

# Evaluation of Effectiveness, Quality and Sustainability of ALE Centers Assessment Report

August, 2024  
Tbilisi, Georgia

## Acknowledgements

The evaluation team expresses its heartfelt gratitude to the directors and trainers of the ALE Centers for their generous contribution of time and the invaluable insights they provided. Your dedication and cooperation have been essential to the success of this evaluation.

We would like to express our special appreciation to Lali Santeladze and Nino Babalashvili for their support throughout the evaluation process. Their guidance and involvement were crucial in facilitating a comprehensive and effective evaluation. Without their commitment and assistance, this evaluation would not have been possible.

Evaluation team:

Nana Chabukiani

Tommaso Caraccioli

Ani Gogberashvili

## Contents

Acknowledgements.....	1
Abbreviations .....	4
Short Summary of Key Findings.....	1
1. Introduction.....	3
1.1 About DVV International, GAEN and ALE Centers .....	3
1.2 Quality Assurance at GAEN and ALE centers .....	5
2. Methodology .....	7
2.1 Objective and the Evaluation Questions .....	7
2.2 Evaluation Framework.....	7
2.3 Evaluation Design Phase.....	10
2.4 Data Collection Phase .....	10
Self-Assessment Survey .....	11
Key Informant Interviews.....	11
Focus Group Discussions .....	11
Summary of data collection process.....	12
2.4 Data analysis and Reporting phase .....	12
2.5 Limitations .....	13
2.3 Ethical Considerations .....	13
3. Evaluation Results .....	14
3.1 Relevance of the Project.....	14
3.2 Effectiveness of the project.....	16
3.3 Assessment of quality.....	19
[Chart with Quality index].....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.3.1 organization .....	20
[Chart with organization quality index] .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.3.2 Didactics and learning process.....	28
[Chart with Didactics quality index] .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.3.3 Staff .....	32
[Chart with Staff quality index] .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.3.4 Results and Impact of the project .....	36
[Chart with Results quality index].....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.4 Sustainability of the Project.....	42

4. Key Findings and Recommendations .....45  
5. Annexes.....47

# Abbreviations

AE - Adult Education

ALE - Adult Learning and Education

CSO - Civil Society Organization

DVV International Georgia - DVVI Georgia

FGD - Focus Group Discussion

GAEN - Georgian Adult Education Network

KII - Key Informant Interview

NGO - Non-Governmental Organization

## Short Summary of Key Findings

**The project demonstrated strong relevance to the Adult Learning and Education (ALE) centers, addressing their current needs effectively.** The curriculum documents were developed through a bottom-up approach, ensuring alignment with the centers' specific requirements. This was achieved by conducting a needs assessment at the project's outset and actively involving ALE center directors in every stage. The strategic plans, standardized procedures, and document templates provided by the project serve as a solid foundation for enhancing the sustainability of the centers, though their full potential depends on proper utilization and implementation.

**The curriculum documents and related activities have significantly contributed to the capacity building, organizational development, and improvement of educational programs at ALE centers.** However, the degree of adoption varies across centers, with full implementation still a work in progress. The flexibility in adopting these procedures allows each center to progress at its own pace, depending on available resources. The long-term sustainability and quality improvement of the centers hinge on the widespread and effective implementation of these documents and standardized practices.

The centers have made significant progress in key quality areas including organizational development, learning program improvement, capacity building of staff and bringing change to the local community. However, **the transition to a more formalized and structured mode of operation has been challenging for ALE centers, primarily due to a lack of human and financial resources, time constraints, and familiarity with previous practices.**

**The curriculum documents and associated capacity building activities have positively influenced the learning process at ALE Centers, leading to more detailed and thoughtful planning and execution of educational activities.** Trainers now emphasize detailed planning, incorporating beneficiaries' needs, interests, and prior knowledge more effectively. Trainers have adapted their approaches to accommodate diverse participant attitudes and learning styles, engaging various age groups more effectively, particularly older learners. They have also incorporated practical activities alongside theoretical ones, using new strategies and methodologies to better address different learning needs. Though there is no standard policy or defined procedure, the trainers are considerate to gender, age and ethnicity of the beneficiaries.

The Curriculum ManagerALE training, which included a financial management module, has improved the centers' budgeting, financial reporting, and understanding of potential funding sources. However, **financial challenges persist due to a lack of experience, human resources, and infrastructure, as well as the socio-economic context in the country.**

**Apart from providing educational activities and support increase of employment opportunities, ALE centers play a pivotal role in building and sustaining civic communities, integrating minorities and socially vulnerable groups, challenging gender and age-related stereotypes, and fostering a sense of social belonging among their**

**beneficiaries.** While it is difficult to assess the direct impact of the curriculum documents and associated activities on community changes, the profound influence of ALE centers on their communities cannot be underestimated.

**The curriculum documents have established a strong foundation for the sustainability of ALE centers, including plans for the continued use of strategies, action plans, and training modules.** However, financial sustainability remains a critical challenge. Besides, the proposed foreign agents law in Georgia poses significant risks to the sustainability of NGOs, including ALE centers, by potentially undermining their operations and donor relationships.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 About DVV International, GAEN and ALE Centers

DVV International, “Institute for International Cooperation of the Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband e.V. (DVV), the German Adult Education Association”<sup>1</sup>, is an organization which “provides worldwide support for the establishment and development of sustainable structures for Youth and Adult Education”<sup>2</sup>.

DVV International (DVVI) Georgia country office was established in 2002<sup>3</sup>. The organization aims to promote Adult Education and Lifelong Learning in Georgia and develop a non-formal adult education system<sup>4</sup> to assist adults with limited access to education or those excluded from the formal education system<sup>5</sup>. Additionally, it supports individuals' personal and professional development<sup>6</sup>. The organization operates in the following areas of interest: Poverty reduction with support in Career Planning and Employment, Civic Education, Cultural Education, Conflict Resolution and Peace Building, Networking, Lobbying, Advocacy and Promotion of Adult Education.

Since 2005 DVVI Georgia has been engaged in building a sustainable system of non-formal education, by establishing Adult Learning and Education (ALE) centers throughout the country<sup>7</sup>. The first center was opened in 2006 in Samtskhe-Javakheti<sup>8</sup>. As of Today, 14 centers are established and operating in Georgia<sup>9</sup>. ALE centers are committed to creating educational and lifelong learning opportunities for everyone, irrespective of class, gender, education, age, religion, ideology, or nationality<sup>10</sup>. They also aim to overcome significant social challenges that the country faces, such as integrating Internally Displaced People (IDPs) into local communities, reducing unemployment, alleviating poverty, addressing inequality, combating instability and conflicts, and preventing the social exclusion of ethnic and religious minorities<sup>11</sup>. Each ALE center offers a variety of Adult Learning and Education courses as part of the Adult Learning Package (ALP), which includes: Personal development program, Vocational education, Cultural education, Civic education, Financial literacy, Sport and health education<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> DVV International (n.d.) *DVV International Overview*. DVV International. <https://www.dvv-international.de/en/about-us/profile>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> DVV International Georgia (n.d.). *About us*. <https://www.dvv-international.ge/georgia/profile>

<sup>4</sup> DVV International Georgia (n.d.). *About us*. <https://www.dvv-international.ge/georgia/profile>

<sup>5</sup> Pfanzelt, A. Pfanzelt, H. Vashakmadze, S. (2021) *Study on Adult Learning and Education in Georgia*. Tblisi, Georgia: DVV International Georgia Country Office. P.29

<sup>6</sup> Chabukiani, N. (2020). *Adult Education Centers in Georgia*. Tblisi, Georgia: DVV International Georgia Country Office. P.5

<sup>7</sup> Chabukiani, N. (2020). *Adult Education Centers in Georgia*. Tblisi, Georgia: DVV International Georgia Country Office. P. 6

<sup>8</sup> Ibid p.9

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> ADULT EDUCATION centerS IN GEORGIA: THE IMPACT (material provided by GAEN and DVV)

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> ADULT EDUCATION centerS IN GEORGIA: THE IMPACT (material provided by GAEN and DVV).

The Georgian Adult Education Network (GAEN), was established in 2014 with the support of DVVI Georgia<sup>13</sup>, and at the behest of the ALE Centers<sup>14</sup>. The Network unites “Georgian organizations that have a similar understanding of the values and advantages of Adult Education for poverty reduction, civic engagement and community development in Georgia”<sup>15</sup>. As of today, GAEN unites all the 14 ALE centers present in the country<sup>16</sup>. The organization aims to help ALE centers establish a unified structure to address the main challenges they face, create opportunities for mutual sharing and support<sup>17</sup>, and support the development of a relevant lifelong learning (LLL) system in Georgia tailored to the country's realities and local challenges<sup>18</sup>. GAEN works on the following tasks:

- Lobbies for principles of Lifelong Learning and its internal part adult education and promoting establishment of relevant system for LLL and particularly adult education in Georgia;
- Advocates on the behalf of its members to be heard by local and central government;
- Provides targeted professional development for member organizations through structured program of trainings and workshops;
- Develops training materials and publications for adult education providers and adult educators;
- Facilitates international cooperation in the field of adult education
- Supports implementation and recognition of vocational training/retraining programs in the network member organizations.

As for the ALE centers, they follow three main objectives as mentioned in article 2.1 of the their charter:

- a) Offer and provide educational services to adults and youth;
- b) Support the process of forming civil society;
- c) Advocate for the needs of the community.

To reach their goals, the ALE centers are engaged in the following activities (article 2.2 of the charter):

- a) Supporting the formation of civil society in Georgia;

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<sup>13</sup> GAEN (n.d.) *History*. GAEN. <https://gaen.org.ge/en/about/history>

<sup>14</sup> Chabukiani, N. (2020). *Adult Education Centers in Georgia*. Tblisi, Georgia: DVV International Georgia Country Office. P.51

<sup>15</sup> GAEN (n.d.) *History*. GAEN. <https://gaen.org.ge/en/about/history>

<sup>16</sup> GAEN (n.d.) *History*. GAEN. <https://gaen.org.ge/en/about/history>

<sup>17</sup> Chabukiani, N. (2020). *Adult Education Centers in Georgia*. Tblisi, Georgia: DVV International Georgia Country Office. P.51

<sup>18</sup> GAEN (n.d.) *Mission*. GAEN. <https://gaen.org.ge/en/about/mission>

- b) Facilitating the consolidation of social structures and state institutions;
- c) Organizing conferences and seminars related to the activities of the Center;
- d) Seeking local and international partners and donors and actively cooperating with them;
- e) Engaging in any other activities that are not contrary to Georgian legislation.

## 1.2 Quality Assurance at GAEN and ALE centers

In 2022 GAEN developed a quality assurance policy and procedure, based on the orientation framework for adult education institutions (curriculum InstitutionALE), as well as the Curriculum for Managers of Adult Learning and Education Centers (Curriculum ManagerALE)<sup>19</sup>. The aim of these documents is to introduce a quality assurance system within the Georgian ALE centers, with the objective “to implement evidence-based decision-making practices in the management process of the centers, to increase their visibility in the community through the delivery of high-quality services, to strengthen the institutional capacity of the centers, to ensure the sustainability of their activities, and to establish the centers as important socio-cultural spaces in the regions”<sup>20</sup>.

The above-mentioned quality assurance framework includes an internal quality assurance process, implemented by the centers, and an external quality assurance process, conducted by GAEN<sup>21</sup>.

Curriculum GlobALE, InstitutionALE, and ManagerALE are three tools developed by DVV International and accessible within the DVVI ALE toolbox<sup>22</sup>. This resource equips institutes, organizations, national and local governments, as well as professionals and volunteers engaged in ALE with instruments, methodologies, and approaches of ALE<sup>23</sup>. The three curriculums aim to enhance the competencies of staff working in adult learning and education (curriculum GlobALE), as well as the capacity-building (curriculum institutionALE) of ALE center staff members and improvement of management processes (curriculum ManagerALE) at the ALE centers.

Between 2022 and March 2024, the implementation of the three curriculums took place across the 14 Georgian Adult Education Centers. The objective was to enhance the quality, efficacy and sustainability of these centers, as well as address their primary challenges. These challenges predominantly revolved around the lack of trainers equipped with strong competencies in adult

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<sup>19</sup> Adult Education Network of AIP Georgia (2022). Adult education centers Quality Assurance Policy and Procedure. Tbilisi, Georgia: GAEN (translated with google translate) original name in Georgian: ა(ა)იპ საქართველოს ზრდასრულთა განათლების ქსელი (2022). ზრდასრულთა განათლების ცენტრების ხარისხის უზრუნველყოფის პოლიტიკა და წესი. თბილისი, საქართველო: GAEN

<sup>20</sup> Ibid cit p.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid p.

<sup>22</sup> DVV International (n.d.) *ALE Toolbox*. <https://www.dvv-international.de/en/ale-toolbox>

<sup>23</sup> DVV International (n.d.) *ALE Toolbox*. <https://www.dvv-international.de/en/ale-toolbox>

learning and education, as well as a lack of specific skills among ALE centers' directors for effectively managing the centers.

The first mentioned tool, Curriculum GlobALE, is described as a "cross-cultural, output-oriented core curriculum for training adult educators worldwide"<sup>24</sup>. Its implementation aims to provide educators with a basic qualification in ALE, encompassing knowledge, competencies, skills, and attitudes necessary for professional engagement in the field<sup>25</sup>. Additionally, Curriculum GlobALE serves as a quality assurance reference framework for evaluating the competencies of adult educators<sup>26</sup>. Curriculum GlobALE was initially introduced in Georgia in 2022 under the guidance of invited experts. During this initiative, 17 participants obtained Master Trainer qualifications. Subsequently, these Master Trainers conducted training programs for all educators across the 14 centers.

The second tool, Curriculum InstitutionALE, serves as a supportive tool for enhancing the capacity and organizational development of adult education institutes<sup>27</sup>. It delineates a range of common services and capacities deemed essential within the ALE domain<sup>28</sup>. The curriculum was developed in the ALE centers in 2022, and its implementation followed four steps:

1. Creation of a quality assurance policy in non-formal education
2. Motivational workshops
3. Meaningful and realistic assessment of the centers, conducted through peer review
4. Practical implementation of changes, through the implementation of 14 strategies based on the peer review result and analysis

The last-mentioned resource, Curriculum ManagerALE, is a modular, competency-based curriculum tailored for managers operating within Adult Learning and Education institutions<sup>29</sup>. Its primary objective is to Enhance the managerial competencies essential for effective institute management<sup>30</sup>. Between February and April 2024, the directors and educational projects coordinators of the 14 centers, attended a training program based on curriculum managerALE<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> DVV International (n.d.) *Curriculum globALE*. <https://www.dvv-international.de/en/ale-toolbox/teaching-and-training/curriculum-globale>

<sup>25</sup> DVV International, et al. (2021) *Curriculum Globale*. DVV International, DIE, UNESCO institute of Lifelong Learning, ICAE. pp. 13-16

<sup>26</sup> Ibid p.16

<sup>27</sup> DVV International (n.d.) *Curriculum InstitutionALE*. <https://www.dvv-international.de/en/ale-toolbox/organization-and-management/curriculum-institutionale>

<sup>28</sup> Denys, K. (2021) *Curriculum InstitutionALE*. Bonn, Germany: DVV International. pp. 16-25

<sup>29</sup> DVV International (n.d.) *Curriculum managerALE*. <https://www.dvv-international.de/en/ale-toolbox/organization-and-management/curriculum-managerale>

<sup>30</sup> DVV International (n.d.) *Curriculum managerALE*. <https://www.dvv-international.de/en/ale-toolbox/organization-and-management/curriculum-managerale>

<sup>31</sup> DVV International Georgia (April, 2024) *Curriculum ManagerALE in Georgia*. <https://www.dvv-international.ge/georgia/news/article/curriculum-managerale-in-georgia>

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Objective and the Evaluation Questions

To assess the quality assurance policy and its implementation, GAEN initiated an external evaluation. The aim of the external evaluation is to assess the contribution of the implementation of Curriculum InstitutionALE, Curriculum GlobALE and Curriculum ManagerALE to the effectiveness, quality and sustainability of ALE Centers.

Based on the above objective the evaluation team identified the following evaluation questions:

1. What measures were undertaken to ensure the relevance of Curriculum InstitutionALE, Curriculum GlobALE and Curriculum ManagerALE to the needs of the ALE centers?
2. Have development and implementation of Curriculum InstitutionALE, Curriculum GlobALE and Curriculum ManagerALE contributed to increased effectiveness of the ALE centers? If yes, in what ways?
3. Have development and implementation of Curriculum InstitutionALE, Curriculum GlobALE and Curriculum ManagerALE contributed to the increase of the quality of ALE Centers, their programs, and their results? If yes, in what ways?
4. What impact did Curriculum InstitutionALE, Curriculum GlobALE and Curriculum ManagerALE have on the beneficiaries of the ALE centers?
5. Have development and implementation of Curriculum InstitutionALE, Curriculum GlobALE and Curriculum ManagerALE contributed to the sustainability of the ALE centers? If yes, in what ways?

### 2.2 Evaluation Framework

To evaluate implementation of Curriculum InstitutionALE, Curriculum GlobALE and Curriculum ManagerALE and their contribution to increased effectiveness, quality and sustainability of ALE centers the evaluation team used the OECD DAC criteria<sup>32</sup> and measured relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Curriculum GlobALE already identifies the above criteria as means for its evaluation and monitoring of implementation. The table below defines: criteria and respective guiding questions. The guiding questions for DAC criteria were derived from the Curriculum GlobALE and adapted to the purposes of the evaluation.

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<sup>32</sup> OECD DAC Criteria: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

Criteria	Guiding questions:
Relevance	How do Curriculum InstitutionALE, Curriculum GlobALE and Curriculum ManagerALE meet the current needs of the ALE centers?  What measures were undertaken to ensure their relevance?
Effectiveness	How far have the aims been met?  Has the intervention supported the increase of the capacity of ALE Centers?  Has the intervention supported organizational development of ALE Centers?  Has the intervention supported improvement of educational programs of ALE Centers?
Impact	What has changed for ALE centers and their beneficiaries after implementation of Curriculum InstitutionALE, Curriculum GlobALE and Curriculum ManagerALE?
Sustainability	How Curriculum InstitutionALE, Curriculum GlobALE and Curriculum ManagerALE contributed to the sustainability of the centers?  How will ALE Centers be using the above documents in the future?  How have the documents contributed for the ALE centers to be operational without DVV International's financial support?

Besides the above criteria, the evaluation team developed a separate framework for assessing the quality of ALE centers after implementation of Curriculum InstitutionALE, Curriculum GlobALE and Curriculum ManagerALE. The framework is built around four quality areas: organization, Didactics and the Learning Process, Staff, and Results. These areas are defined based on the quality criteria identified by Simon Broek and Bert-Jan Buiskool in the report, "Developing the Adult Learning Sector"<sup>33</sup>. This report adopts the four mentioned criteria to map quality indicators from various quality assurance systems across Europe to define quality in Adult Learning and Education (ALE)<sup>34</sup>. Furthermore, these four areas align with some of the quality concepts recognized by the scientific community and international policies in the field of ALE, which emphasize the importance of organizational management<sup>35</sup>, the learning process<sup>36</sup>, the

<sup>33</sup> Broek, S., Buiskool B. (2013) Developing the adult learning sector Quality in the Adult Learning Sector. Zoetermeer, Netherlands: Panteia. (pp.57-67)

<sup>34</sup> Ibid pp. 57-58

<sup>35</sup> Možina T., Klemenčič S., Klenovše m. T. V., Frantar M. Zorić F., Rajh Alenka J.R., Cunja J. O. (2013). Quality indicators in Adult Education. LJUBLJANA, Slovenia: Bori

<sup>36</sup> The literature features various authors who have explored the significance of the didactic and learning process and how it should be implemented to promote high-quality adult learning and education. Among these: Hippel, A. von;

professional development of adult educators<sup>37</sup>, and learning outcomes. These aspects are also reflected in the three curriculum developed in the Georgian ALE centers: GlobALE, InstitutionALE, and ManagerALE.

For each quality area, the team defined the corresponding quality sub-areas, based on: curriculum InstitutionALE<sup>38</sup> (for quality of organization and quality of staff), the stages of the adult education planning cycle, developed by DVV International, in module 5 of curriculum GlobALE<sup>39</sup> (for quality Didactics and the Learning Process) and the quality sub-areas related to results and effects defined by the quality assurance framework build by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education<sup>40</sup>, (for quality of the results) as considered relevant also in the context of Georgian ALE centers.

organization	Didactics and the learning process	Staff	Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Strategy and management</li> <li>· Marketing and outreach</li> <li>· Networking</li> <li>· Funding and financial management</li> <li>· Educational program</li> <li>· Learning Infrastructures and facilities</li> <li>· Human resource management</li> <li>· Quality assurance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Analysis</li> <li>· Planning and organization</li> <li>· Learning process</li> <li>· Monitoring and evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Cooperation with qualified staff</li> <li>· Continuing in-service training for staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Participation</li> <li>· Participants and partner satisfaction</li> <li>· Position of adults in the labor market</li> <li>· active participation of adults in society</li> <li>· Adaptation of IDPs with the local community</li> <li>· Use of skills relevance</li> </ul>

Kulmus, C.; Stimm, M. (2022). *Didaktik der Erwachsenen- und Weiterbildung. 2., aktualisierte Auflage*. Paderborn: Brill, Schöningh, pp. 19-35; Lindeman E.C. (1926); *The meaning of adult education*. Michigan, U.S.A.: University Microfilms; Knowles, M. S. (1970). *The Modern Practice of Adult Education; Andragogy versus Pedagogy, America*, New York: Association Press

<sup>37</sup> Is possible to find informations on the topic in the following texts: Egetenmeyer, R. Käßplinger, B., (2011). Professionalisation and quality management: struggles, boundaries and bridges between two approaches. *European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults*, Vol.2, No.1, (pp. 21-35); UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning (2022) *CONFINTEA VII Marrakech Framework for Action: harnessing the transformational power of adult learning and education*. Marrakech, Marocco: UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning; UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning (2015). *Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education*. France: UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning

<sup>38</sup> DVV International (2021) *Curriculum institutionALE*. Bonn, Germany: DVV International.

<sup>39</sup> Jesco Weickert (2022) *Handbooks for five modules. Module 5: Planning, Organization, and Evaluation in Adult Learning and Education*. Bonn, Germany: DVV International. pp. 249

<sup>40</sup> Možina T., Klemenčič S., Klenovše m. T. V., Frantar M. Zorič F., Rajh Alenka J. R., Cunja J. O. (2013). *Quality indicators in Adult Education*. LJUBLJANA, Slovenia: Bori

The texts mentioned above, together with curriculum ManagerALE<sup>41</sup> and the GAEN quality assurance policy and procedure, were used by the team to develop the indicators needed to assess each quality sub-area. The team aimed to develop a framework that aligns with the scientific literature on the topic, the specific characteristics of the Georgian ALE centers, and the outcomes of curriculum GlobALE, InstitutionALE, and ManagerALE, ensuring that the impact of their implementation on the quality of the centers could be assessed.

Using the developed quality criteria and the respective indicators the evaluation team developed a quality assessment tool. This framework was then presented to representatives of DVV International and GAEN and approved after incorporating their requested minor adjustments. (See Annex A). The quality assessment tool is somewhat similar to the assessment tool used by GAEN for the centers' self- and peer assessments. However, this tool differs from it in two respects: a) It is broader and covers a wider range of quality indicators, considered relevant to answer the above-mentioned evaluation questions (though includes the indicators defined by GAEN); b) Instead of using "Yes/No" option to identify the status of each indicator, it uses a scale from 0 to 3, where 0 means that the indicator is not met, while 3 means that the indicator was fully met. The use of scales will give the evaluation team the possibility to calculate mean score for each indicator as well as calculate a total "Quality Score" for ALE Centers.

This quality assessment tool gives DVVI, GAEN and ALE Centers the possibility to replicate the evaluation in the future and compare the results across years. Therefore, it can serve as a sustainable measure for quality assessment to be used in the future as well.

The evaluation was conducted in three main phases: a) Evaluation Design Phase; b) Data Collection Phase; c) Data Analysis and Reporting. Details about each evaluation phase are described below.

## 2.3 Evaluation Design Phase

At the initial stage of the evaluation the team reviewed the program-related documents including: a) the curriculum documents; b) Charter of ALE Centers; c) Self- and peer-assessments conducted by GAEN at ALE Centers. Desk review provided an overview of the program and activities implemented under the curriculum documents. The results were for development and finalization of the other evaluation instruments such as self-evaluation questionnaire and interview and focus group discussion guides. The evaluation tools were adapted to the different target groups of the evaluation, that is: DVV International Georgia and GAEN staff members, the staff of ALE centers and the trainers of ALE centers (See Annex 2).

## 2.4 Data Collection Phase

For data collection purposes the evaluation team applied a triangulation approach and used multiple methods, namely, self-assessment survey, key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). Triangulation approach enhanced the validity and reliability of the

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<sup>41</sup> DVV International (2021) *Curriculum ManagerALE*. Bonn, Germany: DVV International.

evaluation findings by cross-verifying data and thus ensured comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon. Each method is described below.

## Self-Assessment Survey

The evaluation team first conducted a self-assessment survey among the management/staff of ALE centers as well as their trainers. The survey focused on the quality component of the evaluation.

The team developed two separate questionnaires based on the quality assessment tool developed at the Design Phase (See section [Evaluation Framework](#)). The first questionnaire was designed for the directors of the centers, and covered the indicators of the quality areas: A - Organization, C - Staff and D-Results. The second questionnaire was dedicated for the trainers, with questions related to the quality area B - Didactics and the Learning Process. The questionnaires were developed using a google forms online platform.

Before sending out the questionnaires to be filled, the evaluation team with the support from GAEN conducted an online introductory meeting with the ALE center directors. The aim of the meeting was to provide the ALE center directors with the information about the aim of the evaluation, the process of the evaluation (which methods would be used and who would participate in the study), and the benefits of the evaluation.

To ensure the questionnaire's effectiveness, the evaluation team conducted a pilot test prior to launching the fieldwork. The director of one of the ALE centers was invited to complete the questionnaire using an online form. During this process, she provided real-time verbal feedback on the clarity and relevance of the questions. The evaluation team carefully reviewed her comments and used the insights gained to refine and improve the questionnaire before its broader implementation.

Later the evaluation team shared the questionnaires with the ALE center directors and trainers. The first questionnaire was filled in by all center doctors. While the second questionnaire was filled in by 60 trainers from 14 different centers. 83% of the respondents were female.

## Key Informant Interviews

Following the survey the evaluation team conducted KIIs with the representatives of DVV International Georgia, GAEN and ALE Centers. The aim of conducting the interview was to gain more in-depth information about evaluation questions and also validate the results of the self-assessment. The team conducted 16 KIIs overall. All interviews were conducted online using Google Meets platform. The team recorded the interviews upon the consent of the interview respondents and later transcribed them.

## Focus Group Discussions

Besides the KIIs the evaluation team held FGDs with the ALE center trainers. The team conducted two online FGDs. To select the FGD participants team used the purposive sampling method and

recruited participants considering their sex, ethnicity (where applicable) and field of work (training topic). Such approach ensured the diversity of the groups. In the end, the trainers from 11 ALE centers participated in the FGD discussions. Similarly to the KIIs, the team recorded the discussion meetings and prepared written transcripts.

## Summary of data collection process

The below table provides a short summary of the fieldwork.

	<b>Quantitative study</b>	<b>Qualitative Study</b>	
<b>Method</b>	Survey	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)	Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)
<b>Target group</b>	ALE center management ALE Center Trainers	DVV International GAEN ALE Center management	ALE Center Trainers
<b>Sample size</b>	74 (14 center doctors; 60 center trainers)	16 (1 - DVVI 1 - GAEN 14 Center directors)	2 (11 participants)
<b>Sampling Method</b>	Purposive Sampling Convenience Sampling	Purposive Sampling	Purposive Sampling
<b>Data collection tool</b>	Self-Assessment questionnaire	Interview Guide	FGD guide

## 2.4 Data analysis and Reporting phase

Following the data collection phase, the evaluation team conducted a comprehensive analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data gathered through the self-assessment survey was analyzed using Microsoft Excel, which enabled the team to calculate the quality index of the ALE centers.

For the qualitative data obtained from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), the evaluation team employed a content analysis approach. This involved systematically coding and categorizing the data to identify recurring themes and patterns. The DAC criteria (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability) and quality assessment tool indicators were used as a framework for this analysis. These frameworks guided the initial coding process and ensured that the evaluation focused on key areas of interest. The team also reviewed the data iteratively, refining categories and themes to deepen the understanding of the findings and to ensure a robust and comprehensive analysis. In order to avoid subjectivity, two people analyzed data separately and later the results were compiled.

## 2.5 Limitations

One significant limitation of this evaluation was the absence of baseline data, which constrained the evaluators' ability to make direct comparisons and accurately measure the progress of indicators within the evaluation framework. Without initial data points, assessing the effectiveness and impact of the intervention is inherently challenging.

To address this gap, respondents were asked to assess the indicators and the impact of the intervention retrospectively. However, relying on respondents' memories introduces potential inaccuracies, as recollections may not always be precise.

Additionally, the evaluation relied on assessments provided by ALE center representatives, which were inherently subjective. This subjectivity means that the findings may reflect personal viewpoints and individual opinions rather than objective measurements.

The evaluation team conducted data analysis and developed the report with these limitations in mind, carefully considering their impact on the responses and the overall assessment process.

## 2.3 Ethical Considerations

The evaluation team adhered to standard ethical considerations common in applied research studies, with the do-no-harm principle as a core element. The team followed these ethical principles throughout the study:

**Informed Consent:** Before conducting KIIs and FGDs, the research team obtained informed consent from respondents. This ensured that participants were fully informed about the evaluation's aim, the interview process, the key topics to be covered, and how the data would be used.

**Privacy and Confidentiality:** The evaluation team maintained the confidentiality of the evaluation participants whenever possible and securely stored the collected data to prevent any potential harm. Audio recordings and write-ups were deleted after the completion of the evaluation to ensure privacy.

## 3. Evaluation Results

### 3.1 Relevance of the Project

**Key Finding:**

The project was highly relevant to the ALE centers, effectively meeting their current needs.

The relevance of the curriculum documents was ensured through a bottom-up approach, which involved conducting a needs assessment at the outset of the initiative and actively involving ALE center directors in every stage of the process.

The development of strategic plans, standardized procedures, and document templates, when properly utilized and implemented, provides a strong foundation for enhancing the sustainability of the centers.

The evaluation sought to determine how well the Curriculum InstitutionALE, Curriculum GlobALE, and Curriculum ManagerALE meet the current needs of Adult Learning and Education (ALE) centers and what measures were undertaken to ensure their relevance. The findings indicate that the project was highly relevant to the ALE centers and successfully addressed their current needs.

The curriculum documents, developed by DVV International, served as a framework document for the country offices. The documents were adapted not only to the Georgian context but also to the specific needs of the ALE centers across the country. A key factor in ensuring the relevance of these documents was the use of a bottom-up approach, which included a comprehensive needs assessment at the project's inception and the active involvement of ALE center directors at every stage of the process.

*“The need of the strategy was revealed as part of the self-assessments conducted at the ALE centers. Through the assessment it was revealed that [lack of the strategy] was our weak point - we had no strategy document, development plans. Therefore it was decided to implement activities to solve the problem.”* - ALE center director.

*“In general, as far as I know, mostly all centers are involved and therefore our center too. We were involved in all these processes, starting with the documentation that we received [...]. When GAEN held a meeting in Tbilisi, we discussed everything there, what I thought, what we should include, what should be in this document...”* - ALE center director.

The needs assessment was conducted in two phases: self-assessment and peer assessment. In the self-assessment phase, ALE centers evaluated their own strengths, weaknesses, and specific needs. This was followed by a peer assessment phase, where directors of ALE centers assessed each other's work, providing a more objective perspective.

*“The practical part included the assessment of the activities of the centers. We evaluated each other. I evaluated one center and I was evaluated by the other. Then made reports or recommendations. I was told what was good about [my center] and what I needed to improve on. [Then] everything was put together, analyzed by specialists and [as a result] we have a documented list of our needs.”* ALE center director

The results of these assessments were instrumental in identifying key areas where the centers required support, particularly in improving the quality of their work and ensuring their sustainability.

Recognizing that quality and sustainability were critical challenges, the curriculum documents were designed with these priorities in mind. The growing competition from other educational stakeholders, such as state vocational colleges, underscores the importance of maintaining high-quality services to ensure the ALE centers' continued relevance and competitiveness. Although ALE centers remain the only organizations providing systematic educational services in adult, non-formal education, the pressure to uphold and enhance service quality is increasing.

To address these challenges, training was provided to center directors on topics such as center management and institutional development, that equip center directors with skills and tools for improving the work of the ALE center and ensure its sustainability. Besides, the center staff members and trainers were trained in adult education methodologies.. These trainings were essential in building the capacity of the staff, with a particular focus on the specificities of adult learning. As noted by participants in the focus group discussions, trainers admitted they had limited knowledge of adult education before the training sessions, highlighting the significant impact of these efforts.

Moreover, the development of strategic documents, standardized procedures, and document templates represents a strong foundation for enhancing the sustainability of the centers. For years, many centers operated using procedures they had developed independently, often without formal documentation. While this allowed for flexibility, it also resulted in inconsistencies in following procedures. The new standardized approach aims to address these issues, providing a more structured and sustainable framework for the centers' operations.

In some interviews, it became evident that, despite the process being designed to follow a bottom-up approach, some center directors lacked the time to reflect on the ongoing process and take action. But as mentioned earlier,, the directors of the ALE centers affirmed the relevance of the curriculum documents and the activities implemented as part of the project. They believe that these initiatives are well-aligned with their needs and have significantly contributed to improving the quality and sustainability of their centers.

*“It resonates [with our needs], because we went through the details what is needed for the center. We also conducted research to know exactly what we need, what has to be changed and in which direction we should work.”* ALE center Director

## 3.2 Effectiveness of the project

### **Key Finding:**

The curriculum documents and activities have significantly contributed to the capacity building, organizational development, and educational improvement of ALE centers, though the full impact is still unfolding. While some centers have begun implementing these strategies, challenges such as limited resources and the need for gradual adoption have slowed progress, indicating a long-term process toward achieving sustainability and quality improvement.

The evaluation data reveals that the development of curriculum documents and the associated activities have significantly contributed to enhancing the capacity of ALE centers, supporting their organizational development, and improving the quality of their educational programs. However, it is important to note that the full impact of these efforts is still unfolding. The process is ongoing, and several indicators suggest that these curriculum documents will be instrumental in improving the quality and sustainability of ALE centers over the long term.

To assess the effectiveness of the project, two key dimensions were analyzed:

1. **Institutional Development:** This dimension examined the extent to which ALE centers have adopted the strategies and quality assurance framework that included standardized procedures, and documents and was developed by GAEN.
2. **Improvement of Educational Services:** This aspect focused on the degree to which trainers are applying the knowledge gained from capacity-building trainings on adult education.

### *Institutional Development and Adoption of Strategies*

As outlined earlier, under the Curriculum InstitutionALE initiative, several activities were implemented to foster the institutional development of ALE centers. These included the creation of strategies and action plans tailored to each center and the development of standardized quality assurance and education provision procedures, with respective package of documents such as orders, assessment tools, participant selection form, and certification, registration forms, etc. These resources were designed to enhance the administrative efficiency of the ALE centers.

The evaluation data shows that some centers have begun implementing these strategies and utilizing the standardized documents, with plans to fully integrate them in the near future:

*“In my case, the documents were adopted in practice very easily. Because when I became a director, I tried to organize everything in a certain way. It wasn’t particularly difficult for me to mobilize human resources either. I took on some tasks, and my project coordinator took on others.”*

*"We are starting to implement the strategy now. It has probably been a month since the strategy was developed. But I personally started implementing it because one of my goals is to organize the infrastructure of the organization as defined in the strategy, and I have already started it. As for the strategy, I will follow it step by step. If there are ten points we should implement, I will start working on two or three of them from today."*

However, some centers have yet to fully adopt these strategies or standardized documents. The barriers identified include the short time since the strategy's development and a lack of human and financial resources. One director expressed this challenge:

*"I can't say that after the trainings, we fully understood the ideas and started implementing them in our centers the very next day. It is very difficult to take it and start implementing it immediately. This requires a lot of human and financial resources, which we have scarcely." - ALE Center Director*

While many centers have not yet actively implemented their strategies or adopted standardized procedures, there is a general consensus that development of these documents was very important and the changes will be beneficial in the future, albeit as a gradual, long-term process:

*"In any case, it's probably very good for the beginning. Although today there is nothing to say and talk about, we have no progress, but I think that in the future we will move towards something better, it should happen step by step, in my opinion." (ALE center director)*

*"I have really planned to implement changes, which of course follow the strategy. But let's see, it just depends on finances. It's not just about our desire." (ALE center director)*

The interviews underscore that adopting new procedures and document templates is not an easy task for ALE centers. This often requires them to abandon existing practices and embrace new administrative frameworks. For centers that have been operating for a long time, and have developed practices through trial and error in the past, this shift can be particularly challenging, requiring significant extra effort, resources, and motivation.

*"There are so many documents... I'm not lazy, but it's just too many documents [to be changed] from the past years. Now that we have to change so many things it is very difficult."*

Interestingly, centers that had previous experience with state-recognized educational courses found it easier to adopt the changes because they were already accustomed to similar bureaucratic procedures. Similarly, newly established centers, without prior experience in running an ALE center, found the ready-made procedures and documentation to be a significant help in getting started.

For other centers, especially those with limited resources or long-established practices, the transition to new procedures has been more difficult. They require additional human, time, and financial resources, and in some cases, a stronger motivation to see the benefits of these changes.

## *Educational Services*

The training on adult education conducted was critical and much needed at the ALE centers, yet the evaluation revealed that trainees struggled to fully apply the knowledge gained.

Under Curriculum GlobALE, adult education training was provided to ALE center directors and trainers. As described in the Introduction part, first 17 participants were trained and later they trained educators across 14 centers. The importance of training in adult education cannot be overstated, particularly because many trainers lacked specific expertise in teaching adults. As the Director of DVV International Georgia noted, “At the centers, they may find a skilled craftsman as a trainer, who is an excellent professional but doesn’t know how to teach adults” (See sub-chapter ‘Educational program’ for the positive outcomes of the training).

Despite the significance of these initiatives, interviews revealed that many trainers found it challenging to absorb and apply the information:

*“Let’s take GlobALE as an example, which aims to improve the qualification level of trainers in the centers, among other things. It is very challenging to implement all of this under our current conditions [...] because, in general, it is difficult to find qualified trainers in the regions. With the resources we have now, it is very hard to fully adhere to the Curriculum GlobALE and expect the trainers to follow it point by point. I don’t know, maybe we will gradually get used to it, move things forward step by step, make improvements little by little, and if there are other centers that do more, we will take an example from them.”* ALE center Director

During the FGD discussions, some trainers struggled to recall the trainings and those who did, found them useful but somewhat general and challenging to integrate into their teaching practices.

In contrast, other training sessions specifically tailored for certain course were highly successful. This year GAEN organized updating training modules for four vocational courses: computer, sewing, accountancy, and manicure. The courses were selected based on the needs of the ALE centers. Although these were not part of the curriculum documents, they contributed significantly to the institutional development of ALE centers. These courses included detailed two-month training modules, complete with teaching materials, activities, and assessment forms. These modulus and the material are standardized across all centers.

*“This year, all centers have chosen and standardized four courses, ensuring that whether a course is taken in Jvari or Leliani, the content and learning outcomes will be the same. This approach is crucial for creating institutional memory, so that even if a teacher changes, the organization will maintain a consistent standard for teaching the course, allowing a new teacher to seamlessly continue where the previous one left off.”* ALE Center director.

Trainers reported that these sessions were extremely effective, with many already applying the modules and even transferring skills gained to other training programs. This suggests that while

the broader educational framework was challenging to implement, targeted, course-specific training was both impactful and immediately applicable.

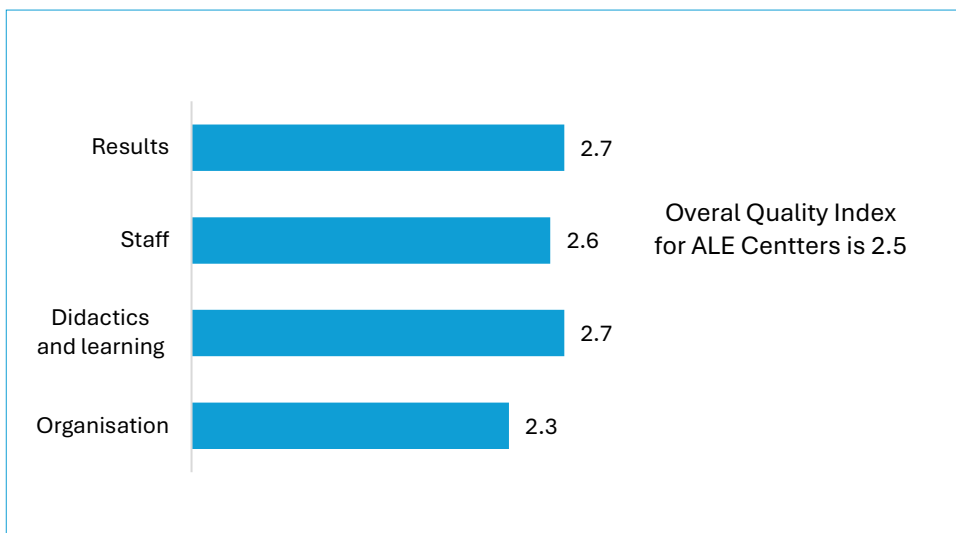
The development and implementation of curriculum documents and activities have undoubtedly supported the increase in capacity, organizational development, and educational program improvement at ALE centers. However, the full realization of these efforts remains a work in progress, with varying levels of adoption across centers. The flexibility in adopting these procedures is beneficial, allowing each center to implement changes at their own pace, depending on their available resources. Nevertheless, the long-term sustainability and quality improvement of ALE centers will likely depend on the widespread adoption and effective implementation of these curriculum documents and standardized practices.

### 3.3 Assessment of quality

#### Key Findings:

An average quality index for ALE centers is 2.5 out of 3, meaning that most of the quality indicators are met. However, there still is room for improvement.

As outlined in the methodology section, the evaluation team developed a quality assessment tool encompassing four key quality areas, each with multiple sub-areas and corresponding indicators. Using responses from ALE Center Directors and trainers, the evaluation team calculated an overall “Quality Index” for the ALE Centers. The table below shows that, on average, ALE Centers rate their quality at 2.5 out of a total possible score of 3. This score suggests that while ALE Center representatives believe most quality indicators are nearly met, there are still areas for improvement and requiring further attention for complete fulfillment.



Each quality area will be discussed in detail in the following sub-chapters.

### 3.3.1 organization

**Key Findings:**

GAEN with ALE Centers have developed three-year strategies and action Plans, which directors praise for providing structure and direction. However, they have not yet been fully implemented.

ALE center directors appreciate standardized internal documents for improving organization, although some feel their formality may not fit non-formal education contexts.

While marketing and outreach strategies are outlined, challenges persist due to limited resources and local communication barriers.

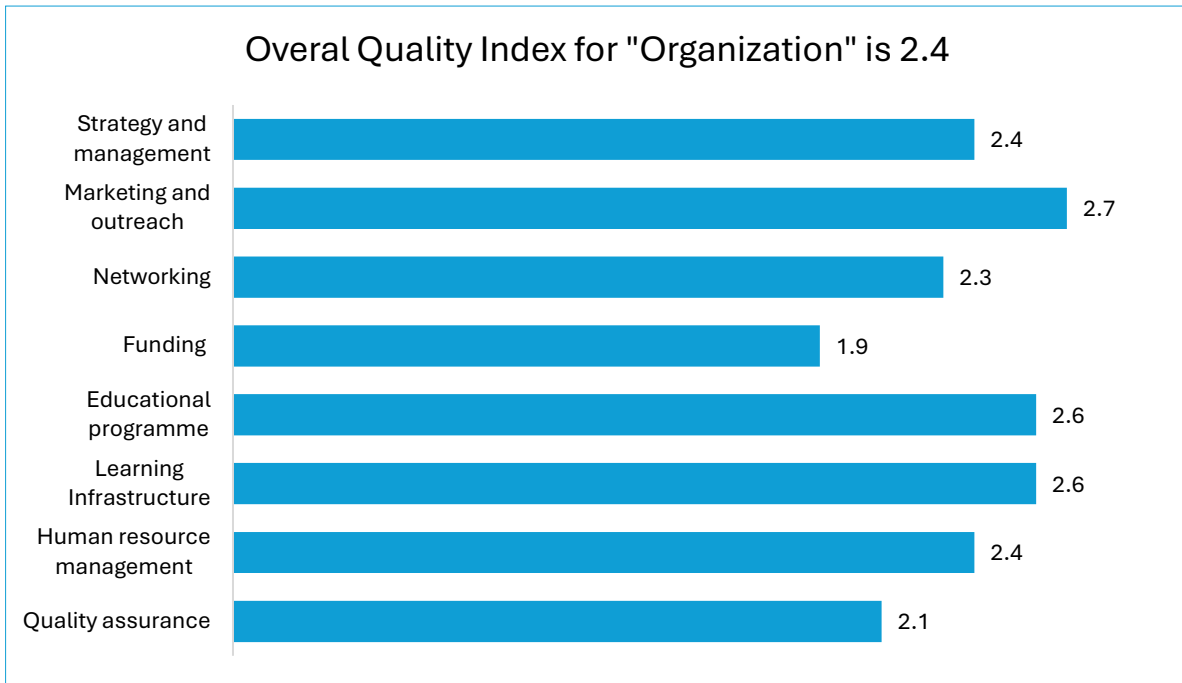
New strategies have clarified networking priorities, and training has improved communication skills among directors.

There are improvements in financial management, but barriers such as a lack of resources remain.

The centers are generally well-equipped, but infrastructure improvements are needed, especially to meet fire safety standards.

Quality Assurance Frameworks developed with GAEN's frameworks have been introduced to the centers. ALE centers believe in the importance of such a framework, though some difficulties in their implementation persist.

The analysis of the quality in the area of 'Organization' reveals that, on average, the centers rate themselves at 2.3 out of 3. Among the sub-areas, 'Marketing and Outreach' receives the highest score of 2.7, while 'Funding and Financial Management' scores the lowest at 1.9. The progress and challenges associated with each sub-area were discussed in interviews with ALE Center directors and trainers, and are detailed below.



### *Organizations' structure and management*

In 2024 three-year strategies and accompanying action plans were developed for each of 14 centers, tailored to address their specific needs, strengths, and weaknesses. This strategic development has been universally praised by directors, who see it as a valuable tool for better planning and organizing future activities, as well as providing an operational framework that has made their work more official and structured.

*"The strategy we are developing is also a protection mechanism for the organization. If you want to arrange the garden in front of the organization's building, and it's not written in the strategy, then you are doing it for nothing, neglecting something else. It's better to follow and develop what's written there. You need to have set goals. I didn't have this before, and when I thought about it, you want to do things in many directions, but eventually, some things don't get done because you took on too many directions at once. When this document is ready, I can look at it and see what I've accomplished and what I haven't, and then go back to it and follow through until it's done. Especially now, we have a new three-year strategy. Now we'll break it down into one-year plans so that after a year, we have an obligation to fulfill it. If a person doesn't have an obligation, they won't do it." - ALE Center Director.*

*"Everything is becoming formalized now. For example, this strategy. The center did not have anything like this before. We had no documentation at all. Now we are moving towards paperwork. It is a fact that [our work] needs to have some kind of framework. This is not bad. On the contrary, it's very good. Because right now we are moving without an aim. And if all the work does not have a strategy, and if you don't want to develop something, then where are you headed?" - ALE Center Director.*

*“We had an unofficial three-year plan that I personally was working on. Now that we started to work on [strategies] during the training, we will officially adopt this document. This is very good, as we have incorporated our experience and knowledge in this strategy document.” - ALE Center Director.*

Although the strategy has not yet been implemented, as it was only recently delivered to the centers, most directors are currently working on or planning to transform the strategy into actionable plans in the near future.

In addition to the strategy, a set of standardized internal documents has been created. These have been positively received as the documents facilitate the organization and archiving of internal documentation, as well as the distribution of responsibilities by clearly defining each person's duties.

However, some directors have expressed concerns about the excessive formality of these documents, which they feel may not be suitable for a non-formal education context.

*“With us, you cannot expel a student or a participant for something. Sometimes they make noise, and I give a warning, but to expel them... that cannot happen, it wouldn't work with us. Our organization is not a school, it's not a formal institution. So, certain formal documentation, we will just not do because we know the situation in our municipality, and it won't work.” - ALE Center Director.*

The creation of a strategic plan and internal documentation is contributing to greater organization and structuring of the centers from an administrative perspective. This is also seen as advantageous in relationships with donors.

*“Our strategy is important because if I present it for a grant or to some donor, I can show that everything is well-prepared internally, that we are organizationally structured with five-year, three-year action plans, and all sorts of internal regulations, labor safety, and other matters.” - ALE Center Director.*

While the center staff acknowledges the importance and relevance of more formalized and structured work (as discussed in the relevance chapter), the transition to this new mode of operation is challenging for the centers. The main obstacles cited are a lack of human resources, financial resources, and time, as well as being accustomed to the previous ways of operating.

### *Marketing and outreach*

Marketing and outreach strategies are outlined in the strategies of the ALE centers, yet this area has seen little change across most of the centers. Several directors cited the lack of essential tools, such as internet or television access in their villages, as a barrier to implementing new strategies.

*“There are regions with many communication and information dissemination opportunities, but in my region, there is no newspaper, no television, no radio. Except for the online radio*

*that we have in our center, the only means of information dissemination are our Facebook pages and putting up some informational flyers. My organization has a significant business relationship with schools and community representatives in municipalities. I know what should be done in this direction, but there are no other means available to me. Whatever communication plans I develop, they are limited to the physical and real possibilities in my region, and I cannot change that." - ALE Center Director.*

Despite these challenges, directors mentioned that the training sessions on public communication that they or their staff attended were very helpful, providing them with new ideas for improvements.

*"I am going to make changes. I want to improve social networks. We sent a person to trainings related to marketing and PR, and things have already really changed. But our problem is, and what I need to change, is to add one staff member." - ALE Center Director.*

*"We were trained in communication forms. The workshops were very interesting, conducted by very qualified trainers." - ALE Center Director.*

Additionally, though not directly linked to the three curriculums, directors view a new initiative promoted by DVV International, which will introduce a radio station in each center, as a valuable resource for enhancing their marketing and outreach capabilities.

It should also be noted that some centers refrain from outreach campaigns because they already have more beneficiaries than they can accommodate. While an official strategy is necessary for the long run, the current methods of recruiting beneficiaries seem to work for most centers. This also indicates a strong demand for ALE centers in their communities, and if more resources and capacity were available, they could potentially double the number of beneficiaries.

*"On the contrary, it is difficult for me that there are courses where I have to put a barrier when I announce the registration, so that more people do not come. It's hard for me to say no to a person and based on what should I say no?" - ALE Center Director.*

### *Networking*

The strategy has outlined networking priorities for ALE centers, emphasizing the importance of either strengthening cooperation with local municipalities or diversifying international partnerships, depending on the center's focus:

*"As I've told you, we have a framework now. If I've defined [in the strategy] that I have to communicate with the local municipality and not with international donors, then I know what my priority should be. Creating the framework for work is very good. I know what my direction is in this regard." - ALE Center Director.*

While the strategy has provided clearer direction, the centers have yet to take significant steps toward achieving their goals. However, there is optimism about future progress:

*"So far, [the curriculum documents] have not brought any change, but I'm saying again that I'm sure there will be changes in the future, and there will be progress. This is what everything is developed for, and this is an international experience, which is being introduced to us now, and that's why I think that if it worked elsewhere, it will also be justified here too, if you approach it correctly and won't be lazy." - ALE Center Director.*

Additionally, the training sessions on communication have not only enhanced the directors' communication skills, which they view as crucial for improving relationships with partners, but also facilitated stronger internal relationships among the centers. These sessions allowed directors to exchange information and experiences, fostering a sense of mutual support. As one director highlighted:

*"This process showed that an issue raised in one center can be of common interest to all 14 centers, and we can reach a common solution." - ALE Center Director.*

The data indicates that ALE centers greatly benefit from their unity. They support one another, with established centers sharing their experiences and guidance when new centers are opened. Being part of a larger network strengthens the ALE centers, giving them a sense of collective resilience and shared purpose.

### *Funding and Financial Management*

During the training on Curriculum ManagerALE, which included not only directors but also other administrative staff such as accountants, a specific module on financial management was conducted. This course enabled the centers to improve their budgeting and financial reporting processes and enhance their overall financial management systems. Additionally, the training helped directors gain a better understanding of potential financial sources.

*"Also, in our strategy and through these trainings and meetings, we have developed specific visions regarding funding sources, discussing what sources organizations like ours might have. We deliberated a lot on these sources. One of them is donor organizations. The second is additional financial income. The third is social enterprises, which some organizations, including ours, have. The fourth source is local self-governments, which have the ability to make donations based on personal decisions," - ALE Center Director.*

*"Within the managerALE framework, we developed a final vision [on ,fundraising]. There are four main sources. We have developed techniques, methods, and visions for them." - ALE Center Director.*

Despite the planned changes, DVV International remains the primary donor for most centers, and the lack of finances continues to be a significant barrier.

*"We always complain about finances, but what can we do? Finances define many things. We write these project applications. We don't mind writing, but maybe I don't have that kind of experience. I might have had a good idea, but I cannot write [a good project*

*application]. What can we do? Not every center can work similarly now, the center is here, and we cannot all work in the same way. Someone has strong experience [in project writing], someone has a good partner through another organization. We don't have [partners] as we are distant [territorially]."* - ALE Center Director.

The directors identified several obstacles to adopting new financial strategies, including a lack of experience and human resources for fundraising, inadequate infrastructure, the socio-economic situation of beneficiaries that makes it difficult to introduce small fees for courses, the location of the center, and the legal framework in the country.

Some centers have experience in grant writing and maintain strong connections with donor organizations, allowing them to secure multiple projects. However, the primary challenge remains the lack of staff dedicated to fundraising and proposal writing. Other centers rely on funding from local municipalities, which can be sustainable but varies greatly depending on the municipality's willingness to collaborate.

Some centers offer paid courses, but this is not feasible for many who operate in municipal buildings where charging for services is not permitted. Additionally, the socio-economic conditions in these regions often prevent locals from affording paid courses.

*"People want to learn something new, but they have no financial resources. We are trying to offer these courses absolutely free of charge at this stage...until the economic situation in the country improves."* - ALE Center Director.

The location of the center also impacts fundraising opportunities. The farther an ALE center is from the municipal center, the more challenging its financial stability becomes. Additionally, the region in which the center is located plays a role; some areas in Georgia attract more donor organizations than others. As one director from Imereti remarked:

*"As part of this project, we of course shared our experiences [about fundraising]. We also had trainings and workshops on how to find and communicate with donor organizations. We also registered on the platform where we can communicate with donor organizations. However, Imereti is not an attractive region for donor organizations. This is a well-known fact. And for us—a newly established organization—it is difficult to have partnership networks at this stage."* - ALE Center Director.

Finally, several directors highlighted the absence of a legal framework for establishing social enterprises as an additional obstacle.

*"I haven't dared to create a social enterprise, even though I have the equipment for woodworking. Why? Because there is no legal framework. The term 'social enterprise' has become very trendy lately, not just for us but also for donors, but in reality, there is no legal framework for social enterprises. How should I register my woodworking class as a social enterprise when such a legal status doesn't exist?"* - ALE Center Director.

### *Educational program*

On average the centers have 8 courses in half a year. As already mentioned in the sub-chapter 'Educational services', one of the most significant developments under the educational program has been the creation of detailed training modules for four vocational courses—computer literacy, sewing, accountancy, and manicure—by field experts. These modules, specifically tailored to the needs of the courses, include additional materials, teaching resources, activities, and assessment forms. Following the development of these modules, training sessions were conducted for the trainers of these courses.

*"Training modules were developed with the involvement of field experts, and now the process of retraining trainers is underway. This, of course, helps to improve the quality of our centers' activities and to enhance some training modules, which directly affects the quality of our services." - ALE Center Director.*

The impact of these trainings, along with AE training conducted under the Curriculum GlobALE, has been positive for the trainers. They have started paying more attention to analyzing and monitoring the needs of their beneficiaries and have begun, or are planning, to open new courses based on these findings. However, some directors pointed out the challenges in opening new courses, even when there is demand from beneficiaries, due to a lack of financial resources or qualified trainers.

*"This is our biggest problem. For my center, it is a huge issue that I know what courses are very important to add and what the demands are, but we do not have the human resources. We do not have people who are professionals in these fields and can become trainers. This is a very big problem in my region."- ALE Center Director.*

*"We know what the demands are, but because we do not have professional human resources in our region, it is a significant limitation for us." - ALE Center Director.*

### *Learning Infrastructures and facilities*

The ALE Centers are generally well-equipped with the technology and materials needed to implement educational courses successfully. However, some centers noted the need for infrastructure improvements. Obstacles to these improvements include the lack of owned facilities, which restricts the ability to plan long-term structural changes, and the financial resources needed to make these changes.

Infrastructure issues are addressed in the ALE Centers' strategy documents, and some centers have already begun upgrading their infrastructure as part of these strategies.

*"We moved [to the new building] about five years ago, and everything needs to be renewed. I have already started [updating infrastructure] step by step—laying out the Internet cables that were missing in one room. I'm doing all this according to the strategy." - ALE Center Director.*

Other centers have been resourceful, gradually improving their infrastructure as part of their vocational courses.

*"For example, the tile flooring course was launched, and the beneficiaries laid the flooring as part of the course. This boosted their motivation. When they come here, they say: 'This is what we did.' We also do cosmetic repairs in the rooms as part of the courses. It's impressive for others when they learn that the walls were painted by our beneficiaries." - ALE Center Director.*

However, a significant challenge for the ALE Centers remains compliance with state fire safety standards. While some centers have made progress and implemented the required safety measures, others continue to face difficulties in this area.

*"We're also working on labor security and have developed maps. We attended labor safety courses, and it was a direct requirement—since we work with children—that labor and hygienic safety be ensured. Good exit doors were made, and maps were developed." - ALE Center Director.*

*"The only problem we have is fire safety, which prevents us from implementing state educational programs. This requires a lot of financial resources, and we need a donor for this; it couldn't be carried out as part of this project." - ALE Center Director.*

Meeting fire safety standards is essential for the centers, as they cannot implement state-certified courses until these standards are met. The director of GAEN stated that they are supporting the ALE Centers in addressing these issues. However, due to limited financial resources, their support is gradual. Another challenge is that most centers operate in municipal buildings, where there is always a risk that the municipality may not renew the contract allowing the centers to use the facilities.

*"We decided to build some fire safety elements in Keda because the Keda ALE Center owns its building. The buildings in Keda, Akhaltsikhe, and Akhalkalaki are private, so there's no danger that the municipality will kick them out of the building," - ALE Center Director.*

### *Quality assurance*

GAEN developed a comprehensive quality assurance framework for the ALE Centers, detailing various areas to enhance the quality of their operations. Thanks to the documents and forms provided by GAEN, some centers have already introduced or are planning to introduce feedback forms to evaluate beneficiary satisfaction and assess trainer performance. However, some interviews revealed difficulties in using these forms, as they were considered too complex for the beneficiaries.

*"GAEN has developed documents that have been shared with us, the centers, and there are several issues that I think may remain a challenge for our operations at this point. Though they are not insurmountable. In part, we implement the quality assurance*

*mechanisms with the standards that we had, but GAEN shared with us the standards that exist at the state level and are used by state vocational colleges, because there is no other standard at the state level in the country. [...] To adopt and meet all the standards is not an easy job for us. We implement it partially: we conduct assessments, we have student assessments. However, we still do not cover all the state-required standards." - ALE Center Director.*

Overall, center directors believe that the quality of educational services has improved, especially when comparing the present to the early days of the centers.

*"If we consider what it was 10 years ago, we will notice progress in many ways. Back then, we found teachers based on the resources and equipment we had. If we compare what we have now, we can see a great advance. It makes sense that after ten years of work, the quality should have increased, especially when we have so many programs and so much support" - ALE Center Director.*

To sum up, ALE Centers have developed three-year strategies and action plans, which directors praise for providing structure and direction. These strategies help in planning and organizing activities, though they have not yet been fully implemented. Directors value the new standardized internal documents for improving organization, but some feel the formality may not suit non-formal education contexts. Marketing and outreach strategies are outlined but face challenges due to limited resources and local communication barriers. Networking priorities are clearer with the new strategies, and training has enhanced communication skills. Financial management improvements were noted, but barriers such as a lack of resources and inadequate infrastructure persist. While the centers are generally well-equipped, infrastructure improvements are needed, particularly to meet fire safety standards. Quality assurance frameworks from GAEN have been introduced, though some difficulties remain in their implementation. Overall, directors report significant progress in quality and organization over the past decade.

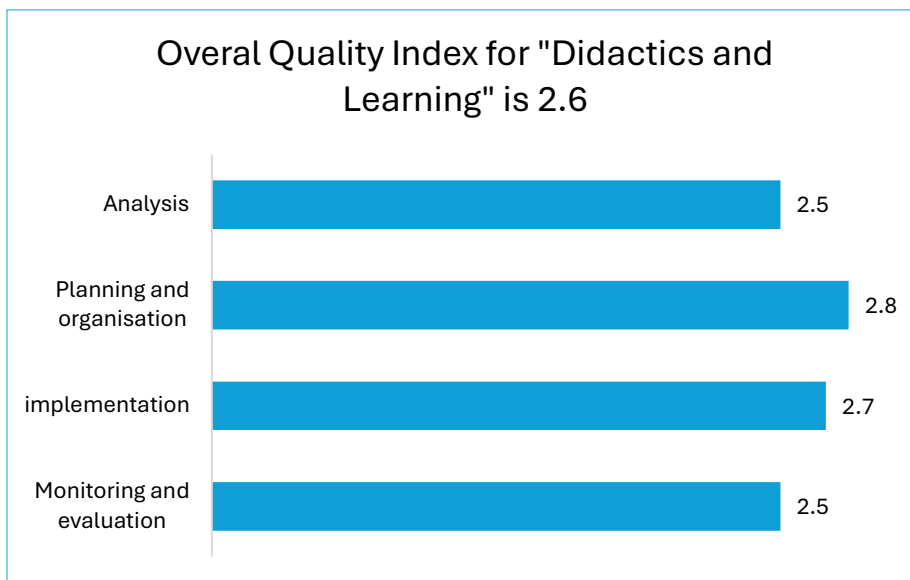
### 3.3.2 Didactics and learning process

#### **Key Findings:**

The curriculum documents and associated activities had a positive impact on the learning process at ALE Centers, leading to more detailed and thoughtful planning and implementation of educational activities.

Training sessions conducted for ALE center directors and trainers have led to more detailed and thoughtful planning and execution of educational activities. Some trainers have adopted new assessment forms and improved feedback mechanisms, while others have enhanced lesson planning by considering beneficiaries' needs and characteristics more thoroughly.

Newly developed curriculums for vocational courses have facilitated better monitoring of trainer performance by providing pre-defined learning outcomes.



### Analysis

The curriculum documents and the activities associated with them have positively impacted the learning process at ALE Centers. Training sessions have led to a more detailed and thoughtful approach to planning and executing educational activities:

*"Starting from the planning process to the final result, we had to look at everything more closely and in more detail, and understand it thoroughly. This was exactly what was beneficial for us, and for me personally."* – ALE Center Trainer.

Some trainers have begun using assessment forms introduced through the curriculum, while others noted that they have been employing them even before the trainings:

*"We have opened additional channels of communication with the beneficiaries through improved feedback forms. We are able to register and statistically process their needs and suggestions, and implement them accordingly. We use the previous year's feedback forms and their statistical data as a basis at the beginning of every new year."* - ALE Center Director

*"I personally always ask at the beginning of every training about the results they want to achieve and their expectations. Even before that, I always asked and knew in advance what the expectations were and what results were desired."* - ALE Center Trainer

While there is no large-scale analysis of beneficiaries - their background, needs and motivation, most centers are familiar with their target groups due to their small community settings. They understand their beneficiaries' socio-cultural backgrounds and motivations for joining the Center.

### Planning and organization

The Curriculum GlobALE training course has led to more specific and comprehensible lesson planning among trainers. Some realized that their previous lesson plans included unnecessary details, and the training helped them focus on essential aspects, such as beneficiaries' starting knowledge levels. Trainers now emphasize detailed lesson planning, incorporating beneficiaries' needs, interests, prior knowledge, and characteristics more thoroughly:

*"It might not have been something entirely new, but after this training, I saw more detailed needs, like paying more attention to pre- and post-tests. We should determine the*

*beneficiaries' knowledge level and learn shorter ways to create this framework.” – ALE Center Trainer*

Focus groups revealed that trainers now consider each beneficiary's individual needs more carefully:

*“After these training sessions, I focused more on the lesson plan and tried to see each beneficiary's problem, which really helped me.” – ALE Center Trainer*

The courses also address gender-specific needs, such as providing facilities for women with children, which reflects the predominantly female leadership of the ALE Centers:

*“There were many participants with small children. We created a room with children's books and toys so they could bring their kids while attending the trainings.”*

Additionally, some trainers adapt their approach to accommodate ethnic minorities by providing materials in multiple languages, although this is done informally and depends on the trainer's initiative:

*“There is a girl in my class who does not speak Georgian well. I give materials in Russian and explain everything in Russian after the training.” – ALE Center Trainer*

However, there is no official procedure for handling such cases, leaving it to the discretion of individual trainers.

### *Didactics and Learning Process / Implementation*

The trainings conducted on AE and trainings for specific vocational courses, such as accountancy and sewing, have significantly enhanced the capacity and knowledge of trainers at ALE Centers, improving both the learning process and the quality of the courses offered.

Trainers have found that understanding different participant attitudes and adapting their approaches accordingly has been beneficial:

*“Of course, you all have different participants. Some people have a bit of an attitude here - I know it and I don't want to listen anymore; Some people have the attitude that they talk about everything whether they know it or not. [During the trainings] we sorted out these characters quite well, we compared them to animals, and when I saw this type of people in my courses, I changed my approach towards them.” – ALE Center Trainer*

The trainings have also equipped trainers with skills to effectively engage with diverse age groups and learning styles:

*“Older women tend to feel as though they already know everything. What we have learned [at the training] and implemented practically makes it easier for us now. Previously, it was*

*more difficult to work with older women, as they often thought they knew more and tried to understand everything but still wanted to be taught in a particular way. This experience and the methods we have learned and practiced have helped us grow. I have also grown, and now I can more easily engage with such individuals by finding what interests them and guiding them in the right direction.” – ALE Center Trainer*

The introduction of various strategies and methodologies during lessons has allowed trainers to address different learning needs and styles more effectively:

*“There are many educational platforms, etc., which make the learning process more qualitative and enjoyable. Personally, speaking about my course, if I used only the book and notebook before, these meetings and training sessions made me realize that you need something else. For instance, you need to adapt to each beneficiary; some don't like reading and writing at all, some prefer watching, and some prefer listening more. So, innovations are always welcome and can lead us to success if used well, in my opinion.”*  
– ALE Center Trainer

Moreover, there has been a noticeable shift towards incorporating more practical activities alongside theoretical ones:

*“In my case, I remembered that we provide a lot of theoretical material to our listeners. Yes, it's somewhat easier for us to deliver the theory, but it's better when this theory is applied in practice, and when each trainer also increasingly loads their lessons with practical exercises.”* – ALE Center Trainer

Despite these positive changes, some center directors have expressed concerns about the feasibility of additional demands on trainers:

*“You need knowledge, you need qualification, human resources. It is very difficult to ask a person whom you pay 200 GEL per month to sit here for the whole day and develop documents, conduct assessments, with trainers, or administration, or the students. This is very difficult, but I don't know. We'll probably think of something.”* – ALE Center Director

### *Monitoring and evaluation*

The FGDs revealed that some trainers have enhanced their student evaluation methods and adopted new techniques.

*“I approach my students more frequently to gather their feedback. This is something we call exit cards. For instance, after each lesson, I ask them to write what they understood, what they did not understand, and what they would like to understand. [...] Introducing this method has greatly helped me in planning the next lesson and taking the subsequent steps.”* – ALE Center Trainer

*“We've refined our feedback forms and now pay closer attention to the feedback, including comments and complaints from beneficiaries, as well as satisfaction levels. This feedback*

*is now better organized at the center. We have made improvements in this area and actively listen to the voices of beneficiaries in our center's administration.” – ALE Center Director*

Regarding the monitoring of trainer performance, improvements have been noted with the newly developed curriculums for four vocational courses (accountancy, computer, sewing, and manicures). The modules now include pre-defined learning outcomes, making it easier for directors to assess the progress of the courses against these outcomes.

To sum up, the curriculum documents and associated activities have positively impacted the learning process at ALE Centers. Training sessions have led to more detailed and thoughtful planning and execution of educational activities. Some trainers have adopted new assessment forms and improved feedback mechanisms, while others have used these methods even before the trainings. Trainers have also enhanced their lesson planning, considering beneficiaries' needs and characteristics more thoroughly. In terms of monitoring and evaluation, trainers have improved student evaluations by using exit cards and refined feedback forms. The newly developed curriculums for vocational courses have facilitated better monitoring of trainer performance by providing pre-defined learning outcomes.

### 3.3.3 Staff

#### **Key Findings:**

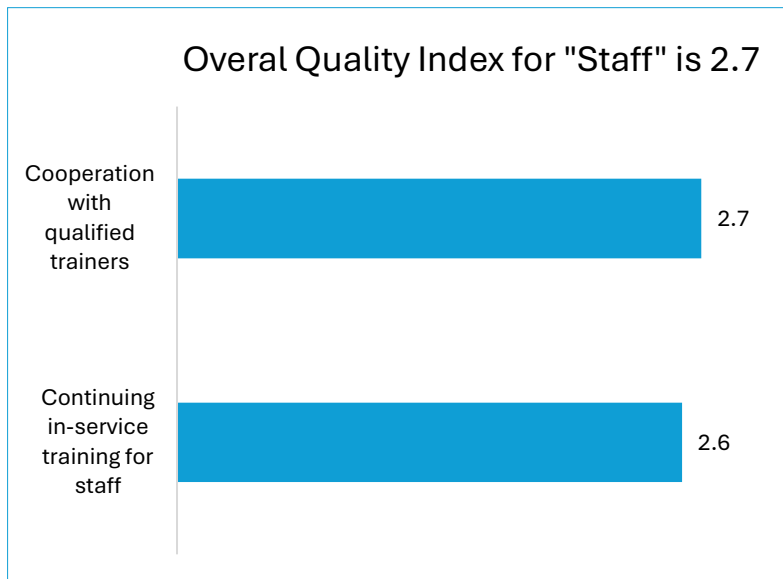
Finding qualified staff remains a challenge for ALE centers due to regional shortages and financial constraints, impacting recruitment and retention despite recent training enhancements.

ALE Center trainers have benefited from GAEN-organized trainings, which have improved their skills and boosted their confidence.

While immediate results may not be fully visible, improvements are evident in the adoption of new teaching methods, initiation of new courses, and increased motivation and proactivity among trainers.

Trainers appreciate ongoing professional development and are eager to participate in future training opportunities.

There is an emphasis on the need for continued refresher courses and GAEN's support for effective planning and implementing.



*Continuing in-service education and training for ALE teachers*

As mentioned in the previous chapters, ALE Center trainers have recently participated in several trainings, including those focused on (AE) and trainings as part of specific vocational courses. According to the directors, the trainings organized by GAEN have been crucial for both training and retraining the center's staff. The sessions

involved all staff members, including trainers and administrative personnel. The evaluation indicates that while the results may not yet be fully apparent, the training has significantly enhanced the trainers' capacity, with positive outcomes already visible.

As described in the didactics and learning chapter, trainers have begun to apply new teaching methods in their courses:

*"Their qualification, their experience, their confidence has increased. Of course, when we hired these people, they had practical experience in the field and had the documents confirming their knowledge. Now they have been retained by experts and this has certainly had a positive effect on each of them and they are satisfied with the results and we are too."* – ALE Center Director.

*"I couldn't say that the conducted trainings suddenly led to an increase in their qualifications. But this led to the fact that, for example, the trainer of the accounting course, who attended the accountancy training, returned with an initiative for a completely new course. Therefore, from September, we will already have a new course."* – ALE Center Director.

Some directors have noted a change in staff attitudes following the training courses. They observed shifts not only in lesson delivery but also in overall work approach. Increased motivation and proactivity among staff were also reported:

*"They receive some positive energy, some motivation, and this desire to teach for free arises because they feel like they are part of something, doing good work, and they realize that not everything is about money."* – ALE Center Director.

*"As they say, the efforts have paid off, and the results are evident. This year, I'm not sure if it's due to the different approach of these trainers or something else, but the change in*

*attitude is remarkable. Some trainers have become very active, with their attendance increasing significantly. The 2 and 3 groups that I had budgeted initially weren't enough, and the trainers are now telling me that they already have 2 or 3 additional groups ready. Two or three trainers have even told me that if funding isn't available, it's not a problem. They're willing to conduct these 2- and 3-month courses for free. I believe this is a direct result of the strategy, the curriculum, and the training they've received."* – ALE Center Director.

Notably, trainers understand the importance of ongoing professional development and are eager to participate in future capacity-building activities:

*"Technologies are developing, and we should follow this development so that there is demand for our so-called knowledge. Maybe teachers need help too. There will be a lot of new equipment, a lot of new things that will further develop us and we will deliver all this to the listeners..."* – ALE Center Trainer.

*"Sometimes everything needs to be refreshed. In my opinion, if we do something monotonously and stay in the same framework, it will not lead us to success. So, everything needs innovation, and even more so now that it is the twenty-first century. We live in the age of technologies, and even the use of these technologies in any learning process is very important. There are many learning platforms that will make the learning process more enjoyable."* – ALE Center Trainer.

Some directors have expressed concerns about trainer turnover due to insufficient financial resources. They worry that without increased compensation, trainers may leave, undermining the benefits of the training:

*"It is most important for us to maintain our human resources. Our biggest challenge is that, as I said, we have trained some of our trainers, and they are still undergoing training. If we do not increase their financial support and create slightly better conditions, our hard-trained, resource-invested trainers may leave us."* – ALE Center Trainer.

*"We constantly face the problem of staff turnover. We don't have the resources to retrain our specialists in management. Therefore, the work done so far is important, but continuous retraining will always be necessary. It is most important for us to maintain our human resources. Our biggest challenge is that, as I said, we have trained some of our trainers, and they are still undergoing training. If we do not increase their financial support and create slightly better conditions, our hard-trained, resource-invested trainers may leave us."* – ALE Center Trainer.

Due to limited financial resources, the centers struggle to fund continuous training programs independently. However, they believe it is essential to keep staff updated on new teaching methods, approaches, and tools. Thus, they consider it crucial for GAEN to offer refresher courses annually.

In terms of development, GAEN planned an accounting course. The centers themselves are unable to plan or send anyone without GAEN's support, but GAEN has planned it for them.

### *Cooperation with qualified staff*

As mentioned in the 'Educational Program' sub-chapter, finding qualified staff presents a significant challenge for center directors. On one hand, there is a shortage of qualified professionals in the regions. On the other hand, the centers have very limited resources and cannot afford to recruit more experienced staff from other cities or towns. Directors even note that trainers are essentially doing the centers a favor due to the very low salaries.

*"There is a shortage of qualified staff in the regions, and those who are good professionals do not have time, I'm trying to find the middle point. I want the trainers to be qualified and to have time for us too."* – ALE Center Director

In addition to needing qualifications in specific fields, trainers must also be skilled in adult education, which is even rarer. Trainers had the opportunity to enhance their knowledge and skills in adult education through the Curriculum GlobALE training sessions. These skills were essential because it was found that many trainers, while experts in their fields, had no prior experience teaching adults. The training provided these trainers with the necessary skills and knowledge for more effective teaching. Some directors view provision of these trainings as a way to incentivize trainers and encourage them to stay:

*"We need to offer [the trainers] some additional benefits; otherwise, they will not stay here. Capacity building trainings under Curriculum GlobALE provided this opportunity. It was an additional motivation for them and a good way for us to retain them. [It shows them] that we have a supportive environment and are focused on professional growth."* – ALE Center Director

Furthermore, the trainings, especially those for specific vocational courses, have been crucial in fostering connections among trainers. FGDs revealed that trainers highly value these new connections. Previously, trainings were primarily for directors, but now trainers from different centers have had the chance to meet and share experiences. They have since created social media groups to exchange insights and support each other. These connections are proving to be vital for ALE center trainers:

*"I have gained many connections from every corner of Georgia. Now, if I encounter any teaching problems, I can reach out to them, seek their help, and learn from their experiences. We have become very close and support each other."* – ALE Center Trainer

*"Now we have this 'chat,' and I'm confident that if I need anything, everyone will be ready to help. We will support each other in every possible way."* – ALE Center Trainer

To sum up, finding qualified staff remains a challenge due to regional shortages and financial constraints, affecting recruitment and retention despite the enhanced skills from recent training. ALE Center trainers have recently benefited from various trainings organized by GAEN, which

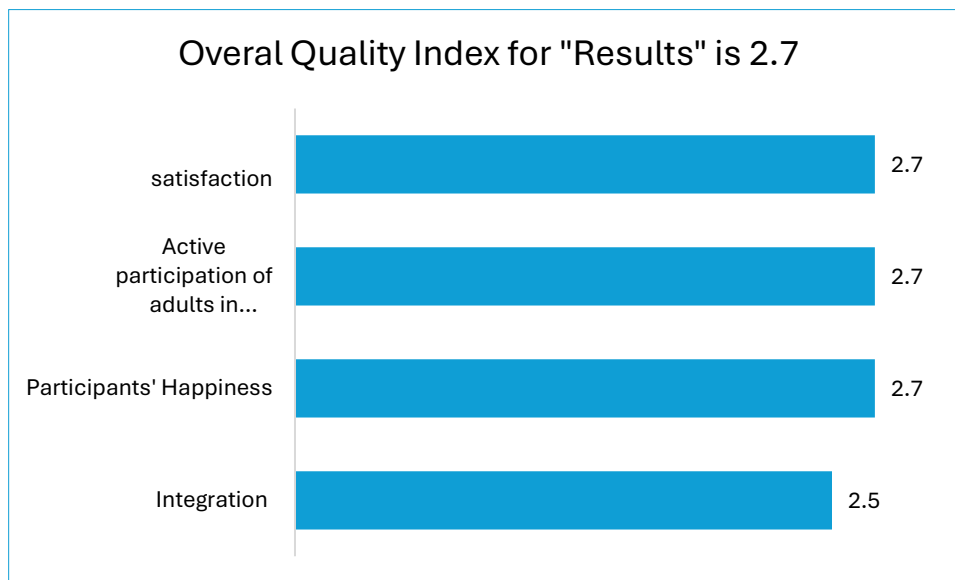
have enhanced their skills and confidence. Although immediate results may not be fully visible, improvements are evident. Trainers have adopted new teaching methods, with some initiating new courses and displaying increased motivation and proactivity.

Trainers value ongoing professional development and are keen to participate in future training. However, directors are concerned about potential staff turnover due to low salaries and limited financial resources. They emphasize the need for continued refresher courses and GAEN's support for effective planning and funding.

### 3.3.4 Results and Impact of the project

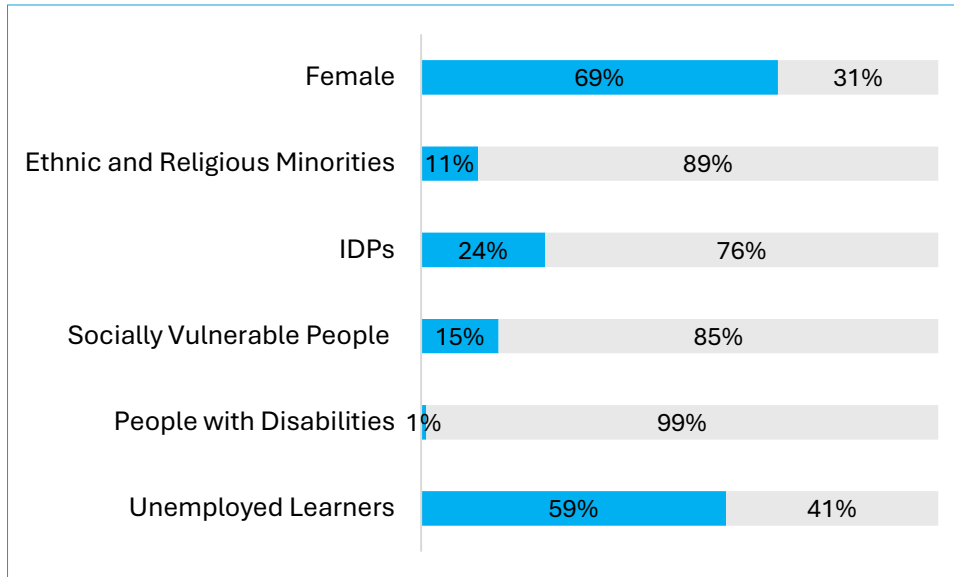
**Key Finding:**

ALE centers observe positive changes in employment, self-development, and social engagement among their beneficiaries, with notable gender-related impacts. However, due to the absence of baseline data and the recent implementation of curriculum documents, the direct contribution of these documents to the observed changes cannot be fully assessed at this time. The long-term impact is expected to become clearer in the coming years.



### Participation in the educational activities

As part of the evaluation, ALE center directors provided statistical data on their participants, indicating that the centers served 6,370 beneficiaries. These beneficiaries are diverse in terms of their social group affiliation.



Although there is no baseline data to determine whether the introduction and implementation of the curriculum document led to an increase in beneficiaries, ALE Center directors have observed a noticeable rise in participant numbers.

*"There definitely is an increase in the number of beneficiaries from year to year. As I told you, we had an increase from 9 to 35 people [in one course]. Their level of satisfaction too [has increased]. They trust us; this is why their number has increased."* -- ALE Center Director.

The directors also noted that not only has the number of beneficiaries grown, but there is also a heightened demand for additional courses:

*"They are asking for more courses: cooking course, stylist course—these are the courses that we don't have. When they attend one course, they will attend other courses too."* -- ALE Center Director.

*"This year, the demand has increased a lot. The two or three courses that I had budgeted for were not enough, and they are asking for more. People are coming and registering for the courses, asking me to find finances for additional groups."* -- ALE Center Director.

According to the statistical data provided by the ALE Centers, approximately 29% of the beneficiaries successfully complete the education courses.

ALE center directors speak of existing barriers to participation too. One trainer highlighted the lack of awareness in the region regarding the meaning, benefits, and value of ALE.

*"I think this is generally a problem of raising awareness, especially when we talk about education for adults. Speaking from my region's perspective, I don't know how it is elsewhere, but people here are still somewhat constrained. They have this mindset that adults cannot receive education" - ALE Center Director.*

Interestingly, after completing Curriculum GlobALE, one of the directors began to spend more time explaining the meaning and value of Adult Learning and Education to new beneficiaries and observed positive effects in terms of participation and more.

*"When accepting a new group, we talk briefly about the importance of adult education. We always show a short film about the importance of education, and I think this approach helps in promoting and introducing people to our center. Interestingly, this practice works: many new students come to us based on recommendations from their acquaintances." - ALE Center Director.*

### *Participant and partner satisfaction*

The ALE Center trainers observed the most significant changes in outcomes, particularly regarding student satisfaction. According to evaluation respondents, the increased focus on the individual needs and characteristics of the beneficiaries, along with the adoption of new teaching strategies and methodologies, positively impacted participation, engagement during lessons, and student motivation.

*"It was interesting [to observe]: They became more motivated, more engaged, and more open, not only about internal issues but also about other conditions. I noticed that later, they were more socially engaged, everyone knew each other better, and they were more active in discussions. By getting used to talking more, they were also more prepared for exams. They became more active overall, and it was useful in that regard." - ALE Center Director*

However, many centers lack a systematic approach to collecting feedback, often relying on observations or verbal feedback from beneficiaries.

*"We don't measure beneficiary satisfaction, but we see in everyday communication who is happy and who isn't. I cannot remember anyone who was unhappy [with the courses]. On the contrary, they always say: 'I have attended this course and I got so accustomed to this place; can I register for another course?'" - ALE Center Director*

*The absence of specific and comparable data across years has likely been a significant obstacle for directors in recognizing changes in outcomes. Nevertheless, some directors acknowledged*

*the general benefits that the changes introduced by the curriculum have brought, or will bring, in terms of outcomes.*

*"Better service leads to better outcomes for them. Improved training with better resources and more flexibly planned modules provide direct benefits for the beneficiaries. So, of course, it directly impacts them; it's not indirect. They are the recipients of quality improvements." - ALE Center Director*

#### *Position of adults in the labor market*

According to the statistical data provided, approximately 12% of beneficiaries found jobs or improved their employment and/or income in the past 6 months. Almost all directors acknowledge that even before the curriculum implementation, the centers played a crucial role in helping people find jobs or enhance their employment opportunities, with many positive results over the years:

*"The curriculum has reflected on many things, but I wouldn't say this in terms of employment because most of the attendees were already employed in various fields. However, I would say that both before and after the change, all my attendees were working somewhere." – ALE Center Director.*

ALE Centers report numerous cases where they have successfully supported beneficiaries in finding jobs or improving their income. They also collaborate with employers, training individuals in skills that are in demand in the local market:

*"Sometimes we reach out to [our beneficiaries] to find out how much the certificate, and the knowledge they gained at our center helped them. And many people tell us that they started to work, or their salary has increased, because their employer was requiring a certificate or certain skills." – ALE Center Director.*

*"We are involved in professional development as much as local resources allow. The employers know us. The representatives of small businesses know us. And they come to us if they need qualified staff in a certain direction. For example, welding courses. An employer came to us and told us that if we trained staff, they would hire them. This person attended the welding processes and selected the candidates [for hiring]." – ALE Center Director.*

Many center beneficiaries are also self-employed:

*"They studied plumbing, plastering, painting, and laying tile flooring. Almost every man who settled here and studied [at the center] is now self-employed in construction." – ALE Center Director.*

*"In the agricultural field, farmers are involved in our center. They study fruit growing, horticulture, etc. They are mostly self-employed, and their farms are developing." - ALE Center Director.*

Despite these success stories, ALE center directors express concerns about the lack of employment opportunities. The socio-economic situation of the country and the scarcity of jobs in the regions where the centers operate are seen as major obstacles to improving beneficiaries' employment prospects:

*"I wanted to say that, in general, employment is a huge problem, especially in regions like ours. Saying that employment increased after the training and we employed our beneficiaries would be a lie. They may not have the opportunity to find employment since there are no available places for them."* – ALE Center Director.

According to ALE center directors, certificates are highly valuable for beneficiaries, both in securing jobs and maintaining their current positions. The new operational standards developed as part of the curriculum address certification procedures, defining when beneficiaries should and should not receive certificates. However, the standardization of the certification process has raised concerns among ALE center trainers, particularly about losing the informality they have cultivated over the years:

*"We said that the certificate should be issued when out of 10 questions the beneficiary answers all of them correctly. But I personally think that there are trainees we can support so that they can keep their jobs. For example, if a shop is searching for a manager and needs certified staff, they might tell [our beneficiary] to bring some [certificate] at some point. In my opinion, non-formal education should also help in such cases."* – ALE Center Trainer.

*"We had a student who wanted to know some basics and needed a certificate to keep their job. If I tell them that if you fail to pass everything that is in this program – they don't have the right to take the exam again – they will never come to our center again. This is how we differ from formal education. Tell me, why should they come [to us] if I limit them in this way?"* – ALE Center Trainer.

Employment is so critical in the areas where the centers operate that the staff seems willing to bend formal procedures to accommodate beneficiaries. The discussion around certification highlights the trainers' struggle to transition from informal practices to formal standards. It appears that the informal, friendly approach toward beneficiaries is a key quality and identity for the centers, and standardization feels like a loss of that essence.

#### *Active participation of adults in the society and integration*

Evaluation participants emphasize that ALE center beneficiaries are actively engaged in civic and community development issues, with an average score of 2.7 out of 3.0 for 'Active participation of adults in society,' a notably high assessment. However, ALE center directors argue that this success is not solely attributable to the curriculum documents, as the centers have excelled in this area in the past too.

*"We have good examples of influence in this regard, where we have been able to nurture strong community leaders, strengthen young people, and make citizens more*

*informed on various issues. Through different services like involving lawyers, psychologists, and providing training, we have taught the community to view their problems as collective rather than individual. We have shown them how to collaborate with local authorities, identify problems, and merge their needs with solutions. We believe that our organization works very well in this area and has a significant impact. Although external evaluations would further validate this impact, we think it is evident.” – ALE Center Director.*

*“We have an observation that despite the difficult context [referring to foreign agents law], the rate of attendance at public meetings is very high. For example, when there are meetings about gender equality and domestic violence, youth attend them. They attend the meetings not because we ask them... They ask questions, and very tough questions too. So, this activity has not died out in our municipality yet, and it is mainly related to youth.” – ALE Center Director.*

*"I saw individuals who were a little less active, and I tried to make them more active. They changed their behavior not only in the class but in society as well. They became more communicative." ALE Center Trainer*

In addition to fostering civic activism, ALE centers have a strong record of supporting the integration of vulnerable groups, such as ethnic and religious minorities and internally displaced people. As discussed in the sub-chapter on ‘Participation in the educational activities’ the centers serve a diverse range of disadvantaged groups. The chapter on ‘planning and organization’ also highlights positive outcomes for women, who, through educational activities, have become more socially active, leaving their domestic surroundings.

*"Of course, when you go to an educational facility and get at least some level of education, then you generally become an active, educated person. The fact that a woman comes out of her shell and leaves her home indicates her becoming more active. We had women as beneficiaries who couldn't leave their houses and had stereotypical ideas [about women's roles] before coming to the center." ALE Center Trainer*

Similarly, the centers have had a positive impact on elderly people, who are among the least socially active groups in communities:

*“That elderly people’s club was initially created by us. And the elders still get together. And in social media too, they always say that they are grateful to us. We launched this club and then they got financial support from the municipality, which built a small building in the park for them.”– ALE Center Director.*

The centers also serve as vital social spaces, fostering connections and community:

*"People still remember: I used to come to your center, we would have coffee together, you would always have something to drink in your fridge... We tried to adjust to different people, and we still do.” – ALE Center Director.*

*“How we greet our beneficiaries is essential. A lot depends on us. People are happy to come here. This is why they call our center a painkiller.” – ALE Center Director.*

*“They call our center a ‘warm hut.’ You can ask the beneficiaries too. Somehow everyone wants to come here.” – ALE Center Trainer.*

*“They feel like they are at home here.” – ALE Center Trainer.*

Engaging in educational courses and activities at the ALE centers has made people more socially active, diversifying their social groups. This increased social engagement has positively impacted learners' happiness, self-esteem, satisfaction with personal development, reduction of negative emotions, and pursuit of a more meaningful and better life.

Due to the lack of baseline data, it is difficult to assess how much the curriculum documents and associated activities have directly contributed to these changes. However, the data shows that ALE centers through providing educational services, capacity building, employment opportunities play pivotal role in building and sustaining civic communities, integration of minorities and socially vulnerable groups, changing gender and age-related stereotypes, and creating a sense of social belongingness for their beneficiaries.

### 3.4 Sustainability of the Project

**Key Finding:**

The curriculum documents have established a strong foundation for the sustainability of ALE centers, including plans for continued use of strategies, action plans, and training modules. However, financial sustainability remains a critical challenge. The centers are largely dependent on external funding, with limited capacity for fundraising, and are further threatened by the broader political and economic environment, which could undermine the long-term viability of their operations.

Under the sustainability component, we examined both the sustainability of the curriculum documents and the long-term viability of the ALE centers themselves.

The curriculum documents appear highly sustainable, as most ALE center directors plan to continue using the strategies, action plans, standardized documents, and training modules developed through these initiatives:

*“Of course, we will continue [to use the documents]; this will happen automatically because we have already passed the initial stage, introduced all this, and now it does not require much work from us.” - ALE Center Director.*

The evaluation also suggests that activities implemented under the curriculum documents have bolstered the sustainability of the ALE centers, particularly through the development of strategic frameworks:

*"If we do not use these documents in the future, the organization will not be sustainable. All the trainings in the framework of whether GlobALE, InstitutionALE, or ManageriALE, that each of our centers participated in, formed our strategy. Without the knowledge we gained from [the trainings], we would not have been able to implement [the strategy]. If we don't follow through and use it, the organization will continue to operate on inertia but will not be able to develop."*  
ALE Center Director.

However, financial sustainability remains a significant challenge for ALE centers. For most, DVV International's project funding is the only long-term, stable income source. As discussed in the 'Funding and financial management' subchapter, ALE centers face a number of structural problems that hinders their financial stability. These include: lack of experience and human resources for fundraising, lack of an infrastructure in their own property; the socio-economic situation of the beneficiaries, which makes it difficult to introduce small fees for attending courses, lack of networking and location of the center and a legal framework in the country.

Beyond financial concerns, the overall sustainability of ALE centers—and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Georgia—faces additional challenges. The proposed foreign agents law in 2024, modeled after similar legislation in Russia, threatens to impact civil society and NGO operations in the country. The law "On Transparency of Foreign Influence" , also known as the "foreign agent law", was passed by the Georgian Government in 2024, it requires non-commercial legal entities, broadcasters, and legal persons who own media outlets receiving over 20% of their income from foreign sources to register as an "organization pursuing the interests of a foreign power", with penalties for non-compliance<sup>42</sup>. The law hinders the sustainability of non-governmental, non-profit legal entities.

As one director pointed out:

*"The political and economic situation in the country will have a great impact on our centers. What is happening now does not bode well for our centers. Because we are a Georgian non-governmental organization. There is a significant investment made by the German government in our work, in our establishment and subsequent activities. And if the state*

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<sup>42</sup> Civil Georgia (2024, May 17). *Adopted "Agents Law" Differs from the Original, Foresees Personal Fines – Experts.* <https://civil.ge/archives/607875>  
Venice Commission (2024). *Georgia urgent opinion on the law on transparency of foreign influence.* France,Strasbourg: Venice Commission. Retrieved from: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-PI(2024)013-e  
RadioFreeEurope RadioLiberty (2024, May 29). *What's Next For Georgia's 'Foreign Agent' Law?*. <https://www.rferl.org/a/georgia-foreign-agent-law-what-next/32970846.html>; Agenda.ge (2024, August 1). *Georgian law on transparency of foreign influence comes into effect starting today.* <https://agenda.ge/en/news/2024/40044#gsc.tab=0>

*does not show trust to our donors, if the state does not respect our donors, of course, this will not reflect well on us."* ALE Center Director.

To sum up, despite the strategic frameworks in place, financial stability and broader sustainability of the ALE centers remain ongoing challenges. The curriculum documents are deemed highly sustainable, with most ALE center directors intending to continue using the strategies, action plans, and standardized documents developed through these initiatives. The activities tied to these documents have also strengthened the strategic frameworks of the ALE centers, crucial for their long-term viability. However, financial sustainability remains a major challenge, as many centers rely heavily on DVV International's project funding. Additionally, the proposed foreign agents law in Georgia poses significant risks to the sustainability of NGOs, including ALE centers, by potentially undermining their operations and donor relationships.

## 4. Key Findings and Recommendations

**Finding:** The project was highly relevant to the needs of ALE Centers. This relevance was ensured through an initial needs assessment and the use of a bottom-up approach throughout its implementation.

**Recommendation:** DVV International Georgia and GAEN should continue utilizing the bottom-up approach in future initiatives. Additionally, ALE Centers should take a more proactive role in identifying, voicing, and addressing their needs.

**Finding:** The curriculum documents and related activities have significantly contributed to capacity building, organizational development, and the enhancement of educational programs at ALE centers. However, the level of adoption varies across centers, with full implementation still in progress.

**Recommendation:** DVV International Georgia and GAEN should maintain flexibility in their approaches, allowing ALE centers the freedom to choose which standardized documents to adopt. While standardized procedures are valuable, each center's unique needs should guide their adoption to ensure the most effective outcomes.

**Finding:** Despite understanding the importance of the strategies or standardized documents some centers have yet to fully adopt them. The primary barriers identified include the short time since the strategy's development and a lack of human and financial resources.

**Recommendation:** Conduct a thorough analysis of the existing barriers to adoption. This would help identify not only the obvious challenges, but also underlying obstacles that may not be immediately apparent. Addressing these deeper issues could enable centers to more effectively adopt and implement the strategies and standardized documents.

**Finding:** The transition to a more formalized and structured mode of operation has been challenging for ALE centers, primarily due to a lack of human and financial resources, time constraints, and familiarity with previous practices. Besides informal approach to their beneficiaries seems to be a significant part of their identities.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that ALE Center directors discuss the changes proposed by the new strategies and standardized documents with their trainers and reflect on what it could mean for them. How could they standardize their work but keep their main niche of being a place of informal gathering too.

**Finding:** The curriculum documents and associated capacity building activities have positively influenced the learning process at ALE Centers, leading to more detailed and thoughtful planning and execution of educational activities. However, some of the trainers find it difficult to apply the gained at the training.

**Recommendation:** Instead of offering a single training session, it is recommended to provide a comprehensive package of trainings to ALE center trainers. For instance, conducting multiple sessions on Adult Education and Learning over an extended period would be more beneficial than a single, isolated training. This approach allows for deeper learning, ongoing skill development, and better integration of new methods into their daily practice.

**Finding:** The development of detailed training modules for specific vocational courses has been highly successful. Trainers are actively using these modules, which has led to significant improvements in both their courses and the overall teaching process. The trainers expressed high satisfaction with the modules as well as the respective trainings and expressed willingness to attend more trainings in the future.

**Recommendation:** Continue development of vocational course modules in the future to improve the overall quality of courses at ALE centers.

**Finding:** ALE centers have standardized documents for assessing their beneficiaries, but they lack a structured approach to conducting comprehensive research studies and assessments, such as analyzing beneficiaries' backgrounds, needs, and motivations.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that ALE centers adopt a more structured approach to systematically conducting these studies. The findings should be utilized to inform and adapt educational programs and activities, ensuring they are better aligned with the needs and motivations of their beneficiaries.

**Finding:** Finding: ALE centers are highly accommodating to the needs of specific groups, such as women, ethnic minorities, and elderly individuals. However, they lack formal policies on these issues, and inclusivity often relies on the individual trainers' goodwill and initiative.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that ALE centers develop and implement formal policies and procedures to ensure consistent and systematic inclusivity for all beneficiaries, including those with special needs. This approach will help institutionalize practices that support diverse groups and ensure that inclusivity is consistently applied across all centers.

**Finding:** ALE centers are crucial in strengthening and sustaining civic communities by integrating minorities and socially vulnerable groups, challenging gender and age-related stereotypes, and fostering a strong sense of social belonging among their beneficiaries.

**Recommendation:** ALE centers should maintain and strengthen their role as 'agents of change' within their communities. By continuing their efforts in building and sustaining civic communities, integrating minorities, challenging stereotypes, and fostering social belonging, centers will further enhance their impact and effectiveness. This ongoing commitment will ensure that ALE centers remain pivotal in driving positive social change and inclusivity within their communities.

**Finding:** The curriculum documents have established a strong foundation for the sustainability of ALE centers, including plans for the continued use of strategies, action plans, and training modules.

**Recommendation:** Conduct a follow-up evaluation in three years to more accurately assess the impact of the curriculum documents on the effectiveness, quality, and sustainability of ALE centers. This will provide valuable insights into the long-term outcomes and areas for further improvement, ensuring that the centers continue to thrive and meet their goals effectively.

## 5. Annexes

Annex 1 - Quality Assessment Tool and statistical data

Annex 2 - Interview and FGD guides