



Institute for
Development Impact

VOLUME II

Country Case Studies Reports

Independent Evaluation of the Civil
Society Education Fund (CSEF)
Programme 2013 – 2015 for the
Global Campaign For Education



22 October 2015



Institute for
Development Impact

Case Study Report – NEP Cambodia

Undertaken As Part Of An Independent
Evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)
Programme 2013-2015 for the Global Campaign For
Education

October 2015

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASPBAE	Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSEF	Civil Society Education Fund
DP	Development Partner
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ESWG	Education Sector Working Group
EFA	Education For All
GCE	Global Campaign For Education
GAW	Global Action Week
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
JTWG	Joint Technical Working Group
MoEYS	Ministry of Education Youth and Sport
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NEP	NGO Education Partnership
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
P-ESWG	Provincial Education Sector Working Group
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
VSO	Volunteer Services Overseas

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the external evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) (2013-15) requested by the Global Campaign for Education, the Institute for Development Impact (IDI) conducted seven country case studies. The evaluation aimed to contribute to GCE's ability to respond to challenges and objectives by identifying the emerging impact of the CSEF programme, provide evidence of the effectiveness of its design and implementation model, and derive learning from implemented processes and structures to influence and strengthen future programming.

The Cambodia case study was conducted by a field visit with the NGO Education Partnership (NEP) from August 3-8, 2015. Interviews and focus group discussions were undertaken over a five day period with 25 persons from development partners, coalition member organisations, coalition board members, coalition staff, and the Minister for Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS). A complete list of interviewees and organisations included in the case study can be found in section 6 of this report.

The work of the coalition in Cambodia is a positive example of how CSEF funding helps to strengthen the role of the coalition as a credible partner, address the capacity needs of members, and attract additional funding. The CSEF programme is instrumental in assisting NEP to further support mechanisms that assist the coalition in achieving its objectives.

NEP makes significant contributions to policy participation of civil society by providing a well-recognized systematic avenue of approach for engaging with policy makers in education. Largely contributing to this is the increased credibility and visibility of the coalition that strengthens its role as a credible partner amongst CSOs and the government. The coalition engages the MoEYS with one voice on issues that have resulted in changes in education policy and implementation. NEP shows an adept capacity to use a broad range of communication tools with members and the general public to sustain awareness in several education policy areas.

NEP is recognized for its success in establishing and maintaining a cohesive, committed and varied network that consists of small local civil society organizations and large International NGOs. Member organizations see value in the platform for organized advocacy action created by NEP and are interested in strengthening its services and voice. The coalition is actively strengthening provincial member capacities to participate in education sector debate and has identified this as an area for increased future efforts.

A significant strength of the coalition is its evidence-based advocacy that relies on research conducted collaboratively with member organizations. NEP is recognized nationally for its extensive research and the contribution this research has made on education policy reform. The research conducted on the teaching hours provided in Cambodian schools was especially noted for having been endorsed and promoted by the MoEYS.

Based on the findings in this report recommendations have been made in the following three areas: 1) increasing the coalition's capacity to capitalise on member expertise, 2)

strengthening the provincial network of the coalition, and 3) prioritising learning and best practice.

2 STATUS OF EDUCATION IN CAMBODIA

After some attempts in the 1950s to modernize, the entire Cambodian education system was dismantled and destroyed in the 1970s under the rule of the Khmer Rouge. A peace agreement was signed in 1991, after decades of war and destruction left Cambodia devastated. In 1993 a new constitution established the Royal Government of Cambodia, which is led by Prime Minister Hun Sen. In 2000 educational reform began in earnest.

Minimal investments and a renewed commitment to educational reform by government officials have brought positive improvements in education structures over the past several years. As a result, Cambodia is on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in the areas of poverty reduction and school enrolment by 2015. Primary school enrolment has more than doubled in the last five years, with the Cambodian government reporting 95.2% primary school enrolment in 2011. The net enrolment rate of female students into primary school in the 2012-2013 school year was 97%, and literacy rates for persons over 15 years of age climbed to 79.7% in 2013¹.

Although there has been progress on economic and social reforms, Cambodia remains ranked as one of the poorest countries in South-East Asia by the World Bank. In 2010 GDP allocation of 2.6%² for education was one of the lowest in the region. The Cambodian education system is plagued with constant teacher shortages, high dropout and repetition rates, and among the lowest regional scores in numeracy and literacy. These deficiencies are especially acute in rural and remote areas, where minority and migratory populations including girls face a plethora of obstacles that prevent them from completing an education and climbing out of a constant cycle of poverty.

3 OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION COALITION IN CAMBODIA

The NGO Education Partnership (NEP), is a membership organization that promotes collaboration between non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the education sector and advocates on behalf of its member organizations in policy dialogue and discussions with the Royal Government of Cambodia. There are 133 members, 92 of whom are local NGOs, and 41 are International NGOs (INGOs). A list of members can be found in Section 7 of this report. NEP is governed by a Board of Directors that consists of 7 elected officers from member organizations, and an Executive Director who reports to the board and manages a total staff of 14 with an annual budget between US\$ 350,000-400,000.

NEP was established in 2002 and is well recognized by government institutions, development partners, provincial departments of education and civil society organizations (CSOs). NEP began CSEF project implementation in 2009. Although CSEF funding represents 25-27% of

¹ UNICEF Cambodia Country Statistics, 2013

² World Development Indicators Cambodia, 2010

NEP's total budget, the contribution of the CSEF programme is a fundamental element for NEP's staff and operational budget that enables all other coalition activities. In light of this, the evaluation included an assessment of all coalition activities. NEP is also recognized for having attracted a varied source of donor funding.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) see NEP as a prominent partner for improving education policy and implementation in Cambodia. NEP programmes are founded on rights based education principles and aimed to empower Cambodian children and youth to have greater access to a quality education.

3.1 Mission Statement

NEP is a membership organization that coordinates dialogue and cooperation among key stakeholders to improve the quality and accessibility of education in Cambodia.

3.2 Coalition Objectives

The following six objectives are set forth in NEP's CSEF proposal:

- To represent members' views to Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), other government ministries and development partners.
- To strengthen information sharing between members, development partners and government.
- To develop the capacity of members to advocate for education policies.
- To develop evidence based research in education in order to advocate effectively with the government and development partners.
- To be the voice of the NGO Education Sector.
- To strengthen the organization and build its capacity to advocate for education policies.

4 FINDINGS

The analysis and findings of the case study have been structured against the standard evaluation criteria adopted by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). These criteria were used to detail the evaluation questions during inception and also to structure the evaluation report. These five criteria are:

- Relevance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Sustainability
- Impact

4.1 Relevance

Relevance is defined as, ‘The extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor’³. The evaluation team’s assessment of programme relevance is based on the analysis of the national and local context, the challenges for strengthening policy making and civil society participation in the educational sector and the needs and priorities of various stakeholders (e.g. CSOs, capacity building, etc.).

Despite some progress by the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) on EFA goals, recovery after so many years of war and isolation has been much slower than in other countries in the region. According to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport it is estimated that nearly 3,000 NGOs work in the education sector in Cambodia that cover a wide range of issues. In recent years, the MoEYS has become increasingly supportive of inviting dialogue and engagement by civil society (CS). This is seen as an opportunity for the coalition to affect broader changes in the education sector. NEP is well positioned as the voice of civil society in the education sector to engage with a government that has shown increased openness.

“...parents are sometimes less inclined to come [..to community meetings] as they feel inadequate to discuss issues since after the Khmer Rouge people were illiterate...”

–Development Partner

4.1.1 Strategy Of Engagement With Government

NEP is recognized by MoEYS as a prominent partner. Coalition member organizations rely on NEP to be their voice in national level discussions and education sector working groups as much as the government relies on NEP to speak for the CSOs in the coalition. As evidence that the government

“...sometimes in the official line of reporting we hear a lot of ‘good news’, but not much ‘bad news’. NEP provides an independent view and proposals for how to improve the education system. The challenge we had in the past is that the ministers wanted only to hear the good news and not the bad news – so we need this.”

–Education Official

values NEP, it was reported that RGC chose to include NEP staff in the Cambodian national delegation to attend the World Education Forum in South Korea.

NEP participates on policy issues with the government at the national level on two separate platforms. The first is the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG), which is a monthly meeting between development partners, and other multi-laterals working in education. Meeting records show that NEP and three coalition member organizations regularly participate in these meetings. The second platform is the Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG), which is chaired by the Minister of Education and meets quarterly. This working group includes larger government representatives and the members of the ESWG. NEP is recognized

³ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dacriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

by government and development partners for being able to successfully bring the concerns of grass roots NGOs to these meetings.

NEP utilises these platforms to present the results of research conducted and to bring issues forward raised by NEP members. As a result, the government has proposed and implemented changes to government education policy based on this research and advocacy. The Minister of Education was noted to quote NEP research in his speaking notes to members of parliament. Considering the political context in Cambodia which has not been favourable to criticism from civil society, these are seen as positive indicators of the growing role of the coalition and CS with government in Cambodia. The change in leadership at the MoEYS as well as NEP's improved management are recognized by members as contributing factors for greater engagement of the government with the civil society sector.

Some respondents expressed concern that NEP is not always capable of taking an assertive position in policy meetings, and lacked the capacity to synthesize the collective concerns of the members. This concern is based primarily on the fact that the NEP team is not large enough to collect all the information at the grass roots level. Aware of this shortage, NEP is working to establish sub-national CSO networks in 25 provinces of Cambodia. NEP, at the time of the evaluation, did not have the resources to fully support a broad sub-national network.

4.1.2 Synergies With Member Priorities

The NEP is seen by its members as the official civil society voice in education. Synergy is created through the coordination of topics for research, which are of interest to a wide range of members. The results of research are empowering for the coalition as an organization and stimulate opportunities for deeper policy discussion.

The NEP also creates synergy with member priorities through the formation of campaign committees for Global Action Week (GAW) and World Teachers' Day. The formation of campaign committees for GAW and World Teachers day are directly funded by CSEF but more notably also include financial contributions from members. In 2015 members agreed on one overall campaign message that was brought forth in media campaigns in several different areas.

The greatest synergy that NEP creates amongst its members is in its ability to represent member voices to government and the general public. With such a high number of active members, there could easily be a tendency for the coalition to be 'dragged all over the place'. Research is well coordinated and conducted in cooperation with coalition members at the provincial level and strategically used at the national level for advocacy. Member feedback indicates that improvements are needed to strengthen the methodological approach to research and increase involvement of experienced member organizations in data collection, research design and validation of results.

There are many organizations working in the education sector in Cambodia covering a wide range of educational issues and priorities. The wide range of priorities and needs of International NGOs and local NGOs pose a challenge for NEP in its role to coordinate the voice of the coalition. Despite this, NEP has found a balance by relying on the larger NGOs for more strategic input and working with the local NGOs to collect information and build capacity.

There is a need for NEP to re-consider its membership strategy in this context in order to distinguish between those members for whom service delivery is important and those members for whom it is not.

Members commonly recognize NEP as a resource for gaining access to government and for training in advocacy and information sharing with other members. The NEP charter lays out a mechanism for the formation of sub-sector working groups within the

“It is always a challenge to decide between the balance of provision of services to members and representation of members – the challenge is that different types of NEP members need different levels of support, and in terms of the interest of government – it is to have one voice.”

–Development Partner

coalition, but this mechanism is only in use in the area of Non-Formal Education supported by a specific donor. A fledgling sub-sector group on Primary Education is being developed with other funding support. Some sub-sector groups have previously been formed but they are reported to no longer function and to “have run their course”. The members see value in the sub-sector groups and their ability to create greater synergy in specific areas of expertise.

4.1.3 Communication

NEP activities demonstrate an adept use of a wide range of communication tools to reach its members and the general public. From participation in radio talk shows, to sponsoring television broadcasts on a popular comedy show, to joint press statements with coalition members, NEP is able to use a variety of communication tools to maximize the impact of its activities. NEP’s website is exemplary of their agility at using technology and social media for communication to extend their outreach to a broad member population. The sharing of videos, a newsletter, and Facebook, in addition to email and phone calls are commonly used to disseminate information to members about important education policy statements by government and to provide access to published literature on education.

Members who have participated in interviews and focus groups highlighted a need for more targeted communication. It was noted that some of the mass communication activities did not seem to attract sufficient attention. Yet it cannot go unnoticed that the coalition is successful in using various methods to communicate with the public and its members. NEP members consistently reported routine communication via email, newsletter, website, and quarterly and annual meetings. Meetings were reported to be well facilitated and follow-up to have been consistent. Attendance at the annual meetings was high. NEP estimates that close to 70% of members actively participate in coalition activities, which is consistent with member feedback.

Throughout the evaluation fieldwork there were no outward indications that communication, as related to education advocacy, was thwarted or controlled by the government. Despite this, it must be noted that the Human Rights Watch considered the control of the media by the current government to be a significant obstacle to the proliferation of a *healthy* civil

society⁴. In addition to this, the Government is consulting on passing a law that is largely seen to restrict the space for civil society discussion. Aside from a note about restrictions for discussing budgetary allocations during a national level meeting with government, there were no references made throughout the interviews about government controls on communication. To the NEP's credit, despite the potential of an increase in restricted space for civil society discussion, relationships with Government continue to be strong.

4.1.4 Networking, Mobilizations

The members clearly recognize that the strength of the coalition is its role in providing a mechanism for systematic and coordinated advocacy strategy. Many of the members and other respondents see this as the most recognizable and important role of NEP. The implementation of the Global Action Week is a good example of how NEP has mobilized community participants on a national level. Every April, NEP coordinates the GAW and World Teachers' Day in October with coalition members from 22 provinces throughout Cambodia. According to stakeholders, each year the profile and sophistication have increased the impact of the campaign.

NEP was noted to have successfully mobilized CSOs on more than one occasion in a coordinated advocacy effort. The success of any advocacy project often depends on many factors outside of an implementing agency's control. NEP's success with more than one advocacy campaign is demonstrative of its efficacy in mobilizing the coalition to increase its advocacy impact.

4.1.5 Training

Members find NEP training on interpreting data to improve research relevance and accuracy to be useful and practical. NEP provides training to coalition members and community representatives at the provincial level in order to develop their capacity for monitoring the government's implementation of education policy. Members felt this type of capacity building training on how to interpret data published by the government is time well spent.

The larger research projects conducted by NEP are implemented in coordination with smaller community based NGOs that are specifically trained for data collection. The training that NEP provides not only contributes to improved research results, it also increases the capacity of those that are trained to collect data, and their awareness of critical issues in education. This type of training demonstrates an effective use of resources that directly contributes to the impact of the CSEF programme.

4.1.6 Gender Equality

Throughout the literature reviewed during this case study, it was generally concluded that gender parity in education had been achieved in Cambodia. Recent official statistics confirm that nearly 95% of girls were enrolled in early primary school. Meanwhile dropout rates for

⁴ Human Rights Watch World Report 2103: Cambodia

elementary school girls were the highest in the region, and secondary school enrolment for girls was reported to be 34%. It was also noted that women were practically absent from higher education as teachers and students.

When questions of gender equality were addressed, the figures for gender parity were often provided. One respondent recognized that higher education was a male dominated area and that more work was necessary in the area of gender equality. Based on the interviews and focus group discussions, gender equality was not a priority. Aside from data tracking of women and girls in education, there was no outright strategy for addressing gender in-equality either internally as a coalition or on a policy level. Women are well represented on NEP staff, which includes five out of ten executives, and three of the seven board members are women. Amongst coalition members, women are poorly represented in the provincial level organizations. This is most likely a reflection of the urban/rural disparities, which exist in general for education in Cambodia.

4.1.7 Mechanisms For Ensuring Stakeholder Involvement In Planning And Implementation

NEP has quarterly and annual meetings with members, as well as engaging members in ad hoc consultations and events such as research publication launches. More than half of all members regularly attend these meetings and report finding them informative and participatory. Members reported that NEP facilitates priority setting for meetings and is responsive to member requests for topics and information on policies. Lessons learned, best practices and general networking were noted to spontaneously occur but were not prioritized as topics for specific meetings.

Members have the opportunity to provide input on agenda and strategic priorities and the right to vote on executive board members. Members are also asked to provide suggestions for guest speakers at meetings or to propose topics for sharing best practice.

“I ... attend meetings regularly, I think it is important to keep track of what is going on in the education sector.”
—Coalition Member

It was reported that attendance at quarterly meetings was upward of 60%. NEP also seeks feedback from its members through surveys. Prior to the NEP co-hosting an event with the National Assembly, members were asked to provide input on NEP’s presentation. This was a unique chance for coalition members to ask politicians questions directly and to make specific recommendations. The recommendations that were made by the coalition to the Assembly and the Minister of Education were successfully accepted.

NEP covers costs of travel, accommodation and meals for members to attend the annual meeting. Respondent feedback indicated that some members saw this as an obstacle for the integrity of the coalition, and a contributing factor to annual meetings being well attended. This created the perception that some provincial members had increased benefits for attendance.

NEP has established sub-national networks in provinces across Cambodia and provides support to these groups at the community level. The development of the sub-national network is recognized as an element that would further strengthen the voice of the coalition. Due to limited resources and a range of contextual factors, the functioning of these networks

is varied and restricts the feedback they have been able to collect at the provincial level. Nevertheless, NEP’s efforts to collect feedback from the provincial network is praiseworthy because of the magnanimity of the logistical effort to organize community networks of CSOs in 22 provinces across Cambodia.

While there was some criticism about the practice of covering costs for members to attend the annual meeting, it should be noted that doing away with this practice might be discouraging for local organizations at a time when NEP is seeking to further strengthen its connection with members at the provincial level.

One of NEP’s strengths is its well-recognized role of bringing together the plethora of civil society organizations that often work in a vacuum. Members benefited from the networking that is facilitated at meetings and trainings, and reported positive experiences from study exchanges with other members.

4.1.8 Learning And Best Practice

Engaging with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport through evidence-based research is universally agreed upon amongst coalition members and development partners as an advocacy best practice. A common reference reiterated throughout the evaluation following the discussion of NEP research, was the importance of providing evidence for advocacy and not just criticism. This astute awareness of effective advocacy was repeatedly observed during the evaluation. The coalition should be lauded for contributing to this awareness, not just amongst its members but other respondents as well. The success of NEP’s research projects such as the ‘Teaching Hours’⁵, which resulted in policy change commitments, have overwhelmingly contributed to this being the preferred means of engagement with the government. During interviews with coalition members, reference was often made to the fact that when government involvement was approached via the NEP, the results were greater.

“We have learned that monitoring, tracking and reporting of education sector expenditures and decisions is a strong tool for change.”
–Coalition Member

Training local NGOs as part of a large research project is recognized as a ‘best practice’ because it serves a threefold purpose. Firstly, awareness is raised on educational issues in the community where the local NGOs are active and where data are collected. Second, once data are collected and analysed it establishes a valuable link between provincial and national level decision makers. And third, the training itself increases the capacity of provincial CSOs to do more research and develop a potential avenue for future income generation. Conducting research collaboratively in this way is recognized as a ‘best practice’ because the overall

⁵ ‘The Teaching Hours in Primary Schools in Cambodia’ is a research study conducted by NEP in 2012-2013 whose aim was to give an updated view of the challenges in delivering the mandated teaching hours in Cambodian primary schools. The research was funded by MISEREOR.

results and impact achieved greatly contributes to CSEF programme objectives and is an effective use of resources.

Another ‘best practice’ recognized by NEP is to gather buy-in for research with coalition members. This serves as an important avenue for raising funds for research and advocacy costs and contributes to quality research. For each research project, the NEP forms a separate research advisory group, drawn from MoEYS, DPs, academic institutes and NEP staff who provide analysis and guidance on particular research topics and methodology. The research advisory group also increases ownership of the process and serves as a quality control mechanism. It is generally regarded that the more players that NEP involve in research without sacrificing quality, the greater the ownership is and the more important the role of a coordinating body. The research advisory group model is seen as a contributing factor to the increased quality of research published by NEP.

Similarly, during field interviews it was noted that members saw value in an ad hoc advisory group that was referred to as the ‘Think Tank’. This body consisted of specific coalition members that were consulted for their expertise or knowledge in a particular area. The ‘Think Tank’ was described as providing more of a technical role within the coalition as opposed to a governance role. This group was no longer in function but was referred to as a positive element that facilitated agile functioning of the coalition.

A ‘best practice’ that increases the credibility of the coalition with its members is to bring education officials, including the Minister for Education to coalition meetings to answer questions and explain policies. This highly motivates members and demonstrates the government’s implicit support for the coalition’s work.

4.2 Effectiveness

The OECD DAC defines effectiveness as, ‘A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives’⁶. Using the programme’s Theory of Change (logical framework/results framework) the evaluation team analysed to what extent the results obtained from the implementation of activities have contributed to the attainment of the planned objectives.

NEP has been effective in bringing the CS voices to the policy making table, and increased its effectiveness to impact policy change during the CSEF funding period. NEP has enabled action and coordinated the prioritized implementation of education goals that are in line with goals of the government. NEP provides the government with evidence and examples from the field of policies that work and those that do not work.

Before CSEF funding, NEP was occasionally organizing meetings. During the evaluation, coalition meetings were described as being well facilitated and consistent. NEP has developed

⁶ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

an effective avenue for members to come together on education issues and facilitates the coalition toward systematic engagement with policy makers.

Important changes in the education sector have occurred as a result of NEP initiatives. The key to these successes has been focused and joint research followed by a collaborative effort to identify the best recommendations for government action and policy change. NEP has successfully created a mechanism for civil society to engage with policy makers and participate in the education sector policy review process.

4.2.1 Policy Formulation

Two key avenues through which NEP influences policy development is through its participation at the monthly ESWG meeting and the quarterly JTWG meeting. Member organizations recognize NEP's role on these bodies as a chance for them to have a place at the policy development table. Coalition members seek to connect directly with government bodies in these forums through NEP.

In 2014 the Government started consultations on a 'Teacher Policy Action Plan' aimed at improving teacher recruitment, training, deployment and management. Teachers were not consulted in the development of this plan and there were several unintended negative consequences that could have reduced the teacher supply and exacerbated already poor teacher to pupil ratios. The ESWG suggested that NEP act as a proxy in consultations with the government and teacher unions on this plan.

As a result of these consultations, NEP conducted a series of interviews and focus groups with teachers and education officials at a sub-national level on the contents of the action plan. A report was subsequently produced with a number of recommendations for change. The final policy document was strongly influenced by NEP recommendations; including commitments to improve the pay, conditions and non-monetary benefits of teachers, better phasing of changes to prevent teacher shortages, and more coherent activity on increasing teacher numbers. NEP reported continued monitoring of the plan to hold the government bodies accountable.

Another example of NEP's influence on policy formulation was its role in raising awareness on the need for scholarships for children out of school. As a result of advocacy efforts in this area, the government has increased their funding on conditional cash transfers to assist children not attending school because of economic obstacles. A subsequent decline in the number of children that were not enrolled was affected and budgetary allocations were made to regularly assist those families unable to cover additional school costs.

The following points briefly summarize the policy changes MoEYS has adopted based on the contributing work of NEP:

- ✓ pilot project for whole school days based on the Teaching Hours Research
- ✓ increased scholarship to assist the poorest of the poor in gaining access to education
- ✓ automatic payment of teachers through the banks
- ✓ direct disbursement of school operating budget to schools via bank account
- ✓ school textbooks in Braille and other accessible formats for disabled children

There are indications that members feel that NEP should increase its capacity to represent the coalition more aggressively and cohesively. This was supported by a comment made by the Minister during a stakeholder interview which indicated that they would like to see NEP become more actively engaged on policy issues and suggested that NEP prepare policy briefs for de-briefings at the community level.

4.2.2 Evidence-based Advocacy

NEP designed a large-scale observational study examining the difference between the stated and delivered instructional hours in primary schools. Primary research was conducted by member CSOs that tracked attendance of 300 teachers over one academic year using multiple sources of information. The study found wide variations between schools and teachers, particularly between rural and urban schools. On average, schools in the study provided less than 75% of the specified instructional hours in the school year in 2012/13. The report also provided clear evidence that Cambodia has lower instructional hours compared with other countries. The report recommended that the school day be extended to include more teacher to pupil contact time, as well as measures to improve teacher attendance and oversight of ad hoc school closures.

The Minister of Education spoke at the launch of the report in July 2015 and officially accepted the findings of the research report. Following this, MoEYS requested further workshops between NEP / CSOs and sub-national officials to identify how to implement the recommendations. A working group on extending the school day was established and pilot whole school days were planned. Media coverage of the event was aimed at keeping the issues of quality education in the public forum and reportedly stirred local communities to push for action.

Working with a number of member CSOs, NEP conducted a community level survey of parents and children on their experiences and attitudes toward education in Cambodia, focused on whether their 'rights to education' were being met. The research targeted traditionally excluded groups such as members of ethnic minority communities, disabled children and their parents, and children who had dropped out of school. The research was structured against the '4As' of Accessibility, Availability, Acceptability, and Adaptability.

This research and other advocacy work contributed to a set of recommendations that were made on a range of issues. The Ministry of Education accepted the recommendation to produce school textbooks in Braille and other accessible formats for disabled children. A pilot programme is underway to mainstream the routine screening of disabilities in line with the recommendations that were made. Recommendations were also made to improve education for children from ethnic minorities by offering bi-lingual contract teacher training and the opportunity to become official teachers, which have been followed by the Government in 2015.

4.2.3 Credibility And Visibility

NEP is well recognized by all stakeholders as the official voice of education in the civil society sector. Improved research and advocacy over the past five years have increased its credibility and visibility, both with the government and with member organizations. This has in turn

highlighted a role for monitoring at the community level. Feedback during the assessment process indicated that developing NEP's internal staffing capacities in leading research and policy development would further improve the credibility of the coalition.

NEP is seen to be visible on the national level as well as the provincial level. Further efforts to improve the outreach through capacity development at the community level is in process and foreseen to increase the strength of the information that NEP collects.

However, despite its seminal role in enabling NEP activities in education advocacy, the CSEF programme and its contribution are largely unknown to the members of the coalition and other actors in country. The CSEF programme, besides financial and technical support, provides a significant leverage to the NEP through international and regional networking and adds legitimacy to its actions. NEP could consider investing more conscious effort in increasing the visibility of the CSEF programme and its contributions.

4.3 Efficiency

According to the OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance, 'Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs'⁷. Efficiency was analysed in terms of how well the programme is organized for delivering its work with regard to managerial and budget efficiency. The evaluation team analysed efficiency based on the assessment of outputs/activities in relation to programme inputs, costs and planned timelines.

4.3.1 Coalition Development Systems

NEP reported working with the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE), the CSEF regional secretariat, during the design stage of CSEF programming, and seeking support on CSEF processes (for example checking reports and proposals) during the implementation phase. Once programming is agreed, NEP reported that it follows these plans independently.

Advice is provided by the capacity development advisor when needed and a coaching approach is used and appreciated. NEP staff highlighted that there is limited staff time at the regional structure to meet all their support needs. This was attributed to the fact that the regional coalition has one programme officer responsible for supporting five countries. Ongoing and potentially additional support from the regional structure was requested in the future in the area of strategic direction of advocacy, facilitating regional networking, exchange and cross-fertilization, and reporting.

ASPBAE facilitates and supports NEP to attend and participate in global and regional events. For example, support in applying for places at the World Education Forum and pre-briefing for that event, regional workshops on specific topics, such as on the Post-2015 education agenda,

⁷ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

and the ASPBAE Festival of Learning in 2014. These events enable NEP to have a better understanding of global trends, and the processes towards Sustainable Development Goals that can then be shared with members. These events, and the GCE World Assembly also provide opportunities to exchange information and ideas with other coalitions and understand differences and similarities between education reform programmes in different countries.

4.3.2 Financial Management Systems

Reporting mechanisms established by the CSEF programme are regarded as having become increasingly complicated and time consuming. The national coalition in Cambodia expressed concerns with the excel forms used for financial reporting. In addition to this there are regular delays in funding from the regional funding committee that disrupted coalition functioning and activities that required bridge funding.

4.3.3 Performance Management Systems

Similarly to the financial reporting, narrative reporting and programme monitoring requirements have become increasingly challenging to prepare and demand a proportionally large amount of time and attention by NEP staff. This contributes to limiting their availability to focus on implementation. Constant changes in monitoring indicators and the amount and type of information required for narrative reporting has made it difficult for NEP to aggregate information and data over time and has in turn limited their ability to produce consistent evidence of effectiveness.

4.4 Sustainability

According to the OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance, 'Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn'⁸. The evaluation team reviewed sustainability factors in terms of programme design, process, implementation and national context.

The level of sustainability of the Cambodian NGO Education Partnership has markedly increased throughout CSEF programme implementation. As an organization there is greater credibility amongst members that the coalition has become the preferred method for civil society to engage with government. Additionally, NEP has diversified and expanded funding resources over the past three years and there are reasons to believe that they should continue to be able to do so.

The success of several NEP research projects that garnered the attention and support of government have established both a formal and informal platform for CS to engage with government. With the implicit support of the government, coalition members and development partners, NEP has laid a solid foundation for continued sustainability of

⁸ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

education advocacy efforts. Based on interviews conducted for this evaluation, it is widely believed that if NEP continues to demonstrate its added value, overcome staffing capacity, and take on a stronger leadership role, there would be donors to support their activities.

CSEF was, at the time of the evaluation, NEP's largest donor, accounting for about 25-27% of coalition funding for core costs. Several other member organizations support NEP research and activities with funding, including membership fees that makes up less than 2-3% of budgetary expenditures. While it is unlikely that the membership umbrella could be maintained without continued financial support, it is significant for sustainability that the coalition has attracted a range of donor support.

Throughout the evaluation, it was suggested that members could play a more active role in the sustainability of the coalition through the provision of funds for research or donated technical staff expertise. The structures and a solid foundation are in place for continued sustainability, but longer-term funding is necessary to develop a more efficient coalition. Additional resources invested at the provincial level were consistently cited as necessary for further sustainability. Furthermore, the development of a funding strategy is critical to support this.

The ministry described its desire to see NEP become more involved in policy development and not just coordination. According to the ministry, the preparation of policy briefs and more involvement at the policy level in a systematic way would contribute to NEP's sustainability. This specific recognition of the coalition by education policy makers is indicative of their increased credibility which greatly contributes to longer term sustainability. Similarly, other evaluation respondents expressed the need for NEP to play a stronger role and influence policy through the expertise of their members.

Throughout the assessment, it was suggested that NEP could develop a viable mechanism for sustainability by capitalising on its ability to conduct research. The coalition is largely seen as a neutral body in this sense and has the outreach for substantial data collection. Initial investments have already been made in training community associations on proper data collection which can be used to support this mechanism.

4.5 Impact

Impact is defined by the OECD DAC as, 'The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended'⁹. The evaluation team examined to what extent the programme increases local capacities in a way that contributes to their better access and participation as measured by increased skills, abilities and knowledge. When assessing the programme's impact, the evaluation team considered the longer-term benefits intended in the CSEF programme design, some of which may not have been fully realized yet.

⁹ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

NEP has positively contributed to an increase in the capacity of CSOs to have a greater impact on government policies in education. NEP has played an important role in raising the awareness and understanding of educational policy at the community level. A paradigm shift has occurred in the last three years that includes a government more receptive to civil society and a gradual increase in budgetary expenditure on education. NEP has been able to respond to these changes and is perfectly positioned to take on a greater role in collecting the voices of civil society to advocate for greater policy change that is on the horizon in Cambodia.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this case study provide a strong basis for drawing conclusions about the direction of NEP and the issues the coalition will face in the scope of the CSEF framework. The following conclusions are based on the Expected Results (ERs) outlined in the CSEF programme objectives.

Objective 1 Policy Participation

NEP actively participates in policy forums and dialogue through the ESWG at the national level and JTWG at the provincial level. NEP effectively uses these policy forums to promote advocacy issues important to the membership at the national level. As a result policy makers have proposed and implemented changes to education policy based on NEP research and advocacy. The development of the capacity of provincial level policy forums is recognized as an area for future focus.

Objective 2 Public Awareness and Coalition Building

NEP has expanded its membership and includes a thorough cross section of local and International NGOs. NEP utilises its broad membership to inform activities and develop proposals. NEP has shown an adept capacity to use a broad range of communication tools with members and the general public to sustain awareness in several specific education policy areas. NEP should further draw on the technical capacities of its members and make greater efforts to collect the opinions of members when representing the coalition with policy makers at the national level.

Objective 3 High Quality Research, Monitoring and Analysis

NEP is recognized nationally for its extensive research and the contribution such research has made on education policy reform. NEP has trained coalition members in tracking government expenditure on education and raised awareness on the importance of monitoring by civil society for advocacy. Members find this training to be valuable and a good tool for monitoring government's progress.

Objective 4 Cross-country Learning and Networks for Change

The coalition receives appropriate technical support in reporting but requested further support and engagement from the region.

5.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings detailed in this report there are three key areas for recommendations:

- Increasing the coalition's capacity to capitalise on member expertise
- Strengthening the provincial network of the coalition
- Prioritising Learning and Best Practice

5.1.1 Increasing NEP Capacity

References were frequently made throughout the assessment that 'NEP does not utilise the expertise of its members' or 'that there is a lack of expertise within the staff of NEP.' One of the benefits of having a large membership body was the wide range of expertise and experience at work within the body of the coalition. NEP has the capacity to harness this expertise either through the establishment of sub-sector working groups or through various knowledge management tools.

One of NEP's strengths is its ability to collect the opinions of members. Similarly, NEP should become adept at collecting data on the skills of its members and adding this kind of knowledge management to the coalition's portfolio. While it is not possible for the staff of NEP to have expertise in as many areas as there are issues, it does need to know who in the coalition has this expertise. This would allow NEP to respond on more policy issues in greater depth. And it would also increase the credibility of the coalition as a body of experts.

Furthermore, this type of platform within the coalition would allow members who were experts to be more actively engaged on specific issues rather than being bogged down with time-consuming responsibilities associated with participation on the Board. NEP has previously developed a body that it referred to as the 'Think Tank'. This 'Think Tank' acted as an advisory council that was focused on technical issues and not governance and was well recognized by members during the evaluation as adding value.

The leadership of the coalition could be strengthened with the development of a mechanism to access highly qualified members with technical expertise that have the capacity to deliver messages with passion. This would also strengthen member ownership on coalition initiatives. Successful advocacy campaigns often rest on the voice of one charismatic expert that has the power to transform an unpopular or unknown issue into something that a wider audience takes an immediate interest in. NEP's strong membership body presents an opportunity for this.

The Minister of Education commented during his interview for this evaluation that he would like to see NEP prepare more policy briefs. The national coalition in Malawi has developed a good model of policy briefs that were widely distributed and regarded in the education sector there. NEP's member experts are well positioned to be a good resource for the preparation of such policy briefs.

5.1.2 Strengthening the Provincial Network

It was consistently recognized that the platform for CS participation in the education sector of Cambodia needs to be strengthened at the sub-national level. Greater efforts should be invested in developing the sub-national network so that it can consistently feed into national level initiatives. Work needs to be moved closer to the ground in order to accelerate reform and increase awareness.

NEP recognizes this need and has included it as part of their strategic plan for the next five years. With the support of UNICEF, a sub-national network has begun to be established over the past three years in 25 Cambodian provinces. At the time of the evaluation there were 22 provinces that had appointed a Chair or Vice-Chair, had a list of members, and some evidence of meetings. NEP has not had sufficient resources to make regular support visits to each province and must rely on reports and verbal feedback for evidence. The need for direct funding to further support these activities is reiterated and emphasized in order for the routine functioning of these bodies to become more apparent.

5.1.3 Prioritize Learning and Best Practice

The NGO sector in general in Cambodia is a crowded playing field with over 3,000 CSOs operating throughout the country. As is often the case in such contexts, learning and reflection are passed over for more attractive pursuits. As such the institutional memory of an organization, like the institutional memory of a country, can be lost in the turnover of people or management. For a member organization like NEP with 133 organizations under its umbrella, there is a great opportunity for learning and quality reflection that is being overlooked.

6 LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Following is a list of those people interviewed for the evaluation during the field visit to Cambodia in the first week of August 2015.

1. Mr. Ung Pola - Executive Director, Cambodian Organization for Children and Development
2. Mr. Bou Noeun – Programme Officer – Education, Health and Social Development, European Union
3. Mr. Santosh Khatri - Education Programme Specialist, UNESCO
4. Mr. Chea Huot – Education Officer, UNICEF
5. H.E. Dr. Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education Youth and Sport
6. Mr. Kim Dara – Country Director, World Education
7. Mr. Ket Chanto – Plan International
8. Mr. Keo Sarath – Education Specialist, Save the Children
9. Mr. Sem Sansamkosal - Mithsamlanh
10. Ms. Oung Raksmeay – Action Aid Cambodia
11. Mr Darong Chour - Executive Assistant/Public Relation Officer, Kruosar Thmey
12. Mr. Hor Sokhak – Literacy Director, Room to Read
13. Mr. Bouy Phallin – Executive Director, Bando Komar

14. Mr. Vorn Samphors – Country Coordinator, Aide et Action
15. Ms. Hun Boramey – Action Aid
16. Mr. Chea Vantha – Country Director, VSO
17. Mr. Jan Noorlander – CARE International
18. Mr. Hun Touch – Executive Director, Rabbit School
19. Ms. Robyn Mcnaughton – Program Advisor, This Life Cambodia
20. Mr. Sen Se – This Life Cambodia
21. Ms. Sra Kim – Programme Officer, UNESCO
22. Mr. Lay Vutha – National Education Officer, UNESCO
23. Mr. Chin Chanveasna – Executive Director, NEP
24. Mr. Nipun Pich – Campaign and Advocacy Coordinator, NEP
25. Mr. Colin Anderson – Advocacy and Donor Relations Advisor, NEP

7 NEP MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

1. ActionAid Cambodia
2. Action for Rural Economic Development of Cambodia
3. ADRA Cambodia
4. AFESIP Cambodia
5. Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement Pharmaciens Sans Frontiers (ACTED)
6. Alliance Action for Rural Restoration Organization
7. Aide et Action
8. Asian Hope Cambodia
9. Asia Human Resource Development Center (Cambodia)
10. Asian Outreach Cambodia
11. Assemblies of God
12. AusCam Freedom Project
13. Aziza's Place
14. Building Bridges for Children
15. Building Community Voice
16. Bandos Komar
17. Brosith Organization
18. Children Action for Development
19. CARE
20. Community Council For Development Organization
21. Cambodian Children's Advocacy Foundation
22. Cambodian Children's Fund
23. CCS Italy
24. Children for Better Future
25. Community For Transformation
26. Children Development Association
27. Child's Dream Cambodia Organization
28. Cambodian Disabled People's Organization
29. ChildFund Cambodia
30. Cambodian Organization for Children and Development
31. Cooperation for Alleviation of Poverty
32. Chumkriel Language School

33. Cambodia Rural Development Team
34. Child Rights Foundation (CRF)
35. Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
36. Children and Women Development Center in Cambodia
37. Caring for Young Khmer
38. Development Association Resource Economic
39. Disability Development Services Programme
40. Disabled Youth Children Foundation for Education and Vocation
41. Damnok Toek/ Goutte d'Eau
42. Fundacion Educacion y Cooperacion (EDUCO in Cambodia)
43. Enfants & Développement
44. Emergency Foundation for Miserable
45. Finn Church Aid
46. German Agro Action
47. Glow Cambodia Organization
48. Great Peace Cambodia
49. Green Umbrella
50. Hagar International Foundation
51. Hearts of Gold
52. Homeland (Meahto Phum Ko'mah)
53. Indochina Starfish Foundation
54. International Relief and Development
55. Kampear Aphivath Bandos Bandal
56. Kampuchea Action for Primary Education
57. Khmer Association For Development Of Countryside Cambodia
58. Khmer Cultural Development Institute
59. Khmer Development of Freedom Organization
60. Khmer New Generation Organization
61. Khmer NGO for Education
62. KnK Cambodia
63. Komar Ney Kdey Sangkheum
64. Komar Pikar Foundation
65. Kong Pisey Disability Development Federation
66. Krousar Thmey
67. Krousar Yoeung
68. Khmer Youth Association
69. LIFE WITH DIGNITY
70. Live & Learn Environmental Education
71. Lotus Outreach Cambodia
72. Maryknoll-Cambodia
73. Mekong Plus
74. MISSIONE POSSIBILE CAMBODIA
75. Mitsamlanh
76. M'lop Tapang
77. Mlup Baitong
78. Mlup Promviheathor Center Organization
79. Marist Solidarity Cambodia

80. Muslim Aid Cambodia
81. National Educators' Association for Development
82. New Humanity
83. New Life Foundation
84. Non-Timber Forest Products
85. Old Age and Miserable People Help
86. Orphanage for Cambodia Children Organization
87. Open Institute
88. Operations Enfants du Cambodge
89. One in Love Ministry
90. Our Home
91. Our Objective Organization
92. Plan International
93. PURE for kids
94. Pour un Sourire d'Enfant
95. People Improvement Organization
96. Professor's Alliance for Development
97. Promvihearhor
98. PEPY Empowering Youth
99. Por Thom Elderly Association
100. Puthi Komar Organization
101. Rabbit School Organization
102. Respect for Children
103. Rural Friend Community for Development
104. Rural Orphan Organization
105. Rural Aid Organization
106. Rural Development Association
107. Room to Read – Cambodia
108. Salariin Kampuchea
109. Samaky Organization
110. Samritan's Purse International Relief
111. Servants to Asia's Urban Poor Cambodia
112. Sustainable Cambodia
113. Save the Children
114. Sustainable Schools International
115. Shanti Volunteer Association
116. Sipar
117. Society for Community Development in Cambodia
118. Sovann Phoum
119. Street Children Assistance and Development Programme
120. Teacher Across Borders Australia
121. This Life Cambodia
122. Trotrung ning Akpiwat Sokapheap Neak Kreykror
123. Tiny Toones
124. Vulnerable Children Assistance Organization
125. Voluntary Service Overseas
126. Vision for Youth Partnership in Development

127. United Brother Association
128. Urban Poor Women Development
129. Wathnakpheap
130. World Education
131. World Renew
132. World Vision
133. Youth Resource Development Programme





Institute for
Development Impact

Case Study Report – CSEC Malawi

Undertaken As Part Of An Independent
Evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)
Programme 2013-2015 for the Global Campaign For
Education

October 2015

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANCEFA	Africa Network Campaign On Education For All
Coalition	Throughout this report, 'coalition' refers to CSEC, the Civil Society Education Coalition of Malawi, which is the focus of this case study.
CSEC	Civil Society Education Coalition of Malawi
CSEF	Civil Society Education Fund
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
DEN	District Education Network
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECG	Education Coordination Group (the Local Education Group in Zimbabwe)
EFA	Education For All
GCE	Global Campaign For Education
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NESP	National Education Sector Plan
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSISA	Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the external evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) Programme (2013-15) requested by the Global Campaign for Education (GCE), the Institute for Development Impact (IDI) conducted seven country case studies. The evaluation aimed to contribute to GCE's ability to respond to challenges and objectives by identifying the emerging impact of the CSEF programme, provide evidence of the effectiveness of its design and implementation model, and derive learning from implemented processes and structures to influence and strengthen future programming.

The Malawi case study was conducted by a field visit with the Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC) from June 8-12, 2015. Interviews and focus group discussions were undertaken with development partners, coalition member organizations, coalition board members, coalition staff, and representatives from the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, and the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare. A complete list of interviewees and organizations included in the case study can be found in Section 6 of this report.

CSEF funding to CSEC is a relatively small percentage of all CSEC programme income and expenditure. Of CSEC staff, only one is dedicated to work on CSEF programme-funded activities. In this context, and given how CSEC functions, it was not possible for the study to assess only CSEF-funded activities, initiatives, outputs and outcomes, nor to attribute outcomes to the CSEF programme. To do so would also not have provided a reflection of the work and results of CSEC.

2 STATUS OF EDUCATION IN MALAWI

Malawi has made significant progress in increasing access to primary education, although a significant number of children were still out of school in 2012. While there is gender parity at lower primary school levels, the picture changes for the higher grades, and is particularly poor from grade 8 and in secondary school where girls lag behind boys on many indicators, including drop-out/retention rates. Only one in four girls completes eight years of primary education leading to fewer girls entering and completing secondary schooling. Household poverty is a barrier to girls' education, even where school fees are not required, due to the indirect costs and foregone earnings from girls' labour. The national education budget makes provisions for increasing access to education for all. However, there is no clear and deliberate effort to ensure that the facilities are accessed equitably - CSEC's budget analyses regularly show that while budget policy is gender-policy aware, budgets are not gender responsive.

The quality of education being provided in the primary schools is poor, with exceptionally high pupil-teacher ratios that can reach above 150 learners per teacher despite the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) prescribing the recommended pupil-teacher ratio as 60:1. With such over-crowding in the classroom, the teaching-learning process cannot deliver as it should. The situation is worsened by a teaching force that is poorly motivated. While government has put in place policies to produce a well-trained, well-supported, equitably distributed professional teacher workforce, the implementation of these policies is poor.

Teachers in Malawi are poorly supported by education supervisors, and access to continuous professional development is poorly developed.

3 OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION COALITION IN MALAWI

The Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC), which was formerly the Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education, is a coalition of 84 diverse, independent and voluntary organizations (non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, trade unions, religious-based organizations, etc.). Originally formed in 2003, the coalition began receiving funding from CSEF in 2008 and changed its name in 2009. Member groups have come together in the pursuit of the right to quality education in Malawi.

The coalition has established 27 District Education Networks (DENs) that span across all three regions of Malawi, and whose intent is to fulfil the mandate of CSEC at the district level. The DENs Secretariat is hosted by a volunteer member organization in each district.

3.1 Vision

The CSEC vision is of *a society where all people enjoy the right to education that promotes equity, relevance, accessibility, quality and critical thinking.*

3.2 Mission Statement

CSEC is a membership organization that exists to promote the right to quality education for all, and to complement government efforts towards a literate and highly productive nation through information sharing, research, advocacy, and capacity-building of member organizations and stakeholders.

3.3 Core Values And Common Ideals

In order to contribute towards the attainment of its vision and its mission, CSEC is committed to the following values:

- Transparency and accountability
- Respect for human rights and the rule of law
- Integrity
- Gender equality

3.4 Coalition Priorities

In the current period, CSEC has four main objectives:

- To enhance the participation of civil society in the local education group and education public policy on girls' education and teacher welfare.
- To improve girls' access to primary education through child-friendly infrastructure and social support mechanisms.

- To increase the voice of teachers on timely payment of salaries and continuous professional development.
- To enhance the capacity and coordination of the CSEC Secretariat with its membership and education stakeholders.

Within its current Strategic Plan, CSEC has nominated 6 strategic programming areas:

- Budget tracking and analysis
- Capacity building (members)
- Policy analysis and advocacy – the main focus of CSEF funding
- Community mobilization and sensitization
- Research
- Networking, collaboration and partnership

3.5 Current Coalition Initiatives

CSEC is currently implementing a range of projects, for a number of different donors. As a result, CSEF funding does not provide CSEC with a majority of its funding, although projects generally fit well within the framework of CSEF objectives. Apart from the CSEF programme, current coalition projects include:

- Two World Bank projects focused on social accountability in schools
- Performance-based financing of primary schools.
- Combatting the drop-out of girls from schools
- Transparency and governance in schools
- Gawo Langa and Out of School Youth Education
- Early Childhood Development
- Budget advocacy

As well as projects, CSEC is involved in research in a range of areas, on a number of topics that are relevant to its work in the education sector, and specifically relevant to its advocacy work. Three recent examples are:

- Rural Primary Teacher Basic Needs Basket in Malawi¹
- Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Education Sector in Malawi: the case of the 2011-2013 Education Sector²
- Research On Hidden Costs Of The Free Primary Education: Final Report³

¹ 2014. Rural Teacher Basic Needs Basket in Malawi. Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC), Lilongwe, Malawi.

² 2015. Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Education Sector in Malawi: the case of the 2011-2013 Education Sector, CSEC, Lilongwe, Malawi.

³ 2014. Research On Hidden Costs Of The Free Primary Education: Final Report. Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC), Lilongwe, Malawi.

4 FINDINGS

The analysis and findings of the case study have been structured against the standard evaluation criteria adopted by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). These criteria were used to detail the evaluation questions during inception and also to structure the evaluation report. The criteria are defined as follows:

- Relevance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Sustainability
- Impact

4.1 Relevance

Relevance is defined as, '[t]he extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor'⁴. The evaluation team's assessment of programme relevance is based on the analysis of the national and local context, the challenges for strengthening policy making and civil society participation in the educational sector and the needs and priorities of various stakeholders (e.g. CSOs, capacity building, etc.).

The initiation of the Education For All (EFA) movement was a particularly important moment for civil society and education in Africa. EFA gave impetus to civil society in education, and saw the establishment of many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) whose aims were to support educational development, whether as local or International NGOs (INGOs). Work was undertaken individually and in coalition. The establishment of EFA enabled the establishment of ANCEFA. ANCEFA aims to promote, enable and strengthen the capacity of African civil society to advocate and campaign for free education for all. CSEC exists and operates within this framework.

CSEC finds a good balance in leading education sector NGOs, listening to the voices of the sector and in its relationship and lobbying with government. CSEC has an oversight role – a watchdog role – and has the capacity to organize the community. The relationship between government and civil society can be difficult in this instance, especially given the role played by CSEC in monitoring the disbursement of grants that provide direct support to schools, and reporting on the timeliness of the disbursement. CSEC has objective measures it uses to monitor school changes and improvements: each school must open a specific account to receive money and development plans for the school must be certified by the school management committee. This monitoring role in schools is recognized as assisting government in improving education delivery, and partnership is an appropriate word to use

⁴ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

to describe the relationship between the coalition and government. A recent project funded with CSEC by the World Bank was only agreed upon by the government because of CSEC's involvement.⁵

CSEC, and international organizations focused on education, agree that the education sector generally would benefit from a closer relationship between, and better coordination of, international organizations and the coalition. The continuing effectiveness and relevance of content and approach for both the coalition and international groups would be strengthened with a closer partnership – a specific example of this is CSEC's participation and role in the Local Education Group (LEG). As a new formal member of the LEG, CSEC has yet to fully establish its presence in this forum in terms of quality and consistent participation.

4.1.1 Communication, Networking, Mobilizations, Learning - Collaboration

CSEC plays a very important role in the education sector in Malawi, including informing debate, leading discussions and responses to government, lobbying and organizing. The coalition is entrepreneurial in its approach to activities and funding, while maintaining a focus on sectoral needs and priorities. CSEC is comprised of local and International NGOs, as well as local civil society and community-based organizations, and is described in the field as 'a true network'.

CSEC was established specifically to bring education-focused civil society together under one umbrella, to give strength and unity to civil society's actions in the sector. There had been no joint approaches prior to the coalition, and government responsiveness to, and effectiveness in, policy development and implementation was poor.

"Within CSEF funding there is a component of knowledge and learning, and coalitions are encouraged to network with others. We went to Addis Ababa and to Nairobi. Through these networks we are able to learn new things from our counterparts and are able to use this experience to determine whether or not their approaches are applicable to our situation. One good example is mothers' groups, a concept used widely in Kenya and Ghana. The communities, through mothers' groups, gather to provide support to girl children in schools, so they are encouraged to stay in school. We have adopted these here, as CSEC, and this has now also been taken up as a policy initiative by government."

–Coalition Member

CSEC's approach does not solely include civil society organizations focused on education, but also looks to develop networks with civil society more generally. While this focus can be best seen in joint efforts for annual initiatives such as *The Day Of The African Child*, CSEC also works with civil society on addressing gaps in knowledge and skills, and in providing training and assistance as required. CSEC sees its role as coordination and capacity-building in advocacy for civil society – the expression heard in field work was 'linking and learning'. Civil society organizations recognize the assistance provided by CSEC in building capacity.

⁵ Information provided during field interviews.

“ANCEFA provides us with technical support on policy matters, training, policy analysis and advocacy, assistance with innovative financing and, they help us to network with like-minded institutions in the world.”

–Coalition Member

The role of ANCEFA, the Africa Network Campaign On Education For All, the CSEF Regional Secretariat for Africa, is unique in CSEC’s networking and learning. The key aspects of ANCEFA’s role is the technical support it provides to coalitions. This technical support covers the whole range of training/capacity-

building requirements of CSEC in management and administration as well as the policy analysis and development needs of the coalition. CSEC acknowledges a focus in ANCEFA on learning, including learning that is built on networking with other coalitions. The network-based sharing is important in demonstrating new approaches to advocacy, new possibilities for types of advocacy initiatives and new policy priorities to address with government.

One specific development of CSEC, in terms of network development, is the establishment of District Education Networks (DENs). The DENs are CSEC’s local face, and an effective mechanism for implementation of policy initiatives, advocacy and monitoring at the district level. The DENs are the implementation body for the monitoring of the School Improvement Programme. The DENs monitor the money received by schools from government, and, in their role as a local NGO, assist CSEC in establishing and developing links with local civil society across Malawi.

4.1.2 Mechanisms For Ensuring Stakeholder Involvement In Planning And Implementation

CSEC experiences the normal tensions visible in civil society coalitions – the balance of competing priorities within the coalition and between the coalition and its members. Both the secretariat and members recognize a mandate for the secretariat of coordination and of research on behalf of the coalition. The secretariat is very conscious of maintaining its actions within its mandate, and both the secretariat and members recognize and focus on implementation by members. The basis of all implementation was put forth in a strategic plan, developed with the membership and adopted as a set of priorities by the membership. Strategic planning, as a coalition, is facilitated by the secretariat making use of external consultants, whose terms of reference requires them to work through the Technical Committee of the Board. Member participation is based on internal consultations and a strategic planning development workshop. This participatory process is aimed at realizing ‘buy-in’ as well as ensuring that the strategic plan undergoes a validation process and sign-off at an annual general meeting of CSEC. Annual planning is executed by the secretariat, and annual plans are aligned fit within the strategic plan, and are also signed-off on at an annual general meeting of members.

“We all own the plan and they coordinate.”

–Coalition Member

CSEC also experiences pressure from donors to address issues or implement projects/programmes that are somewhat or significantly outside the guidelines of the strategic plan. Here, CSEC is open to discussions and negotiations, although they recognize that it is difficult to strike a balance in these circumstances. They demonstrate a willingness to negotiate, but their priorities and resources are limited. The balance is found, to a certain extent, by a

conscious process where CSEC looks at its mandate, and the priorities of donors' requirements, and works to align them from both sides. However, this continues to be a process that requires development.

4.1.3 Coalition Synergies With And Conduciveness To Member Priorities

Generally speaking, both coalition member organizations and the secretariat commented favourably on the synergies that exist between coalition priorities and activities and those of members. Members saw the secretariat as their employee, working on their behalf. Coalition members expressed satisfaction with the alignment of CSEC priorities with those of their own organizations, and also mentioned the coordination role played by CSEC.

Coalition membership is based on involvement of the potential member organization in dealing with education issues. Planning then is based on involvement of members in the strategic planning, or on development of quarterly implementation plans. At the 'local' level, involvement can be through each district's DEN, based on contributions to campaigns, projects or other initiatives such as involvement in research or monitoring.

"Engaging with government – this is really important. Once you have the results of your advocacy – your data, the information – you are bound to win the battle. This is the evidence-base."

-Coalition Member

4.1.4 Learning And Good/ Best Practice

There is a general agreement across coalition members, as well as within the secretariat, that the approach of 'engagement' with government demonstrates best practice. Engagement is best understood as an approach that involves serious dialogue, based on data, on objective information, with a non-conflict ethos, emphasizing the shared priorities while recognizing divergent constituents and needs. This is a conscious strategy, based on consideration of options, and strengthened through the approach of 'evidence-based advocacy'.

"Some scholars prefer mobilisation, as there is power in the voice of the people, but I have learned that dialogue with authority, on the issue you have found, is better than going to the public first and then pressuring. Engaging with government – this is really important. Once you have the results of your advocacy – your data, the information – you are bound to win the battle. This is the evidence base."

-Coalition Member

Sharing, networking and cross-country learning activities are all seen as best practice. The role of GCE/ ANCEFA in this is recognized, with specific mention made of skill development in proposal writing, reporting and in budgeting and financial management.

4.1.5 Gender Equality

With CSEC, as can also be seen with a number of other coalitions, there are two keys to the focus on gender equality in the work and priorities of CSEF-funded work. One key is EFA Goal 5 – 'Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2015, and achieving

gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality⁶. The second key is the involvement of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) – FAWEMA in Malawi.⁷ FAWEMA's role in CSEC is a critical driver of 'the girl child', and of the development and implementation of gender-balanced and gender-focused policies in education.

4.2 Effectiveness

The OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance defines effectiveness as, 'A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives'⁸. Using the programme's Theory of Change (logical framework/ results framework) the evaluation team analysed to what extent the results obtained from the implementation of activities have contributed to the attainment of the planned objectives.

CSEC is demonstrating effectiveness in a number of important areas, all related to improvements in the quality of education policy and implementation, and all involving work with both civil society and government.

4.2.1 Policy Formulation

CSEC plays a formal and non-formal role in its work on policy formulation in the education sector, and contributes as a coalition and in support of coalition member organizations. Some aspects of CSEC's policy work revolves around its evidence-based advocacy – these are discussed in more detail below. It is important to note here, however, that it is the evidence focus of CSEC that gives strength to its policy work with government.

The new Education Act, discussed below (paragraph 4.2.2), is an example of the coalition's policy work. The coalition worked with strong unity, drew on facts, involved the wider community, was strategic in the actions it chose to employ and was strong in discussions with government while maintaining a balanced approach in discussions.

A second example is the Re-admission Policy and monitoring of this policy's implementation. The Re-admission Policy was a fundamental change in the government's approach to girl learners, and specifically those who had become pregnant prior to completing their education. Historically, this group was barred from returning to school after becoming pregnant. The research and advocacy undertaken by CSEC in changing this policy is directly a result of CSEF funding. On-going monitoring of the implementation of the policy is also being carried out, with reporting to government on issues and concerns with its implementation.

CSEC carries out a review of the budget for the education sector during each budget cycle. The review is highly anticipated within civil society, in the public, and with parliamentarians, for whom it is a useful resource, particularly with its gap in analysis. As well as a general

⁶ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/efa-goals/>

⁷ <http://www.fawe.org>

⁸ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

analysis of the whole education sector budget, the analysis also provides a specific gender-responsiveness analysis.

The coalition also analyses issues related to the education curriculum, studies the impact (on teachers as well as on the delivery of education in schools) of the late arrival of salaries to teachers. Additionally, it has also developed a 'basic needs basket' for teachers used in comparison with the annual teacher salary. The coalition is also looking into the availability of teaching materials in schools compared to anticipated/ expected supplies.

4.2.2 Evidence-based Advocacy

One of CSEC's strongest functions, and an area in which it has lasting impact, is the work it does with evidence-based advocacy. CSEC has a strong history and role in research activities in the education sector. This research is conducted on behalf of the coalition and through donor or government impetus. Coalition research projects have assisted the sector to have a clear understanding of issues, policy impact, and have enabled change. Evidence-based advocacy is visible in a number of areas. One particular example was the implementation of the new Education Act (2013), a proposed change that would be the first change in the Act since 1962 (including independence in 1992). Government was not prepared to implement the Act, saying they did not have sufficient resources. CSEC undertook research, and was able to provide evidence to parliament that indeed the resources to implement the new Act existed in the budget. The evidence was presented to parliament, using learners to present the data, and the same week parliament debated and then passed the new Act.

A number of other examples of this role clearly demonstrate why this evidence-based advocacy is so important in CSEC's work:

- The national education budget – CSEC provides a detailed analysis of the education budget during each budget cycle. The analysis is used by civil society and parliamentarians, and is highly anticipated in the media for providing a detailed, objective analysis of the budget.
- Girl-focused education – the Re-admission Policy is discussed above. Beyond this, budget advocacy has seen improvements in the levels of funding directed at enrolments, and specific note was made during field inquiry regarding construction of hostels for girl students, which is happening at a greater rate than hostels for boy students, in order to redress current imbalances.
- Early Childhood Development (ECD) – priorities being addressed in ECD include funding increases, access of children to ECD services and improvements to the quality of ECD services, which has included assistance in organizing conferences on ECD.
- School development grants – CSEC is monitoring the budgets and related expenditure of school development grants, through the DENs, and providing feedback at the district and national levels on the effectiveness and efficiency of the grants.
- Special needs education – beginning in 2007 CSEC has been engaging government through a position paper and then assistance with adopting an agenda on special needs education in Malawi. This has now become a special needs education policy.

CSEC’s advocacy focus is in a number of important areas of Malawi’s education system, and its evidence-based approach strengthens its ability to effectively ‘engage’ with government in indicating the importance of issues, and potential responses to these issues.

4.2.3 Credibility And Visibility

As can be seen from the above discussions, CSEC’s credibility and visibility is good, but there was an expressed view, from government and from international organizations, that more work is required in this area.

Visibility and credibility were specifically commented on by government, with particular reference to CSEC’s positive contributions to joint sector reviews, technical working groups and in-sector working groups, where CSEC is invited particularly because it is an umbrella organization. It was also expressed that more work is required from CSEC to improve its coordination abilities and to strengthen government’s understanding of its functions – a process in which CSEC is engaged with the parliamentary lobby, and is bringing the parliamentary education committee together for discussions on the education budget.

It was noted during interviews that there is a history of too much combativeness from CSEC, too much militancy, and that a focus with the Ministry on dialogue, rather than going first to the media, would be more effective. It was acknowledged that this dialogue is improving.

The perspective of international organizations was also somewhat mixed. On the one hand, CSEC is recognized as an important champion of education advocacy in Malawi, as an effective coalition, and for its formation of district networks. It has clear credibility with international donors, and is implementing a number of large, complex projects on behalf of donors, including the World Bank, Trócaire, OSISA and CORDAID. On the other hand, some respondents, particularly among the ‘development partners’, thought that the coalition is not visible enough in international forums. While CSEC has been formally invited to participate in the Local Education Group, its participation is not seen as consistent, nor strong enough, to impact visibility or credibility.

“I am interested to hear what CSEC will say about something. They have credibility with government, they have credibility with organizations like mine.”

–Fieldwork Respondent

Within civil society itself, the coalition is recognized as strong, independent and influential with government. It is seen by its membership as presenting a collective voice, and a voice which by its representativeness added strength to the conversation with government. This is the other side of CSEC’s apparent ‘combativeness’ – that civil society must at times be represented strongly with government if it is to maintain its role as an advocate and watchdog. ‘Dialogue’ and ‘partnership’ did not mean all conversations had to be gentle. It is recognized that work in the districts, with DEN development, is far from complete, in terms of numbers/ locations of DENs and in terms of the actual advocacy capacity found in DENs, and that CSEC’s effectiveness nationally is dependent on the quality of the product of the DENs.

4.3 Efficiency

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines efficiency as, ‘Measuring the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs’⁹. Efficiency was analysed in terms of how well the programme is organized for delivering its work with regard to managerial and budget efficiency. The evaluation team analysed efficiency based on the assessment of outputs/ activities in relation to programme inputs, costs and planned timelines.

4.3.1 Coalition Development Systems

CSEC is supported in its development, and its planning, implementation and reporting processes by ANCEFA. The role played by ANCEFA is strongly supported by CSEC, particularly their understanding of what is happening on the ground, and the provision by ANCEFA of peer learning, shared learning and collaboration processes.

Specific feedback indicates that there is ‘too much focus at the top’. CSEC leadership is strong, and capable, and beginning to focus on developing the leadership of the coalition further down into the organization. This is extremely important, as there was also some concern expressed about the depth of management capacity visible in the organization and its ability to respond effectively to a full range of priorities and programmes. There is also a perceived issue with staff turnover and organizational stability/sustainability, should organizational memory and the capacity of key staff not be a focus of the coalition’s development systems. Finally, there was an expressed view that human resource practices and systems have not kept up with the growth of the organization and need to be re-thought given the current size and complexity of the organization and its activities.

4.3.2 Financial Management Systems

On the financial side, funding from GPE was provided through Oxfam West Africa (the regional Financial Management Agency (FMA) for the CSEF programme). Oxfam West Africa also provided support with, and oversight to financial reporting,

“Regional structures provide a very good financial support and administrative support, but sometimes they complicate things, which leads to a delay in receipt of funds.”

–Fieldwork Respondent

although the ANCEFA project officer also provides input and comments on budgets. The ANCEFA project officer also has a role in financial management and in ensuring that monies are being spent correctly. The view of CSEC is that the CSEF programme’s assistance in these areas is building organizational capacity by improving the working systems, and specifically in

⁹ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

developing a capacity for internal audit. Further, the improvements in financial management contribute to the quality of programmatic outcomes.

The CSEC view of the oversight provided by Oxfam West Africa and ANCEFA is that substantial technical support is provided but there are concerns about the cost of this support and how this draws from resourcing at the local level. Further, while the quality on inputs is appreciated, there were perceived inefficiencies in the structure of coordination between ANCEFA and Oxfam West Africa that impacts CSEC's processes, including delays in funding disbursements. One example of this is a process whereby CSEC receives ANCEFA's comments on its reports, addresses the comments and then has these reports sent to Oxfam for further comments. This raised the question as to why one aggregated set of comments is not provided to the coalition.

Finally, the CSEC experience is that not a single disbursement of CSEF funds has ever been provided on time. Regardless of the delays in disbursements, the coalition is expected to complete activities on time. Late disbursement negatively impacts the quality of activities and outputs. It is of some concern that this lack of timeliness is noted beyond CSEC itself, with international partners commenting on the time-bound nature of the activities of the coalition and the significance of funding delays.

4.3.3 Performance Management Systems

The contributions of ANCEFA were noted by CSEC in discussions of performance management. Indeed, the coalition would like more face-to-face inputs from their programme officer as the quality of assistance in project management and programme assistance, while good from long distance, is much more beneficial face-to-face.

The coalition recognizes an increasing emphasis within the CSEF programme on monitoring and evaluation, and on the systems that support improvements in these areas. Moreover, CSEC itself recognizes its own improvements in the use of a results framework. CSEC's view is that there has been significant change in their understanding of logical frameworks, and in the use of logical frameworks in project management processes on a weekly and monthly basis. As a result, they have developed a greater focus in this area. Another noted change in the greater emphasis on monitoring is its positive impact on report preparation and content. The use of a results framework assists the coalition in understanding 'what has changed' and in then reporting on this change, and the structure of the reporting also demonstrates weaknesses in activities and priorities.

Given the significant inputs of time required for the monitoring system, particularly in preparation of bi-annual reports, discussion with the coalition raised the potential for use of the current monitoring system beyond just CSEF-funded activities. However, its current focus on the objectives and related activities of the CSEF programme, meant it was neither designed nor appropriate for use with other donor activities, which is particularly significant for an organization such as CSEC, for whom CSEF funding is a relatively small contributor.

4.4 Sustainability

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines sustainability as being, 'concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn'¹⁰. The evaluation team reviewed sustainability factors in terms of programme design, process, implementation and national context.

The general sense of coalition sustainability is positive. A number of visible factors contribute to this:

- On-going focus on education from international organizations and donors
- Positive aspects in the partnership with government, emphasizing the evidence-based advocacy approach
- The member-driven nature of the coalition
- On-going development of the DENs
- Current strong leadership with a clear strategic focus
- Understanding of the leadership of the priority for strengthening CSEC leadership depth
- Developing systems (organizational and financial)
- Current strength of the financial base of CSEC

Financial aspects are important, as in the context of civil society in Africa, dependence on international donors/agencies is the standard state of affairs. CSEC has a strong membership structure and a base of paid member organizations, but these membership fees cannot provide any real financial security for the organization. As with all similar organizations, CSEC's need is to pursue donor funding/project funding while focusing on applications that fall within CSEC's own strategic priorities. There are positive indications in this area, and all projects (and studies) being implemented by the coalition fit well within a framework of advocacy and monitoring within the education sector.

4.5 Impact

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines impact as, 'the positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended'¹¹. The evaluation team examined to what extent the programme increased local capacities in a way which contributes to their better access and participation as measured by increased skills, abilities and knowledge. When assessing the programme's impact, the evaluation team considered the longer-term benefits intended in the CSEF design, some of which may not have been fully realized yet.

Impact indicators are positive, although they are dependent to a large extent on coalition sustainability, and other issues discussed above. Participation in/membership of the Local

¹⁰ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

¹¹ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

Education Group is one impact indicator, as it places the coalition 'at the table' with all important players in the education sector, subject to CSEC's ability to effectively take up its place in the discussions. Maintaining and developing this role is considered key to future impact.

The developing partnership relationship with government is indicative of the potential for impact over time, particularly if the coalition can continue to maintain its civil society perspective while engaging in effective dialogue. The international community continues to play an important role in the education sector in Malawi. This group is insistent on civil society participation in policy development and implementation, and CSEC's further involvement in this role will strengthen its potential for impact in the sector.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The findings of this case study, detailed above, provide a strong basis for the drawing of certain conclusions about future directions for CSEC, and the issues the coalition will face in addressing the priorities of the education sector. As can be seen in the above discussion, key issues are:

- Strengthening of the coalition's formal roles with government and international agencies
- Building the national network of the coalition
- Strengthening internal leadership and management structures

5.1 Strengthening Of Formal Roles

The role of CSEC with government and international organizations/agencies has significant potential for growth and development. As is indicated in the findings section, there are few negatives in this area other than a need to further develop roles and relationships, to improve and then implement strategies for engagement as a formal player in the Local Education Group and related groups. As well as these roles, further participation in monitoring and related activities will also strengthen the coalition's role, profile and effectiveness.

Three areas are key to future developments:

- Active participation in the Local Education Group. CSEC participation should focus on how its evidence-base and research processes can contribute to advocating necessary directions in and for the education sector.
- Greater focus on developing CSEC's relationship with all international actors in the education sector, through bilateral as well as multilateral forums.
- Further engagement with the Parliamentary Education Committee in the analysis of the education budget and in developing questions and approaches the Committee can take to strengthen its impact on budget processes.

5.2 Building The National Network Of The Coalition

The DENs provide both an effective mechanism for advocacy and monitoring and a local face for CSEC. As a result, the DENs are a critical focus for development for the coalition, both in numbers and in the quality of skills, experience and activities they each demonstrate. Future developments of DENs can be directed in a number of critical areas:

- Networking – building the relationship between DENs, as a way of building solidarity and improving the skill level and effectiveness of approach of each DEN. There is significant learning potential in developing the relationship between DENs.
- Capacity – a focus on the knowledge, skills and aptitudes of local DEN staff is a critical priority in the short and medium term. The ability of a DEN to have impact on the local education sector depends on this capacity development. However, the future growth and development of CSEC more generally will benefit from having quality, skilled operatives who are coming from a wide range of backgrounds and are able to contribute to national thinking based on local experience.
- Strategy and action planning – the impact of a particular DEN, as well as the overall strategic direction of the coalition will benefit from the participation of DENs in the national education sector analysis and subsequent strategic analysis that determines CSEC’s strategic directions. Further, annual action planning within the network of DENs has the potential for synergies that can improve both activities and outputs/outcomes.

5.3 Strengthening Internal Leadership And Management Structures

Field inquiry indicated both a level of concern about the relative lack of depth of CSEC leadership and management skills and experience and the awareness within the coalition of this weakness. Future developments to address these concerns can be to:

- Give thought to development of a slightly more hierarchical organizational structure that gives management control of key organizational functions to two or three key staff. The intent of such an approach would be to develop the skills and leadership of these staff, to create less dependence at the top of the CSEC structure and generate dynamic systems of planning/strategizing.
- Give detailed thought to and development of internal systems and processes including human resource practices and employment conditions. Engagement policies, terms of reference for positions, diversity policies and remuneration structures should all be considered for development.

6 LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Following is a list of those people interviewed for the evaluation during the field visit to Malawi in the second week of June, 2015.

CSEC

1. Benedicto Kondowe, Director, CSEC Malawi
2. Kisa Kumwenda, Research and Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

3. Alice Kayanula, Finance and Administration Officer
4. Julie Juma, Chair of CESC Board; Education and Youth Manager, ActionAid

CSEC Member Organizations

5. Joseph Patel, Independent Schools Association of Malawi (ISAMA), President
6. Mtende Msindama, Link For Education Governance (LEG), Executive Director
7. Chifundo Fukiza, Forum for African Women Educationalists in Malawi (FAWEMA) – Project Officer

Development Partners

8. Kersten Henke, German Embassy
9. Judith Ohirwa, EU Delegation
10. Milena Rottoe, GIZ
11. Lamulo Nsanya, KFW
12. Heike Franz Lange, GIZ
13. Hildegunn Tobiassen, Norwegian Embassy
14. Emma Grimley, DfID
15. Ramsey Sosola, USAID
16. Lena Veierskov, Education and Capacity Building Social Sectors and Infrastructure Section, EU
17. Estela Vidal, Programme Manager, Trocaire
18. George Maduka, Programme Officer (monitoring of partners in education), IM (SOIR)
19. Grace Banda, Technical Advisor, Basic Education, GIZ

Ministries

20. Francis R.W. Chalamanda, National Coordinator for Early Childhood Development, Ministry of Gender, Children and Community Development
21. Grace Milner, Planning Directorate, Policy and Programmes, Ministry of Education
22. Mughandira Wathando, Planning Directorate, Policy and Programmes, Ministry of Education
23. Dr Rodrick Nthengwe, Deputy Director of Basic Education, Ministry of Education





Institute for
Development Impact

Case Study Report – NGO Alliance Moldova

Undertaken as Part of an Independent
Evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)
Programme 2013-2015 for the Global Campaign For
Education

October 2015

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APSCF	Alianța ONG-urilor active în domeniul Protecției Sociale a Copilului și Familiei
BMZ	German Ministry for International Cooperation
CRAP	Republican Psycho-pedagogical Services
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSEF	Civil Society Education Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
DI	Deinstitutionalization
EFA	Education For All
GCE	Global Campaign For Education
HDI	Human Development Index
MoE	Ministry of Education
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

1 STATUS OF EDUCATION IN MOLDOVA

After being a part of the Soviet Union for a half century, Moldova's transition to a market economy has been slow and challenged. Slow economic and social reforms, the collapse of the industrial sector, and the territorial dismantling of the country have prolonged this transition. Political instability and slow economic development have contributed to high poverty rates that qualify Moldova as the poorest country in Europe. Moldova's Human Development Index value for 2012 is 0.660, positioning the country at 113 out of 187 countries. Moldova faces significant disparities between the capital city and the rest of the country, between urban and rural areas and, more recently, between development regions. Official data shows growing expenditure of education, reaching 8.7% of GDP in 2008 compared to 5.7% in 2000.

According to data from the Ministry of Education (MoE), about 367,200 students were enrolled in primary and secondary education in the academic year 2012 -2013, or 3.7% less than in the previous year. According to the MoE, 97.5% of school age children attend school, however, very few Roma children are enrolled or complete compulsory education. Every fifth Roma cannot write and read, and only 4% enrol in higher education or university compared with the non-Roma population enrolment of 38%. Discrimination in schools is considered by some Roma leaders as the main reason for school non-attendance. According to UNICEF, there are 180,000 persons with disabilities in Moldova out of a total population of 3.5 million; 13,200 of these were disabled children.

In 2007 the Moldovan Government launched the Deinstitutionalization (DI) National Strategy for Moldova's child protection system. During 2007-2012, 1,181 children were deinstitutionalized and 18 residential institutions were closed. The Moldovan government adopted the Programme of Inclusive Education Development (2011-2020), and increased the number of child-friendly schools as a priority for the education system in Moldova. According to the national programme, all children have the right to attend the closest school to their home and be provided with special educational services.

Education for All (EFA) is still in its embryonic phase. There are not many schools prepared to assist children from different backgrounds with challenging educational needs. There are also many obstacles which prevent children from having access to a quality educational experience. Some of those obstacles include lack of expertise and experience working with children with special educational needs, lack of accessibility of schools for children with special needs, lack of awareness of the mainstream population on inclusive education, and parents' fears of stigmatization and school failure for their children.

2 OVERVIEW OF THE NGO ALLIANCE IN MOLDOVA (APSCF)

The NGO Alliance "*Alianța ONG-urilor active în domeniul Protecției Sociale a Copilului și Familiei*" (hereinafter the NGO Alliance) started its work in 2002 as a loose network and a legally registered Secretariat as "*CDRDCPF – Centre for the Development of Resources for the NGOs active in the field of Child and Family Protection*". The Alliance gathered NGOs working on child protection, particularly in the field of deinstitutionalization of children. The scope of

the engagement of the Alliance has been wide and covers all areas of child protection and inclusive education. A particular focus has been on developing models of advocacy for deinstitutionalization of children with disabilities and their social integration into society.

After years of advocacy work as an unregistered Alliance, it was officially registered in September, 2014 at the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova as *“Alianța ONG-urilor active în domeniul Protecției Sociale a Copilului și Familiei*. Since then a large number of member organizations have joined the network, peaking at 120 organizations. Upon registration, there were 89 organizations registered as official members. As the Alliance covers a wide scope of thematic areas, the members decided to organize their work per thematic interest. At the moment the Alliance has four working groups: Deinstitutionalization, Adoptions, Disability, and Inclusive Education.

The Alliance seeks to work with government, civil society, and other partners in improving child protection policy formulation and implementation, with a focus on inclusive education.

2.1 The NGO Alliance Vision

A better world for every child and family.

2.2 The NGO Alliance Mission

Strengthening the NGO’s members’ capacities in developing and promoting good practices and social policies focused on child and family.

The guiding values and principles of the NGO Alliance are:

- the best interest of the child
- the partnership between the State, private sector and media
- voluntary adherence
- autonomy of the NGO members
- active participation of NGO members
- transparency, accountability and flexibility

The coalition objectives are:

- to facilitate the dialogue between members
- to strengthen the capacity of the NGO in the field of child and family protection
- to ensure the mutual information about activities and members
- to identify the areas of cooperation and strengthen the NGO efforts in these areas
- to develop joint programmes of cooperation of NGO in the field
- to advocate for the participation in decision making process at central and local levels targeting improvement of the legislation and administrative mechanisms that ensures practical implementation of the legislation
- to create partnerships with local governments in creation of local community services for children

- to permanently monitor the implementation of CRC and to contribute to the implementation of CRC
- to coordinate the process of shadow reporting on CRC implementation

2.3 Alliance's Activities

The National Alliance is involved in a range of advocacy activities. Members actively participate in a range of working groups and processes, including the National Council for the Child Rights Protection, a working group organized by the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family for the consultation of different strategic documents, laws, regulations.

The Alliance also focuses on strengthening NGO Alliance capacities. It currently implements projects with the following donor support: project funded by OAK Foundation through UNICEF, Moldova; the project of Testing a Child Protection Index in Republic of Moldova financed by Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs through World Vision Romania, and the project United Voice for Children funded by the German Ministry for International Cooperation (BMZ).

3 FINDINGS

The analysis and findings of the case study have been structured against the standard evaluation criteria adopted by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). These criteria were used to detail the evaluation questions during inception and also to structure the evaluation report. The criteria are defined as follows:

- Relevance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Sustainability
- Impact

3.1 Relevance

Relevance is defined as, '[t]he extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor'¹. The evaluation team's assessment of programme relevance is based on the analysis of the national and local context, the challenges for strengthening policy making and civil society participation in the educational sector and the needs and priorities of various stakeholders (e.g. CSOs, capacity building, etc.).

¹ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

The NGO Alliance is established as a grass roots coalition of NGOs working in the area of social protection, particularly child protection, and deinstitutionalization. The Alliance is needs-driven and includes both local and national NGOs. The Alliance was founded based on the recognition of NGOs that joint action and civil society advocacy was needed in the area of social protection, and also due to the need to harmonise different activities and services offered at the local level in the process of deinstitutionalization and integration of children in society.

The Alliance responded to the need to integrate different models of service provision for child protection and inclusive education. This was particularly important as the NGOs developed different models and approaches to the work and there were some overlaps of activities that affected the understanding and absorption of activities in local communities, particularly in schools.

Founding the Alliance was a positive step as it brought harmonisation of the models and also opened the space for internal discussions, participatory planning and implementation of services in line with standards of social protection and inclusive education.

The Alliance, ensures a joint voice and advocacy towards the government, and has become an important interlocutor and partner of the government. Close collaboration between government institutions and the NGO Alliance, and important programmes of action have been adopted, such as the Inclusive Education Programme from 2011-2020. The models and approaches of the NGOs are thus recognized and integrated in the programme, enabling a more structured role of the NGOs in the process of reforms of inclusive education.

Harmonisation of the work of NGOs through the Alliance is also critical to fill in the gap in the government's response to inclusive education, and also towards institutionalization of the services to be supported by the government. Based on models for inclusion of children with disabilities in schools that were developed by NGOs (primarily services to facilitate inclusion in schools of children with disabilities), the government established Republican Psycho-pedagogical Services (CRAP) which were implemented at the time of the evaluation in all 35 districts in Moldova. The CRAP is a methodological support and supervision body, while its regional structures called PPAS (psycho-pedagogical assistance services) also provide assessment and services.

3.1.1 Strategy Of Engagement With Government

As the poorest country in Europe, the entire population of Moldova faces numerous challenges, which were exacerbated for the most disadvantaged groups such as children with disabilities. Until recently, children with disabilities were predominantly institutionalized even in cases of lighter forms of mental or physical disability. The reform of the sector, through deinstitutionalization, brought many positive prospects for children, but created challenges of how to integrate children in schools and ensure education for all.

The role of civil society has been critical in ensuring the transition and success of the reforms. Due to inability of the government to provide a quick response to deinstitutionalization needs, NGOs took on the tasks of service providers for children, parents, schools and communities.

NGOs, particularly through the Alliance, are a strong and recognized partner of the Ministry of Education. The Ministry cooperated with individual NGOs, but since the Alliance was officially registered communication has improved. The ministry, as well as other government institutions interviewed, see the Alliance as ‘one voice’ of NGOs, and include the Alliance in their working groups and Consultative Council for Inclusive Education (the government body composed of Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Social Protection, among others.)

The Alliance also has strong working relationships with international development partners. UNICEF and SOIR (a Swedish NGO working in the area of social protection) views them as important partners whose work is very relevant.

3.1.2 Mechanisms For Ensuring Stakeholder Involvement In Planning And Implementation

The NGO Alliance has become a strong mechanism for NGOs to work together on issues of social protection and inclusive education. All members agree that the Alliance is a transparent mechanism, enabling democratic and participatory decision making and one that nurtures common values.

Members decided to split into working groups for different sub-sectors. This is successful in ensuring a more focused group, less fragmentation, and time-saving for individual members. The working groups also enable more efficient work of members in project development, advocacy initiatives and participation in governmentally led processes and events. The general mailing list for the Alliance is used as an information sharing tool for achievements and general news.

The Alliance pays special attention to ensure that NGOs outside the capital are actively engaged in working groups. Interviews and focus group discussions demonstrated a high level of satisfaction with the level of engagement of such NGOs.

3.1.3 Coalition Synergies And Member Priorities

The Alliance’s current approach is the result of an on-going quest to promote participatory membership and ensure that members do not struggle with competing priorities and limited funds. For the Alliance, the strategy to mitigate such competing priorities is to create a clear division of lines between the work of individual members. The Alliance ensures that the representation of the Alliance in consultative bodies with the government is transparent and democratic. Individual members are independent members of other alliances as well. This approach empowers the Alliance’s work. It is important to note that the Alliance also creates a space for non-members to participate in working groups. The Inclusive Education Working Group is an example where non-members participate and contribute to the work of the Alliance.

3.1.4 Gender Equality

The Alliance focuses on social protection and inclusive education, which recognizes the discrimination and deprivation of girls with disability in all spheres of life, particularly education. The work of the Alliance recognises that gender equality and protection of women

and girls is important. Discrimination in schools is encountered in multiple forms, on the basis of disability and gender.

3.2 Effectiveness

The OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance defines effectiveness as, ‘a measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives’.² Based on the CSEF programme Theory of Change (logical framework/results framework) the evaluation team analysed to what extent the results obtained from the implementation of activities have contributed to the attainment of the planned objectives.

The NGO Alliance has been active since 2002 in the field of social protection. The NGO Alliance operates with funding from various sources, of which CSEF is one. This section presents the findings of the effectiveness of the activities funded by CSEF within the overall work of the Alliance in Moldova.

3.2.1 CSEF

Funding provided through CSEF in Moldova is designed as a one-year intervention addressing the issues of governance, skills of civil society to participate in educational policy dialogue, and the lack of evidence-based models for inclusive education in the country as input for policy making in the sector. The project has the following objectives:

Objective 1: Formal civil society participation in education sector policy and review processes and engagement with policy-makers and parliamentarians is strengthened and better recognized.

Objective 2: To build awareness, knowledge and skills, and opening opportunities for Civil Society Organizations (CSO) to participate in educational policy discussion.

Objective 3: Conduct research and analysis of trends, practices and gaps in the National Programme for Inclusive Education (2011-2020) by reviewing it after 3 years implementation.

Objective 4: Create and identify opportunities for sharing learning, promoting partnership and South-South collaboration, thus influencing the educational policies on the national, regional and global level.

These four objectives fit with the overall GCE and CSEF objectives and contribute to the wider promotion of EFA.

² OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance-
<http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.html>

3.2.2 NGO Alliance Activities And Outcomes

The project provides an opportunity for NGO Alliance members, and non-members to work together on inclusive education by assessing progress and achievements on EFA. The project also raises awareness of educational staff and the public of the needs and values of EFA through an advocacy campaign.

Trainings and participatory mechanisms within the network are the core of activities. Trainings are implemented in four different areas of interest: policy-making, advocacy, communication and inclusive education. This critical investment strengthens capacities and motivation of members to take an active part in the Alliance.

Research is another important strategy of the project. The National Programme for Inclusive Education (2010-2020) recognizes and supports different models of inclusive education services provided by NGOs in Moldova. These models have been implemented since the beginning of the deinstitutionalization reforms in the country, and achieved many results. However there have been no comprehensive assessments of results, impacts and lessons learned. Through the CSEF project, the Alliance conducted a thorough assessment of the implementation of these services and their achievements, as well as an assessment of gaps in service provision. The findings of the research were important evidence-base for the EFA measures and strong policy input for the government. The research also facilitated the consultation process among the CSOs to come up with one model for inclusive education services. This would ensure that NGOs standardized their work with inclusive education priorities. The research recommendations were further elaborated through another inclusive consultative process, whereby all relevant government institutions, NGOs and international partners gathered and discussed each recommendation. Action points were created as follow up to the recommendations. These action points are expected to become an integral part of implementation of the National Programme in the next phase of implementation.

The strategies and activities undertaken by the NGO Alliance have reached a number of immediate outcomes:

- The government and international partners recognise the NGO Alliance as a strong and unified NGO voice with credibility and knowledge in the area of child protection and EFA.
- The NGO Alliance members feel ownership over the Alliance and see benefit in being part of it. The Alliance is seen as a mechanism for equal participation and extending their views, expertise, knowledge and experiences to the government.
- The Government feels stronger ownership over the products and results of the joint work with the Alliance as its institutions were consulted, involved and benefited from the joint interventions.
- The research brought a new evidence-base to the inclusive education policy field as it took stock of achievements and challenges thus far.

3.3 Efficiency

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines efficiency as, ‘Measuring the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs.’³ Efficiency was analysed in terms of how well the programme is organized for delivering its work with regard to managerial and budget efficiency. The evaluation team analysed efficiency based on the assessment of outputs/ activities in relation to programme inputs, costs and planned timelines.

3.3.1 Financial Management Systems

On the financial side, support to the Alliance is provided by a range of donors such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France, UNICEF, OAK Foundation, and the CSEF programme. The Alliance uses a specialized financial software to comply with donors’ reporting and auditing requirements. The Alliance ensures transparency of its work by publishing the financial report at the Annual General Assembly and discussing the planning and expenditure issues with its members. All financial reports undergo a Censors Commission review and approval. As a rule, the funded projects are submitted to auditing procedures. The project funded through CSEF does not have any deviations from the initial funds. The project is still open and the remaining funds are planned to be spent on an audit of the project and for publishing the report.

3.3.2 Performance Management Systems

The Alliance has developed Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems for each project per donor requirements. There is no overall M&E framework for the Alliance that enables monitoring of the achievement of strategic goals of the Alliance.

3.3.3 Communication, Networking, Mobilizations, Learning - Collaboration

The Alliance has been effective in maintaining the interest and motivation of its partners since its establishment. An indicator of this is the agreement among all interviewed members during field inquiry, that they see the value in membership and plan to continue being affiliated with the Alliance. The Alliance has clear and transparent governance mechanisms and has developed various communication channels, mailing groups, meetings, joint sessions and other activities. The field inquiry showed that members have the capacity to share views effectively.

The coalition facilitates a learning environment. All projects in support of the Alliance include capacity-building components, and the interviews showed that the secretariat and members are eager and ready to use forums or workshops to share new knowledge and to further disseminate what they have learned with other members when they returned.

³ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

Members commented that the Alliance ensures support is being given to NGO members both by the Alliance or individual NGOs who have experience or knowledge in the area of concern. In general, all members agree that their engagement is positive, supportive and complementary to their individual activities.

3.4 Sustainability

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines sustainability as being ‘concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn.’⁴ The evaluation team reviewed sustainability factors in terms of programme design, process, implementation and national context.

All interviewed people agree that sustainability prospects of the Alliance are high. The main reason for this is because the Alliance was created based on the need and joint vision of member NGOs and not driven by donors or external pressure. Dividing the work into thematic working groups creates a lean structure where all interested members can develop, elaborate and grow without unnecessary waste of resources in participating in events that are not of interest. The field inquiry showed that both national and local NGOs considered membership in the Alliance inclusive, equal and democratic.

Another important factor raised was its standing with the government institutions as a recognized partner and platform offering a unified voice of NGOs towards benefits to the target groups of the Coalitions (primarily children with disability).

A factor that contributed to positive sustainability is the fact that the Alliance managed to register as a legal entity. This supports the prospects for fundraising and project implementation.

3.5 Impact

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines impact as, ‘[t]he positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.’⁵ The evaluation team examined to what extent the programme has increased local capacities in a way, which contributes, to their better access and participation as measured by increased skills, abilities and knowledge. When assessing the programme’s impact, the evaluation team considered the longer-term benefits intended in the CSEF design, some of which may not have been fully realized yet.

The Alliance has contributed to important reforms in the field of social protection and inclusion. The work of its members in the field of deinstitutionalization, resulted in a number of inputs in elaboration of the Action Plan for the implementation of the new Strategy for the Child Rights Protection 2014-2020. Due to the deinstitutionalization process that is underway

⁴ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

⁵ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

a large percentage of children have been moved from residential based care to home based care and integrated into the education system. The Alliance also provided important contributions to the first Law on Adoptions (99/2010) promoted by the Alliance's Working Group on Adoptions.

After years of acting as an informal network of NGOs, the Alliance has managed to become a registered entity, thus ensuring more strategic and structured work on a number of issues of importance for the social protection and inclusion of children.

3.5.1 Learning And Best Practice

The NGO Alliance was formed based on joint interest and motivation of members to join forces towards achievement of their advocacy and policy making goals primarily in the field of social protection, which through the years strengthened its focus on inclusion. The Alliance is a learning coalition and there is a lot of internal reflection and discussions on various topics of interest for the members on how to improve their participation and inputs to the government. This has been further strengthened with the establishment of working groups. The project funded through CSEF offers important lessons for the Alliance too. The most important lesson for the Alliance gathered from project is that the work on inclusive education, particularly from the perspective taken by the Alliance, needs more time and more work on communication (internal within the Coalition, and external with government and other actors). Due to its limited duration, CSEF's objectives are ambitious and do not provide realistic expectations for sustainable implementation. The Alliance's Secretariat expected deeper two-way communication, but members have their agenda, and there are conflicting priorities that take their toll when there is a rush to meet deadlines set by the project.

At the same time the project allows the space for members to work together on a research/assessment of policies and models for inclusion. This was the first time that the National Programme was evaluated and the first time when CSOs evaluated a policy. This brought important lessons for NGOs and the government, but also allowed the space for mutual learning and evidence-based selection of models to bring about improvements in the sector.

4 CONCLUSIONS

On a general note, it may be concluded that the NGO Alliance is a strong coalition of NGOs working in the area of social protection and inclusion of children. The measure to join forces for a stronger voice to improve the lives of children brings value to the decision making processes and improved outreach of service delivery throughout the country.

4.1 Service And Advocacy

The NGO Alliance as an institution is working primarily on advocacy while its members work on service provision, each contributing to the overall goal of a better world for every child and family. The NGO Alliance's purpose is to transform lessons learned and experiences from the work of its members into advocacy and policy inputs for the government and other relevant institutions. The Alliance has a wide membership and it manages to support motivation of its

members to actively participate through the establishment of thematic working groups. This proves to be an effective and functional mechanism for members to provide quality inputs in the thematic area of their interest.

The Alliance has been building its credibility and profile for a number of years and it is recognized as a partner of government. This momentum should be capitalised on in the next phase of the Alliance's development.

4.2 Resources And Sustainability

The Alliance has managed to attract funds from a number of donors. CSEF is one of the avenues for continued funding. The step towards institutionalizing the Alliance as a separate legal entity has brought more space for direct support for its policy and advocacy work. On-going support to the Alliance is important for capitalising on the development within the sector thus far and offering input to government's efforts towards inclusive education.

4.3 The Project Funded By CSEF

The project is a relevant vehicle for advocacy and promotion of inclusive education in Moldova. It responds to the Government's needs for undertaking measures to comply with the provisions of the National Programme and responding to the needs of children with disabilities in the country. Its strength is that it provides evidence-based recommendations for improvement of the measures and models for social inclusion of children with disability both horizontally (within and among local governments and service providers), and vertically (between the local, regional and state government institutions). The project design and its objectives are aligned and respond to the needs and priorities of beneficiaries, particularly children from vulnerable groups.

The project has had a very limited time frame (one year) but has succeeded at least partly in achieving all of its planned objectives, and there is evidence of contributions towards the envisaged outcomes. The project ensures formal civil society participation in the education sector policy and review processes and engagement with policy-makers and parliamentarians is strengthened and better recognized. The participation of civil society has been strengthened by evidence-based recommendations for improvements of the National Programme provisions and models to be used resulting from the research and analysis of trends, practices and gaps in the National Programme for Inclusive Education (2011-2020) by reviewing it after 3 years of implementation. The Alliance has succeeded to build awareness, knowledge and skills, and open opportunities for NGOs to participate in educational policy discussion. Finally, the project provides the opportunity to Alliance members to create and identify opportunities for sharing learning.

The Alliance has struggled with utilising all funds due to the obstacles presented by rushed implementation of the project. The funds have generally been spent within the plan, however there is still a portion of funding that is to be spent on an audit and publishing the final reports.

The Alliance has been contributing to the improvement of inclusive education, primarily by laying down the foundations for systemic change through joint work of its members on

service provision and a unified voice in the policy arena. Published research helps efforts to establish baseline data on existing services, knowledge and practice in addressing inclusion of children with disability in education. In doing so the project has contributed to clarifying the nature and scope of quality services and measures for inclusive education, thereby laying the foundations for future informed efforts by national and/or international actors. The established systems, mechanisms and services implemented by Alliance members already show positive effects on children directly included and benefiting from innovative approaches and collaborative efforts of partners.

Overall, the project has achieved important outcomes in all areas of its intervention: legislation, coordination, new services, skills and knowledge. The current legal and policy framework is solid and lays the foundation for further development and expansion of services and measures for support to children. However, financial constraints at all levels of governance and scarce resources of service providers at local level demand further dependence on external funds.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Continued support for the realization of inclusive education in Moldova should be further explored

Despite the progress noted in this evaluation, there is still much work to be done towards the long term goal of eliminating discrimination in the education sector in Moldova. The work of the NGO Alliance to date has laid a valuable foundation that should be further developed. Without continued external support many of the achievements made to date are not likely to last or contribute to significant changes.

Recommendation 2: A minimum of two years for project duration should be allowed to enable effective achievement of results

The project funded was a very short term one (one year only) and this did not allow the Alliance to organize the full dynamic of the project, making it a very rushed set of activities. There should be longer project duration in order to ensure that impacts are achieved and not just outputs.

Recommendation 3: The Alliance should develop an overall M&E framework to enable monitoring of progress towards the achievement of results

The Alliance develops M&E systems for projects it implements. However, they do not have an overall strategic M&E framework that reflects the long-term strategic goals and objectives of the Alliance. An M&E framework established within an overall Theory of Change or Logical Framework developed by the Alliance on its body of work would enable tracking and understanding of the overall progress that the Alliance has made towards achievement of strategic goals.

6 LIST OF INTERVIEWEES AND FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

NGO Alliance

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2. Stela Veluian, NGO Alliance President, NGO Alliance
3. Daniela David, CSEF Project Communications Officer, NGO Alliance

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4. Zincov Ana, Director, ASCHF, Peresecina village
5. Victoria Secu, Director, FCPS, Criuleni village
6. Lilia Nahaba, Project Coordinator, CE Pro – Didactica
7. Teodora Rebeja, Project Coordinator, Terre des hommes
8. Ana Levinte, Director, AO Verbina
9. Cornelia Cincilei, Director, Step by step Educational Programme, Moldova
10. Ludmila Malcoci, Executive Director, KEYSTONE, Human Services International / Moldova
11. Mariana Ianachevici, CEO and President of Regional Coalition Child Pact, Association for Child and Family Empowerment Regional Coalition Child Pact

Officials

12. Valentina Chicu, Head of the Department for Pre-University Education, Ministry of Education of the Republic of Moldova
13. Svetlana Kirilov, Deputy Director of CRAP, Republican Psycho-pedagogical Services (CRAP)

Development Partners

14. Ann Larrow, Volunteer, Peace Corps
15. Larisa Moscalenco, Advocacy Coordinator, FCPS
16. Silvia Apostol, Country Director, SOIR
17. Iuliana Samburschi, Officer, SOIR
18. Mihail Paiu , Teacher of physics and technical sciences, State University
19. Liudmila Lefter, Education Programme Coordinator, UNICEF

7 NGO ALLIANCE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS⁶

1. AO «Parteneriate pentru fiecare Copil»
2. AO «Ave Copiii»
3. AO « Centrul Național de Prevenire a Abuzului față de Copii» CNPAC
4. AO «CCF Moldova – Copil, Comunitate, Familie»
5. AO « Centrul de Informare și Documentare privind Drepturile Copilului din Moldova» - CIDDC
6. AO «Academia Duminicală pentru Copii și Părinți „2 ore + 3 iezi»

⁶ The list of NGOs was provided by the NGO Alliance in the local language. An English translation was not available at the time of the evaluation.

7. AO «Amici Dei Bambini», Moldova
8. Branch of an International Organization
9. AO «Prietenii Copiilor»
10. AO «Mass media pentru copii»
11. AO «Asociația Asistenților Paternali Profesioniști»
12. AO «Asociația de Susținere a Copiilor cu Cerințe Speciale»
13. AO «Tinerii Pentru Cristos Moldova»
14. AO «Centrul Speranța»
15. AO «Centrul Internațional pentru Protecția și Promovarea Drepturilor Femeii „La Strada” »
16. AO «Verbina»
17. AO «Sănătate pentru Tineri»
18. AO «Asociația Reabilitării Copiilor cu Fenilcetonurie » (ARC-PKU)
19. AO «Deschidere»
20. AO «Generația Mea»
21. AO «Misiunea Sociala „Diaconia»
22. AO «Progres prin Alternativa»
23. A.O. «Asociația pentru protecția Copiilor de Vîrstă fragedă Aflați în Dificultate»
24. A.O. «Keystone Human Services Inter Moldova Association»
25. A.O. «INTECO»
26. A.O. «Ajutor Copiilor»
27. A.O. «Asociația de Reabilitare și Integrare a Copiilor Nevăzători „PRO-ARIS”»
28. A.O. «Representancy in Moldova of th4e Foundation „Terre des hommes” »
29. A.O. «Dragostea Învinge »
30. A.O. «Artizana»
31. A.O. «Moldovan Branch of the foundation Stichting Dorcas Aid Inter »
32. A.O. «Promotorii Noului» A.O. «Representance of „SOIR-MOLDOVA »
33. A.O. «Părinților, Pedagogilor și Copiilor „Pr.osperare” »
34. A.O. «Centrul de Servicii Sociale pentru Copil și Familie »
35. A.O. «Asociația Familiilor MonoParentale AFMP »
36. A.O. «Pentru copii și tineret cu disfuncții locomotorii „STOICII” »
37. A.O. «AZI»
38. A.O. «Nicolida-Nord»
39. A.O. «Speranța»
40. A.O. «Junimea in activitate-JUNACT»
41. A.O. «Asociația Părinților și Pedagogilor „
42. A.O. «Vis-Viitor-Integrare»
43. A.O. « Baștina»
44. A.O. «Centrul juridic de protecție a copiilor „Epitrop”»
45. A.O. «Alter - Ego»
46. A.O. «Asociația psihologilor Tighina»
47. A.O. «Viitorul Co1piilor Noștri „VICON”»
48. A.O. «Frunza Codrului»
49. A.O. «Copil-siguranță-cămin»
50. A.O. «Femeia și Copilul –Protecție și Sprijin»
51. A.O. «Centrul de plasament de Zi de tip familial „Mihaela”»
52. A.O. «Călăuza»

53. A.O. «Încredere»
54. A.O. «Demos »
55. A.O. «Oamenii pentru Oameni»
56. A.O. «Caroma Nord»
57. A.O. «Generația Mileniului III»
58. A.O. «PRO Asistență și Dezvoltare Comunitară»
59. A.O. «Părinților și Pedagogilor»
60. A.O. «Pentru tineret „Noi pentru viitor” »
61. A.O. «Consiliul Municipal al Tinerilor și Copiilor din Hîncești»
62. A.O. «Avîntul»
63. A.O. «Compassiune»
64. A.O. «Orhideia»
65. A.O. « Pedagogilor și Părinților „Speranța” »
66. A.O. «Adeona»
67. A.O. «ASCHF Peresecina»
68. A.O. «Asociația de Sprijin a Copiilor cu Dizabilități “Paradis”»
69. A.O. «Centrul pentru Copii si Tineret „Bineva”»
70. A.O. «Centrul pentru educație și reabilitare a adolescenților „Adolescentul”»
71. A.O. «Filiala Sîngerei a Scauților din R.Moldova»
72. A.O. «Asociația Dezvoltarea Durabilă Mileniul– III»
73. A.O. «Viitorul»
74. A.O. «Prichindel»
75. A.O. «Centrul de Reabilitare a copiilor cu Necesități Educaționale Speciale»
76. A.O. «Suflet de lumină»
77. A.O. «Casiopeea»
78. O.O. «Poarta Deschisă»
79. A.O. «Sprijin și Speranță»
80. A.O. «Alături de copil »
81. A.O. „PRIMA”
82. A.O. «Drepturile Copiilor»
83. A.O. «Centrul de Tineret și Adolescenți Mateuți»
84. A.O. „Picături de suflet”
85. A.O. «Asociația Femeilor „Inițiativa”»
86. O.O. „Женская Инициатива”
87. O.O. „Тираспольская Ассоциация семей детей инвалидов”
88. B. F. «Сердце»
89. O.O. «Родолубец



Institute for
Development Impact

Case Study Report – FEDH-IPN Nicaragua

Undertaken As Part Of An Independent
Evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)
Programme 2013-2015 for the Global Campaign For
Education

October 2015

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CLADE	Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education
CSEF	Civil Society Education Fund
CBO	Community Based Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
EFA	Education For All
FEDH-IPN	The Forum on Education and Human Development of the Initiative for Nicaragua
FMA	Financial Management Agency
FSLN	Sandinista National Liberation Front
GCE	Global Campaign For Education
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GON	Government of Nicaragua
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science, and Culture Organization

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the external evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund programme 2013-2015 requested by the Global Campaign for Education, the Institute for Development Impact (I4DI) conducted seven country case studies. The evaluation aimed to contribute to GCE's ability to respond to challenges and objectives by identifying the emerging impact of the CSEF programme, provide evidence of the effectiveness of its design and implementation model, and derive learning from implemented processes and structures to influence and strengthen future programming.

The Nicaragua Case Study was conducted by field visit with the Forum on Education and Human Development of the Initiative for Nicaragua (FEDH-IPN) from July 14 to July 17, 2015. The I4DI consultant conducted individual interviews and focus group discussions with coalition members, Board members, the Secretariat's core team, legislative and executive representatives of the Government of Nicaragua (GON), and local government officials. As part of this field inquiry, the consultant conducted field visits to coalition members in three small municipalities: Camoapa, La Trinidad, and Matagalpa.

The findings of the case study underline FEDH-IPN's strength as a respected and leading voice for civil society in the education sector. FEDH-IPN has developed a strategy that focuses on local actions, grassroots mobilization, and policy monitoring. The study concludes by presenting the lessons learned and challenges for the future of the coalition, centered on evidence-based advocacy, member mobilization, governance, and sustainability.

2 EDUCATION IN NICARAGUA

In the past 15-years the state of education in Nicaragua has been affected by unique challenges in Nicaragua's socio-political environment. The parliamentary, municipal and presidential elections of the FSLN since 2006 have cemented far-reaching political directions, which have been adverse to open criticism by civil society. Two pillars of President Ortega and the Sandinista government underline this political framework: the reinstatement of autonomy at the municipal level and, the adoption of direct democracy principles. This has broadly meant greater decentralization of decisions and autonomy to municipalities, coupled with a strong marginalization of civil society voices.

According to USAID's Country Strategy 2013-2017, "Nicaragua faces significant development challenges as a result of democratic backsliding, persistent poverty, and growing insecurity. The international community viewed the 2008 municipal elections, the 2011 Presidential elections, and more recently the 2012 municipal elections as flawed, which in part led to half of all bilateral donors to depart or reduce the scope or scale of their programs."¹

The social and political environment is greatly polarized, leaving civil society organisations (CSOs) in an ever-shrinking independent and neutral public space. There is also a lack of transparency in the sector; official data are difficult to obtain, and CSOs are rarely invited to

¹ USAID Nicaragua, Country Development Strategy 2013-2017, p.3

participate in policy consultations. The Civil Society Index implemented by the Nicaraguan Network for Democracy and Development in 2011, revealed that 26 percent of 141 CSOs surveyed experienced government restrictions.²

Since the Dakar World Education Forum and the commitment to Education For All, efforts have been made by the government to de-privatize education and strengthen access to education services. However, recent data on education is unavailable. Last available data³ for Nicaragua date back to 2010. Civil society organisations were not permitted access to education data, nor were they invited to participate in sector consultations at the national-level.

“In 2011, the GON unveiled a new Education Sector Strategic Plan. The plan targets universal access to basic education, with a focus on increasing 6 and 9 grade enrollment rates, improving learning outcomes, and improving education management.”⁴ In line with its local autonomy policies, the education strategy includes intercultural and bilingual education for the Pacific coast regions. The challenges in education include:

- Limited access – not enough schools.
- Low teacher pay and educational resources
- Multi-grade teaching that compromises quality
- Overcrowded classes – especially in urban areas
- Lack of statistics information – to gauge progress.

3 BACKGROUND TO FORO DE EDUCACIÓN Y DESARROLLO HUMANO DE LA INICIATIVA POR NICARAGUA (FEDH-IPN)

The Forum on Education and Human Development of the Initiative for Nicaragua (FEDH –IPN) is a civil society network joined by a vision, mission, principles and commitments for education and human development in Nicaragua.

The Forum was founded in 1996, and emanated from civil society and academia concerns over the state of education in Nicaragua. In 2007, FEDH-IPN’s most notable founder, Professor Miguel de Castilla Urbina, was appointed Minister of Education. Since 2010, he has been Special Advisor to the President for Education and Director of the UNESCO Office in Nicaragua.

In the first phase of its existence (1996-2011) the coalition grew. Membership increased and the coalition benefitted from its relationship with Professor Castilla Urbina. The opportunities to engage the government on education matters were apparent. Since the last presidential elections, there has been a stark reduction in dialogue with civil society, and an atrophy of civil society. Like most organizations, FEDH-IPN has been affected by this political environment.

² USAID Nicaragua, Country Development Strategy 2013-2017, p.8

³ World Development Indicators 2015

⁴ USAID Nicaragua, Country Development Strategy 2013-2017, p.5

3.1 FEDH-IPN Vision

FEDH-IPN is recognized as a legitimate expression of civil society, committed to the improvement and transformation of national education and the development of opportunities for participation and influence at the local, municipal, national and international levels.

3.2 FEDH-IPN Mission

FEDH -IPN defines its mission as promoting opportunities and facilitating the development of opportunities to reflect, discuss, propose and influence the formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies, programmes, projects and actions that contribute to the construction, development and transformation of Nicaraguan education with equity, quality and relevance.

3.3 Coalition Objectives And Coalition Member Priorities

The coalition consists of 13 members with legal status. Some of these members are noted to be part of nationwide networks with operations at the municipal level. In addition, the coalition provides 25 spaces of consultation to groups at the local municipalities level ('Mesas Educativas'). As many of these do not hold legal status, they are formally represented by FEDH-IPN. Member organizations⁵ represent a broad cross-section of the education sector, including teachers' unions, child rights' organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs) and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Member priorities have focused on:

- Civil society participation in agenda setting at the local level for quality education as a right;
- Capacity strengthening for a stronger understanding of education topics;
- Education Sector Financing;
- Inclusive education;
- Intercultural and Bilingual Education
- Early Childhood Education.

4 FINDINGS

The analysis and findings of the case study have been structured against the standard evaluation criteria adopted by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). These criteria were used

⁵ Section 8 contains a complete list of members.

to detail the evaluation questions during inception and also to structure the evaluation report. The criteria are defined as follows:

- Relevance.
- Effectiveness.
- Efficiency.
- Sustainability.
- Impact.

4.1 Relevance

Relevance is defined as, '[t]he extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor.'⁶ The evaluation team's assessment of programme relevance is based on the analysis of the national and local context, the challenges for strengthening policy making and civil society participation in the educational sector and the needs and priorities of various stakeholders (e.g. CSOs, capacity building, etc.).

The current Sandinista government of President Ortega prioritized a brand of direct democracy, which viewed intermediaries between government and citizens as unnecessary, and often times a front to political opposition. Since the departure of many international donors from Nicaragua in 2012, and the extremely politicized environment, a large number of civil society organizations have ceased to exist.

"CSEF allowed us to be in the provinces and rural areas. It is fair to say that CSEF has contributed to the survival of the coalition. We were just breathing without being able to act."

–Fieldwork respondent.

The support provided by the CSEF Programme was therefore highly relevant to a continued presence and contribution of CSOs in the public space to debate education in Nicaragua. During the evaluation most stakeholders acknowledged the CSEF programme as the coalition's lifeline for continued advocacy on the right to quality education for all in Nicaragua.

4.1.1 Strategy Of Engagement With Government

Professor de Castilla Urbina, a founder of FEDH IPN in 1997, and a former Minister of Education, was at the time of the evaluation the Education Advisor to the President of Nicaragua and UNESCO Representative. The coalition's continued connection with him was instrumental in the little engagement FEDH IPN was able to have with the government.

Authorities interviewed during the evaluation process underscored the assertion that "the coalition works within the general direction of where the government wants to go," and that the coalition, and civil society in general, "should increase their acknowledgement of the positive reforms implemented by the government and move away from protest advocacy."

⁶ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

The support provided by the CSEF Programme was particularly relevant to the Nicaraguan context where the government was quite adverse to criticism and provided very little opportunity for engagement and openness to participation in policy formulation by civil society.

The access that the coalition maintained, through the personal relationship of an advisory member of government, provided a form of covert dialogue between government institutions and the coalition at the national level. For example, initiatives and policy developments from the government have been noted to react to sustained advocacy efforts on the part of the coalition (e.g. Early Childhood Education policy). This 'dialogue' underlines the relevance of the CSEF Programme.

4.1.2 Synergies With Member Priorities and Mobilization

In the current political environment, the CSEF Programme provides incentives for a democratic partnership of the coalition with its members. The Secretariat finds meaningful engagement at the municipality level. Meanwhile members are provided a national forum and access to a network that would have been otherwise out of reach.

Members' priorities were reported to be fully taken into consideration with the coalition providing support to the realization of activities. With the exception of the theme for the Global Education Week, advocacy campaigns largely respond to local preoccupations or priorities identified during the annual General Assembly of the coalition. Both Secretariat and member respondents underlined the very participatory nature of the coordination and mobilization work provided by the coalition. Opportunities for stakeholder inputs are varied, and during meetings, exchange of ideas are encouraged and valued, and decisions taken collectively.

"When we mobilize people they respond and they come. People are hungry for this exchange. The space we create is very important."

–Fieldwork respondent

4.1.3 Communication

The coalition has 14 members, most being located at the municipal level. The coalition's communication strategy targets a year round monitoring of education policy development. At the national level, there are good relationship with some press outlets, and the media is invited to all coalition events. Interested media are largely seen to broadcast the information of the coalition. When the government is interviewed on an issue, the coalition is then interviewed to present an alternate point of view.

Unfortunately, due to the polarisation of the public sphere, media either does not cover education issues or does so in a partisan manner. Opinion pieces have disappeared from the written press, and there are no large in-depth bipartisan coverage of education developments seen in the media. The coalition threads a fine line ensuring that it remains seen as neutral.

Despite this, coalition members interviewed indicated that the coalition proactively disseminates information to members and the public through radio, television and the Internet. Communication was noted to be fluid and members reported being regularly informed of coalition news.

The coalition is able to develop good working relationships with community radios at the municipal level. These stations are seen to have the widest outreach and provide in-depth coverage of advocacy campaigns and other coalition members' initiatives. A public space for alternative reporting of education issues, as well as citizens' participation and engagement through call-ins, is well established.

"We think we have a social responsibility to diffuse information."

–Community radio manager, guest of a respondent

4.1.4 Networking, Learning And Good Practices

The Secretariat is seen by most respondents to contribute to learning and networking opportunities. The Secretariat systematically shares information and education material provided by the CSEF Programme's Global Secretariat. Activity planning with members provides training sessions and identifies learning needs at the municipal level.

Networking opportunities are focused around specific advocacy campaigns that are being coordinated. To strengthen the sense of belonging to a nationwide network there could be increased opportunities for networking amongst members throughout the year. Improved networking channels would increase the opportunities for peer-to-peer learning, coordinated actions, and maximization of resources. This need for additional networking is also important because many community level members are unable to attend the meetings of the coalition's thematic committees, which take place four times a year in Managua.

The coalition demonstrates a commitment to quality interventions. With the assistance of the Programme's Regional Secretariat, the Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education (CLADE), they seek inputs from the Dominican Republic national coalition on how to implement an effective campaign targeting government budgetary commitments. This type of peer-to-peer learning between coalitions that is facilitated by the Regional Secretariat is regarded as highly effective.

4.1.5 Gender Equality

The coalition's Secretariat is managed with a loose gender sensitive lens. Opportunities for responsibilities and professional development are allocated with both efficiency and equity in mind. The coalition is able to comply in its reporting on gender data requested within the CSEF Programme technical report.

Programmatically, the coalition was a key organizer of the 2011-2012 Campaign for Girls, advocating for girls' education.

It is fair to conclude that, although present in decision-making, gender mainstreaming and gender programming is not an ongoing priority.

4.2 Effectiveness

The OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance defines effectiveness as, ‘A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives.’⁷ Using the programme’s Theory of Change (logical framework/ results framework) the evaluation team analysed to what extent the results obtained from the implementation of activities have contributed to the attainment of the planned objectives.

The general objective of the coalition is to promote the coordinated participation of civil society in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies, programmes, projects and actions that contribute to comprehensive and integrated development of national education.

4.2.1 Policy Monitoring And Decentralized Engagement

Opportunities for engagement with government are limited. While most respondents indicated that the coalition has influenced the government agenda by inserting pressure to consider education as a human right, the results speak differently. Civil society organizations were not invited to the National Forum on Education that was convened to contribute to the planning of the 2016-2020 National Education Plan, and neither was civil society, including the coalition, invited to comment on the Country Proposal submitted to GPE.

On the other hand, representatives of the Education Ministry participated in the Global Week for Education, and as one respondent indicated “this year’s campaign was a real success.”

Due to some coalition members being openly aligned with the political opposition, there is an added layer of complexity and tension that strains relations between the coalition and the government. Despite the diverse composition of its membership, and the complex nature of the coalition’s engagement with the government, the coalition has maintained a neutrality that is recognized and appreciated, both in government circles, and throughout the Nicaraguan social fabric.

“If there is an international consensus that civil society must participate in the proposal from countries, then there must be a mechanism put in place.”

–Fieldwork respondent

Overall however, the political context is such that the coalition has focused its interventions at the local level. The relationship developed at the municipality level with city and government officials is much stronger and conducive to community mobilization, shared learning, and member capacity building. Respondents indicated that the coalition is quite effective in engaging at the local level and working with local authorities and civil society to develop and implement a stronger education agenda.

⁷ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

4.2.2 Credibility And Mobilization

The coalition continues to capitalise on the technical expertise of its founders. As one respondent stated, “The coalition has credibility because the founders are very serious and respected people.” The current Coordinator is also very well respected in the education and human rights sector.

“Through all these years the coalition has been at the forefront of the issues that affect the education system.”

–Fieldwork respondent

Although the nature of the relationship with the Secretariat is collaborative and participatory, at the community level, members clearly indicated that the coalition works through them and that they are the conduits to initiatives, not the Secretariat. In that sense, a much more participatory process takes place at the community level. This includes local Community Based Organizations (CBOs), such as the “Movimiento Communal”, a grassroots advocacy organization present in most localities, and the “Mesas Educativas”. Rapport and engagement of the Secretariat at the local level were reported to be more effective and advisory, serving as a conduit to engagement with education and city authorities.

“We represent the stakeholders’ needs because we work directly with the people.”

–Fieldwork respondent

The ability of the coalition’s Secretariat to engage at the community level ironically reinforces its credibility towards the government with regards to civil society. Working through its grassroots members gives the coalition the credibility that their priorities are not in Managua. Similarly, membership

in a national coalition provides credibility to members for being associated with the Global Week for Education and the Global Campaign for Education, a coordinating body of international reach.

Grassroots mobilization and buy-in is also developed through replication of workshops that take place at the national level. Coalition members indicated that the Secretariat was very effective at engaging members in this regard. It allows them to continue engaging in analysis and reflection of education topics, and provided a neutral space for citizenry to dialogue.

Lastly, as a member of an international network, the coalition benefits domestically from the credibility and respect the CSEF Programme and GCE provide, both vis-à-vis civil society and state institutions.

4.2.3 Coalition Priorities, Activities, Outcomes

The coalition’s general CSEF Programme objective is “to strengthen the advocacy capacity of FEDH-IPN, focusing on the fulfillment of the human right to education and on placing the issue of education in the political platform of municipal governments within the framework of the municipal elections of 2012.”

The coalition’s specific objectives are:

- To strengthen the organization and institutional development of FEDH-IPN, to ensure its efficient operation, and the achievement of its mission, objectives and strategies.

- To promote the strengthening of the capacities and competencies of FEDH - IPN, its members and civil society to provide quality and consistency in educational issues.
- To promote coordination of efforts and joint research process, debate and proposals around priority themes and issues related to national education, and compliance with the agreements and commitments to national and international development.
- To influence the definition, development and evaluation of educational policies at the national, municipal and local level.

Field inquiry suggests that, to a large extent, FEDH-IPN is reaching its general objective. It has focused on engaging with the government at the municipality level where it has found receptive interlocutors.

The coalition has prioritized policy monitoring and advocacy. Advocacy campaigns, to the exception of the Global Week for Education, respond to coalition member priorities. FEDH-IPN also supports the policy monitoring capacity of its members, providing targeted training on specific themes related to education rights.

The coalition engages its members with information dissemination and learning opportunities. Before traveling to attend the World Education Forum in Seoul, the coalition's coordinator organized an event to discuss the achievements since the 2000 Dakar Forum, and upon return organized another event to present the resolutions of the Forum for 2015-2030.

The coalition coordinates the Global Week for Education, which is the main campaign organized in a given year. To effectively mobilize its members and partner organizations, the coalition provides education sessions on specific education topics.

FEDH-IPN also monitors education policy reform and implementation. It provides regular commentary through the media, and has set up a system of "education alerts" ("alertas educativas"), which collect information provided by the Mesas Educativas and warns of, and highlights issues in the education sector as they arise.

Some important activities implemented by FEDH-IPN, in line with their stated objectives, include:

- National Advocacy Campaign towards 7% of GDP towards education.
- National Advocacy Campaign on Early Childhood Education, World Education Week, 2012.
- National Advocacy Campaign on School Retention, 2013.
- National Campaign for the Support of Quality Educators, World Education Week, 2013.
- Camoapa Campaign towards Inclusive Education.

The coalition modestly engages in research activities. It does so through its "Education Observatory", which provides a synthesis of developments in the sector on an annual basis. It has also produced, for instance, an assessment of intercultural education in the Pacific regions in 2011-2012.

4.3 Efficiency

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines efficiency as, 'Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs.'⁸ Efficiency was analysed in terms of how well the programme is organized for delivering its work with regard to managerial and budget efficiency. The evaluation team analysed efficiency based on the assessment of outputs/ activities in relation to programme inputs and planned timelines.

The assessment provided some analysis of systems (development, performance management, financial management) within the coalition and between the coalition and regional organizations, and how they contributed to the on-going development of coalition effectiveness.

4.3.1 Coalition Development Systems

The coalition relies on CLADE for technical support and development assistance. Secretariat personnel indicated that the support of the regional secretariat is valued and efficient, notably recognizing the fluid communication.

In the current political context, the coalition's development is keenly dependent upon the CSEF Programme, both financially and politically.

Some frustration was shared by stakeholders regarding the lack of acknowledgement of the FEDH-IPN by visiting GPE delegations. These missions seemed unaware of the organization to whom GPE is providing financing. In addition, GPE-LAC (World Bank Nicaragua) "did not even know that the coalition existed." Stakeholders felt that it was a missed opportunity for these missions to act as a mediator between the government and civil society and support transparency in the proposal that the government sent to GPE.

In an environment where autonomous civil society is marginalized, not acknowledging a GPE-funded institution is counter-productive to the investment in CSOs.

Some concerns were also shared about the role of UNESCO as a supervising entity. It was noted that UNESCO is accountable to the governments that formed its membership, and as such neutrality of the organization was a preoccupation.

At the municipality level, the coalition plans to continue collaboration with member organizations and engagement with local authorities. It will be important to strengthen networking opportunities and systemise feedback to local members to ensure continued buy-in and participation.

⁸ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

Stronger regional support will be necessary to develop capacity in research-based advocacy and strategic planning. Evidence-based advocacy will provide the coalition with a stronger and more neutral ground to engage with the government. At the moment, the coalition's positions are open for manipulation by the government and a polarised press. Moving away from broad-based campaigns to targeted contributions backed by research and domestically produced data, will be instrumental for the coalition's growth and development.

4.3.2 Financial Management Systems

There is a staff position dedicated to financial and administrative management, as well as a Board position, "the Fiscalisador," to oversee the finances of the organization.

Financial management systems seem well established and the coalition has a good working relationship with Action Aid, the regional Financial Management Agency (FMA). Financial reporting requirements are well understood and in compliance. The coalition administrator also provides reconciliation oversight between activities and expenses, ensuring that both technical and financial reports match.

The coalition is financially dependent upon the CSEF Programme and feel that various disbursement delays have affected Phase II of the Programme. The coalition also noted a thirty percent decrease in CSEF Programme funding, from approximately US\$ 90,000 in 2012, to approximately US\$ 60,000 in 2015.

4.3.3 Performance Management Systems

The coalition conducts monthly monitoring meetings and follows each activity and campaign with a debriefing. However, M&E was reported as the weak point of the coalition. Although deemed cumbersome and at times redundant, M&E requirements provide learning tools to better plan for future activities, and help the coalition systematise its work.

The coalition will benefit from continued assistance from CLADE in institutionalizing the M&E framework, and in creating stronger processes for data collection and management (processing data from inquiries, electronic filing of documents, etc.)

4.4 Sustainability

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines sustainability as being 'concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn.'⁹ The evaluation team reviewed sustainability factors in terms of programme design, process, implementation and national context.

⁹ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

The assessment provided comment on sustainability factors for the coalition, and addressed the key questions confronting FEDH-IPN as it works to establish its longer-term sustainability.

FEDH-IPN was created before the start of the CSEF Programme and enjoys sector-wide recognition, including by the government, albeit indirectly. The coalition is seen as a reference within civil society, with organizations continuously seeking to become members.

“The work of the coalition has been very strong. The population has acquired this understanding of the right to education.”

–Fieldwork respondent

The CSEF Programme was created at a crucial time in Nicaragua when the political framework had made it hard for independent CSOs to operate. International donors have significantly reduced, if not cancelled, the contributions to local organizations. As a result, the available pool of fundraising opportunities is greatly reduced, making the coalition’s dependence on the CSEF Programme that much more acute. The coalition engages informally in resource development by nurturing contacts for future funding.

Respondents indicated that more work is needed and there are hopes for a larger 2016-2018 CSEF Programme. As was the case for other Case Studies, the national coordinator appears to be extremely dedicated to the mission and vision of the coalition and its work, but corollary overstretched and overworked. Continuity in leadership will be important to maintain results over time.

4.5 Impact

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines impact as, ‘The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.’¹⁰ The evaluation team examined to what extent the programme has increased local capacities in a way that contributes to their better access and participation as measured by increased skills, abilities and knowledge. When assessing the programme’s impact, the evaluation team considered the longer-term benefits intended in the CSEF design, some of which may not have been fully realized yet.

All respondents agreed that the coalition has been instrumental in creating a neutral space for public dialogue on education and in exerting pressure on the government in specific areas such as education financing, early childhood education, and inclusive education.

The credibility of the coalition as a respected reference in the education sector is also a positive impact of the Programme.

There was doubt, however, whether impact could be sustained without on-going monitoring of sector development, and opening of dialogue and engagement channels with the GON, which currently precludes any sense of social accountability.

¹⁰ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The findings of this case study, detailed above, provide a strong basis for the drawing of certain conclusions about future directions for FEDH-IPN, and the issues the coalition will face in addressing the priorities of the education sector. As discussed, the issues are related to:

- Evidence-based advocacy
- Member mobilization
- Governance and systems
- Growth and sustainability

Further discussion of each of these areas is provided below.

5.1 Evidence-based advocacy

The coalition has focused its actions on policy monitoring and advocacy campaign, and has developed great credibility and respect. However, in the politicised context of Nicaragua, and to further contribute to free, quality education for all, strategies to better engage in evidence-based advocacy should be developed and subsequently implemented. These efforts should be subject to a communication strategy that would underline the contribution of the coalition as an independent contributor to the education sector. In that regard, the coalition should benefit from technical assistance from the Programme's Regional Secretariat.

Strengthening the capacity of the coalition in conducting evidence-based advocacy will also contribute to a wider base of competencies, potentially attracting new institutional partners.

5.2 Member Mobilization

All respondents approved of the work of the coalition in mobilizing and coordinating efforts. An important challenge for the coalition is to sustain its action and impact at the municipality level, while also fostering a more structured, year-round communication and learning framework for its members. This should include peer-to-peer learning, sharing of agendas, observations, and best practices.

5.3 Governance And Systems

The coalition's governance includes elements, which are not optimised. For instance, the coalition has put in place thematic committees focusing on basic education, inclusive education, rural education, and intercultural education. These committees cover recurring basic themes in education, and meet four times a year in Managua. Many of the members are unable to attend due to time and budgetary constraints. If it is deemed that the contribution of the committees is valuable, which was not verified during field inquiry, the coalition should explore means to improve the access and contribution of these committees.

FEDH-IPN is truly a Forum, in the sense that its participants hold varying legal statuses, from national NGOs, to associations, and individuals. The CSEF Programme and the coalition should

explore means to account for the wide array of participating groups. The coalition reports 13 members, when in actuality it works with approximately 40 different entities.

Finally, the coalition would benefit from developing simple data management processes, which would help capture programming information electronically.

5.4 Growth And Sustainability

In the current political environment and the stark decline of international donors in Nicaragua it would be unrealistic to expect the coalition to make significant in-roads in developing a strong and diversified donor-base. At the moment, the coalition is fully dependent on the CSEF Programme.

Having made great strides in community mobilization, and advocacy campaigns, the coalition would benefit from a strategic planning exercise that looks to refine and strengthen its theory of change for the future as well as its governance structure so it can better respond to the systemic and contextual challenges of the education system. The coalition should also continue to cultivate its current access to the government and to offer engagement with the relevant governmental institutions.

6 LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Following is a list of those people interviewed for the evaluation during the field visit to Nicaragua from 13-16 July, 2015.

No	Nombre	Organización	Día de Entrevista
01	Miguel De Castilla Urbina	Ministro Asesor en asuntos de Educación (UNESCO)	Lunes 9:30 am
02	Jorge Mendoza Vásquez	Foro de Educacion y Desarrollo Humano	Lunes 11:00 am
03	Ruth Danelia Fletes Fonseca	Junta Directiva FEDHIPN	Lunes 2:00 pm
04	Mario Fulvio Espinoza		
05	Arlen Maria Mendoza	Equipo Técnico FEDHIPN	Lunes 3:30 pm
06	Edgar Palacios Ortiz		
07	Karla Perez	EDUCO	Martes 8:00 am
08	Mauricio Castillo		
09	Federico Rostran		
10	Briceyda Traña	MCN	Martes 10: 00 am
11	Douglas		
12	Amanda Flores Guevara	Asociación de Scout de Nicaragua	Martes 11:00 am
13	Carlos Emilio Lopez	Diputado FSLN, Asamblea Nacional	Martes 1:00 pm
14	Irma Quintanilla Franco	Mesa Nacional de Riesgo Revista el País Azul	Martes 3:00 pm

15	Mario Fulvio Espinoza	Radio Sandino	
16	Teatino Santana	Canal 12	
17	Yelsin Espinoza	Radio 580	
18	Magda Garcia	Grupo Focal	
		Medios de comunicación	
19	Jocsan Moreno	Concejala La Trinidad, Estelí	Miércoles 10-12 am
20	Ceferina Fuentes	MCN, La Trinidad, Estelí	
21	Henry Sanchez Castro	ANIDE, Matagalpa	Miércoles 2:00 pm
22	Rosalina Robleto	Mesa Educativa Camoapa	Jueves 10-12 am
23	Francisco Salazar		
24	Zochil Colomer Sánchez	Foro de Educación y Desarrollo Humano	Jueves 3:00 pm

7 FEDH-IPN

7.1 Secretariat

No	First Name	Last Name	Position (FT: Full-time, PT: Part-time)
01	Jorge	Mendoza Vásquez	Executive Director - FT
02	Zochil	Colomer Sánchez	Administrator - FT
03	Arlen Maria	Mendoza	Technical Officer - PT
04	Edgar	Palacios Ortiz	Technical Officer - PT
05	Jorge	Crespo Solorzano	Office manager (support staff) - FT
06	Karen	Norori Cantillano	Office maintenance assistant (support staff) - FT

7.2 Executive Board

No	Name	Position	Organization
01	Julián Ramón Guevara	Presidente	ONG Internacional
02	Elba Kathy Rivera	Vicepresidente	Mesa Educativa Nueva Guinea
03	Ruth Danelia Fletes	Secretaria	SUSAETAS
04	Marina Delgado Carranza	Tesorera	Unan Managua
05	Odilí Robles Río	Fiscal	Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos
06	Mario Fulvio Espinoza	Vocal	Persona Natural

8 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

1. Movimiento Comunal Nicaragüense (MCN)
2. Centro de Educación y Capacitación Integral Hermana Maura Clarke (CECIM)
3. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua(UNAN Managua)
4. INTERVIDA-EDUCO
5. Asociación de Padres de Familia Doris María Morales Tijerino
6. Asociación Scout de Nicaragua
7. Asociación Nicaragüense Para el Desarrollo Sostenible
8. Visión Inclusiva
9. Fundación Escúchame
10. Asociación de Padres de Familia con hijos con Discapacidad, Los Pipitos
11. Movimiento Juvenil Siglo XXI
12. Plan Internacional
13. Fundación 21 Síndrome de Down
14. Mesas Educativas

9 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION CONSULTED

- Understanding Populism and Political Participation: The Case of Nicaragua, Woodrow Wilson Center Update on the Americas, Number 4, June 2009
- USAID Nicaragua, Country Development Strategy 2013





Institute for
Development Impact

Case Study Report – COSYDEP Senegal

Undertaken As Part Of An Independent
Evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)
Programme 2013-2015 for the Global Campaign For
Education

15 October 2015

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ALPHADEV	Alphabétiser pour un développement durable
ANCEFA	Africa Network Campaign On Education For All
ANHMS	Association nationale des personnes handicapées
CEN	Executive National Coordination
CNEAP	Collectif National de l'Education Alternative et Populaire
COSYDEP	Coalition of Organizations in Synergy for the Defence of Public Education
CSEF	Civil Society Education Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CUSEMS	Cadre unitaire des syndicats d'enseignants
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
EFA	Education For All
FAWE	Forum For African Women Educationalists
FMA	Financial Management Agency
GCE	Global Campaign For Education
GCAP	Global Call Against Poverty
MDG	Millenium Development Goals
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
REJEF	Réseau des Journalistes en Education Formation
SELS/A	Syndicat des Enseignants Libres du Sénégal / Authentique
SELS/O	Syndicat des enseignants libres du Sénégal/ Original
SNEEL	Syndicat national de l'enseignement Elémentaire
SNEEL/CNTS	Syndicat Eational des Enseignants de l'Elémentaire
SUDES	Syndicat Unique des Enseignants du Sénégal
SYPROS	Syndicat des Professeurs du Sénégal
UDEN	Union Démocratique des Enseignantes et Enseignants du Sénégal
UES	Union des Enseignants du Sénégal

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the external evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund 2013-2015 requested by the Global Campaign for Education, the Institute for Development Impact (I4DI) conducted seven country case studies. The evaluation aimed to contribute to GCE's ability to respond to challenges and objectives by identifying the emerging impact of the CSEF programme, provide evidence of the effectiveness of its design and implementation model, and derive learning from implemented processes and structures to influence and strengthen future programming.

The Senegal Case Study was conducted by a field visit with the Coalition of Organizations in Synergy for the Defense of Public Education (COSYDEP) from June 15 to June 19, 2015.

The I4DI consultant conducted individual interviews and focus group discussions with six of the 15 coalition Board members, five members of its National Executive Committee, the Secretariat's core team (National Coordinator, Administration and Finance Manager, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer), coalition members, the team of the Financial Management Agency (Oxfam), international partners (Action Aid, UNICEF), and Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education Representatives. The consultant also conducted a site visit to an inclusive school and met with school management, teachers, and community liaisons.

The findings of the case study underline COSYDEP's strength as a respected voice for civil society in the education sector. COSYDEP has developed a strategy that brings in participation at the grassroots level, national coverage, evidence-based advocacy, and strong communication. The study concludes by presenting the lessons learned and challenges for the future of the coalition, focused around institutional strengthening, participation, and financial sustainability.

2 STATUS OF EDUCATION IN SENEGAL

The education system in Senegal remains based on the French model following independence in 1960. Approximately 23 percent of the population is between 10 and 19 years of age¹. Following a legislative commitment in 2000 to free universal primary education, Senegal hosted the 2000 World Education Forum where the international engagement to Education For All was affirmed, aiming at free quality education for all by 2015. In the past decade, Senegal has made strides in achieving universal access to education, increasing primary school gross enrollment rates from 68 percent in 2000 to 84 percent in 2014². Despite these accomplishments, more needs to be done to ensure all Senegalese children receive 10 years of quality basic education, especially girls and vulnerable children. It is in this context that, following national consultations, the government has developed a 10-year plan for 2015-2025, the "Programme d'Amélioration de la Qualité de l'Équité et de la Transparence"

¹ UNICEF Country Statistics.

² World Bank World Development Indicators 2014

(PAQUET – Programme to Improve Quality, Equity, and Transparency), which aims to address, amongst others, the following challenges:

- Many children are still out of the education system,
- Quality remains a real and pressing concern (with only 61 percent primary school completion rate in 2014)³,
- Large shortfalls remain in implementing sector priorities,
- Despite increases in financial resources allocated to the sector (5.6 percent), achievements are lagging,
- Disruptive labor disputes with the teaching corp.

Education quality is severely constrained by a lack of trained teachers, a shortage of instructional resources and a challenging school environment. As a result, many Senegalese children have insufficient skills for their grade level, especially in important areas such as reading and mathematics.

3 OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION COALITION IN SENEGAL

The Coalition of Organizations in Synergy for the Defense of Public Education (COSYDEP) was founded in 2007, and formally registered in 2009, as a response to increasing reflection on the part of civil society and the education sector at large on expanding free public education for all and improving education quality. The 2000 Dakar World Education Forum was particularly instrumental in galvanizing civil society interest for education advocacy as the Senegalese sector was grappling with mounting shortfalls in access, equity and quality. After an initial attempt at forming a coalition of CSOs, COSYDEP was founded to build sector wide support for researched, credible and in-depth reform. It purposefully included a wide number of teacher unions, parent-teacher associations, and advocacy organizations focusing on a number of issues relevant to the EFA objectives.

The tagline of COSYDEP, “For a Free, Accessible, and Quality Education,” indicates clearly the coalition’s priorities. COSYDEP aims to serve as a strategic framework for reflection, dialogue, synergy, research and action to influence positively and significantly the definition and implementation of education policies in order to promote the right to a quality public education, free, inclusive and accessible to all.

A member of the regional network ANCEFA, COSYDEP has opted to anchor its actions in research in order to 1) contribute to the discussion on performance; 2) contribute to advocacy campaigns and sector dialogues, 3) play a monitoring, facilitation and mediation role. The coalition has produced several studies and reports on sensitive and important topics, such as sector financing and girls’ education.

³ Ibid

COSYDEP, which boasts almost 70 active member organizations, has become an instrumental civil society actor in engaging with the government and public institutions, mediating labour conflicts between the government and teachers' unions, and mobilizing community and membership support around education sector issues. It does so by coordinating a wide network of organizations, pushing forward a strong communication strategy, and using evidence-based advocacy to exemplify its messages.

3.1 COSYDEP Priority

To create and consolidate joint efforts of NGOs, teachers' organizations, parents, journalists and other activist structures for the promotion of a quality public education, free, inclusive and accessible.

3.2 COSYDEP Vision

A free, inclusive and accessible public education of quality, imbued with a spirit of solidarity, without fees so students remain in the system.

3.3 COSYDEP Mission

COSYDEP is a platform for civil society organizations, serving as a strategic framework for reflection, dialogue, synergy, research and action. As such, it strives to influence positively and significantly the design, implementation and evaluation of education policies to promote the right to quality public education.

3.4 Guiding Principles

- Accountability - We affirm our commitment to being accountable for the fulfillment of all duties and professional obligations associated with our coalition.
- Transparency - We are committed to openness, honesty and responsibility, and adherence to good governance in all that we do.
- Participation - Our membership is the pillar of the coalition and hence we value their participation and contributions.
- Equality - We subscribe to the removal of all types of stereotypes and negative associations that may impair the full participation of our membership.
- Inclusiveness - We are a membership-based coalition and hence value the broad-based representation of education sector stakeholders.

To contribute to EFA priorities, COSYDEP works in:

- Research, documentation and dialogue on performance of the education system
- Organization of flagship events for the EFA campaign in Senegal
- Participation and contribution to campaigns, consultations and exchanges
- Advocacy and policy monitoring
- Watchdog and mediation

3.5 Coalition Member Priorities

Member organizations represent a broad cross-section of the education sector, including teachers' unions, child rights' organizations, community-based organizations and international NGOs⁴. The focus of coalition members is reflected in the thematic focus of the National Executive Committee (CEN)⁵:

- Gender and girls education,
- Inclusive education,
- Early Childhood Education and Protection,
- School Governance,
- Education in Emergency,
- Literacy, non-formal education and professional training,
- Revalorization of the teaching profession,
- Social dialogue and partnership.

4 FINDINGS

The analysis and findings of the case study have been structured against the standard evaluation criteria adopted by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). These criteria were used to detail the evaluation questions during inception and also to structure the evaluation report. The criteria are defined as follows:

- Relevance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Sustainability
- Impact

4.1 Relevance

Relevance is defined as, 'The extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor.'⁶ The evaluation team's assessment of programme relevance was based on the analysis of the national and local context, the challenges for strengthening policy making and civil society participation in the educational sector and the needs and priorities of various stakeholders (e.g. CSOs, capacity building, etc.).

As noted earlier, COSYDEP is established within the EFA and MDG framework, and the relevance of its priorities and strategies is firmly established within EFA, as well as within its relationship with its members and with government. COSYDEP demonstrates relevance to the education sector through broad membership and community mobilization, strategic

⁴ See Section 6 for complete list of active members

⁵ See paragraph 4.1.2 for additional information on the Committee

⁶ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

communication, and consistent policy engagement. The CSEF Programme's support to the coalition strengthens its capacity to act and advocate for free quality, equitable, and accessible public education.

4.1.1 A Strategy Of Engagement With Government

With the long-term financial and technical support of the CSEF Programme, and an advocacy strategy rooted in systematic research, documentation, and communication, COSYDEP has positioned itself as a valuable interlocutor and partner for the government. COSYDEP is a member and acts as Executive Secretariat of the "Table de Concertation", the Local Education Group (LEG) for Civil Society (government entities – civil society organizations), and actively advocates so that both the "Table de Concertation" and the corresponding forum for government – institutional partners dialogue, become integrated as one platform. This would ensure that all topics, including financial issues pertaining to the education sector, be open for comments and discussion by the LEG as a whole. Amongst others, COSYDEP participates in the Annual Reviews of EFA and participated in the « Assises Nationales de l'Éducation » in 2014, a large national consultation forum for education.

The CSEF Programme gives the coalition the opportunity to operate year round, thereby providing constant feedback to government institutions. The coalition produces alternative reports to bridge gaps and provide additional reflection material to the government. This synergy is replicated at the local level, notably following the coalition's work on decentralization and use of resources in the sector. It empowers members and gives them a voice, as well as a listening ear on the part of the government that reinforces the role of civil society.

COSYDEP has entered into formal partnerships with government institutions such as the Ministry of Higher Education to provide services in community mobilization and monitoring. As with many advocacy organizations, COSYDEP will have to find a balance between service delivery and maintaining its independent voice as a watchdog.

A particularly relevant example of COSYDEP's capacity to engage with the government and to contribute to policy change is the public dialogue and campaign around teacher recruitment, training, and compensation. In 1994, the government launched its "politique de volontaires"; the recruitment of poorly trained teachers (the requirement to be allowed to teach was brought down to 3 months after completion of the 9th grade). This wave of recruitment, which now amounts to 60 percent of teachers, severely undermined the motivation of the teaching corps and exacerbated labour relations with the Ministry. In addition, a system of discretionary recruitment was put in place. These "quotas sécuritaires", ensured that a number of teaching positions were filled by nominations from education officials at the national and regional levels. These measures were taken to increase the offer of and access to education services. With limited resources, and international partners' financing allocated primarily to school construction, the government increased its teaching force by lowering pay and standards, which proved quite detrimental to the quality of public education.

COSYDEP's strategy to bring this issue to the fore included documentation and research, outreach to other civil society actors to induce changes in teacher training standards, and

modification to the recruitment processes. As a result, teacher training went from 3 months to 8 months and a Training Directorate was created at the Ministry of Education (2009-2010). To date, engagement with the government remains to continue improving teacher-training requirements. The “quotas sécuritaires” have been eliminated.

4.1.2 Synergies With Member Priorities and Mechanisms For Ensuring Stakeholder Involvement In Planning And Implementation

COSYDEP considers its priorities to be fully in alignment with those of the CSEF programme. In developing a 5-year plan in 2011, COSYDEP purposefully took into consideration EFA goals and CSEF objectives. Several respondents indicated that CSEF reinforced the objectives of COSYDEP and its function.

COSYDEP’s governance system demonstrates a strong participatory approach and is marked by a focus on channels of communication and feedback.

The General Assembly, which regroups all members, defines the policy and programmes and elects the Board. The Board is composed of representatives of teacher unions, CBOs, a Parent Teacher Association representative, and a representative of the Network of Journalists. The Board vets and decides on priority actions for implementation and the Executive Secretariat is charged with the coordination of implementation. The Board meet at regular intervals, as set by the coalition’s statutes. If physical meetings or attendance at meetings are not feasible, feedbacks and contributions are shared by emails and telephone.

In addition, COSYDEP is composed of regional offices, one in each geographical region, which are reported to be quite autonomous and develop their own regional partnerships. This national coverage ensures that grassroots priorities and community participation throughout the country is accessible and mobilized. As a result, COSYDEP was reported to be well known in the provinces. Consultations amongst members takes place through 14 regional assemblies. These priorities are then shared at the General Assembly for data consolidation and to develop activities that respond to local priorities and needs.

Members noted that the regional offices help with mobilization and advocacy. Issues are picked up at the local level to inform the national level. Members work closely with journalists specialized in education and with whom close contacts have been established. According to members, “Our communication strategy is very strong, we include journalists even in training”.

COSYDEP’s governance structure also includes a “Comité Exécutif de Coordination” (CEN), or Executive Coordinating Committee, composed of nine leaders of member organizations. The CEN, which meets monthly, provides support to the Secretariat through its thematic subgroups. Any member organization of COSYDEP can participate in these thematic groups, which are set up to contribute to and provide data on the following specific topics: gender and girls’ education, inclusive education, early childhood education and protection, school governance, education in emergency literacy, non-formal education and professional training, revalorization of the teaching profession, social dialogue and partnership. In essence, the CEN provides added specialized resources to the Secretariat, also ensuring that member

priorities are fully debated. It also acts as an interface between the Secretariat and local offices. Occasionally, the CEN assists in implementation. The onus is put on capacity building and developing ownership of member organizations, and the CEN leaders and members are invited to participate in trainings and meetings.

The Secretariat produces monthly memos and activity summaries that are shared with members and stakeholders. Feedback to regional and local level is noted to need strengthening.

4.1.3 Communication, Networking, Mobilizations

COSYDEP's structure and organizational culture promotes member and local participation. The coalition's communication strategy is reinforced by this culture of exchange of information, which in turn increases its visibility and credibility.

"It is thanks to CSEF that we are now able to follow year round public policies in education, identify gaps, especially with regards to governance and financing of education"

-Field visit respondent

COSYDEP systematically share the products of its research, discussions and positions, not only with education stakeholders, but also with the wider public. The press is engaged through the sharing of updates, press releases, and position papers with journalists. The coalition participates in regular radio and TV programmes, and maintains an online presence with social media and an up-to-date website.

The coalition's communication strategy is perceived to have profoundly affected the public's awareness of education challenges. This strategy also contributes to large popular mobilizations around a number of challenges such as local school management, the "Livre Blanc", and more recently, the lifting of the birth certificate requirement to take the elementary school exit exam. In this last case, COSYDEP participated with the wider civil society movement to emphasize the effect poor birth registration and school requirements have on primary school completion in Senegal.

4.1.4 Learning And Good Practices

COSYDEP's focus on learning and good practices is anchored in its research and documentation strategy. The coalition roots its advocacy in demonstrating and documenting change, in a similar way that agricultural extension services use demonstration plots to illustrate proper techniques and good practices for replication.

Various respondents highlighted the research – action model which is characterized by a participatory approach, and has led to both an increase in capacity to conduct research, and to a better understanding of policy development.

Learning is encouraged by including coalition member representatives, including regional representatives, in trainings and workshops so that learning opportunities do not remain solely at the level of the Secretariat. In addition to the CSEF Programme reporting requirements, which appear to be well understood and utilised by the Secretariat staff, learning processes are also present at the activity level. Debriefings and consolidation of lessons learned (“documents de capitalisations”), are reported to inform future activities (eg. 2014 World Education Week programming lessons learned influencing the 2015 planning).

“CSEF is extraordinary. A few years back, COSYDEP wasn’t known at all, but with CSEF we’re quite well known, we have a permanent office, and large coalition and today the Ministry of Education would not miss to invite COSYDEP to take part in its activities. Even beyond education sector, we are known as the “defenders of the school”.

-Coalition member

The South-South exchange opportunities afforded the coalition by the CSEF Programme contributes to an increase in confidence by the coalition through the exchange of experiences, and the following:

- the opportunity to contribute to the capacity of the national coalition of Mauritania,
- hosting the Gambian coalition and the subsequent development of an MOU to explore future collaboration, and
- the exposure to regional and global fora.

Senegal also takes part in the regional annual meetings and the group email set up by ANCEFA where advocacy topics are shared and discussed.

4.1.5 Gender Equality

The coalition noted that the CSEF Programme does not impose rigid objectives to be implemented at the national levels. As such, it is a flexible mechanism with broad goals that allows for objectives to reflect national priorities and context. In line with these broad objectives, and responding to member priorities, COSYDEP advocates specifically for girls’ education. The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) in Senegal, takes the lead in this activity, which resulted in a sensibilization campaign and the production in 2010 of a position document on girls’ education.

That being said, gender mainstreaming remains to be fully and consciously integrated both within the CSEF Programme, calling for a specific gender lens and gender responsiveness of objectives and activities, and at the national level. In the case of Senegal, gender equality is broadly grouped with the issues pertaining to inclusive education, or right to education for all.

4.2 Effectiveness

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines effectiveness as, ‘A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives.’⁷ Using the programme’s Theory of Change (logical framework/ results framework) the evaluation team analysed to what extent the results obtained from the implementation of activities have contributed to the attainment of the planned objectives.

The assessment analysed the effectiveness of COSYDEP’s strategy and implementation towards the attainment of its planned objectives, notably in engaging the government, and implementing the activities it set forth for capacity building and mobilization.

4.2.1 Engagement In Policy Formulation And Implementation

COSYDEP has aimed to become a relevant partner to the government and to ensure that civil society voices are being heard in the education sector. All respondents, be they international partners, government officials, coalition members, or other key stakeholders to the programme indicated that COSYDEP is considered a credible and leading voice for civil society concerns.

COSYDEP has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education. It is engaged with Parliament, and is systematically invited by government agencies to participate in technical fora and meetings, such as the Annual Education Review. As the Executive Secretary of the LEG for Civil Society (“Table de Concertation”), COSYDEP’s input and participation is often in demand. It is viewed by civil society, and specifically member organizations, as the conduit to get their preoccupations and priorities heard, and for the government to obtain grassroots information.

The recurring “education crises” as they are referred to, or labour disputes with teacher unions, is a good example of the role that COSYDEP plays as facilitator and mediator. In fact, COSYDEP was recently instrumental in the reopening of schools after five-months of strikes by teacher unions. It is worth noting that although a large number of unions are members of COSYDEP, the coalition’s credibility is seen by both parties to endow it with some neutrality in negotiating an end to the crisis and ensuring that the school year would not be lost.

COSYDEP also works to develop good relationships with authorities at the local level through their regional offices. This is exemplified with the engagement of COSYDEP with the government concerning the use of resources in the education sector, and more specifically with the monitoring of funds being allocated directly to schools and the creation of school management committees, with local authority oversight.

⁷ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

COSYDEP's priorities, which "are defined in reaction to our local reality", focus on inclusive education, education in emergencies, and school governance (obj. 1), achievable through research and documentation, capacity building of members and partners (obj. 2), and education policy monitoring (obj. 3).

Through its advocacy activities, COSYDEP has been able to increase the mobilization of non-state actors around education and school communities and to foster added scrutiny on how system resources are used. The coalition's communication strategy, strengthens the capacity of journalists to report on a number of key issues and challenges for the education system, such as the need for rational use of financial resources.

Some important activities implemented by COSYDEP, in line with their stated objectives, include:

- Campaign against "quotas sécuritaires" and teacher volunteers system, coupled with advocacy for increased teacher training. Although the quotas were removed and the volunteer system stopped, improvements remain to be undertaken in improving teacher training, which has gradually been increased from 3 months to 1 year, with the current objective of a 3-year degree.
- EDB10: basic education until 10 years of age to ensure retention through elementary school.
- "L'Acte 3" de-concentration and de-centralization to give more power to local authorities.
- "Livre Blanc": production of civil society assessment of the education system, following a participatory method of data gathering, involving parents, teachers, school administrators, teacher unions, CBO and CSO representatives.
- Question of Birth Certificates: students being allowed to take their elementary school exit exam without presenting a birth certificate.
- Inclusive Education: including disabled students in mainstream education.
- Girls' Education: production of an advocacy document for girls' education accompanied by a mobilization campaign.
- Advocacy on use of financial resources, and School Management Committees.
- Secretary of "Table de Concertation" (LEG for Government and Civil Society).
- Advocacy for a unique LEG (Gov., Institutional Partners, Civil Society).
- First Day of School, First Day of Learning campaign, to ensure that teaching effectively starts at the beginning of the school year.
- Participation in "Assises Nationales" of 2014, a national consultation including a large array of civil society actors, non-governmental organizations, and institutional partners on the state of the education system.
- Mediation of disputes with teacher unions, especially the 2012 crisis.

Additional achievements leveraged through partnerships:

- School flood mapping with UNICEF: mapping of flood vulnerability of schools in the greater Dakar area. This simple tool is now used as an early warning system and prevention tool.
- "Ecoles amies" (Friendly schools) with UNICEF.

- Mobilization on Higher Education with Ministry of Higher Education.

Spotlight: Inclusive School Pikine 7A

The inclusive schools project (2010-2012) was conducted in partnership with Save the Children. The rationale was to increase enrollment of pupils with disabilities by providing an adequate school environment and decreasing the stigmas around disabilities.

The programme targeted a number of schools where administration and teaching staff received training, retrofitting school infrastructure to welcome pupils with physical handicaps (access ramps, gender specific washrooms), and community sensibilization through disseminating information on the school's new environment and encouraging parents of children with disability to send their children to school.



COSYDEP was part of the programme as a community mobilization and advocacy partner. To date, five schools maintain their inclusive status, still accepting students with disabilities and training new teachers. At Kipine 7A, the women who sensitize their community still voluntarily play a very active role in informing parents and community members on the school and advocating for disabled children to be enrolled in the school.

The initiative to advocate for inclusive education through evidence did not result in an immediate scale up of interventions. That being said, the initiative did demand the attention of the government, and expanded the understanding of inclusive education.

This project demonstrates the balance that advocacy organizations such as COSYDEP must strike between development project implementation and advocacy. In this case, a particular demand was temporarily met and COSYDEP should exercise judgment in how it pursues the issue; through the expansion of time and resources to secure additional funds, versus resuming advocacy and documentation of the benefits of inclusive education, as was the case with the “March for Inclusive Education” organized by COSYDEP in 2010.

4.3 Efficiency

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines efficiency as, ‘Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs.’⁸ Efficiency was analysed in terms of how well the programme is organized for delivering its work with regard to managerial and budget efficiency. The evaluation team analysed efficiency based

⁸ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

on the assessment of outputs/ activities in relation to programme inputs and planned timelines.

4.3.1 Coalition Development Systems

COSYDEP is supported by ANCEFA in quality control and programme development, and reported a stronger technical assistance in recent months, and increased support from the Regional Secretariat.

COSYDEP has developed a geographical presence in the 14 regions of the country. Its priority is on strengthening the capacity of regional offices in terms of governance and community mobilization and networking.

It is suggested that more emphasis should be placed on the needs and priorities of the coalitions, and that the CSEF Programme structure should be more flexible and responsive to the national level. Coalitions cannot include activities that are not cited as part of their quarterly plans. This could have a detrimental effect on the credibility and visibility of the coalition because it limits their ability to react to a changing environment. The other structural limitation to the coalition's development is the small size of its team. Significant time and effort is spent fundraising as opposed to programme implementation.

4.3.2 Financial Management Systems

Oxfam West Africa, CSEF Financial Management Agency (FMA) for the continent, is located in Dakar. This proximity does not translate to an increased number of visits to COSYDEP, but it does give COSYDEP the added support of accessible telephone and email communication. Both Oxfam and COSYDEP reported a positive working relationship characterized by easy communication and professionalism.

Oxfam has put in place an online reporting system that sends all data electronically. They create this reporting system with the coalitions on a monthly basis, and elected to send quarterly reports in addition to the semi-annual required reports to the Global Secretariat using the Programme's reporting templates. Oxfam assess COSYDEP to have a strong capacity in financial management, in great part due to the skilled and experienced staff managing the coalition's finances. COSYDEP also value the financial management support provided by the FMA and demonstrate a strong comprehension of the reporting tools of the CSEF programme.

However, it was noted that the M&E framework does not integrate financial management and project implementation. The role of Oxfam's Project Officer is to address the gap between financial and technical management, and to ensure that there is stronger links between the two.

The vast majority of all COSYDEP financial support came from the CSEF Programme. The coalition is not financially sustainable without this support. This creates problems for COSYDEP, as it experiences regular and significant delays in grant disbursements. In addition, concerns over burdensome reporting requirements and a need for better advance planning were also voiced.

4.3.3 Performance Management Systems

COSYDEP reports that the CSEF Programme management and monitoring systems overall have had a positive impact on the coalition's management practices. COSYDEP noted the ease of communication and support from the regional level, both technically and financially. Reporting requirements are clear and well communicated.

The M&E framework and support from the Programme has greatly contributed to improved practices, performance and efficacy. Although there is overall satisfaction with the M&E framework and regional support from ANCEFA, additional technical support, in the form of trainings and field visits would be beneficial. Reporting is also perceived as too frequent and cumbersome. The programme also reinforces management practices from the national office to the regional field offices, as well as transversally from the Secretariat to members and coalition partners.

4.4 Sustainability

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines sustainability as being, 'concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn.'⁹ The evaluation team reviewed sustainability factors in terms of programme design, process, implementation and national context.

The assessment provided comment on sustainability factors for the coalition, and addressed the key questions confronting COSYDEP as it works to establish its longer-term sustainability. Concerns over sustainability exist and can be looked at as financial sustainability on the one hand, and programmatic sustainability on the other, the latter being somewhat dependent on the former.

Sustainability of the effects of COSYDEP's work are considered with ambivalence, although most respondents believe that the widespread awareness and mobilization of CBOs and citizens will remain. The campaigns and mobilization launched by COSYDEP have to a large degree sensitized communities to their ownership and role in the education sector. On the other hand, most concur that financial sustainability will determine how fundamentally transformed the education sector is with the presence and actions of civil society in general, and COSYDEP in particular to monitor these changes.

Two considerations should be addressed for the financial sustainability of the coalition. The first consideration is the focus on long-term funding to ensure that the coalition will not spread thin in resource mobilization. The other concern is for capacity building in resource mobilization to gradually prepare for non-dependency on a single funding source.

The overwhelming consensus, as aptly expressed by one respondent, is that "Now we're at a critical phase. We have a dynamic national secretariat, but they are overworked; there is a lot

⁹ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

of expectation and now they have outgrown their capacity. So there should be continued long-term support. Support shouldn't be short-term and project-based." Another respondent pointed out that, "...sustainability also means that staff feel secure and we don't have a big turnover."

Long-term assured financing will provide time and resources for COSYDEP to strengthen the capacity of its regional offices, and to reinforce an already dynamic CEN. It will also consolidate the positive multiplier effect that the support of the CSEF Programme lends in terms of credibility vis-à-vis other institutional partners, and more access to other sources of funding.

The coalition is keen on reviving discussions within GCE on a national fund. This fund would allocate a percentage of funding for institutional partners towards civil society organizations and movements.

4.5 Impact

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines impact as, 'The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.'¹⁰ The evaluation team examined to what extent the programme has increased local capacities in a way that contributes to their better access and participation as measured by increased skills, abilities and knowledge. When assessing the programme's impact, the evaluation team considered the longer-term benefits intended in the CSEF design, some of which may not have been fully realized yet.

The assessment provided comment on the potential or actual impact of the coalition, with specific reference to education policy formulation or implementation, and civil society mobilization.

The credibility of the coalition is a positive impact indicator as the coalition is largely seen as instrumental both by its membership and civil society at large and by the government in sector dialogue and policy formulation. The research-based approach to advocacy favoured by COSYDEP, and its extensive and responsive communication mechanisms, have ensured the coalition the respect of its members and government. COSYDEP's national presence is well established throughout the country with 14 regional offices. This allows it to speak with authority on grassroots issues, and positions the coalition as a key interlocutor. The CSEF Programme empowers COSYDEP to have long-term actions with a permanent office. It provides continuity, especially with the emphasis on capacity building and institutional strengthening.

The fact that dialogue with civil society is firmly established has powerfully transformed the sector. The fact also that the coalition receives most of its funding from a similar source as

¹⁰ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

the government (GPE) and attend high-level fora and meetings, reinforces its credibility as a potent actor and partner in the education sector.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The findings of this case study, detailed above, provide a strong basis for the drawing of certain conclusions about future directions for COSYDEP, and the issues the coalition will face in addressing the priorities of the education sector. As discussed, the issues are related to:

- Strengthening member participation
- Balancing advocacy and service delivery
- Institutional development

5.1 Strengthening Member Participation

To increase its capacity and maintain its credibility and visibility as a national voice for civil society, the coalition should continue its efforts at internal communication, reinforcing the flow of information. The agility in communication is a real strength of COSYDEP, which should be nurtured and developed. The coalition will also benefit from continued capacity building of members, to maintain their strong engagement and interest in an active coordinating structure, as well as contributing to stronger grassroots participation and engagement. This in turn will increase the capacity and credibility of the coalition as a whole to conduct advocacy campaigns, research issues, and monitor policies.

5.2 Balancing Advocacy And Service Delivery

Continuing to strike a balance between advocacy and service delivery with the state, and with other institutional partners will be key for COSYDEP. It has been able to be both a reliable partner for the state in service delivery, and to provide evidence-based advocacy as baselines for actions with the government. It will be crucial for the coalition to maintain its independent watchdog lens as it moves forward.

5.3 Institutional Development

Reinforcing the national secretariat, through increased capacity building of technical staff and the development of procedures and manuals, so that specific aspects of operations are not paralyzed by the absence of a particular individual. This has already been initiated with the presence of an administration's assistant, but should be systemized to the other areas of operations, especially in monitoring and evaluation, and in leadership training for the technical staff working alongside the national coordinator. Both Board and CEN are quite active and should remain so to ensure adequate member representation.

5.4 Continued Support

Providing agile and flexible long-term institutional support that would give time and space for institutional strengthening and the development of resource mobilization strategies and mechanisms. One such strategy, which has briefly been mentioned during fieldwork, is the

systematization of the payment of membership dues (monthly or annual) by member organizations. The support structure should also respond to the development stage of the coalition, allowing for more leeway in responding to events as they occur, or recruiting part-time personnel to respond to programming needs. Considering that capital and human resources costs are hard to be funded, the CSEF Programme has a unique role to play in the type of support it provides.

6 LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Following is a list of those people interviewed for the evaluation during the field visit to Senegal from 15-19 June, 2015

	PRENOM	NOM	TITRE	ORG	ROLE DANS LA COALITION
1	Cheikh	MBOW	Coordonateur national	SP	Secrétariat Permanent COSYDEP
2	Mariama	SECK	Responsable Administration et Finances	SP	
3	Marie Elisabeth	MASSALY	Responsable suivi évaluation	SP	
4	Kader	NDIAYE	Chargé de programme	SP	
5	Fatou Diene	MBAYE	Assistante Administration et Finances		
6	Coumba	LOUM	Chargée Genre & Education des filles	CEN	CEN COSYDEP
7	Baye	DIONGUE	Chargé Education inclusive	CEN	
8	Amy	SYLLA SARR	Chargée Protection et Education de la Petite Enfance	CEN	
9	Abdou Aziz	SALL	Chargé Alphabétisation, non formel et Form. Prof.	CEN	
10	Aldiouma	SAGNA	Chargé Dialogue social et partenariat	CEN	
11	Moussa	MBAYE	Président	CNEAP	PCA COSYDEP
12	Banda	DIEYE	Secrétaire Exécutif	ANHMS	CA COSYDEP
13	Omar	SOW	Responsable campagne	GCAP	CA COSYDEP
14	Awa	WADE	Secrétaire Général	UDEN	CA COSYDEP
15	Mor	DIAKHATE	Directeur exécutif	ALPHADEV	Membre coalition
16	Macaty	FALL	Spécialiste Education	UNICEF	Partenaire
17	Haleinta	THIAM	Spécialiste développement de la petite enfance	UNICEF	
18	Hamidou	SOUKOUNA	Responsable programme	Aide et Action	Membre coalition
19	???	???	Directeur	Ecole élémentaire Pikine 7 A	Partenaire

20	Stanford	NSEFU	Responsable Administratif et financier	ANCEFA	Suivi Technique CSEF
21	Kalil	MAIGA	Senior Finance Officer - CSEF	OXFAM	Agence d'exécution financière CSEF
22	Robert	BADJI	CSEF Admin Finance Officer	OXFAM	
23	Awa	TRAORE	Stagiaire Admin Finance Officer CSEF	OXFAM	
24	Doriane ORLYSE	TCHAMANBE	Chargée de programme CSEF	OXFAM	
25	Djibril Ndiaye	DIOUF	Directeur de la Planification et de la Réforme	Ministère Education Nationale	Partenaires institutionnels
26	Moustaphe	SOW	Directeur Centre National de Documentation Scientifique et Technique	Ministère Enseignement Supérieur	
27	Amadou	DIAOUNE	Secrétaire Général	SUDES	CA COSYDEP
28	Marième Dansokho	SAKHO	Secrétaire Général	SYPROS	V/PCA COSYDEP
29	Ndongo	SARR	Secrétaire Général adjoint	CUSEMS	Membre Coalition
30	Abdoulaye	FATY	Secrétaire Général	SELS/A	
31	Gougna	NIANG	Secrétaire Général	UES	
32	Oumar	NDIAYE	Journaliste	REJEF	

7 COSYDEP

7.1 Secretariat

	Prénoms	NOM	Fonction
1	Cheikh	MBOW	Coordonnateur National
2	Mariama	SECK	Responsable Administration et Finances
3	Marie Elisabeth	MASSALY	Responsable suivi évaluation
4	Kader	NDIAYE	Charge de Programme
5	Fatou Diene	NDIAYE	Assistante Administration et Finances

7.2 Executive Board

	Prénoms	NOM	Fonction	Organization	Familles
	<i>First name</i>	<i>Last name</i>	<i>Function</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Type</i>
1	Moussa	MBAYE	Président CA	CNEAP	ONGn
2	Marème Sakho	DANSOKHO	1 ^{ère} V/PCA	SYPROS	Syndicat

3	Bakary	BADIANE	2 ^{ème} V/PCA	FENAPES	APE
4	Banda	DIEYE	Très. Gen.	ANHMS	ONGn
5	Awa	WADE	TG Adjointe	UDEN	Syndicat
6	Adama	DIOUF	Membre	REJEF	Presse
7	Aissata	DIA	Membre	Action AID	ONGi
8	Oumar	SOW	Membre	GCAP	ONGi
9	Aissatou	KASSE	Membre	CNEPSCOFI	ONGn
10	Oumar Waly	ZOUMAROU	Membre	SELS/O	Syndicat
11	Amadou	DIAOUNE	Membre	SUDES	Syndicat
12	Buuba	DIOP	Membre	UCAD	Chercheur
13	Amidou	DIEDHIOU	Membre	Sud Est	Ant. Reg.
14	Doudou Mbodj	NDIAYE	Membre	Nord	Ant. Reg.
15	Tamba	NGOM	Membre	Centre Ouest	Ant. Reg.

7.3 National Executive Coordination

	Prénoms	NOM	Thématique
	<i>First name</i>	<i>Last name</i>	<i>Themes</i>
1	Coumba	LOUM	Genre & Education des filles <i>Gender and girls education</i>
2	Baye	DIONGUE	Education inclusive <i>Inclusive education</i>
3	Amy Sylla	SARR	Protection et Education de la Petite Enfance <i>Early Childhood Education and Protection</i>
4	Ibrahima	FALL	Gouvernance scolaire <i>School Governance</i>
5	Lucien	MEDANG	Education en situation d'urgence <i>Education in Emergency</i>
6	Aboul Aziz	SALL	Alphabétisation, non formel et Form. Prof.

			<i>Literacy, non-formal education and professional training</i>
7	Abass	ATHIE	Revalorisation de la fonction enseignante <i>Revalorisation of the teaching profession</i>
8	Aldiouma	SAGNA	Dialogue social et partenariat <i>Social dialogue et partnership</i>

7.4 Regional Coordination

	Prénom <i>First name</i>	Nom <i>Last name</i>	Région <i>Region</i>
1	Amidou	DIEDHIOU	<i>Ziguinchor</i>
2	Lamine	DIEME	<i>Sédhiou</i>
3	Marthe Eugene Kh. Samb	DIALLO	<i>Louga</i>
4	Louise Diéne	SECK	<i>Tambacounda</i>
5	Yaya	BADJI	<i>Kédougou</i>
6	Abdou Aziz	SECK	<i>Kaffrine</i>
7	Cheikh Tidiane	AW	<i>Kaolack</i>
8	Serigne Mbaye	DIALLO	<i>Fatick</i>
9	Tamba	NGOM	<i>Diourbel</i>
10	Doudou Mbodj	NDIAYE	<i>Matam</i>
11	Khady Fall	WADE	<i>St Louis</i>
12	Bara	TALL	<i>Kolda</i>
13	Seydou	WONE	<i>Thies</i>
14	Fatou	SECK	<i>Dakar</i>

8 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

No.	Nom complet <i>Full name</i>	Type d'organisation <i>Type</i>	Populations ciblées <i>Target population/ audience</i>	Domaine du secteur éducatif <i>Thematic focus</i>	Personne contact <i>Contact</i>	Mail <i>email</i>	Site <i>web</i>
1	ADES Alliance démocratique des enseignants du Sénégal	SYNDICAT	Enseignants-	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation- accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Ibra Diouf Niokhobaye	africapar@gmail.com	Néant
2	SELS syndicat des enseignants libres du Sénégal	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation- accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Souleymane Diallo	julesbango@yahoo.fr	
3	UDEN union démocratique des enseignantes et enseignants du Sénégal	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation- accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Awa Wade	awade7@orange.sn	www.udensenegal.org
4	SUDES syndicat unique des enseignants du Sénégal	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire	Amadou Diaoune	amadou_diaoune@yahoo.fr	www.sudes.sn

				Formation- accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants			
5	SYPROS syndicat des professeurs du Sénégal	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement moyen et secondaire Formation- accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Marième Sakho Dansokho	pfesypros@yahoo.fr	www.sypros.sn
6	SNEEL / FC syndicat national de l'enseignement élémentaire / force du changement	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation- accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Amadou MBAYE	Coucayembaye6979@gmail.com	Néant
7	SAEMS-CUSEMS 6syndicat autonome des enseignants du moyen secondaire du Sénégal cadre unitaire des enseignants du moyen secondaire		Enseignants	Enseignement -moyen et secondaire Formation- accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Mamadou Lamine Diante	saemss@yahoo.fr	www.saemscusems.com
8	SNEEL / CNTS syndicat national des enseignants de l'élémentaire	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation- accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Fatoumata Bintou Yafa	Fatoumatabintouyaffa@yahoo.fr sneel-cnts@orange.sn	www.csfef/snee/.org

9	SAES syndicat autonome des enseignants du supérieur	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement supérieur Formation- accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Seydi Ababacar Ndiaye	sasndiaye@yahoo.fr	www.saes.sn
10	SIENS syndicat des inspectrices et inspecteurs de l'éducation nationale du Sénégal	SYNDICAT	Inspecteurs de l'éducation	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation- accompagnement et défense intérêts des inspecteurs	Samba Diakhate	sambadiakhate@gmail.com	Néant
11	UES union des enseignants du Sénégal	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation- accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Gougna NIANG	Ues.educ@gmail.com	www.ues-educ.com
12	SELS / ORIGINEL syndicat des enseignants libres du Sénégal / originel	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation- accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Oumar Zoumaro	ozoumarou@yahoo.fr	
13	SNEEL syndicat national de l'enseignement élémentaire	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire Formation- accompagnement et	Cheikh Alassane Séne	sneel@sentoo.sn	www.sneel.org

				défense intérêts des enseignants			
14	SYDELS syndicat démocratique des enseignants libres du Sénégal	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation-accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Papa Mamadou Kane	kanepape19@yahoo.fr	Néant
15	OIS / RD organisation des instituteurs du Sénégal / rénovation démocratique	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire Formation-accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Magat Diop	oisrd@yahoo.fr	Néant
16	SELS / AUTH syndicat des enseignants libres du Sénégal / authentique	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation-accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Abdou Faty	abdou_fat@yahoo.fr selsauthentic@yahoo.fr	Néant
17	OIS organisation des instituteurs du Sénégal	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen Formation-accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Hamidou BA	ois1606@yahoo.fr	Néant

18	CUSEMS Cadre unitaire des syndicats d'enseignants	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation-accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Ablaye Ndoye	cusems@gmail.com	www.cusems.sn
19	SDEA syndicat démocratique des enseignants arabisants	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation-accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Abdou Karim Samb	sambsdea@yahoo.fr	Néant
20	SNELAS / CNTS syndicat national démocratique des enseignants en langue arabe du Sénégal	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation-accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Doudou Gaye	doudougaye@gmail.com	Néant
21	SYDELS/O syndicat démocratique des enseignants libres du Sénégal / Originel	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation-accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Alioune Gueye	sydelsoriginel@yahoo.fr dalioune14@yahoo.fr	Néant

22	REEL Rassemblement des éducateurs et enseignants libres	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation-accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Badara Alfred Camara	derflasuma@yahoo.fr	Néant
23	ADEPT Alliance pour la Défense de l'Ecole Publique et des Travailleurs	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation-accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Ndiaga Sylla	adept_sn@yahoo.fr	Néant
24	ODES Organisation Démocratique des Enseignants du Sénégal	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation-accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Ibrahima WANE	ibrahimademba01@gmail.com	Néant
25	SDEA Syndicat Démocratique des Enseignants en Arabe	SYNDICAT	Enseignants	Enseignement élémentaire-moyen et secondaire Formation-accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Abdou Karim Samb	sambsdea@yahoo.fr	Néant
26	ACTION AID	ONGI	femmes et les filles, les jeunes, les personnes handicapées, les	Petite enfance	Aissata Dia	Aissata.dia@actionaid.org	www.actionaid.org/senegal

			groupes défavorisés	Scolarisation Alphabétisation Jeunes non scolarisés			
27	AIDE et ACTION	ONGI	femmes et les filles, les jeunes, les personnes handicapées, les groupes défavorisés	Petite enfance Scolarisation Alphabétisation Jeunes non scolarisés Développement	Amadou Soukouna	aeasenegal@arc.sn	www.aide-et-action.org
28	AISED Association internationale de solidarité et d'entraide pour le développement	ONGI	femmes et les filles, les jeunes, les personnes handicapées, les groupes défavorisés	Petite enfance Scolarisation Alphabétisation Jeunes non scolarisés- Autonomisation des femmes	Mamadou Salla	sallmamadou@hotmail.com	www.aised.org
29	AYCAH Coalition Africaine Des Jeunes Contre La Faim	ONGI	groupes défavorisés	Education – Formation Autonomisation	Zakaria Sambakhé	aycahsenegal2006@yahoo.fr zakariasamb@yahoo.fr	www.aycah.org
30	CNDREAO/SEN Comité de développement des réseaux pour l'éducation en Afrique de l'ouest	ONGI	femmes - filles jeunes- groupes défavorisés	Education de base Petite enfance alphabétisation	Mama Sow	cndreaol@gmail.com	Néant

31	FAWE Forum africain des éducatrices Réseau	ONGI	femmes - filles jeunes- groupes défavorisés	Scolarisation des filles	Adama Mbengue	Mbengue_ndeja@yahoo.fr	www.fawe.org
32	GCAP Appel Mondial Contre la Pauvreté	ONGI	femmes - filles jeunes- groupes vulnérables	Education de base Autonomisation	Oumar Sow	polooumar@yahoo.fr	www.gcap.org
33	Enda Sahel et Afrique de l'Ouest	ONGI	femmes - filles jeunes apprenants- groupes vulnérables	Education Formation Scolarisation exclus du système Scolarisation des filles Gouvernance du système éducatif	Emmanuel Seyni Dione	graf@enda.sn	www.endagrafsahel.org
34	FECSA Femmes Education Culture Santé et Développement en Afrique	ONGI	Femmes-Jeunes	Education, Culture, Santé, l'Entrepreneuriat social et économique	Hélène Rama Niang	fecsa@orange.sn	www.fecsa.org
35	Action 2015/ Sénégal	ONGI	Femmes- Jeunes-Etat- Personnes vulnérables	Education,- changement climatique – Développement	Oumar Sow	action2015senegal@gmail.com	www.action2015.org
36	JED Jeunesse et développement	ONGL	femmes - filles jeunes- groupes vulnérables	Education de base Jeunes non scolarisés	Ibrahima Gueye	ibuguey@yahoo.fr	www.eeds.sn
37	ANAFAN Association Nationale pour l'Alphabétisation et la Formation des Adultes	ONGL	Adultes analphabètes – groupes vulnérables	Education de base des jeunes et des adultes Autonomisation des femmes	Ousmane Faty Ndongo	usmaanfaati@yahoo.fr	www.alfanet.anafa.org

38	FENAPES Fédération nationale des parents d'élèves	ONGL	Apprenants-Parent d'élève-Pouvoirs publics	petite enfance, scolarisation	Bakary Badiane	fenapes@yahoo.fr bacarybfape@yahoo.fr	www.fenapes-senegal.org
39	ALPHA DEV Alphabétiser pour un Développement Durable	ONGL	Adultes et enfants analphabètes	Education de base des jeunes et des adultes Autonomisation des femmes	Mor Diakhate	mdiakhate@ongalphadev.org	www.ongalphadev.org/
40	Collectif National de l'Education Alternative et Populaire CNEAP	ONGL	femmes - filles jeunes apprenants-groupes vulnérables	petite enfance, Education de base-scolarisation des filles	Malick Diop	maalickdiop@gmail.com	
41	PAMOJA/SENEGAL	ONGL	femmes - jeunes Adultes	Education des jeunes et adultes Formation Développement local	Fatou Diouf	feusediouf@hotmail.fr	www.pamoja-senegal.org
42	ANHMS Association nationale des personnes handicapées	ONGL	handicapées	Scolarisation et prise en charge Personnes handicapées	Banda Dieye	bandague@yahoo.fr	www.anhms.org
43	CNEPSCOFI Comité national pour la scolarisation des filles	ONGL	femmes - filles jeunes	Scolarisation des filles Education de base des femmes	Aissatou Niang	aissatoungly@yahoo.fr	www.cnepscofi.org
44	FAFS Fédération des femmes sénégalaises	ONGL	Femmes- Filles-Enfants Association de femme	Education Formation Autonomisation des femmes	Abibatou Ndiaye	fafsnationale@yahoo.fr	

45	ASPROCIDE Association sénégalaise pour la promotion de la citoyenneté et du développement	Organisation de terrain	femmes - filles jeunes- groupes défavorisés	Education de base des jeunes et des adultes Formation Lutte contre la pauvreté Gouvernance locale	Sidy DIOP,	asprocide@gmail.com diop.sidy@gmail.com	www.asprocide.sitew.com
48	ROCARE Réseau Ouest et Centre Africain de Recherche en Education	ONG	femmes - filles jeunes apprenants- groupes vulnérables Education Développement local Droits humains	Education- recherche- santé – développement	Ousmane GUEYE	rocarsen@enda.sn	www.rocare.org
49	ONG 3D Décentralisation Droits Humains Développement Local	ONGL	femmes - filles jeunes - groupes vulnérables	Education Développement local Droits humains	Moundiaïe Cissé	mc-ruf@orange.sn	www.ong3d.org
50	ADHIS Action Humaine pour le Développement Intégré au Sénégal	ONGL	femmes - filles jeunes apprenants- groupes vulnérables	Scolarisation Développement local Alphabétisation formation	Amacodou Diouf	Amacodou1@orange.sn	www.ahdis.org
51	CORIPH Conseil pour la réadaptation et	Organisation communautaire	Jeunes- Femmes-filles	Education- réadaptation- intégration- développement	Papa Samba Sall	coriph2002@yahoo.fr	

	l'intégration des personnes handicapées						
52	DEFI Développement par l'Education, la Formation et l'Insertion	ONGL	femmes - filles jeunes apprenants- groupes vulnérables	Education de base Jeunes non scolarisés Alphabétisation Formation environnement	Ibrahima Lô	ongdefi@yahoo.fr	Néant
54	REJEF réseau des journalistes en éducation et en formation	Organisation de terrain	Journalistes- spécialiste de la communication et de l'information	Scolarisation Formation- accompagnement et défense intérêts des enseignants	Adama Diouf Ly	dioufly@yahoo.fr	Néant
55	PPDH Plateforme pour la protection et la promotion des Droits humains	Organisation de terrain	femmes - filles jeunes – Exclus du système éducatif - groupes vulnérables- Groupes marginalisés	Scolarisation Protection et promotion droits	Mamadou Ndiaye Daara		
56	Association des Facilitatrices Africaine AFA/ NENUPHAR	Organisation communautaire	Femmes-Filles- Jeunes	Scolarisation- Alphabétisation- Autonomisation des femmes- Développement communautaire	Penda Seck Diouf	nenuphar54@yahoo.fr	
57	IMAGE ET VIE	Organisation communautaire	Jeunes	Education- Art et culture	Mahmoud Kane	image_vie@hotmail.com	www.image-vie.org
58	ONG CESES Centre d'Education Spécialisée	Organisation communautaire	femmes - filles jeunes	Scolarisation Enfants handicapés	papa Oumar FAYE	ceida@ceida-sn.com	www.ceida-sn.com

	des Enfants Sourds (CESES)						
59	ADES (associations pour le développement et l'entraide de Sébikotane)	Organisation communautaire	Jeunes-filles, garçons-femmes	Développement local- Education- Environnement-Santé	Ousmane Diallo	Diallodieri2@hotmail.com	www. ades-sebikotane.fr.gd/
60	Association pour l'entreprenariat et l'entre aide sociale "GROUPE JAAM"	Organisation communautaire	Jeunes- Filles- Femmes	Scolarisation des adultes, Santé- formation réinsertion et autonomisation des femmes	Alioune Badara Dione Thiandoum	groupejaam@yahoo.fr	Néant
61	CDEFS				Mansour Ndiaye	ibnalioune@yahoo.fr	
62	RESEP				Ibrahima Sall	ibousn2000@yahoo.fr	
63	AJED (ASSOCIATION DES JEUNES POUR L'EDUCATION ET LE DEVELOPPEMENT)	Organisation communautaire	Jeunes	Lutte contre la pauvreté, sécurité alimentaire, formation	Yaya Ndiaye	ajed@sentoo.sn	Néant
64	Association Culturelle d'Aide à la Promotion Educative Sociale de Rufisque	Organisation communautaire		Formation, développement local (initiatives de quartier, développement municipal, coopération nord-sud), activités économiques de femmes,	Momar NDOYE		
66	Association Culturelle d'Aide à la promotion Educative et Sociale	Organisation communautaire	Enfance, femmes, jeunes, handicapés	Formation, développement local (initiatives de quartier, développement municipal, coopération nord-sud), activités économiques de femmes,	Abdoul H. SY	acapes@metissacana.sn	www.acapes.org

9 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION CONSULTED

- Pour la Refondation de l'Éducation et de la Formation au Sénégal: Le Livre Blanc sur l'École Sénégalaise, COSYDEP, juin 2014.
- Livret de Capitalisation de Bonnes Pratiques en Matière d'Éducation Inclusive, COSYDEP, juin 2014
- COSYDEP application proposal to CSEF Programme 2013-2014
- COSYDEP Plan D'Intervention Stratégique, 2011
- COSYDEP Articles of Incorporation.
- Rapport sur la gouvernance de la COSYDEP (Report on COSYDEP Governance), ANCEFA, Bureau de Lomé, août 2014
- Rapport Mission de Suivi, ANCEFA, Bureau de Lomé, juin 2014





Institute for
Development Impact

Case Study Report – VAEFA Vietnam

Undertaken As Part Of An Independent
Evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)
Programme 2013-2015 for the Global Campaign For
Education

October 2015

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASPBAE	Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education
CPV	Communist Party of Vietnam
CSEF	Civil Society Education Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DP	Development Partner
DP Hanoi	Hanoi Association for People with Disabilities
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EFA	Education for All
ESG	Education Sector Group
GAW	Global Action Week
GCE	Global Campaign For Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
VAPE	Vietnam Association for Promoting Education
VAEFA	Vietnam Association of Education For All
VNIES	Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the external evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) (2013-15) requested by the Global Campaign for Education, the Institute for Development Impact (IDI) conducted seven country case studies. The evaluation aimed to contribute to GCE's ability to respond to challenges and objectives by identifying the emerging impact of the CSEF programme, provide evidence of the effectiveness of its design and implementation model, and derive learning from implemented processes and structures to influence and strengthen future programming.

The Vietnam case study was conducted by a field visit with the Vietnam Association of Education For All (VAEFA) from August 10-14, 2015. Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with development partners, coalition member organizations, coalition board members, coalition staff, and the staff from the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET). A complete list of interviewees and organisations included in the case study can be found in Section 6 of this report.

The coalition in Vietnam has successfully contributed to the overall aim of the CSEF programme through its contribution to the achievement of national education goals in Vietnam and EFA by ensuring the effective participation of CSOs and citizens in education debates and sector planning and review. VAEFA has made notable contributions to the area of policy participation (CSEF Programme Objective 1) through its active engagement with education policy makers, and through its implementation of pilot projects which effectively contributed to changes in government policy and plans (Objective 3). Based on the findings detailed in this report, recommendations are made in the following three key areas: 1) strengthened coalition objectives and roles, 2) increased member engagement and communication and, 3) further investment in training and capacity building.

Although the coalition was legally registered in 2015, since its inception in 2010, VAEFA has been mobilizing local actors, increasing membership, and establishing a portfolio of projects. The Board members include prominent figures that are retired public servants who are recognized for their contribution to society, particularly in the education sector. This is seen as an important leverage to open doors for the coalition to participate in education policy discussions. Despite increased openness, the place for civil society discussion and debate in Vietnam is still limited. In this context, the coalition is lauded for its ability to create opportunities for CSOs to discuss education policy in public forums.

The coalition is effective in utilising a pilot project methodology for education advocacy to influence policy makers on specific initiatives. The pilot project approach is used to influence policy makers in Vietnam by showing evidence of successful new approaches that can be taken to scale by government actors. These low cost innovative solutions are seen as an effective way to engage education authorities and civil society actors to raise awareness. This is seen as a particularly effective method for improving access to quality education for disadvantaged groups in Vietnam. VAEFA effectively use these projects to develop the capacity of its members through the implementation of the pilot projects.

2 STATUS OF EDUCATION IN VIETNAM

More than 99% of primary school aged children in Vietnam are enrolled in school, and literacy rates for persons over 15 are 93%¹. Following the rapid shift to a market economy, the widening gap between the rich and the poor, and subsequent increased urbanization and migration, disadvantaged populations in Vietnam have been left on the margins of society and without access to a quality education. Primary school enrolment rates are significantly lower, and drop-out rates are significantly higher for ethnic minority children in Vietnam.

According to national statistics, there are 7 million persons with disabilities, of which 1 million are deaf. Access to education for those persons is very limited, because of the lack of qualified teaching staff and facilities. Gender gaps have been drastically reduced but gaps exist between girls' and boys' achievement, especially in ethnic minority groups. Schools in remote mountainous areas are consistently the most disadvantaged, sometimes lacking safe play spaces, proper hygiene facilities and learning materials. According to UNICEF, about 52% of children with disabilities do not attend school. Meanwhile the cost of education continues to increase significantly, with the average household expenditure on education and training having more than doubled since 2002.

3 OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION COALITION IN VIETNAM -VAEFA

VAEFA was established in 2010 with the support of the GCE, ASPBAE and the International Non-governmental Organizations' (INGO) working group on the Global Action Week for education. There are 38 member organizations that are generally concentrated in Hanoi and include associations that work with marginalized populations and research institutes.

Initiatives to form the coalition began in 2010 and were greatly assisted by ASPBAE CSEF regional staff that supported efforts to influence education policies and programmes. The coalition was officially recognized by the government in 2015, after which the name of the coalition was officially changed from the Vietnam Coalition for the Education For All (VCEFA) to the Vietnam Association for the Education For All (VAEFA)². The process for achieving legal status was greatly assisted by the MOET who issued a letter to the Ministry of Home Affairs to certify the legitimacy of the coalition's work. Since legal status has been granted, the coalition plans to expand the network. CSEF funding covers 100% of the costs of the coalition staff and activities.

¹ UNICEF Vietnam statistics at a glance total adult literacy rate 2008-2012, and primary school net enrollment rate 2008-2011.

² For the purposes of this evaluation, and for continuity with the CSEF global initiative, the VAEFA will continue to be referred to as a coalition although it should be noted that in Vietnam it is now legally referred to as an association with the acronym VAEFA.

3.1 Mission Statement

To create a common voice of local civil society organizations via policy advocacy work aimed at contributing to the achievement of the EFA goals by 2015 through engagement with the Government of Vietnam, and to sustainably maintain results thereafter.

3.2 Coalition Objectives

The Coalition has defined the following objectives as priorities:

- To advocate the government and donors to develop education policies, budgets and programmes in line with the EFA goals.
- Monitor and support the Government, donors and stakeholders to implement their pledge of EFA.
- Promote and support the building of a learning society in Vietnam.

4 FINDINGS

The analysis and findings of the case study have been structured against the standard evaluation criteria adopted by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). These criteria were used to detail the evaluation questions during inception and also to structure the evaluation report. The criteria are defined as follows:

- Relevance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Sustainability
- Impact

4.1 Relevance

Relevance is defined as ‘The extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor.’³ The evaluation team’s assessment of programme relevance was based on the analysis of the national and local context, the challenges for strengthening policy making and civil society participation in the educational sector and the needs and priorities of various stakeholders (e.g. CSOs, capacity building, etc.).

Given the context of civil society in Vietnam, where support for a collective identity outside the framework of the CPV was just beginning to emerge, there was a recognized need for associations like VAEFA. Such umbrella organizations either did not exist or were not traditionally invited to engage in public debates on policy. It was within this context that

³ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

VAEFA was established. Stakeholder interviews confirmed that there was a need for coordination of civil society actors in education and that VAEFA was recognized as the body to fulfil that role.

4.1.1 Strategy Of Engagement With Government

The coalition engages with the government through technical working sessions and by organizing policy dialogues, workshops, and forums where policy makers and MOET officials and CSOs are invited.

“...we need a system to be created by the government to support implementation [of the law]. We need coordination...”

–Government Respondent

VAEFA also conducts consultative one-on-one meetings with relevant education policy makers to bring recommendations from the coalition. The Chair of the Board of VAEFA is a former education minister, which enables the coalition’s strong relationships with government. The members of the coalition highly value the relationships the coalition has with government bodies and their ability to leverage these relationships to advocate for changes in the law that relate to their work on the ground.

Following training and successful implementation of pilot project activities, VAEFA holds ‘technical working sessions’ and ‘policy dialogue meetings’ with representatives of the MOET, Vietnam Women’s Union, VNIES, the Association for Community Health Care, and the Family Department under the Ministry of Culture Information Sport and Tourism. The results of project activities are presented in technical working sessions to demonstrate the demand for greater government intervention. VAEFA also plays an active role with its member, the Institute of Research and Development of Human Potential (IPD), in advocating the National Assembly to include children up to three years old in the Law on Care and Protection of Children.

One recent example of how VAEFA’s engagement with government has resulted in positive changes in education policy is the work they did to improve the school examination process. VAEFA collected recommendations from members through consultative meetings to propose changes to the laws on education that have been initiated by the government’s comprehensive education reform process begun in 2013. As a result of these consultative meetings, the coalition made recommendations to improve and combine two national school exams into one exam, which was accepted by the government and implemented in July 2015.

“...we encourage VAEFA to participate in the joint monitoring implementation missions for the Vietnam new school model...”

–Development Partner

VAEFA participates in the Education Sector Working Group (ESG), which was reported to work under a rigid structure supervised by the MOET. The agenda of the ESG is set by the MOET and co-chaired by UNESCO, with little room for influence from civil

society. The coalition regularly attends the monitoring activities and learning sessions of the GPE funded project.

Considering the tradition of centralized decision-making and the importance of protocols, the active engagement of the coalition in this sphere of policy debate is a challenge. There was evidence that this environment is evolving and that government is working to develop the space for open policy discussion based on proposed changes to the laws on associations and NGOs. The active engagement and presence of former senior government officials in the civil society sector is seen as a bridge to support this changing environment.

4.1.2 Synergies With Member Priorities

The highest policy-making body of the coalition is the general assembly which consists of all members. Coalition members set priorities during participatory strategic planning sessions, which are reviewed annually. This strategic plan is the basis from which the Board takes its directions for decision-making. Members that are interested in working with the coalition in the targeted areas are requested to send in proposals, ideas and concept notes to develop an implementation plan with VAEFA.

The main areas where the coalition prioritizes its activities are work with the hearing disabled, early childhood care and education, and non-formal education for youth and adult through the Community Learning Centres. Implementing small pilot projects with member organizations that specialize in these areas is recognized as an effective way to create synergy amongst coalition members. VAEFA effectively uses these projects to provide capacity building training of member organizations implementing the projects.

Training provided by the coalition increases members' capacity to participate more actively in education issues. Members highly regard this role of the coalition and VAEFA is recognized by respondents as an advocate for disabled populations.

VAEFA is invited to co-chair the Global Action Week campaign with the MOET. This is considered a key opportunity for community dialogue with local government and a chance to raise public awareness on education issues. VAEFA ensures that member organizations that work with disadvantaged groups, and are traditionally marginalized from public events, participate in the week's activities. Respondent interviews indicated that VAEFA's role on the GAW could be strengthened by monitoring the promises made by the government during the campaign, and coordinating greater involvement of international actors.

4.1.3 Networking, Mobilizations

The coalition is successful in mobilizing support from the local community through the pilot projects. Based on the initial funding provided by VAEFA for the pilot projects, member organizations are able to leverage this support for scaling up initiatives in other locations. This ability to mobilize funding greatly increases the impact of the CSEF programme inputs.

There is a recognized need for VAEFA to do more networking to include the active participation of international partners in coalition activities. Many stakeholders indicated that VAEFA should consider additional ways of engaging with INGOs to mobilize more support on the issues they have prioritized. Expanding membership to international organizations was suggested during the evaluation as a way to have more visible engagement with the

government (although the legal framework for local associations does not allow international organizations to be members). VAEFA recognizes the need for increased INGO participation in its activities, adding that such involvement could improve the dynamics of the coalition.

Respondent feedback indicated that through its role on the GAW, VAEFA could strengthen opportunities for networking with INGOs, government and development partners. Development partners indicated that VAEFA should have the role to monitor and coordinate follow up action after the Global Action Week.

4.1.4 Training

In order to build the capacity of members to monitor government implementation on education policies, VAEFA facilitates training in areas where needs have been identified. Training on budget tracking, analysis and advocacy is provided by ASPBAE in Vietnam, and by local experts on the privatization of education. VAEFA also provides project cycle management training to partners to assist in identifying beneficiaries and monitoring project implementation.

In addition to capacity building training, VAEFA also includes training as an integral element of all advocacy activities. VAEFA funded a pilot project with the Institute of Research and Development of Human Potential that developed a model for training parents and caretakers of children from 0-3 in community. The training was organized through community clubs and feedback on the value and impact of the training was used to demonstrate the benefit of such activities to the local government.

In cooperation with the Vietnam Association for Promotion of Education (VAPE), VAEFA provided training to Community Learning Centres (CLC) on using a data management system that would improve planning and resource allocation in the centres. An assessment on the use of CLC data management software was conducted in seven provinces throughout Vietnam in order to inform the government on the usefulness of the software in generating government education reports and data collection to inform education policy and management. The assessment was used to expand the use of this software in all provinces of Vietnam. The training for using this software was replicated in 37 provinces.

VAEFA also piloted the first ever sign language training course in Community Education Centres that targeted the deaf and their family members⁴. Following the successful completion of this training, the MOET acknowledged the contribution this project made not only to the social integration and improved access to education for the deaf, but also to national efforts to eliminate illiteracy. Efforts to replicate this training on a broad scale are underway.

⁴ According to 2009 National Statistics there are nearly 7 million people in Vietnam with disabilities, approximately 1 million of which are deaf.

4.1.5 Gender Equality

EFA Goal 5 which calls for an elimination of “gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education in 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls’ full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality”⁵ was given consideration in the planning process of coalition initiatives. The coalition reports having conducted an initial assessment on gender equality in ethnic minority areas. This assessment is planned to be used for further research on the obstacles to access basic education of ethnic minority women.

Women are well represented on the board and staff of VAEFA. Two of the seven board members are women, and the office staff of two is 100% female. However, it was also noted during the evaluation that there is a recognizable lack of female representation in executive or decision making positions.

4.1.6 Mechanisms For Ensuring Stakeholder Involvement In Planning And Implementation

Coalition members set priorities during participatory strategic planning sessions, which are reviewed annually. Another means through which members participate in the planning and implementation of the activities of the coalition is through the submission of proposals. Coalition members lead specific activities which encourage active participation and ownership. VAEFA takes the lead when activities cover more than one specific area such as education reform, capacity building and education financing.

Most of the members of the coalition come from small organizations that do not have many resources. Members expressed during the evaluation that greater effort needs to be placed on recruiting more dynamic participation on the steering board of the coalition. Since legal status has recently been granted, future plans include an intention to extend outreach to the south in an effort to strengthen the grass roots foundation of the coalition.

“There needs to be more clarity on the role and responsibilities of the VAEFA office and the Board, in terms of management and governance...”

–Board Member

4.1.7 Learning And Best Practice

During the evaluation, there was an implicitly expressed desire from coalition members to be able to learn from the experiences of other coalitions. VAEFA describes its role in this context as supporting members to have access to international experiences that are brought back to share locally and inform member activities in Vietnam.

“The role of VAEFA is to bring knowledge and an international connection to the education sector in Vietnam.”

–Coalition Member

⁵ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/efa-goals/>

“If VAEFA could identify schools and places where sign language is professionally organized and supported institutionally, we would like to see that and learn from that experience. We want to find out if deaf people around the world communicate in the same way.”

–Coalition Member

Member organizations see this ‘internationalism’ as an added benefit for which they rely on VAEFA. Toward this aim, VAEFA facilitated several member organizations to participate in regional training events and study tours. A learning visit to Mongolia to visit a school for the deaf, facilitated with the support of ASPBAE was seen by

members as a valuable learning experience. This study visit was identified to strengthen the inclusive education framework of VAEFA based on the experiences of the Mongolian coalition. The CSEF programme in Vietnam is seen as a critical element to facilitating these type of opportunities for learning and exposure to best practices in education from around the globe.

The Global Action Week was frequently cited as an opportunity for the coalition to facilitate exchange of experiences and broader learning across different organizations working in the education sector. During the evaluation fieldwork, “institutional boundaries” were noted as being a possible obstacle that prevents VAEFA from promoting a greater exchange of experience with international and local organizations during the GAW campaign.

A coalition member noted that an important lesson they had learned was that policy makers in Vietnam want to see ‘real results’. VAEFA was skilfully providing these ‘real results’ to the government via the successful implementation of pilot projects. VAEFA

“This work is changing the lives of ordinary people and has the potential of making a difference on the larger level by showing the government good practice examples and influencing policy in this way.”

–Coalition Member

uses the examples of best practice from the pilot projects to demonstrate a need for government to further support these initiatives on a broader scale, either through funding or policy change. The sign language training pilot project, as well as the pilot projects on Early Childhood Care and Development and data management in the Community Learning Centres were implemented in small areas but were demonstratively successful because of their ability to show government representatives that not only was there a great demand for these services, but that scaling up of similar training was possible through structures which already existed. The efficiency of the pilot projects to effect large scale policy changes and improvements to educational services was noted as an area where this experience could be shared with coalitions working in similar contexts.

4.2 Effectiveness

The OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance defines effectiveness as, ‘a measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives’.⁶ Based on the CSEF programme Theory of Change (logical framework/results framework) the evaluation team

⁶ OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance-
<http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.html>

analysed to what extent the results obtained from the implementation of activities have contributed to the attainment of the planned objectives.

Due to formal processes required for the coalition to gain legal status, and the political context of Vietnam in which government is wary of independent groups engaging in advocacy, legal status was not established until 2015. VAEFA is therefore limited in its capacities to expand and therefore relies entirely on the CSEF programme for support. However, the coalition has been effective in engaging in policy dialogue and influencing policy formulation within these limiting contextual factors.

4.2.1 Policy Formulation

VAEFA plays a role in the formulation of education policy through direct consultative meetings with education policy makers after the successful implementation of pilot projects. In cooperation with the MOET and the Vietnam National Institute of Educational Sciences (VNIES), VAEFA identified the following additional policies and key actions needed to allow for the expansion of sign language training for both the deaf, and their family members in Community Education Centres throughout Vietnam:

- Official approval of sign language training and programme/curriculum by MOET
- Instruction from MOET to provincial level departments of education to carry out sign language training in continuing education centres
- Local centres to include sign language training in annual budget

VAEFA held technical working sessions and policy dialogues with the MOET, the Vietnam Women's Union, VNIES, the Association for Community Health Care, the Department of Family under the Ministry of Culture Information Sport and Tourism after their initiative to support early childhood care and education for children under five in community clubs in two provinces. These dialogues contributed to proposed changes to the Law on Care and Protection of Children, which were drafted and will be submitted for approval in November 2015.

Stakeholders that were actively involved in the Education Sector Working Group (ESG) did not see VAEFA as an active member of this policy forum. Although VAEFA is recognized as a participant and is invited to increase their role in these policy forums, this is not an avenue through which the coalition is able to influence policy.

4.2.2 Evidence-based Advocacy

An effective and successful way that VAEFA conducts advocacy is through the implementation of pilot projects. Through the successful implementation of the pilot projects evidence is collected by coalition members to convince the government that there is a demand for a particular activity and that it is having an impact that could be scaled up for greater impact. The demand for the services provided during pilot project implementation succeed in demonstrating to the government the existing gaps in education programmes and policies for the poor and marginalized. The scaling up or replication of the pilot projects are an important element of VAEFA's advocacy with the government.

The technical meetings and policy dialogues that VAEFA facilitates following pilot project activities are necessary to convince the government that there is sufficient evidence to make these projects a government funded programme. The coalition is largely successful in this endeavour and is seen to have transformed the pilot projects on sign language training and early childhood care into programmes that would be funded by the government in the future. Training for community learning centre staff on applying data management software was also hugely successful in convincing government to provide funding for an additional 37 trainings in the remaining 19 provinces in Vietnam (the pilot project by VAEFA covered the other 7 provinces).

In order to promote early childhood care of children ages 0-5 years old, VAEFA partnered with its member, the Institute of Research and Development of Human Potential (IPD) to introduce a model of early childhood care and education in community clubs. As a result of this pilot training a series of technical working sessions and policy dialogues were held with government representatives and community associations that included media coverage. VAEFA, with the IPD, advocated to the National Assembly to make subsequent changes to the law, which were later included in the latest draft of the law, which is to be submitted for approval in November 2015.

VAEFA together with member organization, Hanoi Association of People with Disability (DP Hanoi), piloted a project for sign language training for deaf persons and their families in Community Education Centres (CEC). This type of training for deaf people had never been offered before by any CEC and established a precedent for which further similar models would be developed to reach marginalized populations like the deaf. Based on this project VAEFA, MOET, and the Vietnam Institute for Educational Science (VNIES), identified additional policies and actions required to establish further trainings and funding for other CECs to carry out such training for deaf persons and their families.

Another way in which VAEFA engages in advocacy is by conducting public discussions/forums. In 2013 the Vietnamese government initiated a comprehensive education reform process. In order to provide the government with feedback from the civil society sector, VAEFA organized several consultations and policy dialogues with education experts and CSOs. Recommendations were then made to streamline the exam process by combining national exams at the high school and university level into one exam. This recommendation was accepted and implemented in July 2015 and is one of many recommendations the coalition continues to pursue in the on-going educational reform process.

4.2.3 Credibility And Visibility

The credibility of the coalition within its member organizations is very high. The VAEFA President (or Chairman as he was also referred to by members) is a former Vice Minister of Education with over 20 years of experience. His experience is held in high regard and provides access to education policy makers. VAEFA is well recognized as an organization that promotes the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Members value the ability of the coalition to engage on policy dialogue with government officials and perceive the government as listening to the recommendations brought forward

by VAEFA. Despite only recently having been granted legal status, the Deputy Prime Minister has invited VAEFA for three consultative meetings in a short period of time.

Despite being recognized as credible and visible within a small group of local communities, the visibility of the CSEF programme and VAEFA at the national level is not strong. This is attributed to a lack of human and financial resources. Consistent feedback from stakeholders at the national level did not see or understand clearly the role of VAEFA beyond its co-ordinating role of the Global Action Week campaign.

4.3 Efficiency

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines efficiency as, 'Measuring the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs.'⁷ Efficiency was analysed in terms of how well the programme is organized for delivering its work with regard to managerial and budget efficiency. The evaluation team analysed efficiency based on the assessment of outputs/ activities in relation to programme inputs, costs and planned timelines.

4.3.1 Coalition Development Systems

VAEFA was noted to function in a centralized and traditional way that is focused on the actions of the board members. While the strategic planning process has been undertaken in a participatory way that includes input from all coalition members, the day to day operations of the coalition could be characterized as formal. A traditional way of operating has been referred to here in order to explain a decision making and operational style where there is little room for discussion or variations in daily decision making and implementation. Evaluation interviews and focus group discussions supported this observation. While not recognized as a viable legal option, registering as an international organization was seen by one respondent to be a more effective way to influence policy and partner with organizations that had a stronger voice.

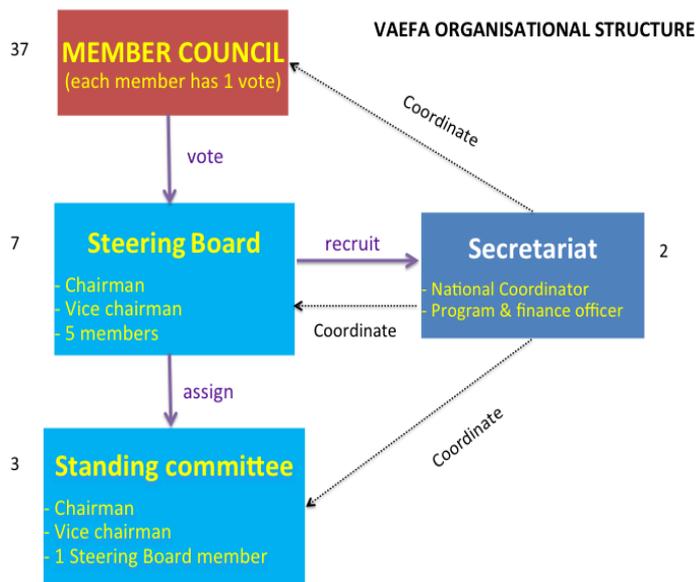
Members reported that the project timeline was too short and that another phase was necessary for project implementation to have a more lasting impact.

4.3.2 Financial Management Systems

Financial and narrative reports were reported as being shared with members and stakeholders at the national level.

⁷ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

4.3.3 Performance Management Systems



Members reported being very satisfied with the support of VAEFA, especially with the technical assistance that is provided throughout implementation. VAEFA members also highly value the ability of the coalition Board members to effect policy change with government officials.

Based on respondent feedback and evaluator observations, there is a lack of clarity on coalition roles and responsibilities. In a slide presentation VAEFA defined their purpose as, “To create a common voice of local civil society organizations via policy advocacy work aiming at contributing to and engagement with Vietnam’s ...”. During the evaluation fieldwork, coalition members described VAEFA’s role to facilitate members’ work and learning *internationally* as opposed to facilitating learning within the coalition. One coalition member added that, “without translation into English our good work and examples cannot be shared.” While this quote has been taken out of context, it has been used here as an example to emphasize a common theme that was noted during the field work. This is not to detract from the positive work of the coalition in policy development, but to point out a lack of clarity in its mandate and roles. Furthermore, while organizational charting is typically seen as a way to systematically clarify relationships, the organizational structure as presented by VAEFA in the chart above does not contribute to creating clarity of organizational roles. During field work interviews, concern was expressed about the small VAEFA staffing capacity (two persons), and while the staff was noted to be competent and qualified, they are limited by a lack of decision-making capacity.

4.4 Sustainability

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines sustainability as being ‘concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after

donor funding has been withdrawn.’⁸ The evaluation team reviewed sustainability factors in terms of programme design, process, implementation and national context.

The coalition is in the early stages of development and still establishing a foundational structure upon which further work can be developed. Without further financial and technical investments it is unlikely that results will be sustainable. Sustainability of the coalition is directly dependent on the continued support of CSEF. The financial support provided through the CSEF programme is critical to maintain the on-going successful relationships with education officials that would enable the coalition to expand its role.

The funding the VAEFA provides to member organizations is significant in that it is used as leverage to kick-start the community into action. Increased technical competencies in organizational and programme management need continued development for the coalition to effectively convene larger groups within the civil society context. This greater range of competencies is generally seen as necessary for the coalition to be able to attract wider donor and member interest.

4.5 Impact

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines impact as, ‘The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.’⁹ The evaluation team examined to what extent the programme increases local capacities in a way, which contributes, to their better access and participation as measured by increased skills, abilities and knowledge. When assessing the programme’s impact, the evaluation team considered the longer-term benefits intended in the CSEF design, some of which may not have been fully realized yet.

The impact of VAEFA activities is clearly demonstrated by an increased capacity of coalition member organizations to be able to prepare and implement project proposals, to engage with the Government on education policy, and an overall increased confidence to participate in advocacy work. The impact of public forums to discuss education policies that are facilitated by VAEFA in order to engage CSOs with education policy makers is just beginning to emerge. The success of these platforms is demonstrated by the confidence of CSOs to further engage on policy issues. This is significant for a country where the public space for debate on government policy is still seen to be very controlled.

The implementation of pilot project proposals has increased access to education for the nearly one million Vietnamese persons who are hearing disabled. VAEFA has also had a positive impact on improving the quality of care provided to children under the age of three and increased the awareness amongst primary care-givers on the importance of the first 1000 days of a child’s life. VAEFA activities have improved the operational management of Community Learning Centres to allocate resources in more than 37 provinces throughout

⁸ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

⁹ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

Vietnam. While the pilot projects are small scale, they have resulted in substantial impacts on changes to education policies that improve the access to quality education for disadvantaged groups in Vietnam.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The findings of this case study provide a strong basis for drawing conclusions about the direction of VAEFA and the issues the coalition will face in the scope of the CSEF framework. The following conclusions are based on the Expected Results (ERs) outlined in the CSEF programme objectives.

Objective 1 Policy Participation

VAEFA participates in the ESG and was invited by development partners to increase its role in the ESG. The ESG is seen as a restrictive policy forum and not an avenue where civil society was able to influence policy. Alternatively, VAEFA initiates platforms/forums where a greater number of local CSOs are able to participate in public discussions on policy with education policy makers.

Objective 2 Public Awareness and Coalition Building

VAEFA is recognized in the education sector as an organization that works to support the rights of disadvantaged populations. Having recently gained legal status, the coalition is in the early phases of expanding its membership to include a broader range of grass roots civil society actors. VAEFA hosts public discussions on educational issues but lacks the capacity to organize advocacy campaigns that sustain public awareness on critical education issues.

Objective 3 High Quality Research, Monitoring and Analysis

VAEFA has been enormously successful in effecting policy change through the implementation of pilot projects, and engagement with education policy makers through technical consultations and advocacy. VAEFA's staffing capacity does not enable it to take on monitoring exercises, but development partners identified a role where a VAEFA monitoring presence could be included to monitor government promises during the GAW.

Objective 4 Cross Country Learning and Networks for Change

The Regional Secretariat is instrumental in providing technical and staffing assistance to the coalition. The coalition is more than satisfied with the contributions of the regional secretariat. Members especially value their participation in the coalition for the opportunities to learn from regional and international experiences.

Recommendations

Based on the findings detailed in this report there are three key areas for recommendations:

- Strengthening of Coalition Objectives and Roles
- Increasing Member Engagement and Communication
- Training and Capacity Building

5.1 Strengthening Coalition Objectives And Roles

The coalition is very clear about the areas where it has prioritized its work and as such they are recognized by others as activists for the promotion of education for the hearing impaired, early childhood education, and adult education. This clarity needs to be carried over into more clearly defined objectives that allow the coalition to reach a broader base of members. In order to increase the participation of grassroots organizations a stronger mandate on how the coalition seeks to collect the voices of members would strengthen its role. The decision making and planning process should be considered in a way that allows for more open dialogue amongst members.

There were indications throughout the evaluation that the roles of the staff and board members need further clarification. This lack of clarity within the organization is also manifest in how others, who are not closely working with the coalition, see VAEFA. Clearly defined roles and work-plans would contribute to the transparency and buy-in from organizations with whom the coalition has plans to further cooperate with. The CSEF programme could support this by ensuring that national coalitions like VAEFA inform relevant stakeholders about CSEF supported activities and share reporting processes with organizations outside the coalition.

5.2 Increasing Member Engagement And Communication

An important challenge for the coalition is developing mechanisms for increased member engagement and support. In its coordinating role for the GAW, VAEFA has the opportunity to engage more INGOs and UN agencies at the national level. The Global Action Week is recognized as a good opportunity for VAEFA to create more community dialogue with local government and to facilitate action week events that promote open discussion. Through the development of longer-term engagement with such actors, VAEFA should be using the CSEF programme to capitalize on these opportunities for greater advocacy through this campaign.

While viewed with cautious optimism, the space for civil society to participate in the public debate on policy making is seen to be increasing in Vietnam. This presents an opportunity for the coalition to develop a systematic outreach to organizations outside of the current network using a wider range of media tools to increase communication channels. Training and facilitation in participatory methods of communication would smartly complement a traditional way of operating.

5.3 Coalition Training And Capacity Building

In order for VAEFA to develop towards sustainable results, continued institutional support through the CSEF programme is necessary. The coalition has demonstrated an adeptness at mobilizing funds locally, which can be strengthened with greater management and

programmatic capacities. Recognition of Vietnam’s tremendous progress in EFA should be more actively captured to support the administrative capacity of the coalition.

Meanwhile further support should be provided for VAEFA’s pilot project model of advocacy that expands on the training and capacity development of member organizations implementing the projects. This model was seen as an effective use of resources for the funding that it mobilized, but also because of the programmatic training that is provided to members. As more sophisticated models of evidenced-based advocacy are introduced, the coalition requires a stronger investment in organizational capacity.

6 LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Following is a list of those people interviewed for the evaluation during the field visit to Vietnam in August 2015.

1. Ms. Mai Chai, Vice Director - IPD (Institute for Human Potential of Education Development Research)
2. Ms. Son, Expert – IPD
3. Ms. Diep, Vice President – DP Hanoi (Hanoi Association for Promoting Education)
4. Ms. Hanh, Director – CEPEW (Centre for Education Promotion and Empowerment for Women)
5. Mr. Tuan, Director – Center for Supporting and Job Orientation for Autistic Children
6. Vice Director – Thanh Xuan Continuing Education Center (Thanh Xuan CEC)
7. Ms. Ngan, Chair Woman – Thahn Xuan District Association of People with Disabilities
8. Mr. Linh, Chairman – Hanoi Association for the Deaf
9. Ms. PhamThi Ngoc Hai – literacy expert Department of Continuing Education, MOET
10. Mr. Dong Van Binh – continuing education expert Department of Continuing Education
11. Mr. Tac – Expert Center for Special Education Research (VNIES)
12. Ms. Kim Anh – National Coordinator VAEFA
13. Ms. Than Hang – Program/Finance Officer VAEFA
14. Ms. Hong – Chair Woman Gia Lam Women’s Union
15. Ms. Sun Lei – Education Program Coordinator UNESCO
16. Ms. Nhung – Education Sector Manager Child Fund
17. Ms. Nga – Government Relations and Advocacy Officer World Vision
18. Ms. Helen Dabu – Deputy Regional Coordinator ASPBAE
19. Mr. Nhi – President VAEFA

7 VAEFA MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

1	Vietnam Association for Promoting Education (VAPE)	Tran Xuan Nhi	Vice Chairman
2	Center for Raising the Intellectual Standards of People (CRISOP)	Bui Khac Cu	Director
3	Vietnam Association for Protection of Children's Rights (VACR)	Tran Thi Thanh Thanh	Chairwoman

4	Association for community health education and caring of Vietnam	Vu Oanh	Chairman
5	Centre for Education Promotion and Empowerment for Women (CEPEW)	Vuong Thi Hanh	Director
6	Centre for Non formal education and community development (CENEV)	Nguyen Thi Van	Director
7	HaTinh Center for Community Development (HCCD)	Le Van Dinh	Director
8	Center for Support and Development of Education and Culture (E&C Center)	Le Kim Thanh	Director
9	Consultancy and Technology Transfer Center of Education, Health, Environment (DHA Center)	Nguyen Tri	Director
10	Center for Community Empowerment (CECEM)	Nguyen Thuy Linh	Director
11	Hanoi Association of People with Disabilities (DP Hanoi)	Duong Thi Van	Chairwoman
12	Study center for children's psychology	Nguyen Thi Hiep	Director
13	Centre for Community and Adult Education Development (CAED)	Thai Thi Xuan Dao	Vice Director
14	Center for Community Development (CCD) in Dien Bien	Vu Dinh Loi	Director
15	Pro-poor center of Ha Tinh (PPC)	Tu Thi Phuong Nga	Director
16	Research Center for Management and Sustainable Development (MSD)	Nguyen Phuong Linh	Director
17	UNET Education joint stock company (UNET)	Tran Thi Ngoc Mai	Chairwoman
18	Center for Counseling and Support to Poor Families and children in Rural Areas (CCSPFC)	Nguyen Thi Hong Tham	Director
19	Consultancy center on law for poor people and community development	Duong Thi Thanh Mai	Director
20	Kindergarden Education Development Globe Kids Joint Stock Company (GK CHILDCARE)	Tran Thi Tuyet Hoa	Vice Chairwoman
21	Vietnam International education joint stock company (VIECA)	Tran Van Nhung	Chairman
22	Center for International Training Cooperation	Vu Duc Thanh	Director
23	Center for Community Development and Social Work (CODES)	Le The Nhan	Chairman

24	Centre for Research and Promotion of Education for Sustainable Development (CEREPROD)	Tran Duc Tuan	Director
25	Center for Development and Integration (CDI)	Duong Thi Viet Anh	Director
26	Center for Special Education	Do Van Ba	Director
27	Institutes for education and potential human development (IPD)	Nguyen Vo Ky Anh	Director
28	Chien Cong Vocational Training and Job Placement Center	Dang Van Chien	Vice Director
29	Hanoi Association for Deaf people	Nguyen Tuan Linh	Chairman
30	Research Center for Resource and Rural Development (RECERD)	Tuong Phi Lai	Director
31	Inclusive Development Action (IDEA)	Nguyen Hong Oanh	Director
32	International Connection Education (Interconex)	Le Van Hung	Director
33	Center for Job orientation and Inclusive education for children	Le Dinh Tuan	Director
34	Tu Nhien Foreign Language Center	Nguyen Phuc Thien	Director
35	Center for Education and Development (CED)	To Kim Lien	Director
36	Private individual	Vu Thi Thanh Hoa	Educator expert
37	Private individual	Nguyen Xuan Phuong	Educator expert
38	INGO - Action Aid in Vietnam	Do Hanh Chi	Technical adviser on women's rights and education
39	INGO - Oxfam in Vietnam	Le Gia Thang	Programme Coordinator - Education Governance





Institute for
Development Impact

Case Study Report – ECOZI Zimbabwe

Undertaken As Part Of An Independent
Evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF)
Programme 2013-2015 for the Global Campaign For
Education

October 2015

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANCEFA	Africa Network Campaign On Education For All
CSEF	Civil Society Education Fund
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
ECOZI	Education Coalition Of Zimbabwe
ECG	Education Coordination Group (the Local Education Group in Zimbabwe)
EDF	Education Development Fund
EFA	Education For All
ETF	Education Transition Fund
FAWEZI	Forum For African Women Educationalists Zimbabwe Chapter
FMA	Financial Management Agency
GCE	Global Campaign For Education
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSISA	Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the external evaluation of the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) (2013-15) requested by the Global Campaign for Education, the Institute for Development Impact (IDI) conducted seven country case studies. The evaluation aimed to contribute to GCE's ability to respond to challenges and objectives by identifying the emerging impact of the CSEF programme, provide evidence of the effectiveness of its design and implementation model, and derive learning from implemented processes and structures to influence and strengthen future programming.

The Zimbabwe case study was conducted by a field visit with the Education Coalition of Zimbabwe (ECOZI) from June 1-5, 2015. Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with the members of the coalition secretariat, representatives from the Ministry of Education, national partners, and member organizations. A complete list of interviewees and organizations included in the case study can be found in Section 6 of this report.

2 STATUS OF EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE

Zimbabwe has approximately 14 million people, of whom 4 million are of primary and secondary school age. At independence, in 1980, the British education system was inherited. There was a significant growth in education infrastructure at that time, including a growth in secondary schools from 177 at that time to 2424 today. Education was free, but structural adjustment programmes forced on Zimbabwe by the International Monetary Fund in 1989 and 1990 severely impacted education, with all schools (public primary and secondary) requiring the payment of fees and levies. School fees and levies remain government policy today.

The land reform initiatives from 1999 caused severe disruptions, and displacements of families, which generated the phenomenon of satellite schools. Some 1000 of these schools still exist in makeshift set-ups, including converted tobacco barns. Severely depressed teacher salaries during this period occasioned a mass exodus of teachers from the education system as teachers moved to South Africa, Botswana and Namibia in search of more realistic wages. The student to teacher ratio during this period was 1 teacher to 80 students, when the livelihoods of Zimbabweans became severely compromised, and 70% of people were living below the poverty line. The lowest point was in 2008 when there was widespread political unrest and economic hardship (teacher wages had dropped to approximately \$2 per month). With the formation of a government of national unity some tension was released, teacher salaries rose to around \$100, and the donor community worked to assist the education sector through the creation of the Education Transition Fund (ETF). The ETF helped procure textbooks, and salaries have now increased into the range of \$300-\$350. The ETF is now the Education Development Fund (EDF) and is managed by UNICEF on behalf of the donor community.

Fees remain a real barrier to learners. Rural community fees range from \$10 to \$20 per term while in the city they range from \$20 to \$150. The most vulnerable children were covered by

the Basic Education Assistance Model, which began in 2000, but the programme has very meagre funding from government after the pulling out of the donors like DFID.

Since 1980 there has been no curriculum review, although at the time of the evaluation a review was in process.

3 OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION COALITION IN ZIMBABWE

The coalition began in 2003, and was then called the National Civil Society Coalition in Education. Internal political and economic difficulties in Zimbabwe from 2003-2007 caused the coalition to collapse, until it was resuscitated by the African Network Campaign on Education For All (ANCEFA) in 2009, using funding from the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF). ANCEFA is the regional coalition (and member of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE)) which advocates for education to be accessible, and free for all, and for the attainment of the Education For All (EFA) goals. ANCEFA was borne out of the 2000 Dakar World Education Forum, to which the Government of Zimbabwe is a signatory. The newly formed coalition, ECOZI, is a chapter of ANCEFA. It began with 6 member organizations and now has 26 members, governed by a national management committee of member organizations that make up the board. A secretariat of three people was put in place in June 2010. ECOZI's focus, and the key criteria for membership of the coalition, is a focus thematically on education, and works to unite civil society in pursuing the right to quality, compulsory and free basic education for all, with emphasis on publicly-funded education.

ECOZI seeks to work with government, civil society, NGOs and agencies in improving education policy formulation and implementation.

3.1 ECOZI Vision

A society empowered to participate well in its civic life through access to quality, adaptable, affordable and relevant basic education.

3.2 ECOZI Mission

To coordinate and facilitate civil society participation in effective educational policy formulation and implementation towards attainment of the EFA goals and other national educational objectives.

3.3 ECOZI Guiding Principles

- Accountability - We affirm our commitment to being accountable for the fulfilment of all duties and professional obligations associated with our coalition.
- Transparency - We are committed to openness, honesty and responsibility, and adherence to good governance in all that we do.
- Participation - Our membership is the pillar of the coalition and hence we value their participation and contributions.
- Equality - We subscribe to the removal of all types of stereotypes and negative associations that may impair the full participation of our membership.

- Inclusiveness - We are a membership based coalition and hence value the broad based representation of education sector stakeholders.

3.4 Coalition Priorities

ECOZI priorities mirror those of EFA:

- Early childhood care and education
- Universal primary education
- Life-skills for youths and adults
- Increasing adult literacy
- Gender equality at all education levels
- Quality education

3.5 Coalition Member Priorities

Member organizations represent a broad cross-section of the education sector, including teachers' unions, child rights' organizations, community-based organizations and International NGOs (INGO) (a complete list of members is found in Section 7 of this report). The focus of coalition members can be grouped into the following categories:

- Teachers
- Gender and education
- Student activism
- Child rights
- College lecturers
- Education personnel
- Disability
- HIV and education
- Early Childhood Development
- Basic Education, Access, Equity and Quality
- Media in child rights
- Youth and skills
- Orphans and the destitute

4 FINDINGS

The analysis and findings of the case study have been structured against the standard evaluation criteria adopted by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). These criteria were used to detail the evaluation questions during inception and also to structure the evaluation report. The criteria are defined as follows:

- Relevance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency

- Sustainability
- Impact

4.1 Relevance

Relevance is defined as ‘The extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor.’¹ The evaluation team’s assessment of programme relevance was based on the analysis of the national and local context, the challenges for strengthening policy making and civil society participation in the educational sector and the needs and priorities of various stakeholders (e.g. CSOs, capacity building, etc.).

The initiation of the EFA movement was a particularly important moment for civil society and education in Africa. EFA gave impetus to civil society in education, and saw the establishment of many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) whose aims were to support educational development, whether as local or International NGOs. Work was undertaken individually and in coalition. The establishment of EFA enabled the establishment of ANCEFA. ANCEFA aims to promote, enable and strengthen the capacity of African Civil Society to advocate and campaign for free education for all.

ECOZI was established within this framework, and the relevance of its priorities and strategies are firmly established within EFA, as well as within its relationship with its members and with government. ECOZI demonstrates relevance to the education sector through this framework, at the policy level, in civil society involvement with government and in building a strong base of commitment from member organizations.

4.1.1 A Strategy Of Engagement With Government

ECOZI is known well in the Ministry of Education and across the education sector. They are known both as ECOZI and by the different organizations they represent. It is well-known that ECOZI focuses on representing members and on representing *with* its members, i.e. key ECOZI representatives are visible at meetings and workshops, and in the media, representing the views of the coalition and can also be seen jointly with member organizations’ representatives at times when the coalition determines that a wider visible representation is required.

The political situation in Zimbabwe, particularly during the recent, difficult times, meant it was not easy for civil society to operate. During that time, many donors pulled out of the country, and withdrew their funding of civil society organizations. Many of the NGOs that stayed through this difficult

“A benefit for coalition members is their relationship with the Ministry of Education. We are asked to contribute, as a coalition, and the request is genuine – the Ministry is really genuine. They want our involvement.”

–Coalition Member

¹ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

period emerged stronger. ECOZI, with ANCEFA's assistance, has emerged as one of these groups. There was general agreement across the sector that the relationship between the Ministry and civil society, until 2-3 years ago, was 'troubled'. It was also recognized by government representatives that NGOs have a vocal, even combative role to play in advocacy. As recently as 2012, NGOs participating in a meeting of the Education Coordination Group (ECG, Zimbabwe's Local Education Group), were often asked to leave the meeting at a certain point as they were not welcome to stay. Institutional representatives noted a shift in the government's relationship with civil society, particularly ECOZI, based to a certain extent on the more visible focus on positive strategies for *engagement* with government. NGOs were no longer asked to leave the ECG at certain points, and ECOZI is now a formal member of this group. The change in style and quality of contribution is also recognized, and particular reference was made to ECOZI's ability to bring people (civil society and government departments) together. The ECOZI profile is more pronounced, and its focus on engagement with government has assisted in the development of a solid relationship with government. This relationship is visible in concrete roles (ECOZI's contribution to the EFA global monitoring report) and the expressed confidence of government representatives in the professionalism of the relationship.

There is a recognized area of difficulty in the developing relationship with government. ECOZI provides services to the Ministry (e.g. contributions to the education sector review; contributions to research on teacher professional standards). Balancing service provision with an advocacy or watchdog role is a complex task. It is a challenge to maintain a true partnership relationship and also provide services as an independent civil society representative. ECOZI management is fully aware of these challenges and works diligently to balance these roles.

ECOZI is also developing good working relationships with International NGOs and agencies. Agency representatives had ready examples of the effectiveness of ECOZI's engagement with government, including its involvement on the ECD, involvement with all aspects of EFA activities in Zimbabwe, as well as work on the curriculum development programme and the education for sustainable development programme.

4.1.2 Communication, Networking, Mobilizations, Learning - Collaboration

ECOZI has been effective in bringing the coalition together since it was re-established. The growth of the coalition is based on a growing desire to be affiliated with ECOZI because organizations are able to express the views of the people in the community, and to share these views with the Ministry of Education. Many member organisations had trouble discussing issues one-on-one, but found, in ECOZI forums, they have the capacity to share views effectively.

The coalition demonstrates facilitating a learning environment. Members value travel to forums or workshops and sharing learning with other members when they return. Particular emphasis is placed on learning from other people, from interactions and from networks.

Coalition members expressed strong support for each other and the network, and for the way the network is itself a supportive entity. Members noted that they come from a range of backgrounds, but find their engagement with ECOZI to be enriching, with an ethos of

complementing, not competing. The coalition helps organizations feel confident in approaching each other for advice and assistance. A benefit for coalition members is the relationship with the Ministry of Education; members recognized a real interest from government in their contribution to the education dialogue.

ECOZI is identified as a driving force behind civil society in the education sector. Instead of going to each NGO that has an interest in education, the Ministry and international agencies find it more productive to go to ECOZI. ECOZI has its members on board, and brings them in to discussions. This is an illustration of the possibilities and strengths of networking to bring organizations together in this way.

4.1.3 Mechanisms For Ensuring Stakeholder Involvement In Planning And Implementation

ECOZI has established useful systems for ensuring stakeholder involvement at all levels of the work of the coalition. The first step is funding proposals, a process which is described by ECOZI members as participatory. The focus is not on

“We worked with other groups to look at national priorities. We were taught right from the start not to focus on what the people in the Secretariat think, but on what members are thinking.”

–Coalition Member

addressing specific member priorities, but on understanding national issues and priorities and where different member organizations fit in developing strategies and actions for addressing these issues. The planning process includes involving members in a way that incorporates discussions of national priorities, coalition priorities and member priorities. This approach was attributed to CSEF training, where coalitions and their members were trained, from the beginning, to focus on member priorities, and member thinking, and not to focus on the secretariat personnel. Having said this, much of the actual work of proposal writing is driven by and undertaken by the Secretariat, as was all narrative and financial reporting.

ECOZI has begun developing ‘chapters’ in the other nine provinces outside of Harare; currently there are six. The chapters are an important strategy for assisting members in remote areas to participate in both actions and planning.

4.1.4 Coalition Synergies With, And Conduciveness To, Member Priorities

The coalition faces the dilemma of competing priorities and limited funds. For ECOZI, this dilemma is experienced in how it balances its need to focus on EFA, member priorities and national (Ministry) priorities, while also working to access sufficient financial resources. Competing priorities are relevant up and down the relationships within CSEF (Global goals, ANCEFA Goals, ECOZI goals, member goals) and how these all tied together. It is not a clear and easy process, and there are no certain strategies for maintaining the balance.

ECOZI is particularly aware of this dilemma, and has consciously aligned itself with CSEF goals as a way of balancing priorities. ECOZI is also implementing its own strategy with members, which is built on strong communication within the coalition and a focus on the six EFA goals that are fundamental to both ECOZI and ANCEFA. When a group applies to be a member of

the coalition their applications are screened to see how their priorities correlate with these goals. Coalition members subscribe to the EFA goals, and ECOZI coordinated meetings provide a platform where members discuss what they are doing in terms of EFA and how this applies to ECOZI actions.

The relationship between ECOZI and member goals is somewhat coincidental. ECOZI is aligned, for example, with teacher union goals but not where those are related to collective bargaining. The strongest synergies come from the CSEF focus on advocacy, with particular reference to issues of disparity.

4.1.5 Learning And Best Practice

ECOZI maintains a focus on learning, and recognizes that members require training in organizational systems, planning, strategizing, and advocacy. Improving the quality of participation and activity at the local and grassroots levels requires work with the member organizations. The coalition learned early that members need to develop their capacity, particularly in how to collate data and use it for advocacy. It was noted in interviews that ANCEFA, GCE and OSISA all assist the coalition with mobilization and advocacy development. Where training and exchange programmes take place, coalition policy is that members participate according to the focus of their work in a given thematic area. Further, ANCEFA ensures that the coalition participates in regional meetings and education-related forums, and also prepares platforms where coalitions in different countries can share things they have learned and success stories. For example, Lesotho visited Zimbabwe and ECOZI visited Malawi.

The coalition is aware that development of the government's understanding of ECOZI's advocacy role is critical, with less emphasis on service provision. Membership of the ECG is important in this regard, as ECOZI's role on the ECG is at the

"We are not always attacking now (although sometimes we are), but we have learned that there are other ways of engagement, including times when we can sit and talk."

–Coalition Member

policy/ strategy level. Gaining ECG membership is an example of Best Practice. Partnership is an appropriate word to describe the relationship between ECOZI and the government on the ECG. The coalition acknowledges that at times it felt as though it was in competition with government, but that in more recent times, as it has developed its capacity for being strategic and professional in its criticism, government has felt more able to welcome the feedback it receives. The coalition acknowledges that it had learned new ways of engaging with

"We learned that the issues being addressed in Malawi were much more substantial than what we do – we have tried to learn from that."

–Coalition Member

government, and that as a result government provides civil society with a platform and space, to express views and commentary, and welcomes civil society representatives to policy and programme launches.

Learning has been influenced by exchanges with neighbouring coalitions, with Malawi specifically being mentioned. It was particularly mentioned that the activities of the Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC) in Malawi are broader than those of ECOZI, which pushed ECOZI representatives to think about how the coalition could improve its work. During the Malawi visit, ECOZI representatives saw the CSEC in Malawi advocating with government on important issues (the education budget), which gave them new insight into the scope of issues they could advocate on.

4.1.6 Gender Equality

ECOZI has made a specific priority of gender-balance initiatives, not least because the Chair of the coalition is also the National Coordinator of FAWEZI, the Forum For African Women Educationalists Zimbabwe Chapter. A reported 30% of children in Zimbabwe do not attend school, the majority of whom are girls, who demonstrate issues with getting into school as well as in being kept in school. The view of ECOZI is that CSEF's gender approach requires greater focus on strategy to improve retention levels for girls in school.

“The programme’s gender approach needs to be more focused, particularly on strategies to address community, cultural and political structures and constructs, and focus on keeping girls in school.”

–Coalition Member

4.2 Effectiveness

The OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance defines effectiveness as, ‘A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives.’² Using the programme’s Theory of Change (logical framework/ results framework) the evaluation team analysed to what extent the results obtained from the implementation of activities have contributed to the attainment of the planned objectives.

The assessment considered the contribution of activities to the attainment of the planned objectives and learning goals of ECOZI, the effectiveness of its strategy and implementation approaches, with government as well as with its own membership. These have been the most important areas of its work, and are likely to remain the areas of key focus over the coming years.

4.2.1 Engagement In Policy Formulation And Implementation

One indicator of the effectiveness of ECOZI is its participation in the ECG. A key aspect of this is the developing partnership between civil society that does not avoid controversy, but neither does it seek it. The ECG is comprised of senior officers of the Ministry of Education (it is chaired by the Minister), the Ministry of Higher Education, the Ministry of Finance, DFID, UNESCO, UNICEF, OSISA and ECOZI. ECOZI plays a critical role in representing civil society on

² OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

the ECG, with either the ECOZI Chair or the Director representing the coalition at each meeting. Participation in the ECG makes it clear to the coalition that this forum provides a number of opportunities for advocacy, including in planning, monitoring and evaluation of educational programmes. Early childhood development (ECD) is an area where this advocacy is visible. Following awareness-raising actions ('Raised From The Start') and other advocacy initiatives, Zimbabwe now has a policy that each school must have an ECD classroom. Further, Zimbabwe has been developing a non-formal education policy, with the process involving, from the beginning, all players in education, including ECOZI. When the draft was ready, a validation meeting was held with all interested parties, and the policy was not published until after the validation meeting.

ECOZI is also a participant in a number of technical working groups of the Ministry – the Technical Working Group for the Sector Plan and the Technical Working Group for Care and Support for Teaching and Learning.

4.2.2 Coalition Priorities, Activities, Outcomes

An important aspect of ECOZI's effectiveness is its use of member organizations to lead its advocacy work. The point was made strongly that the Secretariat works for members and members work with the Secretariat. ECOZI activities are executed for the benefit of member organizations, who set priorities annually. Members contribute to ECOZI's strategic plan, which in turn contributes to the work of member organizations.

There was an expressed view, from government, international partners and from coalition members that ECOZI's contribution to policy discussion and development 'has been significant', and

"When there is criticism, even of the Ministry, and it is based on evidence, then it has to be accepted."

–Coalition Member

that the organization is recognized for its ability to bring people on board and contribute to progress. International partners recognize the positive role played on the ECG. Government noted 'feedback, exchange, sharing', and made particular note of ECOZI's advocacy from a 'balanced' perspective. It is also worth noting that government representatives specifically expressed that they work with coalition members and with the coalition. This is not just the view of the government, but of the coalition as well. On the coalition side, the word most often heard was engagement. Members of ECOZI see the coalition as an effective way to approach the Ministry with a single voice now, and that they work well with the Ministry on specific issues. The coalition developed out of an era when communication was weak and mistrust was strong. The policy of engagement with government is having a practical, positive effect.

Some important activities of ECOZI include:

- Participation in the Education Sector Review, with UNICEF, UNESCO and the Ministry.
- Research (a situational analysis) of ECD funded by OSISA. The programme mentioned above flowed from this research, and, for example, 100 schools were funded for ECD this year with an on-going plan.

- Lobbying for education to be considered a basic right in the Bill of Rights in the new Constitution, and for education to be state-funded (the Constitution refers to ‘basic state-funded education’ and the Education Act says ‘user pays’).
- Engagement in the development of Teacher Professional Standards.
- Joint monitoring processes with government.
- Annual lobbying for improved teacher conditions – based around World Teachers Day.
- Annual lobbying for EFA goals – based around Global Action Week and the Day of the African Child.
- A curriculum campaign – ‘Let’s Have A Curriculum That Answers The Needs Of Learners’, focused on learning outcomes. This campaign contributed to ECOZI involvement in the government’s Curriculum Review process (representing civil society).
- FAWEZI undertook research that indicated that girls in farming communities were being left out of school. Based on this, the coalition developed the ‘Give Every Child An Opportunity To Learn’ Campaign, which FAWEZI led. They visited schools engaging parents, and were assisted by political leadership.

4.3 Efficiency

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines efficiency as ‘measuring the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs.’³ Efficiency was analysed in terms of how well the programme is organized for delivering its work with regard to managerial and budget efficiency. Analysis of efficiency was based on the assessment of outputs/ activities in relation to programme inputs, costs and planned timelines, and provided some analysis of systems (development, performance management, financial management) within the coalition and between the coalition and regional organizations, and how they contributed to the on-going development of coalition effectiveness.

4.3.1 Coalition Development Systems

ECOZI is supported in its development, planning, implementation and reporting processes by ANCEFA. The role played by ANCEFA is strongly supported by ECOZI, particularly their understanding of what is happening on the ground. ANCEFA provides opportunities for peer learning, shared learning and collaboration processes, ‘they are able to push us when our policies or practice are not up to scratch’. ECOZI also welcomes being affiliated with a large, pan-African NGO.

ECOZI focuses on developing the skills of its members in evidence-based programming. This centres on building programmatic priorities based on evidence ascertained through research, and developing relevant programmatic responses, that help members and the coalition to be more effective.

³ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

4.3.2 Financial Management Systems

On the financial side, support is provided by Oxfam West Africa, the regional Financial Management Agency (FMA) for the CSEF programme, although the ANCEFA project officer also provides input and comments on budgets. They also have a role in financial management and in ensuring that monies are being spent correctly. It is understood by ECOZI that GCE also comments on financial and narrative documents, but only through the regional organizations (ANCEFA and Oxfam). The ECOZI view is that Oxfam's control systems are clear, and effective, but that they could demonstrate greater focus on the provision of resources to the coalition in developing skills and experience. While ECOZI staff have participated in regional financial management workshops, no visits have been made by the FMA. The view was expressed that visits, even annually, would allow financial officers to develop a more detailed understanding of financial management systems and to address detailed questions to FMA representatives.

Some questions were raised about the cost and importance of audit processes. Specifically, the cost efficacy of annual audits of all grants was raised. There was discussion on the potential benefits of the FMA or ANCEFA focusing on a risk assessment process that monitors coalitions all year and then make recommendations for coalitions to be audited based on the risk assessment.

The vast majority of all ECOZI financial support comes from CSEF. The coalition is not financially sustainable without this support. This creates problems for ECOZI, as the coalition experiences regular and significant delays in grant

"We appear to not be serious because we are not able to do what we said we would do because we have no money."

–Coalition Member

disbursements. This also negatively affects the coalition's credibility with national and district government, and with civil society when grant payments do not arrive. Proposal processes from GCE also demonstrate significant delays. The current extension period is a case in point:

- As required by the donor, proposals for the extension were submitted on 28 March, even though the funded period was from 1 April.
- In mid-May ECOZI was requested to make changes to the proposed budget.
- It was understood the proposal had been approved, but no money was expected to arrive until July, leaving the coalition with no funding for 3 or more months.

4.3.3 Performance Management Systems

The view of ECOZI is that CSEF management and monitoring systems have had an impact on ECOZI's management approach. A key component of effectiveness is that with CSEF they are working with people involved inside the programmatic areas, and that the coalition receives guidelines that help them do it themselves.

"To some extent it helps me reflect on the impact of activities – you look at activities and outputs and you ask yourself if you have done the activity correctly and if there are areas where we are able to improve the next time. (But), it is focused on activities and outputs, not so much on outcomes. On outcomes it is here and there. It is not so easy to understand our outcomes, and we need to be able to ask about how we can get better outcomes."

–Coalition Member

However, CSEF programme monitoring systems are not consistently as strong as the support for programme development. There is support for how the monitoring system assists the coalition in understanding its programme. One example of this is when the monitoring system discovered a hole in their programme that led to new research. On the other hand, however, the system is complex and time-consuming in nature and referred to as very cumbersome.

4.4 Sustainability

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines sustainability as being ‘concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn.’⁴ The evaluation team reviewed sustainability factors in terms of programme design, process, implementation and national context and addresses the key questions confronting ECOZI as it works to establish its longer-term sustainability.

ECOZI is completely dependent on CSEF funding. This is understandable, given the newness of the organization, but it is also an area where strategic thinking needs to be done in order for other sources of income to be developed. Zimbabwe has looked to Malawi for programmatic and strategic inspiration over the past two years. This encouraged ECOZI to do the similar fundraising from international donors.

A further issue of sustainability is balancing the geographical coverage with resource capacities. ECOZI is constrained by its small staff set-up, and a lack of resources to effectively, and visibly, reach out to other parts of the country. The chapters are a very important strategy that needs further development and resourcing.

Apart from finances, there are critical areas that need addressing to ensure ECOZI’s longer-term sustainability. Key among these is ECOZI’s ability to manage relationships within the coalition and with government effectively. The coalition needs to grow, and needs to grow in

“The question for the future, the strategic question, in a fragile and sensitive context, is how they maintain the balance up and down – up to government and down to stakeholders/ members. The key now is where they go from here, and how they continue to grow in size and in stature, and do this while not only not losing stakeholders up or stakeholders down, but indeed strengthen all of that.”

–Coalition Member

influence, and it needs to do this while maintaining and upgrading the quality of relationships with government and the effective involvement of members.

There is a strongly expressed view that ECOZI has ‘come a long way’, and that as a coalition and as member organizations they have developed advocacy strength. These strengths are visible in internal communications, as well as in how approaches are made to both government and international donors/ agencies. Communication, within Zimbabwe and with related organizations in the region, is seen to be strengthening the coalition’s advocacy approaches. It is also widely believed that the coalition’s agenda is stronger, with a notable

⁴ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

focus on girls' education and on the promotion of quality education, particularly in remote areas.

There is a 'push' from government for the coalition to continue to be a service provider which detracts from the coalition becoming more politically sophisticated. The concern is how to maintain a balance. Zimbabwe is a sensitive country, where it is important for civil society to move slowly. In the coming period, ECOZI needs to move carefully and balance relationships with government and with its advocacy priorities. Finding this balance is important in order to not lose stakeholders nor their 'place at the table' with government.

4.5 Impact

The OECD DAC criteria for evaluating development assistance defines impact as, 'the positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.'⁵ The evaluation team examined to what extent the programme increased local capacities in a way which contributes to their better access and participation as measured by increased skills, abilities and knowledge. When assessing the programme's impact, the evaluation team considered the longer-term benefits intended in the CSEF design, some of which may not have been fully realized yet.

Impact indicators are positive, although they are largely dependent on coalition sustainability. Participation in the ECG places the coalition 'at the table' with all important players in the education sector. Maintaining and developing this role, as ECOZI, while further developing the capacities and experience of member organizations are seen as key factors to having a sustained impact.

ECOZI's visibility is seen as positively contributing to the impact of the coalition. The coalition is regularly visible in both print and electronic media, a presence noted by government, international partners and coalition members. The recently established chapters strengthen these visibility processes, within specific districts, as well as their importance to coalition effectiveness. Thirdly, the international community, and particularly donors, continue to play an important role in the education sector in Zimbabwe. This group is insistent on civil society participation in policy development and implementation, and ECOZI's further development in this role will continue to strengthen its potential for impact in the sector.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The findings of this case study, detailed above, provide a strong basis for the drawing of certain conclusions about future directions for ECOZI, and the issues the coalition will face in addressing the priorities of the education sector. As discussed, the issues are related to:

- ECOZI's relationship with government
- Development of financial resources

⁵ OECD DAC Criteria For Evaluating Development Assistance - <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

- Membership growth

5.1 Service And Advocacy

ECOZI is currently managing the balance between service and advocacy effectively, and senior people in the coalition, and in its member and partner organizations are aware of and focused on continuing to address the need for balance. ECOZI provides services to government, through joint monitoring processes, policy formulation, and participation in the ECG. ECOZI has not, however, lost its ability to advocate and question government policy and actions when it is necessary. ECOZI's ability to provide criticism is based on evidence and presented in a balanced way. Government recognizes and accepts the coalition as a true partner.

Maintaining this balanced approach moving forward will be both necessary and difficult. ECOZI must maintain, and further develop:

- Joint activities with government in policy development, implementation and monitoring.
- Independent monitoring and assessment approaches, drawing on member priorities and skills.
- New initiatives, particularly where clearly defined coalition priorities correlate closely with donor initiatives.

5.2 Resources And Sustainability

ECOZI is completely dependent on CSEF. While there is an intention, and plans, for expanding the coalition's funding base, immediate prospects are limited. The implications of this dependence are obvious and have a significant impact on activities, outputs, outcomes and credibility. A number of key points to be considered in this discussion:

- ECOZI is well-positioned, with government, in civil society and with international organizations, to build on current activities and successes.
- ECOZI runs a very lean operation and has excellent management capacity, but this does not run deep in the organization, i.e., the loss of either of the two senior staff has the potential to cause significant disruption.
- On-going success will be determined, to a certain extent, by ECOZI's ability to balance growth in size and activities with solid, medium to long-term finances.

5.3 Growth And Capacity

ECOZI is developing chapters in provinces across Zimbabwe, increasing its visibility while also extending the impact of its activities. This development is to be strongly encouraged, to the extent which resources can be found to support the chapters, and the chapter development is done within a clearly defined medium to long-term strategy. Further growth is dependent both on resources and on the ability of ECOZI to prepare, train and develop staff to work in the chapter offices. As much as accessing the necessary level of resources, this staff development will be both difficult and critical. The quality of activities and outputs will correlate directly with effectiveness of ECOZI outcomes and credibility.

A number of areas will need to be addressed, going forward, to ensure ECOZI's growth and capacity respond well to the external circumstances:

- Further focus on chapter development will contribute to the quality and extent of ECOZI impact, with civil society directly, and in its advocacy work with government.
- Member organizations will need further development and skills, particularly in advocacy/ watchdog/ monitoring processes. Development of these skills and knowledge will broaden the effectiveness of the coalition as a whole.
- Engagement of programme officers within ECOZI, subject to the availability of resources, is critical to organizational development to increase and deepen the management capacity of the Secretariat.

6 LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Following is a list of those people interviewed for the evaluation during the field visit to Zimbabwe in the first week of June, 2015.

Secretariat Of The Education Coalition Of Zimbabwe

1. Lydia Madyirapanze, Chairperson of the ECOZI Board, as well as National Coordinator of the Forum For African Women Educationalists Zimbabwe Chapter (FAWEZI), an ECOZI member organization
2. Maxwell Rafomoyo, National Coordinator
3. Nomatter Kuhwehwe, Finance Officer

Ministry Of Education

4. Mrs Kwadzanai Nyanungo, Principal Director, Department of Infant Education, Learner Welfare, School Psychological Services and Special Needs Education
5. Mr S Sithole, Deputy Director, School Psychological Services and Special Needs Education
6. Dr Makanda, Director, Curriculum Development And Technical Services
7. Mr Peter Muzawazi, Director for Planning, Policy, Research and Development
8. Stella Kakono, Programme Officer for Education, Zimbabwe National Commission for UNESCO

Other National Partners

9. Dr Nikhat Shameem, Manager, Global Partnership For Education, UNICEF
10. Rosalina Maponga, National Programme Officer For Education, UNESCO
11. Dr Abdoul Wahab Coulibaly, Education Programme Specialist, UNESCO

Member Organizations Of ECOZI

12. Stella Moyo, Shingirirai Trust
13. Sister Annah Theresa Nyadombo, HLMC – Zimbabwe Catholic Bishop's Conference (ZCBC)
14. Vernon Chikwaya, Nhaka Foundation

15. Daphne Mawunge, Chiedza Child Care Centre
16. Mrs Jane Chimene, National Education Union of Zimbabwe (NEUZ)
17. Martha Damu, the Foundations Project (TFPT)
18. Wadzanai Chikudza, The HIV and AIDS Management and Support Organization (THAMASO)
19. Stella Satiya, Child Resource Institute in Zimbabwe (CRIZ)

7 ECOZI MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

No.	Organization	Focus Area
1	Zimbabwe Teachers' Association	Teacher Issues
2	Progressive Teachers Union of Zimbabwe	Teacher Issues
3	Forum for African Women Educationalists Zimbabwe Chapter	Gender and Education
4	Students Solidarity Trust	Student activism
5	Zimbabwe National Council for the Welfare of Children	Child rights
6	College Lecturer's Association	College lecturer Issues
7	National Education Union of Zimbabwe	Education personnel Issues
8	Disabled Women Support Organisation	Disability in Women
9	The HIV and AIDS Management and Support Organization	HIV and Education
10	Practical Empowerment Networking Youth Association	Youth and Skills
11	Nhaka Foundation	Early Childhood Development
12	Shingirirayi Trust	Early Childhood Development
13	Foundations project	Early Childhood Development
14	Save the Children	Basic Education, Access, Equity and Quality
15	Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference	Basic Education, Access, Equity and Quality
16	Association of Church Education Secretaries	Basic Education, Access, Equity and Quality
17	Child Resource Institute in Zimbabwe	Early Childhood Development
18	Alight Zimbabwe Trust	Youth and Skills
19	Child and Guardian Foundation	Early Childhood Development
20	Zimbabwe Early Childhood Education and Development Foundation	Early Childhood Development
21	Action Aid Zimbabwe	Basic Education, Access, Equity and Quality
22	Chiedza Child Care Centre	Early Childhood Development
23	Female Students Network	Gender and Female Student activism
24	Citizen Child	Media in Child rights

25	Joined Hands Welfare Organization	Youth and Skills
26	Zimbabwe Association of the Visually and Handicapped	Disability Issues
27	Mavambo Orphan Care	Orphans and destitute issues

