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Introduction

The MacArthur Foundation’s Big Bet On Nigeria program supports Nigerian-led efforts to reduce corruption by strengthening accountability, transparency, and participation, including—in line with the Foundation’s Just Imperative—by applying a gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) lens. This interim synthesis memo reviews the learning products thus far produced under On Nigeria 2.0, explores evidence related to three of the On Nigeria Evaluation and Learning Framework’s overarching evaluation questions (see box), and provides a synthesis of the evidence and learning to date.

The memo demonstrates that there is some evidence of progress to date against the On Nigeria theory of change, especially with regards to improvements in collaboration, skill-building, and the integration of GESI considerations into anticorruption work. On Nigeria 2.0 programming may have contributed to these gains, but room for further progress remains.

Methods

To conduct this analysis, EnCompass used existing data from learning products produced thus far under the Evaluation and Learning Framework for On Nigeria 2.0 (Exhibit 1). To begin, The Evaluation and Learning (EL) Partner mapped findings and conclusions from *Learning Briefs 1–6* and the *Social Network Analysis (SNA Report)* against outcomes in the On Nigeria 2.0 theory of change. Next, the EL Partner coded and analyzed data from the Program Team’s Reflective Learning Workshops and

Learning Questions

1.0: How do efforts to leverage collaboration between, within, and across voice and teeth actors affect the accountability ecosystem?

2.0: How is On Nigeria 2.0 using a gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) lens to include, engage, and advance the rights of marginalized communities in Nigeria?

3.0: What On Nigeria programming appears to contribute to the emergence of a robust, sustainable accountability ecosystem in Nigeria? What factors enable and impede success?

Grantee Learning Events. The EL Partner also analyzed previously unexplored primary data on grantees’ sustainability plans from the November 2021 GESI survey. The EL Partner then conducted an internal data analysis, integration, and synthesis session to review emergent themes and generate the preliminary findings and conclusions presented in this memo. Note that, as this memo is a synthesis of pre-existing data, data and sampling limitations that applied to other learning products (e.g., fewer than 100 percent of grantees responding to surveys) apply here as well.

Exhibit 1. Learning Products to Date under the On Nigeria 2.0 Evaluation and Learning Framework

Learning Product	Status	Date Finalized	Date of Grantee Learning Event
Learning Brief 1: <i>GESI in Grantee Organizations</i>	Complete	June 2022	April 2022
Learning Brief 2: <i>Behavior Change Approaches in Action</i>	Complete	April 2022	Aug. 2022
Learning Brief 3: <i>Quality of Investigative Reporting (2016-2020)</i>	Complete	April 2022	Nov. 2022*
Learning Brief 4: <i>Anticorruption Agencies, Accountability Bodies, and Citizen Engagement</i>	Complete	Aug. 2022	Sept. 2022
Learning Brief 5: <i>Amplifying Investigative Reporting</i>	Pending	Jan. 2023	Nov. 2022*
Learning Brief 6: <i>Media Monitoring (2016-2021)</i>	Complete	Nov. 2022	Nov. 2022*
Report: <i>Social Network Analysis</i>	Complete	Oct. 2022	Oct. 2022

***NOTE:** One combined grantee learning event was held for Learning Briefs 3, 5, and 6.

Findings

Findings are presented in three groups: (1) evidence about the application of On Nigeria 2.0’s collaboration, skill building, and gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) approaches; (2) evidence on sustainability; and (3) evidence about progress to date along the On Nigeria theory of change (Annex 1 presents the full theory of change). Sources are listed underneath each finding statement.

Evidence on Collaboration, Skill Building, and GESI Approaches

The On Nigeria 2.0 theory of change includes four levels of outcomes (see box). Three approaches—skill building, collaboration, and GESI—are seen as key pathways for achieving intended outcomes. These approaches operate as the “roots” that nourish the “trunk” of On Nigeria. By emphasizing these approaches (as well as voice and teeth actions), On Nigeria intends to pave the way for sustained progress against corruption.

Theory of Change Outcome Levels

- 1) The **roots** (i.e., outcomes related to the strategic approaches of promoting collaboration, building accountability ecosystem actor skills, and encouraging GESI, as implemented within On Nigeria’s modules);
- 2) The **trunk** (i.e., the outcomes related to how voice and teeth components of the sandwich strategy work together to strengthen the accountability ecosystem);
- 3) The **branches** (i.e., specific anticorruption results);
- 4) The **foliage** (i.e., outcomes of increased transparency, accountability, and participation).

1

Grantees are collaborating with each other, other civil society organizations, government partners, and the private sector in various ways. According to grantees, these collaborations build trust and facilitate joint action, thereby adding value and contributing to both strengthening the accountability ecosystem and achieving anticorruption results.

Sources: Learning Brief 2: Behavior Change in Action, Learning Brief 4: Anticorruption Agency and Accountability Body Citizen Engagement, Learning Brief 5: Amplifying Investigative Reporting, Social Network Analysis Report, and Grantee Learning Events

Grantees collaborate for different purposes, including joint advocacy, sharing information, amplifying anticorruption reporting and victories, and technical training and support (more on this below). Grantees have partnered with each other within and across modules and with non-grantee civil society organizations, the private sector, and government actors. Grantees frequently shared their appreciation for the Foundation’s support for collaboration. They highlighted the Foundation’s convening power, facilitation of shared platforms, and introductions to others as especially helpful.

Grantees and the Program Team maintain that collaboration itself adds value to their work because it allows grantees and other organizations to build off each other’s efforts, identify synergies, and reduce redundancies, all while creating trust (see box). Trust-building, however, does not occur in a vacuum. Grantees report that trust develops over time, through frequent meetings to set expectations, agreeing on goals, and holding each other accountable. Providing consistent, high-quality work also contributes to mutual trust and over time, can promote deeper

I want to say something about the collaboration I had in June. What I found there was very good for grantees. Yes, we’ve been given a lot of engagement and training. This one was different though; I met with other field practitioners, people in different kinds of practices. All their ideas came from different perspectives, and this helped improve my understanding of behavioral change and how it can effectively make change. Collaboration can’t be over emphasized. – Behavior Change grantee, Learning Brief 2 grantee learning event

partnerships in which organizations share more information with each other and work collectively toward more impactful projects.

2

Skill building is a focus of many grantee collaborations. Grantees report that skill building efforts simultaneously strengthen the capacity of accountability ecosystem actors and foster stronger relationships within and across the ecosystem.

Sources: Learning Brief 2: Behavior Change in Action, Learning Brief 4: Anticorruption Agency and Accountability Body Citizen Engagement, Learning Brief 5: Amplifying Investigative Reporting, Social Network Analysis Report, October 2022 Grantee Convening

Many grantees reported that collaborations often include an explicit focus on skill building, although this focus takes different forms. In some cases, the MacArthur Foundation supports capacity building assistance directly to grantees through a separately contracted organization. In other cases, grantees provide training to non-grantees (Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 2. Skill Building in On Nigeria 2.0: Types and Sources

Skill-building assistance to grantees, facilitated by the Foundation

- MEL support (via Technical Assistance Partner)
- Behavior Change design support (via BIT and Griot Studios)

Skill-building assistance provided by grantees for other partners

- Capacity building with policy agencies to implement behavior change approaches
- Capacity building to strengthen ACAs investigative skills
- Trainings for civil society organizations and citizens focused on accountability mechanisms
- Investigative reporting training and fellowships

Grantees report that these skill building efforts are beneficial in two ways. First, skill building contributes to improvements in ecosystem actors' quality of work. Second, and just as importantly, collaborations involving skill building, over time, have helped to promote trust and partnership. In some cases, these benefits are interconnected and have reinforced effective collaboration (see box).

It has been the consistency of some of the things we have done, irrespective of the person, personality, or political party that is involved that has earned some of the trust that allows us to access the confidential information that they get to make available sometimes but to forge collaboration in the things we do with them... we had to train the staff of the law enforcement agencies, not just low-level people but the mid-level officers and staff. –
Joinbodi Grantee, SNA Report research

3

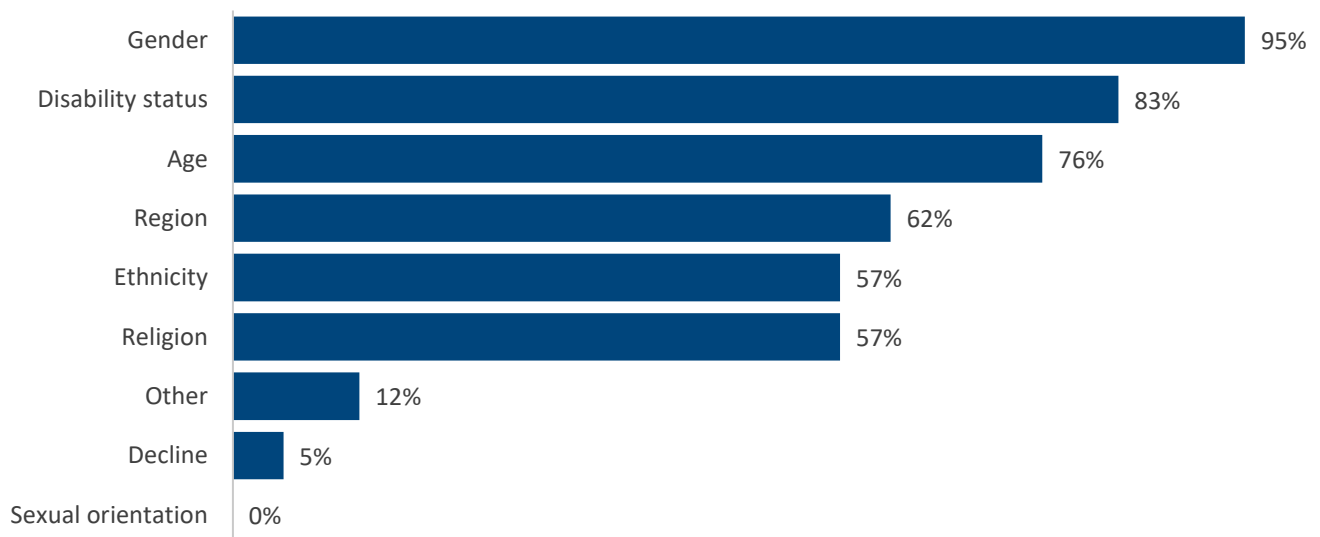
Many grantees stress the importance of strengthening GESI in anticorruption work. Some grantees have integrated GESI considerations into their programming, as well as within their organizations.

Sources: Learning Brief 1: GESI in Grantee Organizations, Learning Brief 4: Anticorruption Agency and Accountability Body Citizen Engagement, Social Network Analysis Report, October 2022 Grantee Convening

Many grantees noted the importance of integrating GESI considerations into anticorruption programming to ensure participation of marginalized groups and to reduce the impact of corruption on such groups. Many grantees state that gender, disability status, age, ethnicity, region, and religion are important considerations in their programming (Exhibit 3), though few grantees focus their programming on specific groups.

Some grantees do specifically integrate GESI considerations into their work by offering programming in a range of languages, hosting events in locations that are accessible for the physically disabled and targeting specific numbers of female or youth participants and implementing recruitment approaches to reach those targets. A limited number engage in collaborations that apply a GESI lens—with particular focus on bringing women, youth, and people with disabilities into their work. Other populations at risk of exclusion, such as those with mental (non-physical) disabilities and LGBTQIA+¹ individuals, do not appear to be a focus for most grantees.

Exhibit 3. Percent of grantees reporting that gender, age, ethnicity, etc. are important considerations when selecting targets for their programming and activities (n=42 grantees responding to the 2021 GESI survey)²



¹ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual, and more.

² Exhibit 3 originally appeared in *Learning Brief 1: GESI in Grantee Organizations*.

Some grantees demonstrate high levels of diversity within their organizations across gender, age, and region of origin. Some also report prioritizing diversity and inclusiveness within their own organizations in various ways, such as introducing non-discrimination policies, creating wheelchair accessible entrances to their offices, and trying to diversify their boards.

4

Grantees would welcome additional support to define and integrate GESI considerations into their programming.

Sources: Learning Brief 1: GESI in Grantee Organizations, Learning Brief 2: Behavior Change Approaches in Action, Learning Brief 4: Anticorruption Agency and Accountability Body Citizen Engagement, Social Network Analysis Report, October 2022 Grantee Convening, Grantee Learning Events

Few grantees—other than those whose organizational mandates include an explicit GESI focus and those that focused on GESI before receiving support from On Nigeria—report successfully integrating GESI into their programming. Many grantees only describe GESI considerations at a superficial level (e.g., saying that programming is supposed to include all groups without providing a clear explanation of how they do so). Notably, when describing criteria for collaborations, grantees often mentioned complementary skills and regional focuses, but few organizations mentioned diversity of populations as a criterion.

Several grantees noted that, although they are committed to GESI in principle, they do not know how to best incorporate a stronger GESI focus to their work. They express a need for a common strategic framework on inclusion and skill building in measuring GESI outcomes (see box). In both Program Team Reflective Learning Workshops and Grantee Learning Events, some participants expressed concern that existing GESI interventions may be focusing mostly on counting participants from different groups and backgrounds. Some grantees also noted that systemic barriers often drive patterns of exclusion. If their programming does not consider (and when possible, try to shift) such barriers, grantees worry that they will fail to engage diverse groups in their programming, and even risk further entrenching the systems, norms, and practices that drive marginalization in Nigeria.

It would be nice to get a general framework guiding our work around inclusion that grantees can adapt based on their peculiarities. – GESI Workshop feedback

“[There is a need to] take a more nuanced approach in the future. This might include power mapping, tailoring events for particular groups, engaging people from these groups with the start of the work, etc.” – Learning Brief 4 Grantee Learning Event Participant

Evidence on Sustainability

Building on, and even maintaining, gains from On Nigeria’s anticorruption work requires a robust, self-sustaining accountability ecosystem. Sustainability can be viewed at several levels: sustaining anticorruption results, sustaining the accountability ecosystem itself, and/or sustaining grantees’ efforts beyond On Nigeria 2.0.

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Grantees report that more strategic, systematic approaches to identifying and implementing collaborative efforts are needed to sustain and expand emerging collaborations and institutionalize existing partnerships.

Sources: Learning Brief 4: Anticorruption Agency and Accountability Body Citizen Engagement, Social Network Analysis Report, Grantee Learning Events

Grantees see collaboration as essential and believe that On Nigeria 2.0 has both encouraged and supported collaborative efforts in various ways. They also express concerns about how to sustain, expand, and institutionalize ongoing collaborations beyond 2024. For example, grantees do not share a clear definition of “value-add collaboration,” and some have expressed a desire for such a definition, as well as guidance on how to report on or describe their collaborative efforts. These items could help grantees focus the process of identifying potential productive collaborations and facilitate systematic reporting on collaboration efforts. At the same time, many grantees were not aware of or had not used collaboration platforms supported by the Foundation. According to grantees, expanding the use of such platforms could incentivize strategic, non-competitive grantee-grantee collaboration. Finally, consolidating and ensuring the sustainability of collaborations with government partners can be a challenge. Grantees noted that developing systems and processes, including alternative funding models, transferring ownership of activities to government champions, and bringing more partners in to share coordination responsibilities, could help to sustain collaborations when they will no longer have Foundation funding to manage existing relationships at the same level of effort.

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Some grantees have begun building a sustainable base for their work, including by engaging in forward planning. But many express concerns about the durability of their anticorruption programming, especially when it involves government partners.

Sources: 2021 Grantee GESI Survey, Learning Brief 4: Anticorruption Agency and Accountability Body Citizen Engagement, Learning Brief 3: Quality Of Investigative Reporting (2016–2020), Learning Brief 6: Media Monitoring 2016–2021, Social Network Analysis Report, October 2022 Grantee Convening

As explained under finding 5, grantees are implementing activities that appear to be creating a platform for further anticorruption work in the future. At the same time, grantees are in different stages of grappling with how to sustain their anticorruption work beyond the end of On Nigeria in 2024. As of late 2021, two grantees (both Joinbodi) had secured funding from other donors to continue their work, while seven had identified alternative revenue streams to support their work in the future. A quarter of grantees planned to continue their anticorruption work beyond 2024, even without external funding (Exhibit 4). Grantee organizations with fewer than ten staff were most likely to be actively pursuing grant funding and planning to increase staff in the future.

A number of grantees face ongoing challenges with respect to their effect on the accountability ecosystem and sustaining momentum on anticorruption results. These include maintaining initiatives

What we have observed is a lack of political will in general to institutionalize the concept of whistleblowing in Nigeria... So, in as much as the Federal Ministry of Finance has already created this platform, we believe that a lot more can be done to sensitize citizens to the existence of a whistleblowing policy, for instance, or even pushing for the adoption of the whistleblowing protection bill. Even from the work that [government agency] is doing with [grantee], it was just the sense of not wanting to go ahead with the innovations that we are providing and institutionalizing...

– Joinbodi Grantee (data from the SNA Report)

with government partners, sustaining collaborative partnerships when there is no longer funding, and ensuring capacity gains persist at the institutional level, even when individuals who have received training move on. Grantees across modules share these concerns, with criminal justice and Joinbodi grantees especially worried about partnerships with government actors. As a result of these and other challenges, grantees are concerned about the sustainability of the results to which they are contributing (see box).

Generally, grantees are interested in doing more to institutionalize the results of their efforts and see several avenues for doing so. These include operationalizing policies at government agencies, working to get dedicated budgets for government actors to continue anticorruption work in the future, ensuring that government and community partners at various levels have the skills and capacity to tackle corruption issues without support from grantees, and institutionalizing existing collaboration platforms, such that work can continue beyond 2024.

Exhibit 4. Grantee Sustainability Planning (Multiple responses allowed) (n=46 grantee organizations)

<i>Module</i>	<i>Staffing</i>					<i>Funding</i>			<i>Policies</i>		<i>Number of grantees responding to this question</i>
	<i>Continue to have staff members perform the roles funded by the MacArthur Foundation</i>	<i>Maintain the same number of staff working full time or part time on anticorruption work</i>	<i>Increase staff working full time or part time on anticorruption work</i>	<i>Reduce staff working full or part time on anticorruption work</i>	<i>Actively writing proposals to secure funding from another donor to continue this work</i>	<i>Planning to write proposals to secure funding from another donor to continue this work</i>	<i>Continue this work without funding</i>	<i>Identified other revenue sources (besides donor funding) to support this work</i>	<i>Secured funding from another donor to continue this work</i>	<i>Maintain internal policies created with support of the Foundation</i>	
Behavior Change	8 (42%)	5 (26%)	3 (16%)	2 (11%)	12 (63%)	8 (42%)	6 (32%)	3 (16%)	0 (0%)	12 (63%)	19
Criminal Justice	2 (50%)	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	2 (50%)	4
Joinbodi	5 (38%)	3 (23%)	3 (23%)	1 (8%)	9 (69%)	4 (31%)	6 (46%)	3 (23%)	2 (15%)	9 (69%)	13
Media and Journalism	3 (30%)	1 (10%)	2 (20%)	4 (40%)	4 (40%)	4 (40%)	1 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (50%)	10
Total	18 (39%)	9 (20%)	9 (20%)	7 (15%)	28 (61%)	18 (39%)	13 (28%)	7 (15%)	2 (4%)	28 (61%)	46

Progress to date against the On Nigeria 2.0 theory of change

By 2024, the theory of change anticipates concrete progress at the roots (skill building, collaboration, and GESI) and trunk (strengthened accountability ecosystem)-levels, with some signs of progress at the branches (specific anticorruption results) and modest progress at the foliage-level (transparency, accountability, and participation).

7

On Nigeria 2.0 has made some progress toward several strategy-level outcomes, especially those located at the trunk (strengthened accountability ecosystem) and branches (specific anticorruption results) of the theory of change. At the module level, evidence suggests progress toward outcomes at the roots and some trunk outcomes.

Sources: All learning products produced thus far under On Nigeria 2.0

At the strategy-level, the evidence suggests that there has been meaningful progress toward strengthening the accountability ecosystem (Outcome *STRAT.1*).³ There is also some, though more limited evidence, of progress toward branch-level outcomes related to the use of accountability mechanisms (Outcome *STRAT. 3*) and independent enforcement (Outcome *STRAT.5*).⁴ There is limited evidence available on progress toward other branch outcomes.⁵

The observed progress is largely in line with expectations as the Program Team expected to see concrete progress toward a stronger accountability ecosystem by 2024, as well as some signs of progress regarding branch-level outcomes. At the module-level, there is evidence of progress toward various outcomes, especially at the roots- and trunk-level.

Exhibit 5 summarizes progress on the levels of the theory of change so far (for a detailed mapping against each outcome in the theory of change, see Annex 2).

Exhibit 5. Summary of progress toward On Nigeria 2.0 outcomes

Level of Theory of Change	Progress on Outcomes				
	Strategy	Behavior Change	Criminal Justice	Joinbodi	Media and Journalism
<i>Root– Skill Building</i>	N/A				

³ STRAT.1 is defined as “a diverse set of anticorruption actors collaborate, learn, and work in tandem in a robust, resilient accountability ecosystem to institutionalize and scale up successful tactics and approaches for tackling corruption.”

⁴ STRAT.3: “Nigerian citizens, civil society actors, and other non-state actors—including marginalized groups—advocate for transparency and accountability, use redress mechanisms to act against corruption, and demand public services.”

STRAT. 5: “Anticorruption agencies act independently and effectively implement their mandates and anticorruption laws, and equitably protect marginalized groups from the negative effects of corruption.”

⁵ An important caveat to this finding is that there are several areas of On Nigeria work on which the EL Partner has yet to collect data, as well as some for which no substantive data collection is planned. It may be that progress in these areas without data has not progressed or progressed further than where evidence is available.

Root – Collaboration	N/A				
Root – GESI	N/A				
Trunk – accountability ecosystem					
Branches – specific anticorruption results					
Foliage – increased TAP		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Impact/Goal – reduced corruption					

- Substantial progress: Clear signs of movement during On Nigeria 2.0
- Moderate progress: Some momentum visible for at least some outcomes at this level during On Nigeria 2.0
- Minimal or no progress: Minimal or no indications of movement during On Nigeria 2.0, or a worsening of the situation
- No data available to definitively assess progress for this outcome

Conclusions

Conclusion 1: Efforts to support collaboration and strengthen grantee and other ecosystem actors’ skills appear to be laying the groundwork for a stronger accountability ecosystem in Nigeria. The MacArthur Foundation has directly and indirectly contributed to many of the observed advances in these areas (aligned with Findings 1, 2, 3, and 7).

On Nigeria grantees have had success in identifying, forming, and implementing effective collaborative efforts, both with non-grantees and many other grantees. They have also taken advantage of skill building opportunities to improve their own organizational and programmatic capacities, as well as providing such opportunities to other partners in the accountability ecosystem.

In the areas of skill building and collaboration in particular, grantees frequently highlight the critical role the MacArthur Foundation has played in driving progress to date. On Nigeria has allowed them to build their own skills, train others, and both find and work with useful collaborators. Support for skill building has improved the capacity of actors throughout the accountability ecosystem, while also providing in-roads for developing stronger collaborative activities grounded in mutual trust. Improvements in GESI are less clear. Most of the work to integrate GESI considerations into skill building and collaboration activities, as well as anticorruption work more generally, has been driven by organizations that came to On Nigeria with a GESI focus. The capacity to develop and apply a GESI approach is not yet widely shared across On Nigeria grantees or evident in the broader accountability system.

The advances in collaboration and skill building may serve as a basis for further strengthening anticorruption work in the future, and especially, for strengthening voice actors’ capacity to encourage and support teeth actors in taking action to prosecute and sanction corruption. Assuming this work continues to grow, and that the GESI lens is further strengthened, On Nigeria may be on track to make significant progress toward desired results and impact by 2024. Conclusion 2: There are a variety of opportunities for the MacArthur Foundation to promote further progress, especially when it comes to advancing collaboration, supporting the integration of GESI into grantees' work, and strengthening sustainability (Aligned with Findings 4, 5, and 6).

To consolidate gains seen to date, and accelerate further progress toward anticorruption results, grantees would welcome additional assistance from the Foundation in deepening their work in three interconnected domains: collaboration, GESI, and sustainability.

Despite increased and strengthened **collaboration**, some grantees report that the need for additional or higher-quality collaborative efforts, and others express concern about how to ensure their existing efforts will last beyond 2024.

Although the majority of grantees appear to believe in the importance of **GESI**, relatively few feel confident about how to actively integrate GESI considerations into their programming or their organizations. Specifically, grantees have expressed an interest in developing their skills regarding the measurement of GESI issues, receiving support in defining GESI in ways that make sense given their specific contexts, and better understanding how to take GESI beyond number counting, to really focus on impact.

Regarding **sustainability**, grantees expressed a desire to further develop their thinking and planning for maintaining their anticorruption activities beyond 2024. For some, this means accessing other funding sources. For others, it means developing alternative revenue generation models. To maintain a resilient accountability ecosystem and to sustain gains achieved, grantees also emphasize the need for support in helping their partners throughout the accountability ecosystem, and especially government actors, to operationalize the policies, processes, procedures, and partnerships that work under On Nigeria has promoted

Learning Considerations

Based on the findings and conclusions in this memo, the Program Team may benefit from reflecting on the following questions:

- 1. How might the Program Team best help grantees to fill remaining gaps in their GESI approaches? What role might the GESI action plan and end of strategy plan play in these efforts, and what, if any, additional support might grantees need to strengthen their GESI skills and practices?*
- 2. What will it take for the Program Team to share the story of On Nigeria with others, including funders working on transparency, accountability, and participation in other contexts? How can existing and upcoming learning products be leveraged, in combination with other communication efforts, to support that story-telling process?*
- 3. What do grantees need to do to sustain, further strengthen, and broaden the scope and impact of their anticorruption work in the aftermath of the 2023 elections? How might the Program Team best support efforts on this front?*

