

# TRENDS IN ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Findings from the  
4th Global Report on Adult  
Learning and Education



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

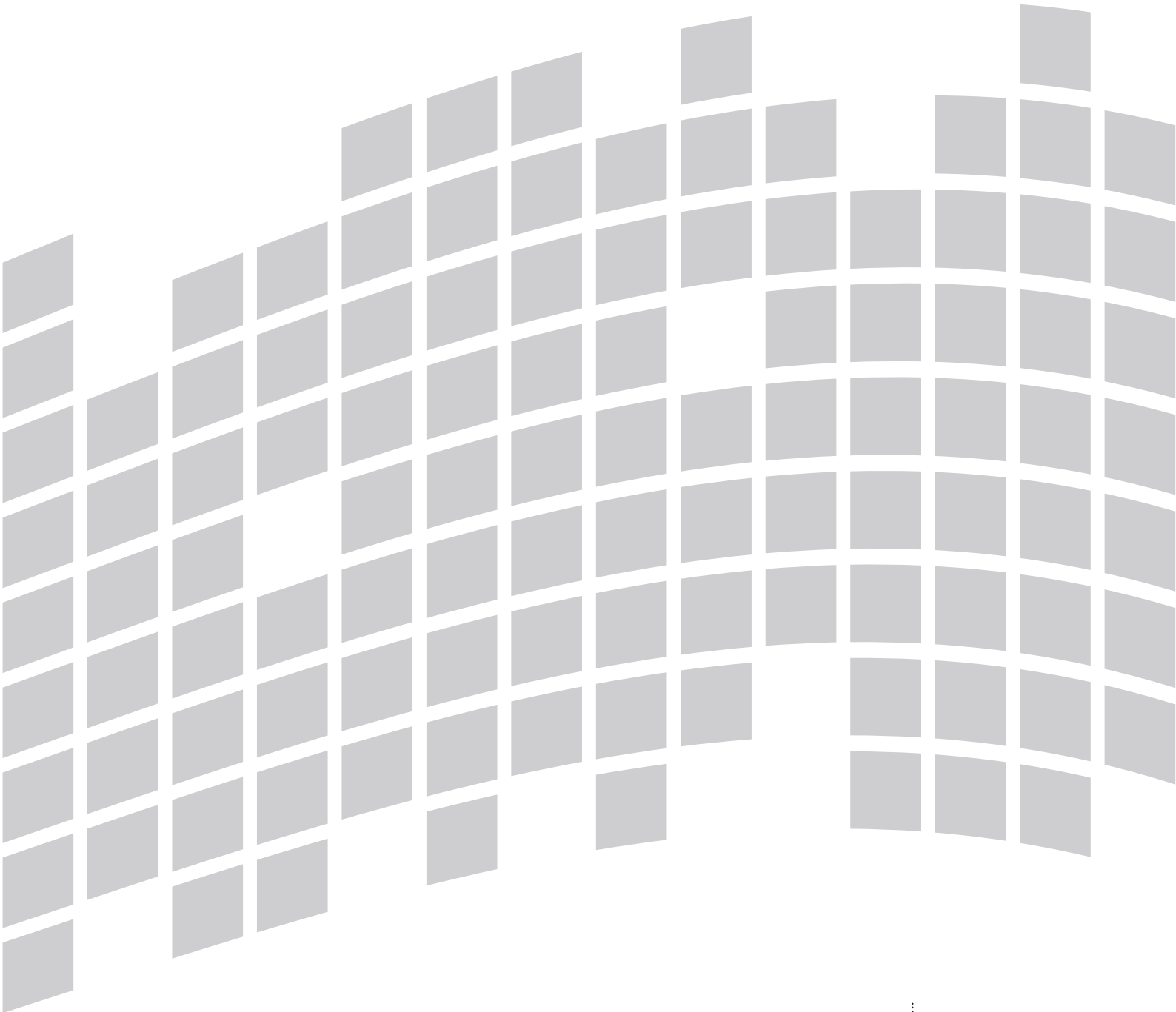


UNESCO Institute  
for Lifelong Learning



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# FOREWORD

The international community has set an ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with education and learning central to its achievement – aiming to leave no one behind. In the same vision, through Agenda 2063, the Member States of the African Union (AU) have committed to catalyse an education and skills revolution. Their aims are based on inclusive growth and sustainable development. This requires that Africa makes significant investments in education with the aim of developing human and social capital, emphasizing innovation, science and technology.

Deeply rooted in the culture of African nations is a long tradition of lifelong learning, preparing participants through education and apprenticeships for a wide range of social and professional roles in society. Adult learning and education (ALE) is more and more recognized as an indispensable component of lifelong learning, specifically with its capacity to reach disadvantaged groups. The economic and educational situations of African countries, however, represent additional challenges. On the whole, Africa is facing multiple challenges, including in education. While access to universal primary education has drastically improved, provision of and access to lifelong and life-wide learning opportunities remain to be further developed.

In 2016, the African Union adopted the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16–25) as the framework for transforming education systems in Africa. CESA 16–25 comprises 12 strategic objectives that are in line with, and can even be mapped through, Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4): to ‘ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’. Therefore, both frameworks require similar data points to track countries’ progress.

Promoting quality education in Africa remains a major priority for UNESCO, with the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL) paying attention to the often-neglected area of youth and adult education. In response, to strengthen understandings of ‘where we stand’ as a global community, and to address the increased needs of youth and adult education, UIL has compiled this report from *GRALE 4* providing a regional snapshot of adult learning and education based on data and information provided by 40 countries, Member States of both UNESCO and the African Union. It reports how far the recommendations in the Belém Framework for Action (BFA; UIL, 2010), as well as the Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education (RALE), have been implemented on the continent. It also outlines what has changed since *GRALE 3* (2016).

Data on the African continent included in *GRALE 4* make clear that without a sea-change in political will and resourcing, the potential contribution of adult learning and education to giving us the key tools – economic, social, technological, even ethical – to take on and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals will remain unrealized. This report provides valuable insight for governments, education experts and policy-makers in African Member States to monitor and accelerate progress towards not only SDG 4, but also the whole sustainable development agenda, with equity and especially inclusion – to leave no one behind – as measures of overall success.



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David Atchoarena  
Director  
UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning







# KEY MESSAGES

## 1

**Progress in participation in adult learning and education is insufficient. African Member States and the international community must do more to enhance participation, investing resources and developing effective policies that draw on best practice in the continent and around the world, particularly in reaching the least advantaged.**

- Participation in adult learning and education is uneven. Of the 25 African countries that reported participation rates, 20% reported participation at between 5% and 10%, 4% at between 10% and 20%, and 32% at between 20% and 50%; 20% reported participation rates higher than 50%. A quarter (24%) reported participation rates below 5%.
- Progress in participation is similarly mixed. More than two-thirds of the African countries surveyed reported an increase in ALE participation, while 21% reported no change and 8% reported a decrease.
- In too many cases, disadvantaged or marginalized groups do not participate in adult learning and education. The lowest increases in participation reported were for women, adults with disabilities, and older adults.
- People who find themselves living in absolute poverty may not be motivated to participate in adult learning and education, tending to believe they have nothing to gain from studying.

## 2

**Poor data constitute a major barrier to tackling inequalities in participation in ALE and addressing the needs of vulnerable groups. We need to know more about who is participating and who is not. More investment is needed in the collection and monitoring of data to support evidence-based policies that promote inclusive participation for all.**

- Thirty-nine countries answered a question asking them to state the source of their participation data; of these, 28 (72%) responded that ALE participation rates were based on actual figures.
- Knowledge about participation in ALE, particularly among disadvantaged and low-participation groups, remains insufficient. Eight countries (22%) reported not knowing the ALE participation rates of minority groups, refugees and migrants.
- While the number of countries taking part in the *GRALE 4* survey increased, survey data for 14 African countries remain unavailable.

# 3

**Progress in ALE policy and governance is encouraging but it is by no means enough, with some countries continuing to lag behind.**

- Twenty-nine African countries reported progress in adult learning and education policy since 2015. However, seven countries reported no change in ALE policy since 2015 (19%). Only one country reported regression in ALE policy since 2015.
- The lowest level of progress in ALE policy was reported in recognition, validation and accreditation (RVA) of non-formal and informal learning, with only 26% of countries reporting progress.
- Twenty-nine countries reported improvements in governance. Governance structures that help to implement these policies increasingly include effective coordination mechanisms and build on strong and fair partnerships between an increasing number of actors. Progress in governance was most notable in low-income countries.
- Member States must do more to target the groups facing the greatest barriers to participation, including through provision in diverse languages and recognition, validation and accreditation of previous learning, formal and non-formal. Eight countries reported that they did not know the participation rate of groups such as migrants and refugees.

# 4

**Funding for adult learning and education is inadequate. More investment is required, as well as more targeting of those hardest to reach.**

- Less than a quarter of countries (20%) reported that ALE spending had increased as a proportion of the education budget since 2015, with 35% reporting a decrease and 43% reporting no progress (this despite 72% of countries in *GRALE 3* mentioning a planned increase in funding).
- Twenty-six per cent of countries reported spending less than 0.5% of the education budget on ALE and a further 18% reported spending less than 1%. This confirms that ALE remains underfunded.



## CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

The resounding message of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was 'Leave no one behind'. Similarly, the African Union Agenda 2063 and the African Union's Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16–25) aim to deliver on the overall goal for inclusive and sustainable development. In particular, the AU 2063 declaration promotes an 'integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international arena' (African Union Commission, 2015, p. 1). This should be achieved through a 'qualitative system of education and training to provide the African continent with efficient human resources adapted to African core values' (AU, 2015, p. 7) enshrined in a vision of lifelong learning.

ALE has a crucial role to play in this, supporting the achievement of not only SDG 4 but also a range of other goals, including those on climate change, poverty, health and well-being, gender equality, decent work and economic growth, and sustainable cities and communities.

The Pan-African High-Level Conference on Education (PACE 2018) made an important commitment to promoting lifelong learning for all, particularly for those excluded from education and training. The event aimed to chart a common way forward to ensure inclusive and quality education for all in Africa. Education ministers and vice-ministers, other high-level government officials, and representatives of international organizations, pan-African and sub-regional organizations, civil society, and youth and teacher organizations joined the discussions, which concluded with strong recommendations for developing Africa's human and social capital through education within the context of the implementation

of Sustainable Development Goal 4 and the Continental Strategy for Education in Africa 2016–2025, expressed in the Nairobi Declaration and Call for Action on Education.

The Nairobi Declaration recognized that 'access to and quality of education and training at all levels remained critical challenges within the African continent with millions of children, young people and adults lacking foundational skills and relevant competencies needed for life and work in a globalized world' (UNESCO *et al.*, 2018, p. 1). It put the learning needs of out-of-school children and excluded young people and adults high on the list of priorities for national education policy and planning.

Lifelong learning was high on the agenda during PACE 2018, with advances made in lifelong learning highlighted and needs for further development identified, among them well-integrated, functioning lifelong learning systems. The Declaration included a commitment by national governments to:

promoting quality lifelong learning for all at all levels, using diverse and relevant modes of learning with flexible pathways between formal, non-formal and informal education and training models, including strengthened systems of recognition and equivalence, to cater for all children, youth and adults in and out of school (*ibid.*).

A further commitment was made to 'increasing provision of effective and relevant literacy programmes for youth and adults leading to functional proficiency levels, integrating skills development for decent work and livelihood, health and responsible citizenship' (*ibid.*, p. 3).

The 2019 African Union summit focused on refugees and internally displaced persons. Sub-Saharan Africa hosts more than 26% of the world's 25.4 million refugees, according to UNHCR, the UN agency for refugees. That figure has recently been rising because of ongoing crises in countries like the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) and Burundi. ALE is a means of addressing the needs of refugees and migrant populations, which is becoming a more pressing issue to the international community.

ALE provides knowledge, skills and attitudes required for social, economic and political participation and transformation applicable to a range of contexts. It may be practised in diverse African languages using, preferably, the mother tongue or, more frequently, the official language. Africa's multilingualism and cultural diversity is an asset that is increasingly being exploited as an important resource for learning. Multilingualism is normal in many parts of Africa. In fact, multilingualism can be seen as the norm practically everywhere. It is not a problem that might isolate the continent from knowledge and the emergence of knowledge-based economies, facilitated through international languages of wider communication. Given that a number of African formal education systems do not perform to their full potential, ALE is still an immensely important tool for national development.

## 1.1 MONITORING THE BELÉM FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

The *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE)* is a monitoring tool built to track the implementation of the Belém Framework for Action (BFA), adopted by 144 UNESCO Member States at the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI) in 2009. CONFINTEA VI was organized on behalf of UNESCO by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning in partnership with the Ministry of Education of Brazil. The overarching goal of CONFINTEA VI was to harmonize adult learning and education with other international education and development agendas, including the African Union's, and its integration within national sector-wide strategies.

The Belém Framework for Action affirms three basic principles: that education is a fundamental human right and an enabling tool, that it is a public good, and that gender equality is linked to the right to education for all. It provides descriptions related to each target, and indicative strategies for implementation in countries. CONFINTEA VI was supplemented by regional CONFINTEA follow-up meetings from 2011 to 2013 and, more recently, the CONFINTEA Mid-Term Review meeting in 2017 generated renewed momentum for ALE at global, regional and national levels. The Mid-Term Review provided the ALE community with valuable information on the impact that the BFA has had on ALE policies and practices and identified strategies and measures to enhance full implementation and sound monitoring of the BFA towards CONFINTEA VII, which will take place – on the African continent – in 2022.

*GRALE 4* has been designed to monitor the ALE activities of Member States since 2015, in line with the commitments made in the BFA, in terms of policy, governance, participation, inclusion and equity, financing and quality of provision.

In addition, *GRALE 4* monitors the implementation of the Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education (RALE, 2015). RALE reaffirms the central role played by ALE in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. *GRALE 4* reiterates that

Member States should continue to implement the Recommendation and further strengthen international cooperation in ALE.

RALE replaces the Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education (1976) and sets out principles and goals for ALE. It sets the central aim and objectives of ALE as follows:

The aim of adult learning and education is to equip people with the necessary capabilities to exercise and realize their rights and take control of their destinies. It promotes personal and professional development, thereby supporting more active engagement by adults with their societies, communities and environments. It fosters sustainable and inclusive economic growth and decent work prospects for individuals. It is therefore a crucial tool in alleviating poverty, improving health and well-being and contributing to sustainable learning societies (UNESCO, 2016, p. 8).

More specifically, RALE identifies three key fields of learning skills that are of importance for ALE:

- literacy and basic skills;
- continuing education and professional development (vocational skills);
- liberal, popular and community education (active citizenship skills).

These domains will be referred to in this report with particular data available in Chapters 2 on policy, 5 on quality, and 6 on participation. RALE also highlights the great potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in promoting inclusion and equity by providing adults with access to learning opportunities, including people with disabilities, and marginalized or disadvantaged groups.

The specific monitoring tool for *GRALE 4*, the *GRALE 4* Survey (UIL, 2018a), consists mostly of closed-ended questions which indicate changes in the five different areas of commitment on ALE. This is done to allow for global coverage, relevance and comparability, and is achieved via the introduction of standardized measures for the responses. Responses to closed-ended questions have been converted to

percentages for quantitative reporting of the main findings and trends, which appear as tables, figures and charts in the following chapters. To add depth to the closed-ended responses from Member States and to capture some country context, the survey also asked open-ended questions in order to collect specific examples or illustrations of progress or regression in a particular BFA area.

This report gives insight into the results of a survey undertaken for *GRALE 4*, with a particular focus on the African continent. The survey was conducted in May 2018, and collected responses from 157 of the 193 UNESCO Member States and two of the 11 Associate Member States. This report covers the responses from 40 African countries (see Annex).

## 1.2 A REGIONAL SNAPSHOT THROUGH THE LENS OF *GRALE 4*

The response rate and quality of responses from African Member States to current and past *GRALE* surveys helps to animate a continental 'picture' of adult education and learning across regions and over time. The total of 40 African countries responding to *GRALE 4* compares with 39 for *GRALE 3* (see **Table 1.1**) – an increase in response rate from 72% in 2015 for *GRALE 3* to 74% for *GRALE 4*. Sub-regionally, four countries in Central Africa returned the monitoring template (44% participation rate); 11 in Eastern Africa (79% participation rate); five in Northern Africa (83% participation rate); eight in Southern Africa (80% participation rate); and 12 in Western Africa (80% participation rate). Particularly important is the increase in participation rates from countries in Eastern Africa, from 64% participation in *GRALE 3* to 79% participation in *GRALE 4*. However, the Western African countries' participation rate decreased from 87% in *GRALE 3* to 80% participation in *GRALE 4*.

**TABLE 1.1**  
**Participation of African Member States in *GRALE 4*, by sub-region and by income group**

	All Member States	Member States that submitted information	Participation rate (%)
<b>WORLD</b>	159		
<b>AFRICA</b>	54	40	74%
<b>AU SUB-REGIONAL GROUPS</b>			
Central Africa	9	4	44%
Eastern Africa	14	11	79%
Northern Africa	6	5	83%
Southern Africa	10	8	80%
Western Africa	15	12	80%
<b>INCOME GROUPS</b>			
Low income	27	20	74%
Lower middle income	18	13	72%
Upper middle income	8	6	75%
High income	1	1	100%

Source: UIL, 2018a

**Table 1.1** shows participation of African countries in *GRALE 4* by income group. Of 27 countries classified as low income, 20 provided information for monitoring ALE; 13 out of 18 classified as lower middle income provided information; 6 out of 8 classified as upper middle income provided information; and one classified as high income participated in *GRALE 4*.

The overall participation rate in *GRALE 4* is slightly higher than in *GRALE 3*, yet 26% of Member States (14 countries) did not participate in *GRALE 4*. Furthermore, the overall participation rate is affected by a lack of responses to certain questions in the monitoring tool. As with *GRALE 3*, *GRALE 4* does not attempt to achieve representativeness, e.g. by weighting responses by population, but instead presents the number of responses and the percentage it represents of participating countries. Member States in conflict or

fragile political situations are, unsurprisingly, less likely to participate<sup>1</sup> – the ALE situation in these countries is likely to be quite different from the rest of the African countries. The regional ‘picture’ of ALE offered in this report is based on information provided by the countries that participated.

The *GRALE 4* survey asked Member States to report which government ministries provided input in response to the survey. In the African Member States, 61% of countries reported that the ministry of education was involved in providing input to responses, followed by 20% of countries reporting that the ministry of social affairs, and 7% the ministry of labour, contributed. This trend is similar across sub-regions and income groups, showing, regionally, that the government ministry mostly responsible for providing input on monitoring ALE is education.

<sup>1</sup> Although Somalia participated in *GRALE 4*.



**TABLE 1.2**  
**Stakeholders' involvement in national progress report for *GRALE 4***

	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>ALE agencies</b>	<b>ALE providers</b>	<b>Research</b>	<b>Universities</b>	<b>NGOs</b>	<b>INGOs</b>	<b>Private sector</b>
<b>WORLD</b>	159	28%	26%	14%	21%	24%	16%	9%
<b>AFRICA</b>	40	30%	53%	25%	33%	45%	35%	18%
<b>AU SUB-REGIONAL GROUPS</b>								
Central Africa	4	25%	50%	0%	50%	50%	50%	25%
Eastern Africa	11	36%	64%	36%	27%	45%	27%	27%
Northern Africa	5	20%	0%	20%	20%	0%	20%	0%
Southern Africa	8	38%	75%	25%	50%	75%	50%	38%
Western Africa	12	25%	50%	25%	25%	42%	33%	0%
<b>INCOME GROUPS</b>								
Low income	20	25%	50%	30%	30%	45%	40%	15%
Lower middle income	13	31%	46%	31%	38%	46%	38%	8%
Upper middle income	6	50%	67%	0%	33%	50%	17%	50%
High income	1	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

It is important to have the engagement of civil society and non-governmental organizations in tracking progress with respect to ALE (see **Table 1.2**). This is due to the importance of an inter-sectoral approach and cooperation in increasing and maintaining the potential of ALE for all. Of all the participating countries, only 30% indicated that ALE agencies contributed to the survey response, and 53% indicated that ALE providers contributed. While 33% of countries indicated that universities and 25% reported that research institutes gave input, only 45% of the countries involved local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and even fewer involved international NGOs, in giving input on the monitoring tool. Sub-

regionally, there is some variation in terms of stakeholders' participation in responding to the survey. In Southern Africa, for instance, 75% of participating countries responded that ALE providers were consulted to report on national progress, and 75% of countries consulted with local NGOs. In Western Africa, there was less consultation with stakeholders in responding on progress on ALE since 2015: notably, 42% and 33% from NGOs and INGOs and none from the private sector.

Policies reported through the *GRALE 4* survey illustrate the progress made by African Member States in relation to the BFA.



## CHAPTER 2

# POLICY

The BFA highlights the necessary commitment of Member States to develop and implement policies, well-targeted plans and legislation for addressing ALE. A commitment was also made to the designing of specific action plans for ALE that integrate the main international development priorities and policies. Further, the Member States committed to establishing coordinating mechanisms involving all stakeholders in the area of ALE, and improving the recognition, validation and accreditation (RVA) of all forms of learning (including non-formal and informal learning). These important commitments form the basis for the monitoring of ALE policy in *GRALE 4*.

### 2.1 THE STATE OF ALE POLICY IN AFRICAN MEMBER STATES

In *GRALE 3*, 27 African countries (out of 38 that responded to the question) reported significant improvements in ALE policies between 2009 and 2015. In *GRALE 4*, 37 African countries reported on whether ALE policies have continued to progress, remained the same or actually regressed since 2015. Rates of progress, regression, or no change (same levels) are shown in **Figure 2.1**. These rates are categorized by sub-region and by income group.<sup>2</sup> Results show that the majority of countries (78%) that responded to the question made significant progress. Significant progress was reported especially in Southern Africa (100% of 7 countries) and Western Africa (90% of 10 countries), in low-income countries (89% of 18 countries) and the only high-income country.

<sup>2</sup> The report uses the World Bank country classifications by income level.

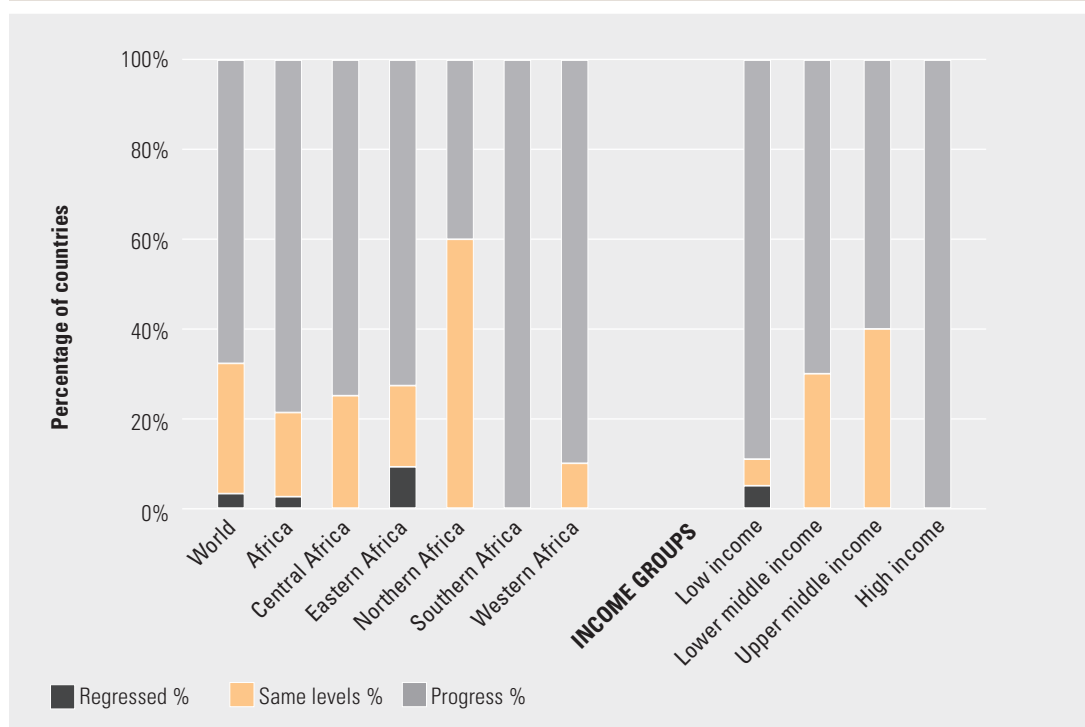
Nearly 20% of the African countries that responded to the survey reported no changes in ALE policies since 2015 (seven countries). Somalia, which is ranked second on the *Fund for Peace's Fragile State Index* (Fund for Peace, n.d.; see also OECD, 2018, p. 85), even reported regression in ALE policies since 2015. It reported regression due to limitations on resources and policy-making.

Countries were asked about progress in disaggregated categories of policy, which followed the commitment of the BFA. These are shown in **Table 2.1**, where we find that 40 countries responded on these disaggregated categories of ALE policy. The greatest regional progress was in involving stakeholders (68% of countries reported progress in this field). DR Congo described activities with different stakeholders to increase social awareness.

Of the countries that responded, those in Southern and Western Africa have the highest sub-regional rate of involving stakeholders. Eritrea is working with partners such as the African Development Bank, UNICEF, the Global Partnership for Education and others for financial support to implement basic education and skills training for adults through mother tongue literacy initiatives. DR Congo reported launching a literacy awareness programme with Alpha Ujuvo, a non-profit organization based in Goma. Kenya reported involving stakeholders through the establishment of adult and continuing education centres, which offer community education programmes in public health and nutrition, cooperative education, financial literacy and digital literacy.

Developing concrete and specific plans in ALE was the second key area where regional progress was made, with 62% of countries reporting progress since 2015 (**Table 2.1**).

**FIGURE 2.1**  
**Overall progress on ALE policy since 2015**



Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey

**TABLE 2.1**  
**Progress in the field of ALE with respect to different policy processes**

	Total responses	Implementing legislation	Implementing policies	Developing plans	Involving stakeholders	Validation non-formal & informal
<b>WORLD</b>	147	68%	73%	82%	86%	66%
<b>AFRICA</b>	40	44%	45%	62%	68%	26%
<b>AU SUB-REGIONAL GROUPS</b>						
Central Africa	4	25%	25%	25%	50%	0%
Eastern Africa	11	45%	45%	64%	64%	18%
Northern Africa	5	20%	20%	40%	40%	20%
Southern Africa	8	63%	75%	88%	100%	38%
Western Africa	12	42%	42%	58%	67%	33%
<b>INCOME GROUPS</b>						
Low income	20	40%	40%	70%	80%	30%
Lower middle income	13	46%	62%	54%	54%	15%
Upper middle income	6	33%	33%	50%	50%	17%
High income	1	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%

Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey. Note: Four Member States did not provide this information.

These plans were developed from a range of principles, including rights-based approaches to education, economic transformation, social inclusion and community engagement, as well as from a desire to promote lifelong learning and learning societies. In Uganda, for example, the National Development Plan II 2015/16–2019/20 identifies the development of human capital as one of the fundamental enablers for socio-economic transformation of the country, which is in line with aspirations of the Uganda Vision 2040 statement.

**Table 2.1** also shows that 45% of countries reported regional progress in implementing policies on ALE, while 44% reported progress on implementing legislation. The lowest level of progress in disaggregated categories of ALE, however, was in recognition, validation and accreditation (RVA) of non-formal and informal learning, with 26% of countries reporting progress.

Finally, low-income countries had the second-highest regional rates of involving stakeholders, developing plans and RVA, after the one high-income country, Seychelles. Lower middle income countries had the highest rates of implementing policies and legislation (the latter after the high-income country; see **Table 2.1**). The learning outcomes that young people and adults acquire in the course of their lives in non-formal and informal settings need to be made visible, assessed and accredited, as has been recognized in a number of important policy reports, frameworks and guidelines. Enhancing RVA to all forms of learning has the potential to motivate young

people and adults to continue learning and to ensure equity and inclusiveness in access to learning opportunities. It can also promote more effective utilization of human talent and resources (UIL, 2018b).

## 2.2 PROGRESS BY RALE LEARNING FIELD

Countries were asked about progress in RALE fields of learning – literacy and basic skills; continuing education and professional development (vocational skills); liberal, popular and community education (active citizenship skills) – according to disaggregated categories of policy.

**Table 2.2**'s responses indicate comparative regional progress across the disaggregated categories of ALE. Higher rates of regional progress were reported for two fields: literacy and basic skills, and continuing training and professional development. The third field, citizenship education, had a regional rate of 3% or below across disaggregated categories of ALE. Increasing literacy levels and the promotion of employability are obviously the main policy goals of countries in relation to ALE. It should be noted that citizenship education so far receives rather marginal attention in ALE policy development. Countries gave a high level of attention to ALE programmes and policies that link literacy and basic skills with health, employability and social cohesion. Usually, adults are not encouraged to participate in ALE programmes merely to acquire new skills; instead, they look at the potential to translate new skills into social and economic outcomes (UIL, 2016, p. 99).

**TABLE 2.2**  
**Policy processes with respect to RALE**

	Total responses	Literacy and basic skills	Continuing training and professional development	Citizenship education	Do not know
Implementing legislation	24	45%	10%	5%	0%
Implementing policies	25	48%	13%	3%	0%
Developing plans	28	53%	13%	3%	3%
Involving stakeholders	35	73%	13%	3%	0%
Validation, non-formal & informal	24	35%	23%	0%	3%

Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey

## 2.3 KEY FINDINGS ON POLICY

The main findings from African Member States' responses on ALE policy in the *GRALE 4* survey are:

- Twenty-nine countries (78%) reported progress in ALE policy since 2015, especially in Southern Africa (100% of seven countries) and Western Africa (90% of 10 countries), and in those countries classified as low-income (89% of 18 countries). In *GRALE 3*, 75% of countries reported progress since 2009.
- Seven countries (19%) reported no change in ALE policy since 2015.
- Only one country (3%) reported regression in ALE policy since 2015, namely Somalia.
- In terms of disaggregated categories of ALE policy, the most progress reported was in involving stakeholders (68% of countries), followed by developing concrete and specific plans (62%). These plans were developed from a range of principles, including rights-based approaches to education, economic transformation, social inclusion and community engagement, as well as to promote lifelong learning and learning societies. Nevertheless, citizenship education received comparatively marginal attention from survey respondents overall.
- The lowest level of progress in disaggregated categories of ALE was in recognition, validation and accreditation (RVA) of non-formal and informal learning, with 26% of countries reporting progress.
- Low-income countries reported significantly higher rates of involving stakeholders, developing plans and recognizing and validating non-formal and informal education in comparison to the region, excluding the high-income country that reported policy progress of 100% in implementing legislation, involving stakeholders and in recognition and validation.
- Literacy and basic skills and vocational skills and professional development are the two fields of learning in which countries generally reported progress in terms of policy. Citizenship education is, by comparison, somewhat neglected.







## CHAPTER 3

## GOVERNANCE

Governance is the application of policy, or 'a government's ability to make and enforce rules, and to deliver services' (Fukuyama, 2013, p. 350). High-level statements of intent that guide planning, engagement and accreditation – policies – ideally are formulated through cooperation between government agencies and key stakeholders, such as ALE providers and educators. Without such cooperation, provision would not be organized and systematic, reducing the possibility of overall social benefits from ALE, a core theme highlighted in *GRALE 3*.

### 3.1 THE STATE OF ALE GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA

Recent *GRALE* reports have explored ways towards an inclusive and equitable process of governance that leads to transparent, accountable and effective provision. The BFA recommendation offers suggestions on how to achieve this. Three aspects of governance put forward in the BFA recommendations that are embedded in the *GRALE 4* survey are mechanisms for stakeholder engagement and coordination, capacity building for better stakeholder engagement and coordination, and better cooperation between sectors and government ministries (UIL, 2018a).

A further key governance strategy, highlighted in *GRALE 2*, was decentralization. Decentralized power enables more engagement with stakeholders to develop and thus offer ALE provision that is relevant and accountable to a local community. Also, decentralized provision is likely to relate more to learners' realities and needs, which are essential aspects of inclusive and equitable provision. Effective decentralization should contribute to inclusion for the most disadvantaged groups by enhancing their access to ALE provision. This could lead to

wider participation, which is the thematic focus of this report and will be expanded on in Chapter 6.

**Table 3.1** shows responses to the question on whether there has been notable improvement in the governance of ALE since 2015, by region and by income group. Out of 35 African countries that responded, 29 reported improvement in governance since 2015. Regionally, this represents 83% of total respondents.

The Eastern African countries reported the highest rate of improvement in ALE governance, at 50% (9 of 18 countries). Western Africa reported 47% (8 out of 17 countries). As shown in **Table 3.1**, low-income countries reported the most improvement in ALE governance at 89% (14 of 16 countries). The rate of progress drops slightly from there, levelling at 73% in the other income groups.

Countries were also asked about progress in disaggregated categories (see **Table 3.2**) related to the three aspects of governance set out in the BFA recommendations. The number of country responses to the question varied – from 38 to 40 – depending on disaggregated category; this is shown in **Table 3.2** under 'Total responses'.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Response options to disaggregated categories were drawn from a Likert-type scale, ranging from 'not much' to 'somewhat' to 'much', with the option of 'do not know'. Some response options were merged together to make a three-point scale, as there were very few countries with extreme categories 'not much' versus 'a little' and 'much' versus 'a great deal'.

**TABLE 3.1**  
**Improvement in the governance of ALE in African member countries since 2015**

	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Proportion (%)</b>
<b>WORLD</b>	137	103	75%
<b>AFRICA</b>	35	29	83%
<b>AU SUB-REGIONAL GROUPS</b>			
Central Africa	28	3	11%
Eastern Africa	18	9	50%
Northern Africa	32	3	9%
Southern Africa	20	6	30%
Western Africa	17	8	47%
<b>INCOME GROUPS</b>			
Low income	16	14	89%
Lower middle income	12	9	72%
Upper middle income	6	5	73%
High income	1	1	73%

Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey. Note: Five countries did not respond to this question.

**TABLE 3.2**  
**Regional disaggregated reporting on ALE governance in Africa**

	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>Not much</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Much</b>
Increased stakeholder participation	40	20%	23%	58%
Developed more effective monitoring and evaluation systems	40	28%	45%	28%
Strengthened cooperation with civil society	39	18%	33%	49%
Improved inter-sectoral coordination	39	36%	18%	46%
Improved inter-ministerial cooperation	39	31%	31%	38%
Improved transnational cooperation	38	47%	34%	18%
Strengthened capacity-building initiatives	38	24%	39%	37%
Become more decentralized	40	25%	33%	53%

Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey

## 3.1.1

**INCREASED STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION**

Results show that 58% of 40 respondent countries from Africa reported much progress in stakeholder participation (**Table 3.2**). Stakeholder participation was achieved through organized programmes, the creation of councils or adult learning centres, and through collaboration between the government and other key providers, educators and adult learners.

## 3.1.2

**MORE EFFECTIVE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS**

**Table 3.2** shows that 11 out of 40 countries (28%) have made 'much progress' in developing effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems since 2015. The greatest progress by sub-region was achieved in Northern Africa, where 40% (two out of five countries) reported making much progress. Developing M&E systems is important for planning ALE. M&E systems are also important for quality assurance (**Box 3.1**).

## 3.1.3

**STRENGTHENED COOPERATION WITH CIVIL SOCIETY, AND CAPACITY-BUILDING INITIATIVES**

Progress in support for the constructive and informed involvement of civil society in ALE since 2015 was reported by 49% of countries. Just under two-thirds of countries from Southern Africa (5 out of 8), and Western Africa (7 out of 12) reported 'much progress' on strengthening cooperation with civil society (**Table 3.2**).

South Africa, to name one key example, established nine community colleges, one in each province, in 2015. Community colleges are responsible for the delivery of formal, non-formal and informal adult learning and education, which in South Africa is called community education and training. Each college is governed by a 16-member college council, formed to strengthen cooperation with diverse stakeholders. The college council has an oversight role in the delivery of ALE in South Africa.

**BOX 3.1****Monitoring interventions in Uganda**

In Uganda, the Ministry of Education, as lead agent for promoting adult literacy, collaborates with other partners in organizing activities aimed at strengthening coordination, collaboration and quality assurance. The social development Sector Working Group (SWG) regularly plans, reviews and monitors relevant interventions in Uganda as part of the national strategy for poverty reduction. The SWG also promotes staff capacity-building in M&E and is responsible for a management information system for the sector. This structure is replicated at a lower level through thematic working groups, particularly the Community Mobilization and Empowerment Committee, which meets every two months to review and plan ALE activities.

*Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey*

Capacity-building is key for informed decision-making of stakeholders. Slightly over one-third (37%) of countries that responded to this question (14 out of 38) reported that capacity-building initiatives were much strengthened since 2015, and a further 39% (15 out of 38 countries) reported that capacity-building had somewhat strengthened (see **Table 3.2**).

## 3.1.4

**BETTER INTER-SECTORAL, INTER-MINISTERIAL COORDINATION AND TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION**

Inter-sectoral and inter-ministerial cooperation supports the implementation of ALE policy. In addition, transnational cooperation is important to raise the profile of ALE within countries, help them learn from best practice and receive support for the implementation of innovative practice. **Table 3.2** shows that 46% (18 out of 39 countries) reported much progress in inter-sectoral coordination, 38% (15 out of 39 countries) reported much progress in inter-ministerial coordination, but only 18%

(7 out of 38 countries) reported much progress in transnational cooperation. To exemplify, Kenya reported having a multi-sectoral approach to review policies and regulations to coordinate ALE provision. In Egypt, in turn, there is cooperation between ministries, sectors and civil society organizations with the aim of promoting lifelong learning. South Sudan reported that the Pastoralist Livelihood Curriculum was developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture to enhance food security as well as livestock resources.

### 3.1.5 DECENTRALIZING ALE

The involvement of public authorities at all levels of government, and increased decision-making for ALE policy planning and implementation at lower levels of government, are also important to facilitate the implementation of ALE policies. Ultimately, this approach helps to better serve the needs of adults, businesses and stakeholders in the local community.

**Table 3.2** shows that 53% of countries have become more decentralized with respect to ALE since 2015 (21 out of 40 countries). In *GRALE 3*, almost the same percentage of countries reported that ALE had become more decentralized (52%, or 17 out of 33 countries).

At the same time, 25% of countries (10 out of 40 countries) indicated that they had not decentralized much since 2015.

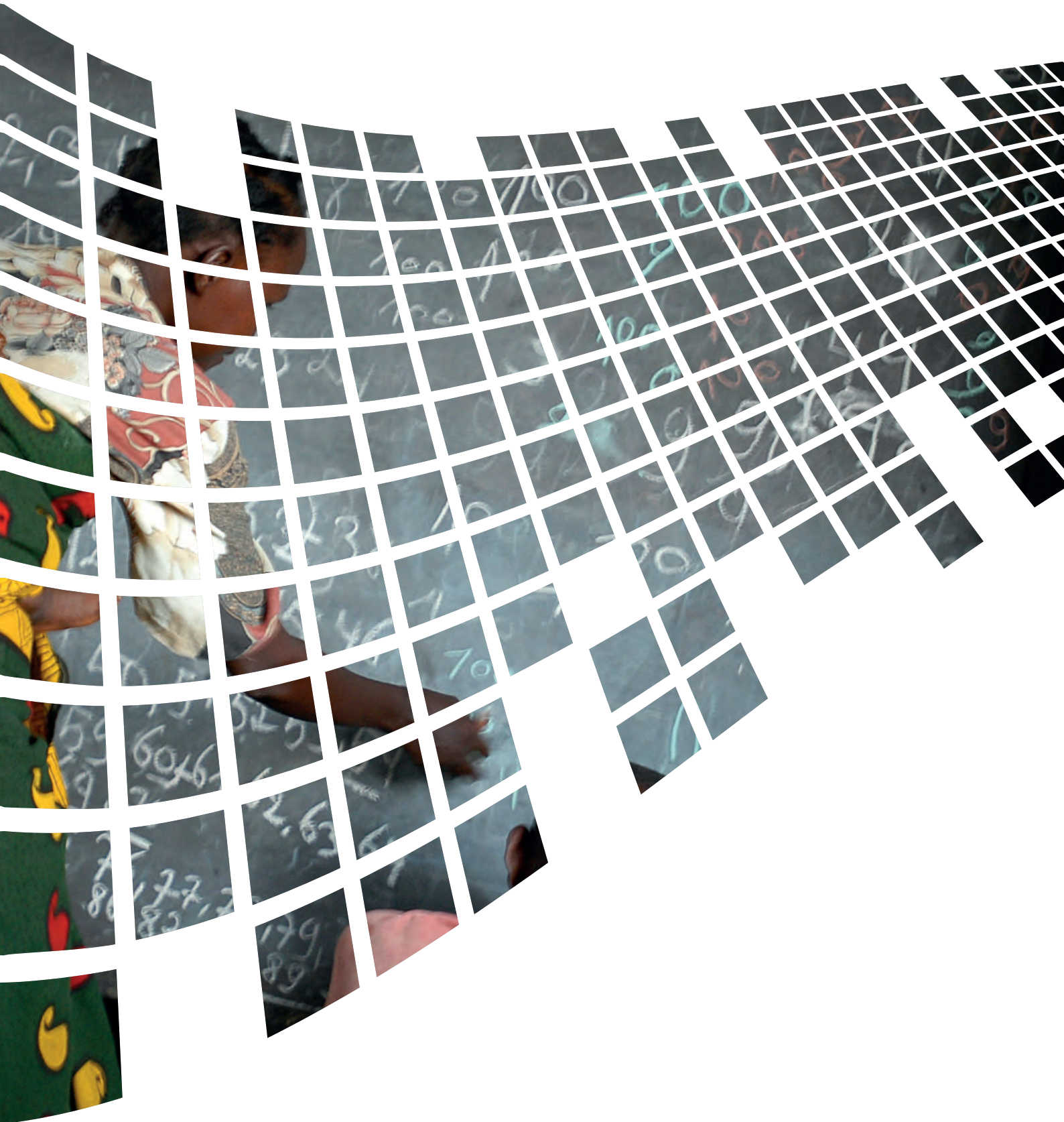
Eritrea and Togo associated improved ALE governance with collaboration at local level. Eritrea has collaborated with many partners at national level to develop policy and curriculum guidelines and secure finance at the local level for ALE operations. Togo reported that local communities are increasingly involved in the implementation of programmes.

## 3.2 KEY FINDINGS ON GOVERNANCE

The main findings from countries' responses on ALE governance are:

- Of 35 countries that responded, 29 reported improvement in ALE governance since 2015. Regionally, this represents 83% of total respondents.
- Sub-regionally, the Eastern African countries reported most improvement in ALE governance at 50% (9 of 18 countries), followed by Western Africa at 47% (8 of 17 countries). Low-income countries reported the most improvement at 89% (14 of 16 countries).
- Of the 40 countries that responded, 23 reported progress in ALE stakeholder participation. Those in Northern Africa had the highest rates of increase. Examples of stakeholder participation are through organizing programmes, councils or adult learning centres, and collaboration between government and other key providers, educators and adult learners. Cooperation with stakeholders and civil society was reported in 50% of countries that took part in the *GRALE 3* survey, and is generally perceived as important in serving learners' needs and guaranteeing the benefits of ALE.
- Nineteen out of 39 respondents (49% of countries) reported progress in strengthening cooperation with civil society for ALE, including just under two-thirds of countries from Southern Africa (five out of eight) and Western Africa (seven out of 12).
- ALE has become more decentralized in 53% of countries (21 out of 40).





## CHAPTER 4

## FINANCING

According to the BFA, a ‘significant financial investment’ is imperative to any viable ALE system (UIL, 2010, p. 7). Consistent financing over time can determine whether adequate attention goes into creating ALE policies and in developing and maintaining governance systems. Quality provision, as defined in the BFA, is often the focus of the discussion on financing ALE, and must be situated within a robust ALE system that maintains, accredits and improves it.

## 4.1

**THE STATE OF PUBLIC SPENDING ON ALE IN AFRICAN MEMBER STATES**

The *GRALE 4* survey asked for information on overall public spending on ALE, as well as future expenditure plans. It also collected disaggregated information on ALE financing for different groups, highlighted in Article 15 of the BFA under ‘participation, inclusion and equity’. Countries shared examples of new mechanisms and major improvements in financing ALE since 2015, which helps to characterize the progress made.

Overall, 40 African countries reported on public ALE spending as a proportion of public education spending since 2015. Regionally, 43% (17 countries) reported no progress on ALE spending as a proportion of public education spending since 2015 (**Table 4.1**), despite 72% of countries in *GRALE 3* mentioning a planned increase in funding. This was followed by 35% (14 countries) where ALE spending as a proportion of public education spending decreased and 20% (eight countries) where spending had increased since 2015. Only one country (3%) indicated not knowing whether there has been a change in ALE spending over the past three years.

In Eastern Africa, 45% of countries (five out of 11) reported increases. In Western Africa, 42% of countries reported reductions and 58% reported no change in ALE spending as a proportion of education spending since 2015.

**Table 4.1** shows that public spending on ALE is going down across the region: the poorer the country, the lower its readiness to increase investment in ALE, and vice versa (the richer countries tend to invest more). The worst-affected income group is low-income countries: 40% reported a reduction in ALE spending as a proportion of education spending since 2015, despite 89% of these countries having mentioned planned increased spending on ALE as part of the *GRALE 3* survey. Over the last 10 years, ALE spending has continued to decrease, not only in the low-income countries but also in lower middle income and high-income countries, suggesting that attention being paid by countries and governments to their adult learners is decreasing over time. Globally, in 2015, there is estimated to be 781 million adults unable to read or write a simple sentence (UNESCO, 2015, p. 137).

**Figure 4.1** shows a regional ‘picture’ of ALE spending as a percentage of public education spending: 34 countries could provide information on the proportion of public spending on education currently allocated to ALE. Just over one-quarter (26%) of countries reported spending less than 0.5% of their education budget on ALE and a further 18% reported spending less than 1%. Only 15% of 34 countries reported spending more than 4% of their education budget on ALE; these countries were Botswana, Comoros, Ethiopia, South Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

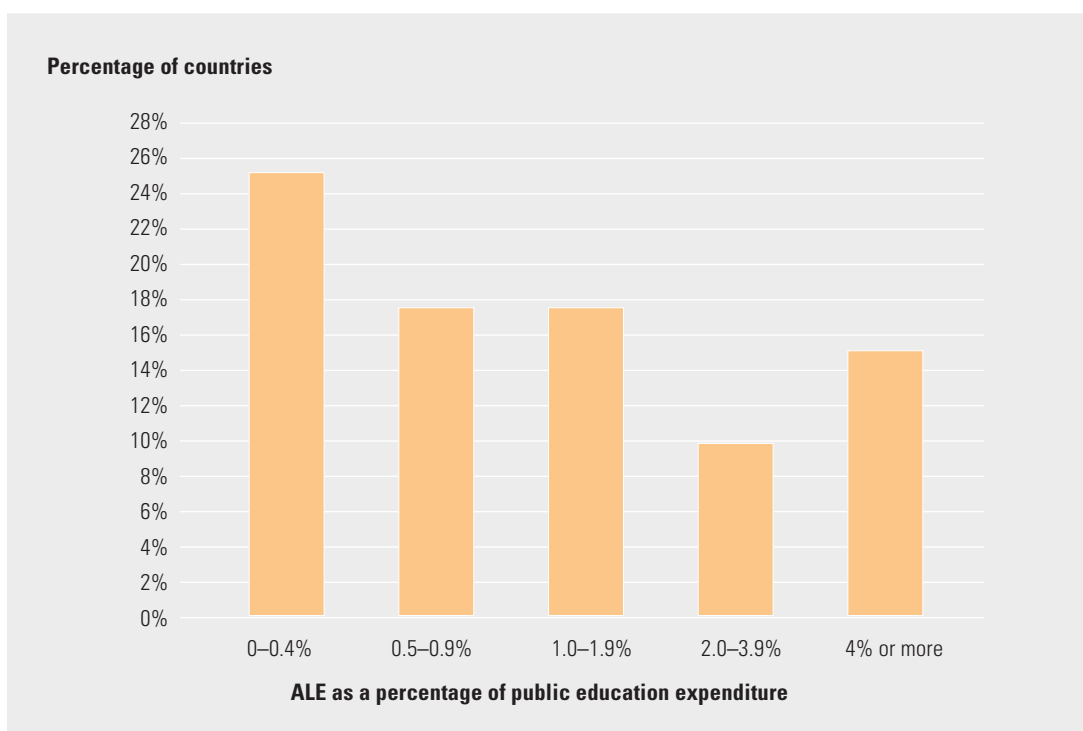
In total, 32 countries reported on the introduction of new mechanisms for financing ALE (see **Table 4.2**). Of these, 43% (17 countries) have introduced new financing

**TABLE 4.1**  
**Changes in public spending on ALE as a proportion of public education spending since 2015**

	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>Decreased (%)</b>	<b>Stay the same (%)</b>	<b>Increase (%)</b>	<b>Do not know (%)</b>
<b>WORLD</b>	149	17%	41%	28%	14%
<b>AFRICA</b>	40	35%	43%	20%	3%
<b>AU SUB-REGIONAL GROUPS</b>					
Central Africa	4	50%	50%	0%	0%
Eastern Africa	11	18%	36%	45%	0%
Northern Africa	5	40%	20%	20%	20%
Southern Africa	8	38%	38%	25%	0%
Western Africa	12	42%	58%	0%	0%
<b>INCOME GROUPS</b>					
Low income	20	40%	40%	20%	0%
Lower middle income	13	38%	38%	15%	8%
Upper middle income	6	17%	67%	17%	0%
High income	1	0%	0%	100%	0%

Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey

**FIGURE 4.1**  
**Public education spending on ALE**



Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey. Note: Based on responses by 35 countries reporting actual figures.



mechanisms since 2015. These range from cross-collaborations such as inter-ministerial, public–private, council, agency, programme and campaign initiatives, to special types of funds, unemployment insurance, scholarships, bilateral, multilateral, national and local mechanisms, and international and regional funding.

Sudan, Egypt and DR Congo gave examples of ALE funding collaboration. A literacy campaign in Sudan is supported by numerous sectors in most states. Similarly, Egypt and DR Congo described cross-collaboration for ALE financing. Several non-governmental and civil society organizations, along with telecommunications companies, finance ALE in Egypt. In DR Congo, funding comes through a combination of technical, financial, community, religious and non-profit partners.

Morocco has also introduced funding initiatives since 2015. Among these, regional councils in Morocco fund territorial literacy programmes in their development plans. In a declaration to parliament, the government pledged to give the necessary support to the National Agency to Combat Illiteracy to improve the rate of literacy in the country.

Low-income and lower middle income countries reported the highest rates of introducing new mechanisms for ALE funding, which might indicate that these countries are recognizing the potential of ALE and the positive return on ALE investment not only for individuals, but also for society and the economy. Funding ALE should not be perceived as a cost but rather as a medium- or long-term investment (EAEA, 2018).

Special types of funds for ALE were reported by Senegal and South Africa. Senegal established a fund to finance literacy interventions. ALE in South Africa is funded through the National Skills Fund and other public entities, such as the Sector Education and Training Authorities.

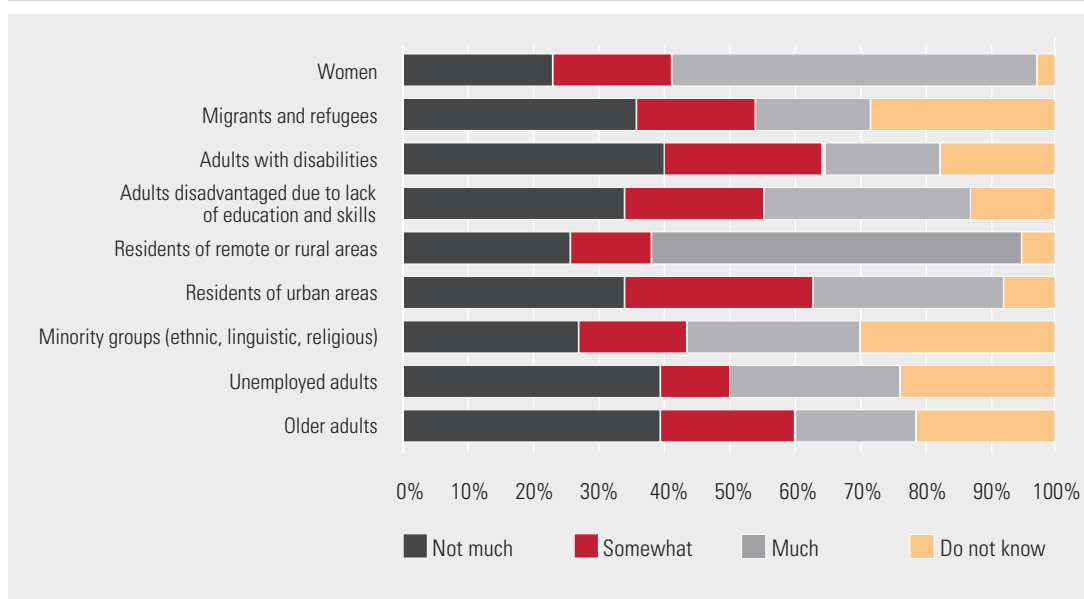
A combination of bilateral, multilateral, national and local ALE financing can be seen in Cameroon, Eritrea and Mozambique. Cameroon has bilateral and multilateral cooperation, as well as decentralized local authorities. ALE is financed by the state in Cameroon, along with development partners and communities through the municipalities.

**TABLE 4.2**  
**Proportion of countries that have introduced new mechanisms or sources of funding for ALE since 2015**

	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Proportion (%)</b>
<b>WORLD</b>	149	63	42%
<b>AFRICA</b>	32	17	43%
<b>AU SUB-REGIONAL GROUPS</b>			
Central Africa	4	3	75%
Eastern Africa	8	4	50%
Northern Africa	5	2	40%
Southern Africa	6	4	67%
Western Africa	9	4	44%
<b>INCOME GROUPS</b>			
Low income	14	8	57%
Lower middle income	11	6	55%
Upper middle income	6	3	50%
High income	1	0	0%

Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey

**FIGURE 4.2**  
**Regional rates of priority in ALE spending on key groups, including women**



Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey

In Mozambique, compensating adult educators is the responsibility of national and international organizations. Multinational companies, such as Vale, a global mining company, and Skills for Oil and Gas Africa (SOGA), also provide professional training courses in the country

Between 37 and 40 countries reported on whether their country had prioritized financing of ALE for nine key groups since 2015.<sup>4</sup> Possible responses were captured using a six-point Likert scale ranging from 'not at all' to 'a great deal'. For analytical purposes, and due to the small proportion of responses to some of these categories, *GRALE 4* reports on whether governments

4 The key groups are: women, migrants and refugees, adults with disabilities, adults disadvantaged due to lack of education and skills, residents of remote or rural areas, residents of urban areas, minority groups (ethnic, linguistic or religious), unemployed adults and older adults.

This list covers the prioritized groups highlighted under Financing in the BFA: women, rural populations, and people with disabilities. While not directly covering early adulthood, indigenous peoples and adults in prison – other groups highlighted in the BFA under participation (Article 15c, f and g) – this list encompasses most of them.

prioritize financing for these groups in four categories: 'not so much', 'somewhat', 'much' and 'do not know' (see **Figure 4.2**).

**Figure 4.2** shows, regionally, the extent to which each key group is prioritized for ALE financing. This is important, as these groups tend to be under-represented in ALE, meaning they do not profit from it as much as they might. Many of these groups have also been targeted in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The highest priority was for women and residents of remote or rural areas (56% of countries reported a priority), followed by adults disadvantaged due to lack of education and skills (32% of countries reported a priority), residents of urban areas (29% of countries reported a priority), and minority groups (ethnic, linguistic, religious; 27%). The most neglected groups were adults with disabilities, closely followed by unemployed adults and older adults – 39–40% of countries reported 'not much' priority for these groups.

ALE policies have an influence on the direction of spending. In *GRALE 3*, in which countries were asked to identify the most important target groups in ALE policies, 92%

of countries identified adults with low-level literacy or basic skills as a high priority for ALE policies. In *GRALE 4*, the same target group was reported to be the top priority in ALE spending.

Improvements in the financing of ALE were reported by countries as being applied to raising standards for ALE educators, providing them with training and learning materials and funding quality-assurance mechanisms for the provision of ALE. Botswana raised teachers' salaries, and Seychelles increased its budget to pay part-time instructors. DR Congo covers staff remuneration through subsidies from non-profit organizations and religious groups. Sudan has trained team leaders in basic, trainer and supervisor courses, as well as teachers who are graduates in civil service qualifications. Regarding learning materials, Sudan provides literacy textbooks and teachers' manuals, and Botswana supplies learning materials. Botswana also offers capacity-building, in addition to accreditation of adult educators.

Finally, minority groups was the category for which the largest percentage of countries (30%) reported not knowing if it constituted a priority for ALE financing. This was followed by 28% of countries that reported not knowing whether migrants and refugees were a priority for government financing of ALE. These key groups must be given more attention in financing strategies, as agreed to by Member States in the BFA (UIL, 2010, p. 8).

## 4.2

### KEY FINDINGS ON FINANCING

The main points from countries' responses on ALE financing are:

- Regionally, 43% (17 countries) reported no progress since 2015 on ALE spending as a proportion of public spending on education. This was followed by 35% (14 countries) where ALE spending as a proportion of the public education budget had decreased, and 20% (eight countries) where spending had increased since 2015. This information demonstrates countries have generally failed to implement the intended increase in ALE financing highlighted in *GRALE 3*.
- Low-income group countries were the most likely to have experienced a decline in public spending on ALE (40%), while upper middle income states were the most likely to report increases in ALE spending as a proportion of the public education budget.
- All but one (39 out of 40) country provided information on the proportion of public spending on education currently allocated to ALE. Only five countries regionally do not have relevant data to report. Nevertheless, this issue of under-reporting of data needs to be addressed by countries.
- Ten countries (26%) reported spending less than 0.5% of the education budget on ALE and a further 18% reported spending less than 1%. This resonates with the findings of *GRALE 3* and confirms that ALE remains underfunded.
- Low-income countries reported the highest rate in introducing new mechanisms of funding ALE since 2015.
- Countries reported that highest priority in ALE funding goes to women and residents of remote or rural areas (56% of responding countries), followed by adults disadvantaged due to lack of education and skills (32%), residents of urban areas (29%) and minority groups (27%).
- The highest rate of not knowing whether a group was prioritized for ALE financing was for minority groups (30%); the next poorest-known group was migrants and refugees: 28% of countries reported not knowing if migrants and refugees were a priority for government financing of ALE.



## CHAPTER 5

## QUALITY

Themes covered in other areas of the BFA – policies, governance, finance and participation – may improve over time, but if these do not result in high-quality provision, then ALE will not make a difference for the learner or for society. Provision is where ‘the rubber meets the road’, where policy, governance, participation and finance help define a quality offer.

The BFA underlines quality ALE provision as a ‘holistic, multidimensional concept and practice’, which should be regularly tracked and evaluated for improvement (UIL, 2010, p. 8). Member States agreed to ‘fostering a culture of quality in adult learning,’ laid down in Article 16 (*ibid.*). Quality requires relevant content, delivery, and assessment so that provision can empower individuals and communities. Therefore, Member States committed to developing quality criteria for curricula, learning materials and teaching methodologies take steps to elaborate criteria for assessing learning outcomes and improving training and employment conditions for adult educators.

Of 39 African countries that responded to *GRALE 3* in 2015, 64% collected information about learner completion rates, and 64% collected information about certificates or qualifications issued. These findings are linked by administrative procedures that recognize achievement through standardized qualifications which are embedded in the larger ALE system. Such immediate outcomes of ALE provision are easy to track.

However, *GRALE 3* showed that tracking the economic and social outcomes of ALE provision for the learner and society – whether from a non-formal programme with recognized qualifications or informal learning activities – was not done systematically. Challenges remained for the adequate monitoring of ALE outcomes over time. In

this respect, in *GRALE 3*, nine countries (23%) reported systematic collection on employment outcomes; only 36% reported collecting on wider social outcomes of adult learning; and 23% reported not collecting any information on outcomes from ALE provision.

### 5.1. ALE PROVISION OF QUALITY IN AFRICA

*GRALE 4* collected information on improvements in curricula, learning materials, teaching methodologies, training and employment conditions for ALE trainers and facilitators, and assessments of ALE since 2015. These indicators of quality were also disaggregated according to RALE fields of learning (i.e. literacy and basic skills, continuing training and professional development, and citizenship education). Qualitative data were also requested from countries on good practices in improving ALE quality.

**Table 5.1** shows that 30 countries (86%) reported making major improvements to ALE quality since 2015. We explore this in greater detail throughout this chapter. Sub-regionally, Central Africa reported the highest rates of progress in ALE quality at 100%. These rates were followed by 91% in Western Africa.

By income group, 100% of both the high-income and upper middle income countries reported major improvements to ALE quality (see **Table 5.1**). This was followed by 82% in both the low-income countries, corresponding to 17 countries, and the lower middle group.

**TABLE 5.1**  
**Proportion of countries reporting improvements in the quality of ALE since 2015**

	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>Yes (%)</b>
<b>WORLD</b>	107	75%
<b>AFRICA</b>	35	86%
<b>AU SUB-REGIONAL GROUPS</b>		
Central Africa	4	100%
Eastern Africa	8	75%
Northern Africa	5	80%
Southern Africa	7	86%
Western Africa	11	91%
<b>INCOME GROUPS</b>		
Low income	17	82%
Lower middle income	11	82%
Upper middle income	6	100%
High income	1	100%

Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey

**TABLE 5.2**  
**Progress in developing quality criteria for curricula and assessment in ALE since 2015**

	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>Curricula (%)</b>	<b>Assessment (%)</b>
<b>WORLD</b>	150	75%	73%
<b>AFRICA</b>	39	77%	62%
<b>AU SUB-REGIONAL GROUPS</b>			
Central Africa	4	50%	75%
Eastern Africa	11	73%	50%
Northern Africa	4	50%	67%
Southern Africa	8	88%	75%
Western Africa	12	92%	83%
<b>INCOME GROUPS</b>			
Low income	20	90%	79%
Lower middle income	12	67%	67%
Upper middle income	6	67%	60%
High income	1	0%	0%

Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey

## 5.1.1

**DEVELOPING QUALITY CRITERIA FOR CURRICULA AND ASSESSMENT**

Regionally, 39 countries reported on whether there was progress in developing new or reformed curricula for ALE since 2015 (see **Table 5.2**). Overall, 30 out of 39 countries (77% regionally) reported making progress in developing criteria for curricula. Many countries described new and reformed ALE curricula based on rationales of demand and needs assessment, competencies and intended learning outcomes, subjects and priority groups, and availability and purposes of special funds.

Meanwhile, 24 out of 39 countries (62% regionally) reported making progress in developing assessments for enhancing ALE quality since 2015 (see **Table 5.2**). Respondents in Eastern Africa proportionally reported the lowest progress in developing ALE assessments (50%).

Zimbabwe, Mozambique, South Sudan, Lesotho and South Africa offered some examples of developing new quality curricula. Mozambique designed new curricula for literacy and adult education. South Sudan developed its adult literacy curriculum. South Africa introduced a curriculum related to a new qualification, titled General Education and Training for Adults (GETCA), and the national senior certificate for adults (NSCA).

Also important are examples of reform to existing curricula for ALE. Countries such as Liberia and Namibia reported reforms of this type. Liberia has improved curriculum development for ALE and Namibia has revised curricula for programmes and courses to reflect current demands in the country. It has also streamlined technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in adult learning and school curricula.

Countries gave differing descriptions of ALE assessment, learning outcomes, tests to determine outcomes from provision, and a process for the accreditation of prior learning that includes assessment. Kenya, for example, has reviewed learning outcomes from ALE related to practical skills and competencies.

## 5.1.2

**DEVELOPING ALE LEARNING MATERIALS AND TEACHING METHODOLOGIES**

Quality in adult learning and education requires not just reforms to curricula, but constant development of learning materials and teaching methodologies – required for provision to be relevant and effective for adults in a changing world. **Table 5.3** shows that out of 39 countries that responded, 79% had made progress on developing teaching methodologies and 77% had made much progress on developing learning materials since 2015. By sub-region, countries in Western Africa reported greatest progress in the areas of teaching methodologies and learning materials, corresponding to 11 countries out of 12.

Improving teaching methods and materials can be done through different means, for instance by developing teaching competencies for ALE, or matching teaching quality to learner needs and then developing materials.

## 5.1.3

**DEVELOPING ALE PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING, AND EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS**

Previous *GRALE* reports have looked closely at progress reported on pre-service and in-service training for ALE teachers. *GRALE 4* also focuses on training for ALE educators and changes in their employment conditions since 2015. Regionally, 66% of countries (26) reported improving pre-service training for ALE educators, 74% (29) reported improving in-service training, and 51% (20) reported improving employment conditions (see **Table 5.4**).

Sub-regionally, the highest rate of progress in pre-service training was in Southern and Western Africa (75% corresponding to 6 out of 8 and 9 out of 12 countries with responses, respectively, as shown in **Table 5.4**). The highest rate of progress with respect to in-service training was Northern Africa, where all four responding countries reported progress.

In terms of income group, low-income countries reported the highest rates of progress for pre-service training for ALE

**TABLE 5.3**  
**Progress in developing learning materials and teaching methodologies since 2015**

	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>Learning materials</b>	<b>Teaching methodologies</b>
<b>WORLD</b>	147	65%	72%
<b>AFRICA</b>	39	77%	79%
<b>AU SUB-REGIONAL GROUPS</b>			
Central Africa	4	50%	75%
Eastern Africa	11	73%	73%
Northern Africa	4	50%	50%
Southern Africa	8	88%	88%
Western Africa	12	92%	92%
<b>INCOME GROUPS</b>			
Low income	20	90%	90%
Lower middle income	12	67%	67%
Upper middle income	6	83%	67%
High income	1	0%	0%

Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey

**TABLE 5.4**  
**Progress in pre-service training, in-service training and employment conditions since 2015**

	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>Pre-service training</b>	<b>In-service training</b>	<b>Employment conditions</b>
<b>WORLD</b>	146	52%	70%	58%
<b>AFRICA</b>	39	66%	74%	51%
<b>AU SUB-REGIONAL GROUPS</b>				
Central Africa	4	50%	75%	50%
Eastern Africa	11	60%	64%	45%
Northern Africa	4	50%	100%	50%
Southern Africa	8	75%	75%	63%
Western Africa	12	75%	75%	50%
<b>INCOME GROUPS</b>				
Low income	20	75%	70%	45% **
Lower middle income	12	50%	75%	54% ***
Upper middle income	6	67%	100%	60%
High income	1	*	0%	100%

Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey

\* No response to this question

\*\* Based on 13 responses for lower middle income group

\*\*\* Based on 5 responses for upper middle income group



educators (75%, as shown in **Table 5.4**), whereas the highest rate of progress for in-service training was for upper middle income countries, and employment conditions for high-income countries (100% in both cases, as in **Table 5.4**). High-income countries reported no progress on both pre-service and in-service training for ALE educators, whereas low-income countries reported the lowest levels of progress on employment conditions since 2015.

Countries offered examples of improvement to ALE quality in the form of teacher training. In DR Congo, social educators are being trained, and in Sudan literacy supervisors and trainers are learning to teach life skills. Senegal has improved its training system for educators by means of a 12-module course. Continuous facilitator training is offered in South Sudan. In Guinea, trainers are being trained according to the REFLECT approach, wherein learning activities are based on local need and reality.

For pre-service training in Uganda, institutions, including universities such as Kyambogo and Makerere, have quality assurance directorates. Curriculum is further assessed by the National Council for Higher Education, while Examinations Councils also have a role. The quality of in-service training is supported by a rigorous selection of

master trainers at national level. Their training focuses on key aspects of adult literacy programme development, such as facilitation skills, materials development, assessment (including measurement of literacy outcomes) and multi-level learning. They also cover policy analysis and multi-sectoral approaches to development. For district-level training, the focus is on facilitation skills, assessment and monitoring, and evaluation, as these are critical at the operation level.

## 5.2. PROGRESS BY LEARNING FIELD OF RALE

**Table 5.5** shows that most progress in RALE fields of learning in terms of quality was made in literacy and basic skills and continuing training and professional development; comparatively little progress was made in citizenship education. With respect to developing quality criteria for curricula, 29 countries reported making at least some progress, mostly in literacy and basic skills (86% of the 29 countries), followed by continuing training and professional development (14% of the 29 countries). Employment conditions were more improved in the area of literacy and basic skills than in continuing training and professional development. None of the

**TABLE 5.5**  
Progress in the quality of ALE with respect to RALE fields, including literacy, since 2015

	Total responses	Literacy and basic skills	Continuing training and professional development	Citizenship education	Do not know
Developing quality criteria for curricula	29	86%	14%	0%	0%
Developing quality criteria for learning materials	29	90%	10%	0%	0%
Developing quality criteria for teaching methodologies	30	73%	27%	0%	0%
Improving pre-service training for educators	24	58%	38%	0%	4%
Improving in-service training for educators	28	61%	36%	0%	4%
Improving employment conditions	20	50%	35%	0%	15%
Assessing learning outcomes	26	85%	15%	0%	0%

Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey

29 countries reported progress in developing quality criteria for curricula in citizenship education in comparison to the other two RALE fields of learning.

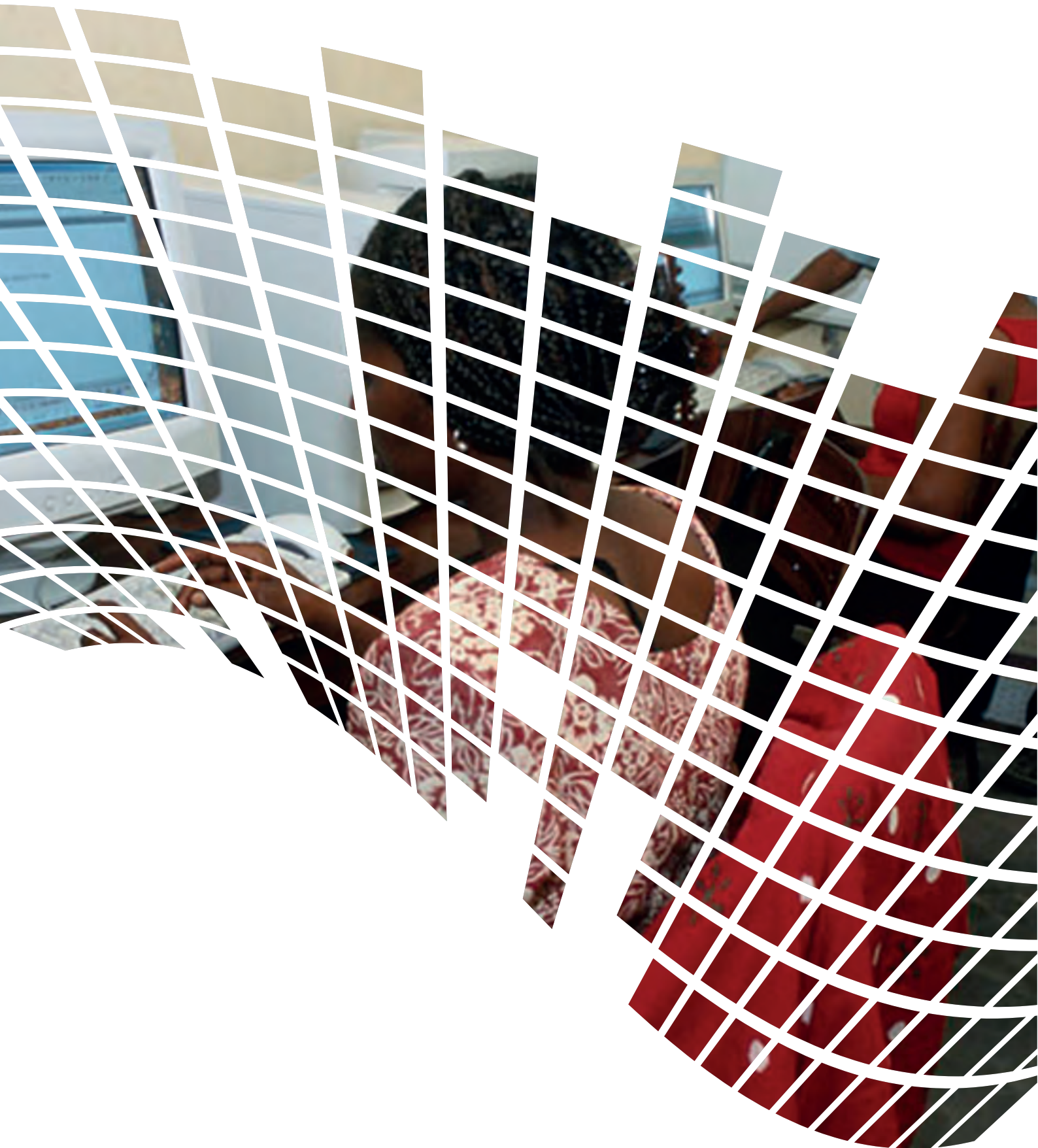
Another interesting observation is that no African Member State reported progress in developing quality criteria for learning materials and assessing learning outcomes for liberal, popular and community education (active citizenship skills).

### 5.3. **KEY FINDINGS ON QUALITY**

The main points from African countries' responses on ALE quality are:

- Thirty countries (86% regionally) reported major improvements to ALE quality since 2015. Central Africa reported the highest rates of progress in ALE quality at 100%. Progress was lowest in upper middle income and low-income countries.
- Of 39 countries, 30 (77% regionally) reported making much progress in developing criteria for ALE curricula since 2015. Of the 39 countries, 24 (62%) reported making much progress in developing ALE assessments.
- Of the 39 countries that responded, 79% reported much progress in developing teaching methodologies, and 77% in developing learning materials since 2015. By sub-region, countries in Western Africa reported greatest progress in these areas.
- For ALE educators, 66% of countries (26) reported improving pre-service training, 74% (29 countries) reported improving in-service training, and 51% (20 countries) reported improving employment conditions. Examples in the report highlighted good practices.
- Countries reported the most progress in RALE related to quality in literacy and basic skills, and continuing education and professional development (vocational skills). On the contrary, no country reported progress in liberal, popular and community education (active citizenship skills).





## CHAPTER 6

PARTICIPATION, EQUITY  
AND INCLUSION

Participation is the result of individuals engaging in ALE provision that is available to them.

ALE provision should be accessible to all learners, regardless of income, rural/urban development, gender, ethnicity, sexual identity or orientation, disability, language or any other social, economic, demographic or cultural marker of differentiation, in order for them to participate fully. The BFA equates fair access to ALE provision with achieving social development and helping to establish peace and prosperity. It emphasizes no exclusion of an individual in any circumstance. Equality and inclusion are also highlighted in the Sustainable Development Goals and are important to guarantee that the benefits of ALE are available to all.

Guided by the BFA, improving participation is seen as an inclusive process that involves learners, providers, policy-makers and other stakeholders and should result in accessible ALE provision. Participation is a key indicator for monitoring whether or not provision is accessible and people are actually enrolled and, hopefully, benefiting from ALE provision.

Collecting and analysing adequate participation data should enable countries to adjust and offer better, more targeted ALE provision in the future. Without it, planners have no way of knowing if people are actually participating in ALE, what their needs are and if they are benefitting from the provision. Therefore, monitoring data on the personal, family and social benefits of ALE is important to capture the returns that countries are achieving on ALE investment. Another advantage of monitoring learner participation and progress in ALE provision concerns identifying good practice. This is useful for confirming the effectiveness of ALE provision, and the policy and governance that informs and organizes it. But it does not stop

there. Good practice can be disseminated within and between countries and adapted to the contextual and specific realities of learners.

### 6.1. THE STATE OF PARTICIPATION IN ALE OF AFRICAN MEMBER STATES BEFORE 2015

*GRALE 3* (2015) reported overall changes in participation between 2009 and 2015: 58% of 36 countries reported that participation in ALE had, in general, increased during that period and 14% reported no change. Only 3% reported a decrease. 25% of countries reported not knowing changes in overall participation in their countries as there were no data available to track participation.

Participation in ALE provision by gender was one of the foci of *GRALE 3*. A total of 38% of countries reported that more women than men participated in non-formal ALE programmes and informal opportunities. Another 9% reported equal participation between genders, followed by 16% with more male participation. Over one-third (38%) of countries did not answer this question as there were no data available on participation by gender. By subject, 76% said more women participated in literacy programmes, whereas 58% said more men participated in TVET.

Data on participation by other markers of disadvantage, such as refugee status, disability or poverty, were nearly absent from *GRALE 3*. For example, 60% of countries reported not having participation rates for ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, 56% reported not having participation data for migrants and refugees, 33% did not report participation rates of low-skilled workers, or those with low wages

in precarious employment and 17% reported not having data on participation for adults with disabilities. Therefore, a main recommendation of *GRALE 3* was for better, more specific monitoring and evaluation data on different groups.

## 6.2. THE STATE OF PARTICIPATION IN ALE OF AFRICAN MEMBER STATES SINCE 2015

A particular focus in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the AU 2063 agenda, is on participation, calling for a renewal of the impetus to reach the marginalized in view of unleashing the full potential of all citizens. The *GRALE 4* survey captures overall changes in participation rates in ALE since 2015. Countries provided national participation rates, whether these

were from actual figures or based on estimates. In addition, *GRALE 4* captures participation for different groups of learners, as well as for different fields of learning according to RALE. Finally, *GRALE 4* captured a self-assessment by countries of overall progress on access and participation in ALE provision, as well as an opportunity for countries to share examples of good practice for improving ALE participation.

**Table 6.1** shows changes in participation rates in ALE since 2015. Regionally, 27 countries, or 69% of the 39 respondents, reported an increase in the overall participation rate in ALE. Eight (21%) reported no change (stayed the same), followed by 8% reporting a decrease, corresponding to three countries. Importantly, only one country reported not knowing whether there was a change in ALE participation, which is significantly lower than in *GRALE 3*.

**TABLE 6.1**  
Changes in overall participation rates<sup>5</sup> in ALE since 2015

	Total responses	Decreased (%)	Stay the same (%)	Increased (%)	Do not know
<b>WORLD</b>	152	9%	28%	57%	7%
<b>AFRICA</b>	39	8%	21%	69%	3%
<b>AU SUB-REGIONAL GROUPS</b>					
Central Africa	4	0%	0%	100%	0%
Eastern Africa	11	9%	18%	73%	0%
Northern Africa	5	0%	60%	40%	0%
Southern Africa	8	0%	13%	88%	0%
Western Africa	11	18%	18%	55%	9%
<b>INCOME GROUPS</b>					
Low income	19	11%	16%	68%	5%
Lower middle income	13	8%	23%	69%	0%
Upper middle income	6	0%	33%	67%	0%
High income	1	0%	0%	100%	0%

Source: *GRALE 4* Monitoring Survey

<sup>5</sup> Respondents were asked to indicate whether their participation rates were based on estimates or available statistics. In case of data, they were asked to indicate the year of data collection.

**TABLE 6.2**  
**Monitoring of participation rates based on actual figures**

	<b>Countries with data</b>	<b>Total responding</b>	<b>Proportion with actual data (%)</b>
<b>WORLD</b>	103	152	68%
<b>AFRICA</b>	28	39	72%
<b>AU SUB-REGIONAL GROUPS</b>			
Central Africa	3	4	75%
Eastern Africa	9	11	82%
Northern Africa	5	5	100%
Southern Africa	5	8	63%
Western Africa	6	11	55%
<b>INCOME GROUPS</b>			
Low income	12	19	63%
Lower middle income	10	13	77%
Upper middle income	5	6	83%
High income	1	1	100%

Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey

All of the Central African countries reported an increase in ALE participation since 2015, and two-thirds of countries in Eastern Africa reported an increase in ALE participation since 2015 (6 out of 9 respondents).

High-income countries reported the largest increase in ALE participation, followed by lower middle income countries (69%), trailed by low-income and upper middle income countries (67%–68%). Notably, only a small fraction of low-income countries reported not knowing information.

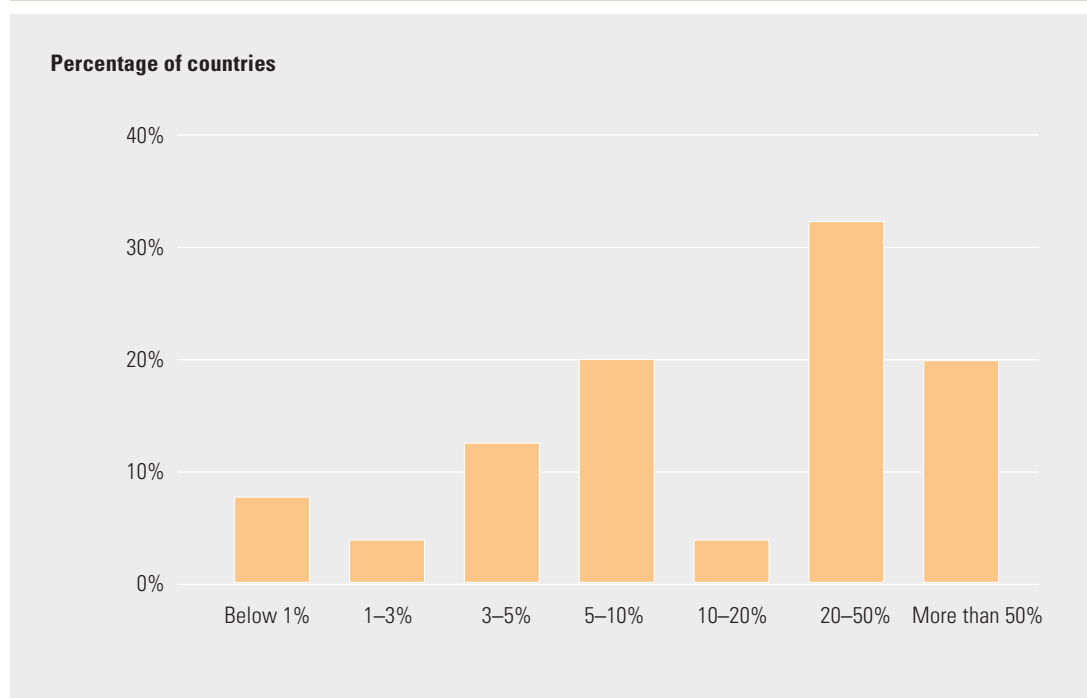
An important factor to consider in reporting ALE participation accurately is whether monitoring by countries is based on actual figures rather than estimates. Of the total 39 countries that provided an estimate of change in overall ALE participation rates since 2015, 11 did not have actual figures on participation. All the countries in Northern Africa, and a high proportion of countries in Eastern Africa (82% or nine out of 11 countries) reported having actual figures to estimate participation rates (Table 6.2). By income group, at least two-thirds of

countries, regardless of income classification, have data on participation rates based on actual figures.

Countries that had actual figures on ALE participation were asked to provide rates. Out of 28 countries with actual data, 25 reported participation rates. Figure 6.1 shows that 20% of these countries reported participation rates between 5 and 10%, 4% reported participation rates between 10 and 20%, 32% reported participation rates between 20 and 50%, and 20% reported participation rates higher than 50%. Around 24% of these countries reported participation rates below 5%.

In total, 25 countries reported overall participation in ALE on the basis of actual figures. Nearly two-thirds of low-income countries with actual figures reported participation rates above 20%: DR Congo, Comoros, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, South Sudan and Togo. Two-fifths of lower middle income countries with actual figures reported participation rates in excess of 20%, and the same can be said for about two-fifths of

**FIGURE 6.1**  
**Overall participation rates in ALE regionally based on actual figures**



Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey. Note: Based on responses from 25 countries with actual data on participation.

upper middle income countries with actual figures. As for low ALE participation rates, 18% of low-income countries with actual figures reported below 5%, whereas 33% of lower middle income countries with actual figures reported the same. About one-fifth of upper middle income countries reported ALE participation below 5%, based on actual figures. No high-income country reported having figures.

Again, based on 25 countries with actual figures on participation in ALE, **Table 6.3** shows participation rates by sub-region. There is no common pattern of ALE participation across different sub-regions, but some highlights are worth describing. All of the countries with actual figures in Southern Africa reported participation rates in excess of 20%. In Central and Eastern Africa no countries with actual figures reported participation above 50%, and 40% of Southern African respondents reported participation rates of 20–50%. It is important to highlight that these rates are based on about two-thirds of participating countries, those with actual figures to substantiate ALE participation.

Based on a question posed to countries on whether ALE participation and provision had changed since 2015, **Figure 6.2** shows reported changes in regional percentages on ALE *participation* for nine key groups,<sup>6</sup> and **Figure 6.3** shows reported changes in *provision* for these groups.<sup>7</sup>

The largest increase in participation since 2015 (**Figure 6.2**) was for adults disadvantaged due to lack of education and skills (69% of 35 countries), followed by residents of remote or rural areas (65% of 37 countries) and residents of urban areas (53% of 38 countries). While the latter two

6 The key groups are: women, migrants and refugees, adults with disabilities, adults disadvantaged due to lack of education and skills, residents of remote or rural areas, residents in urban areas, minority groups (ethnic, linguistic or religious), unemployed adults, and older adults.

7 In contrast to other target groups, migrants and refugees are not equally represented in different parts of the world and might therefore have varying significance for different countries, depending on region. However, the small number of responses from those countries most affected by mass population movements meant that further analysis was not possible here.

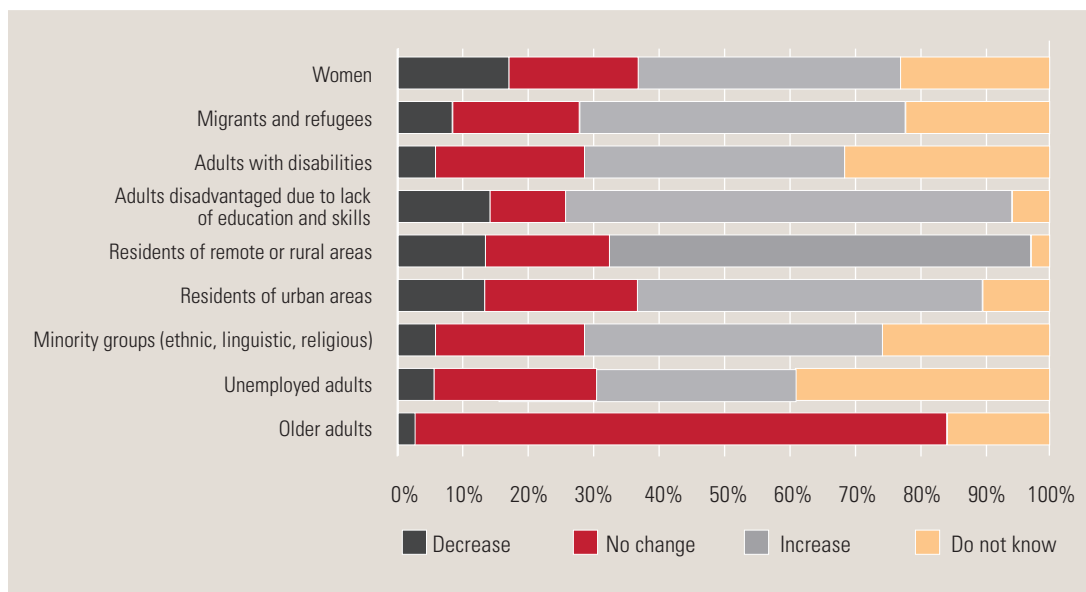


**TABLE 6.3**  
Participation rates by sub-region, based on actual figures

	Central Africa (%)	Eastern Africa (%)	Northern Africa (%)	Southern Africa (%)	Western Africa (%)
Below 1%	0%	0%	20%	0%	20%
1–3%	0%	0%	20%	0%	0%
3–5%	33%	29%	0%	0%	0%
5–10%	33%	29%	20%	0%	20%
10–20%	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%
20–50%	33%	29%	20%	40%	40%
More than 50%	0%	0%	20%	60%	20%
<b>Number of countries</b>	3	7	5	5	5

Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey. Note: Based on 25 out of 28 countries with actual data on participation in ALE regionally.

**FIGURE 6.2**  
Reported changes in ALE participation for different groups, including women and residents of rural areas, since 2015

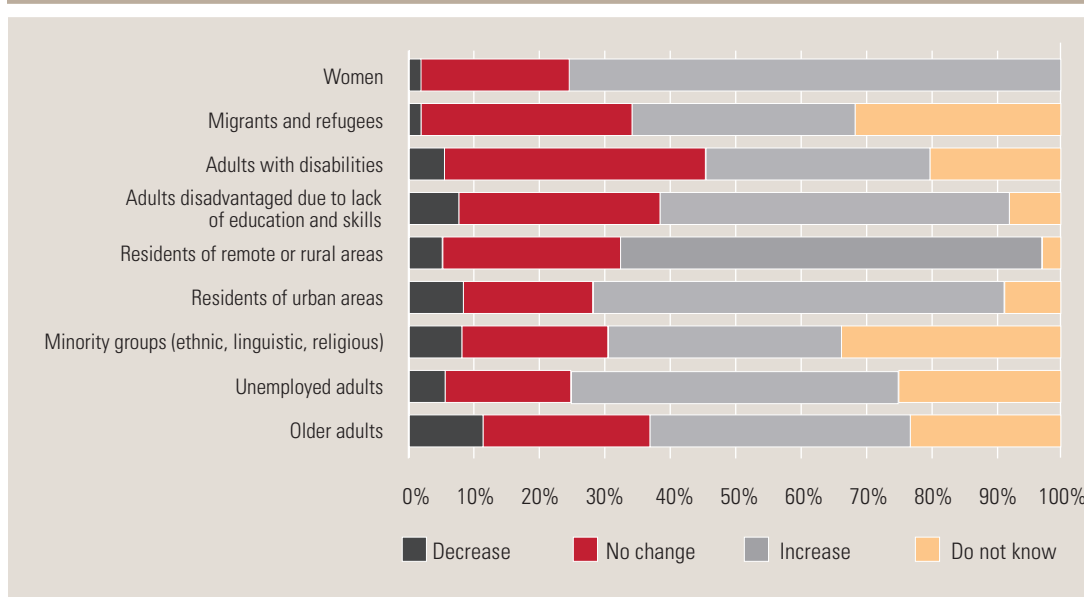


Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey. Note: Total number of countries which responded on participation varied from a minimum of 35 for participation of women, adults with disabilities, adults disadvantaged due to lack of education and skills and minority groups to a maximum of 38 for participation of older adults and residents of urban areas.

groups also demonstrate high increases in provision of ALE since 2015 (at 65% and 63%, respectively), it was in fact the change in ALE provision for women that was highest, at 75% (shown in **Figure 6.3**). African countries reported the lowest changes in participation for women and adults with disabilities (both 40% of 35 countries), unemployed adults (31% of

36 countries) and older adults (none of the 38 countries), shown in **Figure 6.2**. Whilst adults with disabilities also reported low increases in provision since 2015, at 34% of 35 countries, it was actually migrants and refugees (also at 34% of 35), and minority groups (at 36% of 36 countries) that registered the lowest increase in provision since 2015 (**Figure 6.3**).

**FIGURE 6.3**  
**Reported changes in ALE provision for different groups, including women and residents of rural areas since 2015**



Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey. Note: The total number of countries that responded on ALE provision varied from a minimum of 35 for provision for older adults, migrants and refugees, and adults with disabilities and 40 for provisions for women.

African states also reported on change in ALE participation and provision of different groups since 2015. Regionally, between 11% and 25% of countries reported no change in participation by different groups, except for older adults, where 82% of countries reported no change in participation (Figure 6.2). More importantly, 26% and 22% of countries reported not knowing or not having information about the participation of minority groups, and migrants and refugees (Figure 6.2). Further, 31%–33% reported not knowing about ALE provision for these groups (Figure 6.3). In addition, 31% of countries did not have information to report participation of adults with disabilities (Figure 6.2), and 20% did not know about provision for these adults (Figure 6.3). Lastly, 16%–23% did not have information on ALE participation and provision for older adults (Figure 6.2 and Figure 6.3).

Finally, Table 6.4 shows whether ALE participation has changed for RALE fields of learning. Fields with the comparatively biggest increases in participation since 2015 are literacy and basic skills and continuing training and professional development, indicated in 70% and 59%, respectively,

**BOX 6.1**  
**Literacy in urban and rural Kenya**

Kenya faces enormous challenges when it comes to improving the literacy situation in its rural areas, such as its North Eastern province, where only 8% of the population had reached a minimum standard of literacy and 4% had achieved the desired literacy skills (master level). In contrast, the figures for the country’s capital, Nairobi, were 87% and 62%, respectively. While the Kenyan National Literacy Survey found that 9% of the population 15 years or older in the North Eastern province reported ever having participated in a literacy programme as compared to only 1% in Nairobi (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2007), the effort is far from sufficient to address the literacy challenges.

**TABLE 6.4**  
**Changes in participation in Africa related to RALE fields of learning since 2015**

	<b>Total responses</b>	<b>Decrease (%)</b>	<b>No change (%)</b>	<b>Increase (%)</b>	<b>Do not know (%)</b>
Literacy and basic skills	37	14%	16%	70%	0%
Continuing training and professional development	37	3%	14%	59%	24%
Citizenship education	36	6%	31%	39%	25%

Source: GRALE 4 Monitoring Survey

of 37 responses from countries. For citizenship education, 39% of 36 countries reported increases in participation, while 31% reported no change in participation in citizenship education, despite this field of learning having been comparatively neglected in ALE policy development and quality improvement. Again, the lack of data for monitoring participation is an issue: 25% of 36 countries responded as not knowing whether participation for citizenship education has changed since 2015.

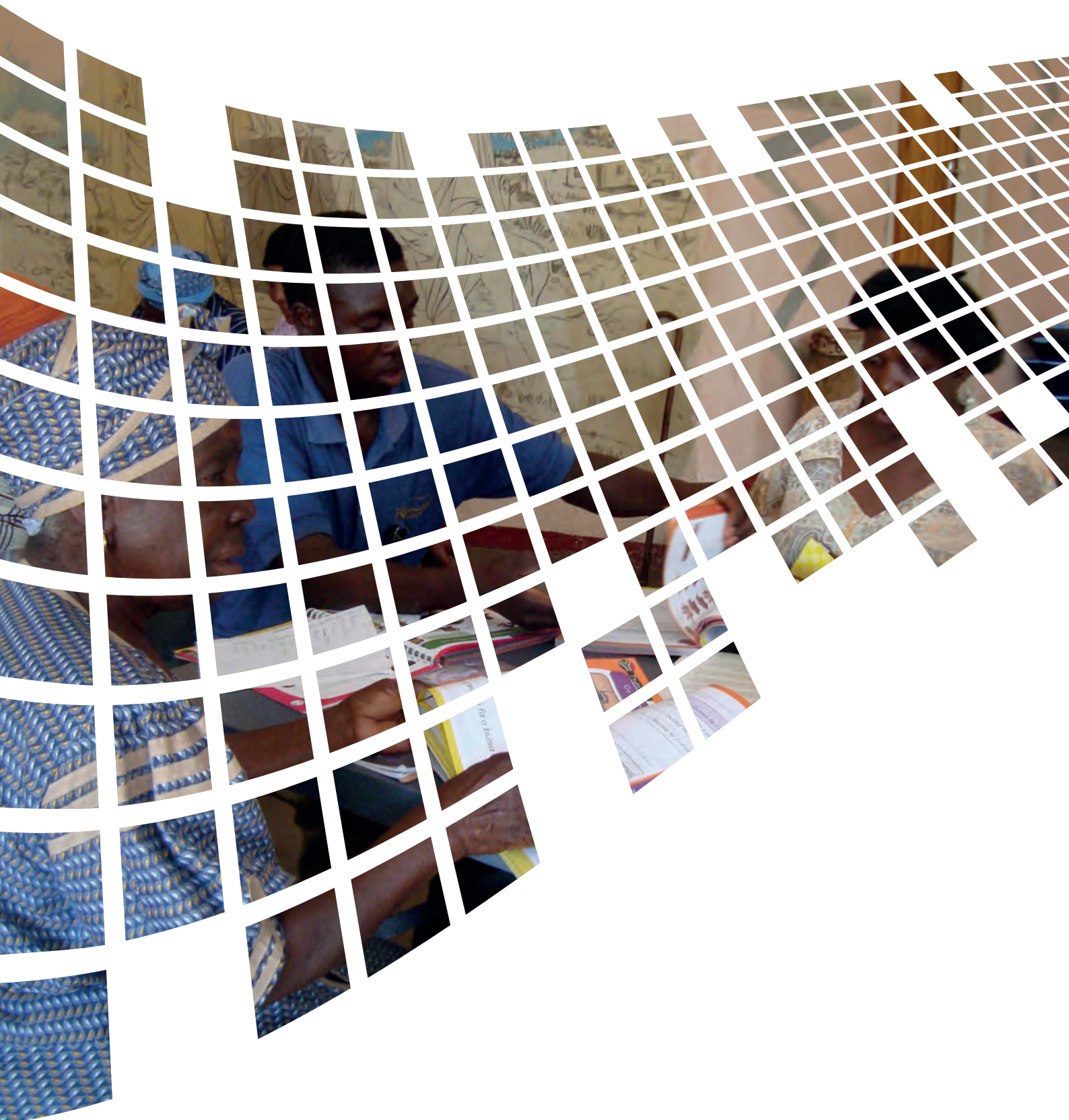
### 6.3 KEY FINDINGS ON PARTICIPATION

The main points drawn from countries' responses on ALE participation in the GRALE 4 survey:

- Regionally, 27 countries, or 69% of 39 respondents, reported an (estimated) increase in overall participation rates in ALE provision. Eight countries (21%) reported no change (stayed the same), and 8%, corresponding to three countries, reported a decrease.
- All of the Central African, and roughly two-thirds of the Eastern African countries, reported an increase in ALE participation since 2015 (67%, corresponding to 6 out of 9 respondents).
- Only 28 of 39 countries, or 72%, responded that ALE participation rates were based on actual figures. By income group, at least two-thirds of countries, regardless of classification, have data

on participation rates based on actual figures. Lack of data was highlighted as a failing in the conclusions of GRALE 3 as well.

- A total of 25 countries reported ALE participation rates based on actual figures. Of these countries, 20% reported participation at 5–10%, 32% reported participation at 20%–50%, and 20% reported participation higher than 50%. Six (23%) reported participation below 5%. In a number of countries, ALE provision has decreased for vulnerable groups such as adults with disabilities and residents living in remote or rural areas. Exclusion of these groups is in line with the findings of GRALE 3.
- A proportion of 39% countries reported not knowing the ALE participation rates of unemployed adults, and 26% and 22% did not know the participation rates of minority groups, and migrants and refugees, respectively. Further, 25%–33% reported not knowing about ALE provision for these groups. This suggests that many countries have considerable work to do if they are to meet the challenges identified in the most recent Global Education Monitoring Report. The report showed that the right of refugee and migrant children to quality education, while increasingly recognized on paper, was challenged daily in practice and denied outright by some governments. It urged the inclusion of migrants and displaced people in national education systems (UNESCO, 2018).



## CHAPTER 7

## CONCLUSION

The potential of ALE for all still remains a largely untapped resource in the efforts to promote and achieve both the SDGs and Agenda 2063. ALE is essential in enabling people (with a particular focus on disadvantaged and excluded groups) to become critical citizens and to attain self-fulfilment. ALE is a driver of economic competitiveness as well as community development. There are many opportunities in Africa today to ensure an inclusive, quality and transformative education for all.

Monitoring the different areas of the BFA and the RALE has been the core focus of this regional report of *GRALE 4*. This is important not only to comply with the commitment made as part of the BFA and the RALE, but also to identify areas in need of future change. In line with the thematic focus of *GRALE 3*, and in the spirit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ALE aims to improve lives and to contribute to a society underpinned by economic and social proficiency. We therefore welcome the increased participation of Member States in the *GRALE 4* survey compared to previous *GRALE* cycles. Nevertheless, survey data for 14 countries were not available. A goal for the future will be to ensure that more countries respond to the survey.

This report has highlighted progress made in a range of areas. About three-quarters (29 out of 37) of responding countries reported that ALE policies had been strengthened compared to 2015. Stakeholders have been involved to a greater extent in policy issues, including in low-income countries. A wide range of new policy plans have been put in place. However, one area that is progressing at a slower rate is the validation of non-formal and informal learning. This was also highlighted in *GRALE 3* and deserves more policy attention. Non-recognition of skills and previous experience might put adults

in a weak position and prevent them from accessing employment or gaining entry to ALE programmes.

Policies may not achieve their full potential if they are not accompanied by appropriate governance measures. One model of governance that has gained much attention in the region is decentralization. This policy focuses on bringing public interventions close to the learner, thereby taking into account their needs. Governance can also be improved through policy-learning processes in which countries share good practice to enrich the knowledge base on what works. This *GRALE* report provides an example of this approach.

One of the key findings of *GRALE 3* referred to the lack of funding for ALE across the world. The majority of countries reported a planned increase in ALE funding in response to the *GRALE 3* survey. It is clear from the data presented in *GRALE 4* that this intention has not been translated into concrete action. This situation is especially worrying in those low-income countries in which ALE funding decreased (the *GRALE 4* survey found that 40% of low-income countries reported a funding decrease in recent years), affecting the most vulnerable adults in society.

While there seems to be a willingness to implement new policies and to make governance practices more efficient, it is clear that a lack of funding will undermine these policy intentions. And while countries have demonstrated an awareness of the importance of quality in ALE and are tending to pay more attention to this policy area, unfortunately, the data provided do not illustrate how countries have been able to improve quality, in terms of curriculum, learning materials, pedagogy, environment or educators, in a context of financial constraint.

Finally, as the report clearly demonstrates, rates of participation in ALE remain uneven and progress is insufficient. Some countries in the region appear to be going backwards. While there has been progress for some groups, notably women, there is a discernible pattern of exclusion of vulnerable groups in many parts of Africa. This analysis of the responses provided by African Member States to the *GRALE 4* survey provides a

mixed picture. While in some areas progress seems to be significant, in others ALE is not improving and, in some countries, even deteriorating. While funding is not the only answer, *GRALE 4* provides evidence that the lack of resources constitutes a major obstacle to ensuring access to ALE for all youth and adults and to making ALE an effective instrument of social transformation in line with the vision reflected in the SDGs.



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## ANNEX

List of 40 countries from the AU, which responded to the *GRALE 4* survey

Sub-region	Country	Participation in <i>GRALE 3</i>	Participation in <i>GRALE 4</i>
<b>Central Africa</b>	Cameroon	No	Yes
	Chad	Yes	No
	DR Congo	Yes	Yes
	Equatorial Guinea	No	Yes
	Gabon	Yes	Yes
	Sao Tomé and Príncipe	Yes	No
<b>Eastern Africa</b>	Comoros	Yes	Yes
	Djibouti	No	Yes
	Eritrea	Yes	Yes
	Ethiopia	Yes	Yes
	Kenya	Yes	Yes
	Madagascar	Yes	No
	Mauritius	Yes	No
	Seychelles	No	Yes
	Somalia	No	Yes
	South Sudan	No	Yes
	Sudan	Yes	Yes
	Uganda	Yes	Yes
	United Republic of Tanzania	Yes	Yes
<b>Northern Africa</b>	Algeria	Yes	Yes
	Egypt	Yes	Yes
	Mauritania	Yes	Yes
	Morocco	Yes	Yes
	Tunisia	Yes	Yes
<b>Southern Africa</b>	Botswana	No	Yes
	Eswatini	Yes	No
	Lesotho	Yes	Yes
	Malawi	Yes	Yes
	Mozambique	Yes	Yes
	Namibia	Yes	Yes
	South Africa	Yes	Yes
	Zambia	Yes	Yes
	Zimbabwe	Yes	Yes

<b>Sub-region</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Participation in <i>GRALE 3</i></b>	<b>Participation in <i>GRALE 4</i></b>
<b>Western Africa</b>	Benin	Yes	Yes
	Burkina Faso	Yes	Yes
	Cabo Verde	Yes	Yes
	Côte d'Ivoire	Yes	Yes
	Gambia	Yes	Yes
	Ghana	Yes	Yes
	Guinea	Yes	Yes
	Guinea-Bissau	Yes	No
	Liberia	No	Yes
	Mali	Yes	Yes
	Niger	Yes	Yes
	Nigeria	Yes	No
	Senegal	Yes	Yes
	Togo	Yes	Yes











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