



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

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Through the Support of Global Partnership for Education (GPE), and Oxfam IBIS, CSOs namely ZINECDA, NECDOL, ECD Malawi engaged in transnational advocacy to make governments in Southern Africa more transparent and accountable to their citizens on ECDE issues.

**4** **QUALITY  
EDUCATION**



**5** **GENDER  
EQUALITY**



## OBJECTIVE 1

To strengthen the capacity of ECDE national coalitions on areas of internal governance, advocacy and research in order for them to effectively hold governments accountable and demand transparency in the formulation and implementation of ECD policies and strategies related to SDG 4.2 and GPE at transnational level by December 2023. (Capacity Building)

## OBJECTIVE 2

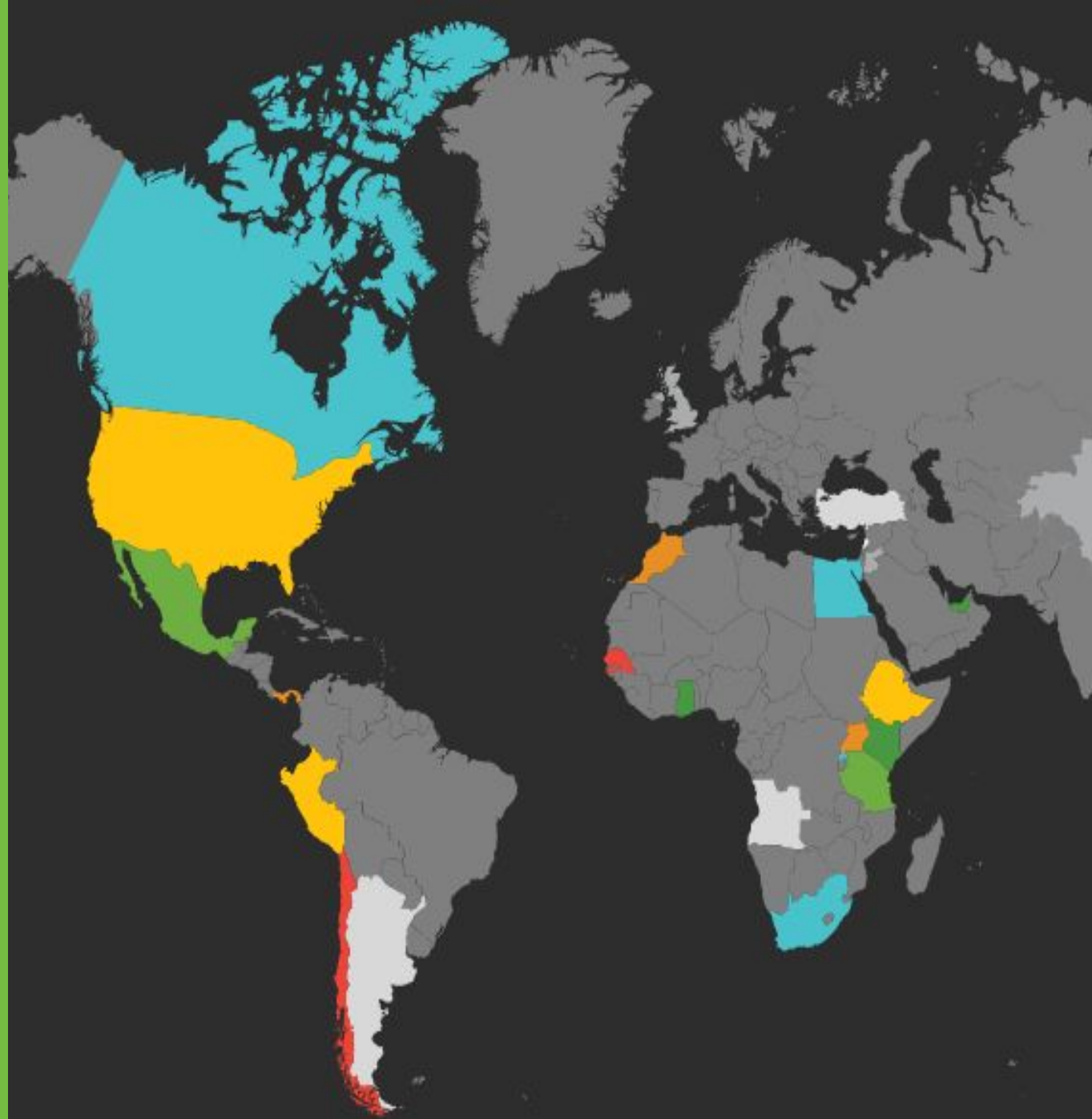
To engage in national and transnational advocacy to influence the development of comprehensive and inclusive ECDE policies, legislation and systems by Governments in Lesotho, Malawi, Zimbabwe and other Southern African Countries by December 2023 (Advocacy)

## OBJECTIVE 3

To improve the availability of ECDE data, through research, monitoring and evaluation, for use at national and transnational level in advocacy, learning and decision making for attainment of SDG 4.2 and GPE related targets on ECDE in Lesotho, Malawi, Zimbabwe and other Southern African countries by 2023

## PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

- (1) To identify successes that TRANAC project has registered in ECDE advocacy at regional level.
- (2) To document the success stories identified and indicate how these have contributed to achieving project objectives
- (3) To show how project engagements have created a strong and transnational enabling environment for national civil society advocacy and transparency efforts in ECDE especially at SADC level
- (4) To assess how the TRANAC advocacy strategies were aligned to gender equality/inclusion and human rights-based approaches



## Methodology

A case study design and analysis approach, was adopted owing to its facilitative ability to support a step-by step process to;

1. Identify & document/compile success stories and inspirational practices.
2. The study collected data from
  - Desk desk reviews of project documents and reports
  - Virtual/online interviews &
  - Surveys with purposely selected representatives of project teams, partners/stakeholders from national and SADC level



# STUDY FINDINGS

TRANSNATIONAL  
NETWORK  
ADVOCACY  
CAPACITY



# TRANAC project registered several successes but 3 (three) Key significant successes were identified, compiled and documented

1

Increased ECDE recognition and financing

2

Development of the SADC children's protocol

3

The online knowledge and information Hub establishment for HESA

A study conducted in six countries revealed that ECD allocation was 1.57% on average in Six TRANAC Countries.

## ECD FINANCING

### **ECD Financial and In kind commitments Made by the Six African Countries and Other SADC Countries**

- Malawi has increased its ECDE budget allocation from 2 to 5 percent of total education budget with the goal and commitment of increasing it to 10 percent.
- Zimbabwe, has increased its ECD budget from 14% to 16% of total education budget, and per capita allocation, from around \$64 per learner in 2021 to \$226 per learner in 2022.
- In Lesotho, Global Partnership for Education (GPE) multiplier fund of USD 5 million reallocated to ECDE.
- Southern Africa governments have committed to include ECDE qualified teachers (mentors) on the government payroll. Specifically, in Malawi, 2000 ECDE teachers are going to be given honorarium, which is expected to grow to 3000 by end of 2023, and 8000 by 2026.
- With the exception of Zimbabwe which already has 11 teachers training colleges, and Malawi one, respondents indicated that plans are underway to establish and increase ECDE teachers training colleges in Malawi, Eswatini, and Lesotho by 2026 – 2027 in order to provide fully trained teachers as opposed to using volunteer community caregivers.



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- In addition, most governments in the SADC countries recognize the need for equipping ECDE centres with appropriate resources such as furniture, scholastic materials and learning aids. In Lesotho, discussions around exempting taxes on infant learning aids are taking shape.
- Development and implementation of standardised ECDE curriculum, disseminated in community ECDE centres.
- Key players have committed to hold discussions around pushing SADC countries to have ECDE as a public agenda. Subsequently, some countries such as Zimbabwe, and Lesotho have added a foundation class to primary schools to prepare infants from low-income families who could not undergo ECD Education for primary school. Having this class in existing primary school will aid in reaching more infants from vulnerable communities, instead of having ECD dedicated community centers.
- In addition, some countries such as Malawi, Zimbabwe and Lesotho have been pushing for drafting a law on making ECDE mandatory by 2030.

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

## SADC CHILDREN'S PROTOCOL

TRANAC in partnership with Child Rights Network of Southern Africa (CRNSA) embarked on developing the SADC Children Protocol. CRNSA, which is based in South Africa and operates in 11 SADC countries, also hosts the secretariat for the CSOs that implement the African Charter on the rights and welfare of the child across Africa. TRANAC's strategic partnerships and funding has seen the draft protocol, whose development had stalled for 21 years, developed, finalised to a point where it is awaiting to be submitted at the SADC Ministers Conference and Heads of Government Summit scheduled either to take place in Angola or DRC by 2023.

Initially, the delay to finalise the protocol was partly caused by lack of funds, and impetus to transform from youth focus to including children. The broadening of buy-in of the protocol from CSO membership to country wide, inclusive of government was also limited as a base to influence the SADC region's heads of states. This changed once the TRANAC project brought on board the requisite funds and the advocacy prowess and engaged the CRNSA secretariat, board members and national chapter representatives. After the analysis of the initial stages of the protocol, relevant articles on ECDE were formulated and added in the draft Protocol. Subsequently, the support from TRANAC led to the validation of the second draft and the development, validation and finalisation of the 2nd draft

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

Absence of information on ECDE had been identified as a hindrance to effective advocacy. Yet because there was no information hub in the target countries and at regional level and information sharing at national level was weak

## ONLINE KNOWLEDGE & INFORMATION HUB FOR HESA

- Establishing an online knowledge/information hub for the Horn, East and Southern Africa (HESA) and beyond by TRANAC has reshaped understanding of ECDE and strengthened key institutions, partners and stakeholders in Southern African countries and beyond.
- The hub is also aimed at empowering partners in respective SADC countries to develop and implement ECDE policies and ensure that these are part of the development agenda.
- TRANAC proposed the establishment of the hub for ECDE. However, RMU HESA had been planning to create an education wide hub. When TRANAC's idea was submitted, OXFAM found it fit to merge the goals and create one portal focusing on education and not just ECDE, and have it run and connected to the ZINECDA website. The Link to the information portal is <https://africaeducationhub.org/>.
- The portal has been used to strengthen the capacity of coalitions both at national and regional level, create awareness about the status of ECDE, invite decision makers to celebrate successes, and learn from others' successes.

**WHAT IS CRITICAL TO TAKE  
INTO ACCOUNT IN TERMS OF  
STRATEGIES OR INTERVENTIONS  
USED AT TRANSNATIONAL  
LEVEL:**

**STRATEGIES USED**



## Strategies Used

### 1. Formation of the consortium of 6 CSOs in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Lesotho, Zambia, Eswatini and Mozambique:

The formation of a Consortium of three partners in Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Lesotho, is one outstanding “niche”.. Subsequently, TRANAC realized the power of teamwork and embarked on a course to bring Zambia, Eswatini, and Mozambique on board, making it six implementers in this phase.

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

### 2. Formation of Technical and Taskforce Committees

The TRANAC project formed a national task force and technical committees, composed of members of TRANAC partners (6 implementing countries), government officials, and Parliamentarians to influence transnational and national advocacy on ECDE from national to SADC levels. These task teams were to facilitate, lobby, and create ownership and buy-in for the uptake of ECDE information and advocacy issues to the broader national governments and regional bodies. The task forces also served to identify, share and advocate for best practices on ECDE issues at national and transnational levels.

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

### Strategies Used

**3. Evidence-based Advocacy:** TRANAC conducted more than five pieces of research, partners' consultations and dialogues, as well as signing position papers at the regional level. This has built the imperial evidence, and strengthened their lobbying for policy through the evidence based approach. In addition, sharing resources between TRANAC and Education Coalitions has been beneficial for all parties.

**4. Budget Analysis:** As part of the TRANAC project, budget analysis of all the six countries as a key strategy to analyze trends in financing, expenditures, extent of prioritisation and resourcing, as well as a regional picture of financing ECD was drawn.

**5. “Do no harm” approach:** Positioned TRANAC for peaceful advocacy, instilled confidence in the partners, and eased collaboration at all levels. For TRANAC, the advocacy has been designed to focus on dialogue, build consensus, and hold discussions to prioritize and work together based on facts to address the issues affecting ECDE, than being confrontational

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

**6. The HESA online knowledge and information learning HUB;** this is seen as a foundation for advocacy on Education, sustainability and scalability of awareness.



### Strategies Used

#### 6. Capacity Strengthening of Implementers and Stakeholders:

**Coalition Members:** TRANAC carried out a capacity assessment of the leadership, followed by internal and external audits that led to strengthening systems for governance for each coalition involved in the project. This process enhanced Coalition Members work books, led to increased visibility and accountability as well as earned the project a vote of confidence from donors and other partners. Capacities were built around how the SADC secretariat works, and which department handles the sector of ministers and ECDE issues in general. In this regard, TRANAC built strong relationships with these strategic groups, especially those that push agendas to ministerial meetings and then to the heads of state agendas.

- **Members of Parliament and other decision makers.** TRANAC project ensured that selected parliamentarians from SADC parliamentary portfolio and officials from the SADC Secretariat are invited to attend induction and capacity building training by implementers. This was very critical because sometimes the assumption is that honorable members know about certain issues, while in truth they don't. Different countries were brought in one room, and there was a lot of cross learning, and several best practices shared.
- **Media practitioners.** For visibility and appropriate portrayal of the ECDE agenda, media practitioners were inducted on the available ECDE policies and declarations, trained on how to report ECD issues identified in the six countries and at regional level, as well as equipped with skills to sensitise the communities on the same. Indeed, the interviews echoed the fact that, since the media houses in the region were inducted, a positive image of ECDE has been portrayed and the ECDE agenda has been popularised and driven forward.

## Strategies Used

**7. Power in the numbers and seizing partnerships:** TRANAC leveraged existing operating and working partnerships with the Child Rights Network of Southern Africa (CRNSA), which was working on developing and pushing the SADC childrens protocol and Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled, to co-create the disability framework to embed ECD. CRNSA currently has membership and networks of child rights in 11 out of 16 SADC countries. This move is envisioned as a channel for mobilizing SADC states to ratify the children's protocol, by having more national coalitions advocating and influencing their decision-makers to approve it.

*“The strong and strategic approach of working together devised by TRANAC has been very instrumental in increasing a strong and enhanced ECDE framework into the Children Protocol”. “We would still be stuck on the first draft of the protocol that has taken us 22 years, if not for TRANAC. TRANAC’s coming on board was timely and helped us to move.”*

Through ZINECDAs impact and position in Zimbabwe, the Education Coalition of Zimbabwe has been appointed a leadership role, by Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA). ANCEFA has networks in 23 countries and is a member of the global campaign for education. The Education Coalition of Zimbabwe got that role, because technically, ZINECDA is part of the coalition and this was ANCEFA's way of recognising the efforts made by TRANAC. This pushes TRANACs work and impact long far into the future.

## CHALLENGES WORKING AT TRANSNATIONAL LEVEL

- **Bureaucracy in engaging ministries at SADC level:** Influencing SADC is such a long process, the systems of bringing agendas to the desk is tough. There are many competing priorities that require prioritization. For TRANAC, they worked with a Consultant that created a Strategy on Influencing SADC, and created national taskforce committees, this helped a lot.
- **The political Terrain and High turnover of MP's and Government leaders**  
It has been noted that the majority of MP's and Ministers that were capacitated by TRANAC have changed, due to elections in different countries. This means investing on ongoing inductions and trainings. What the project has explored is training Parliament staff, and Senate to also sustain the learning inhouse.
- **Limited research:** Lack of data at national and transnational level was a limiting factor for TRANAC, at the start. Although data collection, analysis and packaging information for advocacy on ECDE was time consuming, TRANAC had no option but to invest in research. Since it was deemed very critical for the project's success in advocating for ECDE recognition, financing and importance.
- **Funding:** It was also noted that it takes a lot of funding to convene the decision makers in different countries for training, which has impacted the number of attendees.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- TRANAC should continue nurturing already existing partnerships with other donors such as the Roger foundation, respective governments and CSOs to continue the momentum.
- TRANAC to mobilize all SADC countries to be ready to approve and ratify the protocol, to prevent the likelihood of staying on the shelf.
- Continuous training of MPs and government leaders as well as scale to include staff of parliamentary portfolio to address the issue of turn over as a result of changing of governments
- TRANAC ought to accelerate documentation and use of the online knowledge and information hub to address the issue of limited research. TRANAC should continue to recruit more partners (other SADC countries) to ensure that at the end of TRANAC each SADC country will have earned ownership of the online information hub, hence positioning them to populate and upload materials on the portal from country specific MEALs.

## CONCLUSIONS

The success stories identified and compiled included; the increase and recognition of ECDE financing and resourcing, the development and finalisation of the children's protocol with ECDE sections enhanced, and the establishment of an online knowledge and learning information hub for East, Horn and southern africa (HESA), the unified South African/one South African Network established, intentional capacity building of relevant stakeholders, as well as the establishment of able leadership and consortium implementation approach of TRANAC.

Other SADC countries for a collective voice in pushing for an ECD agenda and policies that are steadily taking shape.

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