2017 CLA Case Competition Winners Announcement Webinar Transcript

- Slide 1:
  - Stacey Young: Thank you for joining us. I'm Stacey Young, Senior Learning Advisor and CLA Team Lead with USAID's Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning
  - Amy Leo: And I'm Amy Leo, Communications Specialist on the USAID LEARN Contract. Thank you for those who submitted cases, we were very impressed with the volume and quality of submissions this year and are excited to share them with you!
- Slide 2:
  - Stacey: We start with a brief overview of the CLA Case Competition
- Slide 3:
  - Stacey: This is the third year of the case competition. We do this to capture case studies of how you are using a CLA approach for better development results. Cases also contribute to the evidence base for CLA. Our analysis of the 2015 cases is available on Learning Lab, and we plan to do a similar analysis of the 2017 submissions. We also used this year's case competition to collect examples of evaluation utilization, but not exclusively. We considered all CLA approaches.
  - Amy: Those who are participating in the competition for the second or third time may have noticed a few key changes this year. To start, the submission form was a fillable PDF and we asked you to choose up to 5 CLA subcomponents that were reflected in your case. We also specifically asked about the outcomes of your CLA approach to feed into our research on the impact that CLA has on development outcomes. Since we're always learning and adapting, we'd like your feedback on these changes. If you have feedback to share, please send it to us!
- Slide 4:
  - Stacey: Our judging process was thorough. First, a team of five judges from the USAID LEARN contract read all of the cases and selected a pool of around 25 finalists. Next, a team of 5 USAID/PPL judges read the finalists. This year, due to the high number of submissions and quantity of excellent cases, we decided to choose 10 finalists instead of our typical five. We assigned a point value to each question and judges considered scores and regional and sectoral representation of the group of winners.
- Slide 5:
  - Amy: In addition to winners receiving expense-paid travel to a CLA event in Washington, DC this spring. Winner and finalist cases will be posted on USAID Learning Lab just after they are announced in this webinar. In the coming months, case studies may be featured in blogs, podcasts, webinars, and on social media. And additional cases will be posted on USAID Learning Lab throughout the winter. I will notify authors when their case is posted.
- Slide 6-8:
  - Stacey: We received 100 submissions this year! This is tremendous growth from the previous two years. We received cases from 41 countries. This was a significant increase from last year. There were 78 cases from IPs, 22 from USAID missions/OUs. Around the same proportion as previous years. For the cases by region: the majority were from Africa but a higher showing from Middle East, Latin America and Asia than previous years. For cases by sector: These are

self-reported. The largest percentages are Democracy, Human Rights & Governance, and Global Health. "Other" could be multi-sector cases or organizational development cases that aren't sector-specific.

- Slides 9-11: CLA Lessons Learned (8 mins)
    - Amy: The final question of the case submission form asked: Based on your experience and lessons learned, what advice would you share with colleagues about using a collaborating, learning and adapting approach? The answers to this question were consistently my favorite part of each case study, and so I picked my top ten favorite themes to share with the USAID Learning Lab community. (If you're interested in learning more about what we've learned from CLA Case Competition submissions, check out our analysis of 2015 cases.) So these quotes came directly from 2017 submissions.

        1. Amy: Be deliberate. Good CLA is intentional, systematic, and resourced
            a. This one from Mercy Corps says that CLA doesn't always happen organically. That's been our experience too, so we liked reading about how organizations and teams planned their CLA approach in an intentional, systematic, and resourced way.
        2. Stacey: Leadership buy-in helps
            a. We've found that a key enabling condition for CLA is openness, and a culture of openness needs to be fostered by leadership. We have heard of cases of CLA bubbling up in the technical or program office, but for it to really take off in an organization or mission, buy-in from leadership is key.
        3. Amy: To get buy-in for CLA, show, don't tell
            a. When it comes to getting buy-in for CLA, some need explanations of the potential benefits and some need evidence. If you do need evidence about the impact of CLA on development results, check out our work on the evidence base for CLA by visiting usaidlearninglab.org/eb4cla.
        4. Stacey: Suspend "the rush" to an easy answer
            a. This one is about taking the time with your data and partners to really understand what's going on
        5. Amy: Include relevant stakeholders, and use decision-making to empower staff
            a. This lesson learned from DAI in Cambodia describes how they invited their team into the decision-making process in order to help them understand that adaptations aren't a sign of failure but rather a way to achieve better results. I like how they used this decision-making process get buy-in from staff and empower them to be CLA champions.
        6. Stacey: Walk the talk of CLA
            a. It's not just about modeling CLA with external stakeholders, it's about bringing CLA practices into the team's norms
        7. Amy: Learn to act, and plan to share
            a. As a comms person, this one appealed to me

b. We heard this again and again, that learning needs to be actionable and digestible for decision-making, and this one took it a step further to say that it needs to be designed to be shared

8. Stacey: CLA is worth the investment of time and resources, which can range from a little to a lot
   a. Both those who invested a lot and those who invested a little said that the investment was worth it. Some people struggled a bit to identify a low-investment way to get started, while some found this easier.

9. Amy: Know and use your resources, as they are plentiful
   a. There are indeed many CLA resources available!
   b. To Suzannah's list I'd also like to add the recently released CLA Toolkit on USAID Learning Lab - it's a great place to start to find CLA resources.

10. Stacey: You are probably already doing CLA:
    a. In many cases, we heard that the CLA Case Competition actually prompted teams and organizations to recognize that what they were doing was CLA, they just weren't calling it CLA at the time.
    b. We hear this a lot, and so when we introduce the concept of CLA we try to help people identify the CLA that they're already practicing. This is a good place to start, and then think about where you can add to it or scale up.

- Slide 12-13:
  - Stacey: The moment you've been waiting for is here, I'm now going to announce the finalists of the 2017 CLA Case Competition. Congratulations to these 23 finalists! These cases were selected because of their:
    - Identification of a clear development or organizational challenge that CLA could help them address
    - Clear description of CLA activities
    - Connection of CLA activities to development results
    - Reflection about the enablers and barriers to CLA
    - From this list of 23 cases we selected 10 winners

- Slides 14-24: Announce winning cases
  - 15: Stacey: In no particular order, the first winner is: USAID/Senegal. USAID/Senegal used the mission's FEV scores as an opportunity to improve organizational and cultural change. Their goal was to improve operations, not increase FEVS scores necessarily. They designed the process to strengthen relationships and empower employees to communicate and problem-solve. As a result, they established five internal management priorities for the upcoming year, including building organizational resilience. The FEVS process has set the stage for ongoing reflection and long-term action within the Mission.
  - 16: Amy: Congratulations to CARE! A common challenge in gender programming is that implementing staff are themselves embedded in the cultural contexts and subject to the same gendered social norms that they are attempting to transform. So, in order to create behavior change around gender in Mali, CARE staff took the time to examine their own beliefs first. Next, they invented a tool to collect data and create safe spaces for conversation about behavior change. Based on

these conversations, they adapted their work plan and scaled the tool throughout CARE's USAID programs.

- ○ 17: Stacey: As I mentioned earlier, we also used the 2017 CLA Case Competition to collect examples of evaluation utilization. Virginia Lamprecht, Senior Evaluation Specialist and Evaluation Methodologist in USAID/PPL is here to tell us about this case, which falls in this category.
    - ■ Virginia: This case from DAI is a good example of evidence-based learning. In the context of a civil society innovations project in Cambodia, DAI adapted their program approach in response to mid-term evaluation findings and the results of rapid demand surveys. They changed course to focus on scaling and establishing local partners to take over key services.
- ○ 18: Amy: Congratulations to Creative Associates International! This case from Creative Associates International is about a project focusing on expanding access to quality and relevant non-formal education (NFE) opportunities for internally displaced and out-of-school children/youth ages 6 through 17. The team formed trusting relationships with and empowered stakeholders to participate in project decision-making. They also shared their lessons learned with stakeholders in other regions so that they could learn adjust their implementation.
- ○ 19: Stacey: This case from The Manoff Group takes place in Zimbabwe. When their research indicated that one of the reasons why women did not practice optimal breastfeeding behavior was men's attitudes towards it, the team we engaged both men and women in a consultative process that generated a list of realistic, supportive behaviors that could be promoted with men. The resultant Male Involvement Campaign leveraged respected local leaders to engage men to lead tailored outreach programs to discuss men's roles and responsibilities in infant and young child feeding. As a result, they achieved a statistically significant improvement in key behaviors in their pilot area.
- ○ 20: Amy: Congratulations to USAID/Middle East! This case from USAID/Middle East stood out because of participatory, facilitated processed they used for scenario planning in Yemen. The team identified key themes and used them to build four draft scenarios and then held roundtables to validate scenarios and solicit feedback. They've planned quarterly reviews to re-validate and revise the scenarios and contextual indicators.
- ○ 21: Stacey: Virginia will tell us about this case as well.
    - ■ Virginia - This case from USAID/Jordan explains how the mission adapted their evaluation process for learning and adaptive management. One key step in this initiative was improving collaboration between their evaluation team members and USAID activity managers to ensure that evaluation recommendations were implemented. They also added a workshop to the evaluation process to allow stakeholders to co-generate actionable recommendations based on evaluation findings.
- ○ 22: Amy: Congratulations, Catholic Relief Services! This case concerns the Feed the Future Zambia Mawa Project, implemented in the Eastern Province of Zambia. Catholic Relief Services looked to feedback from farmers piloting new technologies and used demonstration plots to test adapted technologies. This

case is a great example of openness as a key enabling condition for CLA and incorporating feedback for adaptation.
- ○ 23: Stacey: Working in South Sudan, Global Communities developed a learning agenda to test their development hypothesis and pilot and document good practices for strengthening resilience capacities. They created M&E tools and reporting procedures that addressed their learning agenda, as well as a lessons learned tracker. And they also prepared community dashboards to inform project prioritization.
- ○ 24: Amy: Congratulations, USAID/Guatemala. USAID/Guatemala used a Broad Agency Announcement to convene partners to collaborate around identifying opportunities for youth in the highlands of Guatemala. So they established trust and facilitated co-creation among a group of partners that usually compete for bids
- Slide 25: Screenshot of cases posted on USAID Learning Lab
  - ○ Amy: The winner and finalist cases are now posted on USAID Learning Lab. You can view the cases on this map and use the filters below to search. More cases will be posted over the course of the next few months, and we will notify you when they are ready.
- Slide 26: Infographic Slide
  - ○ Stacey: Thank participants for submitting cases and listening in. We hope this empowers you and inspires you in your work.
- Slide 22: Questions?
  - ○ Stacey: We will now open it up to questions about the case competition, CLA, etc. If you would like to receive feedback on your case, or share feedback on your experience participating in the competition, please email Amy Leo: aleo@learning4dev.org.