

# Strategy Summary 2025 – 2030

## About PAL Network

The People's Action for Learning (PAL) Network is a south-south network of 17 organizations across three continents, that generate evidence through assessments and actions to understand and improve children's foundational learning.

The PAL Network 2025-2030 strategy is aligned with the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The strategy centers on generating data through citizen-led assessments (CLAs) to inform and improve foundational learning outcomes in the Global South. This summary provides an overview of the strategy's key pillars, cross-cutting areas, the theory of change, and the key principles that guide its implementation.

## Vision



A world where all children have a foundation for lifelong learning.

## Mission



To generate evidence through assessments and action to inform, influence and improve children's learning.

## What We do

The PAL Network generates robust evidence on children's foundational learning through simple, household-based assessments, and uses these insights to implement evidence-informed learning interventions in collaboration with governments and civil society. This data-driven approach guides a cross-cutting research focus to deepen the understanding of children's learning progress and underpins advocacy efforts to track and report on learning outcomes, ultimately promoting equitable, inclusive, and quality education to ensure all children acquire foundational skills for lifelong learning.



## Our Key Principles

We are guided by a set of key principles in our two central pillars: assessment and action.

**1** We focus on foundational skills



**2** Paying attention to each individual child



**3** Ensuring that no child is left behind



### Assessment

We assess basic skills including reading and simple arithmetic.

*If children cannot read, they cannot move ahead – either in school or in life.*

We assess children orally, one-on-one.

*Pen and paper assessments assume that a child can already read. We do not make that assumption.*

We assess children in their homes.

*The best place to find a representative sample of all children, whether in school or not, is in their home.*

### Action

We use simple assessments to understand and track children's learning progress.

*Understanding children's learning progress is impossible without regular assessment to tailor teaching to the appropriate level.*

We build on the learning level of each individual child to help them progress.

*We do not assume that children of the same age are at the same level and learn at the same pace.*

We ensure that all children are supported to acquire basic skills.

*We believe that every child can learn, so we develop and apply teaching methods that are adapted to the level and needs of each child.*

# Strategy at a Glance

## Impact Goal

By 2030, data generated by PAL Network's citizen-led assessments and actions is used in at least 15 global South countries to inform governments, civil society, and citizens about the status of foundational learning, and inspires actions to improve foundational learning.

## Focus Area 1: Assessment

Objective: Reliable and inclusive disaggregated data on the status of foundational learning is regularly produced and analysed through CLAs.

1. Existing multi-country CLA tools are expanded and adapted for wider reach and at-least two data collection rounds implemented by 2030.
2. Robust data management systems are established to ensure the collection, quality assurance and accessibility of data from multi-country CLAs, aligned with the network's DQSF.
3. Non-member organizations interested in conducting or strengthening data using multi-country CLA tools and assessments are provided technical and/or implementation support.
4. Network engagement in technical forums on using assessment tools and data facilitated for learning and post-2030 development goals.

## Focus Area 2: Action

Objective: The network's efforts to improve foundational learning through piloting and scaling citizen-led actions are documented, compared, and strengthened.

1. Documentation describing the network's single- and multi-country citizen-led action programme design, implementation, reach, and results are developed.
2. Network-wide minimum quality standards for single- and multi-country citizen-led actions are developed and published.
3. Non-member and member organisations interested in conducting or strengthening citizen-led actions are provided technical and/or implementation support.
4. Existing and new Network members are supported to plan, pilot, and implement multi-country citizen-led actions to improve foundational learning.

## Focus Area 3 (Cross-cutting): Research

1. Rigorous evidence-based knowledge products using a) multi-country CLA tools and data, b) data from citizen-led actions, and c) first-hand data from research projects are Generated and published.
2. Existing multi-country CLA tools are adapted to be inclusive of children in emergencies, children with disabilities, and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) skills.
3. Equitable partnerships with policy/research institutions in the global South and North are built to co-create knowledge and deepen analysis of data from multi-country CLAs and citizen-led actions to co-produce new reports and publications.
4. Network-wide tools and methods to collect comparable data for multi-country CLAs and citizen-led actions are developed to inform comparability, enhanced implementation, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability.
5. Network members are supported to use comparable tools and methods to generate evidence on the cost-effectiveness, implementation fidelity, and sustainability of multi-country CLAs and citizen-led actions.
6. Mapping studies tracking a) the use of CLA tools and data and b) the use of CL action principles and approaches globally are regularly developed and published.

## Focus Area 4 (Cross-cutting): Communication and Advocacy

1. Network members are supported to speak with one voice through the creation and implementation of a network-wide communications and advocacy strategy.
2. Digital tools and platforms are optimized to maximize visibility of PAL Network's work.
3. Platforms to engage policy makers, education practitioners and researchers convened to promote foundational literacy and numeracy at national, regional and global level.
4. PAL Network presents assessment and action evidence at relevant education meetings, forums, and conferences, supporting its members to advocate for the importance of foundational learning and numeracy (FLN) and influence dialogue on current and post-2030 global development goals.

## Strategy Enablers



Effective Governance



Adequate Financial Resources



Efficient Financial Management



Engaged and Active Members



Highly Skilled Secretariat

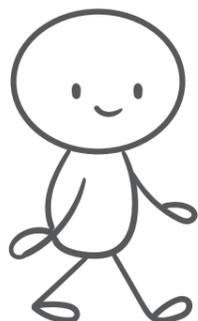
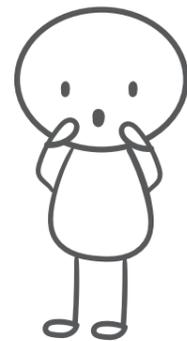


Effective Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Sharing (MELS)

# Theory of Change

## The problem is

Across the global South, millions of children are still out-of-school. But even those who are in school are not learning the basics. There is a lack of available data on the acquisition of foundational literacy and numeracy skills that include both in-school and out-of-school children. The lack of data leads to a lack of awareness about the extent of the problem. The majority of existing assessments are not appropriate for global South contexts. Finally, teachers and parents lack the knowledge and tools to help children acquire foundational skills quickly, easily, and cost-effectively.



## We therefore

**1.) Assess children using simple tools to generate reliable and inclusive data on children's learning, regardless of their schooling status, at regular intervals.**

**2.) Establish the extent of the problem to identify who is being left behind and where action needs to be taken to improve learning outcomes.**

**3.) Use evidence to advocate for more and better evidence-informed policy and practice that equitably targets children who are left behind and helps them to catch up.**

**4.) Design and test appropriate actions that respond to the immediate learning needs of each child (based on where they are and not where they ought to be)**

**5.) Inform actions at scale to ensure all children acquire foundational literacy and numeracy skills that are the building blocks for lifelong learning.**



## So that in the short term (the next 6 years)

- More countries across the global South assess children using simple tools to generate regular and reliable data on the acquisition of foundational skills that include both in-school and out-of-school children.
- Data collected from assessments and actions generate greater awareness of the extent of the problem: at household, community, national, regional, and global levels.
- There is more and better data available on the effectiveness of appropriate actions to help children acquire foundational skills quickly, easily, and cost-effectively.
- Governments and civil society organisations pilot and scale effective action programmes that integrate assessments, enabling them to track and understand learning progress.

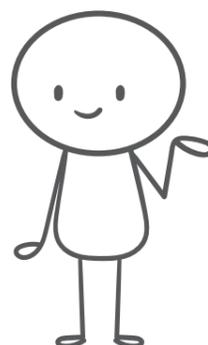
## And in the medium term (the next 10 years)

- There is widespread awareness about the extent of the problem and how to tackle it using simple, effective, and low-cost actions to improve learning in homes and schools.
- Data shows improvements in the acquisition of foundational skills in the early grades across the global South.



## Then eventually,

All children acquire foundational skills that are the building blocks for lifelong learning.



2025-2030 STRATEGY BUDGET.			2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total Year 2025-2030
Output	Activities	Amounts (USD)							
Focus Areas		3,125,441	837,328	5,421,072	937,078	8,627,683	1,085,808	20,034,409	
Assessment	KO1: Reliable and inclusive disaggregated data on the status of foundational learning is regularly produced and analysed through CLAs.	2,969,141	309,748	4,867,113	356,210	8,016,721	445,262	16,964,193	
Action	KO2: The network's efforts to improve foundational learning through piloting and scaling citizen-led actions are documented, compared, and strengthened.	156,300	527,580	553,959	580,868	610,963	640,546	3,070,216	
Focus Areas (Cross-Cutting)		759,200	515,813	834,863	568,683	949,029	626,973	4,254,562	
Research	CCO1: Data from CLAs and citizen-led actions result in additional reports and publications that contribute to the global evidence base on the status of, and what works to improve, foundational learning. CCO2: Data and insights from CLAs and citizen-led actions are regularly published and widely communicated to advocate for change in policy and practice at regional and global levels.	443,271	465,435	488,706	513,142	538,799	565,739	3,015,091	
Communication & Advocacy		315,929	50,378	346,157	55,542	410,231	61,235	1,239,471	
Enablers		310,861	281,239	348,261	375,781	429,998	440,206	2,186,345	
Governance	E1: Effective Governance	175,061	164,154	190,264	201,485	232,709	247,930	1,211,602	
Fundraising	E2: Adequate Financial Resources	21,900	7,350	24,020	8,438	26,432	8,743	96,883	
Finance	E3: Efficient Financial Management	7,500	-	8,250	-	9,075	-	24,825	
Membership	E4: Engaged and Active Members	82,200	95,056	110,315	126,862	144,788	165,690	724,911	
Human Resource	E5: Highly Skilled Secretariat	16,920	7,035	7,387	11,781	8,144	8,551	59,818	
Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Sharing (MELS)	E6: Effective Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Sharing (MELS)	7,280	7,644	8,026	27,215	8,849	9,291	68,305	
Total program Costs		4,195,501	1,634,379	6,604,196	1,881,542	10,006,710	2,152,987	26,475,316	
Personnel & Administration		928,039	931,088	943,985	958,719	965,264	971,129	5,698,224	
Personnel & Admin	Right personnel put in place to deliver programs outputs and outcomes, Operational, admin and other other indirect costs procured and paid on time	928,039	931,088	943,985	958,719	965,264	971,129	5,698,224	
TOTAL BUDGET		5,123,540	2,565,466	7,548,181	2,840,261	10,971,975	3,124,116	32,173,540	