



Save the Children®



OXFAM

THE POWER OF Ownership

Transforming US Foreign Assistance



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Foreword

US foreign assistance is a valuable tool for achieving a more stable and prosperous world. The US government spends less than 1 percent of its budget on foreign assistance. Despite this small investment, it's one of the best value-for-money investments in support of strengthening US national security, providing new economic opportunities, and fighting extreme poverty. As lawmakers, however, we rarely have the opportunity to raise an important caveat to this claim -- ***US foreign assistance is most effective when provided in a manner that ensures local participation and ownership.***

Ownership reflects the simple truth that aid does not create development. Aid is a tool that enables people and countries to develop themselves. Oxfam and Save the Children's invaluable study, "The Power of Ownership," offers a glimpse into how two leading US aid agencies – the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) -- are increasing local ownership of development. Seven case studies showcase how local people worked to shape US foreign assistance programs for the benefit of their countries and communities, and how US aid agencies supported this in practice.

We expect that this report will inspire a meaningful discussion about scaling up and improving upon the policies and approaches that enabled these local ownership success stories. The impact of our foreign assistance will be longer-lasting if we strengthen local systems instead of building parallel ones; invest in local and national priorities that partners are committed to taking forward; and make space for diverse voices to be heard at all stages of a project.

As we welcome a new US administration, we reflect on the contributions of the Bush and Obama Administrations toward ensuring local ownership of development. The next President has much to learn from the progress we have made over the past 16 years. We hope this report encourages them to take this to heart and double down on the pursuit of meaningful ownership.

We believe in the power of aid as a tool of development; and in the power of ownership to turn those investments into meaningful and lasting change in people's lives. It is our hope that the models in this report are just the beginning of a new era in US foreign assistance: one that changes the aid paradigm to ensure greater participation and ownership in development decisions and implementation. This will help our nation's efforts to fight poverty and create a safer, more prosperous, and stable world for everyone.



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Acronyms

| | |
|---------------|---|
| AEE | African Evangelical Enterprise |
| AK | Akazi Kanoze |
| AKA | Akazi Kanoze Access |
| BOT | Build Operate Transfer |
| CBT | Community-Based Targeting |
| CDCS | Country Development Cooperation Strategies |
| CEPAT | Community Empowerment Against Tuberculosis |
| DA | District Assemblies |
| EDC | Education Development Center, Inc. |
| GOG | Government of Ghana |
| GOI | Government of Indonesia |
| GOJ | Government of Jordan |
| GOR | Government of Rwanda |
| INGO | International Non-Governmental Organization |
| JKM | Jaringan Kesehatan Masyarakat |
| LEAF | Local Engagement Assessment Framework |
| LKNU | Lembaya Kesehatan Nadhlatul Ulama |
| MCA | Millennium Challenge Account |
| MCC | Millennium Challenge Corporation |
| MFAN | Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network |
| MWI | Ministry of Water and Irrigation |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NTP | National Tuberculosis Project |
| NU | Nadhlatul Ulama |
| ODI | Overseas Development Institute |
| PEPFAR | US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief |
| PIU | Project Implementation Unit |
| PPD6 | Presidential Policy Directive on Global Development |
| PSF | PNPM Support Facility |
| RDC | Roman Catholic Diocese of Timika |
| RING | Resiliency in Northern Ghana |
| RPF | Rwandan Patriotic Front |
| TB | Tuberculosis |
| TVET | Technical and Vocational Education and Training |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| USDA | U.S. Department of Agriculture |
| USG | United States Government |
| WAJ | Water Authority of Jordan |
| WDA | Workforce Development Agency |



1. Executive Summary

In 2005, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, to which 138 donor and developing-world governments adhere, enshrined ownership as the first principle of effective development cooperation.¹ Six years later, at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton reiterated the US commitment to ownership as “a key step to the sustainability of development initiatives.”²

What does this mean for the way US international assistance is implemented on the ground in developing countries? Oxfam and Save the Children believe that when development assistance efforts are driven by local citizens in collaboration with their governments, the results are more effective and enduring. The *how* and *with whom* the US partners in host countries are central to the long-term success of its international assistance.

The past two US administrations put this belief into action, working to strengthen host country ownership of US development assistance. President Bush created the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), a US government agency that allows for significant control by country partners over the programs it funds, and promises rigorous accountability for results.

For his part, President Obama issued the first-ever Presidential Policy Directive on Global Development, which committed the US to a “new operational model” of international assistance that underscores the importance of country ownership.³ As part of this vision, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) introduced USAID Forward, a set of organizational and programmatic reforms. Part of USAID Forward included the Local Solutions initiative, which intended to transfer decision making power to local stakeholders.⁴

After over a decade of MCC operations, and five years after President Obama first declared his administration’s support for a locally owned development approach, Oxfam and Save the Children decided it was time to analyze projects cited by the MCC and USAID as successful instances of applied-ownership approaches that empowered local actors to drive their own development. We hope these examples not only highlight the value of pursuing ownership, but also provide analysis, findings and recommendations that are useful to practitioners and policymakers who want to strengthen the US’s commitment to ownership.

In order to systematically assess progress on ownership, Oxfam and Save the Children collaborated with the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) to develop an analytical framework. We hope the analytical framework, the Local Engagement Assessment Framework (LEAF), can be used as a separate stand-alone tool policymakers, practitioners, and outside stakeholders can use to systematically assess the country ownership qualities of development assistance projects to better understand the impact of ownership policies in Washington and measure and strengthen practices on the ground.

The Local Engagement Assessment Framework

The Local Engagement Assessment Framework (LEAF) captures local engagement by assessing *who* among the host country government, civil society, and the private sector engaged with US-supported projects, *how* that engagement empowered local stakeholders, and during *what* parts of the project cycle the engagement took place. It was built upon a framework put forth by the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN), a coalition of US-based think tanks and NGOs, including Oxfam and Save the Children, committed to making US foreign assistance more effective. The framework is structured around the development project or compact cycle and comprises: ownership of priorities, implementation, and resources.⁵ The LEAF builds on the MFAN framework to capture elements of local engagement related to the sustainability of results.

Ownership Project Case Studies

Oxfam and Save the Children used the LEAF to uncover how US development agencies successfully pursued ownership in seven exemplary development projects in the diverse contexts of Ghana, Indonesia, Jordan, and Rwanda. Oxfam and Save the Children consulted closely with USAID and MCC to find cases that US officials described as model projects showcasing a significant amount of local leadership.

Specifically, we looked at how a variety of ownership tools helped local stakeholders lead the charge on the following three key development goals:

- Enhancing accountable local leadership;
- Improving basic service delivery in vulnerable communities; and
- Forging partnerships with the private sector to accelerate economic growth.

Encouraging ownership is more challenging than business-as-usual development, but our analysis highlights successes and promising paths to advance US ownership policy and practice.

Key Findings

The case studies demonstrate that US international development agencies can employ a range of ownership approaches to shift responsibility, accountability, and decision making power to local government officials, civil society, and entrepreneurs. While it is too early to ascertain the full developmental impact of the projects explored in our case studies, the application of the LEAF to each of them demonstrates that—through varying ownership modalities—the US can foster the types of local leadership with the capacity, resources, and mandate to drive and sustain development outcomes.

- **Ownership takes multiple forms.** There is not—and there shouldn't be—a one-size-fits-all approach to country-owned development. In each case study, the US used a variety of approaches that helped equip, support, and empower local actors, laying the foundation for more sustainable results.
- **Localization, meaning the transfer of aid directly to local—rather than through international—entities enables local actors to exercise more decision making power over projects.** Partnering directly with the US ensured that local organizations had the flexibility to draw on their local networks and expertise to the greatest degree possible.
- **Early ownership sets the path for the rest of the project.** Findings suggest that projects with the highest overall levels of stakeholder engagement typically included strong local ownership early in the project cycle, when local stakeholders were deeply engaged in identifying development priorities and project design.
- **Alignment with national development plans is an ongoing dialogue, not a document review.** In all of the cases examined in this study, the process of aligning the development project with national priorities included multiple discussions between the US and partner government that brought deeper and sustained engagement with the project throughout the project cycle.
- **International actors can play a key role in connecting local stakeholders in new ways.** US aid agencies and implementing organizations can bring together a range of stakeholders, including the national government, local government, civil society, and the private sector, as well as harder-to-reach stakeholders such as women and girls, ethnic minorities, and other marginalized groups to collaborate on realizing development objectives.
- **Some local actors need additional capacity building prior to a full partnership with the US.** In some cases, US foreign assistance agencies provided long-term support to local actors, including local government agencies and NGOs, fortifying their internal systems, *before* providing direct funding or transferring more responsibility for project management and leadership.
- **US development agencies employ a variety of methods to minimize the financial risk of directly funding local partners.** These methods and tools manage the risk of working through local financial systems, especially when strengthening local financial systems are a crucial means towards achieving a country's development goals.
- **Ownership policies in Washington played a role in driving the way the US engages with local stakeholders in the field.** We encountered evidence in multiple case studies linking USAID-wide policy initiatives and the MCC ownership model to a stronger adoption of ownership approaches on the ground.
- **The greatest overall threat to sustainability encountered in the projects examined was the lack of a clear plan to secure resourcing beyond US funding.** While a number

of case studies demonstrated strong local ownership of priorities, implementation, and results, we found in some cases resource constraints were a persistent obstacle to long-term sustainability.

Policy Recommendations:

- 1. The incoming US administration should act within the first 100 days to appoint development agency leaders who are committed to advancing a country-owned approach to development.** By the end of 2017, the administration should issue a development policy directive reaffirming ownership of development as a major guiding principle of US international development policy.
- 2.** In order to implement this policy directive and institutionalize ownership as a key pillar of their approach to international development, US agencies should:
 - a.** Adopt common metrics to ensure meaningful country ownership in practice and create internal agency incentives and accountability for achieving existing US ownership policies. A comprehensive approach would include metrics on priority-setting, implementation, resourcing, and sustainability as well as sufficient resources and staffing to pursue rigorous ownership.
 - b.** Continue to align their support with country- and community-level development priorities. This should be based on active, ongoing dialogue with local leadership and communities, providing capacity strengthening, as needed. Alignment with broad national development plans is necessary but not sufficient.

ENHANCING ACCOUNTABLE LOCAL LEADERSHIP:

Ownership empowered local stakeholders to serve, listen to, and better respond to their communities' needs.

Ghana – Page 30

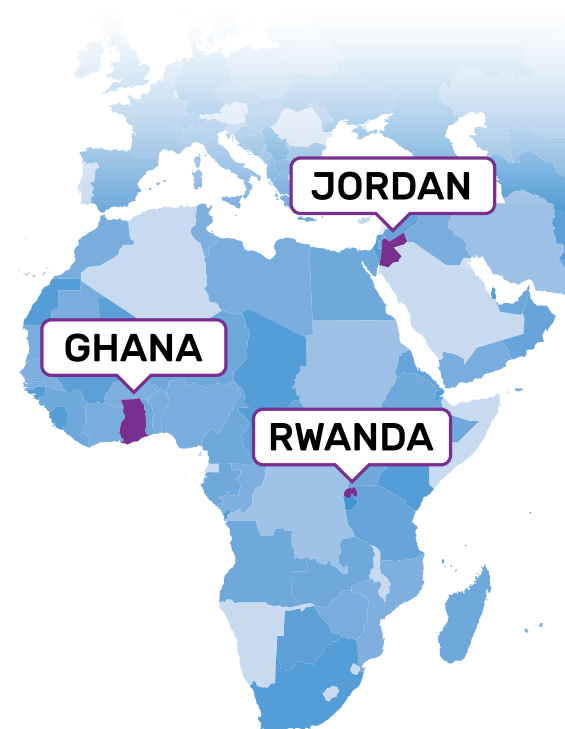
Indonesia – Page 36

FORGING PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR:

Ownership empowered local leaders to engage with private-sector partners to help vulnerable communities.

Rwanda – Page 55

Jordan – Page 60



- c. Work with and through existing local systems, including government systems, when strengthening these systems results in a sustainable impact. The US should continue to take the necessary precautions to protect US investments. When creating parallel implementation bodies, such as the MCA, the US should adopt actionable strategies to ensure the long-term integration of project results and structures into existing local systems.

3. US agencies' ownership policies should include metrics and guidelines to ensure that development projects reach vulnerable and marginalized stakeholders. As part of planning and executing country-owned development projects, US agencies should understand which groups exercise disproportionate amounts of power in a particular context and consider partnerships and initiatives that engage disempowered sectors of the population. Ownership should be as inclusive as possible.

4. When designing development projects, US development agencies should default to using local systems and take specific measures to ensure sustainable results. This should include clear plans to move the country along the continuum to sustainable financing and meeting its own development needs. US agencies should establish and report against long-term development benchmarks in each country where they work, with adequate budgetary resources allocated to support monitoring and evaluation, including ex-post evaluations. As part of their plan for long-term sustainability, US development agencies should support countries to sustain the development progress they achieve, taking into account available local resources.



IMPROVING BASIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES:

Ownership facilitated collaboration with local stakeholders and social service organizations to strengthen their service delivery capacity.

Rwanda — Page 40

Indonesia — Page 45

Jordan — Page 49



2. Introduction

The world has made incredible progress in the fight to end extreme poverty in the last quarter century. The number of people living in extreme poverty has been reduced by more than half⁶—as has the number of children who die before their fifth birthday.⁷ More children are in primary school than ever before, boys and girls in nearly equal numbers.⁸ But challenges remain: Nearly 897 million people still live in extreme poverty.⁹

Meeting this global commitment to eradicate extreme poverty requires global partnership and cooperation. America's international assistance goals are only part of the story; *how* and *with whom* the US partners in host countries is central to the success and sustainability of international assistance. Oxfam and Save the Children believe that development assistance efforts are more sustainable when they are driven by local citizens in collaboration with their governments. Local actors are experts on their contexts and on how to adapt solutions to their communities. If development assistance supports their priorities, taps their expertise and experience, and leverages their resources, we believe the results are more likely to endure.¹⁰

In fact, supporting ownership—or letting countries lead their own development—is nearly taken as gospel in the development community, even if it has been slow to be put into practice. Donors can foster local leadership when they employ practices that empower citizens and their governments to identify development priorities, implement development projects, and provide local resources to sustain them. This belief aligns with human values of self-determination, individual agency, and a rights-based approach to development.¹¹ Aid without local engagement is often ineffective, as seen in a recent example from Haiti (see Box 1.)

Text Box 1: The Consequences of Not Working with Local Partners in Haiti

In March 2016, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that it would ship 500 metric tons of packaged, dry-roasted US peanuts to Haiti for use as snacks in local schools.¹² According to USDA, the donation would help address Haiti's high levels of child malnutrition and stunting, as well as the impact of El Niño on crop production in the country.¹³

However, snacks at school cannot address child stunting, since once children reach school age, the effects of stunting are irreversible. Also, USDA admitted that it had not undertaken a rigorous assessment of Haiti's peanut sector prior to announcing the donation, and it was not clear to what extent the drought had impacted local supply.¹⁴ There is little evidence that the Haitian government requested the peanuts, and Haitian farmer and civil-society organizations actively opposed the shipment in fear the addition of the peanuts would drive the local price of peanuts down, a practice known as "dumping."

USDA's lack of meaningful local engagement was a result of competing political pressures. US surplus agricultural production results in part from government subsidies to approximately

7,000 US farmers.¹⁵ In contrast, Haitian civil-society groups report that their country's peanut value chain employs roughly 150,000 people who receive no government support. In a meeting with Haitian civil-society groups and international NGOs in June 2016, the Haitian Minister of Agriculture stated that the Haitian government will not accept additional shipments of US peanuts. Had this project incorporated some of the ownership approaches featured in this report—giving leaders and those most-impacted by drought and malnutrition the opportunity to define their most critical needs and how best to meet them—the US government may have opted to support the Haitian economy by purchasing peanuts from local farmers or to strengthen local governance structures by conducting programming through the Haitian Ministry of Agriculture.

When the international community realized that only global cooperation could lead to a sustained change in foreign assistance practice, they gathered to write and agree upon the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005, the Accra Agenda for Action in 2008, and the Busan Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation in 2011. These agreements espouse the virtues of ownership and committed each of the signatories to pursue ownership, including the US government.¹⁶

As donors took on the challenge of supporting local leadership of development, they adopted a variety of “ownership approaches” (see box below “on ownership approaches”). A variety of ownership approaches are needed to foster the types of local leadership necessary for sustained impact. Ownership blossoms when donors are able to use a diversity of approaches, catered specifically to help overcome the challenges faced in local contexts and achieve the goals of the development project.

Text Box 2: What is an “Ownership Approach?”

Ownership approaches are donor practices which intend to shift more decision making to local authorities and base donor development interventions on local demand. These approaches can be put to work throughout the program cycle and include: alignment with country priorities, use of country financial systems (including the use of direct budget support or sector budget support,) localization (creating a direct financial relationship with local organizations or government institutions rather than working through non-local entities,) untying aid, or pursue a range of participatory and consultative strategies during the development of their country approaches or throughout the project cycle.

As the US faces a change in administration in January 2017, it's time to take stock of how the US successfully put local stakeholders in the driver's seat of their own development. The case studies in this report stand in contrast to the Haiti example described in Box 1. Each project showcased is a testament to the value of ownership policies and practices. And while the US faced some significant challenges while adopting ownership approaches, these experiences offer important lessons to help US international assistance agencies to preserve and strengthen effective ownership policies and practices.

Ownership in US Development Policy

The US commitment to ownership has meant the adoption of a diversity of ownership approaches. (See Box 2.) Since the Paris Declaration in 2005, the shift toward country-owned development has enjoyed the support of US development policymakers at the highest levels and the principles of country ownership are firmly ensconced in the framework for US global development policy.

President Bush recognized the importance of strengthening country ownership principles in US development agencies, when a commitment to ownership was built into the very foundation of the Millennium Challenge Corporation in 2004. The MCC's funding model assesses the relative policy performance of all low- and lower-middle income countries by examining 20 third-party indicators that look at a country's commitment to economic freedom, investment in people, and just rule of law. To be considered eligible for MCC assistance, countries must achieve a passing score on at least half of these indicators, including those on control of corruption and democratic rights.¹⁷ Once a country is selected as eligible for MCC assistance, the MCC practices ownership by requiring partner countries to set priorities for its MCC compact, design projects, and implement compact activities. MCC works to broaden ownership beyond partner governments by requiring an extensive ongoing consultation process that strives to ensure local partners are transparent and accountable to the general population, as well as to the MCC.¹⁸

President Obama's Policy Directive on Global Development (PPD-6), which was issued in 2010, puts ownership at the center of US global development policy: Where our partners set in place systems that reflect high standards of transparency, good governance, and accountability, the United States will: "Respond directly to country priorities, making new investments in line with established national strategies and country development plans based on broad consultation. Empower responsible government to drive development and sustain outcomes by working through national institutions rather than around them."¹⁹

As part of this vision, USAID launched USAID Forward, an agency-wide reform that included an effort to reorient the agency toward a country-owned development approach.²⁰ One key part of USAID Forward is the Local Solutions initiative, which seeks to increase the sustainability of development results through increased local ownership, thus supporting local stakeholders to have the agency and voice to solve their own development challenges. An important aspect of that initiative aims to channel more US assistance through direct partnerships with local entities.²¹ USAID Forward also established Country Development Cooperation Strategies

(CDCS), which were designed to foster local engagement in determining country ownership priorities and strategies.²²

These efforts are promising, but given that they apply to only two of the dozens of US agencies providing foreign assistance²³ and ownership approaches are not systematically applied to all USAID and MCC projects, they will impact only a fraction of the total \$38 billion the US plans to spend on foreign assistance funding in the next year.²⁴ Even in the parts of the US government committed to ownership, ownership has been slow to translate into practice. USAID's Local Solutions initiative set an ambitious target of providing 30 percent of all mission-level US assistance directly to local actors (government, civil society, and the private sector) by fiscal year 2015.²⁵ USAID has achieved incremental progress toward this goal: Between fiscal years 2010 and 2015, the proportion of USAID funding going directly to local organizations almost doubled from 9.7 percent to 18.6 percent.²⁶

Report Goals

US development agencies are increasingly engaging in high-quality, country-owned development using a variety of modalities in varying geographic and socioeconomic contexts. But to continue on this trajectory, policymakers, practitioners, and other observers need a shared understanding of what constitutes successful ownership and how to assess it. To this end, this report seeks to:

- Introduce an analytical framework, the LEAF, to enable policymakers and other observers to systematically assess development assistance projects' ownership qualities to better measure and strengthen ownership policies in Washington and practices *on the ground*;
- Highlight diverse examples of successful ownership in practice, using a common framework for understanding what makes each case a success; and
- Provide analysis, findings, and recommendations generated from applying the LEAF to seven projects in four countries to illustrate possible pathways for strengthening ownership policies and practices within development agencies.

The analytical tool presented here, LEAF, is a prototype for assessing development projects' level of local stakeholder engagement. The LEAF is also meant as a starting point for further analysis and discussion on standardized assessment frameworks for ownership that can be applied across donors, agencies, countries, and development sectors. We hope others will build upon it to deepen the collective understanding of ownership and how best to put it into practice.

After developing the LEAF, Oxfam and Save the Children applied it to seven US-funded development projects as a means to analyze and showcase high-quality ownership across a variety of contexts. These projects were selected purposively, rather than through random sampling. Projects selected were intended to be models of ownership rather than representative of all US foreign assistance projects. Case study projects were selected in

consultation with USAID and MCC as being emblematic of country-owned development, illustrative of how US foreign assistance can successfully integrate ownership.

The LEAF helped us explore how US ownership approaches heightened stakeholder engagement and bolstered local leadership in a range of contexts and in pursuit of varying development objectives. It also helped us explore common challenges the US and other entities face as they try to encourage more locally driven development within their agencies. The report is structured as follows:

- Section 3 delves into the concept of ownership, its relevance to stakeholder power and engagement, and how the conceptions of ownership underpin the LEAF. This section concludes with an explanation of the LEAF and the methodology used to produce the case studies.
- Section 4 presents and explores seven projects that exemplify good local ownership practice across a range of contexts and sectors.
- Section 5 highlights some of the practical ways the US can build on its commitment to ownership in policy and practice.





3. Defining and Assessing Ownership

The importance of adapting foreign assistance to include more participation and leadership from partner countries is now widely supported in the US and elsewhere.²⁷ To explore the relationship between US ownership approaches and local leadership, two fundamental questions should be answered:

1. When US agencies adopt ownership approaches, who among local stakeholders were engaged, and when during the project cycle were they engaged to ensure that projects were effective and sustainable?
2. What was the quality of that engagement across different ownership models and within different development contexts and project objectives?

To answer these questions, we needed a tool which could help us analyze the degree of local engagement in a particular development project. To this end, Oxfam and Save the Children collaborated with the Overseas Development Institute to conduct a literature review exploring the research and trends on ownership and participation, and use those findings to conceptualize and design an analytical framework (the LEAF) to assess ownership in practice.

The review explored both conceptual studies and empirical evidence supporting and challenging ownership and participation as key ingredients of aid effectiveness. The complete findings of the literature review will be shared in separate publication, but are summarized in the following section. Three key ownership dimensions arose from the literature review:

- Ownership approaches are most effective and sustainable when stakeholders are engaged throughout the project cycle, from problem identification, to project design, to implementation, to providing project resources. We call these project phases the *what* of ownership.
- The effectiveness of ownership approaches is dependent on *who* among local stakeholders was engaged in a project and whether those ownership or participatory approaches didn't disadvantage one group of stakeholders, for example women, over another.
- And finally, effectiveness is contingent on the extent to which those stakeholders were empowered by the ownership approaches—the *how* of ownership.

Ownership is Integral to Aid Effectiveness

The literature on ownership and aid effectiveness highlighted three key elements related to the effectiveness of a development intervention.

First, genuine ownership and participation require widening the scope of actors beyond the executive levels of government towards more local levels within a community that are able to exert their influence on a project. Despite this value, it is especially challenging to ensure that poor and marginalized people are adequately engaged. These findings first came to light in the early participation literature when research uncovered biases in community participation towards dominant community members over those who are more marginalized.²⁸ In particular, the literature highlights common gender bias in participatory practices—often, women of all socioeconomic backgrounds are less likely to participate in design, management, and oversight of development projects.²⁹

In recognition of that community ownership alone does not guarantee effectiveness, the development community shifted away from participation towards pursuing a more state-centric form of ownership. In practice, more donors oriented their aid to support a country government's development and poverty reduction efforts, rather than replicate them.³⁰ Two key trends inspired this reorientation. First, the development community recognized that external policy interventions, such as the the structural adjustment programs,³¹ too often failed. And second, government leadership was a key driver of development success. Countries such as Korea and China³² displayed a nationally led development process and new evidence was emerging that aid was most effective in countries with strong domestic political institutions.³³ This shift led to the High Level Aid Effectiveness fora in Rome in 2003, Paris in 2005, Accra in 2008, and Busan in 2011.³⁴ The Busan statement on country ownership is unequivocal: "Partnerships for development can only succeed if they are led by developing countries, implementing approaches that are tailored to country-specific situations and needs."³⁵ (See Box 3).³⁶

While the Busan partnership recognized the importance of broadening stakeholder engagement on development issues, especially to women, it still fell short of addressing the critique that the Busan and the broader international donor ownership practice is overly state-oriented.³⁷ Some believed aid, when focused on supporting the state, tipped the balance of power towards governments by shielding it from the public scrutiny required to develop strong domestic government institutions³⁸ or even protect human rights.³⁹

More recent discourse recognizes that aid, given in the right way, can empower active citizenship to help people demand more from their government⁴⁰ and can help states work with citizens to overcome considerable hurdles to service delivery.⁴¹ In other words, effective ownership approaches integrate participation and transparency in aid projects as means toward citizen empowerment and government accountability.⁴²

A second major finding of the country-ownership literature is that mere participation of country actors is not enough; they must influence and exert control over a development intervention.⁴³ To help measure the degree of influence local actors exhibit over a development intervention, a number of authors have proposed *participation ladders*. One version, for example, identifies eight ascending levels of participation: 1) manipulation, 2) therapy, 3) informing, 4) consultation, 5) placation, 6) partnership, 7) delegated power, and 8) citizen control.⁴⁴

And third, the literature indicates that participatory approaches lead to effectiveness most often when citizen participation is integrated into all phases of development interventions, including strategy development and implementation,⁴⁵ and when participation is meaningful and inclusive for all members of a targeted community.⁴⁶ The research highlighting the exclusion of women in participation is quite prolific; projects that did not identify the gendered dimension of development challenges and approaches are often less likely to achieve their immediate purposes and socioeconomic goals.⁴⁷

The literature also points out a distinction between *ownership for effectiveness* and *ownership for sustainability*. Three key conditions must be in place for the continuation of results: a supportive institutional environment—as reflected by a local policy framework and local demand for continued services; adequate resources—including from local resources, as a demonstration of local demand; and strategic institutional and human resource capacity.⁴⁸ Local engagement with actors embedded in local systems is a key component for meeting these three sustainability criteria, but projects should work with local leadership to ensure these conditions are in place in the long-term.⁴⁹

Text Box 3: Alignment with Country Development Plans: An Essential Element of Ownership

Ensuring that aid supports national development plans is a crucial element of ownership. In our case studies, the US demonstrated a clear intent to align with national development plans. While national development plans are often critiqued as being so broad as to render alignment meaningless, our case studies demonstrated a variety of ways that projects meaningfully aligned with national development goals. In Ghana, alignment helped initiate a dialogue between the government and USAID that has endured through the course of the project. In Indonesia, USAID not only initiated a dialogue with the government through the National Tuberculosis Program, but the CEPAT project is expected to deliver results determined in the NTP Plan. In Jordan, the government recently put together the Jordanian Compact, a plan to help Jordan manage resources to help manage the influx of refugees from Syria. The Plan articulates a solution to the financial challenges now faced by the MCC's wastewater treatment plant to help sustain the MCC's investment. (See case study on the MCC–Jordan, Wastewater treatment plant.)

The United States is among the countries that adhere to the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the associated 2008 Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) that includes five fundamental principles to make aid more effective, of which ownership tops the list. According to the Paris Declaration, ownership means that developing countries set their own strategies for poverty reduction.

The second principle is alignment, i.e., “Donor countries align behind these objectives and use local systems.” In other words, aid should support national development plans via the country's own processes and institutions. The AAA further emphasizes the importance of an active

role for the country that receives the aid, including its citizens and governments, defining ownership as when “countries have more say over their development processes through wider participation in development policy formulation, stronger leadership on aid co-ordination, and more use of country systems for aid delivery.” Following the Fourth High-Level Forum on Effective Development Cooperation, held in Busan in 2011, then US Secretary of State Hillary R. Clinton strongly reiterated US support for these principles.

The most recent (2011) peer review of US aid programs conducted under the auspices of the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee found that most US agencies align their programs with national priorities....” The review noted that MCC compacts are a joint product of the agency and the partner government, while other US programs, such as Feed the Future and the Global Health Initiative, likewise require alignment with country plans. The review took note of USAID’s guidance to its field missions, which requires it to explain how their strategies and objectives relate to country plans and priorities.

The Local Engagement Assessment Framework (LEAF)

As the discussion above demonstrates, the literature review concluded that ownership approaches are more likely to foster genuine local leadership when:

- Local stakeholders are engaged throughout the project cycle;
- A range of relevant local stakeholder groups are engaged in the project, including women and marginalized communities; and
- The engagement enhances or reinforces decision-making power of local stakeholders within the project.

Based on these findings, we developed the LEAF to assess ownership practice at the USAID activity level and MCC compact activities. Specifically, the LEAF aims to provide a graphic display and narrative justification analyzing who amongst local stakeholder groups a project engages, as well as the degree to which they have been able to exercise decision-making power over a project at each stage of the project cycle.

The LEAF is consistent with a framework created by the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN), a coalition of US-based think tanks, operational NGOs, (including Save the Children and Oxfam), and advocacy organizations committed to making US foreign assistance more effective. This framework organizes ownership into three areas: ownership of priorities, ownership of implementation, and ownership of resources.⁵⁰ The LEAF compliments the MFAN framework by providing a way to analyze ownership within a specific context. We added the elements of sustainability to the MFAN framework in recognition that sustainability is more likely to be achieved when the project reflects a long-term vision of stakeholder engagement beyond the life of the project cycle. The LEAF assesses stakeholder engagement against the

sustainability criteria conceptualized in the literature review.

The LEAF is designed to capture stakeholder engagement in a project, with project defined as a limited closely related set of activities—usually implemented by a single (or small number of) actors. The LEAF also captures the results of some preliminary processes that helped determine the parameters of the project. For example, the LEAF will likely capture a US consultation process during the development of their country strategies; if that process influenced the parameters of the project (see Box 4).

How to Read and Use the LEAF

The LEAF is organized around three main dimensions of donor policy and practice, and when the information is graphically displayed, the LEAF depicts a tree (see Box 4). As previously explained:

- **What:** The phases of a project cycle when local stakeholders can exercise influence. The visual tree findings from this element are displayed in the trunk.
- **Who:** The local stakeholders who are engaged in each of these project elements. In the tree, this element is depicted on the left-side of the trunk.
- **How:** The quality of the local stakeholder engagement in the project. This element is displayed on the right-side of the trunk.

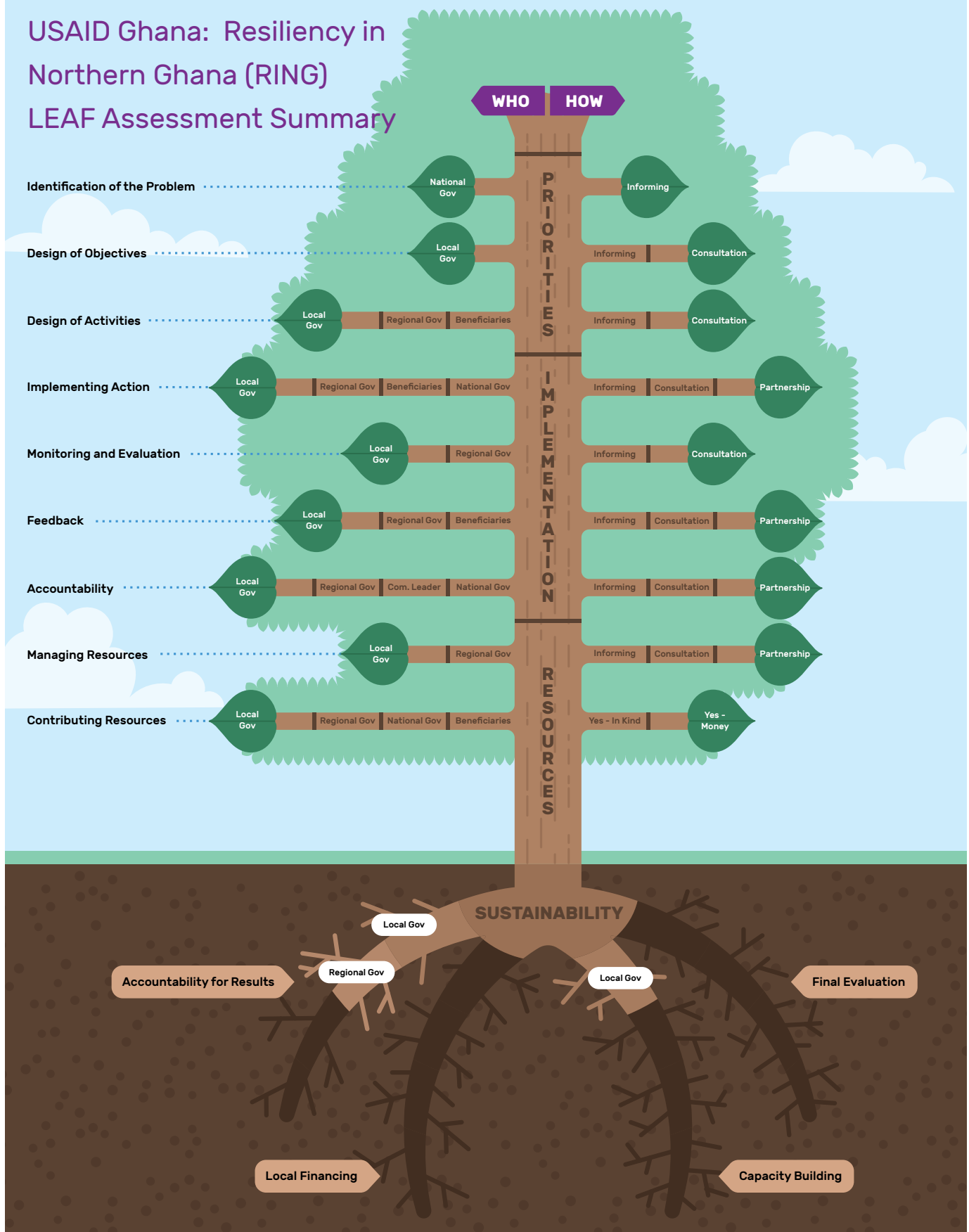
Taken together, these three dimensions provide an analytical framework to examine how much power and authority local stakeholders exercised over a particular aspect of a project and who among the local stakeholders carried the most influence.

The further the branch of the tree extends in the *who* section, the more local stakeholder groups were involved in a particular phase or process. The further a branch extends on the *how* side, the greater the degree of control and decision-making power exercised by the stakeholder group with the highest level of engagement. The stakeholder group with the highest level of engagement is listed at the end of the branch on the left (or *who* side), farthest from the trunk while the other stakeholders that appear on the trunk were engaged to lesser degrees.

While the LEAF provides a framework for assessing the quality of ownership in practice, it is not intended to compare projects against each other. The results can elicit important points of conversation about differences between projects, but one assessment should not be valued over another since each project is different and should utilize ownership practices according to the goals of the project and the local context.

Box 4: The Local Engagement Assessment Framework

USAID Ghana: Resiliency in Northern Ghana (RING) LEAF Assessment Summary



Text Box 5: Analyzing a Gendered Approach to Ownership

Recent aid effectiveness agreements commit donors to ownership practices which include all members of a community, including women and girls.⁵¹ Study after study has pointed out the consequences when aid empowered one gender over another in the pursuit of ownership. (See section Ownership is Integral to Aid Effectiveness for more information.) To fully appreciate ownership, any analytical tool assessing local ownership must be sensitive to the power imbalance between different genders among stakeholders empowered by ownership approaches. However, Oxfam and Save the Children researchers found integrating an assessment of gender dynamics and their impact on ownership into the tool to be quite challenging. While the LEAF helped chart the local stakeholders engaged in a project and proposed a rudimentary set of gender specific questions, these failed to help us systematically integrate gender issues throughout the case studies. A next iteration of this tool would need to find a way to analyze the different ways women and men exercise influence over a project.

Despite the weakness described above, our research helped us capture a few enlightening examples of gender-sensitive ownership in practice. Processes embedded in USAID⁵² and MCC policy⁵³ pushed projects to assess relevant gender dynamics and integrate gender sensitive approaches into several of the case study projects.

In Indonesia,⁵⁴ the PNPM Generasi already had an affirmative mandate to increase the representation of women in village community development councils to ensure women were at the helm of decision making about health and education issues. Increased female leadership meant community priorities were more reflective of the needs of women and women were more likely to be integrated into other local governance structures.⁵⁵ According to one participant; this explicit mandate has impacted gender inclusion. “Without the PNPM-Generasi project, women had to fight for their voice to be heard and had some success,” one local project member said. “But because of [Generasi] project, women are in a better position. We are part of the decision making in our communities.”⁵⁶ The MCA-I’s gender approach helped PNPM-Generasi overcome some gender shortfalls. The MCA-I pushed the PNPM-Generasi on a number of design elements, including conduct gender specific outreach in the villages to encourage substantive participation by women, ensure men/local elders participate in project activities, and collect sex disaggregated data during monitoring.⁵⁷

In Jordan,⁵⁸ the women plumber’s initiative, a subcomponent to the Water Network Project, was created in response to a gender assessment that advised targeting women to socialize better water management behaviors within the household. The women plumber’s initiative would provide plumbing services and minor equipment repairs and replacements as a way to encourage the women to attend behavior trainings. However, the vast majority of plumbers in the Zarqa area are men and are not permitted into the homes of residents when another male is not present. The compact addressed this challenge by training a group of women in plumbing skills, many of whom are now starting their own plumbing businesses.

In Ghana, USAID's RING project solicitation cites inequality between men and women, particularly in the area of household income generation, among the factors contributing to under-nutrition. To address this inequality, RING targeted women to improve their power over household and economic decisions. This objective required socialization of mostly male community leadership, including traditional community leaders and the family members of women, to "ensure that male community stakeholders and family members gain awareness of how these changes will have a positive effect not only on women but on them as well."⁵⁹ The husband of a woman who benefitted from owning small ruminants said that, "The whole community is happy about the women possessing the ruminants. Even husbands whose wives did not get the sheep wished their wives had them. It has changed the lives of community members. We the men are happy about our wives having the ruminants."⁶⁰

In Rwanda, the Akazi Kanoze project disaggregated monitoring data by gender, uncovering an interesting trend: "Young women in Akazi Kanoze had a significantly higher increase [than young men] in knowledge of how to find a job/livelihood and apply for work."

What the LEAF Does Not Capture

The LEAF aims to capture the full array of local stakeholders involved in a project. While particular local actors have specific roles and responsibilities in producing sustainable development outcomes, the LEAF is not a normative tool that assesses which local actors *should* be involved in a particular stage in a given project. The list of local actors involved in each project was determined through project documents and stakeholder interviews.

While we also developed the LEAF with the intention of specifically identifying the role of vulnerable groups—for example, girls, refugees, ethnic minorities, and isolated rural communities—in each of the projects, the current version of the LEAF does not include this specific metric. Nevertheless, the voices of many of these groups are represented in the case studies, and when appropriate, analysis of these vulnerable groups and their involvement in the project is highlighted in the LEAF analysis.

LEAF Methodology

Applying the LEAF includes a review of the publicly available, relevant project, agency, and national-level documents. Findings from the document review were augmented with the LEAF primary data source: semi-structured interviews with an array of relevant local and international stakeholders, donor officials, and community members targeted by the project.

Once gathered, data from interviews and documents is organized against the most relevant aspect of the project, as depicted in the *what* of ownership, and against the relevant stakeholder grouping, *who*. The information was evaluated based on the appropriate evaluation criteria (see Box 6) to assess the quality of engagement, the *how*. The stakeholder group with the highest level of engagement at a particular stage of the project cycle is

represented in the *how* dimension of the tree and is listed farthest from the trunk on the left *who* side of the tree. Other local stakeholder groups are listed on the *who* side of the LEAF in descending order from left to right.

Under the *resources and sustainability* parts of the tree, stakeholder engagement was assessed against a binary yes or no criteria. In these instances, yes or no answers are noted under the *how* section of the tree and, like the sections above, the most influential stakeholder groups are listed under the *who* section.



Text Box 6: The Local Engagement Assessment Framework: A Snapshot

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| WHO | Which local stakeholders exercise <i>some</i> ownership of a development intervention phase? |
| Who's included? | Project cases are assessed based on the quality of ownership by local stakeholders , defined as communities, organizations, or institutions that are indigenous to the partner country. This includes government at all levels, civil society, the private sector, and communities. |
| Who's not? | Local stakeholders, for the purposes of this research, do not include international development organizations or the international private sector—even those based in the country—or other international implementers. |
| Who's analyzed? | The LEAF identifies the various stakeholder groups that are engaged; however, it only maps the quality of ownership of the stakeholder group with the highest level of engagement , according to the <i>how</i> criteria. This group will be listed farthest from the trunk of the tree. Under the resources and sustainability aspects of the project, the LEAF lists and assesses the stakeholder group with the highest level of engagement, against a binary yes or no. |
| HOW | What is the extent—informing, consultation, partnership, or delegated power—of the <i>most engaged local stakeholder's</i> engagement in each particular project phase? |
| Informing | Local stakeholders receive information regarding a project phase and may share their views, but without any effort by the donor/ implementing partner to consider or act on these views. |
| Consultation | Local stakeholders share their views on project phase with donors/the implementing partner obligated in some way to consider or act on these views and to communicate how this input impacted the project. |
| Partnership | Local stakeholders are part of a formal system that provides them an opportunity to work with the donor/the implementing partner to make decisions jointly for that project phase. |
| Delegated power | Local stakeholders take the lead in making decisions and taking action with regard to a project phase within agreed parameters. |
| WHAT | In what phases of the development intervention have local stakeholders been engaged? |
| Setting Priorities | In this phase, local stakeholders' level of engagement in identifying the problem and designing project goals and plans is assessed. |
| 1.1 Identification of the problem | Describes the nature of local engagement in determining the development challenges the intervention intends to address (i.e., health, governance, economic growth, etc.) |

Text Box 6: The Local Engagement Assessment Framework: A Snapshot

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1.2 Design of objectives | Describes the nature of local engagement in determining the results the project aims to achieve in order to address a given development challenge. |
| 1.3 Design of activities | Describes the nature of local engagement in determining the specific activities necessary to achieve the desired results. |
| Implementation | Local stakeholders' level of agency and decision-making power is assessed against their responsibilities in carrying out and managing the implementation of project activities. |
| 2.1 Implementing Action | Describes the nature of local stakeholder engagement implementing the project activities. |
| 2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation | Describes the nature of local stakeholder engagement in monitoring and evaluating the results of the intervention. |
| 2.3 Feedback | Describes the nature of local engagement providing feedback and adapting the intervention during implementation (excluding formal M&E processes). |
| 2.4 Accountability | Describes the nature of local oversight by local government authorities and those responsible for implementing the project. |
| Resources | Local stakeholders' level of engagement is assessed against their involvement in project budgeting decisions, financial management of project resources, and contribution of local financial or in-kind resources to the project. |
| 3.1 Managing resources | Describes the nature of local stakeholder engagement in managing the resources used to fund the intervention and the nature of these resources. |
| 3.2 Contributing resources | Indicates whether local stakeholders are contributing resources and the type of resources (in-kind and/or financial). |
| Long-Term Sustainability | Local stakeholders' level of engagement is assessed against indicators deemed important for local actors to sustainably maintain project results. |
| 4.1 Accountability of Results | Describes if local stakeholders are committed to maintain, expand, or integrate the project results, regardless of continued donor funding. |
| 4.2 Local financing | Describes if the project supports a clear and actionable plan (activities, budget and results) by local stakeholders that moves the country towards sustainable financing without development assistance? |
| 4.3 Capacity Building | Describes if the project includes a clear and accountable plan to build or strengthen the ability of local organizations to maintain results? |
| 4.4 Final evaluation | Describes if there is a plan in place to conduct a final ex-post evaluation of the intervention's results. |



4. Ownership Project Case Studies: Improving Accountability of Local Governments, Strengthening Local Services, and Forging Private Sector Partnerships

In each of the seven cases from Ghana, Indonesia, Jordan, and Rwanda, US foreign assistance agencies transferred significant control to local stakeholders who led the charge improving the accountability of local governments, delivering basic services in their communities, or forging partnerships with the private sector to spur economic growth.

These case studies demonstrate how the United States utilized a range of ownership approaches to foster local leadership. What emerges from these studies is that donors can pursue ownership to achieve different development outcomes by using a mix of *ownership approaches*. Think of ownership approaches as a set of tools available to donors that intentionally shift more decision making power to local stakeholders (see Box 2.) Finding the right mix of ownership tools depends on the particular goal of the project, as well as the opportunities and constraints in each country.

Case Study Country Selection Process

In addition to the primary goal of identifying model ownership projects we also selected the four case-study countries based on the diversity of their economic level (middle- and low-income) and geography (East and West Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East.) Within the parameters of model ownership projects, we sought variety to illustrate how USAID and MCC apply ownership approaches across varying development scenarios.

These case studies relied primarily on data collected on the ground, using the LEAF methodology described above. The bulk of the analysis was conducted at the project level. During the field research, teams also collected information about the shortcomings of the LEAF. Some of those shortcomings were addressed during the research project, while others are key areas for future iterations of the LEAF to improve upon. These opportunities are explored further in the conclusion of the paper.⁶¹

Case Studies: Ownership to Strengthen Local Governance and Accountability

Sustainability is about creating a lasting relationship between people and their government so citizens can continue to exercise influence over their government to continually improve a government's ability to respond to citizen needs.⁶² Both project case studies in this section showcase how ownership approaches are used to strengthen the ability of the governments to accountably respond to the needs of their people.

Resiliency in Northern Ghana (RING) – USAID – Ghana

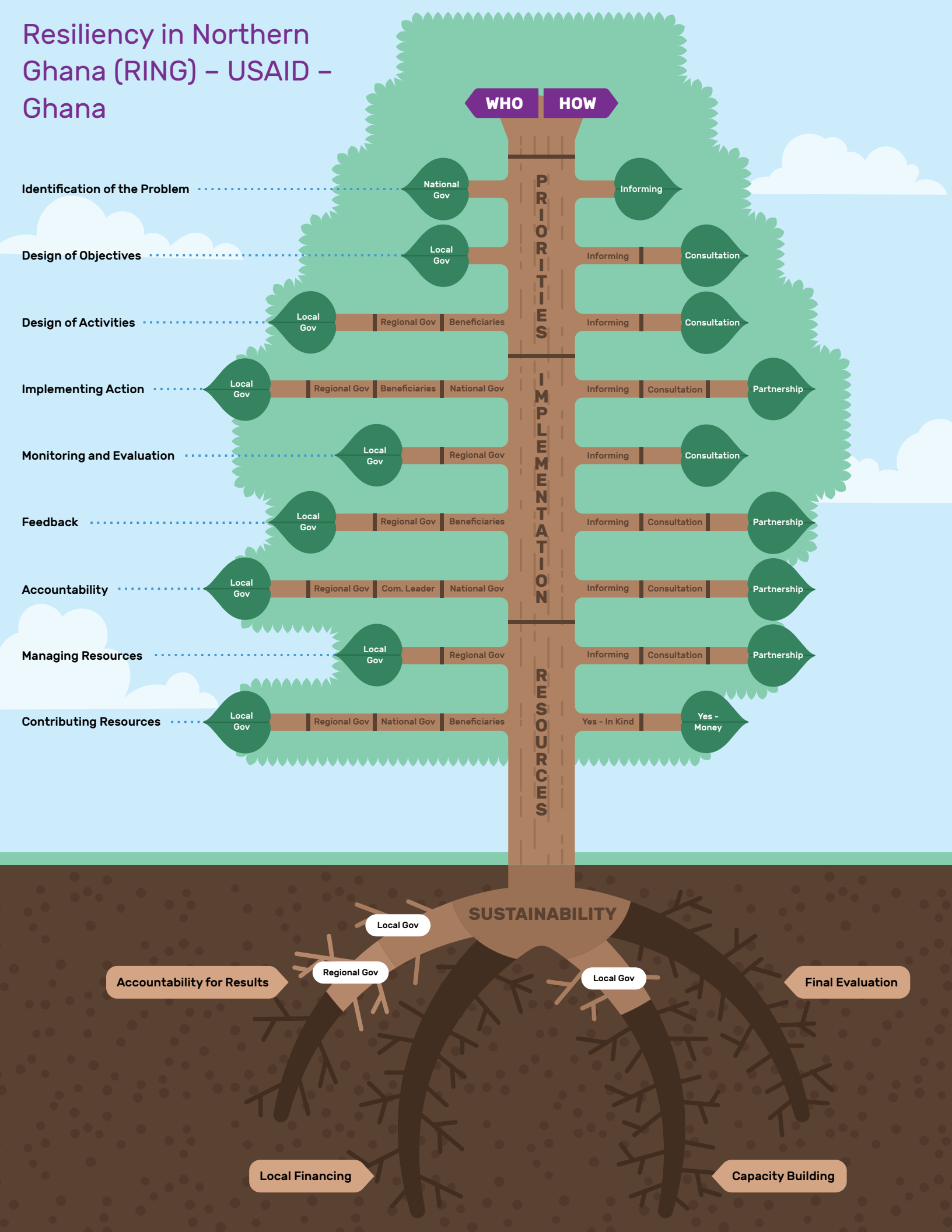
As captured by the LEAF, the Resiliency in Northern Ghana (RING) project utilized an ownership approach that empowered local governmental and community leaders to address malnutrition (persistently high stunting, wasting, underweight, and anemia rates) at the household level. RING also supports the Ghanaian government's long-term decentralization goal, and the project was characterized by a direct relationship between USAID—and the US-based contractor Global Communities—with local Ghanaian government entities.⁶³

The project was designed in response to—and to adhere to—USAID Forward and Local Solutions principles of working through host country financial systems and providing direct funding to local stakeholders. “It’s an integral part of our portfolio, because it’s part of our strategy and our belief about the way to do sustainable development,” one USAID/Ghana official said.

The \$60 million, five-year project, funded in part through the Feed the Future initiative, targets vulnerable communities among the 2.2 million people living in Ghana’s Northern Region, many of whom are subsistence farmers.⁶⁴ While Ghana is a lower middle-income country with a decreasing poverty rate, the Northern Region has levels of poverty, food insecurity, and undernutrition that lag national indicators.⁶⁵ To address these issues, RING is intended to reach 326,000 people in 850 communities, 25 percent of whom are intended to be women of reproductive age.⁶⁶

RING was designed by USAID to target women to improve their power over household and economic decisions, a design element that responded to the project’s mandate to ensure “that RING-supported interventions address the many gender inequities within households and communities that adversely affect women’s economic and nutrition status.”⁶⁷ This required socialization of the mostly male community leadership, including traditional community leaders and the family members of women, consistent with RING’s project design. The design stated that the Global Communities should “ensure that male community stakeholders and family members gain awareness of how these changes will have a positive effect not only on women but on them as well.”⁶⁸

Resiliency in Northern Ghana (RING) – USAID – Ghana



One USAID respondent said that RING was “at the tip of the spear” in terms of USAID’s direct work with governments. The modality is key to USAID’s intention to build the Northern Region’s governance structure: Rather than bypass the existing government systems, RING provides funds directly to local district assemblies (DA) budgets in order to strengthen their ability to service vulnerable constituents.



“Direct funding from USAID is important to the extent that it supports our own plans and budget. It is not telling us what to do. It is supporting what we planned to do. And I think that is the most important aspect of it.”

*Habib Shahadu
Senior Development Planning Officer
Northern Regional Coordinating Council*

With the additional resources, DA representatives are better able to target, implement, and monitor project interventions—including small-scale agriculture, livelihoods, savings, nutrition, hygiene, and sanitation projects—intended to reach their most vulnerable communities.⁶⁹ For example, in 2012, before RING, the Saboba DA had an agricultural budget of \$7,500. But in 2013 RING partnered with the Saboba DA and its agricultural budget was increased to \$180,000, providing local officials with the resources to better meet their constituents’ needs.⁷⁰ During 2016, USAID provided \$4.3 million in direct funding to nine of the 17 district assemblies targeted by RING and has allocated \$1.5 million to eight districts through subcontracts with Global Communities. Prior to the disbursement of funds, USAID conducted extensive financial management analyses of each of the district assemblies to assess their ability to absorptive capacity and ability to administer increased funding. (See box 7.)

While USAID provides some communities with direct resources, others are given resources through Global Communities as a way to ensure sound financial control.⁷¹ Thus far, the project seems to be incentivizing DAs to deliver more support to their communities. “We want to be accountable to our people,” one DA official in Tolon said. “The assembly is responsible for the development of their communities.”

Priorities

The RING project's major strength in terms of ownership was during the implementation phase (see below). During the priorities phase of the project, RING largely adhered to broad Ghanaian government development goals, but there was no evidence of extraordinary levels of local ownership of project design. This is reflected in the LEAF assessments priorities phase that only reached the level of **consultation** in terms of local and national Ghanaian entities claiming ownership over the project design.

In spite of the lack of local ownership at the design phase, RING did include some local systems. RING was atypical in its use of Government of Ghana (GoG) systems and data to conduct the targeting and selection of beneficiaries. To achieve this, RING used GoG's beneficiary-identification system, which employs community based targeting. USAID also coordinated with the national and regional departments of social welfare in targeting beneficiaries.⁷²

RING officials discussed beneficiary criteria with GoG partners during the design phase, including how to obtain and assess available GoG data at the sub-regional levels, and provided training—through Ghanaian regional government structures—with the first six districts integrated into the program. “Previously, when you have a project like this, you bring consultants from outside to do the data collection,” one DA official from Savelugu said. “For [RING] we used our own officers...They already know every household, they know every farmer.”

Nevertheless, USAID and Global Communities led the process in consultation with local stakeholders. While this approaches the **partnership** level of ownership, this phase was more akin to consultative levels of ownership.

Implementation

As the RING LEAF indicates, the project exhibited the strongest ownership qualities during the implementation phase when the level of local control reached the level of **partnership**. The project facilitated the DAs' leadership role in implementing activities, strengthening the existing government structures to better deliver services.⁷³ While the DAs appeared to be full partners in terms of the implementation phase of RING, it was ultimately still supervised by USAID and particularly Global Communities which is why this phase was not assessed on the LEAF at the level of **delegated power**.

Global Communities played a key role building technical capacity for the DAs district-level crop officers, nutrition officers, environmental health officers, planning officers, and procurement officers to prioritize, plan, budget, implement, monitor, and report on the project interventions. Capacity strengthening also focused on increasing fiscal and budget accountability.⁷⁴ “We were allowed to use our own [local Ghanaian government] structures to implement the project,” one DA official from Savelugu said.

While important for sustainable results, USAID and Global Communities officials said that

working with government systems was labor and time intensive. USAID respondents said working with government structures as closely as the RING project does is difficult, fragile, and at times, frustrating—but ultimately worth the effort.

The amount of effort and resources needed to design and operate a government-to-government project, such as RING's, is evidenced through its staffing: RING project design required six to seven people to design; the USAID implementation team includes 10-15 staff across the agency, based in both the national capital, Accra, and the Northern Region capital of Tamale. This doesn't include additional local staff and Global Communities.⁷⁵

One USAID RING official said, "It's a whole lot easier to give out a contract grant to a sophisticated partner who can deliver...but that doesn't create sustainable, transformational change."

Resources

Prior to the RING project, GoG funding for the DAs only allowed for salaries, with little left over for DA outreach in their communities.⁷⁶ Like the *implementation* phase, the *resources* phase of RING also exhibited high levels (although not the highest) of ownership. Even as they were ultimately responsible to USAID and Global Communities, the DAs had considerable power over managing their budgets.⁷⁷

While the contribution of local funding to the project is still small, the DAs ownership of project funds provided by USAID reached the level of **partnership** on the LEAF. A Tolon district official said, "The planning and budgeting is done by the districts, the activity lines are chosen by the districts, based on [districts'] needs and priorities."

RING resources have been used for tools to improve the DAs overall effectiveness through the procurement of computers, vehicles, and office equipment. RING funds are also used for providing beneficiaries with direct community interventions, including water wells, livestock, and fisheries.⁷⁸ Other than salaries, the vast majority of RING funding comes from USAID, not the Ghanaian government. So, while the LEAF assessed the RING project as including local financial and in-kind contributions, it is important to note that these contributions were very small compared to the resources provided by USAID. Our research indicates that long-term *local* funding of RING project activities, once USAID funding ends, has not been adequately addressed by USAID, Global Communities, or Ghanaian actors at the national, regional, and local levels.

Sustainability

As demonstrated by the LEAF, the local government system itself is strengthened by the project: Respondents said that the skills acquired from RING will remain beyond the end of the project. "The RING sustainability plan is strengthening the assembly structures, whether it is done consciously or unconsciously," one Tolon district official said. "It becomes you. Once something is you, it's sustainable."

Text Box 7: Risk of Loss vs. Risk of Failure

Respondents from Ghana, Indonesia, and Rwanda pointed out the challenges US officials encounter as they worked more closely with local organizations to deliver project activities. In particular, as noted in a number of previous studies, providing aid directly to local entities has raised questions about their absorptive capacity, particularly their capacity to absorb US funds and to control fiduciary risk.⁸⁰ Yet, more US control over finances does not always lead to better outcomes, since the same approaches donors use to control fiduciary risk often neglect—and leave donor investments more vulnerable to—programmatic or reputational risk.⁸¹ Donors have increasingly developed strategies to weigh and manage the array of risks they face.

These approaches include the use of assessments of a partner country's public financial management capacity and fiduciary risk profile, including the Public Financial Management Rapid Assessment Framework (PFMRAF), the USAID Framework for Integrated Risk Management, and lower-risk, pay-for-performance financing instruments, such as Fixed-Amount Reimbursement Agreements (FARA).

An array of tools was used to assess and mitigate risk in the countries we visited. In Ghana, USAID conducted seventeen separate PFMRAFs—one for each district assembly receiving funds—in order to assess and design programs in a manner that mitigated the risk of using financial systems of local district assemblies. USAID also began its direct funding with six districts and municipalities, assigning a US-based contractor the oversight role over the remaining districts that received funding indirectly. The contractor also embedded governance staff inside each district assembly to provide on-the-spot assistance with management.

But, as noted on the LEAF and above, the lack of significant local financing is the project's Achilles heel and one that will need to be addressed to ensure its sustainability. The acquisition of new knowledge, skills, and abilities—as commendable as that outcome is—cannot substitute for a secure, *local* source of long-term funding.

Some DA officials said they were exploring opportunities for local domestic resource mobilization through better demarcation of property and the formalization of local business, but they were in the very early phases and the amount of revenue generated has been negligible.⁷⁹ As seen above, in spite of the project's major contributions to fortifying local governance, the lack of a long-term plan for local financing results in a mixed sustainability picture for the RING project assessment on the LEAF.

Nevertheless, in the eyes of the stakeholders involved in RING, strengthening local government systems through this ownership approach still holds promise for sustainability when compared with traditional aid modalities. “[RING] is our project because it has come through our assembly,” one Tolon district official said.

Community-Based Health and Nutrition to Reduce Stunting – MCC– Indonesia

Stunting is still a major problem in Indonesia, where the country has the fifth highest population of stunted children in the world and a prevalence rate of 36 percent, much higher than the global average of 26 percent.⁸² According to the World Health Organization (WHO) stunting is “the result of long-term nutritional deprivation and often results in delayed mental development, poor school performance and reduced intellectual capacity.”⁸³ MCC’s “Community-Based Health and Nutrition to Reduce Stunting Project,” a \$131.5 million component of the \$600 million MCC compact in Indonesia,⁸⁴ demonstrates how the US can use an ownership approach to empower local communities in poor, rural districts to increase health and education outcomes while simultaneously fostering accountability for local service delivery. The MCC component targets 5,206 villages where stunting occurs at a higher rate than the national average.⁸⁵

By supporting a successful,⁸⁶ pre-existing community development program, the PNPM Generasi, the MCC has supported local communities and community members at the helm of the fight against stunting. The nationally run PNPM Generasi project is a participatory community driven development program. The project provides block grants to fund activities determined by communities through participatory community development councils.⁸⁷ Because of the high degree of local decision making and local implementation of the PNPM Generasi, and because the MCA-I, the Indonesian body responsible for the execution of the MCC compact in Indonesia, the project displays a significant amount of delegated leadership at the national and village level, as assessed by the LEAF.

The PNPM-Generasi’s stated objective is: “To empower local communities in poor, rural sub-districts in target provinces to increase the utilization of health and education services.”⁸⁸ As one villager described, “(PNPM Generasi) starts from the community level.”⁸⁹

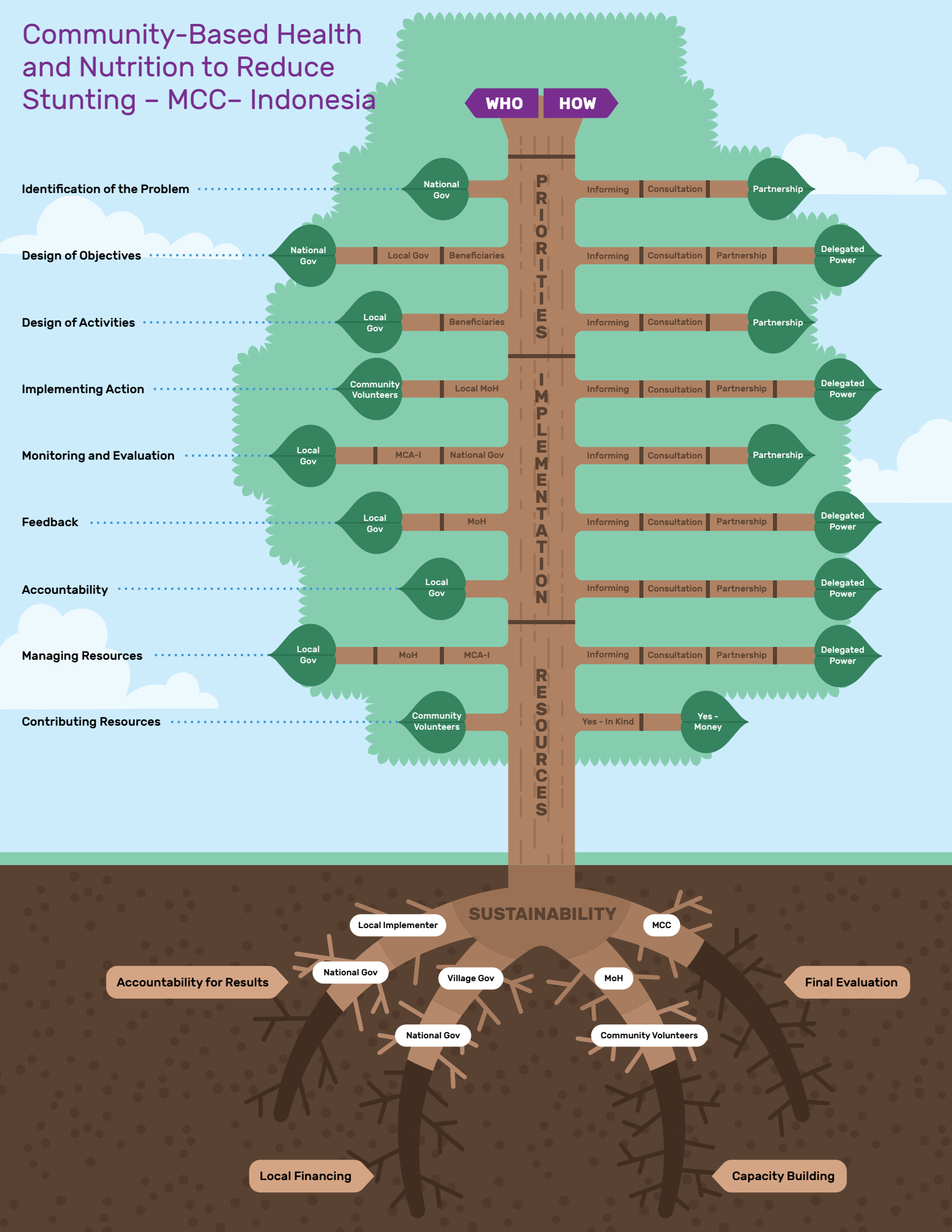
Priorities

The majority of project decisions—from the compact development phase down to what activities are provided in the village—engage local stakeholders. The LEAF captures the different national and locally led processes to determine priorities resulting in “delegated authority.” National level decisions about what to implement and how to implement the project are made by an Indonesian committee made up of government, non-government, private sector, and academics throughout the MCC Indonesia compact development process. Priorities are decided at the village level through the local village development council.

Implementation

Generasi scores at the highest level—**delegated power**—in terms of the project implementation areas. Generasi is implemented by local agents at a number of levels. Overall project management of the entire compact occurs in the MCA-I. For this specific activity,

Community-Based Health and Nutrition to Reduce Stunting – MCC- Indonesia



the community health and nutrition subcomponent, the MCA-I collaborates with the World Bank administered trust fund (PNPM Support Facility, PSF) and the Ministry of Health at the village level. All levels of the project conduct monitoring and evaluation. And the community development councils conduct monitoring of the project activities along with the Ministry of Health. The councils also weigh in during the implementation of the projects acting as a key feedback and accountability conduit of the project at the village level. As one community representative stated, “I have the responsibility to dig in any problems or issues that arise among the community and bring it to the leaders in the sub-district level.”⁹⁰



“It is important for the community to have ownership over the activities, because by identifying their own problems but also seeking solution by themselves.”

*Lucas Adhyakso
Deputy Executive Director for Programs
MCA - Indonesia*

Resources

The project ranks highly in terms of local control of resourcing, as well. The project uses a mix of resources from the MCC, the WB Multi-donor trust fund, and in-kind resources through salaries to Ministry of Health Officials and the community health volunteers, known as “cadres,” and financial resources from the government. However, the MCC doesn’t contribute directly into Indonesian budgets, but elects to use the World Bank trust fund instead. The specific Generasi funds, however, are managed at the village and community levels.

Sustainability

Sustainability is built into the project. The project meets the key criteria explored in the LEAF, which suggest the results of the project will be sustained. In 2017, not only is the MCC compact ending, the World Bank will allow the Generasi program to expire; however, the government of Indonesia has decided that program will continue, broadening its scope to look at all basic social services (beyond nutrition and education). Villages will be responsible for managing it under a different Ministry.⁹¹ At time of our visit, the villages were awaiting a new operating manual for the program to fund basic social services.⁹² According to village government leaders, the new village law calls for 10 percent of district budgets to go directly to the village level. Currently, they are getting only 3 percent, but they expect to get the whole 10 percent next year. They will integrate the Generasi projects into that additional funding.⁹³ And the MCC, in addition to the PSF, will conduct post-facto evaluations.⁹⁴



Case Studies: Ownership to Improve Local Service Delivery

The following three case studies showcase projects where USAID and MCC worked collaboratively with local stakeholders and systems to strengthen their capacity to delivery high quality basic services.

Ubaka Ejo – USAID – Rwanda

During the 2000s, Rwanda boasted an average 8 percent annual economic growth rate and the World Bank has noted its “remarkable development success[es] over the last decade which include high growth, rapid poverty reduction and, since 2005, reduced inequality.”⁹⁵ Between 2001 and 2011, the poverty rate dropped from 59 percent to 45 percent, while the distribution of family income inequality measured by the Gini also decreased.⁹⁶

But in spite of the recent progress, Rwanda continues to struggle with poverty and Ubaka Ejo, which means “Build the Future” in Kinyarwanda, is an example of how USAID employed an ownership approach by empowering a Rwandan NGO with deep roots in local communities to improve household resilience through economic strengthening and HIV and AIDS awareness and prevention. Specifically, Ubaka Ejo seeks to:

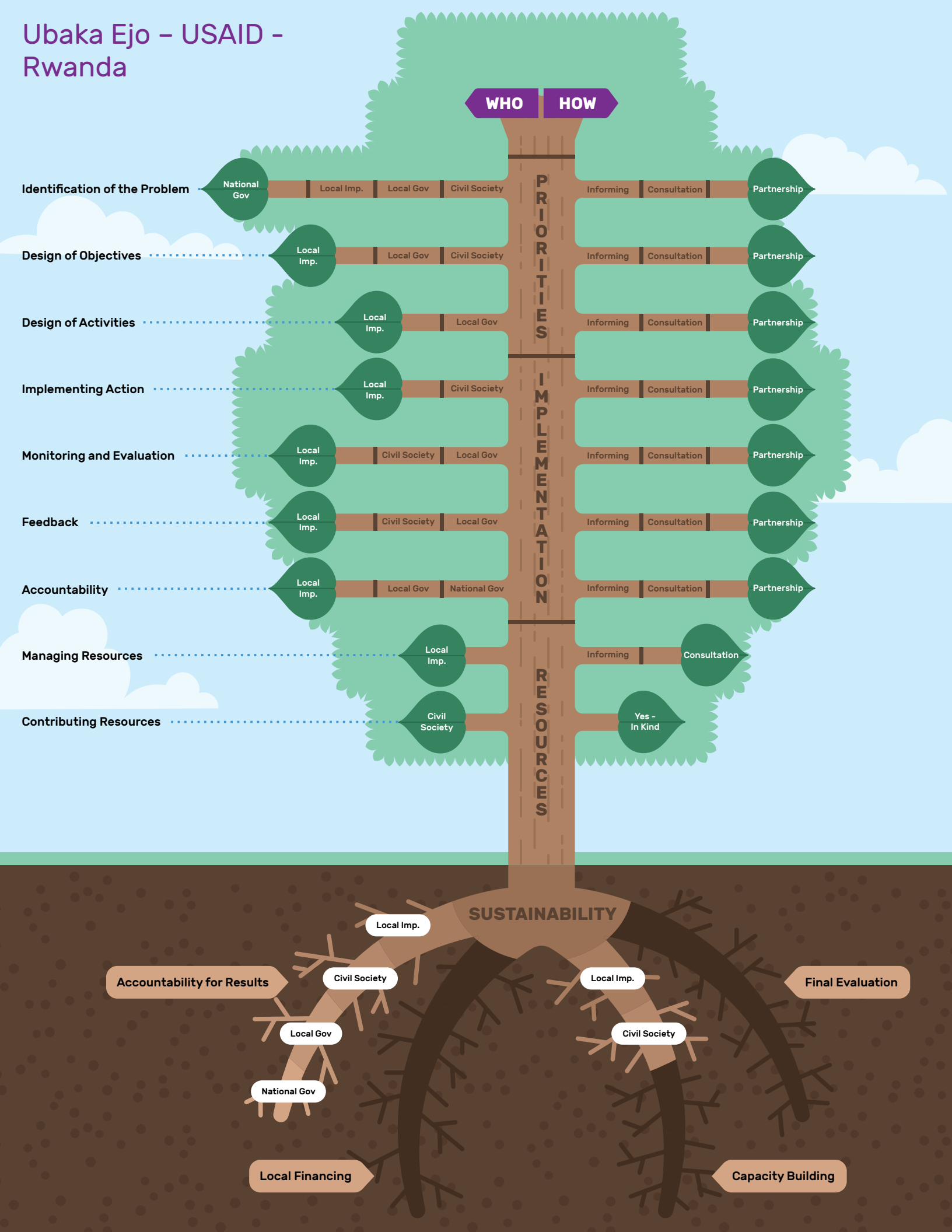
- Improve the economic well-being of orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) and their families; and
- Improve the nutritional status of women and children, especially children younger than two years old, through community-based nutrition interventions.

Ubaka Ejo is an example of USAID’s intent to foster ownership by strengthening local NGOs to compete for and manage direct grants—a goal of the Local Solutions initiative. USAID Rwanda officials acknowledge that this global USAID initiative provided them with strong encouragement to provide direct funding to a local organization.⁹⁷

The project started in 2012, when USAID awarded \$2.15 million over three years to a local NGO, African Evangelistic Enterprise (AEE), with funding coming from the US President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Initially, Ubaka Ejo focused on treating HIV and AIDS impacted households and communities. Following a favorable evaluation of AEE’s project management, USAID provided a five-year extension.

During a previous project, when AEE was a subcontractor, the prime contractor, Global Communities (then known as CHF), provided capacity development to AEE, including assistance on organizational governance, project management, proposal writing and other fundraising, and financial management. AEE staff credit CHF with nurturing it to the point where it could compete for direct funding from the US government.⁹⁸

Ubaka Ejo – USAID - Rwanda



Priorities

From the priorities phase and the project design, AEE assumed a role as full partner with USAID in designing Ubaka Ejo. While AEE exhibited high levels of ownership, it was still operating within the broad parameters set by US agencies, beginning with AEE's preparation of a successful proposal using the guidelines set forth by USAID in its solicitation for applications.⁹⁹ For this reason the Ubaka Ejo project was not assessed at the highest level of ***delegated power*** on the LEAF, but did attain the level of ***partnership***.

AEE staff took pains to stress that USAID did not have any other input into the project's design. "The beauty of the USAID request for proposals is that they just ask for ideas and we put out our model and they judged it best based on who can do the work," one AEE staff member said.¹⁰⁰

While GoR and AEE were the primary local actors assuming ownership over the project in the early phases, AEE designed and operated the project in partnership with the local community.¹⁰¹ The project was not "community-led," but AEE consulted widely with local officials and others working in the same areas of intervention about the project design. Thus, the project exhibited high levels of ownership—among both GoR ministries and AEE—during the priorities phase.

Implementation

Like the priorities phase, the implementation phase of the project had AEE in the driver's seat as the direct recipient of US funds and with a broad mandate to implement the program based on its directives.¹⁰² As illustrated by the LEAF, implementation of the project was led by AEE in partnership with USAID.

As part of its leadership of project implementation, AEE brought in a range of local stakeholders—both communities and civil society.¹⁰³ AEE's grounding in the community was reflected in its emphasis on organizing communities into self-help groups that jointly identify needs with AEE. In this way, AEE seeks to bring local knowledge and leadership capacity to bear. "Ubaka Ejo is not a new program," one AEE staff member said. "It's an improvement of the previous program based on our experiences on the ground." In this sense, the project was very grounded and influenced by community organizations during the implementation phase even as it was led by AEE in partnership with USAID staff. This exemplified the project's strong ownership not just vis-à-vis AEE, but also through civil society implementing partners.

Project interventions included group-based microfinance, growth monitoring of vulnerable preschool children, use of the positive deviance/hearth method to reduce child malnutrition, encouraging beneficiaries to plant kitchen gardens, youth vocational training, and promotion of handwashing and step-and-wash systems. AEE national staff said they sometimes serve as intermediaries between program beneficiaries and local and regional GoR officials. "[AEE field staff] are close to the beneficiaries on a day-to-day basis," one AEE national official said. "They talk to the local leadership on a day-to-day basis."

Implementing the program with and through local organizations is not without its challenges. While working with local groups may help strengthen local engagement and ownership, USAID officials noted that there are challenges with reporting. According to one official, the major strengths of INGOs over their Rwandan NGO counterparts was their ability to report upwards in the fashion preferred by the US and other international donors. “International NGOs produce good quality reports because they know how to write,” the USAID official said. In terms of documentation [of results], it’s really a verbal process [for local NGOs].”

As in project design, AEE appeared to be a full partner in implementing Ubaka Ejo, but the LEAF did not assess the agency at the level of “delegated power” because the project still had significant control from USAID. USAID Mission staff said that they meet frequently with AEE, particularly to see if there are any technical issues or challenges in project implementation.

USAID will also raise issues with the government if AEE so desires, placing the US government agency in the role of an intermediary between local stakeholders.¹⁰⁴ However, AEE headquarters staff informed us that USAID’s quarterly project reviews occur in the capital city, Kigali, and mission staff seldom visit the field, except when the project introduces new components. USAID does not systematically make field visits to examine how the project engages beneficiary families and communities in design of activities or their implementation.¹⁰⁵



“When we are a direct recipient, we actually have the project in our own hands. So from the word ‘go’, we are the author of the idea. We are the author of the project.”

John Kalenzi
CEO
African Evangelistic Enterprise

Resources

Ubaka Ejo involves a good deal of volunteer labor on the part of the beneficiaries, e.g., the work of “caregivers” (basically social work paraprofessionals) who counsel beneficiary families, as well as that of community health promoters. The reliance on volunteers mirrors and expands upon *umuganda*, the five hours of monthly mandatory community service that the

government requires of all Rwandans.¹⁰⁶ Such in-kind contributions are the main sources of support for the project, besides US government funding.¹⁰⁷

The *resources* component of the Ubaka Ejo LEAF is perhaps least locally owned and is one of the challenges of ownership found among several of the case study projects. While AEE receives funding from a variety of donors for multiple projects, there was no evidence of additional funding sources for Ubaka Ejo other than from the US government.¹⁰⁸ AEE has considerable leeway in managing resources, but is ultimately responsible—and totally dependent on—USAID for funding the program. Therefore, as the LEAF indicates, the level of managing resources was assessed at the level of consultation.

Sustainability

Sustainability of results is a concern of all the stakeholders in Ubaka Ejo.¹⁰⁹ Local government officials repeatedly brought up sustainability and pointed to the long-term national goal of achieving self-reliance and breaking free of Rwanda's current aid dependence. They also referenced the post-genocide experience of INGOs descending upon the country, only to depart abruptly once they themselves had declared "recovery." So project stakeholders expect INGOs to build the capacity of Rwandan NGOs, which they expect, in turn, to strengthen community capacity.¹¹⁰ Nevertheless, the sustainability picture on the LEAF for Ubaka Ejo is mixed.

On one hand, AEE is a strong local NGO with diversified funding streams, but the vast majority of this funding comes from external donors so, as indicated on the LEAF, we did not find evidence for continued local funding for the Ubaka Ejo program after US government funding ends. While the LEAF indicates that the project receives local funding, it is important to note that this funding will not be enough to sustain Ubaka Ejo after US government funding ends.

On the other hand, there was evidence that the project was building capacity among project volunteers to be taken forward.

As the capacity building LEAF indicator demonstrates, AEE's model of service delivery is premised on gains from Ubaka Ejo enduring beyond the availability of US funding because the project is anchored on community-based structures such as self-help and savings groups.¹¹¹ Training participants also receive instruction on life skills and financial literacy that are intended to last them a lifetime, and AEE encourages them to form savings groups after the training ends, so that they can build their assets or start businesses. AEE follows up with beneficiaries after they exit the project.¹¹²

Beneficiaries who have participated in savings groups confirmed to us that the project has helped them to get out—and stay out—of the most extreme poverty.¹¹³ That is why, in spite of a lack detailed plans for obtaining additional resources, the LEAF indicates that local stakeholders—and particularly AEE—have planned ahead on some components of long-term sustainability. As with other projects profiled in this report, long-term local funding remains a conundrum even for projects that otherwise exhibit strong ownership characteristics.

Community Empowerment Against Tuberculosis – USAID – Indonesia

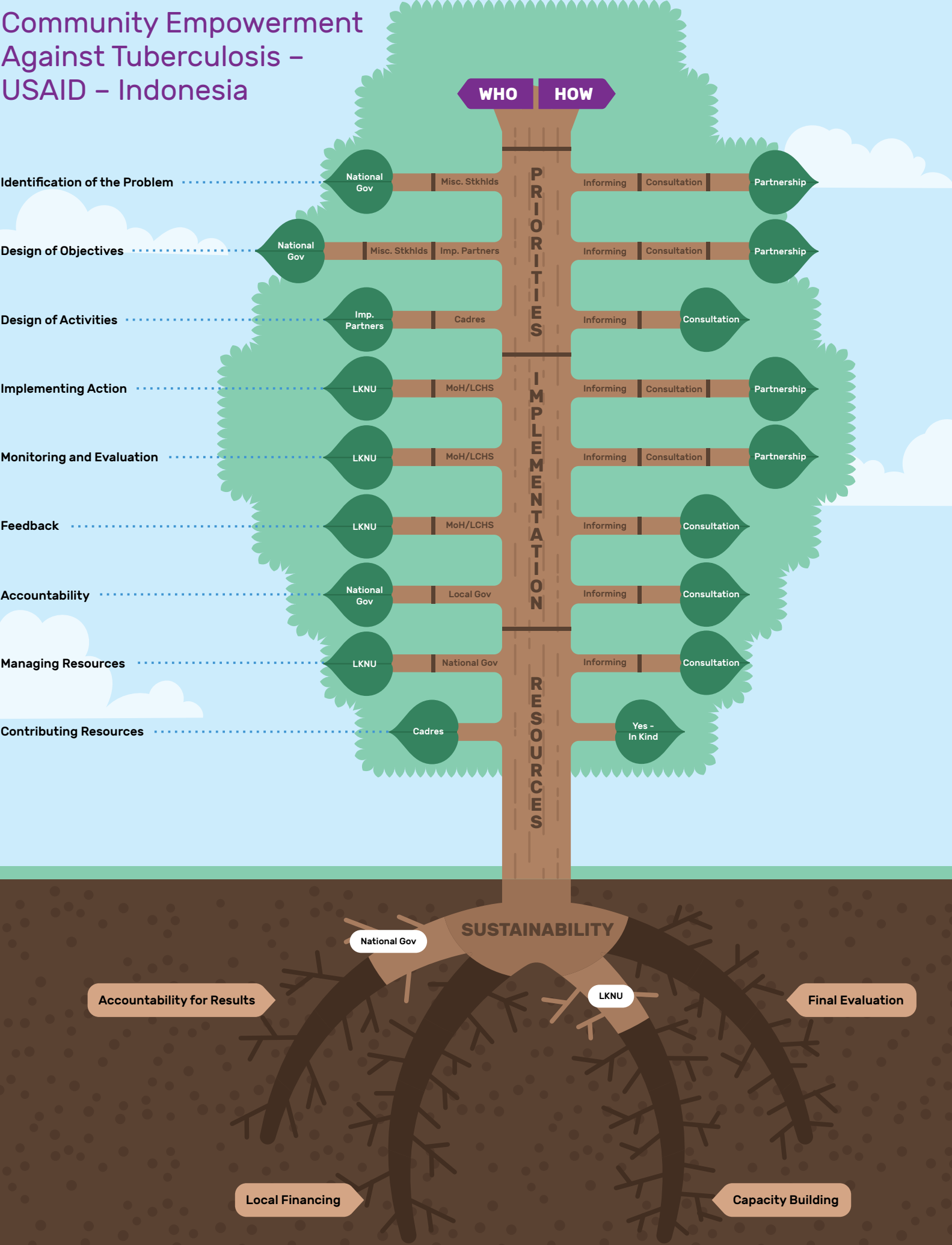
USAID's Community Empowerment Against Tuberculosis (CEPAT, which means "quickly" in Bahasa Indonesia) project is focused on fighting tuberculosis (TB) in areas prone to the spread of the disease. Because of the stigma attached to TB locally, CEPAT is designed to mobilize community members to ensure that those who have the disease seek and complete treatment at the primary health care centers.¹¹⁴ The \$12 million project (with \$4 million provided to each of the three grantees) will run until 2017.¹¹⁵ Like other USAID projects profiled in this report, the impetus for localizing CEPAT was, in part, inspired by USAID's Local Solutions initiative. CEPAT offered USAID/Indonesia an excellent opportunity to show its commitment to that country-ownership mandate.¹¹⁶ However, localization also made sense to achieve better results. USAID/Indonesia officials recognized the need and opportunity to work directly with community groups. As stated by one USAID/Indonesia official, "To really address TB issues, which are stigmatized in communities, you need to find partners who are rooted in the communities you intend to serve. Local actors are a key tool to identify patients. The strength of the local organization is that they really know what's happening."¹¹⁷

The project seeks to reduce TB through two avenues. The first is to increase the skills and technological competence within the local health system, from local health service centers to the informal networks of community health volunteers (cadres). CEPAT aims to help cadres identify and support people infected with TB and ensure that they receive long-term treatment. The second avenue is to support advocacy by the implementing NGO and their partners. This is intended to improve government health care services through social accountability mechanisms and demand increased funding in the local health budgets specifically for TB care.¹¹⁸

Overall, CEPAT offers a good example of how ownership practices strengthen a range of local stakeholders who are living in and working in communities to tackle TB. As the LEAF indicates, working directly with a local partner meant local stakeholders, including USAID's civil society partner and those in the communities, exercised a significant degree of control over the project. But the LEAF also uncovered some challenges. While the project works directly with local stakeholders to have them tackle TB in their communities, the LEAF pointed out some concerns related to sustainability. There doesn't seem to be local authority exercised over the project that could guarantee the results of the project are maintained. Likewise, activities designed to ensure continued resourcing have not successfully guaranteed TB care will continue to be financed in the targeted communities after the end of the project.

Aside from these real concerns, the community now sees the value of TB care and the value of their role in community care.

Community Empowerment Against Tuberculosis – USAID – Indonesia



Priorities

As the LEAF assessed, CEPAT exemplified ownership practice in terms of how USAID determined the project priority. By design, the objectives and activities of the project are integrated into the Indonesian-conceived and government-led National Tuberculosis Project (NTP), which recognized the need for a program to socialize behavioral changes to fight TB through community-level responses. The NTP determined the results to be measured as the standard of success.¹¹⁹ While USAID wrote the original request for proposals, local organizations that applied for support determined the specific activities that they would implement to achieve the stated objectives of the project.¹²⁰



“The project is very flexible, because if we found the challenges and we need to change something we don’t need to wait for the long time to get decision and make the changes. Compared with what I have experienced before, we feel that ownership is really strong in this project.”

Esty Febriani
Chief Of Party, CEPAT
LKNU (Lembaya Kesehatan Nahdlatul Ulama)

Implementation

The project was intentionally designed to have a high level of local engagement. In fact, USAID limited the competition to lead the project to local organizations. Currently, three Indonesian civil society organizations implement CEPAT: Lembaga Kesehatan Nahdlatul Ulama (LKNU), Jaringan Kesehatan Masyarakat (JKM), and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Timika (RDC).¹²¹ This review focuses on LKNU’s project implementation of their activities in urban, lower-income Jakarta neighborhoods. LKNU is the Health Institute of Nahdlatul Ulama (the Awakening of the Islamic Scholars), one of the world’s largest Muslim organizations.¹²² Because LKNU is already part of a well-known social, political, and religious organization, it easily mobilized community volunteers to get people to seek treatment through integrated socialization, behavior change communication, patient identification, and connected patients to long-term treatment at primary health care centers within communities where it has a strong presence.

The results of the LEAF deem the relationship between USAID and LKNU as a partnership, due

to the high level of flexibility LKNU exhibited during the project. According to the leadership of CEPAT-LKNU, the combination of a direct relationship in addition to the flexibility engrained in a cooperative agreement¹²³ with USAID provided the tractability to design and implement the project. This allowed CEPAT-LKNU to operate within the local context by working through its existing relationships with health officials and local governance bodies.¹²⁴ As one LKNU official mentioned, “I think the project is very flexible... if we found the challenges and we need to change something... I think we can do it.”¹²⁵ Cadres, who are already part of the targeted communities, built on existing relationships to identify TB patients through door-to-door outreach, religious gatherings, and political affiliations, and formed close relationships with patients to ensure adherence to long-term treatment.¹²⁶

As the LEAF helped uncover, one of the challenges of the project is that local authorities and community members lack formal accountability mechanisms to influence the project. The project seeks permission for activities from the local health system; however, the LEAF did not uncover evidence of a formal community feedback mechanism or identify other local government authorities in the areas targeted by CEPAT with the ability to influence CEPAT’s activities.¹²⁷

Resources

As assessed in the LEAF, Indonesian stakeholders mostly provided in-kind support to CEPAT. The Ministry of Health provided resources during project implementation, in the form of salary support to local health officials benefitting from the health trainings. In addition, community health workers provided their time on a volunteer basis.¹²⁸ But there was no indication that the government or the NU provided additional financial resources for the project.

Sustainability

As expressed in the LEAF, CEPAT clearly demonstrated a strong locally led implementation process, but the potential for locally led project activities after the end of the project is questionable. The skills, knowledge, and capacities that CEPAT has supported will remain within the local health systems as long as the health professionals who received trainings continue their work. While the NTP will continue the mandate to provide community based TB socialization activities to Indonesia, there is not an identifiable local body, or evidence of local resources, intended for the continuation of results. An LKNU official shared an anecdote noting that CEPAT’s advocacy raised the TB care budget in one district by 30 percent, but the project documents offered no other evidence suggesting a similar result in any other of LKNU’s target communities.¹²⁹ Because the project lacked accountability to local officials, who may have appreciated improved TB care in their communities as a result of CEPAT, they are not likely to find ways to ensure that project outcomes endure.

Water Network Project – MCC – Jordan

As in the MCC Indonesia case study project, the MCC in Jordan demonstrates quality ownership practice in US foreign assistance. In both cases, MCC's country-led ownership approach allowed for a significant amount of authority to local stakeholders. As demonstrated by the LEAF, Jordanians were at helm of identifying project priorities to ensuring long-term sustainability.

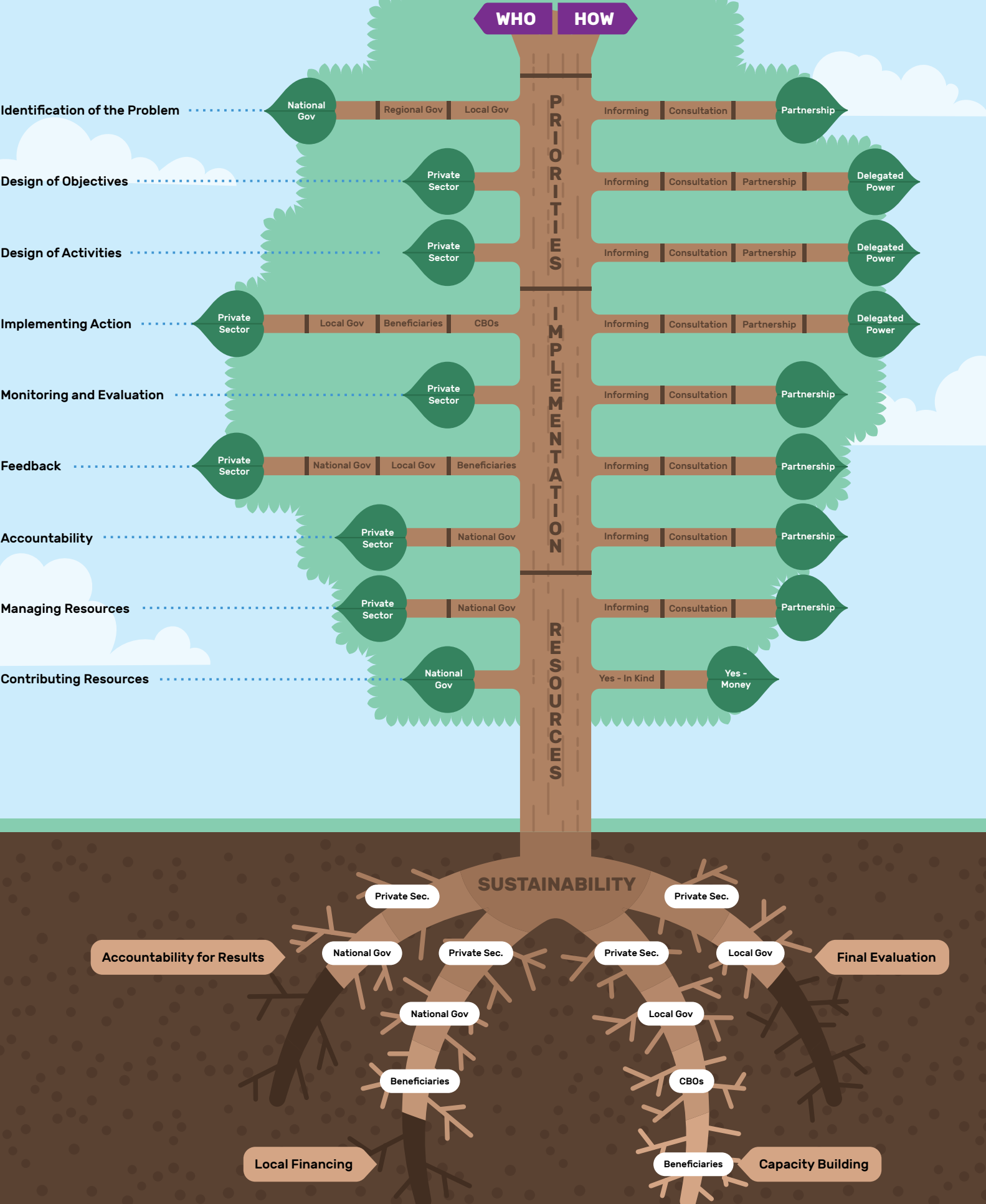
Jordan is the second most water-poor country in the world.¹³⁰ The lack of access to ground water or aquifers is a major constraint to economic development, and disproportionately affects people living in poverty. Simultaneously, the United States's relationship with Jordan is one of its most important strategic partnerships in the Middle East. US foreign assistance plays a significant role this relationship.¹³¹

The \$275 million MCC Compact entered into force in December of 2011 and focuses on increasing the water supply of residents of the Zarqa Governorate, one of the poorest in the country.¹³² A stable source of water is not only crucial for poverty reduction and economic growth, but helps maintain stability with Jordan's neighbors.

The compact has three distinct, but inter-related projects, and focuses on a single sector in one geographical area: The Wastewater Network Project is replacing and rehabilitating undersized sewage and wastewater lines, the As-Samra Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion Project (analyzed later in this report), and, as explored further in this case study, the Water Network Project aims to improve water delivery to both homes and businesses in the cities of Zarqa and Ruseifa. The project aims to reduce the water waste percentage in the area to 35 percent and increase the number of days people receive water services from two to three through the construction of a combination of 800 kilometers of new or rehabilitated pipes, new pump stations, replacement of water meters and smart water management behavioral change. One key activity, called Water Smart Homes, works at the household level to raise awareness of water-saving practices, including some plumbing skills.¹³³

As captured by the LEAF, the project demonstrates some of the highest levels of delegated power to Jordanians in the design and implementation phase. The LEAF uncovered a key dimension to local implementation: not only were Jordanians leading the implementation of the project, but the prime implementer, the MCA, was beholden to Jordanian stakeholders at a number of levels. This local accountability exists simply because the project is already integrated into the water management system and will remain so when the compact comes to an end in December 2016. The project also was one of the few examined that took extra measures to ensure gender sensitivity was integrated throughout project activities. While the project demonstrated some of the highest levels of delegated power, the LEAF also uncovered are some key questions about the sustainability of the MCA model, which are discussed in Text Box 8.

Water Network Project – MCC – Jordan



Text Box 8: The MCA: Is it a Sustainable Model?

The Jordan water projects provide a shining example how of a Jordanian organization, the MCA, successfully managed and implemented a water infrastructure program. Most importantly, the body was accountable to Jordanian officials while beholden to US government rules and regulations. But where the MCA shines when it comes to local engagement with priorities, implementation, and shared resources, there are some concerns about sustainability.

At the end of the MCC compact with Jordan—to take place this year (2016)—the MCA will cease to exist. The Jordan MCA leadership is currently drafting and sharing sustainability plans with the MCA board of directors.¹⁴⁸ These plans are part of a MCC compact implementation requirement for the MCA and accountability entities to produce compact closure plans 15 to 12 months in advance of the end of the compact.¹⁴⁹ These plans include agreements to transition the highly trained staff back into the Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ); the selection of Miyahuna, an existing water utility company, rather than a government ministry or board, to ensure financial sustainability and efficiency; and capacity building trainings between the MCA, the WAJ, and Miyahuna to improve management and maintenance of the water system.¹⁵⁰ MCA is also shifting over all equipment to Miyahuna. In addition, each contract with the construction companies that built the water system contains a two-year obligation to maintain the new infrastructure.¹⁵¹ Even the high-level operational, health, safety, and environmental elements of the project are now being socialized into other government bodies with the hope to raise health, safety, and environmental standards across Jordan.¹⁵²

While there is a clear plan to transfer a number of capacities to Miyahuna, there doesn't seem to be a clear plan to ensure Miyahuna operates with the same standards of stakeholder engagement and governance. Citizens, sometimes via government representation, had a number of mechanisms they could access to inform MCA activities, from on-site complaint mechanisms, to town halls before construction, to the stakeholder committee.¹⁵³ The MCA also conducted targeted outreach to women civic organizations and marginalized communities.¹⁵⁴ The government, private sector, and civil society were able to voice opinions through their oversight of the MCA during board of directors meetings. These mechanisms were key to help the MCA work with the people of Zarqa, and proved to be especially critical during the last few years when the MCA overcame a barrage of citizen and government complaints as in Zarqa.¹⁵⁵ What's worrying is that while responsibility for the construction of the water system is shifting to Miyahuna, there may be a drop in the level of citizen oversight of the utility, especially in response to the particular needs of women.¹⁵⁶

The MCA is a project implementation unit (PIU). PIUs are bodies specifically set up to manage and implement donor projects in a particular country as a way to avoid the challenges of working with weak government institutions.¹⁵⁷ Similar to other PIUs, there are concerns that the MCA may raise technical capacity, financial management capacity, and governance standards in a small unit of the government, while causing some institutional harm as well.¹⁵⁸

The technical and management capacities are usually drawn from government institutions, creating a government to non-government brain drain, and the strong governance mechanisms built to monitor and regulate PIUs cease to exist at the end of the project. The international community attempted to push donors away from using PIUs when the conundrum was formally recognized by the Paris Declaration for Aid Effectiveness and measured within the Paris Declaration Monitoring Framework as agreed within the Accra Agenda for Action.¹⁵⁹

While the MCA has qualities similar to a stereotypically problematic PIU, the local nature of the MCA might help it avoid the PIU curse. During the final days of the interviews in Jordan, a number of MCA board members mentioned their interest in making sure that they inform the sustainability plans to look beyond the sustainability of just technology, human resources, and financial resources, and to ensure that the MCA sustainability plans include a clear plan to improve the stakeholder feedback as water management responsibilities transition to Miyahuna.¹⁶⁰ Strengthening the diversity representation on the Miyahuna board of directors and ensuring both the governorate and municipality have close ties to Miyahuna, are two fundamental values that need to be integrated into Miyahuna governance decisions.

Priorities

As the LEAF assessed, the priorities phase of the project demonstrated among the highest levels of ownership practice with both the government and private-sector entities taking on **delegated power** roles. The Government of Jordan led the processes during the compact development phase and the MCA Jordan was responsible for determining project activities.¹³⁴ “We asked them where they would like the money to go,” one MCA representative said. “Most of the people said water was the biggest constraint to growth and the most critical sector in Jordan.”¹³⁵

Implementation

As the LEAF uncovered, not only were Jordanians at the heart of designing compact activities and identifying priorities, but a coalition of Jordanian government officials, companies, and beneficiaries managed, constructed, and oversaw the full range of compact activities and phases. The MCA worked closely with other government authorities to help with the overall management of compact activities. When contracting specific work requirements, the MCA generally hired local companies. “This saved in the cost and reduced the amount of time to hire, but we still maintained high requirements for those interested in bidding,” one MCA respondent said. The MCA didn’t require companies to be Jordanian to bid, but most Jordanian bidders met the project requirements at the same or lower cost than international bidders.¹³⁶ In other cases, Jordanian companies partnered with international companies.¹³⁷

Due to these high levels of ownership in implementing the project, our LEAF assessment

indicates mostly “partnership” and “delegated power” levels of ownership. “Jordanians know the main concepts of design, they are well-educated in water and wastewater systems. We have excellent engineers in order to construct the work,” one Jordanian respondent said. “Jordanians can oversee the whole system.”¹³⁸

What is especially noteworthy is the local accountability exercised over the MCA, as demonstrated through the LEAF. The MCA receives feedback and is held to account by a number of Jordanian bodies including a board of directors, made up of representatives from Jordanian government, civil society, and the private sector.¹³⁹ The MCA stakeholder committee is made up of a diversity of people from Zarqa,¹⁴⁰ and closely collaborates with local government bodies. The local oversight was especially needed to address complaints about MCA activities raised by citizens in Zarqa over the radio and directly to local government officials.¹⁴¹ The MCA was able to utilize their relationships to overcome the issue by working collaboratively with local government bodies.¹⁴²



“I know what the system needs, I know how to design...I know the areas, I know the people. Why shall we bring somebody from outside in order to come and design for us and construct for us. We can do it by ourselves.”

*Eng. Rodana Al Dabbas
Project Director, Water Systems
Millennium Challenge Account – Jordan*

Resources

As shown on the LEAF, Jordanians provide substantial resources besides those that come from the MCC in two forms. Users are charged for water usage by the government-owned water utility company Miyahuna,¹⁴³ and the government of Jordan subsidizes the cost of providing water to the population. In fact, only the major construction costs of the water pipes project was borne by the MCA but all continued maintenance and future work will come from Miyahuna, the utility company.¹⁴⁴

Sustainability

The MCA in Jordan is in the process of creating a formal *sustainability* plan as part of the compact closure plan.¹⁴⁵ Respondents did verbally share their plans for ensuring the project results would be maintained. The LEAF's sustainability section assesses the project highly on all indicators. (See Box 8 for further discussion.) In 2015 Miyahuna took over responsibility for water service delivery as part of the cost recovery conditions that MCC placed on the project. As a corporatized entity owned by the GoJ, Miyahuna is required to maintain financial transparency and works much more closely with outreach and customer interaction, as compared to the old government utility. As one respondent noted, "The project design emphasized better equipping those operating the existing system *to meet the needs of their own population*."¹⁴⁶ The staff of the MCA, the equipment purchased, and maintenance obligations will all be brought into the existing water system at the end of the MCC compact. There are also ongoing efforts to build stakeholder groups through Miyahuna to continue the behavior change campaign, including the women plumbers project (See Text Box 5.) However, it is not clear whether the MCA adequately addresses the need to continue good governance standards in its sustainability plans, including a diverse representation on the board of directors, or local community engagement.¹⁴⁷



Case Studies: Ownership to Facilitate Partnerships for Economic Growth

Often, there are questions about how ownership of foreign assistance might lead to economic development—since private sector entities tend to operate on a different set of incentives compared to governments and donors. The two case studies presented below demonstrate how local leadership led the way toward encouraging economic development through engaging private-sector actors.

Akazi Kanoze – USAID – Rwanda

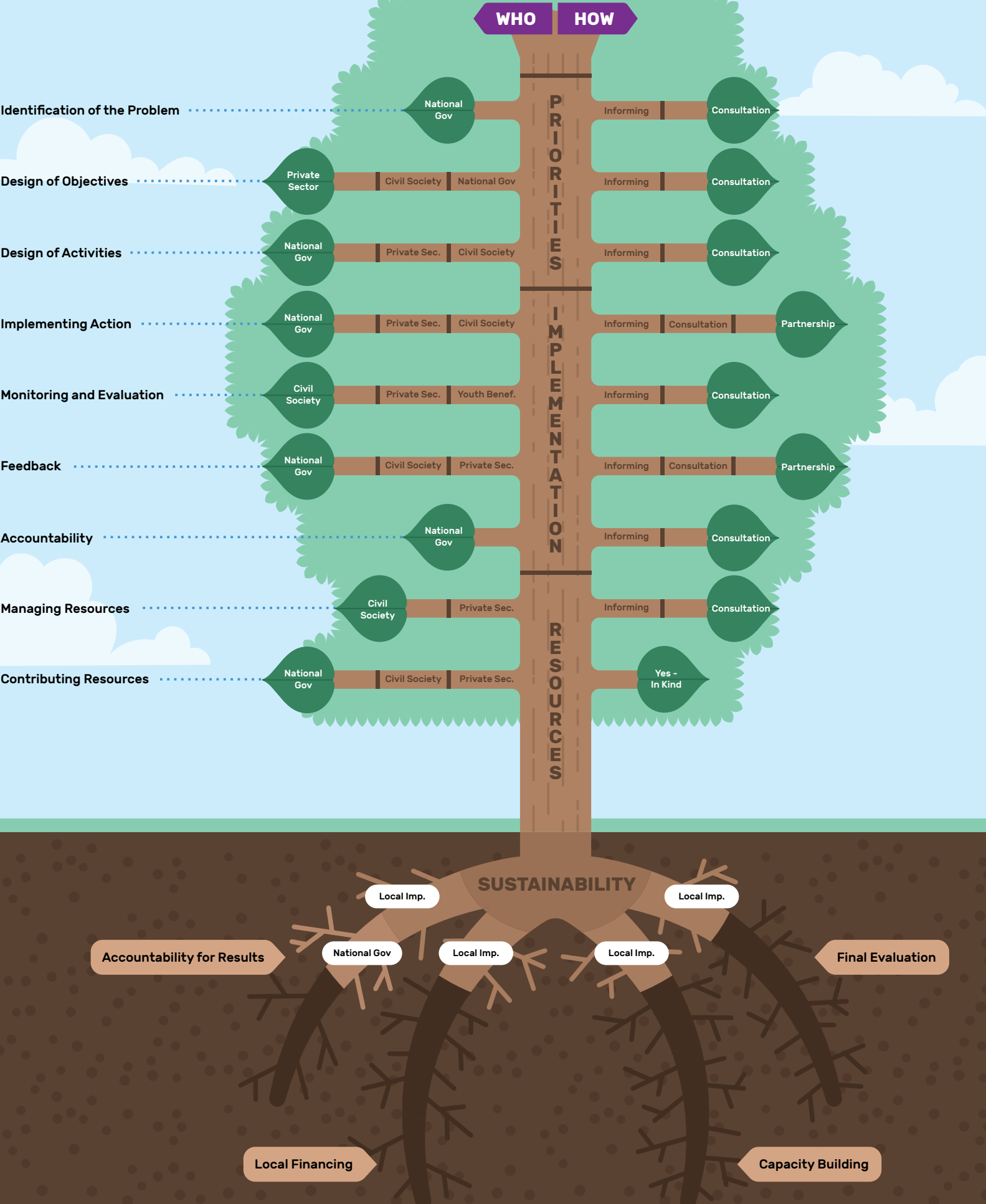
Akazi Kanoze (AK), meaning, “a job well done,” in Kinyarwanda, originated as a USAID activity designed to address the challenge of youth unemployment in Rwanda. As illustrated by the LEAF visual, USAID’s approach to the project fostered local leadership, with the strongest examples coming in the *implementation* and *sustainability* phases of the project. Ownership in the implementation phase engaged a wide range of stakeholders in joint decision-making roles, including Rwandan government agencies, local businesses, and civil society implementing partners. But what made this project stand out was the initiative, led by USAID, with significant support from local stakeholders, to create an independent Rwandan NGO, Akazi Kanoze Access (AKA) to continue the work of the project, with the long-term goal of operational and financial independence from USAID.

The AK project and its continuation through AKA provides vulnerable, out-of-school Rwandan youth, ages 14 to 24, “with market-relevant life and work readiness training and support, hands-on training opportunities, and links to the employment and self-employment job market.”¹⁶¹ The project was conceived with an initial target of 12,500 youth beneficiaries in two urban settings, but quickly grew to include project sites throughout the country with programs operated by local civil society, the private sector, and Rwandan government agencies. Since its inception in 2009, roughly 20,000 youth have graduated from the program, with 65 percent of them confirmed to have found employment or started their own business.¹⁶²

The AK project was also designed to be gender-sensitive and the project final evaluation report—produced by international contractor Education Development Center (EDC) and USAID—disaggregated project outcomes by gender.¹⁶³ The report states that qualitative data gathering was conducted, “to maintain gender parity of interviewees.”¹⁶⁴ In fact, some qualitative outcomes from the evaluation found greater impacts for young women than men. The report states, “Young women in Akazi Kanoze had significantly higher increases [than young men] in knowledge of how to find a job/livelihood and apply for work.”¹⁶⁵ We also noted that program participants were not channeled into trades based on gender stereotypes. For example, we encountered girls who chose to become iron welders due to their interest and their perception that is paid better than other jobs being offered.¹⁶⁶

The services the organization offers have three main components:

Akazi Kanoze – USAID – Rwanda



- **Workforce Readiness:** This core component is a 100-hour curriculum focused on professional “soft skills,” including teamwork, customer service, communication skills, self-awareness, and financial literacy, with a heavy emphasis on entrepreneurship. This training is intended to be transferable across a variety of vocations;
- **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET):** The TVET project component typically follows soft skills training and includes training in technical skills such as auto repair, hospitality, construction, and cosmetology, among other trades. The technical skills training is offered by nonprofit and community-based organizations, as well as government technical schools; and
- **Internship/Employment:** AKA relies on its partnerships with the local private sector for internship and employment placement service after completion of the soft skills and vocational components of the program.



“This is the first international NGO that helped in creating the local NGO that can do the same thing, and then phase out from the international partner. This was very wonderful.”

Irenée Nsengiyumva
Deputy Director General for Training
Workforce Development Authority

Priorities

USAID consulted closely with the Rwandan Ministry of Labor, among other government bodies in identifying program priorities. Encouraging entrepreneurship and strengthening the private sector are key components of Rwanda’s national development plan.

Perhaps reflecting this consultative approach, AK is consistent with the approach laid out in the GoR’s *Vision 2020* document, which places particular importance on improving national technical and vocational education and training as a means to generate youth employment and generate 200,000 off-farm jobs annually.¹⁶⁷ Rwanda is currently experiencing a youth bulge: 72 percent of the population is 25 years of age or younger, and 61.5 percent of the working age population is 16 to 35 years old, with 125,000 new people entering the labor

market each year.¹⁶⁸ While today Rwanda is a country transformed with a leadership committed to maintaining stability, leaders remember how previous regimes mobilized unemployed youth to carry out the genocide.¹⁶⁹

EDC, a Waltham, MA-based NGO, was awarded the AK project in 2009. Like USAID, EDC followed a consultative approach to tap the knowledge of local stakeholders to determine the most appropriate project activities.

During the program design phase, EDC worked closely with the Rwandan Ministry of Labor to develop the 100-hour soft skills curriculum. Rwandan private sector partners were engaged to conduct a market analysis to identify the youth capacity gaps and local labor market needs to be addressed by the project. “The AK curriculum is market-driven,” one AK staff member said. “It’s based on the work we’ve done with local partners to identify labor market gaps for youth.”

The consultative process described above is reflected in the LEAF. While the input of GoR ministries and local private sector actors is reflected in the project priorities and design, ultimately decisions were made by a US-based contractor (EDC), based on a model that it had utilized elsewhere. For this reason the priorities phase on the LEAF analysis of the project is consistently assessed at the **consultation** level. Beyond adherence to the broad development priorities of the GoR, the AK project was designed by international actors in consultation with local stakeholders. As indicated on the LEAF, we found no evidence of particularly high levels of ownership during the design phase. Local ownership escalated significantly during the *implementation* phase of the project.

Implementation

After the program was launched, it was operated and managed by EDC in coordination with local implementing partners. At its best, as indicated in the LEAF, the level of ownership rose to the level of partnership during parts of the *implementation* phase. The primary local stakeholders throughout this phase were GoR ministries and agencies. Civil society partners played a leadership role in monitoring and evaluation, although that, too, was ultimately led by EDC.

AK worked with numerous Rwandan organizations to identify and expand its network of youth participants. EDC worked through organizations that were engaging youth already, thereby tapping into, rather than replicating, existing networks.

Ongoing consultation with the private sector and participants were particularly evident during the *implementation* phase. As the LEAF indicates, civil society organizations and the private sector were important local partners during the *implementation* phase even as the GoR was the leading local interlocutor with USAID. AK engaged its local private sector partners through an advisory committee representing a range of business sectors from hospitality to construction. According to one AKA staff member, “What we do is just run ideas by them on activities that we’re trying to implement and get their feedback from a private sector perspective. What does an employer want to see? And how can our services as an organization

respond to the needs of the private sector?”

The project also engaged graduates through an alumni network organized into chapters that meet monthly. Ambassadors from these chapters met with project staff on a quarterly basis to give feedback and hold project leaders accountable regarding ongoing requests for support.

Key evidence of the strength of local ownership of AK’s vocational training program is its adoption by the GoR’s vocational and public education systems. After AK’s early success in training youth through its partnerships with civil society and the private sector, the GoR Workforce Development Agency (WDA) approached AK about adopting its curriculum as its own Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) regime. “[Prior to the integration of AK] there was no government curriculum to address soft skills,” one AKA staff member said. AKA is currently working with the WDA to make its program even more widely available by including it as part of the public secondary education curriculum.

Resources

AK’s civil-society and private-sector implementing partners had some say in the use of program resources, but ultimately control over project finances rested with EDC as the project implementer. As the LEAF indicates, the resources phase did not attain the same level of local ownership as the implementation phase, so the project was assessed at the **consultation** level on managing resources. Implementing partners were consulted and had influence over the way resources were used, but not final decision-making power. All financial resources for the project came from USAID and were channeled and managed by EDC, with in-kind resources contributed by local stakeholders through staff time and the use of facilities and materials. However, the AK project was exemplary in terms of its long-range planning to secure resources to continue a wholly locally controlled version of the project (AKA) after USAID ceased funding in July 2016. (See below.)

Sustainability

As mentioned above, AK’s focus on sustainability through creation of an independent, Rwandan organization to continue vocational training and support to youth is its most notable component in terms of ownership. This is reflected in the next LEAF, where the AK project was assessed positively on nearly all of the *sustainability* project phase indicators. In 2015, in preparation for the end of the program, USAID and EDC worked with local partners to create a local nonprofit spinoff of the AK project to carry the work forward after the USAID grant ended in July 2016.¹⁷⁰

As mentioned above, the locally led and operated NGO that has emerged from the EDC program is called *Akazi Kanoze Access*. EDC and USAID decided to support the creation of this new local NGO after it was determined that a new independent organization would be necessary to take forward the vocational training and support work of AK.

USAID and EDC respondents said that the creation of a local NGO to continue the work of

AK was inspired by USAID's Local Solutions initiative. A key part of this effort was ensuring sustainable and diversified sources of long-term funding beyond USAID so that it would be genuinely locally owned. "We wanted to push the boundaries of sustainability and finding new models of funding," one EDC staff member said.

This effort was greatly valued. According to one official from the Rwandan Workforce Development Authority, "It is a very good initiative for...not only employing locals and capacitating them, but going beyond and helping them in setting up their own local NGO... this is the first international NGO that helped in creating the local NGO that can do the same thing and then phase out from the international partner."

It's too early to know if AKA will succeed as an independent organization, but regardless, the fact that the WDA has adopted the AK curriculum into its TVET program ensures that the AK curriculum is valued locally and will be carried forward. "We're [always] looking at: 'Is our support preparing [local stakeholders] to take over?'" one USAID respondent said. "Every element of our portfolio has a local partner or the government."

AKA has already been successful in securing private funding, including a grant from MasterCard, but to be truly independent and self-sustaining, AKA staff said they aspire to become a fee-for-service organization to private sector clients. "We want to sell our services to the private sector like a social enterprise," one AKA member said. "The AK certificate is now in demand by the private sector," one EDC staff member said. While the jury is still out on the ultimate sustainability of AK Access, USAID has laid the foundation for long-term self-sustaining local ownership of the initiative.

As-Samra Water Treatment Facility – MCC – Jordan¹⁷¹

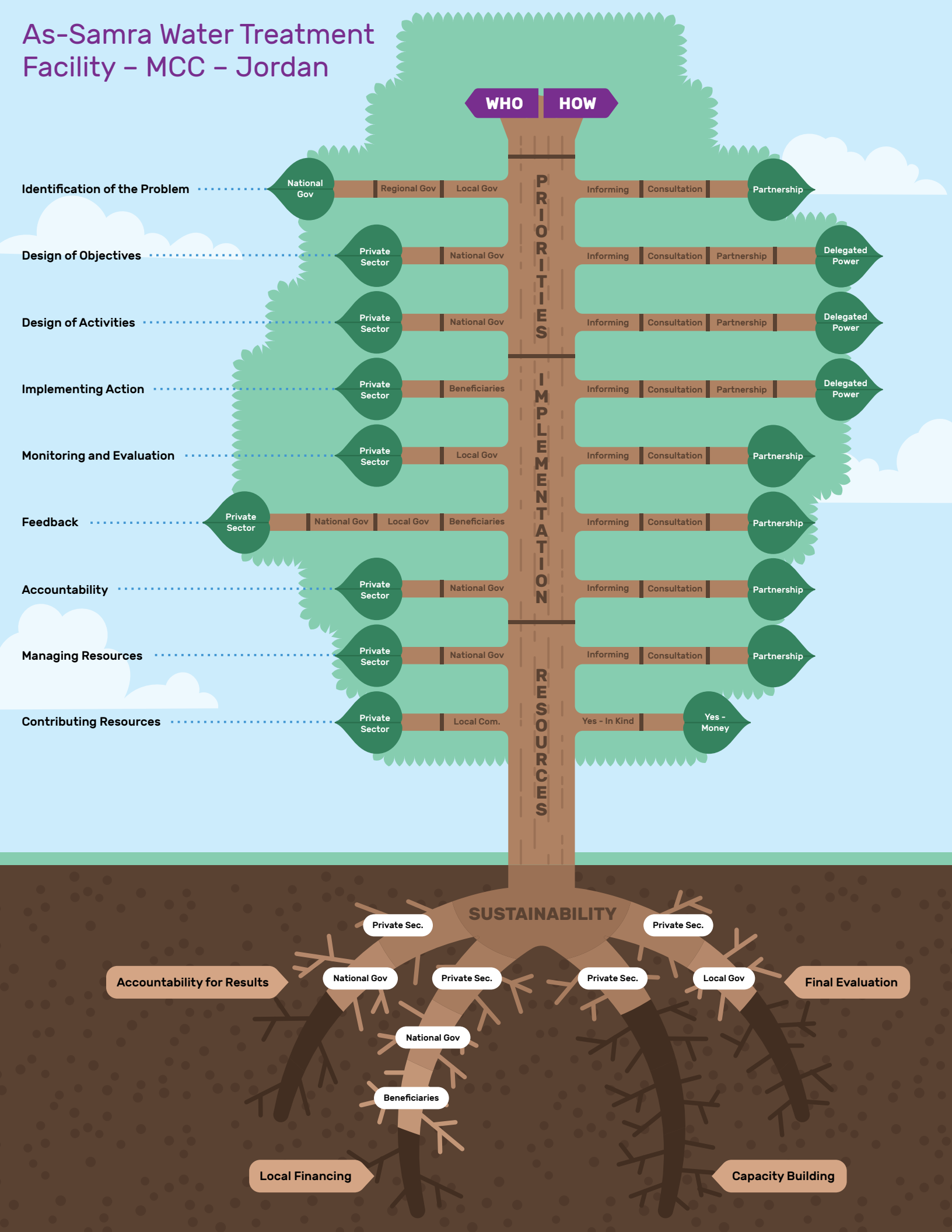
What's remarkable about the As-Samra facility project of MCC's compact with Jordan, as uncovered by the LEAF, is that despite working with a number of non-Jordanian companies and using external financing, the overall implementation of the project was locally led, and it even built in a method to ensure that domestic sources of revenue will sustain the facility.

The As-Samra Waste Water Treatment Plant improves on an existing (USAID-supported) wastewater treatment facility that served 70 percent to 75 percent of Jordanians.¹⁷² The project is MCC's first build-operate-transfer (BOT) financial model project.¹⁷³ This means that MCC, through the MCA and the Jordanian government, provided financial support to hire a company to expand the plant, operate it for 25 years, and ultimately hand it back to the government.

Priorities

As can be seen in the As-Samra LEAF and consistent with the overall MCC Jordan compact, Jordanians came up with the idea for this innovative compact component. Like the Water

As-Samra Water Treatment Facility – MCC – Jordan



Network project, the As-Samra facility expansion was one of the many project proposals that the Jordanian government—in this case the WAJ—developed.¹⁷⁴ The MCA board of directors approved the project based on feasibility studies during the early years of the compact. Jordanians led all of these major infrastructure projects, which included partnerships between multiple local stakeholders—most importantly the Jordanian government and private sector.¹⁷⁵

While the MCC played a major facilitating role in the partnership, Jordanians initiated the idea of expanding the plant.



“The problem with other donors is that they set the amount, they almost select the project and define the components remotely; they are not here. With MCC it’s different. With MCC, it’s teamwork where we have our local team, we have American counterpart team at MCC headquarters.”

*Eng. Kamal Zoubi
Chief Executive Officer
Millennium Challenge Account – Jordan*

Implementation

While the Jordanian leadership in deciding project priorities is key, local leadership also characterized the *implementation* phase. From the early stages of the project, the MCA board of directors, which includes the head of WAJ, maintained oversight of project operations, leading to a strong sense of local ownership of the MCC compact. “This is our project, [preventing] its failure is our responsibility,” one member of the WAJ said.¹⁷⁶

As in Indonesia, the MCA led overall project management. The MCA contracted with a Jordanian company, the Samra Project Company which in turn worked in partnership with an international firm. As one respondent said, “In the project, one amazing aspect was that there was only one foreigner involved in the construction of the expansion.”¹⁷⁷

This partnership has been an economic success for a country that needs to generate employment: The plant provides nearly 220 jobs, and almost all of the employees are Jordanian. Construction employed nearly 2,000 workers from neighboring communities.¹⁷⁸

Resources

What is critical—and even distinct from some of the other projects profiled in this report—is the financial relationship created to ensure its success. And because of this unique public-private relationship, the As-Samra water treatment facility’s financial model provides a clear locally sustained model, as assessed by the LEAF. The MCC helped the Jordanians create a financial partnership between the government and private lenders in order to raise the finances required to hire the BOT operator. The MCC also provided an initial \$110 million grant component to the project, which lowered the amount of funds the government needed to borrow from private investors as well as offered a guarantee to lower the risk rate of the investment. In addition, the MCC helped bring together a group of international investors who matched the MCC contribution.¹⁷⁹ The government used the financial support to hire a private Jordanian-international joint-venture to build, operate, and after 25 years, transfer ownership of the facility back to the government.¹⁸⁰ In return for the financial support, the government plans to pay back the private investors through utility fee payments.¹⁸¹

Sustainability

The MCC helped play a convening role, but also knew when to allow local stakeholders to take the lead in forming a sustainable partnership for economic growth. Often with donor supported infrastructure projects, once construction is complete, the new structures suffer from poor maintenance and operation. The BOT agreement with a private sector entity ensures high quality water treatment for at least 25 years after the end of the MCC compact. However, the LEAF helped reveal a particular challenge that the Jordanian government faced when it comes to continued financing of the facility. The recent Syrian refugee crisis caused the treatment facility to reach capacity three years early. In order to continue providing adequate water treatment to the people of Zarqa, the facility needs to expand once more.¹⁸² If not for the current crises, the government’s original cost recovery plan would have led to a self-sustained financing model. However, now the government is forced to request additional assistance from donors.¹⁸³



5. Conclusion

Encouraging ownership is more challenging than development business-as-usual, but our analysis highlights successes and promising paths forward to advance US ownership policy and practice to make development more sustainable and effective. In this concluding section, we lay out the key findings from our research, discuss the strengths and limitations of the LEAF, and offer policy recommendations.

Key Findings

The case studies demonstrate that US international development agencies can employ a range of ownership approaches to shift responsibility and accountability to local government officials, civil society, and entrepreneurs. While it is too early to ascertain the full developmental impact of the projects explored in our case studies, the application of the LEAF to each of them demonstrates that, through varying ownership modalities, the US can foster the types of local leadership with the potential for longer-term, self-sustained results.

- **Ownership takes multiple forms.** There is not—and there shouldn't be—a one size fits all approach to country-owned development. Projects using ownership approaches successfully range from a USAID government-to-government project in Ghana to an MCC infrastructure project implemented by Jordanian private-sector partners. Each of these approaches helped equip, support, and empower local actors, laying the foundation for more sustainable results.
- **Localization, meaning the transfer of aid directly to local—rather than through international entities—enables local actors to exercise more control over projects.** Partnering directly with the USG ensured that local organizations had the flexibility to draw on their local networks, capacities, and expertise to the greatest degree possible. In Indonesia, USAID intentionally worked directly with Indonesian civil society organizations, enabling them to engage their local networks. In Rwanda, the Ubaka Ejo project resourced the work of a faith-based civil society organization with deep roots in the targeted communities where it had been performing similar activities before USAID arrived.
- **Early ownership sets the path for the rest of the project.** The research analyzes the level of ownership throughout the project cycle in order to showcase model ownership practice at different stages. Findings suggest that projects with the highest overall levels of stakeholder engagement typically included strong local ownership early in the project cycle, when local stakeholders were deeply engaged in identifying development priorities and project design.
- **Alignment with national development plans is an ongoing dialogue, not a document review.** In all of the cases examined in this study, the process of aligning the development project around national priorities included multiple discussions between the

US and partner government that brought deeper and sustained engagement throughout the project cycle. In Ghana, alignment with national and regional development plans brought closer collaboration between the US and different levels of the Ghanaian government—particularly local government institutions. In Indonesia, alignment ensured that the USAID-funded project was achieving the expected outcomes determined by the Indonesian National Tuberculosis Program.

- **International actors can play a key role in connecting local stakeholders in new ways.** Effective stakeholder mapping can identify who should be in the room. Different stakeholders—the national government, local government, civil society, or the private sector—are not always focused on the same problem at the same time. US foreign assistance agencies and implementing organizations can bring different stakeholders together around a shared vision and strengthen transparency and accountability among them. External actors can also play a powerful role in ensuring that people who are typically left out of decision making are brought into the process, such as women and girls, ethnic minorities, or other marginalized groups.
- **Some local actors need additional capacity building prior to a full partnership with the US.** In some cases, US foreign assistance agencies provided long-term support to local actors, including local government agencies and NGOs, fortifying their internal systems, *before* providing direct funding or transferring more responsibility for project management and leadership. In Indonesia, Ghana, and Rwanda, where our case studies more deeply explored localization between USAID and a local civil society organization, the capacity support to local organizations was most valued when the needs addressed were defined by the local organization and geared towards helping it meet its own institutional goals, rather than narrowly targeted to help the organization compete for and implement USG-supported programs.
- **US development agencies employ a variety of methods to minimize the financial risk of directly funding local partners.** Working through country systems or partnering with local organizations is a risky endeavor. In the long-term, using systems to strengthen them will reduce financial risk of donors or other sources of finance. But in the short term, the US can manage financial risk through a variety of tools. In Indonesia, MCC community-development resources went into a World Bank-managed trust fund with strong financial controls and systems, which then provides funds for community-driven projects. In Ghana, USAID conducted an extensive assessment of the financial management capacity of local government institutions' systems *before* providing them with direct funding. This assessment identified areas requiring improvement, allowing the agency to take an incremental approach to when and where direct-funding was provided. Using this risk-mitigation technique, USAID had increased confidence in the financial management capacity of local government entities when funding was disbursed.
- **Ownership policies in Washington played a role in driving the way the US engages with local stakeholders in the field.** We encountered evidence in multiple case studies linking USAID-wide policy initiatives to changes on the ground. In several case study

countries, USAID pointed to USAID Forward and the Local Solutions initiative as a driver of localization. Staff at multiple missions also cited the Country Development Cooperation Strategies (CDCS) as an initiative that broadened USAID and national-level conversations. MCC staff in the field as well as local government counterparts frequently referred to the “MCC model” when discussing different ways that countries were leading on the development projects.

- **The greatest overall threat to sustainability encountered in the projects examined was the lack of a clear plan to secure resourcing beyond US funding.** While a number of case studies demonstrated strong local ownership of priorities, implementation, and results, we found in some cases resource constraints were a persistent obstacle to long-term sustainability. In Rwanda, the Ubaka Ejo project worked with a Rwandan civil society organization with a long history of serving communities, but is dependent on external support for the continuation of project activities. In Indonesia, efforts were made during the CEPAT project to ensure local governance structures allocated more funds to TB resources in the local health systems, but ultimately there was no clear plan for continued financing. In Jordan, the MCA planned for future financing through cost recovery assessments of the As-Samra Water Treatment Facility with local stakeholders, including the public utility company and the government. Unfortunately, the Syrian refugee crisis has threatened these plans. While there are local financing arrangements, the local government will continue to require some form of international support to address the increasing demand for services.



The LEAF: Strengths and Limitations

The LEAF is a useful analytical tool but has some limitations. We hope that it will both be used to bring additional rigor and accountability for ownership in donor-funded project, as well as spark a conversation among stakeholders about how to better assess local ownership and engagement. As discussed above, the LEAF is a prototype and there were a number of ways the LEAF can be strengthened. The next iteration of the LEAF tool might consider addressing the following issues:

- While the LEAF tool captures the relative influence different groups of stakeholders exercise over a project, it fails to categorize stakeholders according to their appropriate roles and responsibilities for ensuring sustained development results. One path to explore would be to link the LEAF's *who* methodology to political economic analyses to gain further insight about who among local stakeholders should be exercising influence over development projects in addition to who currently is exercising influence over the development project;
- The tool's gender sensitivity and appreciation of whether marginalized communities members are disproportionately left out of the project can be improved. Our research included analysis of vulnerable groups in the case studies—girls, HIV-impacted households, and isolated rural communities, among others—but this version of the LEAF includes all types of local stakeholders and doesn't include a specific focus on the role and influence of vulnerable groups vis-à-vis other local stakeholders;
- The LEAF methodology, as applied, was conducted by independent assessors. It could be modified to integrate more participatory research approaches, which could ensure that it is responsive to the elements of ownership that targeted community members feel are most relevant for their own empowerment;
- The LEAF captured a number of processes and important arenas in which local stakeholders could exercise influence. However, some elements were not included in this version of the tree. Local budget setting at the beginning of a project and impact assessments that not only measure ex-post results but also the ownership over results are two features left out of this iteration of the LEAF.

There were also some fundamental questions left out of the report. We hope future users of the LEAF are able to use the tool to help answer an array of crucial questions about the nature of ownership not addressed in this report:

- More research needs to be conducted to test ownership approaches, especially those highlighted in this report, against long-term sustainability;
- While this report captured different contexts in which ownership is pursued, further research could build on this work and systematically test particular features of a country context as variables for the application of ownership approaches;

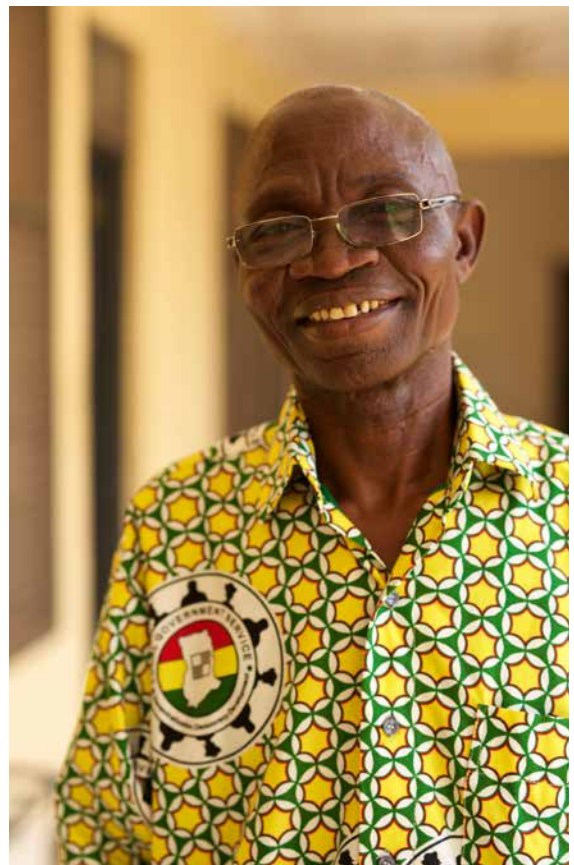
- This report also shied away from testing a causal relationship between headquarters-level ownership policy and practice on the ground. We found evidence of such connections during our research, but did not explore them systematically. Establishing a clear link between ownership policy and practice could be a fruitful follow-on research project;
- If the LEAF is strengthened in a manner that would help ascertain whether various stakeholder groups are fulfilling the specific roles and responsibilities required to ensure sustainable development results, follow-up research could create a much stronger mapping of if, when, and how these stakeholders can be better integrated into projects to further local ownership;
- Finally, the LEAF can be tested and adapted to make it a more relevant tool to measure the link between ownership policy and practice in other donor organizations, NGOs or private sector groups.

Policy Recommendations:

- 1. The incoming US administration should act within the first 100 days to appoint development agency leaders who are committed to advancing a country-owned approach to development.** By the end of 2017, the administration should issue a development policy directive re-affirming ownership of development as a major guiding principle of US international development policy.
- 2.** In order to implement this policy directive and institutionalize ownership as a key pillar of their approach to international development, US agencies should:
 - a.** Adopt common metrics to ensure meaningful country ownership in practice and create internal agency incentives and accountability for achieving existing US ownership policies. A comprehensive approach would include metrics on priority-setting, implementation, resourcing, and sustainability as well as sufficient resources and staffing to pursue rigorous ownership;
 - b.** Continue to align their support with country- and community-level development priorities. This should be based on active, ongoing dialogue with local leadership and communities, providing capacity strengthening as needed. Alignment with broad national development plans is necessary but not sufficient;
 - c.** Work with and through existing local systems, including government systems, when strengthening these systems results in a sustainable impact. The US should continue to take the necessary precautions to protect US investments. When

creating parallel implementation bodies, such as the MCA, the US should adopt actionable strategies to ensure the long-term integration of project results and structures into existing local systems.

3. US agencies' ownership policies should include metrics and guidelines to ensure that development projects reach vulnerable and marginalized stakeholders. As part of planning and executing country-owned development projects, US agencies should understand which groups exercise disproportionate amounts of power in a particular context and consider partnerships and initiatives that engage disempowered sectors of the population. Ownership should be as inclusive as possible.
4. When designing development projects, US development agencies should default to using local systems and take specific measures to ensure sustainable results. This should include clear plans to move the country along the continuum to sustainable financing and meeting its own development needs. US agencies should establish and report against long-term development benchmarks in each country where they work, with adequate budgetary resources allocated to support monitoring and evaluation, including ex-post evaluations. As part of their plan for long-term sustainability, US development agencies should support countries to sustain the development progress they achieve, taking into account available local resources.



Annex

Local Engagement Assessment Framework (LEAF) Graphical depictions (trees) and explanatory notes

1. USAID Ghana: Resiliency in Northern Ghana (RING) LEAF Assessment Summary

Priorities

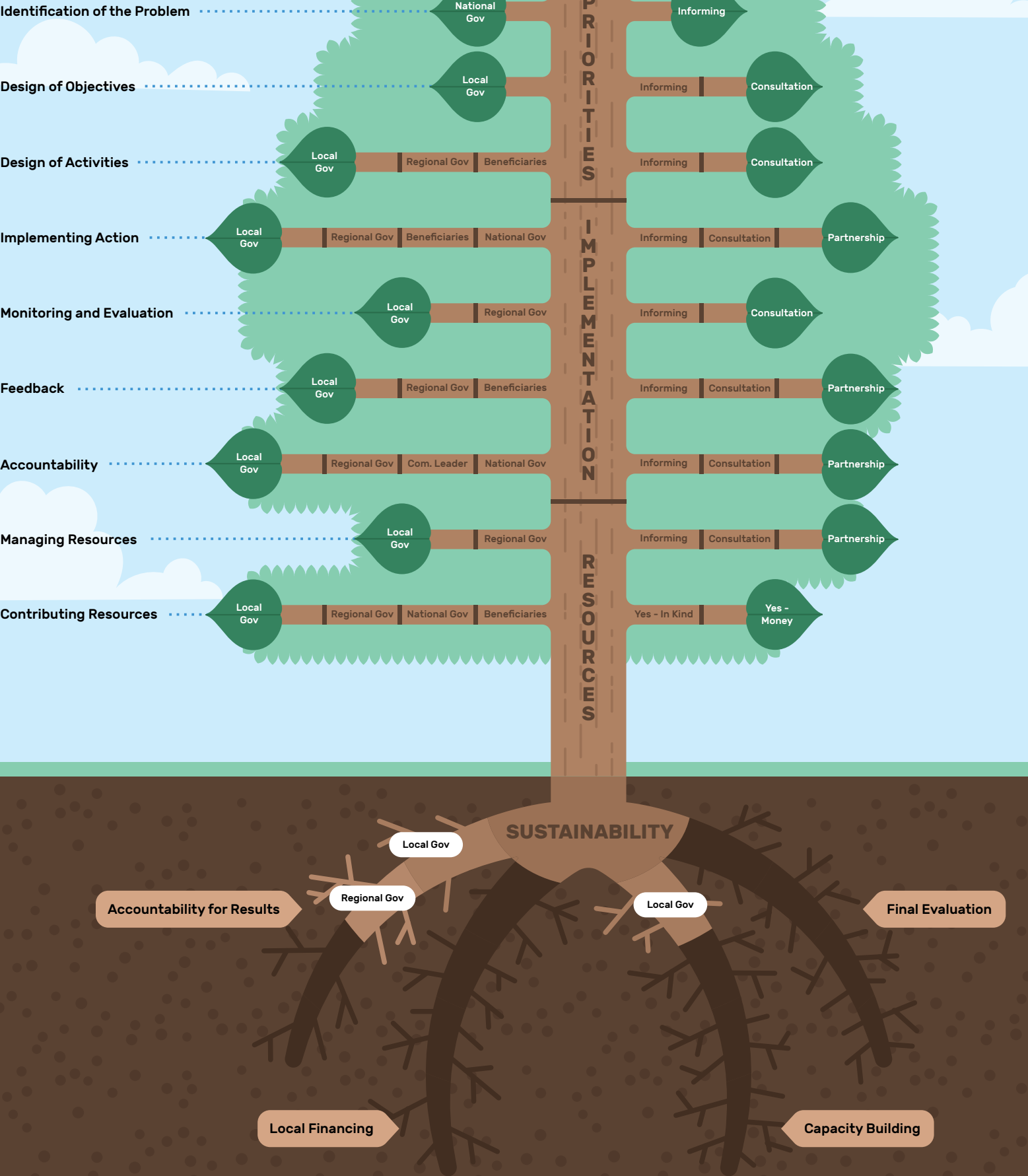
1.1 Identification of the Problem: USAID determined the overall nature of the intervention based on its own priorities and an assessment of secondary data indicating that northern Ghana is a vulnerable region with high poverty indicators. While the project focused on vulnerable populations and strengthening local government, there is no evidence of engagement of these groups in the design of the project beyond a regional situation assessment conducted by a USAID researcher. The contractor did consult with local stakeholders over two weeks in the region during July 2010, but there is no evidence of accountability, and the report focused on livelihood and food security issues—two of the RING project’s eventual sectors. The project does adhere to Ghanaian broad development objectives and GoG was discussed at the national level through ongoing discussions between the USAID mission and the ministries, but there is no evidence of accountability to the national government or local communities. USAID created its own accountability framework that has a very strong emphasis on vulnerable populations, but they were not engaged beyond the consultation phase in the design of the project. Because there was no evidence of accountability to specific GoG input on the identification of the problem, this indicator was assessed at the **informing** level.

1.2 Design of Objectives: See above. While objectives are focused on strengthening and working through local and regional government, and helping the most vulnerable populations, documents such as the project RFP and interviews with respondents indicate that the overall objectives were determined by USAID with broad consultation with the national GoG. Objectives are also very sensitive to vulnerable populations and include a gender emphasis, but there is no evidence of local *engagement* with these populations beyond a local needs assessment consultation carried out by a USAID contractor. Activities are designed to work through GoG structures, but there is very little evidence of accountability to them in the project activity design. It should be noted that the emphasis on local and regional structures was in line with the national GoG’s priority and laws on decentralization. This indicator was also assessed at the **consultation** level.

1.3 Design of Activities: By the design of specific activities phase, the RING project began to engage local GoG institutions in more significant ways. USAID assessed local government structures’ preparation to receive direct funding, based on conducting Public Financial

USAID Ghana: Resiliency in Northern Ghana (RING)

LEAF Assessment Summary



Management Risk Assessments (PFMRAF) in potential beneficiary districts. Those that passed received direct funding from USAID, while those that were not ready received funding through the INGO contractor, Global Communities (GC.) USAID presented local GoG entities, such as the district and municipal assemblies (DAs and MAs) with a “menu of activities” based on its own global expertise and based on the results of a regional situation assessment of what activities would work best according to local conditions. (See assessment above.)

But activities could be added and discarded by local government entities based on the experience of each of the DAs and MAs implementing the project and this includes some input from beneficiaries through the MAs and DAs. While this extends into the implementation phase, it is relevant to the design of activities and so is also assessed in this fashion for this phase of the project. Activity design, particularly in the area of governance, also strongly aligned with requirements based in national GoG policies and regulations around decentralization.

RING also used GoG’s beneficiary-identification system, called community based targeting, and coordinated with the national and regional Departments of Social Welfare. USAID discussed beneficiary criteria with the government partners, how to obtain and assess available GoG data at the sub-regional levels, and provided training led by local and national GoG agencies. While USAID consulted with the Ghanaian government at multiple levels, this didn’t reach the level of **partnership** because it was all led by USAID. Therefore, this indicator was assessed at the **consultation** level.

Implementation

2.1 Implementing Action: The RING exhibited its strongest local ownership during the implementation phase during which many DAs and MAs led the daily implementation of activities with guidance and monitoring by the INGO contractor, Global Communities. Implementation in most cases also included using GoG procurement systems, but at times GC directly procured high-value items, such as vehicles and provided to DAs and MAs.

In the early stages of the project, USAID tried to operate the program through the national government via the Ministry of Finance. After early problems working with the national GoG, USAID, directed funding directly to northern local and regional government structures. The national GoG signed off on this process and has had little engagement with RING. DAs and MAs were empowered to significantly alter interventions—albeit with monitoring from Global Communities—and to develop new interventions and discard ones that didn’t work.

The major strength of the RING project is its execution through GoG local structures, and this was most on display during the implementing action phase where local Ghanaian government structures (in some cases as local as the sub-district level) led the daily implementation of activities in target communities. The *who* on this phase is being scored at the **beneficiary** level because there was significant evidence that input from beneficiary communities also influenced the DAs and MAs, who then made changes to activities. Both beneficiaries and other key community stakeholders, such as spouses of women beneficiaries, were given

space to provide input. This was particularly important given the project's emphasis on nearly exclusively women beneficiaries in communities that exhibited patriarchal hierarchies. Given the role of local government structures in implementing the project this indicator is scored at the level of **partnership**.

2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation: RING monitoring and evaluation also exhibited local ownership in terms of the role of the DAs and MAs who led data collection in the target communities. This was also done through GoG structures and the RING project adapted its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to local GoG evaluation structures and systems. GC still played a supervisory role in M&E, which is why this indicator isn't being scored as a **partnership**. DA and MA evaluation data was aggregated and analyzed by GC. GC helped coach the DAs and MAs on some evaluation tools and procedures. While this is in line with the overall project goal of strengthening the local government structures in M&E, it was clear that GC is still playing a large role in this regard, and the DAs and MAs were not yet leading the process.

As the DAs and MAs build capacity, GC could step back further in terms of its oversight of M&E, although that may be some ways off. Regional GoG entities were charged with big-picture monitoring of all districts, but was not performing its role adequately. There was some evidence that regional GoG was communicating successes to national GoG, allowing national GoG to take credit for some program successes, but GoG has mostly been aloof from the RING project. Because the M&E was being led by USAID/Global Communities but local Ghanaian structures took charge of certain M&E components, this indicator is being scored at the level of **consultation**.

2.3 Feedback: DAs and MAs were presented with an intervention "menu" based on USAID's global expertise on nutrition, agriculture, livelihoods, governance, and other relevant RING interventions; but the DAs and MAs were also able to adapt this menu to their own local needs discarding or proposing additions to USAID's proposed RING interventions in each sector. DAs and MAs said that some of these changes were made due to consultations with the target beneficiaries and local organizations, so adaptation reached to the most vulnerable of populations in some cases, although the MAs and DAs were in the driver's seat in terms of recommending changes to GC.

The level of ownership for this indicator doesn't reach delegated power because changes were still overseen by GC, and DAs and MAs didn't unilaterally make alterations to interventions without oversight. While it made sense to vet these changes with GC—some of the districts might not be in the best position to make the changes unilaterally and it helps to have GC's big-picture analysis—it still indicates that full power wasn't delegated to local government in this phase. One factor that limited local GoG's ability to choose alternative menu items based on local priorities was USAID's project objectives, which were fixed, and GC's interpretation of what would be allowable under those objectives. Due to the above, this indicator was assessed at the level of **partnership**.

2.4 Accountability: There was evidence that local stakeholders were empowered through local governance structures to hold the donor or implementing partner to account for the delivery of project results. The project was assessed at the level of **partnership** since the most involved entity, the local government structures, were responsible for the project's success within their district and worked on a continuous basis with the implementing partner to ensure the project was on target to meet its goals. Because the project results were integrated into the local government planning, the entities officially responsible for carrying these out were the district assemblies; they would continue to be even after the completion of the project. The reason they were not assessed as delegated power was because they did not entirely lead on monitoring and oversight, since that was done by an international organization (Global Communities).

At a more macro level, the local entity responsible for overall project accountability for results in the region and in all 17 districts, the regional government, was much less involved, despite its stated role. The implementer (a non-local entity) played the largest role in ensuring overall accountability for the entire project's scale and success in achieving results. There was no evidence that sub-district structures were involved in ensuring accountability for results.

Resources

3.1 Managing Resources: This indicator was assessed at the level of **partnership**, since USAID for half of RING's funding, provided aid directly through local entities, supporting both the regional and local GoG entities with direct funding.

Not all DAs and MAs were certified as able to receive funds directly, but the program is designed to increase the number of districts and municipalities receiving direct funding as the project progresses and DAs improve their capacities. It does not reach the stage of delegated power due to the persistent oversight of USAID and GC finance officers over financial reporting and in some cases, procurement.

Prior to receiving funding, USAID assessed financial management and scored districts based on financial risk, and did so both within a GoG risk assessment framework, as well as through USAID's Congressionally mandated processes. MAs and DAs make budget decisions, but only with permission from USAID and oversight from GC. There was evidence that budget realignment only occurs once per year, and when DAs are permitted to realign budgets, they do so with both the permission of GC and USAID that changes will be allowable. There was also evidence that local GoG units contributed resources from the budget given to them by the central GoG, but these were very small in comparison to the substantial percentage of project funds for district budgets that was contributed by USAID. GoG primarily contributed salaries, government structures, some furniture and building rehabilitation, but at a low level of funding, compared with USAID's funding.

3.2 Contributing Resources: There was evidence that local GoG units contributed funds from their own central government-allocated resources for project implementation, as well as in-kind resources. The most significant contribution made by the GoG was staff salaries,

but interviews demonstrated that many DAs used other portions of their funds to support complementary aspects of the project, such as requesting additional support to hire new staff to implement a new project activity that local government officials recommended. This amount, however, was small in proportion to the larger project. It was anecdotally stated that the RING project budget accounted for 90 percent to 95 percent of district assembly overall budgets. There was also evidence that community leaders and beneficiaries played volunteer roles as implementers in the project, such as outreach volunteers and leaders of VSLAs. Although the amounts contributed by the GoG to the project were small, this indicator is assessed at **Yes - Money**.

Sustainability

4.1 Accountability for Results: There was evidence in place that local stakeholders had a clear and actionable plan in place to maintain, expand, or integrate the project results after the donor has withdrawn, to the extent possible, considering significant funding challenges. Many of the activities were designed in a way to be able to continue using project resources to focus on results. The results they aimed to achieve were also integrated into the country's mid-term development plans and other development plans down to the community level (community action plans). Some of the activities down to the sub-district level, such as strengthening governance, were built to continue results beyond the end of the project. This indicator was assessed as **yes** due to the plans local actors had to integrate and be accountable for future results.

4.2 Local Financing: This was a particularly challenging phase of the project. While RING demonstrated evidence of strengthening local government systems by providing them funding to carry out activities determined at least in part by local actors, they built significant organizational and human capacity that—in theory at least—can be carried forward at the end of the RING project. (See capacity building below.) But there is no good answer as to what will happen to the funding that RING is using to strengthen local government once the project ends.

Project stakeholders seemed to believe that funding from the national government wasn't realistic in the near term. Several MAs and DAs indicated that they were planning local revenue-generating schemes to try to meet some of the inevitable budget shortfall that will happen when RING leaves, but since there was no specific plan for this, the indicator was assessed as **no**. Through assessing land ownership—and preparing it for taxation—and looking at opportunities for taxing markets, local governments see some opportunity to raise funds to maintain the additional government capacity provided by the RING project. But these are all in the early planning phase with no evidence yet of success.

4.3 Capacity Building: Local project stakeholders have developed a clear and actionable plan to address the potential gaps in capacity required to maintain, increase, or integrate the results from the activities. This was done through the project design as well as through specific activities that aimed to directly build capacity and implement the project, such as having the international implementing partner play a technical role and embedding

capacity-building governance experts into local governance structures. Due to the multiple mechanisms included in RING to build local capacity (even if future funding is not clear) this indicator was assessed as **yes**.

4.4 Final Evaluation: There was no evidence that local project stakeholders had developed a clear and actionable plan to integrate the results of a project impact/ex-post project evaluation to ensure success after the donor has withdrawn. This indicator was assessed as **no**.

2. MCC Indonesia: Community-Based Health and Nutrition to Reduce Stunting LEAF Assessment Summary

Priorities

1.1 Identification of the Problem: The Government of Indonesia (GoI) identified malnutrition and stunting as a problem at the national level. It joined the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement (SUN) in 2011 and malnutrition and stunting were identified as priorities by the GoI through the MCC compact development process. The MCC required local consultation as part of the development of the compact. But given that the compact was developed and signed in November 2011—pre-compact activities were prior to that—we were able to ascertain few details about the specific consultation process from the interviews.

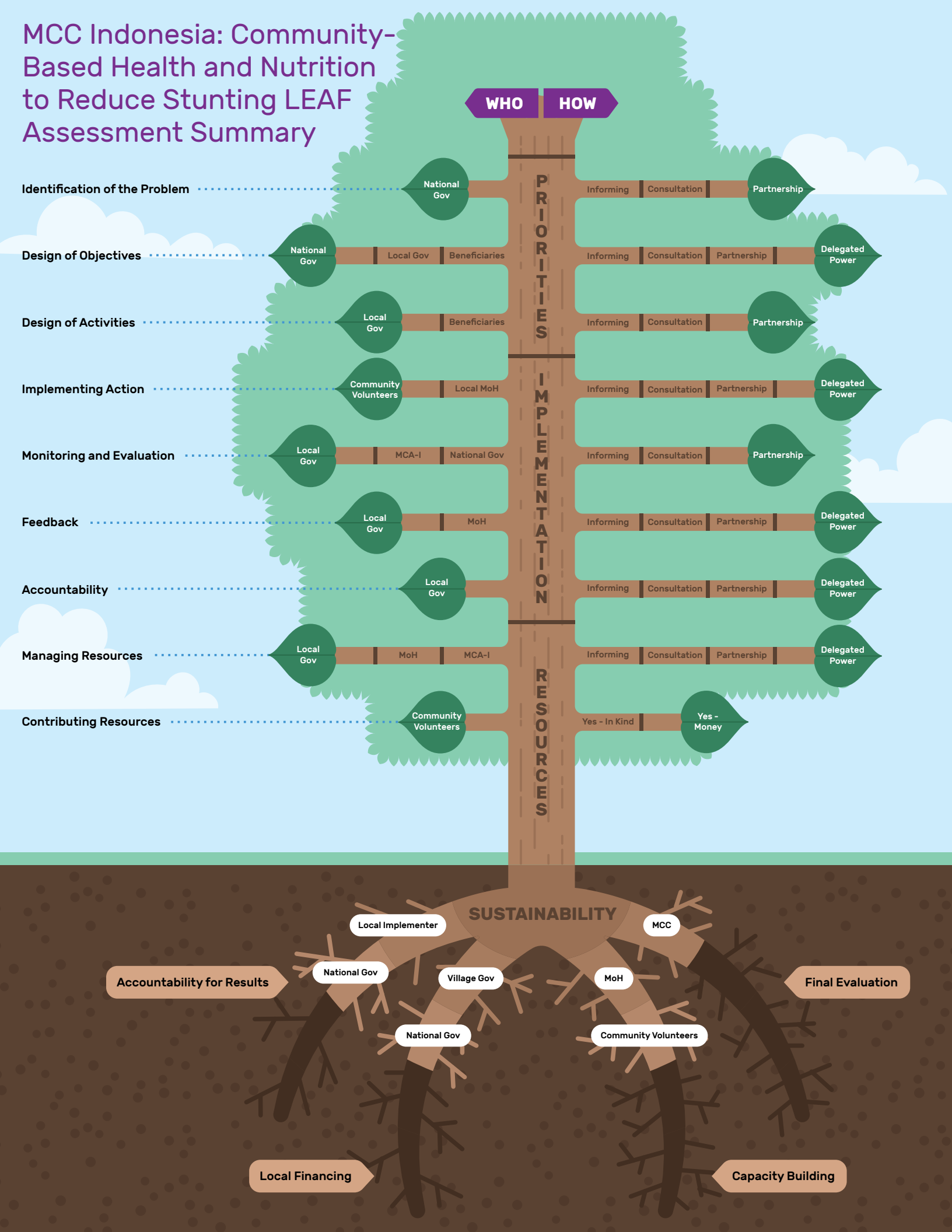
The compact was led by a steering committee (SC) and the compact board of trustees was set up by an Indonesia presidential decree with representatives from government, the private sector, and civil society organizations. Project documents also describe an extensive consultation process by the GoI. The identification of nutrition was initially part of a proposal submitted to the MCA-I by the Ministry of Health. The MCA-I, along with the board of trustees, decided not to “re-invent the wheel,” in favor of using the existing PNPM-Generasi project to implement the nutrition project.

The selection of nutrition responded to the constraints-to-growth analysis and was identified in the national development plan. MCC and GoI jointly did the constraints-to-growth analysis, which identified the set of potential compact priorities. The MCA-I led the process of identifying priorities within parameters set by the MCC (economic growth). The process criteria were also determined by the MCC (constraints to growth, consultation, etc.)

As part of our analysis we learned that at one point (2007-2008), the GoI kicked out the MCC during the compact development process due to frustration—a clear sign of ownership by the national government. While this project phase could have been scored at the level of **delegated power**, we assessed at the level of **partnership** because of the prominent role played by the MCC in this phase.

In terms of community-level input, the problem was already defined by the GoI and MCC as a

MCC Indonesia: Community-Based Health and Nutrition to Reduce Stunting LEAF Assessment Summary



lack of access to basic services (health and education) for women and children. The original iteration of the community development project, the KDP (Indonesian acronym), was created to bypass the formal village leadership who often did not prioritize development needs of the community. The KDP councils often ended up funding infrastructure projects, and not basic services. The PNPM-Generasi project was created to solve this problem by ensuring more formal space for women in the decision making on the councils and ensuring the Generasi block grants would only fund health and education activities. While the MCA-I identified villages based on stunting statistics, the CDC mechanism meant villages had a certain degree of self-selection in the project by choosing stunting as a priority development challenge.

1.2 Design of Objectives: In the compact, the Gol and MCC identified specific objectives around the reduction of stunting. MCC funds flow through an existing national program that the Gol wanted funding for – the Generasi program, which is a World Bank program that is managed by the Gol Ministry of Villages. While the Generasi project already had strong metrics and gender specifications in the project, GOI made adjustments to strengthen indicators on stunting and increase gender integration program nationally prior to MCC funding. Like the previous phase, this phase of the compact development was led by the Gol, working according to MCC standards. Again, we assessed it between partnership and delegation, but ultimately assessed at the ***delegated power*** level.

In terms of local governance, power was delegated to local governance entities set up by the Generasi project. Community facilitators along with community members gathered input from community members to develop the ideas (consultation for community members). The proposals went to a Generasi-created local governance committee, made up by members selected by the community at a community forum (*musrang ban*). This local government committee then ranked the proposals and decided which to fund.

The Generasi program has a menu of options for choosing what the specific objectives are; the proposals from the community identify which objective it is working towards and what activities it proposes to achieve them. The decision is made by this local governance committee, so community members are consulted and the local governance structure is the decision maker. People do know what projects are funded and only explain what's not funded or why, if asked. A project not funded one year could be funded the following year.

1.3 Design of Activities: See 1.2 above. This compact phase is integrated into the process of selecting the objectives. For the Ministry of Health (MoH) training, the MCA-Indonesia (MCA-I) contracted an implementer to design the training revisions, in coordination with the MoH. This phase was assessed at the ***partnership*** level because of the strong role played by the MCA-I in designing the training in partnership with MCC.

Implementation

2.1 Implementing Action: Throughout the implementation phase of the project, implementation of the project was fully delegated to the community level and that holds true for the implementing action sub-phase. The proposals for the compact include the means of

implementation. The projects funded in the community the research team visited included providing nutritious food for mothers and babies and counseling for husbands. Most of these were carried out by community health volunteers (*cadres*) who provided the services at the *posyandu* (community health center). The cadres are pre-existing volunteers who are not paid. So, there is a very high degree of ownership. A community could also decide to hire paid labor if, for example, the need was to build a well. (However, the site visited by the research team didn't have any such projects.)

The MCA-I works closely with the Project Support Facility, the World Bank group embedded in the Ministry of Villages, along with the ministry, itself, on overall project management, including financial management.

The MoH training employed a train-the-trainer model, so the initial training was done at the national level, then MoH staff trained down the chain to the community level. Given the level of leadership and decision-making exhibited by the community at this level we assessed this sub-phase at the ***delegated power*** level.

2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation: At the community level, the implementers (generally the cadres) gathered the data to report on the activity. The data is shared with the local MoH and the local governance committee. If the project meets its success indicators, as determined by the committee, it is rewarded with additional funds for the following year. The MoH receives the data as part of its responsibility to monitor the activities and the health outcomes at the community level. The work of the cadres is very integrated into the primary health care system. The local MoH provides training on M&E to the cadres. The MoH is responsible for evaluating whether trainings are being carried out and looking at the data from a public health perspective. The MCA-I also conducts monitoring and evaluation activities in line with MCC expectations. The local government and the MCA-I played a leadership role in this phase, and we assessed it at the level of ***partnership***. The compact failed to reach delegated authority only because the M&E processes are beholden to overall MCC guidance.

2.3 Feedback and Adaptation: To enable ongoing feedback and accountability, local governance committees were established and trained facilitators were placed in every community.

For the training elements, the MoH noted that they adapt the training module to meet the needs of specific communities. Every month, there are meetings to ask if there are problems in the village. This serves as a mechanism for ongoing feedback on implementation. MoH also monitors data and can see who is or isn't benefitting, though they don't have the data to be able to tell why. There are no real channels for feedback from the community training to the MCA, but local government stakeholders exhibited strong leadership and decision making at this sub-phase through the local governance committees, and it was accordingly assessed at the level of ***delegated power***.

2.4 Accountability and Governance: At the community level, the local governance committee owns the projects and is accountable. These outside committees were created to bypass corruption of elected leaders. With the passage of the Village law, a recently introduced

law which formally integrates the community councils into the local governance structures, it's unclear if these entities will continue. However, during the project, the activities did have a legitimate local governance entity that, while created by the project, represent the community. The Village law creates these village-wide citizen committees that may absorb these. The MoH is accountable for monitoring the access to services and health programs. Due to the creation of governance structures at a number of levels of the project, from overall compact accountability with the board of directors, to the integration of the project to empower local governance structures at the village level, this sub-phase is assessed at the **delegated power** level.

Resources

3.1 Managing Resources: At the community level, for the Generasi program, funds are managed by the local governance structure, so this sub-phase was assessed at the strongest expression of ownership: **delegated power**. The planning and use of resources is done jointly on an annual basis with the MoH and the Generasi program to ensure high levels of coordination.

For the MoH component, the MCC required the MoH and Ministry of Finance (MoF) to set up a separate fund to receive the MCC funds. This was not budget support or leveraging existing funds. The MoF strenuously objected to this, but eventually conceded. For the MCA-I itself, no implementation funds flow to it directly. It does procure experts (such as for the nutrition training). It also manages the procurement process and does quarterly requests for disbursements (QDR) to the MCC for funding in advance. These are carefully examined before being approved. The MCA-I level would be assessed at **consultation** by itself.

3.2 Contribution of Resources: The GoI provides funds to the PNPM-Generasi project, but we don't know exactly what percentage. Other donors, especially the World Bank, provide funds into the World Bank- administered trust fund that supports PNPM-Generasi. Since the MCA-I intends to focus its funds on specific communities, we cannot determine if other funds are combined with MCA-I funds to support block grants in these specific areas. The Ministry of Health provides in-kind resources, since it funds the salaries of the Ministry of Health officials involved in the training-of-the-trainer activities, and the cadres in the villages are volunteers. Due to the multiple contributions of resources to the project, this indicator was assessed as **Yes - In kind** and **Yes - Money**.

Sustainability

4.1 Accountability of Results: While the World Bank will sunset the Generasi program, the program will continue in some form. It will broaden its scope to look at all basic social services, and formal village structures will take the place of the community development councils that will be responsible for continuing activities under the BPMPD, the ministry responsible for development planning. At time of research team's visit, they were awaiting a new operating manual for the program to fund basic social services (for example, early childhood

development). Given this project's strong long-term accountability mechanisms, this indicator was assessed as **yes**.

4.2 Local Financing: Like the rest of the sustainability phases, the project exhibited strong local, sustainable financing mechanisms. Not only is the MCA funding ending, but the Generasi program is expiring. According to village government leaders interviewed, the new Village law calls for 10 percent of district budgets to go directly to the village level. Currently, they are getting only 3 percent, but they expect to get the whole 10 percent in the near future that will be integrated into the Generasi projects. Due to the local funding for the project set to continue, this indicator was assessed as **yes**.

4.3 Capacity Building: The technical capacity building that took place in the Ministry of Health and among the cadres will continue as long as those who received the training remain in the local health systems. The capacity built in the MCA-I will also remain, so long as the MCA-I continues to exist. At the end of the compact, the MCA-I intends to continue a development mandate in Indonesia with alternative sources of revenue. Due to the continuation of the project capacity building, this indicator was assessed as **yes**.

4.4 Final Evaluation: MCA-I, in line with MCC obligations, plans to conduct a specific impact evaluation of the program after the completion of activities. In addition, the Project Support Facility continues to do a variety of evaluations of the overall project and will continue to provide these services. Due to the plan for a final evaluation, this indicator was assessed as **yes**.



3. USAID Rwanda: Ubaka Ejo LEAF Assessment Summary

Priorities

1.1 Identification of the Problem: Ubaka Ejo is a follow-on to the earlier Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Programme (CHAMP), implemented by the US-headquartered international NGO (INGO) CHF (now known as Global Communities). However, Ubaka Ejo has added some activities and has a somewhat different design from CHAMP. It is fair to say that the US government provided funding for CHAMP and other HIV and AIDS projects in Rwanda opportunistically, rather than on the basis of a rigorous problem-identification exercise. Nevertheless, Ubaka Ejo aligned closely with *Rwanda Vision 2020*, the Rwanda government's long-term plan, and other national priority documents. Human resource development, including health, is one of the six pillars of *Vision 2020*. Moreover, according to USAID and PEPFAR officials in Rwanda, they work very closely with the Ministry of Health and engage in joint sectoral planning.

As part of USAID's worldwide Local Solutions initiative, the agency sought to have a Rwandan prime contractor for the follow-on project to CHAMP. Indeed, USAID staff in Kigali said that there was some pressure on them from headquarters to fund local organizations in place of INGOs and consulting firms. In anticipation of the transition, CHF had provided capacity development support to its subcontractors in such areas as organizational governance, project management, fundraising, and financial management. CHF then graded partners' capacity to manage future projects and relate to beneficiary communities, based on PEPFAR's Sustainability Index. USAID's Rwanda mission made additional assessments to determine which local subcontractors were the best to take over. One of those subcontractors, the African Evangelistic Enterprise-Rwanda (AEE), the local affiliate of a pan-African NGO, received high marks during these exercises. AEE submitted a successful application to implement Ubaka Ejo ("Build the Future" in Kinyarwanda), a CHAMP follow-on project. During the life of CHAMP, AEE had worked on implementation at the district and community levels, consulting closely with beneficiaries and local officials.

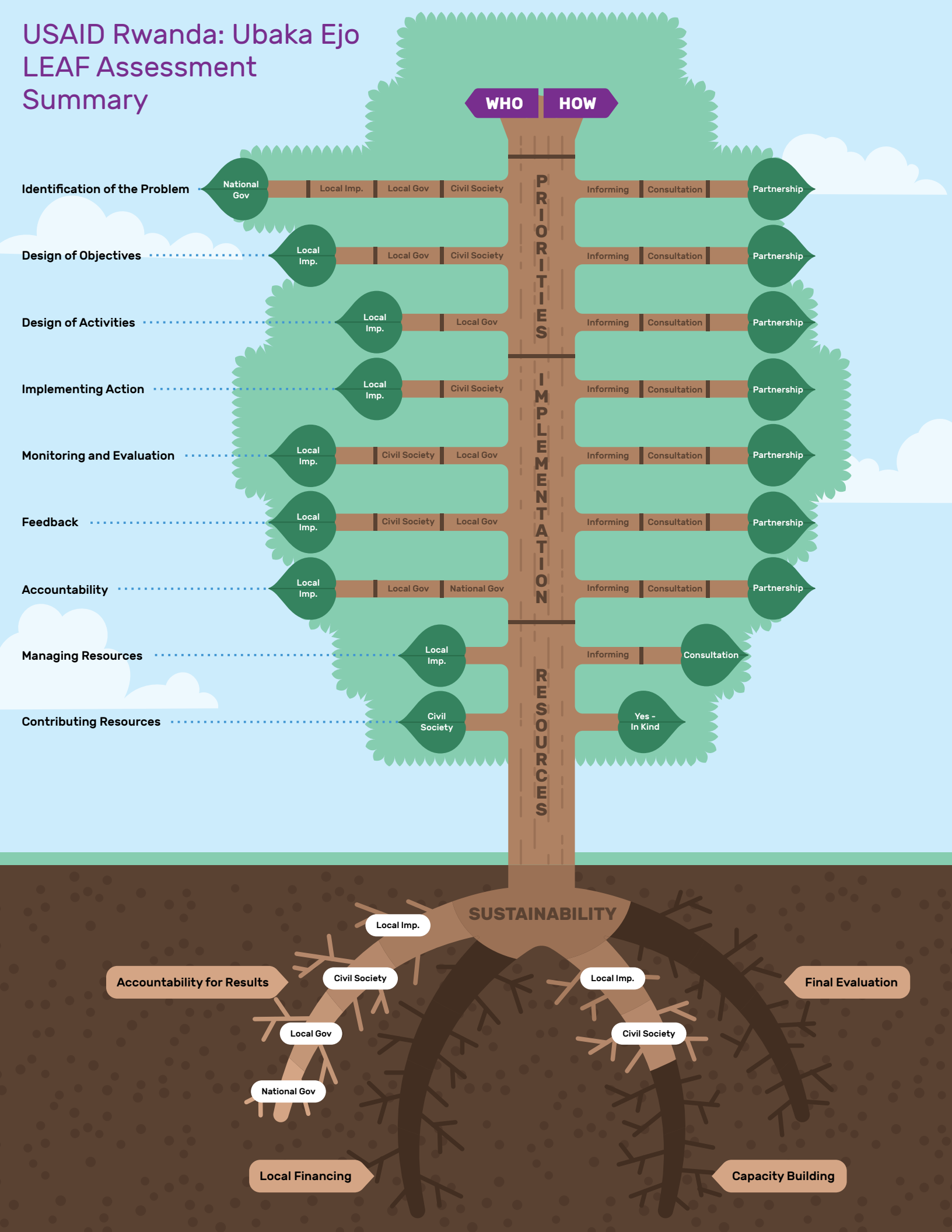
Overall, this indicator was assessed at the level of **partnership** because of the close collaboration between USAID and the Ministry of Health and because of CHF's nurturing of AEE as a future implementing partner. We assess the interaction with other stakeholders (beneficiaries and local officials) as being more in the **consultation** category.

1.2 Design of Objectives: AEE led the design of Ubaka Ejo. The organization has adopted the self-help approach to development pioneered by the Indian NGO Myrada. Instead of simply giving people goods or providing them with services, the emphasis is on empowering them to take care of themselves and meet their own needs, with communities participating in the design of solutions to their problems. AEE staff told us that in designing Ubaka Ejo, they drew on some of the elements of CHAMP, which CHF had taken the lead on designing. They pointed out that CHF had incorporated AEE's self-help approach to a certain degree. Ubaka Ejo pivots around this approach, with an emphasis on organizing communities into self-help groups

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Summary



that jointly identify needs with AEE. In this way, the project seeks to bring local knowledge and leadership capacity to bear. The self-help groups also serve as community-based micro-savings associations. In addition, AEE consulted widely with local officials and other actors working in the same areas of intervention about the project design. Although AEE developed its successful proposal using guidelines received from USAID, AEE staff took pains to stress to us that USAID did not have any other input into the project's design. This indicator was assessed at the **partnership** level because of the relationship between AEE and beneficiary communities. However, AEE's relationship with USAID, local officials, and other development partners was more akin to consultation.

1.3 Design of Activities: Notwithstanding the broadly consultative process for designing objectives, we found Ubaka Ejo's activities to be quite conventional. Project interventions include group-based microfinance, growth monitoring of vulnerable preschool children, use of the positive deviance/hearth method to reduce child malnutrition, encouraging beneficiaries to plant kitchen gardens, youth vocational training, and promotion of handwashing and step-and-wash systems in water, sanitation, and hygiene programming. These are the sorts of activities that a large, USAID-funded INGO such as CHF/Global Communities typically carries out.

Ubaka Ejo provides information, training, and services based on standard operating procedures decided in Kigali and Washington, DC. At the same time, both AEE staff and local government officials pointed out to us that NGO activities—whether implemented by local, national, or international agencies—need to fit into the priorities of government from the national to the cell level. At the district level, periodic Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) meetings ensure this alignment, and also serve to coordinate development activities. We noted that an AEE regional director with whom we met is also the elected chair of a district council; this further reinforces Ubaka Ejo's close association with government of Rwanda (GoR) plans at the national and local level. Yet, we noted some tensions between AEE and its local partners.

One NGO leader that collaborates with AEE on Ubaka Ejo implementation in low-income areas of Kigali Province, said that there are disagreements between the two organizations on matters of women's reproductive health, with AEE following a strict policy of abstinence promotion when it comes to family planning. We did not find evidence of close consultation with beneficiaries on the design of activities. Overall, this indicator was assessed at the **partnership** level because of the close working relationship with district and lower-level governments, as well as the project's conformity with USAID guidelines. We note, however, that the relationship with partners and beneficiaries is more consultative or even at the level of informing.

Implementation

2.1 Implementing Action: Ubaka Ejo implementation is rather top-down. AEE decides on the broad outlines of implementation. USAID/Rwanda staff meet frequently with AEE, particularly to see if there are any technical issues or challenges in project implementation. USAID will also

raise issues with the government if AEE so desires. However, AEE headquarters staff informed us that USAID's quarterly project reviews occur in Kigali, with mission staff seldom visiting the field, except when the project introduces new components (such as recent additions in the areas of WASH and nutrition). Notably, USAID does not systematically make field visits to examine how the project engages beneficiary families and communities in implementing action.

With regard to targeting, local officials and AEE staff told us that sector (sub-district) governments select beneficiaries based on their vulnerability classification, which is based on criteria that the national government has established. Beneficiaries confirmed that sector government offices mobilized them to participate in the project.

We were not able to judge whether the classification system is accurate enough to avoid most errors of exclusion (keeping eligible people from participating) or inclusion (facilitating the enrollment of ineligible, better-off people). Nor could we assess whether it is subject to any political or ethnic biases. US government officials in Rwanda consider the government's data to be of high quality and detail, but professed no knowledge about political manipulation. Assuming that the system is free from these problems, it seems to offer an excellent targeting mechanism.

As an example of top-down implementation, Ubaka Ejo involves a good deal of volunteer labor by "caregivers" (basically social work paraprofessionals) who counsel beneficiary families, as well as community health promoters. AEE trains the volunteers and provides them with educational materials and health-related equipment. While the use of volunteers may seem like "participatory development" that engages beneficiaries in implementation, the transmission of skills and materials is one-way, from AEE to the volunteers. In addition, the voluntary action, like the mandatory community service that the government requires of all Rwandans (*umuganda*), amounts to a form of corvée labor or a labor tax. Taking all this together, this indicator was assessed at the level of **partnership** based on AEE's relationships with USAID implementing the program. The level of ownership by community members was lower and could be scored at the informing level.

2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation: In contrast to the rather one-way transmission belt of implementing action, Ubaka Ejo features a very interactive approach to M&E. In the field, AEE does not have dedicated M&E staff; instead, all staff, regardless of their other responsibilities, are supposed to participate in M&E. AEE also requires project volunteers and self-help groups to compile progress reports on their activities. The agency maintains a database of reporting from the field, and shares this M&E data with USAID. However, a USAID/Rwanda staff member told us that there is some feeling that AEE's reporting is not of the same quality as the reports that INGOs provide. Based on the collaborative nature of M&E between USAID and AEE, this indicator was assessed at the level of **partnership**.

2.3 Feedback: Despite the top-down elements that we observed with regard to implementing action, our interviews with beneficiaries and volunteers identified instances where they were able to provide AEE with feedback about the project and engage in self-advocacy via project

structures and personnel:

- Members of a project savings group noted that they worked with Ubaka Ejo volunteers to get the local government to allocate them unused land that they could cultivate as a group, and to provide them with agricultural extension advice;
- Volunteer caregivers told us that beneficiaries had sought their help to get a local kindergarten and a vocational training school established; and
- Volunteer community health promoters informed AEE that they did not have adequate equipment to carry out their growth monitoring work, leading the agency to purchase additional equipment.

We conclude that within a top-down operational context, Ubaka Ejo offers some bottom-up opportunities for beneficiaries to articulate their views and aspirations. Due to this aspect of the project, this indicator was assessed at the **partnership** level.

2.4 Accountability: As noted above, both CHAMP and Ubaka Ejo are well-aligned with Rwanda’s national development plans. Because government officials at all levels work under performance contracts, locally known as an *imihigo*, local government officials are keen to ensure that all development partners contribute to the achievement of their annual action plans. These plans are likewise aligned with national plans. At the district level, the Joint Action Development Forums (JADFs) provide a mechanism for ensuring that an NGO such as AEE is helping to fulfill the plan. “All INGOs report their action plans and budgets to JADF,” one district level official in Bugesera, Eastern Province, told us. “We have a sort of informal *imihigo* with them.” JADFs engage in formal joint program M&E with development partners, such as AEE, and evaluate those partners quarterly. Due to the strong level of accountability to GoR entities, this indicator was assessed at the **partnership** level.

Resources

3.1 Managing Resources: AEE handles all financial aspects of Ubaka Ejo, and is accountable only to USAID. Both USAID and CHF expressed confidence in AEE’s financial management capacity prior to the launch of the project, and the external evaluation of the first three years of implementation found that AEE had adequate capacity to manage resources. The USAID Inspector General found a small amount (\$4,000) in questionable Ubaka Ejo spending in 2013. This indicator was assessed at the level of **consultation**, since AEE has some leeway in how project funds are spent, but is accountable to the donor for its financial management and almost completely dependent on foreign funding for the project.

3.2 Contributing Resources: The in-kind labor and record-keeping contributions of volunteers and beneficiaries are substantial so this indicator was assessed as **Yes – in kind**.

Sustainability

4.1 Accountability of Results: Sustainability of results is a concern of all the stakeholders in Ubaka Ejo. Local government officials repeatedly discussed sustainability. They pointed to the long-term national goal of achieving self-reliance and breaking free of Rwanda’s current aid dependence. Donors, too, seek sustainability. PEPFAR’s Sustainability Action Agenda “focuses on ensuring that when partner countries and PEPFAR have scaled up interventions and reached epidemic control, the services, systems, financing, and policies required to maintain that control are available to PEPFAR beneficiaries and partner countries.”

AEE argues that beneficiaries will sustain gains from Ubaka Ejo beyond the availability of USAID funding because the project is anchored on community-based structures, such as self-help and savings groups. Training offered to youth is for jobs that are in demand, based on the national Workforce Development Authority’s market assessments, so the skills developed should facilitate obtaining steady employment. In addition, the trainees receive training in life skills and financial literacy that are intended to last them a lifetime, and AEE encourages them to form savings groups after the training ends, so that they can build their assets or start businesses. The agency follows up with beneficiaries after they exit the project to monitor sustainability of achievements.

Project beneficiaries frequently point to tangible improvements in their well-being that resulted from project interventions. For example, we met with a savings and loan group in Bugesera District that had started a small agricultural marketing enterprise and felt that the project had given them a sense of dignity that they did not previously have. They told us, “We didn’t exist” before they participated in Ubaka Ejo. We also met young people in Rwamagana District who had learned skilled occupations through the project and had gone on to get steady jobs or start small businesses. A number of people who volunteered as project caregivers identified themselves as Ubaka Ejo graduates and said that the project had made a difference in their lives, so they wanted to “give back.” Based on the focus on continuing the results of the project, this indicator is assessed as **yes**.

4.2 Local Financing: AEE is Rwanda’s second largest national development NGO, with over 30 years of experience working on a variety of projects. Its current budget is \$7 million, and it employs 262 staff members. The agency operates in 19 of Rwanda’s 30 districts, and senior AEE staff repeatedly noted in our discussions with them that they have strong ties to the communities in which they work. In addition to partnerships with several international aid donor agencies other than USAID and with INGOs, AEE generates revenues from businesses that it owns, including guest houses, a community bank, and a publishing house. AEE will continue to operate well beyond the life of Ubaka Ejo. Likewise, project beneficiaries who have participated in savings groups confirmed to us that the project has helped them to get out—and stay out—of the most extreme poverty. Given AEE’s large and diversified funding sources, this indicator was assessed as **no**.

4.3 Capacity Building: Local government officials repeatedly referenced the post-genocide experience of INGOs descending upon the country, only to depart abruptly once they

themselves had declared “recovery.” So they expect INGOs to build the capacity of Rwandan NGOs, which they expect, in turn, to strengthen community capacity. In this area, CHF’s efforts to strengthen AEE’s capacity and AEE’s efforts to build sustainable self-help groups at the community level represent a clear success story, and this indicator is marked as **yes**.

4.4 Final Evaluation: USAID initially awarded AEE three years of funding for Ubaka Ejo. Based on a favorable external evaluation, USAID provided a five-year extension, through 2020. The review found that there were no significant differences between CHF and AEE in terms of programming quality, and the costs are lower with a local NGO as prime. However, USAID Rwanda staff told us that we might want to take the evaluation with a grain of salt. Some in the mission felt that the assessment was a bit thin and rushed. As the extension is only in its second year, we did not receive any information about a final project evaluation. So, this indicator is marked as **no**.

4. USAID Indonesia: Community Empowerment against Tuberculosis (CEPAT) LEAF Assessment Summary

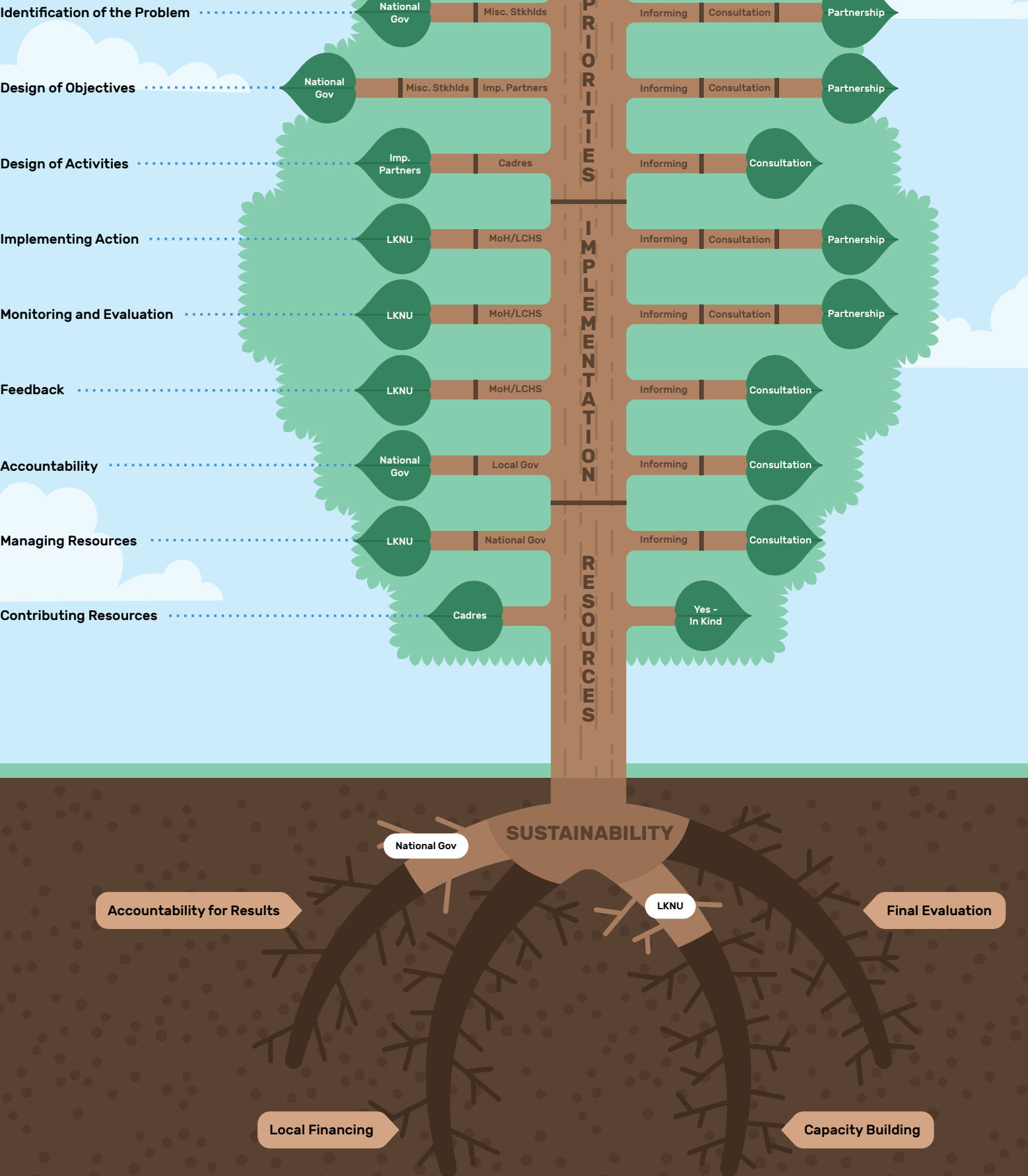
Priorities

1.1 Identification of the Problem: The government of Indonesia (GoI) determined health provision, better local health delivery, and specifically, tuberculosis (TB) as key priorities areas in both the long-term national development plan and the mid-term national development plan. USAID also focused on TB as a key health challenge, based on what project documents called “requests from the government” and as part of a continued dialogue with the government about Indonesia’s health needs. USAID has focused on TB in Indonesia for a number of years both as a donor to the National Tuberculosis Program (NTP) and as a major contributor to the Global Fund.

Project documents also indicate a focus on TB as fulfilling a mandate from the Global Health Initiative (GHI) and worked through the country plans as part of GHI’s core principles. While USAID conducted a wide consultation around the development of the CDCS, the CEPAT program predates the process. However, according to interviewees, CEPAT is integrated into the CDCS. The CDCS identified the delivery of essential services as one of USAID’s key strategic objectives. GoI cleared the draft of the CDCS before Washington, DC, and the CDCS mapped the objectives to the National Development Plan.

The government played a significant role in each draft of the CDCS, insinuating national government officials were heavily involved in the discussions around the continuation of the CEPAT program. Given the strong alignment with GoI priorities and evidence of continuing GoI input to the CDCS, this sub-phase was assessed at the **partnership** level. Both the long-term and short-term national development plan mention wide consultations with various stakeholders, but we do not have enough information about the quality of these consultations

USAID Indonesia: Community Empowerment against Tuberculosis (CEPAT) LEAF Assessment Summary



to know if the government followed up with relevant stakeholders.

In the target communities, we heard there was no consultation around the identification of the problem. In fact, many community members didn't realize TB was a problem in their communities until the project started. This is to be expected. TB detection is highly technical and communities would have little understanding about increasing TB rates. In interviews, community members now agree that TB is a priority concern considering the potential for local infection.

1.2 Design of Objectives: The request for applications (RFAs) for the CEPAT program clearly stated the intended objectives. Respondents from the NTP clearly mentioned a wide consultation process during the development of the program. The RFA prioritized engagement in areas with significant incidence or risk of TB, including urban slums, remote islands, malnourished people, the poor, and contacts of TB patients. Partnership with communities affected by TB is a critical element of the overall national TB control activities in Indonesia.

Potential implementing partners developed their particular project submissions with a key geographic location in mind, resulting in only three out of an originally identified 10 locations targeted by CEPAT. The decision suggests input based on consultation did not drive the decision to focus on these three areas. The project was designed in the context of USAID Indonesia's increasing commitment to local solutions, and CEPAT was an ideal candidate for working through local organizations. Working with community groups with a deep history or network inside the target communities was considered a useful way to localize the intervention.

The project implementing partners were also responsible for developing their own M&E plans and determining their own objectives for organizational strengthening capacity building. USAID made the decision to use local organizations as the best method to achieve the objectives determined by the NTP. During the CDCS process, the inclusion of local civil society organizations was a key priority. But according to some interviews, the activities planned to realize this objective were removed because of cuts to USAID's democracy and governance funding internationally. Due to the role of a variety of local stakeholders, especially the NTP, in shaping the objectives within the confines of USAID's broad priorities, we assess this sub-phase at the *partnership* level.

1.3 Design of Activities: During the proposal process, local organizations interested in bidding for CEPAT, proposed the type of activities they would carry out as a means to achieve the CEPAT objectives. However, considering the nature of the intervention, community socialization and mobilization to prevent the spread of TB, there was a very limited amount of flexibility in terms of the actual types of activities that could take place. While the majority of activities seem pre-determined, the prime grantee, Lembaga Kesehatan Nadhlatul Ulama (LKNU), created a sub-grant to the community group, PETA, after the award from USAID was made. The move demonstrates a certain amount of control by the grantee to determine the best activities. In addition, PETA determined their own activities in which LKNU funds. The only real restriction experienced was the need for LKNU to negotiate this activity line to PETA

with USAID.

According to interviews, the cadres, who are supported by LKNU, had a certain degree of flexibility when it came to interacting with their own community members. They used a variety of methods, from traveling door to door, working through the community health centers, and finally, working through other family members when they are conducting their day to day activities. The training curriculums are determined by LKNU but based on common technical knowledge about tuberculosis. Cadres had little say about the content of these trainings. Given that implementing partners were able to share their views on the design of activities within the confines of a project whose broad outlines were already determined, this sub-phase of the project is assessed at the **consultation** level.

Implementation

2.1 Implementing Action: USAID formed a cooperative agreement with LKNU, meaning the LKNU had more leeway in the day-to-day management of the programs activities. However, USAID retained approval authority over work plans, modifications to work plans, performance monitoring plans, personnel changes, and the sub-award process.

When carrying out the actual activities, the MoH and the local community health system delivered activities in the target communities. MoH officials conducted the trainings on TB identification and care to the cadres. The cadres (representatives of the local community centers, also known as community health workers) conducted the door-to-door TB screening, worked with affected families, and were usually the first response to any identified TB case.

The cadres were also responsible for collecting local health statistics, including the TB information and providing that data to the local government officials, who then entered that data into the government health system. (There are two arms of monitoring and evaluation in this case.) Given the prominent role of LKNU in the day-to-day management and decision making of the project, this sub-phase was assessed at the **partnership** level.

2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation: LKNU defined and created the monitoring and evaluation plan, and carried out the activities. Information about TB cases is systematically captured at the community level by the cadres and is fed into the national health system. LKNU borrows from this information when conducting its M&E.

LKNU is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation process, as mandated by USAID. The cadres are required to capture and report local health statics, which are filtered through the government health systems into the national health system. As with many of the implementation sub-phases on this project, LKNU acted as a partner to USAID in the M&E process, with responsibilities for collecting data and analyzing data using local systems, all within an evaluation process mandated by USAID. This sub-phase is assessed at the **partnership** level.

2.3 Feedback: Some adjustments to the program were made by USAID in response to findings

from LKNU. However, the ability to immediately adjust course required significant consultation with USAID. During the course of the program, issues and needs have arisen in the community or with the cadres, and LKNU and USAID appropriately modified their approach to cater to these needs, for example, allotting more money for transportation costs. However, not all requests for project adaptation were granted, for example, cadres mentioned a need to pay cadres for their work. While USAID or LKNU may have had good reason to dismiss this request, there is no evidence this request was formally registered or the results of deliberations were fed back to the cadres.

There were also forums, like the *musrenbag* where community members were able to voice concerns about the implementation of community services. However, there is no evidence that USAID or LKNU are formally integrated into this feedback mechanism. The quarterly monitoring report specifically mentions project activities that include the measurement of community satisfaction for the local health system, but there is no evidence of a similar feedback mechanism a citizen can utilize to voice dissatisfaction with the LKNU/CEPAT intervention. Overall, there doesn't seem to be any evidence for formal or informal feedback mechanisms for community members to influence the operations of the project, outside of the relationship between USAID and CEPAT-LKNU. Due to the availability of a feedback and adaptation mechanism but the lack of it reaching from the donor to the communities, this sub-phases is assessed at the **consultation** level.

2.4 Accountability: The NTP clearly described the objectives and results expected of donor interventions in TB. However, there is no evidence USAID or LKNU is accountable to the national government. Because of USAID's involvement in GFATB, we assume there is a forum where implementation of the NTP is discussed with participating donors, but this is a lack of evidence about the quality of this engagement.

The NTP identifies the need to strengthening local governance forums, like the *musrenbag*, as a key driver of achieving development outcomes. There is also evidence LKNU, through their advocacy activities, have interacted with government decision makers around TB. However, most of these activities are designed to build the relationship between the local governance structures, local community members, and local service centers, but they don't facilitate local governance structures to hold USAID/LKNU accountable for achieving their intended objectives. Interviews suggested that LKNU must seek local government permission for all their activities, but there is nothing to suggest the local bodies can exercise authority over the project. Generally, the program falls short of handing over more authority and control to monitor and manage program results to local authorities. Therefore, this was assessed at the **consultation** level.

Resources

3.1 Managing Resources: LKNU sometimes suggested program budgetary changes, but most of the budget decisions were already established prior to the project. LKNU was highly involved in the budget decisions about CEPAT during the project design phase when they were submitting proposals, but there is not much evidence of any modifications to the budget since

the project began. Once USAID determined the budget for LKNU through CEPAT, the budget was set. LKNU had no more authority to influence the overall budget but has mentioned an ability to change specific budget lines. The national government through the NTP manages the overall coordination of donors to the NTP, including budgetary decisions. However, for the specific CEPAT activities, there is no evidence the national level bodies have influenced budget decisions. While local stakeholders provided input and coordination on program resource management, most of these major decisions were made prior to the project. Therefore, we have assessed this sub-phase at the **consultation** level.

3.2 Contribution of Resources: The cadres provided in-kind contributions as volunteers on the project activities. There are also a number of stakeholders and beneficiaries in CEPAT who are already embedded in the local system, and when salaries or other resources are already allocated through those systems, one could arguably state that local stakeholders are contributing in-kind support to the project. But beyond these in-kind contributions, mostly through volunteer labor, there was no evidence of significant local financial contribution to the project. This project phase was assessed as **Yes – In Kind**.

Sustainability

4.1 Accountability for Results: When the CEPAT program ends, USAID is not planning to re-finance the project. Rather, USAID has built sustainability into the original design of the project. In that sense, USAID designed the CEPAT project to work with the government and a broad array of community stakeholders with the clear intent to create a sense of ownership over the program as a means to lead to sustainability.

In addition to the local design of the program, USAID also asked the local implementing partners of CEPAT to establish exit strategies for their activities in the request for proposal (RFP) stage. The exit strategies are intended to ensure the activities are continued and that the CEPAT implementing partners are working closely with the NTP counterparts to ensure sustainability beyond the end of the project. There are two ways to envision how activities will continue after the end of the CEPAT project: Either the local organizations will find additional means to continue the activities without US support, or other stakeholders, most likely the local health system, will continue take on the continued trainings of community health workers. In either case, USAID has emphasized continuation of results; it's assessed as **yes**.

4.2 Local Financing: As stated above, USAID will no longer fund the CEPAT-LKNU project once the program ends, but the activities currently financed by CEPAT-LKNU are likely to continue. A number of stakeholders and institutions involved in the program predate the USAID intervention and those stakeholders will continue to use community-based TB screening and long-term care. The cadre network will remain the primary conduits for community screening and care. As long as cadres remain within the community and provide a community health outreach function, they will continue to employ the skills they've learned to carry out their activities.

However, some activities are likely to stop receiving funding when CEPAT ends. There was

no indication that LKNU will continue the activities funded under CEPAT-LKNU which require continued resourcing, such as the training of the trainers or the advocacy related activities. One possible scenario is the NU begins to finance these activities. However, interviewees did not share a clear and actionable plan formally committing the NU to continuing their support of these activities. Long-term financing for TB activities in the local health systems was an objective in the program, but had little if any success according to project monitoring reports. The CEPAT program trained community organizations to advocate for more TB funding, in addition to quality care and better regulatory environments. One interviewee mentioned that one of the target districts increased the budget for TB related services by 30 percent because of the project, however, there is no evidence that the advocacy activities have systematically led to an increase in funding for TB services in the target communities. Due to the lack of clear and actionable plans for local, sustainable financing, this sub-phase is assessed as **no**.

4.3 Capacity Building: USAID provided an incredible amount of capacity building through the CEPAT project, but not all required capacities currently exist within the system to allow local entities the ability to maintain, increase, or appropriately integrate the results from the activities. The technical capacity will likely remain in the local health systems and LKNU now likely has the operational expertise to continue managing the CEPAT program, but only if LKNU still has the mandate and resources to continue these activities. While we decided to assess this project phase as **yes**, there's little evidence that the local health advocates or local governance bodies have developed the level of capacity to enter into a dialogue that would ultimately allow for a more responsive community health system.

A key learning from the CEPAT program was the need to not only improve the technical capacity of the implementing local partners, but to also improve their organizational capacity. While LKNU-CEPAT conducted a number of capacity-building projects focused on advocacy with local governance bodies, there is no evidence to suggest local entities will take the learnings forward. LKNU-CEPAT activities helped establish relationships between the local officials (health-related governance bodies) and the community. However, there is no evidence to suggest community members will use these new relationships to exercise their voice and no evidence that the local governance bodies will respond to community concerns.

4.4 Final Evaluation: In early 2016, USAID issued a call for consultants with the intent to evaluate the CEPAT program. The objectives of the evaluation are to “evaluate the impact made by each award” against the two objectives of the project: mobilize communities to support improved TB care; advocate for increased TB resources and improve TB services, including sustainability and cost effectiveness. Since the evaluation is expected to take place before the end of the project, the evaluation cannot be considered an ex-post evaluation. More importantly, the timing of the evaluation means evaluators will not be able to evaluate the lasting systemic change of LKNU-CEPAT or the local health system attributable to USAID’s intervention.

The current call for consultants does not describe how the evaluation will engage local stakeholders or how local stakeholders, especially the local community governance structures and the MoH, will use the CEPAT evaluation findings to inform the anti-TB program in the

affected communities or in the country at large. Given the shortfalls in this final evaluation format this has been assessed as **no**.

5. MCC Jordan: Water Network Project Assessment Summary

Priorities

1.1 Identification of the Problem: National, regional and local Jordanian government structures were involved in identifying development issues as part of this compact, a process led by a Jordanian steering committee out of the prime minister's office. As a part of the compact, design meetings were held in all 12 governorates to allow for broad dialogue on issues affecting economic growth. The decision to focus on water in the governorate of Zarqa came out of discussions with Jordanian stakeholders at the compact phase. MCC's consultative process aimed to "create common ground between the various sectors of the Jordanian society to address the foremost economic constraints and ways of dealing with them, as well as offering solutions for them."

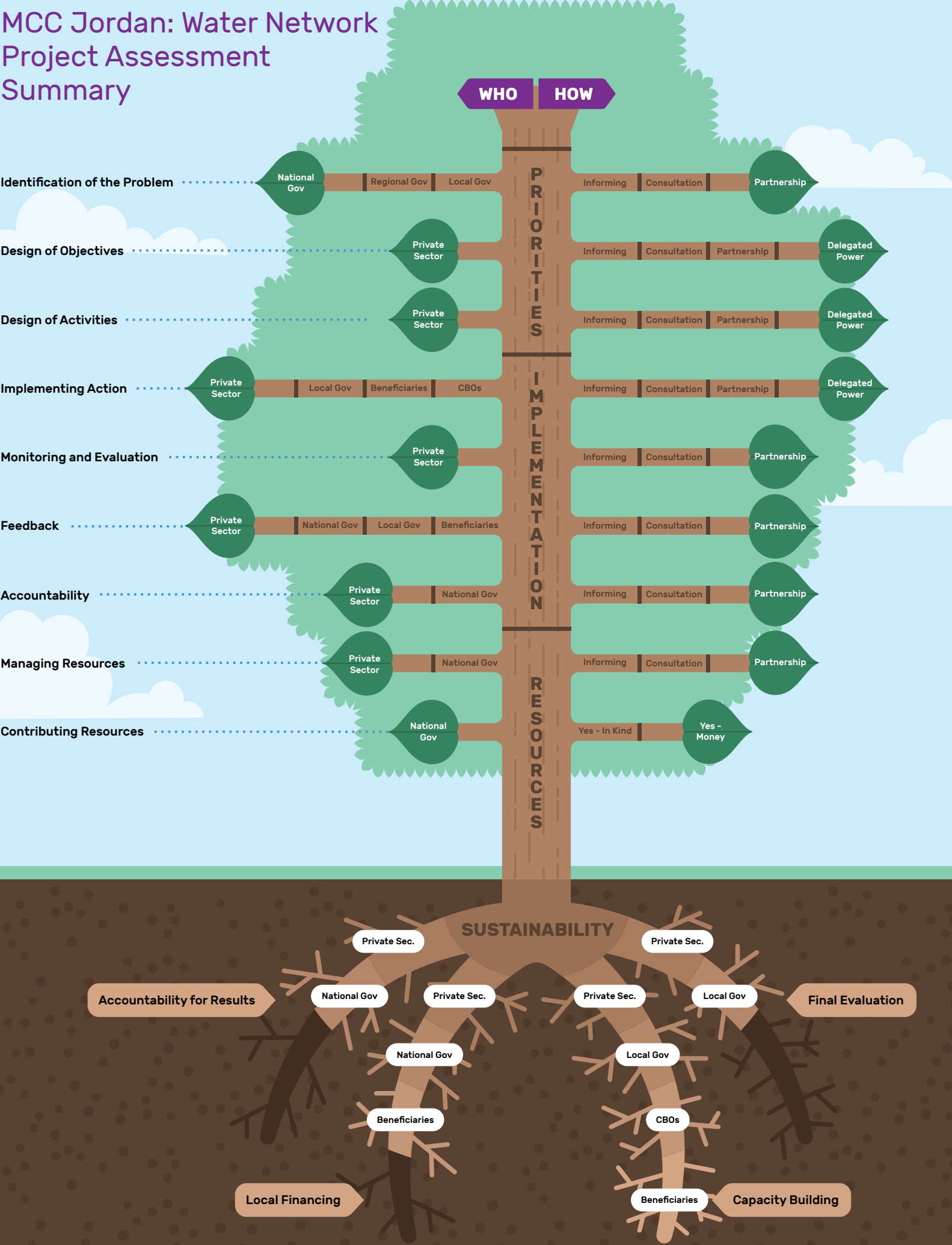
Each governorate developed a list of priorities that was added to the list of results from the economic analysis study. Target groups for the consultative process included: associations, universities, the private sector, NGOs (local and international), parliamentarians, local communities, donor countries, civil society institutions, and media. While there was significant input from government and civil society, ultimately, MCC signed off on the compact and also identified water through its constraints-to-growth analysis. Therefore, identification of the problem was assessed at the level of **partnership**.

1.2 Design of Objectives: Once the sector of the compact focus was determined MCA-Jordan had significant power to determine project objectives. In July 2008 MCA held a project design workshop with water sector stakeholders. The MCA then worked in cooperation with the Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI) to develop a concept note that focused on four types of investment in the Zarqa Governorate. The concept paper was endorsed by an advisory group that included civil society members, academic institutions and bilateral donors. The final concept paper was approved by a steering committee that included the prime minister. It was then submitted to MCC for approval.

In 2007, the compact development process culminated with the establishment of the MCA, a Jordanian body charged with further defining the compact activities, managing implementation, and ensuring sustainability of results. Many in the original steering committee became MCA employees once compact design was moving into its final phases. The MCA received the authority to develop project objectives and activities and to hire all project contractors—and it generally hired local companies.

Given the very strong level of engagement from the Jordanian private sector and the MCA in

MCC Jordan: Water Network Project Assessment Summary



determining objectives, this indicator was scored at the ***delegated power*** level.

1.3 Design of Activities: The MCA led in the design of activities and had delegated power to do so by the MCC. While other groups were consulted, they were the primary lead, but required to gain approval by their Board of Directors that were made up of Jordanian government officials and civil society members. A feasibility study was conducted in 2009 for the water system restructuring and rehabilitation project. The MCA engineers design the scope of activities that were then included in the bids.

In relation to the Smart Water Homes sub-activity the Canadian based NGO, CoWater, led in the design of activities. They conducted a needs assessment to identify appropriate ways of addressing household behavior change around water usage. Additionally, they conducted focus groups to help determine the design of their activities. Like other components of the priority phase, the MCA and local actors played a leadership role in determining compact activities; this indicator was scored at the ***delegated power*** level.

Implementation

2.1 Implementing Action: The local private sector was heavily involved in the implementation of the water project. All contractors hired to replace or rehabilitate water pipes were Jordanian companies. A sub-component of the water project involved awareness raising on the importance of water conservation within Zarqa.

The Jordanian government hired Jordanian citizens and in many cases seconded staff from their own Ministry of Water and Irrigation (MWI) to the MCA. Jordanian engineers with the education and technical capacity to design, develop, and manage the project led the work—not ex-pat development professionals. Women preachers from the Ministry of Religion and other community base organizations led this effort. In addition to raising awareness, household beneficiaries and 30 women were trained to varying degrees in plumbing. This effort allowed those who have received new faucets, piping and tanks to be able to fix issues themselves and also allow a select group of highly trained women to fix more technical issues in the homes of Zarqa residents. While there were multiple actors involved, overall, this sub-phase was assessed at the level of ***delegated power***. MCA had authority to determine and hire all contractors and coordinate with local CBOs to raise greater awareness.

2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation: MCA developed the M&E plan, but it was done in accordance with the MCC guidelines. The M&E director of MCA is responsible for the overall monitoring and evaluation of the program. This includes overseeing data collection from the Department of Statistics, WAJ, and MWI. Since the compact has not been completed, the final evaluation has yet to take place. Baseline studies for the final and impact evaluation have been conducted. Since MCA developed its own M&E plan but is required to follow existing MCC guidelines for M&E, this sub-phases was assessed at the level of ***partnership***.

2.3 Feedback: The water project had multiple areas of adaptation throughout the project. The project sub-component that addressed awareness raising and basic plumbing training

for those in the target area was adapted after feedback and ideas were received from one of the implementing agencies. In addition to giving informal feedback that could result in project adaptation, there were also multiple opportunities for local stakeholders to provide input. At the most local level, the MCA developed a grievance mechanism through which citizens affected by construction could go directly to MCA and share their concerns. The MCA also created a stakeholder committee made up of local government, civil society, and private sector representatives. Finally, citizens were able to voice their concerns to the municipality or through radio programs. While the research uncovered some shortcomings with these feedback mechanisms—for example, the stakeholder committee didn't meet as often as promised and the municipality found it difficult to adjust MCA plans immediately—the mechanisms were influential in changing the course of the project.

Additionally, as the compact neared its ending, there was a surplus of funding. The MCA, in collaboration with the national government and Miyahuna, the local water utility company, added piping to new neighborhoods and decided to build an administrative building for Miyahuna. Additionally, as the compact neared its ending there was a surplus of funding. All of these changes initiated by local stakeholders required approval by MCC, and this sub-phase was assessed at the level of **partnership**.

2.4 Accountability: Local government bodies exercised a significant amount of oversight of the MCA. Local government officials from the Water Authority of Jordan and the Ministry of Planning joined civil society representatives on the MCA board of directors. In addition, Miyahuna and the Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) are the existing bodies responsible for the quality of water services in Zarqa. Both collect local feedback, as mentioned earlier in the case study.

The MCA in Jordan is governed by a board of directors made up of representatives from Jordanian government bodies relevant to compact activities as well as civil society and the private sector. The MCA also conducts stakeholder committee meetings with representatives of people affected by the project in Zarqa. In addition, the MCA works closely with local government bodies. In essence, the MCA led project implementation, and Jordanian project stakeholders held it to account for the delivery of results.

In spite of these high levels of stakeholder engagement in identifying project priorities and implementation, the citizens of Zarqa Governorate were not always happy with the project. They noted that construction of the water infrastructure uprooted entire streets. Other residents complained that construction would start on some sites and was left uncompleted, with no construction taking place for months at a time, risking the safety of Jordanians living in the affected areas. Due to these and other problems, the citizens of Zarqa were at times angry with the Jordanian contractors and the MCA, and lodged complaints with to the local municipality and governorate officials, and even aired their grievances on radio programs.

The governance of the compact, in particular the close relationship of the MCA with local government bodies, was viewed as a strength of the project and proved critical in the MCA's ability to resolve conflict among Jordanians themselves. Many of the local bodies overseeing

the MCA implementation sit on the Board of directors, like representatives from the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Water, as well as the local municipality. These arrangements helped facilitate the MCA's ability to work with governorate officials and the municipality, and speak directly to affected citizens to resolve their complaints.

The project works with a number of structures that will be accountable for the continuation of the compact. We assessed this indicator as **partnership** because of the authority exercised by the board of directors as well as the collaboration with other local governance bodies.

Resources

3.1 Managing Resources: We assessed this indicator as **partnership** considering the independence the MCA exercised over financial management while not being able to disburse money directly. The MCA, in partnership with the national government and MCC, had authority to determine how money was spent, however, MCC in Washington still disbursed the money and would get involved if there were issues. The project used the Ministry of Finance's procurement and financial management systems to help overall financial and procurement management, but funds for the projects were disbursed directly from the MCC in Washington to the contractors. In determining what the MCA spend funds on, the MCA was mostly in control of their own resources. The MCC does require a "no objection" statement before administering payments. When unspent money was discovered in the compact budget, the MCA was able to shift those resources towards a neighborhood left out of the original feasibility studies.

3.2 Financial Resources: In-kind resources in the form of buildings to house the MCA offices were the only type of financial support that was given for the compact. However, in relation to other aspects of the compact, the Government of Jordan has been and will continue to subsidize water service delivery and wastewater treatment.

As previously mentioned in the case study, Jordanians provide substantial resources besides those that come from the MCC. In fact, there are two major non-MCA sources of local financing for the project. Miyahuna, the water utility company providing services to the people of Zarqa, charges users based on the amount of water delivered to their homes. In addition, the government of Jordan subsidizes the cost of providing water to the population. In fact, only the major construction costs of the water pipes project were borne by the MCA, but all ongoing maintenance and future work will come from Miyahuna, the utility company.

Yes – Money.

Sustainability

4.1 Accountability of Results: Once the compact is completed Miyahuna will be responsible for ensuring that water still reaches the communities of Zarqa at least three days a week and water loss continues to be less than 35 percent. While Miyahuna is responsible for service delivery in Zarqa, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation is also accountable for the continuation

of project results, and all compact contractors are required to continue maintenance on their work for the next two years. Additionally, the national government has signed a contract with Miyahuna to manage the water and wastewater services. Other examples of continuation include the women plumbers, who hope to expand their work in Zarqa, and the women preachers, who said they would continue to discuss water conservation in their outreach to the community. Given the compact's strong emphasis on accountability for results, this sub-phase was assessed as **yes**.

4.2 Local Financing: Customers of Miyahuna will continue to pay their bills and the national government will continue to subsidize part of the water and wastewater service to the citizens of Zarqa Governorate. However, with the Syrian refugee crisis, the demands on the local system require the government to find additional resources to help subsidize the utility costs. Because the cost-recovery plans are built into the compact activities, local financing is assessed as **yes**.

4.3 Capacity Building: Multiple groups were reached by this project and their capacity was strengthened. These groups include Jordanian contractors, Miyahuna, MCA and its Jordanian staff, women from the Ministry of Religion, and community-based organizations (CBOs) and community beneficiaries. In the case of Miyahuna, MCA purchased trucks for the company and continues to train its employees in maintenance and health and safety standards. Many MCA staff will join the local utility company or WAJ when the compact concludes, using their learned skills to continue to improve water services in Zarqa. It's expected that their capacity will transfer into the existing government systems. In addition, the MCA plans to transfer all equipment purchased. Each contractor has a built-in clause in their agreements guaranteeing follow-up services for two years. However, it is not clear whether the MCA has included the continuation of good governance standards in its sustainability plans, including a diverse representation on the board of directors, or local community engagement. Women preachers have said they will continue to discuss water issues in their outreach to the community. Given the broad range of local stakeholders whose capacity was improved by the compact, and despite worries about the transfer of quality governance in the water sector, this sub-phase is being assessed as **yes**.

4.4 Final Evaluation: There will be a final impact evaluation conducted. Baseline data has already been gathered for the impact evaluation. While the compact still has a few months before final completion, initial baseline reports for a final impact evaluation have already been developed to help understand what, if any, change the compact had on Jordan and, in particular, the Zarqa Governorate. Due to the advance planning and integration of a final evaluation into the compact, this indicator was assessed as **yes**.

6. USAID Rwanda: Akazi Kanoze LEAF Assessment Summary

Priorities

1.1 Identification of the Problem: The problem that the Akazi Kanoze (AK) project responds to was identified by USAID through its ongoing discussions with the Rwandan government (GoR) on development priorities, and its own internal discussions on its Rwanda development agenda. The project closely adheres to GoR's focus on vocational training as expressed through the 2020 document and other national priority documents, but there is no evidence of USAID receiving or soliciting specific input on the problem the AK program addresses from GoR other than ensuring that it fits GoR's development priorities.

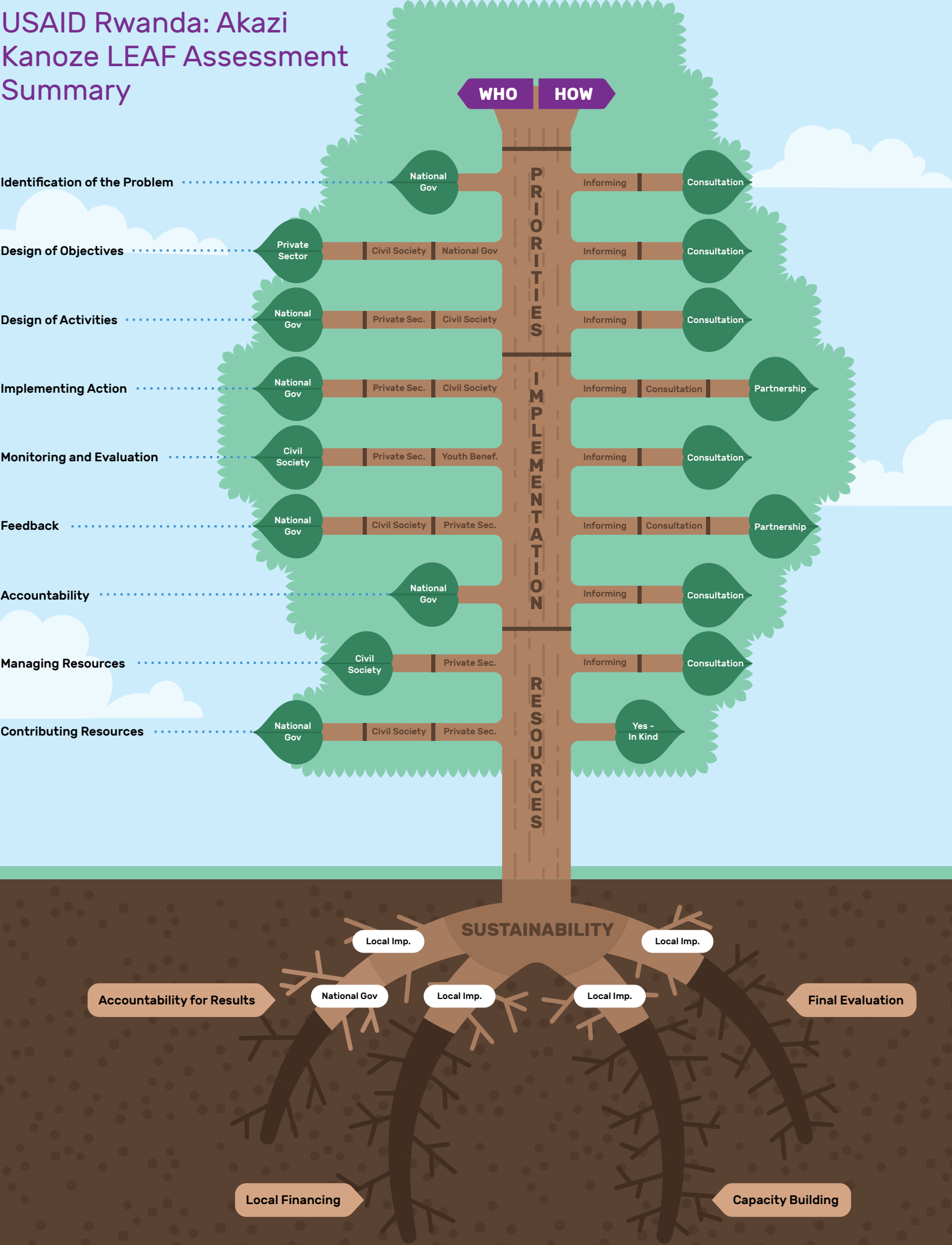
This indicator is assessed at the **consultation** level because USAID said that any programming it did in Rwanda had to be approved by the national government and that there were ongoing discussions about the type of programming USAID would do in Rwanda. But there was no evidence that GoR input specifically identified this project. So, while USAID had ongoing consultation with GoR on development priorities and GoR provided input, it did not rise to the level of partnership. There was no evidence that local stakeholders other than the national GoR contributed to the identification of the problem.

1.2 Design of Objectives: Once USAID identified the INGO Education Development Center (EDC) as the main implementing partner for the project, USAID stepped back from the details of program design. EDC worked closely with the Rwandan private sector in assessing local labor market demand and workforce opportunities. Input and advice from the private sector was crucial in identifying specific job-related skills to include in the AK curriculum. Due to the role that the private sector played in engaging with EDC on the project objectives, this indicator was assessed at the **consultation** level.

Rwandan private sector organizations worked with USAID on shaping the program curriculum and assessing local needs to be addressed by the program. This indicator was not scored at the partnership level because the core AK program curriculum was based on a model employed by EDC in Haiti. While it makes sense that this was based on international best practices and adapted to the local context based on private sector input, this does not rise to the level of partnership, based on the evidence gathered. Much of the curriculum was already essentially in place before local stakeholders were engaged. On the other hand, local stakeholders were consulted and their input integrated during the local labor market assessment, which fed into the specific job-training component of the program.

1.3 Design of Activities: EDC continued to consult with relevant government agencies, the private sector, and civil society partners in developing the AK activities. As noted above, these were based on a core curriculum EDC had used in Haiti, but were adapted locally with input from the above-mentioned stakeholders. EDC led the design of the project activities, but

USAID Rwanda: Akazi Kanoze LEAF Assessment Summary



consulted broadly with the above-mentioned stakeholders so this indicator is assessed at the level of **consultation**. It does not score at the level of partnership, because while there is evidence that EDC consulted widely and integrated input into programming, it was clearly led by EDC.

EDC worked closely with the GoR Ministry of Labor to develop the 100-hour “soft skills” curriculum. The Ministry of Labor was the local stakeholder with the greatest amount of ownership during this phase.

Implementation

2.1 Implementing Action: In general, there was a higher level of local ownership of AK implementation activities than during the priorities phase. Activities were implemented in conjunction with local partners, including GoR agencies, the private sector, and civil society implementing partners. This indicator is scored at the level of **partnership**.

These partnerships were especially important in recruiting AK project beneficiaries and delivering services, such as vocational, computer, and entrepreneurial trainings. While space was created for local actors to participate in decision making, this falls short of delegated power in that it appears that EDC was the ultimate decision maker and leader in the process. EDC led quality control on service delivery. Local partners fed into the project implementation activities under the broad mandate put forth by EDC.

This project phase integrated relevant government agency stakeholders, such as the WDA, the private sector, and civil society partners. There was also collaboration with academics, including a team from Harvard University that did a market skills evaluation.

2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation: At different points during the project cycle, EDC- and USAID Rwanda-led evaluations concluded that the project had a substantial impact. Youth beneficiaries were surveyed and included in focus groups. In some cases, youth groups facilitated their own focus groups with peers to gather evaluation data from youth. Other local civil society implementing partners also facilitated focus groups as part of the evaluation process. While local actors were involved in the methodology of the evaluation, the process was led by non-local actors. AK staff involved beneficiaries in the collection of evaluation data, so there was strong consultation on M&E, even if it wasn't a full partnership. AK project evaluations relied on a combination of international and Rwandan consultants to carry out M&E activities. Most of the evaluation was designed and executed by EDC's Washington-based M&E team or USAID Rwanda staff.

The evaluation team also took care to include a balanced input of girls in the focus groups. The project evaluation had a clear focus on vulnerable populations, including refugees, out-of-school or out-of-work youth, people from rural areas, and girls. This phase is assessed at the **consultation** level. While EDC emphasized gathering the input of vulnerable populations and used some local stakeholders in carrying out the evaluation, it was clearly led by EDC and USAID Rwanda. Data analysis and reporting was largely done by EDC, while local stakeholders

contributed evaluation data to be analyzed.

2.3 Feedback: One of the hallmarks of the AK program was its continued expansion during the project cycle, due to assessments that the project was a success and a widening of its focus to larger Rwandan populations and geographic areas. The 2011 AK rural expansion proposal targeted marginalized rural youth who suffer most from unemployment, indicating its focus on reaching some of the most vulnerable Rwandan youth. This expansion also included an increased focus on girls.

This expansion of the program was also done in concert with local government, private sector, and civil society stakeholders. EDC partnered with these organizations to identify key skill areas and unfilled value chain niches, so there was partnership in this adaptation even though it was ultimately driven by EDC.

But the expansion of the program in some respects reaches the level of **partnership** in terms of EDC's engagement with GoR Workforce Development Agency. Key parts of the project expansion, including the integration of the curriculum into the government technical and vocational education training (TVET) system, could not have been done without the partnership of Rwandan government agencies mentioned above.

2.4 Accountability: As stated above, vocational training and the increased employability of youth is a GoR priority. Many donors have entered this arena in Rwanda due to strong and evident policy and political GoR support for this type of work.

AK partners, such as the Workforce Development Agency, are under pressure from GoR leadership to show positive impact of vocational training and youth employment. So, these national government agencies have generally welcomed the opportunity to partner with AK and to expand the program. AK staff members have forged strong partnerships with GoR ministries responsible for national vocational training and youth livelihoods. Consultation between AK and GoR officials is ongoing. As such, this project phase is assessed at **consultation** phase in terms of local stakeholders' level of accountability and governance for project success.

The GOR has helped ensure success by providing official certification to AK graduates. This, it is presumed, will help them in the labor market. Various GoR entities—particularly the Workforce Development Agency—have also adopted the AK curriculum and integrated it into government systems, demonstrating strong ownership and accountability of project outcomes. It is not rated at the partnership level because the project expansion and accountability for its success still primarily resides with the EDC and USAID, which need the consent of Rwandan local stakeholders. GoR has adopted the AK program to some degree and has taken ownership of its success—but not at an equal level as the international stakeholders that drove the project.

Resources

3.1 Managing Resources: Project finances are largely led and managed by EDC in close

consultation with private sector and civil society implementing partners. After local implementing partners are selected by EDC, based on an application process, EDC and the implementing partners (IPs) jointly develop a statement of work that details the target population, budget, and a technical training plan. EDC trains IPs how to implement the WRC, manage finances, and conduct M&E. This project phase is assessed at the **consultation** level because local stakeholder input from IPs is actively sought and integrated into AK programs. Nonetheless, this is not an egalitarian relationship, and EDC is clearly in the main and final decision maker—at least as far as local stakeholders are concerned—in determining the project budget.

3.2 Contribution of Resources: While there was no evidence of substantial local contributions of money to the AK project, various local stakeholders contributed to the project in-kind through staff time, use of facilities, and providing materials. This indicator is assessed as **Yes – in kind**.

Sustainability

4.1 Accountability for Results: The sustainability portion of the AK project is generally the project's main strength and where its country ownership is exemplary. EDC and USAID have worked with local stakeholders to create a local NGO, AK Access, to take the AK project forward after USAID ceased funding. On the government side, the Workforce Development Agency has also adopted much of the AK curriculum into its own governmental TVET program, helping to ensure that the AK curriculum will be carried forward once USAID and EDC are no longer involved. Due to these main factors, this indicator is assessed **yes**.

4.2 Local Financing: AK Access has begun fundraising beyond USAID and had some initial success in raising funds from other donors and foundations. It has also begun to sell its services to the local private sector, using a sort of social enterprise model. While these are only early steps to financial self-sufficiency, there is clearly much effort on the part of local stakeholders toward generating sustainable financing to continue to operate AK Access after USAID ceases support. AK Access has a realistic and actionable plan to obtain additional funding from local sources to sustain the project into the future, so this indicator is assessed as **yes**.

4.3 Capacity Building: The creation of the local NGO AK Access has ensured that at least one local stakeholder is taking on the task of seriously assessing local capacity needs, and trying to address them. The needs for this program are great, but AK Access does have a plan to build local capacity vis-à-vis the program. Due to the transfer of the EDC's expertise to AK Access and the clear and actionable plans to continue this capacity building in the future, this indicator is assessed as **yes**.

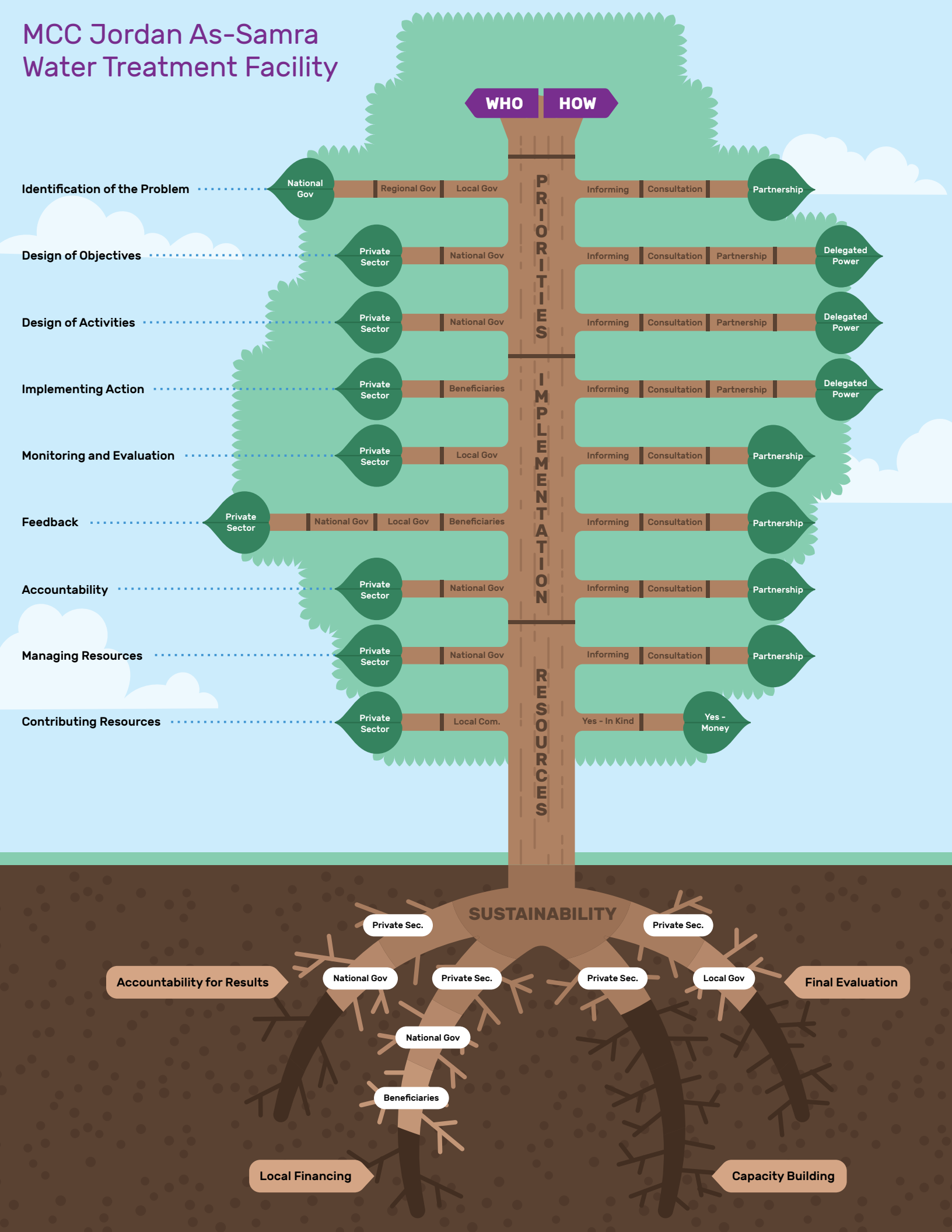
4.4 Final Evaluation: AK Access indicated that it was conducting a final evaluation, although it was being led by a US organization. While the evaluation was not complete or publicly available at the time of this research, there was some evidence of AK's involvement in the final evaluation, so this indicator was assessed as **yes**.

7. MCC Jordan As-Samra Water Treatment Facility

Notes are not included in the MCC Jordan As-Samra Water Treatment Facility Tree since the project shares many of the same attributes as the Water Network Project. The major differences between the two projects are explained in the case study in the main report.



MCC Jordan As-Samra Water Treatment Facility



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