



# Local Capacity Development Policy

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USAID Webinar  
October 19, 2020



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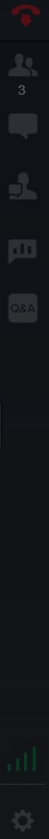
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# RATIONALE FOR A NEW POLICY

Why is USAID developing a new Agency-wide policy on local capacity development (LCD)?

LCD is a cornerstone of USAID's work and a pillar of the Journey to Self-Reliance (J2SR)

No unifying or authoritative policy on this common area of practice

Our system often incentivizes LCD that favors compliance and short-term results

A need to articulate the principles of LCD in context of achieving self-reliance

# BACKGROUND TO THE LCD POLICY

- **2017:** J2SR Roadmap based on pillars of *capacity* and *commitment*
- **2018:** EPPR recommendations and A&A Strategy
- **2019:** NPI adopts Agency-wide capacity building indicator (CBLD-9)
- **2020:** PPL approves Action Memo for new LCD policy, Agency forms LCD policy development working groups



# VISION FOR THE LCD POLICY

- Goal: Create a unifying and authoritative policy on the principles and approaches related to this area of common practice
- Principles-based policy
- Clarify key definitions
- Provide rationale for choosing to invest in local capacity, with a focus on improved performance
- Describe roles and requirements for Agency staff and implementers

“USAID will shift from viewing successful local capacity building as an organization’s ability to receive and manage federal funding directly to measuring success by the strengthened performance of local actors and local systems in achieving and sustaining demonstrable results.”

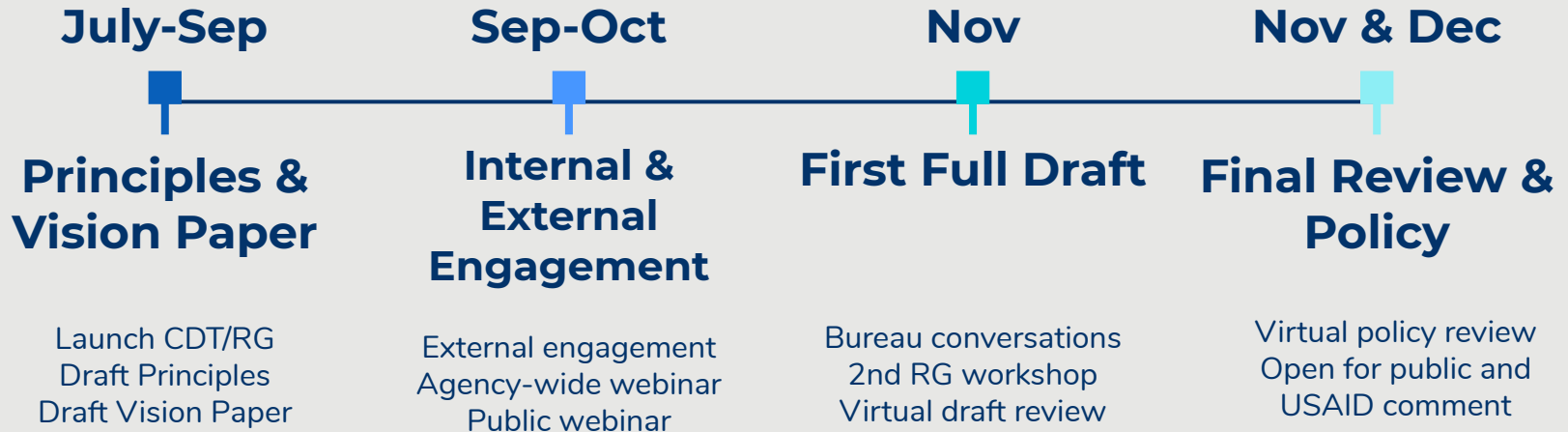
-USAID Acquisition and Assistance Strategy (2018)

# THE LCD POLICY DEVELOPMENT TEAM

- **Co-Senior Leader Champions (SLCs):** Guide the overall process and provide senior-level oversight
  - Kimberly Rosen, E3 and Randy Tift, M/OAA
- **Core Drafting Team (CDT):** Leads on day-to-day drafting of the policy
  - Coordinated by E3's Office of Local Sustainability
  - All technical Bureaus represented
- **Resource Group (RG):** Provides input into and feedback on key deliverables
  - Representation from all HQ Bureaus and field-based technical experts



# POLICY DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE





# Principles: Local Capacity Development Policy



# Principles of Local Capacity Development [Draft]

**PRINCIPLE I.** Recognize that there is always a system and there are capacities at many levels within the system

- Development results are a product of actors interacting and behaving within a system.
- Consider actors across social levels and geographic scale and their capacity to perform their self-defined roles & responsibilities.
- Successful capacity development support is dependent on being ***strategic and intentional*** about ***which social level*** within the system (individual, household, organizational, community, network, entire system) and at ***which geographic scale*** (sub-national, national, regional, global) to engage.

# Principles of Local Capacity Development [Draft]

**PRINCIPLE 2.** Develop diverse capacities by responding to local priorities and leveraging local strengths and assets.

- Take an *asset-based approach* to capacity development. Don't focus solely on gaps or weaknesses.
- There are many kinds of capacity; invest in ways tailored to context.
- Capacity development with multiple actors may realize economies of scale, and *need not be linked to USAID award/sub-award status*.

# Principles of Local Capacity Development [Draft]

**PRINCIPLE 3.** Be mindful of, and mitigate, the unintended consequences of our engagement.

- ***Do no harm.*** Don't:
  - Displace local capacity, ongoing efforts or be a resource drain on local actors.
  - Promote donor dependency by over emphasizing capacity to partner with USAID or other donors rather than building self-reliance.
  - Assume that we know what capacities are required (such as “best practices”).
- Instead, do:
  - ***Explore our own biases and assumptions*** before engaging with local actors.
  - Conduct consultations and assessments sensitively and rigorously to identify underlying dynamics that ***may result in conflict or other unintended consequences.***

# Principles of Local Capacity Development [Draft]

**PRINCIPLE 4.** Nurture local partnerships based on respect and mutual accountability.

- ***Mutual accountability aims to bring some balance to power differences.*** Whether working with a single actor or with many, USAID should inclusively engage local actors in partnerships based on mutual respect and accountability. Trust grows partnerships.
- When supporting local partners in their capacity development, USAID should embody mutual accountability and respect by “*Doing nothing for them, without them.*”
- Respect is reflected in our own internal commitment to and capacity for doing LCD, and ***holding ourselves accountable for shifting our organizational culture to support this***

# Principles of Local Capacity Development [Draft]

## PRINCIPLE 5. Measure performance and monitor for improvement over time

- ***Measure performance, not potential.***
- ***Distinguish between three distinct purposes*** associated with different tools.
  - Risk mitigation (assess the risks to USAID from partnering with an actor)
  - Catalyzing action through capacity assessments (encourage actors to undertake change that improves their capacity)
  - Monitoring (measure the extent of change in performance)
- “Over time” means ***acknowledging that change will be incremental***; requires a shift in USAID culture.
- Use metrics to improve mutual accountability.

# NEXT STEPS

- Continuing consultations with partner organizations and local actors (throughout October)
  - After this webinar, send feedback and comments to [lcdpolicycomments@usaid.gov](mailto:lcdpolicycomments@usaid.gov)
- First draft of policy (November)
  - Public comment period (November/December) - Stay tuned!
- We look forward to working with all of you to launch and implement this policy





# Thank You!

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For questions and feedback, please contact:

[lcdpolicycomments@usaid.gov](mailto:lcdpolicycomments@usaid.gov)