



FLAVIO BORGES FOR USAID/TIMOR-LESTE

# LOCALLY LED DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

## Facilitation Guide – Pilot Version

**Note:** these tools were adapted from Oxfam America and Save the Children’s [Local Engagement Assessment Framework](#) by USAID’s [Local, Faith, and Transformative Partnerships](#) (LFT) Hub. The spectrum, and its related tools, are currently being pilot tested across various contexts, sectors, and programming in which USAID works. We value your feedback and invite you to share your questions, experiences using these tools, and suggestions for improvement with us at [localsustainability@usaid.gov](mailto:localsustainability@usaid.gov).

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# INTRODUCTION TO THE CHECKLIST

## LOCALLY LED DEVELOPMENT

Locally led development is the process in which local actors – encompassing individuals, communities, networks, organizations, private entities, and governments – set their own agendas, develop solutions, and bring the capacity, leadership, and resources to make those solutions a reality. USAID recognizes that local leadership and ownership are essential for fostering sustainable results across our development and humanitarian assistance work. Locally led development is not a single approach, but a range of ways that USAID, its partners, and communities can work together to shift agenda-setting and decision-making power into the hands of local actors.

## THE LOCALLY LED DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

The [Locally Led Development Checklist](#) is a pause and reflect tool, designed to help USAID Missions and partners consider and adopt locally led approaches at every stage of the development process. Its purpose is to facilitate reflection on how USAID and partners work together towards common goals, and to explore how we can advance locally led development in our work. The tool is flexible and can be applied to any step, stage, or component of the development process, and at any point in the Program Cycle. Use of the Checklist is encouraged for USAID Missions and partners who are seeking to make their work more locally led.

**Please note: the point of the Checklist is not to have all the right answers, but to pause and reflect on where you have been and where you are going.** This Checklist can also be used to document the evolution in your thinking about locally led development, which can be helpful for informing activity design, managing adaptively, and planning evaluations.

The Locally Led Development Checklist is estimated to take 1-2 hours of participants' time to complete, including group discussion and compiling notes. Facilitator preparation is estimated to take an additional one hour.

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We value your feedback and invite you to share your questions, experiences using these tools, and suggestions for improvement with us at [localsustainability@usaid.gov](mailto:localsustainability@usaid.gov).

## FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS

**Who:** Once a topic has been identified, invite key staff (i.e. the implementing partner team and USAID Mission) involved in this approach to join the facilitated conversation. Make sure to include key staff involved in the process you are discussing, including project technical staff, administrative staff, USAID COR/AORs, or others as appropriate. Keeping the discussion group to 5-7 participants tends to work best in order to ensure participation. Keep in mind formal and informal power dynamics of those in the room and consider organizing multiple sessions to create more space for participants to freely express their thoughts.

### What:

- Before the discussion, the facilitator will review this Facilitation Guide and select questions to incorporate into the [Checklist Worksheet](#) depending on the process to be discussed. This can be almost any process in which USAID and its partners engage with local stakeholders: from analysis and design to co-creation, activity design or management, and evaluation planning.
- Convening can take place through an in-person discussion, video call, or through another format conducive to participation and learning.
- During the facilitated session, the group will discuss the questions in the worksheet, and the facilitator or notetaker can take notes of the group's responses. The questions on the back of the worksheet can be used to facilitate a conversation about how the partner and Mission's efforts are being designed and managed to foster local ownership and empower local actors in the development process.
- Following the session, completed worksheets should be circulated and validated by all attendees before being finalized.

**When:** The use of this worksheet is most valuable at key “Pause and Reflect” opportunities throughout [USAID's Program Cycle](#). It may be used as a starting point for a broader conversation about what is working, what can be changed, and new opportunities the team sees to promote sustainability through greater local leadership. It is also useful while planning a certain phase of design, implementation, or monitoring. Or after you complete a phase, to reflect on the level of local leadership and how it might be improved in the future.

The Locally Led Development Checklist is estimated to take 1-2 hours of participants' time to complete, including group discussion and cleaning and compiling notes. Anticipate dedicating approximately 15-20 minutes for the first page of activities, and the remaining time on the discussion questions.

**Facilitation Support:** The [Local Works](#) team in USAID/Washington is available to answer questions about how to use this worksheet. Please contact [localsustainability@usaid.gov](mailto:localsustainability@usaid.gov) with your questions.

# FACILITATOR CHEAT SHEET

## KEY MESSAGES

- The Checklist is a [Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting](#) (CLA) tool. The point or purpose is not to have all the “right” answers, but to pause and reflect on where we’ve been and where we’re going.
- There are many opportunities for USAID, its partners, and other development practitioners to be more locally led in our work. Any Program Cycle or operational process where we are engaging with local partners, including procurement and financial management processes, can present important opportunities to enhance local leadership.
- This tool is a pilot version - it is still being tested and refined, and user feedback is very highly valued! Please share your thoughts about clarity, usefulness, time commitment, and any other feedback on the Checklist with us at [localsustainability@usaid.gov](mailto:localsustainability@usaid.gov).

## BEFORE THE DISCUSSION

- Consult with relevant partners and USAID staff members to identify what part of the development process they want to pause and reflect on using the Checklist. Use this as a starting point to identify in advance which Supplemental Question(s) to incorporate. *For example: “We’ll be talking about adapting our Year 2 Work Plan based off of learning from startup, so I customized our Checklist with the supplemental questions about Implementation and Management Decision-Making. Is there anything else we should include before we begin?”*
- Set the stage to follow up from your conversations. Ask participants to be open to changing practices, but also realistic about their bandwidth to take on changes.
- Decide who will participate in the discussion. Ideally, plan to have all of the relevant partner and Mission perspectives in the room - this may include staff from the field and headquarters, Mission staff such as technical teams, the Program Office, the Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA), the Office of Financial Management (OFM), and others.
- Schedule the discussion when everyone can participate.

## DURING THE DISCUSSION

- Provide all participants with copies of the [Checklist Worksheet](#), the [Locally Led Development Fact Sheet](#), and, if needed, the Reference Handout (found on page 5). Briefly review the Locally Led Development Spectrum to ensure all participants have a shared understanding.
- Validate with the participants that the right Supplemental Question(s) have been added to the core Checklist for the subject you are discussing. If needed, add additional, relevant questions to page 3 of the Checklist.
- You may find it helpful to have a scribe to capture notes in the soft copy of the Checklist in real time. These notes can be cleaned up and shared with participants after the discussion.

## AFTER THE DISCUSSION

- Solicit feedback from the participants: was this process useful, challenging, something else? How can we improve this tool in the future?

- Circulate a clean version of the notes from the Checklist discussion to all participants.
- Invite participants to make a commitment to follow up on any suggested activities. This could be a formal prioritization and action planning conversation or an agreement to reconvene in the future to use the tool again to monitor progress.
- Share your feedback on the tool with USAID's [Local, Faith and Transformative Partnerships \(LFT\) Hub](#) at [localsustainability@usaid.gov](mailto:localsustainability@usaid.gov).

## REFERENCE HANDOUT: LOCALLY LED DEVELOPMENT

**Instructions:** Distribute this page as a handout to all participants in the discussion or pull these definitions and graphics up on a screen for the group to reference.

### KEY DEFINITIONS

**Locally led** refers to the extent to which local actors/stakeholders drive decision-making throughout the development process. That includes priority-setting, design, management, measurement, and other processes through which development assistance contributes toward improving systems and outcomes for development.

**To what extent are local stakeholders exercising decision-making power?**

## Locally Led Development Spectrum

USAID Implementing Partners



## BASIC CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

- In what part of the [Program Cycle](#) (planning, design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, learning) are you currently seeking to empower local actors?
- How are you engaging local actors and creating space/opportunities for local leadership at this stage of the process?
- Who is involved? (e.g., your organization, USAID, community groups, organizations, individuals, host government entities, others). What is their role?
  - [Stakeholder 1]: Role
  - [Stakeholder 2]: Role
  - [Stakeholder 3]: Role
  - [Stakeholder 4]: Role
- Place your engagement with each stakeholder on the Locally Led Development Spectrum below: Include the stakeholder in the box under the appropriate option.
- Who has *not* been engaged in this process? (groups, organizations, individuals, host government entities, others). What are the barriers to engaging these stakeholders?
- Pause & Reflect
  - In your opinion, how locally led is this part of the development process, in this instance? Why?
  - Is this significantly different from the way you usually engage with local actors during this part of the development process? If it is different, why have you been able to engage with local actors differently in this instance?
  - What barriers or opportunities did you encounter in making this process more locally led?
    - Did USAID play a role? What role should USAID play going forward?
  - What would 'success' for this part of program development look like? How could bringing more local leadership into this process move us closer to achieving this vision of success?
  - How might this process be made more locally led...
    - In the near future, as part of this process or activity?
    - In future collaborations with these stakeholders?
    - If you were to give advice to USAID or other organizations who were trying to do something similar?



## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

*Facilitator Note: These supplemental questions can be added on to the Basic Checklist questions on the third page of the Checklist worksheet to focus on specific steps in the Program Cycle/elements of the development process. Select only the supplemental questions that are relevant to your efforts at this time. Plan to budget at least an additional five minutes to the discussion for each supplemental question added.*

- **Identifying the Development Problem or Challenge**
  - Describe the plan for engaging local stakeholders in identifying the development problem or challenge.
- **Defining Success**
  - Describe the plan for engaging local stakeholders in defining success and deciding on project goals.
- **Proposal or Activity Design**
  - Describe the plan for engaging local stakeholders in selecting activities/interventions.
  - How do you plan to engage local stakeholders in developing the Theory of Change?
- **Co-Creation with USAID**
  - How were you motivated or supported to make this effort more locally led?
  - To what extent have you co-created...
    - Award scope of work or milestones?
    - Activity work plan?
    - Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (AMELP)?
- **Mobilizing Local Resources**
  - Who (which groups, organizations, individuals, host government entities, others) is involved in mobilizing local resources related to these outcomes?
  - What resources are each of these local stakeholders engaged in mobilizing?
    - [Stakeholder 1] In-Kind; Money; Other: \_\_\_\_\_; Value: \_\_\_\_\_
    - [Stakeholder 2] In-Kind; Money; Other: \_\_\_\_\_; Value: \_\_\_\_\_
    - [Stakeholder 3] In-Kind; Money; Other: \_\_\_\_\_; Value: \_\_\_\_\_
    - [Stakeholder 4] In-Kind; Money; Other: \_\_\_\_\_; Value: \_\_\_\_\_
  - From what sources are these stakeholders attempting to mobilize local resources?
  - What are some barriers and opportunities to mobilizing resources from these sources?
  - Do these sources plan to contribute resources beyond the life of the project? If so, to what extent?
- **Implementation and Management Decision-Making**
  - What is the management structure for this development effort?

- Procurement Mechanism:
  - Contract/Award numbers (if relevant):
- List what kinds of decisions will be made...
  - by the partner?
  - by USAID?
  - Jointly?
- Do the management and decision-making structures for this development effort generally support or create barriers to centering local actors?
- Are there any ways that USAID could modify the management structure or decision-making approach to facilitate greater local engagement?
- **Developing Local Capacity**
  - What is the approach to local capacity development in this effort?
  - What resources (human, financial, and/or other) are allocated for capacity development?
  - How are areas for capacity/performance improvement identified and decided upon?
    - Who has input into this process?
  - How is current capacity/performance assessed?
  - How are capacity development/performance improvement solutions selected and implemented?
  - What performance improvement metric(s) will be used to monitor and measure changes in performance?
- **Managing Financial Risk**
  - What, if any, challenges are being encountered in terms of managing financial risk for this development effort?
  - How are the Mission and its partners addressing the challenges you identified?
    - Partner financial management capacity:
    - Partner financial management processes:
    - USAID financial management requirements:
    - USAID financial management processes:
    - USAID risk posture:
    - [Other: Enter here]
- **Monitoring, Evaluating, and Learning**
  - How will performance and impact metrics/indicators be selected?

- How will determinations be made about whether or not the project is on track to be successful? By whom?
- Are plans in place to conduct impact or ex-post evaluations that measure ownership over results? If so, by whom?
- **Receiving and Using Feedback**
  - Does a process exist to solicit local stakeholder feedback?
  - To what extent are project adaptation decisions shared with local stakeholders?