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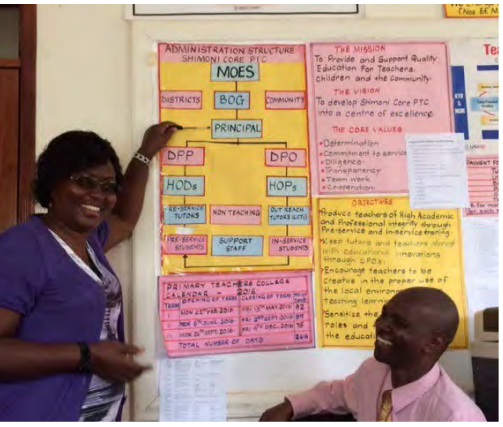

EVALUATION OF SUSTAINED OUTCOMES IN BASIC EDUCATION

Synthesis Report

March 29, 2018

This publication was produced at the request of the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared independently by Management Systems International, A Tetra Tech Company, for the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project.

Front cover photo captions and credits clockwise from top left:

Teachers in the Bushenyi District of Uganda exhibit teaching aides.
Credit: Jindra Cekan, MSI.

Teaching exercises shown in a classroom in the Bushenyi District of Uganda.
Credit: Jindra Cekan, MSI.

Teachers participating in USAID's Namibia Basic Education Support project crowd around a computer.
Credit: EQUIP2, USAID.

Path between school buildings in Uganda.
Credit: Jindra Cekan, MSI.

Teaching exercises shown in a classroom in the Bushenyi District of Uganda.
Credit: Jindra Cekan, MSI.

EVALUATION OF SUSTAINED OUTCOMES IN BASIC EDUCATION

SYNTHESIS REPORT

Contracted under AID-OAA-M-13-00017

E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project

Prepared by:

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ABSTRACT

USAID has increasingly focused on the importance of local systems as the linchpin of sustainability. This evaluation, using an ex-post comparative case study design, is intended to help USAID better understand the programmatic and contextual factors that contribute to sustained outcomes from international development interventions.

The evaluation examined four cases of USAID basic education activities implemented in Ghana, Namibia, South Africa, and Uganda. Each activity was completed between 2000 and 2010. Case study teams conducted primary research to understand how local systems contributed to outcome sustainment, using tools and processes were designed to capture how relationships and perceptions drive behavior in complex systems. The evaluation analyzed data at the case study level and across cases using qualitative and inductive methods.

The evaluation found that while various factors influenced what remained in these four countries, the main influencing factors appeared to be: (1) building of momentum of results over time, (2) the timing of the intervention, and (3) the role played by the host national government, including the policy environment and political will. In cases where outcomes were sustained, the national government had made shifts in its education system that required support, and USAID was invited to participate in that national government process in a specific role and for a specific reason. As key actors, national governments brought legitimacy and control, and influenced the motivation of other key actors during the USAID activity.

CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives System
BES	Basic Education Support Project (USAID)
CSA	Community Schools Alliance
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DDSP	District Development and Support Program (USAID)
DoE	Department of Education
E3	Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (USAID)
EQ	Evaluation Question
EQUIP	Educational Quality Improvement Program
fCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education Program
IR	Intermediate Result
LER	Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research (USAID/PPL)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoE	Ministry of Education
MSI	Management Systems International
PPL	Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning (USAID)
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
QUIPS	Quality Improvement in Primary Schools
SABER	South Africa Basic Education Reconstruction (USAID)
SGB	School Governing Body
SO	Strategic Objective
SOW	Statement of Work
SUPER	Support to Uganda Primary Education Reform Project (USAID)
TDMS	Teacher Development Management System
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This evaluation would not have been possible without the time and effort freely given by many people, including those who helped us to organize our field research, spoke with our research teams, reviewed our data interpretation and reports and dug through old files and memories.

Specifically, I would like to thank each of the case study teams for their hard work and dedication; the government officials in each of our case study countries who provided in-country guidance and allowed us to conduct research in their countries; and the USAID staff who provided support at each step of the way. I would also like to thank my fellow evaluation team member Jim Wile for his valuable feedback throughout the evaluation.

Finally, I would to provide a special thank you to my friend and former colleague Dr. Amelia Kleijn, whose insight and support during the evaluation were especially appreciated. You are sorely missed.

- Dr. Donna Podems

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Evaluation Purpose and Questions

The Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research in the United States Agency for International Development's Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning (USAID/PPL/LER) commissioned this evaluation of sustained outcomes to address four evaluation questions:

1. Were USAID-intended outcomes sustained?
2. What other outcomes resulted from the project (positive/negative) and were these outcomes sustained?
3. What has contributed to or hindered sustaining the outcomes?
4. How are the outcomes perceived and valued by those with significant stakes in the project?

The primary audience for the evaluation is USAID/PPL. Other audiences include USAID missions and individuals involved in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of international development projects.

Evaluation Approach and Methodology

The evaluation used an ex-post comparative case study design. The evaluation identified four USAID basic education activities completed between 2000 and 2010 as cases. The focus on one sector – basic education – was intended to increase the likelihood that the study would isolate the factors that were consistently present where outcomes were sustained.

To address the four evaluation questions, case study teams conducted primary and secondary research on whether outcomes resulting from USAID activities in Uganda, South Africa, Ghana, and Namibia were sustained. For each case, case study teams selected one intermediate level outcome of the activity based on theoretical and practical considerations. Using the same Evaluation Guide across all four cases, the teams refined data collection tools and processes that aimed to capture how relationships and perceptions drive behavior in complex systems.

The case studies and their relevant data sets provided the data for analysis. Thus, the findings from the case studies became the "data" for this cross-thematic analysis, or synthesis, which the evaluation team conducted in two phases. The first phase addressed each evaluation question and identified emergent themes based upon an inductive analysis of the case study data. The second phase focused on identifying relevant manifestations of systems concepts.

Case Study Descriptions

To prepare for the evaluation, the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project, working with USAID, analyzed documents relating to 95 USAID basic education activities completed between 2000 and 2010 and identified 13 potential cases based upon the following criteria:

- Potential cases should feature a high-level objective related to basic education;
- There should be an evaluation of the activity that found that the basic education outcome was achieved or partially achieved, and that the activity contributed to the achievement of that outcome;

- The activity should not have been implemented in a country that is currently or has recently undergone a period of conflict, war, or significant civil strife; and
- Relative to other case study options, there should be sufficient documentation available to describe how the activity was implemented.

USAID/PPL/LER reviewed descriptions of the remaining 13 activities and ultimately selected 5 for examination in this evaluation based upon the above criteria. One of the activities was removed from the evaluation for primarily logistical reasons. The remaining four are described below.

South Africa District Development and Support Program (DDSP), 1998 - 2003

DDSP was a nearly six-year USAID activity that had as its highest-level objective to improve the quality of educational delivery for South African children in grades 1-9. This $23 million activity was a continuation of a 10-year USAID program (South Africa Basic Education Reconstruction) to improve the quality of education for disadvantaged South Africans by supporting four of the poorest provinces: Northern Province (now Limpopo), KwaZulu-Natal, the Northern Cape, and the Eastern Cape.

The case study team selected *enhanced school governance* as the DDSP outcome of interest, which DDSP supported in several ways. First, it supported the first elections for school governing bodies (SGBs) composed of community members and parents. Second, it supported SGBs by developing manuals and training SGB members on issues such as school development, SGB roles and responsibilities, and school financial management. Finally, it initiated capacity-building interventions for district officials to enable them to better support SGBs.

By the end of DDSP, school governance structures had been strengthened across all four provinces through training and school support. Most schools had democratically elected SGBs; materials and guidance was available to support the electoral process and the responsibilities of SGB members; and the roles of district officials to support SGBs had been documented if not fully realized.

Ghana Quality Improvement in Primary Schools (QUIPs), 1996 - 2004

QUIPS was an eight-year USAID activity, the highest level objective of which was to increase the effectiveness of the primary education system in Ghana. QUIPS was delivered by different implementers in different parts of Ghana. The case study focused on the $12.5 million Community Schools Alliance (CSA) intervention delivered in southern Ghana and its outcome of *enhanced parent engagement in local education*.

The CSA activity used public awareness efforts, participant rural appraisals, and training for school managers and leaders of parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and school management committees to build support for education, parent engagement, and shared responsibility for school management. The activity successfully delivered training for these groups, provided and distributed grants to schools that had developed and submitted school improvement plans, and implemented a monitoring and support mechanism via the position of the community support coordinator.

An external final evaluation of QUIPS found that the activity increased community support for, and investment in, schools and education and strengthened relationships between teachers and communities. CSA also strengthened the role of the community in school management by building the capacity of community units such as PTAs and school management committees, and established formal and informal relationships between these units.

Namibia Basic Education Support Project, Phases II and III (BES III), 2005 - 2009

BES III was a five-year USAID activity, the highest-level objective of which was to increase the capacity of the basic education system in Namibia to give learners the foundations for health and livelihood. The $14.1 million activity built on the gains of BES II to embed local decentralized management. USAID designed BES as an integrated and multi-faceted intervention focused on core dimensions of Namibia's education reform agenda: support to curriculum reform, teacher education, and decentralization and democratization of the education system.

The case study team selected *improved effectiveness of decentralized education management* as the BES III outcome of interest. Key interventions under this outcome included training a cadre of school inspectors and teachers to support local school self-assessment and strategic planning and rolling out school self-evaluation and school development plan models nationwide.

By the end of BES III, target schools were equipped to administer the BES-designed school self-evaluation process, and 90 percent of the BES target schools had achieved the goal of school boards implementing school development plans.

Support to Uganda Primary Education Reform Project (SUPER), 1993 - 2000

SUPER was an eight-year USAID activity, the highest-level objective of which was to improve the quality of, and reduce inequities in, the primary education system in Uganda. It provided both project ($25 million) and non-project ($83 million) assistance to support the government's reform efforts and prepare for universal primary education.

The case study team selected *improved quality of classroom instruction to enhance student (pupil) acquisition of basic skills* as the SUPER outcome of interest. To achieve this outcome, SUPER supported the development and implementation of the teacher development management system (TDMS), which restructured the role of Uganda's primary teacher colleges to strengthen teacher training. The basic premise of TDMS was the integration of pre-service, in-service, and management training for teachers and administrators in Uganda's primary schools.

By the end of SUPER in 2000, key actors in Uganda and USAID viewed the TDMS as a success. The TDMS network included 47 primary teacher colleges which, in addition to their own training activities, acted as hubs supporting 539 fully operational coordinating centers. Each of these coordinating centers provided continual in-service training to all state-supported schools in Uganda and a cumulative 10,145 teachers nationwide. In addition, the position of coordinating center tutor operated out of the coordinating centers and provided direct support to schools across the country.

Key Findings

Outcomes were sustained in the education system for each of the four case studies, to varying degrees. Structures and roles developed with the support of the USAID activity continue to exist in the same or adapted forms after the end of the activity – although the capacity of these entities to carry out their original functions has atrophied in many cases. Materials (e.g., forms, templates) and processes created during the USAID activity also continue to be used, though also often in an adapted form.

Relationships (and improved relationships) between actors in the formal education system and community members and organizations continued following the conclusion of the USAID activity, in most cases. This is true regardless of whether relationship building was a specific objective of the USAID activity. Relationships are more likely to exist where beneficiaries of the USAID activity remain.

Where USAID was invited to support a national government-led policy shift, USAID outcomes were sustained in the formal system. A key factor where outcomes were sustained was during a period of policy transition, the host government provided clear guidance on how USAID could support change. The host government had policies, frameworks, or infrastructure in place, or plans to have these in place, and that set the stage for USAID to engage in the host government's activity, and these remained in place long after USAID funding ceased.

When national government leadership conveyed control and legitimacy, and influenced motivation of key actors, outcomes were sustained. All four cases demonstrated that a key actor for sustained outcomes was the national government, as it brought control (i.e., the ability to make binding decisions and provide resources) and legitimacy, and contributed to motivation among other key actors at the time of the USAID activity, and after.

Where USAID contributed resources to activities that built on each other, and thus gained momentum over time, outcomes were sustained. The key factor is that USAID was building on effective interventions, and using lessons learned, to improve successive interventions over time.

When a position or role created by USAID was not formally institutionalized, generally within the government structure, it often ceased to function or exist when the USAID activity ended. While there was no clear single factor that contributed to the weakening of institutional functioning, the broad theme of economic and financial factors emerged as a major factor – including specifically fiscal constraints.

Relying on volunteers in poorer communities negatively influenced the sustainment of the outcome in some cases. Engaging poorer communities in volunteer services is a challenge when there either seems to be little motivation among community members (e.g., due to no obvious or direct benefits to themselves or their families), or little control over other barriers—such as language, time, and literacy—that prevent full participation.

Conclusion

While various factors influenced what remained in the four cases that the evaluation examined, the main factors appeared to be: (1) building of momentum of results over time, (2) the timing of the intervention to coincide with major shifts in the country, and (3) the role played by the host national government, including the policy environment and political will. In cases where outcomes were sustained, the national government had made shifts in its education system that required support, and USAID was invited to participate in that national government process in a specific role and for a specific reason.

Diving deeper into the government's role, the evaluation identified five influential factors (motivation, control, legitimacy, building on success, and timing of the intervention) present in all four countries where outcomes were sustained at any level (i.e., national, regional, or community). The national government appeared to be a key actor as it brought legitimacy and control and influenced the motivation of other key actors during the USAID activity.

INTRODUCTION

In April 2014, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) published Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development, which expressed the Agency's recognition of the importance of working with local systems to promote sustainability.

> *The focus on local systems is rooted in the reality that achieving and sustaining any development outcome depends on the contributions of multiple and interconnected actors. Building the capacity of a single actor or strengthening a single relationship is insufficient. Rather, the focus must be on the system as a whole: the actors, their interrelationships and the incentives that guide them. Realizing improved development outcomes emanates from increasing the performance of multiple actors and the effectiveness of their interactions. And sustaining development outcomes depends on the sustainability of the local system—specifically, its built-in durability and adaptability that allows actors and their interrelationships to accommodate shocks and respond to changing circumstances.*[1]

Reflecting USAID's focus on the importance of local systems, the Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning's Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research (USAID/PPL/LER) contracted the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project[2] to conduct an ex-post evaluation using systems approaches. The evaluation conducted case studies[3] of four USAID basic education activities, in Uganda, South Africa, Ghana, and Namibia, to examine when and under what circumstances activity outcomes emerged and were sustained, and how local systems contributed to those results. The evaluation was designed to understand how relationships and perceptions drive behavior in complex systems.

While this study was intended to benefit Agency staff working in a variety of sectors, it focused on USAID basic education programming. Focusing on one sector increased the likelihood that the evaluation would isolate factors consistently present where outcomes were sustained, but noticeably absent where they were not. The evaluation statement of work (SOW) is included as Annex A.

This report is organized as follows:

- Overview of the evaluation objectives and the questions that guided the evaluation.
- Summary of the evaluation approach and methodology.
- Description of the USAID activities selected as cases for this comparative study.
- Presentation of key findings from the cross-case analysis of the four case studies.

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1 *Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development*. United States Agency for International Development, April 2014. Web. Available at: https://www.usaid.gov/policy/local-systems-framework.

2 Management Systems International (MSI), A Tetra Tech Company, implements the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project for USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (E3) in partnership with Development and Training Services, a Palladium company; and NORC at the University of Chicago.

3 The evaluation team produced reports for each case study. These reports are available through the USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse via the following links:
https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/content/Detail_Presto.aspx?vID=47&ctID=ODVhZjk4NWQtM2YyMi00YjRmLTkxNjktZTcxMjM2NDBmY2Uy&rID=NTAzMTU2,
https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/content/Detail_Presto.aspx?vID=47&ctID=ODVhZjk4NWQtM2YyMi00YjRmLTkxNjktZTcxMjM2NDBmY2Uy&rID=NTAzMTU3,
https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/content/Detail_Presto.aspx?vID=47&ctID=ODVhZjk4NWQtM2YyMi00YjRmLTkxNjktZTcxMjM2NDBmY2Uy&rID=NTAzMTU4,
https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/content/Detail_Presto.aspx?vID=47&ctID=ODVhZjk4NWQtM2YyMi00YjRmLTkxNjktZTcxMjM2NDBmY2Uy&rID=NTAzMTU5

EVALUATION PURPOSE AND QUESTIONS

Evaluation Purpose

This evaluation had two purposes. The primary purpose was to identify programmatic and contextual factors that contribute to sustained outcomes (whether intended or unanticipated) from international development interventions. The secondary purpose was to learn lessons about conducting ex-post evaluations using a systems approach to better understand when and how USAID might use these approaches in the future. The secondary purpose of the evaluation is the subject of a separate lesson learning exercise being conducted by USAID/PPL/LER and is not addressed in this report.

Evaluation Audiences and Uses

The primary audience for the evaluation is USAID/PPL, which may use the evaluation to inform program cycle guidance and tools, including the Agency's approach to analyzing sustainability during activity design.

Other audiences include USAID missions and individuals involved in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of international development projects. While the evaluation may be of special interest to USAID staff who work on basic education activities, the evaluation findings on factors that influence sustainability are likely also relevant to USAID staff working in other sectors.

Evaluation Questions

As per USAID's approved SOW, this study addressed the following evaluation questions:

1. Were USAID-intended outcomes sustained?
2. What other outcomes resulted from the project (positive/negative) and were these outcomes sustained?
3. What has contributed to or hindered sustaining the outcomes?
4. How are the outcomes perceived and valued by those with significant stakes in the project?

The four operational definitions provided below helped to ensure a common understanding of these questions:

- **"USAID-intended outcomes"** are defined as the conditions of people, systems, or institutions that indicate progress or lack of progress toward achievement of project/program goals. Outcomes are any result higher than an output to which a given output contributes, but for which it is not solely responsible. Outcomes may be intermediate or end outcomes, short- or long-term, intended or unintended, positive or negative, direct or indirect (USAID Automated Directives System [ADS] 200-203).
- **"Project"** refers to a set of executed interventions over an established timeline and budget that are intended to achieve a discrete development result through resolving an associated problem. More succinctly, a project is a collaborative undertaking with a beginning and end that is designed to achieve a specific purpose.[4] Based on consultations between the evaluation team and USAID/PPL/LER, it was agreed that evaluation research would focus on what USAID

4 See ADS 201, page 47 (2014).

currently defines as an "activity," or a sub-component of a project that contributes to a project purpose.[5] This report uses the term "activity" unless context requires otherwise.

- **"Sustained"** refers to something that has been maintained or continued over time. In this evaluation, the reference is to the intended outcome of the USAID activity and its condition in the present time, i.e., some years after the activity's funding ended. For this evaluation, the determination as to whether an outcome has been sustained will be decided on a case-by-case basis on the totality of the evidence amassed through document reviews and field work about the condition of the outcome(s) examined in relation to their condition at the end point of USAID funding, and contribution rather than attribution will be the guiding principle as to whether a sustained outcome can be linked to the activity.
- "**Sustainability**," as defined in USAID's Local Systems Framework, "refers to the ability of a local system to produce desired outcomes over time. Discrete projects contribute to sustainability when they strengthen the system's ability to produce valued results and its ability to be both resilient and adaptive in the face of changing circumstances."[6]

EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

This evaluation generated findings across four case studies using a systems approach. Through the systems approach, the evaluation analyzed how outcomes of the USAID activities were nested within multiple social systems and how these outcomes may have influenced, or been influenced by, those systems. The evaluation approach and methodology is described below, including:

- The systems thinking concepts that influenced the evaluation methodologies.
- The application of a comparative case study evaluation design.
- How cases were selected and the methodologies used for case study research and analysis.
- The framework for cross-case analysis to address the evaluation questions.

The Evaluation Design Proposal is available at http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00M8CN.pdf.

A Systemic Evaluation Approach

At the outset of the evaluation, the evaluation team could identify no literature on conducting an ex-post evaluation using systems approaches. Therefore, USAID/PPL/LER and the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project conducted several preliminary activities to better understand how to apply systems approaches in this context. These included consulting with experts on sustainability and systems; conducting three literature reviews on topics related to systems thinking and sustainability analysis, including specifically in basic education;[7] and convening an evaluation advisory group of experts in education, evaluation, systems thinking, and sustainability to discuss potential evaluation questions, approaches, methods, and challenges.

The evaluation drew guidance from this preparatory work and incorporated key recommendations from the advisory group in the evaluation design and implementation.

Three systems thinking concepts influenced the data collection and analysis methodologies: (1) a commitment to multiple perspectives, (2) a focus on understanding interrelationships, and (3) an

5 Ibid, page 40.
6 See https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/LocalSystemsFramework.pdf, page 5.
7 See Literature Review: Sustainable Outcomes in Basic Education (2015); Literature Review: Sustainable Outcomes and the Systems Field (2015); Literature Review: Defining Sustainability in International Development (2015).

awareness of boundaries, as understood in the systems thinking literature. These concepts helped the evaluation team to understand the factors that affect sustained outcomes in a different way than the more traditional "goal oriented" and "theory driven" evaluations. Annex B provides further discussion of the evaluation methods and limitations, including how the evaluation team applied these systems thinking characteristics.

Comparative Case Study Design

The evaluation compared findings from four cases (described in the next section) that each examined a USAID basic education activity completed between 2000 and 2010. Data were analyzed for this evaluation at the case level and the cross-case level, which is outlined below and described more fully in Annex B. Each case study involved in-depth research predicated upon a systems analysis to assess whether and to what extent USAID's intended and unanticipated outcomes were sustained, and to identify the factors that contributed to or hindered the sustainment of these outcomes.

Case Study Selection

The E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project conducted an evaluability assessment to identify activities appropriate for inclusion in this study. The assessment had five criteria:

1. Basic education outcomes of interest
2. Measurable change in the outcome of interest
3. Evidence of activity contribution
4. Conflict dynamics in activity countries
5. Activity documentation

Figure 1 provides a graphic representation of the case selection process, explained in greater detail in Annex B:

FIGURE 1: CASE SELECTION PROCESS

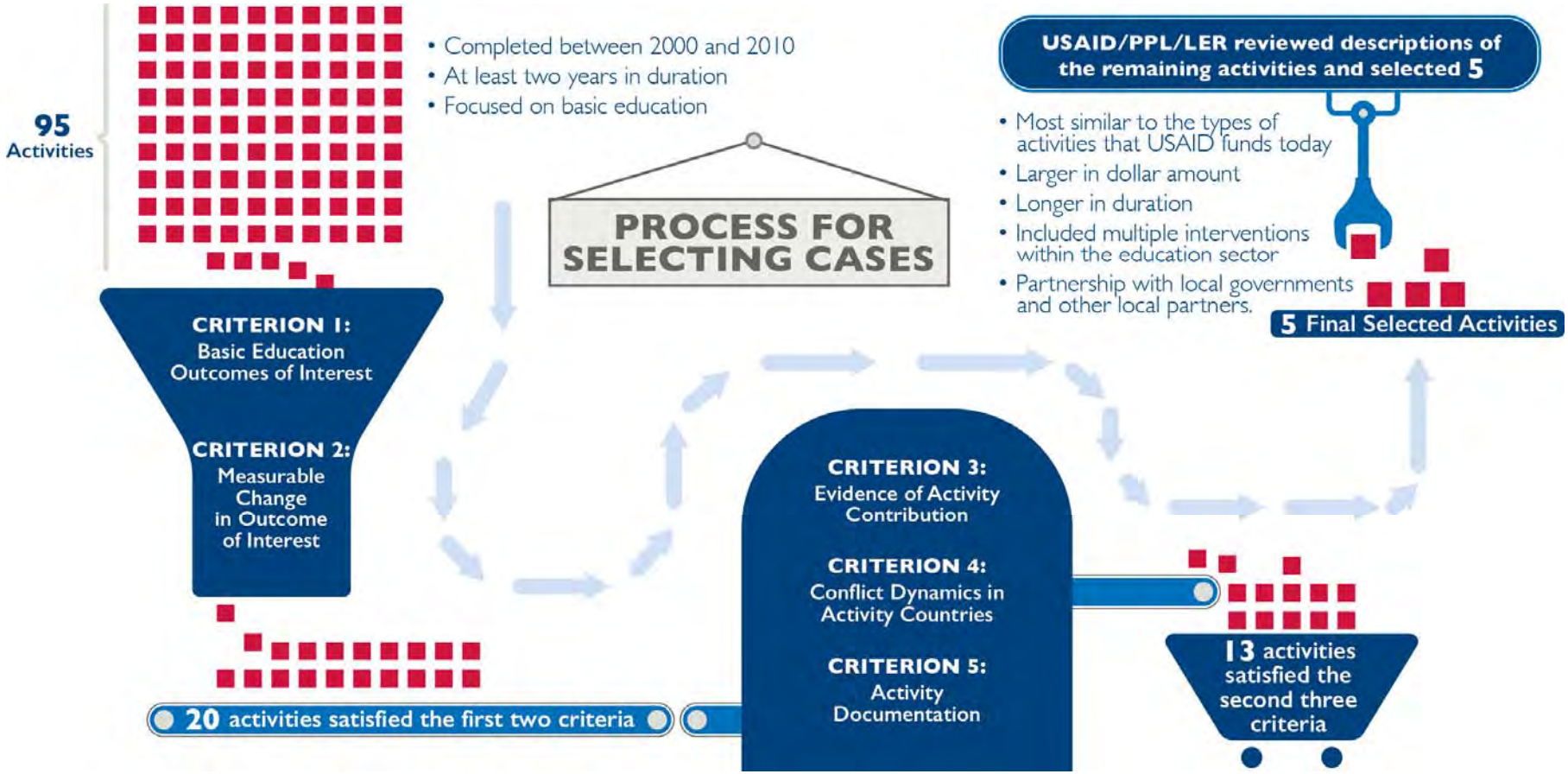
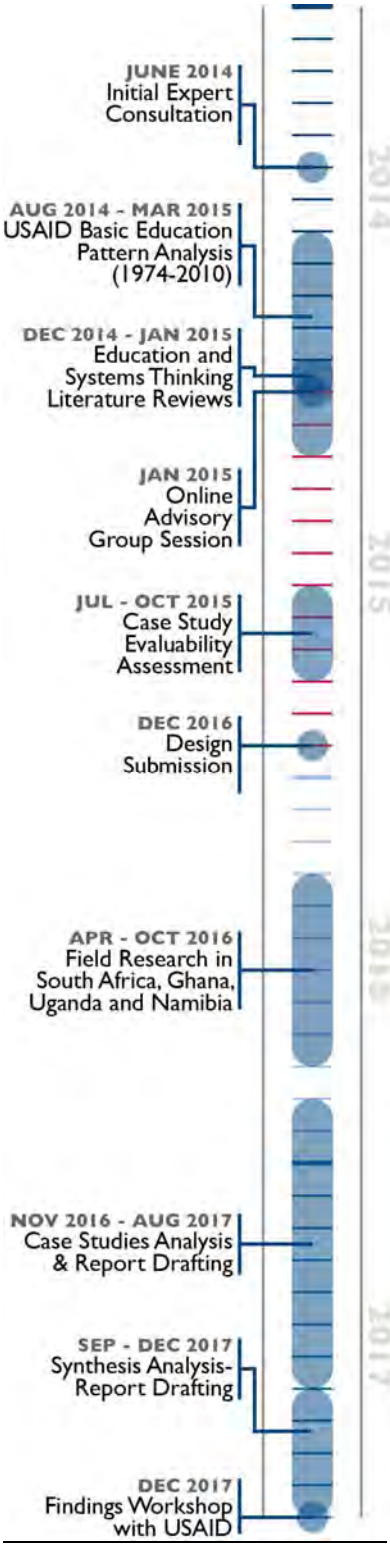


FIGURE 2: PROCESS TIMELINE



Case Study Research Methodology

Purposeful Sampling of Outcomes, Sites, and Respondents

The evaluation conducted case studies in four countries based on the study's country selection criteria: Namibia, Ghana, Uganda and South Africa. Case study teams sampled purposefully to select outcomes, sites, and respondents. To assess the sustainment of outcomes for activities ending up to 16 years previously, the evaluation first needed to identify outcomes that had been achieved and were likely to be observable, and then to identify individuals likely to provide information of sufficient quality to identify key factors influencing outcome sustainment. Randomly selecting sites, schools, and individuals and hoping to find people who remembered the USAID activity would likely not have provided the necessary data. While purposeful sampling enabled solid empirical data collection and contributed to an effective evaluation, this sampling approach is inherently biased. Findings drawn from this study may be analytically generalizable, but they are not representative of USAID education interventions more generally.

Annex B provides detailed sampling criteria and selection processes.

Data Collection Methods

For each case study, the evaluation's case study teams collected activity-related documents from public and non-public sources, including USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse, former contractors' databases, and relevant in-country institutions, where feasible. The case study teams used these documents to inform exploratory interviews with national (primarily) education experts to better understand the education system and its key actors during the time of the USAID activity and at present. The case study teams used the research to draw initial systems maps, to begin a timeline of key events, and to start refining the generic interview tool provided in the Evaluation Guide.[8]

Each case study team reviewed several kinds of activity and administrative data, including: activity design and implementation documents; activity evaluation reports; national education strategy and policy documents; host-country education management information system data and third-party education monitoring data; and assessments of the national education systems conducted by academics and international donors including USAID.

Following and sometimes concurrent with the document review, case study teams conducted semi-structured interviews with a range of

[8] As part of the evaluation design process, the evaluation team lead developed a comprehensive guide to conducting the case studies, which was provided to each of the case study teams. The Evaluation Guide is included as Annex D.

informants that gathered participants' perceptions in their own words, capturing rich and detailed accounts of their experiences or perceptions. The teams conducted interviews with individuals and in small groups. Table 1 shows the number and categories of respondents interviewed for each case study, although categorization is somewhat arbitrary as individuals sometimes occupied multiple roles, either concurrently or consecutively, over the course of the activity and thereafter.

Data Analysis Methods

Data Analysis Workshop. In the week following the conclusion of data collection, each case study team participated in an analysis workshop held in-country. Each workshop took place over 3-4 days and was led by the case study lead, sometimes in conjunction with the evaluation team lead or senior education specialist. During each workshop, the case study team analyzed the data including interview notes (cleaned and typed in advance) against the evaluation questions, as detailed in Annex B. Each case study lead drafted the initial narrative in report format, which the evaluation team lead then reviewed and revised by using findings from the analysis workshop and the raw data.

Cross-Case Analysis. The evaluation team conducted qualitative analysis of findings from each case study. The case studies and their relevant data sets provided the data for analysis; thus, the findings from the case studies became the "data" for the cross-thematic analysis.

The evaluation team conducted the cross-case analysis in two phases. The first phase addressed each evaluation question and identified emergent themes based upon an inductive analysis of the case study data. The second phase focused on identifying relevant manifestations of systems concepts—specifically with respect to systems dynamics and Midgley's categorization of the components of critical systems.[9] Annex B further explains this aspect of the work.

Evaluation Limitations

The limitations for this evaluation varied by country. The ones listed below are relevant to most cases.

The nature of this study does not allow for broad generalization of findings. Since the evaluation used purposive approaches for selecting cases, outcomes, research sites, and respondents, and systems-thinking approaches to identify the unique contextual factors that contributed to change (or stasis), the cases and the findings of the cases or cross-case analysis are not generalizable (in any statistical sense). However, the findings presented in this report may be instructive in analogous contexts (analytically transferrable) – i.e., where a donor or implementer has found similarities in the factors producing outcomes and the effect of context.

There was incomplete activity documentation. In all cases except South Africa, there were few activity documents available (e.g., proposals, work plans, monitoring plans, reports). There was often more information about changes to which the activity contributed than the specific interventions through which these changes were accomplished. The available documents provided weak descriptions regarding the activities, and at times provided conflicting data. This strained the case study teams' understanding, and required a considerable amount of effort, through qualitative inquiry, to piece together what happened in activity implementation. While the data and findings in this report were not negatively influenced by this limitation, the lack of written data meant that the case study teams had to spend considerable time triangulating basic descriptions.

[9] See Midgley, Gerald. "Systems thinking for evaluation." *Systems concepts in evaluation: An expert anthology* (2006): 11-34.

Respondent were prone to cognitive biases. Key informants constituted the primary source of information for each case study. Interview data are well known to be prone to cognitive biases on the part of the respondent or the interviewer. These include social desirability or acceptability bias—the tendency of individuals to provide responses that they believe will be "socially desirable" in the context or desirable from the researcher's/sponsor's point of view. The case study teams mitigated potential cognitive biases in the research to ensure the validity and reliability of its findings using systematic triangulation of interview sources, appropriate selection of a range of interview participants, and expert validation of data.

The reliance on inductive analytical approaches resulted in some incomparable data. While the analysis phase did draw on both inductive and deductive analysis, as both are often applied together, the cross-case analysis drew more heavily on inductive analysis, which is an open-ended and exploratory approach. An example of the limitation is that at different times during analysis, when a pattern began to emerge across cases, it was not possible to explore it further due to lack of comparable data. Deductive approaches would have compelled each case study to focus in specific areas, and therefore provided more in-depth information in comparable areas. In turn, that would have permitted more in-depth cross-case analysis, and likely deeper insights to answer the evaluation questions.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Annex C provides an overview of the four USAID activities selected as cases for the evaluation, including the country context, USAID objectives, and key interventions and achievements for each activity.

Evaluation Question 1: Were USAID-intended outcomes sustained?

The evaluation found that USAID-intended outcomes were sustained, to a degree. This section presents key findings identified in the cross-case analysis, with data supporting each finding. The individual case study reports provide in-depth and specific aspects of each case.

Finding: Where USAID supported major national policy initiatives to decentralize education, some USAID outcomes have been sustained in the formal system.

The evaluation identified outcomes sustained in the education system for each of the four case studies. Decentralization connects these findings, as each country maintained a structure or system influenced by a USAID activity that supported the national government's continued focus on decentralization of education. Below are examples of what the research identified as sustained outcomes.

Decentralized Education (National System)

- The USAID activity supported the government of **Namibia** to decentralize their education system, which remains the government's approach to education today. In the mid-1990s, USAID designed BES to respond to a key strategy in Namibia's education reform, to decentralize the management of education to the regions, circuits, and schools. BES I (1993–1998) provided support at both the national and regional levels, BES II (1999–2004) shifted to regional- and school-level support, and BES III (2005–2009) built on the gains of BES II. As of 2016, many of the decentralization processes supported by USAID continued to exist and continued to facilitate local school planning and management.

National Teacher Development Management System (National System)

- In **Uganda**, the USAID activity supported the development and implementation of the teacher development management system (TDMS), which sought to restructure the role of Uganda's primary teacher colleges and strengthen teacher training, and remains today. This is also an example of supporting decentralization. USAID supported the design and implementation of the government's TDMS outreach structure, and as of 2016 this continued to exist. Within the TDMS structure, pre-service and in-service training still exist, although their composition has changed since the USAID activity. Coordinating centers and coordinating center tutors continue to provide instructional support, although its intensity and effectiveness is reduced.

School Governing Bodies (Regional and Local System)

- In **South Africa** and **Namibia**, the USAID activity focused on strengthening school governing bodies (SGBs) in local communities, where the SGBs remain today. Prior to USAID activities commencing, the **South African** and **Namibian** governments had education policies that resulted in formal structures to encourage local engagement in education; one such structure was SGBs. These also represent examples of decentralization. Both South Africa and Namibia aimed to strengthen those structures. For the schools that the case study team visited in South Africa, there were regular SGB elections and electoral processes were relatively systematic and well established. Similar findings were identified for Namibia, where similar SGB interventions took place. In Namibia, like South Africa, SGB elections have become a regular part of the education system in the province. The related South African and Namibian education policies and the supporting government structures that require democratically established SGBs remain in place.

Community Participation Coordinator (Regional and Local System)

- **In Ghana,** the community participation coordinator role exists, though its functions have largely been discontinued. The community participation coordinator was the key district-level position introduced through CSA into the formal education system. This coordinator was delegated to supervise community participation activities across a range of local communities within a district. Twelve years after the conclusion of CSA, the community participation coordinator role exists in the formal system, although its actual function has been largely discontinued.

Finding: In some cases, materials (such as forms and templates) and processes created during the USAID activity continue to be used today.

In two countries, case study teams identified USAID-introduced processes and forms that remain today as a type of sustained outcome. Searching for "forms" and "materials" (identified as part of the content analysis) showed a pattern: a USAID activity introduced new processes or materials, some of which remain either as initially developed or with modifications.

- In **Namibia**, BES III promoted the school self-evaluation and school development plans to facilitate local school management and planning. The evaluation found that both processes are still in use. Currently, despite being contrary to policy, submitting the school self-evaluation and the school development plan to MoE officials is voluntary and these rarely receive feedback from the government. Regardless, all the schools visited had continued to follow the school self-evaluation and school development plan process after the end of BES, suggesting that the processes, tools, and plans remain relevant and valued at the school and community levels.

- In **South Africa,** SGB processes and materials still exist although they have been adapted over time. The tool that emerged from the USAID activity that supported school self-evaluation approaches became institutionalized nationally. In the USAID activity schools, DDSP introduced the school self-evaluation process and associated tools, such as self-assessment templates that formed the basis for the SGB functionality tool. The USAID activity trained SGBs and school managers in their use, and supported the implementation of the self-assessment processes. The SGB functionality tool was later institutionalized at a national level, and still exists.
- Also in **South Africa**, pro forma SGB policies, school management templates, and other SGB templates are still in use at most school and district levels. Training and policy materials introduced through DDSP are still being used at most schools. Nearly all principals who the case study team interviewed mentioned that pro forma policy templates were the most valuable resources provided by the USAID activity and are still used today.

Not all materials and processes introduced through USAID activities remained. Exploring why processes and forms did not remain was challenging. If they did not remain, most people did not remember them, and thus could not explain the reason the forms or processes no longer existed. Possible explanations include a lack of ongoing financial support for the materials, or the processes and forms being considered no longer relevant, useful, or necessary.

Finding: Some individuals trained by the USAID activity remained contributors to the education system and furthered USAID objectives.

In all four case studies where individuals had received direct training from the USAID activity, there was a higher likelihood that they still implemented the USAID activity policies and strategies, or have used the knowledge gained during the USAID activity to further their careers in nonprofit or government organizations, to the benefit of the education sector. This is an example of the transfer of expertise to domestic actors.

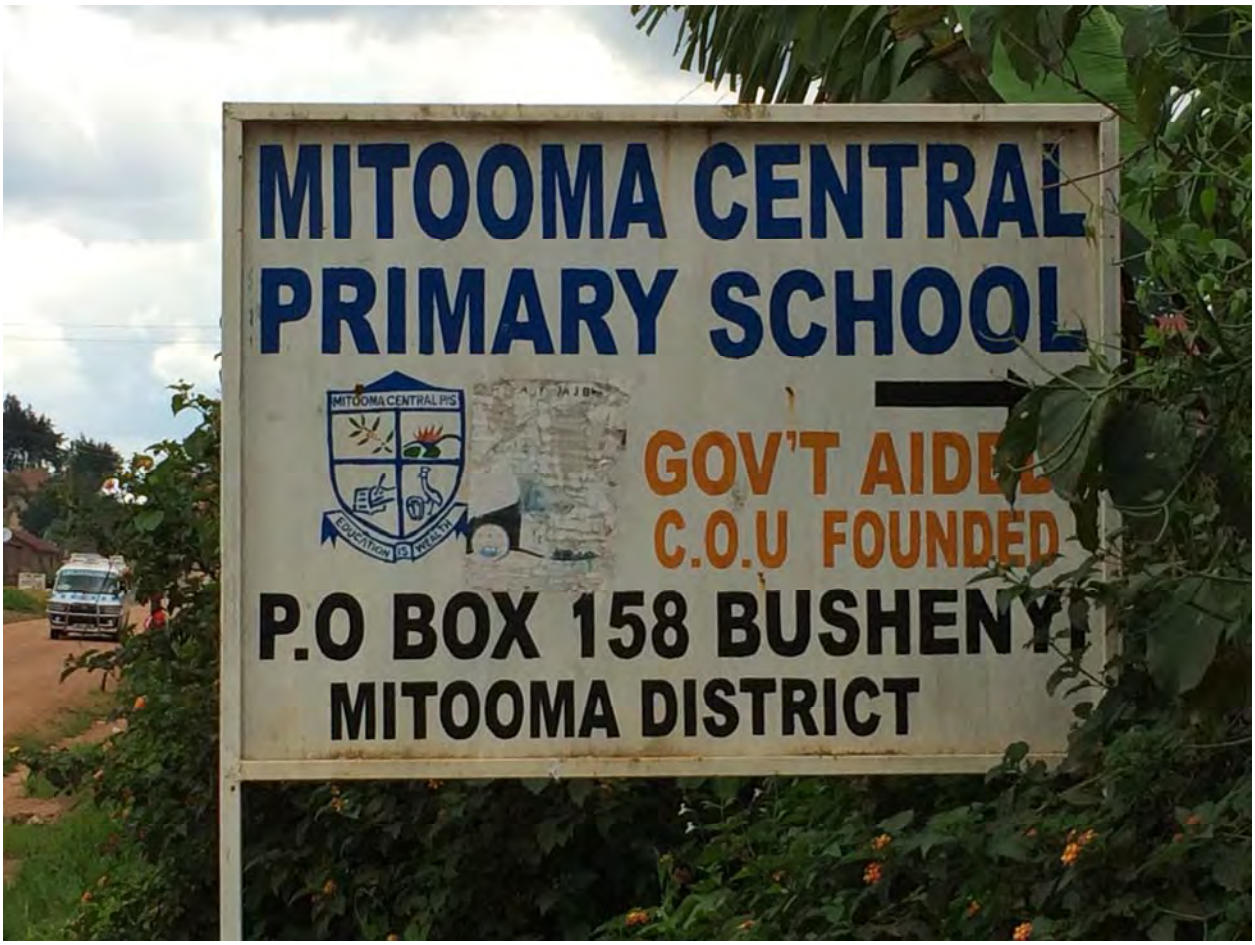
- In **South Africa**, school principals who benefited from USAID activity training and provision of materials reported that they still use the materials for SGB induction training. Some staff trained by the USAID activity while working in nonprofits have now moved into government and continue to use their knowledge and skills for the betterment of the education system.
- In **Uganda**, SUPER supported the development of a TDMS and the establishment of a "hub and spoke" structure network of primary teacher colleges, coordinating centers, and coordinating center tutors providing support directly to primary schools. The coordinating center tutors trained during SUPER remained critical to the "hub and spoke" model for years following the end of the activity. The quality of instruction provided has fallen in large measure because the tutors trained during SUPER have retired or left their positions and been replaced by tutors who have not received commensurate training and professional support.
- In **Ghana,** individuals involved with the USAID activity were empowered by and benefitted from career growth. Substantial evidence demonstrated how individuals involved in the activity received life-changing opportunities for career development. For example, education managers at the national, regional, and district levels spoke of individuals who had emerged with an improved ability to present, facilitate, and lead community engagement.
- In **Namibia,** principals involved in the USAID activity still implemented activity interventions and used USAID formats. Some individuals who received training or had significant roles in the activity still use that experience and knowledge to contribute to the education sector through various public and private entities in Namibia.

Finding: Some structures and roles developed with the support of the USAID activity continue to exist in the same or adapted forms after the end of the activity.

In each of the four case studies, the USAID activity supported the creation of new institutions or roles, or new responsibilities within existing roles, which continue to exist. This is the case even where the function(s) associated with the entity has atrophied over time (as discussed below).

- In **Uganda**, the "hub and spoke" structure of primary teacher colleges, coordinating centers, and coordinating center tutors continues to exist today in roughly the same form.
- In **South Africa**, DDSP supported the establishment through elections of new SGBs. DDSP also provided guidance to district officials on the kind of support they would need to provide to SGBs, and ultimately helped define the roles and responsibilities of the district officials in relation to schools. SGBs continue to be an important formal structure of the South African education system, and the responsibility of district officials to support SGBs – at least according to current job descriptions and guidelines – continues (in adapted forms).
- In **Namibia** and **Ghana**, the USAID activities helped establish new mechanisms to support schools and community organizations affiliated with schools. In Namibia, circuit support teams were replaced by circuit management teams, which fulfill a similar function today. In Ghana, the role of the community participation coordinator continues to exist, with formal responsibility to supervise community participation across school districts.

FIGURE 3: SCHOOL SIGN IN UGANDA



Credit: Jindra Cekan (MSI)

Finding: Where formal institutions and roles continue to exist, the commitment or capacity of some of these entities to carry out their original functions has atrophied.

In each of the case studies, the roles and institutions supported by the USAID activity carry out their functions to a lesser degree today than at the end of the activity. This is particularly the case where the entities are not closely related to the core change supported by the activity.

- In **Uganda**, primary teacher colleges and coordinating centers continue to operate as a hub-and-spoke system, providing training and professional development to teachers. However, this support is both qualitatively and quantitatively less now than it was previously. Primary teacher colleges and coordinating centers are often constrained by inadequate instructional materials and access to the most recent curricula. Coordinating centers and coordinating center tutors also are responsible for providing support to a far greater number of schools, resulting in less support to each school on average, with more geographically remote schools faring the worst.
- In **South Africa**, while SGBs continue to exist and elections are held regularly, it has been challenging to recruit community members to run for volunteer positions on the SGBs and retain existing SGB members. Additionally, while the role of district officials in supporting SGBs is relatively clear and documented in district job descriptions and guidelines, the actual support that district officials provide is minimal. As the case study report notes: "While these visits still take place to some degree, the intensity and frequency of the support visits have been greatly reduced since DDSP, with most occurring when directly requested by a principal."
- In **Ghana**, although the community participation coordinator role continues to exist (as a now unfunded position), the actual function of the community participation coordinator in supervising community participation has largely ceased. This function has generally been delegated to several other district officials. Similarly, although 12 years after the conclusion of CSA the community participation coordinator role still exists, the actual function of the coordinator had been largely discontinued. In **Namibia**, circuit support teams provided support (e.g., materials and subject advice) and training to principals, teachers, and parents – a task that was transferred to the circuit management teams after the activity concluded. Today, circuit management teams offer varying but generally lower levels of support to schools compared to what was provided at the end of BES III.

Finding: Relationships between actors in the formal education system and community members and organizations continue where beneficiaries of the USAID activity remain.

In part because of the prevalence of decentralization initiatives in the cases selected for study, a common objective of the USAID activities was the establishment of better relationships between formal education structures (e.g., school boards, principals, teachers) and parents and community members. Where the beneficiaries of the USAID activity remain in these locations, these relationships have likewise continued.

- In **South Africa**, one outcome from DDSP was strengthened relationships between SGBs and parents and organizations in the community, such as nonprofits and businesses. Case study respondents acknowledged the continued value of these relationships today. As one principal noted: "Now that SGB members are involved in planning, managing the plan and meeting with parents about their work…the community is more involved and committed…I feel that the DDSP built this capacity and strengthened the link between school governance and parent."
- In **Namibia**, BES III provided training to school boards to better understand their roles. Principals, teachers, and school board members described this training as helping to maintain relationships between the school and the community, including parents. One current board member of a BES school, who knew nothing about BES, stated that, "[The school board's role] is about taking services to the people. … It is not only teachers who need to decide on what needs to be done at the school, but the parents need to be involved in planning and

implementing activities." Case study data suggest that the strong relationships between school and community established during BES III remain today.

- Conversely, these relationships have continued to a lesser extent in **Ghana**. QUIPS/CSA provided support to and was effective in building relationships between school management committees, PTAs, teachers, and parents. The case study data show that there is considerable variance among communities in how these relationships function today, and their usefulness. However, two factors from the Ghana case study may account for variable or weakened relationships: the MoE's policy of rotating teachers among schools and the high levels of migration in the case study's target schools since the end of the activity.

Evaluation Question 2: What other outcomes resulted from the project (positive/negative) and were these outcomes sustained?

Through the cross-case analysis, the evaluation team identified sustained outcomes in two areas: activity interventions and relationships. There were no patterns identified for negative sustained outcomes.

Finding: In some cases, other donors have built upon USAID activities to advance social objectives, only some of which relate to basic education.

Through USAID activities, Uganda and Namibia laid a foundation of models, tools, processes and standards that have been drawn on or built upon to support other in-country initiatives.

- In **Uganda**, the coordinating center tutor in-service and community outreach model developed by TDMS has been a conduit for community services, and has been used to deliver a broader range of community services than initially intended. The services now include outreach for early childhood development programs, health initiatives, and even agricultural activities. Although coordinating center tutors have benefited from training provided under new initiatives, these new roles stretch tutors in their ability to deliver on their commitments to improve teacher quality.
- In **Namibia**, subsequent donor support to education is building upon the tools, processes, and standards of BES III. In 2012, the United Nations Children's Fund and the European Union funded the Social Accountability and School Governance program in two regions, which builds on the work and investments of BES II and III and intends to keep the BES-initiated school self-evaluation tools, which will be simplified and made less administration heavy. This program shows that the tools and approaches that began under BES II and BES III are still relevant and valued by government stakeholders. This provides a second example of something that occurred after BES funding ceased, although it was built primarily on BES III.

Finding: USAID activities contributed to stronger relationships between key stakeholders and beneficiaries even where this was not an explicit objective of the activity, and to some extent these relationships have been maintained.

Three of the four USAID activities provided support to community-level interventions. Although it was not an explicit objective, the interventions supported by these activities resulted in greater communication and collaboration, and ultimately better relations, between key stakeholders and beneficiaries. These relationships, while weakened in some cases, still exist.

- In **Ghana,** CSA and its focus on the community helped spur the establishment of mechanisms for exchange between communities and their district officials. As the case study report notes, "Twice a year, since the implementation of the USAID activity, a district-level stakeholder meeting takes place for planning and problem solving." The case study team did not identify any

formal outputs from these meetings, but the fact that they continue to take place so many years after the conclusion of QUIPS indicates that the meetings have some value to the participants.
- In **Namibia**, the USAID activity contributed to stronger relationships now between school boards and their communities.

It is notable that the relationships and interventions that still exist supported the wider interests of education and development in each of the countries highlighted below.

Evaluation Question 3: What has contributed to or hindered sustaining the outcomes?

While a few patterns emerged with regards to *what* remained, exploring the reason(s) *why* they remained revealed several insights. The evaluation team explored the extent to which systems factors provided an insight into the findings. The next section provides an explanation for what remains from the USAID activities by looking through a systems lens.

Factors that Contributed to Sustained Outcomes

Finding: USAID contributed specific support to host country governments during periods of policy transition, which likely contributed to the sustainment of outcomes.

In each case study, the USAID activity was implemented at the invitation of the national government for a specific input that the government needed in its efforts to decentralize education, suggesting that the timing was right for the interventions.

- In **South Africa** and **Namibia**, national governments were implementing new national policies on education during a period of transition from prior regimes. At the time of the USAID activity, no government department supported or focused on SGBs, and the USAID activity filled that role at the request of the government.
- In **Uganda**, the government initiated the Primary Education Reform Program (linked to its decentralization of education). This series of reforms sought to dramatically improve primary education, including an overhaul of education management and teacher development, and was accompanied by large investments in school infrastructure. Although policy development and direction remained centrally controlled, authority and resources for basic service delivery in primary education were devolved to the districts. It was during these shifts in the education system that the Ugandan government invited USAID to implement its activities.
- In **Ghana**, the national government was launching a large-scale expansion of primary education through fCUBE, which sought to implement universal primary education and included broad decentralization initiatives. USAID provided support during this pivotal moment to the MoE to launch fCUBE and implement decentralization at the request of the government.

Finding: Where USAID was invited to support the implementation of significant education policy initiatives that were driven and supported by national governments, examples of sustained education outcomes were identified.

By using an adapted critical pathways perspective, the evaluation team attempted to identify a logical sequence of events and factors that appear necessary to achieve a sustained outcome. The pattern that emerged from the cases was: where USAID was invited by the host government to support decentralization and where the government continued to support that activity after USAID departed, government structures, positions, or systems remained – although sometimes in adapted forms.

The case study evidence suggests that there are several steps along this critical path:

- **Critical entry points**. In each of the cases, USAID was invited by the national government to support the government initiate or support a major shift in its educational system. In each of the four cases, the policy changes were significant (e.g., the shift from apartheid-based education in South Africa) and involved some element of education decentralization. In each case, the national government provided the political and environmental context (e.g., policy shifts and structural shifts in the system) that laid the foundation for the USAID activity.
- **Host government involvement**. In each case study, the host government provided strong direction regarding the nature of USAID support, specifically identifying how USAID would contribute to the government's recent or planned changes in decentralizing education.
- **Continued national government support**. In each case study, the national government supported the path in which USAID participated, and eventually sustained outcomes were achieved. Political will and leadership, enabling policy frameworks, continued funding, and institutionalization of USAID interventions and outcomes appeared to contribute to outcome sustainment. The government continued to support sustained outcomes that remained as a part of the formal system, although sometimes at a reduced level over time.

FIGURE 4: LOCAL SCHOOL MATERIALS IN UGANDA

Credit: Jindra Cekan (MSI)

Finding: Leadership from national governments conveyed control and legitimacy, and influenced the motivation of stakeholders. These factors appeared to contribute to sustained outcomes.

In all four case studies, the national government was a key actor for sustained outcomes. The important role of the national governments conveyed control and legitimacy for an initiative that USAID was invited to support, and contributed to stakeholder motivations at the time of the USAID activity and after. For example, all countries exhibited some form of government policy, infrastructure, or political will to improve basic education prior to the USAID activity that necessitated or set the stage for the USAID activity, and supported the activity during its implementation. After USAID funding ended, the political will and policy frameworks of the national government continued to be influential in the sustained outcomes the evaluation identified today. While other actors influenced the sustainment of outcomes in each country, the cross-case analysis suggests that it was the national government that played the strongest role.

Identifying the national government as the decisive actor in whether there were sustained outcomes is a critical finding. In all activities, national government institutions implemented or supported key interventions that were generally sustained. When interventions engaged solely with nonprofits, universities, and civil society – or when a more prominent role was provided by these organizations – the evaluation identified few sustained results in individual countries.

Finding: Implementing USAID activities over a longer period appeared to contribute to sustaining outcomes.

The evaluation found that length of implementation time is a fourth potential influential factor (in addition to legitimacy, control, and motivation of stakeholders by the national government). When including follow-up activities, the shortest implementation time of the USAID activities examined was eight years (Ghana). In South Africa, where the activity lasted an initial five years, the case study team identified solid evidence that the extended USAID involvement (an additional five years) helped good practices from DDSP become institutionalized at the provincial, district, and school levels. In Namibia (16 years), Ghana (8 years), and Uganda (12 years), evaluation data suggested that the length of implementation of the USAID activity and subsequent involvement (i.e., continued support that built on the initial activity) influenced whether outcomes were sustained.

The **Namibia** case provides a strong example. The longevity of the BES activity, across three phases, enabled USAID to build on the initial strategy. BES I put in place the "scaffolding" – the introduction of approaches and materials that were appropriate for the time, helping teachers grasp basics elements. This paved the way for approaches in BES II and BES III that focused on improved educational outcomes and different approaches to measurement (including continuous assessment). A staff member for all three phases of BES was "struck by how iterative the process was between BES phases and by the long term and visionary nature of the U.S. government's commitment to supporting Namibia in reshaping the primary education system." Data from three case studies support the conclusion that USAID's significant investment in terms of a consistent technical approach is linked to sustained outcomes.

While the evaluation team did consider the possibility that even if the intervention had existed for a shorter amount of time the outcome might have been sustained, interview data in each country suggest that it is unlikely. Most key informants in each country suggested that building the momentum of results (i.e., not stopping USAID resources after one success or lessons learned) over time and the continuity of the USAID activity were key factors that contributed to sustained outcomes.

Finding: USAID-supported structures, roles, and functions adapted in response to the context over time.

While critical pathways provide one potential model to explain how and why outcomes remained, another feasible explanation is adaptation. A second analytical lens explored how and if adaptation took place that resulted in the identified sustained outcome. Strong examples of system adaptation are

identifiable in the answers to evaluation question 1, including the structures, roles, and functions that changed over time in response to changing contexts influenced by motivation, legitimacy, etc. In each country, the government's educational system was shifting from centralized to decentralized (as initiated by the host government) when USAID entered the scene. The national education system continued to adapt to this new form as the USAID activity was implemented. The case studies in Namibia, Uganda, and South Africa provide evidence of the extent to which the USAID activity contributed to smaller shifts that supported decentralization.

Factors that Hindered Sustained Outcomes

Finding: When the position or role created by USAID was not institutionalized into a formal system, it often ceased to exist when the USAID activity ended.

The institutionalization of positions and roles appears to have been an important factor in whether it continued to exist following the cessation of the USAID activity.

- In **South Africa**, while the SGBs were institutionalized and remain today, the training for parents so they could actively participate in the SGBs was not institutionalized in the formal education system, and the training no longer exists today.
- In **Ghana**, case study data suggest that the USAID activity created a useful role of the community participation coordinator, but the position was never formalized in the education system. When the USAID activity ended, the position ceased to exist.
- In **Namibia**, BES III strengthened circuit support teams that were critical in supporting local schools in their governance processes and in managing their SGBs. The USAID activity relied on these teams to provide support and capacity building to the local school system. When the activity ended, so did the circuit support teams' role in strengthening the system. Another relevant example from Namibia was the cessation after BES of the informal cluster-based system of school support that the activity used to provide training, but which raised issues of control for other important stakeholders. The cluster-based system is discussed in more detail below.

The Rise and Fall of School Clusters in the Kavango Region of Namibia

The cluster system was an innovative approach for addressing the isolation of school staff by enabling peer-to-peer support and efficient oversight and delivering capacity-building interventions. A cluster is a group of schools that are geographically close and accessible to each other (normally seven to nine schools). A central school is selected as the cluster center and a suitably skilled and experienced principal is selected as the cluster head.

BES took advantage of the cluster system and built on this platform by making it a convening point for BES support activities. Most BES training took place at the cluster level, which reduced travel costs and made attendance logistically practical – including for school board trainings, workshops for principals, and teacher professional development conferences. Stakeholders with multiple perspectives (e.g., circuit inspectors, principals, teachers, school board members) described the cluster system as playing a big role in professional development and knowledge sharing between more and less developed schools.

However, lamenting the additional work placed on cluster schools and principals, the Namibia National Teachers Union requested extra staff and infrastructure funding for these facilities. When none was forthcoming, they halted the cluster systems in Kavango. Thus, the cluster systems disappeared in Kavango.

Finding: In cases where formal institutions and individuals in key positions had weakened commitment or capacity to carry out their functions, a range of economic and financial factors appeared to have considerable influence.

There was no clear single factor that contributed to the weakening of institutional functioning. However, the broad theme of economic and financial factors emerged and provided some insight.

- In **South Africa,** the effectiveness of the SGBs was hindered by two economic factors. First, a lack of resources has resulted in insufficient numbers of district officials to support the boards. This support was identified as a key need during the USAID activity. This finding relates directly to the lack of control by the SGBs over their human resources and budget. Second, macroeconomic circumstances influenced by poverty and culture have resulted in corruption in every aspect of the SGBs. Thus, while the SGBs exist and are part of the formal system, their effectiveness is questionable.
- In **Ghana**, there were economic obstacles and disincentives to parental participation in the support of local institutionalized structures to support local schools during the USAID activity. While the local structures are part of the formal education system and remain (and were part of the education system prior to USAID's involvement), the usefulness of these structures is questionable in terms of fulfilling their intent of providing quality education. Here, the finding is directly related to the lack of legitimacy, with an obvious lack of social and cultural support to engage with those structures.
- In **Uganda**, the coordinating center tutor network – a part of the formal system – is now a conduit for services in other sectors and strains the capacity of the tutors to provide education services. The lack of financing to support their new, expanded roles stretches the tutors in their ability to improve teacher quality. The lack of control, with regards to what the coordinating center does and the budget to support the new expanded role, is a key factor that led to the lack of usefulness of the sustained outcome.

Finding: Relying on volunteers in poorer communities has negatively influenced outcome sustainment in some cases.

Analyzing data where there were remnants of the USAID activity (i.e., the outcome remained yet was weak or was a severely diminished outcome) revealed similar influencing factors and brought a few additional insights. In **Uganda**, **Ghana**, **South Africa,** and to a lesser extent in **Namibia**, engaging poorer communities in volunteer services is a challenge when there seems to be little motivation among community members (e.g., due to no obvious or direct benefits to themselves or their families) or little control over other barriers (e.g., language, time, literacy) that prevent full participation. While in Namibia the concept of volunteering to support a school existed prior to the USAID activity (which drew on that cultural aspect), the same challenges (e.g., lack of money for transport, lack of education) that hindered parental and community involvement remained after the activity ceased.

Evaluation Question 4: How are the outcomes perceived and valued by those with significant stakes in the project?

As with data identified for evaluation question 3, data collected to answer evaluation question 4 also provide potential reasons for the sustained outcomes, although with much weaker links and offering much less insight.

Finding: National and provincial/district-level governments valued the sustained outcome.

In ***Namibia, South Africa,*** and ***Uganda,*** national government officials valued the role of the USAID activity and its remaining outcome. In South Africa, district, provincial, and national officials who recalled the activity said they valued its scale and scope. In Namibia, at the national level, the identified outcomes are perceived as valuable. In Uganda, officials from various levels of government identified the sustained outcomes as valuable.

Finding: Civil society, including local nonprofit implementing partners, valued the sustained outcome.

In **South Africa,** civil society organizations that implemented the USAID activity valued it for strengthening their organizations and supporting the establishment of local partnerships. Partnerships forged between organizations were sustained after the activity ended, and these partnerships supported these organizations to be involved in other education interventions. In **Ghana**, while traditional leaders did not value the institutions that encouraged parental engagement (e.g., PTA) outside of traditional venues, parents were split in their valuing of these institutions and the USAID activity. In **Namibia**, parents, teachers, and principals noted that they valued the USAID activity.

Finding: School-level education officers and teachers valued the sustained outcome.

In **South Africa**, principals and managers continue to value the supporting role that the USAID activity played in helping them to come to grips with changes brought on by the promulgation of the South African Schools Act and the implications for governance in their schools. In Namibia, at the local level, school principals, boards, and teachers perceive the outcomes of the USAID activity, or versions of them, to be relevant and useful. For example, all schools that the case study team visited retained documents related to the USAID activity and spoke about their usefulness and relevance to learner improvement in their schools. Part of the process used for activity implementation, specifically the self-reflection and community engagement element, was found useful by these actors, particularly regarding its role in priority setting for planning purposes and the resulting transparency. At the local level in **Namibia**, despite the lack of follow-up or penalties, the continued use of USAID-supported processes and tools suggests that they are perceived as useful and relevant. Finally, in **Uganda**, teachers strongly appreciate the investments that USAID made in school management and teacher training and lament the diminished status of the associated activities.

CONCLUSION

This evaluation used a systems evaluation approach to explore what outcomes remained at least 5 years – and up to 16 years – after funding for selected USAID activities ceased to exist in 4 African countries. The systems approaches enabled the evaluation to explore what factors shaped or influenced outcomes that were sustained, sustained in a weakened state, or not sustained.

Comparing the findings from four cases studies allowed for deeper insight into what factors are likely to support sustainable outcomes in any development sector. While various factors influenced what remained in these four countries, the main influencing factors appeared to be: (1) building of momentum of results over time, (2) the timing of the intervention, and (3) the role played by the host national government, including the policy environment and political will. In cases where outcomes were sustained, the national government had made shifts in its education system that required support, and USAID was invited to participate in that national government process in a specific role and for a specific reason. Thus, from the outset, a common factor in all four countries with sustained results was the host government clarifying USAID's role in the country at a time when changes were happening (e.g., system shifts were taking place). Further, the host government had policies, frameworks, or infrastructure planned or in place that set the stage for USAID to engage in the activity.

Diving deeper into the government's role, the evaluation identified five influential factors (**motivation, control, legitimacy**, **building on success,** and **timing** of the intervention) present in all four countries where outcomes were sustained at any level (i.e., national, regional, or community). The national government appeared to be a key actor as it brought legitimacy and control and influenced the motivation of other key actors during the USAID activity. Where outcomes were sustained, those same factors remained constant after the activity ended. The building of successive results appeared to be important, with most activities that resulted in a sustained outcome building over time through multiple USAID activities that lasted at least 10 years and included antecedent or follow-on activities. Lesser factors that may have also influenced sustainability include implementing USAID activities that fit within the local culture, or at least did not contradict it. Two other factors influenced the intensity levels and effectiveness of what remained: whether interventions were institutionalized, and macroeconomic influences. Each of these factors suggest elements of what USAID should consider in future efforts to contribute to sustained outcomes.

ANNEX A: STATEMENT OF WORK

Ex-Post Evaluation of Sustained Outcomes in USAID Programming

1. Activity Description

Through the 2010 Presidential Policy Directive on Global Development, the United States set forth a comprehensive development assistance policy focused on sustainable development outcomes that places a premium on broad-based economic growth, democratic governance, game-changing innovations and outcomes across a variety of sectors and development contexts. Aligned with this approach, USAID's Office of Learning, Evaluation and Research in the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL/LER) has embarked on an ex-post evaluation that will use a systems approach to retrospectively examine a portion of USAID's portfolio of completed programs, projects and activities to document when and under what programmatic and contextual circumstances intended, as well as unintended, outcomes have emerged and been sustained, and what role locals systems have played in those results. While this study is intended to benefit USAID staff working in a variety of sectors, it will initially concentrate on a single field in order to enhance the likelihood that the evaluation will succeed in isolating factors, processes and contextual variables that are consistently present where outcomes are sustained but noticeably absent where they are not. To this end, PPL/LER's initial ex-post evaluation of sustained outcomes will focus on USAID basic education programming that ended prior to the study period.

2. Development Hypothesis

Regardless of the sector in which USAID invests, sustainable outcomes depend on continued support from local actors and systems. USAID's recent paper, Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development,10 underlines the importance of effectively embedding outcomes that are intended to be durable in local systems.

In this context, the development hypothesis for the evaluation of sustained outcomes is conceptually simple: development interventions work within, are influenced by, and influence systems, and a combination of programmatic, contextual and systems factors align to determine the nature of developmental change. Figure 1 graphically depicts this hypothesis.

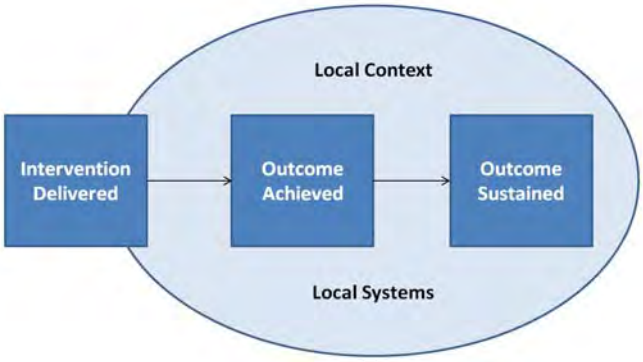
Sustainable Outcomes Rely on Local Systems

The focus on local systems is rooted in the reality that achieving and sustaining any development outcome depends on the contributions of multiple and interconnected actors. Building the capacity of a single actor or strengthening a single relationship is insufficient. Rather, the focus must be on the system as a whole: the actors, their interrelationships and the incentives that guide them. Realizing improved development outcomes emanates from increasing the performance of multiple actors and the effectiveness of their interactions. And sustaining development outcomes depends on the sustainability of the local system – specifically, its built-in durability and adaptability that allows actors and their interrelationships to accommodate shocks and respond to changing circumstances.

USAID Local Systems Framework (2014)

10 See: http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/LocalSystemsFramework.pdf

Figure 1: Development Hypothesis for Sustainable Outcomes Evaluation



3. Existing Information Sources

Significant research exists to understand sustainable development in the fields of conservation and the environment, but little equivalent analysis has been undertaken of the factors contributing to sustained outcomes, as the term will be used in this evaluation and in the systems context. However, the evaluation team should review several USAID sources of information and analysis developed both specifically in preparation for this evaluation as well as more generally, and build upon these where needed. A list of potential sources of information that can contribute to this evaluation is presented below.

Resources, Studies and Analysis

Several resources have been identified as relevant to the evaluation design and implementation, and they are listed below. The evaluation team should continue to look for relevant resources. During concept paper development, the evaluation management team should also reach out to USAID staff for input on potential country selection and other decisions related to targeting the evaluation.
In late 2014 and early 2015, USAID commissioned several small analytic pieces through the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project that will contribute to this evaluation, including literature reviews of relevant topics and a pattern analysis of USAID basic education programming. These documents, which are listed below, will provide the evaluation team with relevant information that will contribute to the design and implementation of the evaluation.

- *Pattern Analysis of USAID Basic Education Activities, 1974–2010 (2015)*
- *Literature Review: Sustainable Outcomes in Basic Education (2015)*
- *Literature Review: Sustainable Outcomes and the Systems Field (2015)*
- *Literature Review: Defining Sustainability in International Development (2015)*

USAID also convened an advisory group composed of a diverse collection of experts to discuss potential evaluation approaches, methods and challenges, and prepared a transcript of these discussions. Key recommendations from the consultation should be considered during evaluation design and implementation.

- *Transcript of Evaluation Advisory Group Online Consultation (2015)*

Background Studies of USAID Basic Education Assistance

USAID and others, including the Government Accountability Organization, have undertaken several studies reviewing the Agency's basic education programming that may be relevant to this evaluation, and are listed below.

- *An Analysis of USAID Assistance to Basic Education in the Developing World, 1990-2005* (EQUIP2 2009)
- *A.I.D.'s Investment in Basic Education: a Description of Current Activities* (1993)
- *Overview of USAID Basic Education Programs in Sub-Saharan Africa III* (2001)
- *Overview of USAID Basic education programs in sub-Saharan Africa II* (1995)
- *Overview of A.I.D. basic education programs in sub-Saharan Africa* (1993)
- *Choosing the best way to provide assistance: the implication of project and non-project assistance modalities for aid effectiveness (DeStefano, 2011)*
- *Enhanced Coordination and Better Methods to Assess the Results of U.S. International Basic Education Efforts are Needed* (GAO-07-523) (2007)

USAID has developed principles and strategies and captured lessons learned relating to systems thinking that should be used to inform the evaluation, including the documents listed below.

- *Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development* (2014)
- *Attending to Interrelationships, Perspectives, and Boundaries: A Complexity-Aware Monitoring Principle*[11] (2014)
- *New Directions in Local Capacity Development: Embracing a Systems Perspective*[12] (2013)
- *Discussion Note: Complexity-aware monitoring* (2013)

Additional Sources

Additional sources of information developed by USAID and other partners that may inform the evaluation include:

- Educational performance data for host countries or regions, such as attendance, government investment in educational approaches, sectors or pedagogies, student attainment scores and general population perception surveys.
- Relevant political and socio-economic data sets, e.g. levels of conflict, gender analysis (as defined by USAID Automated Directives System [ADS] 205), Gini coefficients, GDP, social capital indexes.
- Aid dependency and USAID investment as a dollar proportion of foreign aid into an education 'system', or ministry.
- USAID's Knowledge Services Center (which is only accessible by USAID staff) may also support the development of a bibliography of additional key documents for the pattern analysis.

As the evaluation is expected to analyze whether outcomes from USAID basic education activities have been sustained, data sources associated with individual USAID activities and country-level education data will also likely be utilized. Annex I provides an illustrative list of such data sources that may be included in the document review.

[11] Available at: http://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/Systemic%20Monitoring%20IPB%202014-09-25%20FINAL.pdf
[12] Available at: http://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/new_directions_lcd.pdf

4. Evaluation Purpose, Audience and Intended Use

Evaluation Purpose

The evaluation will have two purposes:

- The primary purpose of the evaluation will be to identify factors that contribute to sustained outcomes from international development interventions. These factors will encompass programmatic characteristics (including in the design, management and implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and learning of projects) and contextual features, including local systems. The evaluation will assess if outcomes were sustained whether or not they were intended by USAID.
- A secondary purpose of the evaluation will be to record and learn lessons from the process of designing and implementing an ex post evaluation taking a systems approach

Evaluation Audience

The primary audience for the evaluation is USAID/PPL. Other audiences will include individuals involved in the design, implementation and M&E of international development projects and USAID Missions more generally. While the evaluation may be of special interest to USAID staff who work on basic education programs, the evaluation findings on factors that influence whether outcomes are sustained should be of more general interest to the Agency – including USAID staff working in areas other than education.

Intended Use

The evaluation will be used by PPL to inform program cycle guidance and tools related to the future design, implementation and M&E of projects and activities. This may include, but not be limited to changes in USAID's approach to sustainability analysis during project design and guidance identifying factors that may foster sustainability in project designs and implementation.

5. Evaluation Questions

The following evaluation questions (EQs) will guide this study:

- EQ 1: Were USAID-intended outcomes sustained?
- EQ 2: What other outcomes resulted from the project (positive/negative) and were these outcomes sustained?
- EQ 3: What has contributed to or hindered sustaining the outcomes?
- EQ 4: How are the outcomes perceived and valued by those with significant stakes in the project?

Two operational definitions are provided below to ensure a common understanding of these questions:

- **"Outcomes"** – For the purposes of EQ 1, "outcomes" represent high-level objectives of USAID project(s). In the basic education sector, these could include outcomes such as improved education quality, improved literacy and numeracy, improved access to education for primary aged students, etc. The evaluation design will likely select an outcome to focus and target the evaluation planning, but the evaluation itself will be open to other outcomes, intended and unintended, that may have resulted from USAID activities.

- **"Sustained"** – For the purposes of these EQs, "sustained" refers to the ability of a local system to produce desired outcomes over time. Discrete projects contribute to sustainability when they strengthen the system's ability to produce valued results and its ability to be both resilient and adaptive in the face of changing circumstances (USAID Local Systems Framework). The determination as to whether an outcome has been sustained will be decided on a case-by-case basis on the totality of the evidence at the conclusion of field work, and contribution rather than attribution will be the guiding principle as to whether sustainability can be linked to project efforts.

6. Gender Considerations

The evaluation will specifically consider the extent to which outcomes were achieved and sustained with respect to women and girls. Gender-specific and differential access to project services, women/girl's participation in project activities, and women/girl's benefits/results should be explored for each evaluation question, using methods specific to that task as required. Where gender-specific performance was an aspect of USAID's project design or set of intended outcomes, performance in relation to targets should be examined. Given the systems dimension of this evaluation, the evaluation team is also encouraged to examine differential perceptions of the value of outcomes in beneficiary and other stakeholder communities, along with differences in the willingness/interest of community and education system leaders to invest in sustained outcomes for girls and boys separately as well as together. At a minimum, this will require that data be disaggregated from a gender perspective, with specific research on why gender-differential effects (e.g., gender-specific access, participation, results, or benefits) do or do not exist.

7. Evaluation Design and Methods

To capture the influence of local systems, USAID anticipates that the evaluation design will take a systems approach to identifying and understanding multiple perspectives and factors and include a variety of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods. Findings may be organized as country-specific case studies of USAID basic education activities. Findings will also be presented in a synthesized manner that will allow for identifying differences and common factors across contexts. Other approaches may also be applied.

The evaluation team responding to this Statement of Work will propose a comprehensive design for addressing the evaluation questions and will address how choices will be made related to selecting country/geographic and basic education outcomes or activities to maximize the ability of the evaluation to develop findings based in evidence and that will be relevant to the broadest possible range of development activities.

Within this design, the evaluation team will select the best and most rigorous methods for data collection to identify the factors that contribute to sustained outcomes. Annex 2 provides an illustrative analytical framework for the evaluation with potential data collection methods, to be further developed by the evaluation team.

8. Data Analysis Methods

The evaluation will use a variety of data analysis methods as appropriate to the mixed-methods nature of the evaluation research. The evaluation team will select the best and most rigorous analysis methods possible to identify the factors that contribute to sustained outcomes. Possible data analysis methods are included in the illustrative analytical framework in Annex 2.

9. Strengths and Limitations

It is expected that the evaluation will confront a number of challenges, many of which are inherent to retrospective evaluations and the inductive nature of the research that is anticipated for this study.

- There may be a small number of potential activities appropriate for the evaluation. This may provide limited options for including projects that are representative of the universe of USAID activities in basic education and other sectors.
- Where activities selected for the evaluation have insufficient contemporaneous analysis and documentation demonstrating that outcomes were achieved, this will hinder the assessment of whether outcomes have been sustained.
- Where contemporaneous project documentation and interviews with project stakeholders do not provide sufficient information on characteristics of project delivery, this will limit the analysis of the extent to which project characteristics have contributed to sustained outcomes.
- Recall data is generally considered to be less than fully reliable.13 Given the nature of this evaluation, much of the information that the evaluation team will collect will be of this nature.
- Across country studies, the evaluation team will iteratively develop a sustainability hypothesis and may accordingly adapt research instruments to test this evolving hypothesis. Any adaptation of the research instruments will need to consider and mitigate the potential to hinder the comparison of research findings across the countries.
- The evaluation will focus on basic education projects. Findings, therefore, may not be generalizable to all USAID activities, whether in basic education or other sectors.

10. Deliverables

It is expected that the evaluation team will be responsible for the following deliverables. A final list of deliverables including specific due dates will be proposed in the Evaluation Design Proposal to be prepared by the evaluation team. The estimated due dates below provide an illustrative indication of the overall timeline for the evaluation.

Deliverable	Estimated Due Date
1. Evaluation Concept Paper, including preliminary methodological options.	o/a 30 days from USAID approval of the evaluation SOW
2. Evaluability Assessment, including recommendations for the selection of countries and projects for analysis based on feasibility of answering the evaluation questions.	o/a July 2015
3. Evaluation Design Proposal, including description of the evaluation methodology, drafts of data collection instruments and sampling plan, as relevant	o/a August 2015
4. Country-specific evaluation reports	October 2015 – January 2016
5. Draft Evaluation Report	o/a March 2016
6. Oral presentation(s) of key findings Draft Evaluation Report for USAID and invitees	o/a March2016
7. Findings Workshops to Inform Conclusions	April – May 2016

13 "Research tells us that 20% of critical details of a recognized event are irretrievable after one year from its occurrence and 50% are irretrievable after 5 years." Bradburn N, Rips L, Shevell S. Answering autobiographical questions: The impact of memory and inference on surveys. Science, New Series 1987; 236(4798):157-161.

Deliverable	Estimated Due Date
8. Final Evaluation Report	o/a June 2016
9. Oral presentation(s) of key findings and from Final Evaluation Report for USAID and invitees	o/a June 2016
10. Short Summary of Findings (1 – 5 pages) with an infographic if appropriate	o/a July 2016
11. Summary Briefing on the study methodology and findings for future use of this type of evaluation approach	o/a July 2016

All documents and reports will be provided electronically to USAID no later than the dates indicated in the approved Evaluation Design Proposal unless exceptions are approved in advance. All qualitative and quantitative data will be provided in electronic format to USAID either by email or by other medium, depending on the size of the files being provided. All debriefs will include a formal presentation with slides delivered both electronically and in hard copy for all attendees.

Prior to the submission of the Evaluation Design Proposal, the evaluation team will discuss with USAID whether its preliminary dissemination plan for this evaluation indicates other deliverables that should be prepared, such as translation of evaluation materials into other languages and additional presentations or workshops. Such additions as agreed with USAID will then be included in the Evaluation Design Proposal.

11. Team Composition

The evaluation will be delivered by a core evaluation team supported by technical and administrative U.S.-based or local evaluation and project management specialists. The evaluation will also feature teams that will conduct research in specific countries and with respect to specific projects. Where possible, the majority of the country teams should be composed of locally-hired evaluation or sector experts from the country where the study is taking place.

Evaluation Team

It is anticipated that the core evaluation team will consist of a Team Leader, an Evaluation Specialist, an Education Specialist or specialist in education systems, and two research analysts.

Team Leader

The evaluation Team Leader will have extensive experience leading multi-disciplinary teams conducting field research of complex projects, and should also have experience with the application of systems thinking and systems research methodologies. The Team Leader will be responsible for managing the research conducted by the country research teams and ensuring that it is aligned to the overall objectives of the evaluation.

The Team Leader, supported by the other members of the evaluation team, will also be responsible for: (1) developing the overarching research framework for the study, (2) developing generic research instruments for application with adaptation in the case studies, (3) conducting analysis and synthesis of the results of the various strands of research to answer the evaluation questions, and (4) drafting the Final Evaluation Report and other deliverables.

Evaluation Specialist

The Evaluation Specialist will have experience conducting field research of complex projects and applying systems thinking and systems research methodologies, especially in the context of retrospective studies. The Evaluation Specialist will support the Team Leader to iteratively develop the hypotheses of sustainability and the overarching research framework. The Evaluation Specialist will also work with the evaluation and country research teams to develop research instruments that can be adapted for specific country contexts and will contribute to the analysis and synthesis of the various strands of research and to the drafting of the Final Evaluation Report and other deliverables.

Education Specialist

The Education Specialist will have extensive experience in the design and implementation of basic education programs in the international development context. The Education Specialist will provide technical expertise during the evaluation to identify sources of information on education outcomes and to develop the hypotheses of sustainability contributing to the overarching research framework. The Education Specialist will also contribute to the analysis and synthesis of the various strands of research and to the drafting of the Final Evaluation Report and other deliverables.

Research Analysts (x2)

Research Analysts will analyze data collected by the various strands of research to identify trends or patterns that support the hypotheses of sustainability iteratively developed throughout the evaluation and to develop new hypotheses.

Country Research Teams

It is anticipated that the country research teams will each consist of a Research Lead, a Country Education Expert and two to four Research Specialists or Project Assistants. It is expected that all or most of the country research team members will be locally-hired country nationals. Members from the core evaluation team may participate in the field work, as well as USAID headquarters staff.

Research Lead

The Research Lead will be an evaluation and research specialist with extensive experience leading multi-disciplinary teams conducting field research of complex projects. The Research Lead will be responsible for managing the country research team and for developing a research framework and data collection instruments for case study that nest within and are consistent with the overarching research framework for the evaluation. The Research Lead, with support from the other members of the Country Research Team, will also conduct primary research and analysis in according with the research framework for the study, develop and adapt the sustainability hypotheses for their specific unit of study and will be responsible for drafting a Case Study Report and contributing to other deliverables as directed by the Evaluation Team Leader. The Research Lead may be an international, regional or local hire. The same person could be the research lead for more than one country research team.

Country Education Expert

The Country Education Expert is likely a local hire with have extensive expertise and experience with respect to the education system of the country in which the study is conducted, whether through the delivery or study of education provision in the country. It is suggested that the Country Education

Expert have strong social science research experience. The Country Education Expert will support the Research Lead to develop the research framework and data collection instruments for case study and will conduct primary research and analysis in accordance with this research framework. The Country Education Expert will also contribute to the drafting of the Case Study Report and other deliverables as directed by the Research Lead.

Research Specialists and Project Assistants (2 – 4)

Depending on the intensity and breadth of research, the evaluation team will also include up to four Research Specialists and/or Project Assistants who will likely be hired locally and who will contribute substantially to the planning, logistics, data collection (interviews, site visits, etc.), data analysis and presentations/debriefs being conducted for the country study. They will provide country context for the studies and relevant subject matter knowledge or evaluation expertise, as required. They may also be asked to provide translation or logistical support, if needed by the evaluation team.

12. USAID Participation

USAID/PPL expects to be highly engaged with the evaluation team to ensure a collaborative approach to the design and implementation of this research. Throughout the design and implementation process, PPL/LER and the evaluation team will meet regularly to consider options for the evaluation and agree on the focus and approaches for the design and delivery of the evaluation. The desirability of USAID participation in the research field work will be considered and agreed at the appropriate time.
At the conclusion of field research, USAID and the evaluation team will consider the data and findings from the research and, through a collaborative approach and methodology that may include a series of workshops with various stakeholders, they, will construct and agree on conclusions for the evaluation as a whole that are substantiated by the findings.

13. Scheduling and Logistics

The design and implementation of this evaluation is expected to be carried out from o/a May 2015 to July 2016. A preliminary timeline is included below. The evaluation team will prepare an Evaluation Design Proposal including a more detailed schedule with specific dates of completion for tasks and deliverables under this evaluation.

Estimated Evaluation Timeline (2015-2016)

Task/Deliverable	May	Jun-July	Aug-Sept	Oct-Nov	Dec-Jan	Feb-Mar	Apr-May	June-July
Evaluation Concept Paper								
Case Study Selection/ Assessment Phase								
Evaluation Design Proposal								
Pilot Country Study Field Work								
Country Study Field Work								
Data Analysis								
Collaborative development of Conc. & Rec.								
Report Drafting								
Draft Evaluation Report								
Final Evaluation Report								
Summary Briefing								

14. Reporting Requirements

The format of the evaluation report should follow USAID guidelines set forth in the USAID Evaluation Report Template (http://usaidlearninglab.org/library/evaluation-report-template) and the How-To Note on Preparing Evaluation Reports (http://usaidlearninglab.org/library/how-note-preparing-evaluation-reports).

The final version of the evaluation report will be submitted to USAID and should not exceed 30 pages, excluding references and annexes.

All members of the evaluation team should be provided with USAID's mandatory statement of the evaluation standards they are expected to meet, shown in the following text box below, along with USAID's conflict of interest statement that they sign where necessary before field work starts.

USAID EVALUATION POLICY, APPENDIX 1

CRITERIA TO ENSURE THE QUALITY OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

- The evaluation report should represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not and why.
- Evaluation reports shall address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work.
- The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an annex. All modifications to the scope of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the technical officer.
- Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists, and discussion guides will be included in an Annex in the final report.
- Evaluation findings will assess outcomes and impact on males and females.
- Limitations to the evaluation shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.).
- Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people's opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
- Sources of information need to be properly identified and listed in an annex.
- Recommendations need to be supported by a specific set of findings.
- Recommendations should be action-oriented, practical, and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.

15. Budget

The evaluation team will propose a notional budget in its Concept Paper for this evaluation, including cost implications of the methodological options proposed. A full detailed budget will then be prepared and included in the Evaluation Design Proposal for USAID's approval.

ANNEX B: DETAILED EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

This evaluation generated findings across four case studies using a systems approach. Through the systems approach, the evaluation analyzed how outcomes of the USAID activities were nested within multiple social systems and how these outcomes may have influenced, or been influenced by, those systems. The evaluation approach and methodology is described below, including:

- The systems thinking concepts that influenced the evaluation methodologies.
- The application of a comparative case study evaluation design.
- How cases were selected and the methodologies used for case study research and analysis.
- The framework for cross-case analysis to address the evaluation questions.

The Evaluation Design Proposal is available at http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00M8CN.pdf.

A Systemic Evaluation Approach

At the outset of the evaluation, there was no literature on conducting an ex-post evaluation using systems approaches. Therefore, USAID/PPL/LER and the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project conducted several preliminary activities to better understand how to apply systems approaches in this context. These included:

- Consulting with recognized experts on sustainability and systems to discuss evaluating sustainability from a systems perspective and to gain insights on how to define 'sustainability.'
- Conducting three literature reviews on topics related to systems thinking and sustainability analysis, including specifically in basic education.[14]
- Convening an evaluation advisory group of experts in education, evaluation, systems thinking, and sustainability to discuss potential evaluation questions, approaches, methods, and challenges. This group convened online, initially with a two-hour synchronous live kick-off session followed by asynchronous online work and discussions.

The evaluation drew guidance from this preparatory work and incorporated key recommendations from the advisory group in the evaluation design and implementation.

In practice, three systems thinking concepts[15] influenced the data collection and analysis methodologies:

- **A commitment to multiple perspectives.** Actors' *perspectives* are informed by the different and often multiple roles (e.g., parent and teacher) that actors hold. These perspectives drive motivations and behaviors.[16] The evaluation used preliminary research to understand the variety of actors' perspectives and focused the primary field research and analysis on understanding these perspectives.
- **A focus on understanding interrelationships.** *Interrelationships* (between actors or systems/sub-systems) change over time, and the evaluation team needed to remain aware of this dynamism in its case studies, as well as the sensitivity of these interrelationships to context. The evaluation team tailored its case study research methods to identify these changes and their

14 See Literature Review: Sustainable Outcomes in Basic Education (2015); Literature Review: Sustainable Outcomes and the Systems Field (2015); Literature Review: Defining Sustainability in International Development (2015).
15 For a broader discussion of these three concepts, see: William, B. and Britt, H. (2014). Discussion Note on Systemic Thinking for Monitoring: Attending to Interrelationships, Perspectives and Boundaries. Washington, DC: USAID.
16 Imam, Iraj, Amy LaGoy, and Bob Williams. "*Introduction.*" Systems Concepts in Evaluation: An Expert Anthology (2006*):* 6, *9.*

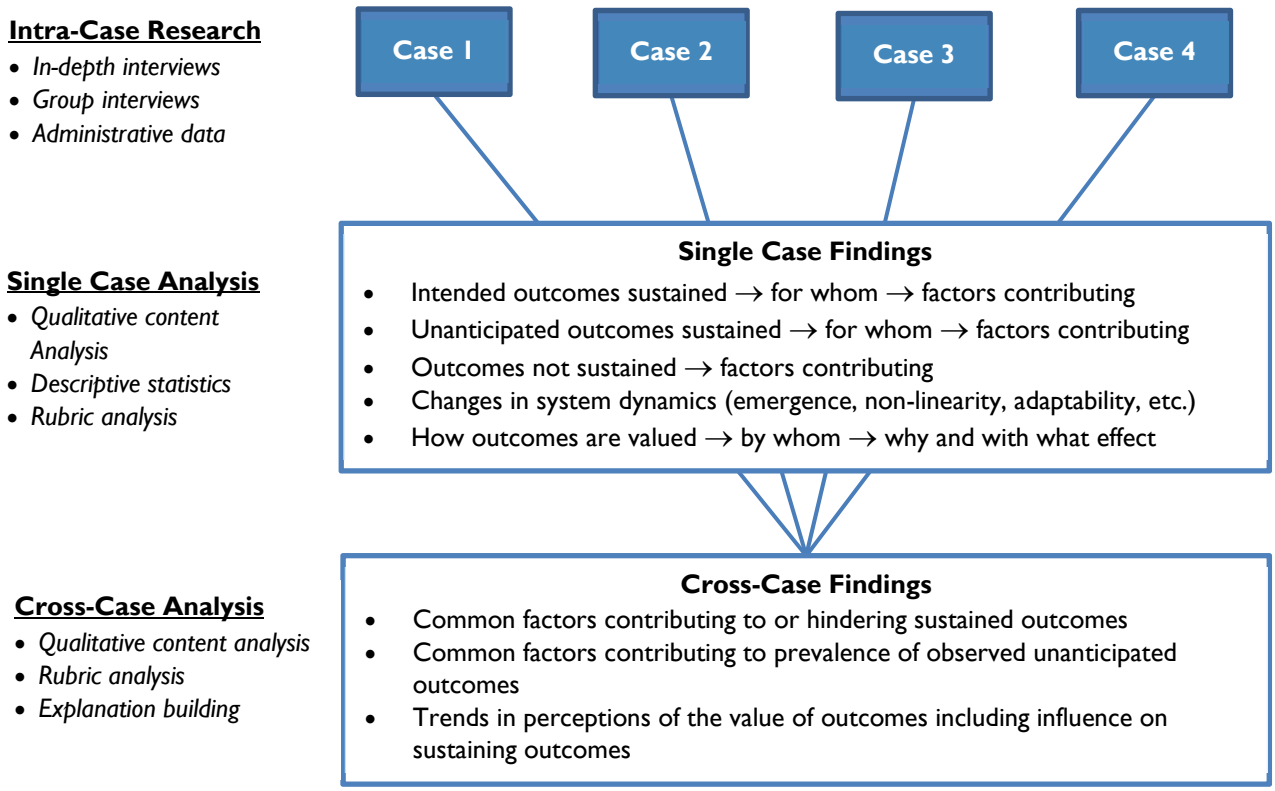
impacts on sustainability.[17] This was accomplished through in-depth questioning during key informant interviews and the use of education systems maps and diagrams as reference tools to help respondents describe the influence of changes to these interrelationships.

- **An awareness of boundaries**. In the case study research, the evaluation team consciously set *boundaries*—including some actors, dynamics, and events and excluding others.[18] While a systems evaluation aims to be holistic, 'holism' is not about trying to deal with everything, but rather being methodical, informed, pragmatic, and ethical about what to leave out.[19] To ensure consistency, coherence, and transparency, the evaluation team established clear criteria for selecting outcomes, sites, and respondents based upon the objectives of the evaluation and research capacity. The question of what was 'in' and what was 'out' was critical and not often easy to determine.

Comparative Case Study Design

The evaluation compared findings from four cases (described in the next section) that each examined a USAID basic education activity completed between 2000 and 2010. Figure 1 shows how the evaluation team analyzed data at the case and cross-case levels.

FIGURE 1: ANALYTICAL PATHWAY FOR THE EVALUATION



17 Eoyang, G. "*Human systems dynamics: Complexity-based approach to a complex evaluation*." Systems Concepts in Evaluation: An Expert Anthology (2006): 123-139.
18 Imam, Iraj, Amy LaGoy, and Bob Williams. "*Introduction.*" Systems Concepts in Evaluation: An Expert Anthology (2006*): 6*.
19 This description is heavily based on the work of Williams and Hummelbrunner, and Beverly Parsons. USAID's Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development (April 2014) also informed the evaluation team.

Each case study involved in-depth research predicated upon a systems analysis to assess whether and to what extent USAID's intended and unanticipated outcomes were sustained, and to identify the factors that contributed to or hindered the sustainment of these outcomes.

Case Study Selection

Prior to the case study research, the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project conducted an evaluability assessment to identify activities appropriate for inclusion in this study. The assessment had five criteria:

1. **Basic education outcomes of interest** – The activity should feature a high-level objective related to basic education.
2. **Measurable change in the outcome of interest** – The activity documentation should include reliable data to assess whether there was a measurable improvement in the achievement (or partial achievement) of the basic education outcome.
3. **Evidence of activity contribution** – There should exist a performance or impact evaluation providing evidence that the activity contributed to the achievement of the basic education outcome.
4. **Conflict dynamics in activity countries** – The activity should not have been implemented in a country that is currently or has recently undergone a period of conflict, war, or significant civil strife.
5. **Activity documentation** – Relative to other case study options, there should be sufficient documentation available to describe how the activity was implemented.

The evaluability assessment identified 95 USAID basic education activities completed between 2000 and 2010, of which only 20 satisfied the first 2 criteria. The team then assessed these 20 activities holistically against criteria 3-5, through which an additional 7 activities were excluded from the study.

USAID/PPL/LER reviewed descriptions of the remaining 13 activities and selected the following 5 activities based upon considerations of activity duration, intensity, and aid modality (criteria determined relevant to informing USAID activity planning in the future):

- District Development Support Program (South Africa Basic Education Reconstruction III) (1998–2003)
- Ghana Quality Improvement in Primary Schools Program (1996–2004)
- Malawi Primary School Support Program: A School Fees Pilot (2006–2009)
- Namibia Basic Education Support Project, Phases II and III (1999–2009)
- Support for Uganda Primary Education Reform (1993–2001)

USAID/PPL/LER and the evaluation team subsequently agreed to drop the Malawi Primary School Support Program from the evaluation, largely for logistical reasons. Annex D provides a fuller description of the case selection process.

Case Study Research Methodology

Preparatory Research and Scoping

For each case study, the evaluation's case study teams collected activity-related documents from public and non-public sources, including USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse, former contractors' databases, and relevant in-country institutions, where feasible. The case study teams used these documents to inform exploratory interviews with national (primarily) education experts to better understand the education system and its key actors during the time of the USAID activity and at

present. The case study teams used the research to draw initial systems maps, to begin a timeline of key events, and to start refining the generic interview tool provided in the Evaluation Guide.[20]

After the initial research, each case study team held a five-day, in-county planning session, during which the teams collected additional data from education experts and informants. The teams used these data to select the outcome of interest, establish the research boundaries for the study, and identify key informants who could likely speak about the selected outcome. The case study teams also refined systems maps that they used as reference tools with key informants and for researchers during data analysis.

Purposeful Sampling of Outcomes, Sites, and Respondents

Case study teams sampled purposefully to select outcomes, sites, and respondents. To assess the sustainment of outcomes for activities ending up to 16 years previously, the evaluation first needed to identify outcomes that had been achieved and were likely to be observable, and then to identify individuals likely to provide information of sufficient quality to identify key factors influencing outcome sustainment. Randomly selecting sites, schools, and individuals and hoping to find people who remembered the USAID activity would likely not have provided the necessary data. While purposeful sampling enabled solid empirical data collection and contributed to an effective evaluation, this sampling approach is inherently biased. Findings drawn from this study may be analytically generalizable, but they are not representative of USAID education interventions more generally.

The sampling criteria and selection processes are described further below.

Outcome Selection. The case study teams, in consultation with national education experts, applied the following four criteria in selecting outcomes of interest.

1. Intensity of intervention: Did USAID activities relating to this outcome continue for the duration of the activity?
2. Sufficiency of data: Is it likely that sufficient data will be available to understand the nature of the outcome and the extent to which it was sustained?
3. Centrality to improving learning performance: Recognizing that improved student learning is the ultimate objective of basic education, was the outcome likely to have contributed to this objective?
4. Existence of "ripple effects": Is the outcome likely to have contributed to continuing changes to the delivery of basic education?

Each case study team limited its study to one outcome due to time and resource constraints, and the belief that exploring a single outcome would be a sufficient unit of analysis to begin to understand the influences on sustainability after USAID funding ceased. As this is not a USAID performance evaluation, it was not necessary to examine all activity outcomes to better understand sustainability and address the evaluation questions.

Site Selection. Case study teams worked with education experts during the planning sessions and applied three selection criteria to identify the specific sites in which research would be conducted:

1. Sites should be data rich (e.g., have people who were there when implementation took place, and have previous evaluation data).

[20] As part of the evaluation design process, the evaluation team lead developed a comprehensive guide to conducting the case studies, which was provided to each of the case study teams. The Evaluation Guide is included as Annex D.

2. Sites should be accessible (e.g., the team can physically get there within the evaluation timeframe and budget, and is likely to be granted permission to visit the site).
3. Sites should be diverse (e.g., rural/urban and resource poor/resource rich, public government schools/private schools).

These criteria tried to balance practical considerations (criteria 1 and 2) in data collection with the desire to understand how sustainability may be impacted by contextual diversity.

Respondent Sampling. Case study teams worked with education experts during the planning sessions and applied three criteria to select key informants:

1. High likelihood that the informant could be contacted and would be willing to engage.
2. High relevance in terms of their ability to talk about the topic (e.g., were they aware of the USAID activity? Are they knowledgeable about the implementation area?).
3. Likelihood that the range of respondents might yield different perspectives on the outcome of interest.

Within the pool of respondents, case study teams also were required to ensure that at least three actors from each of seven identified categories listed in the evaluation guide[21] were included, with higher representation of implementation staff and beneficiaries where possible. Although many potential informants (roles or individuals) were identified during the planning sessions, the process allowed for the inclusion of additional respondents during research through snowball sampling.[22]

Data Collection Methods

Each case study team reviewed several kinds of activity and administrative data, including: activity design and implementation documents; activity evaluation reports; national education strategy and policy documents; host-country education management information system data and third-party education monitoring data; and assessments of the national education systems conducted by academics and international donors including USAID.

These data provided descriptive information, including:

- The original education context for the activity and changes to the context since its conclusion;
- The activity and its implementation;
- Outcomes achieved by the activity;
- Systemic factors and key actors affecting achievement of outcomes; and
- Partial list of the key national and education policy changes relevant to the evaluation.

Following and sometimes concurrent with the document review, case study teams conducted semi-structured interviews with a range of informants that gathered participants' perceptions in their own words, capturing rich and detailed accounts of their experiences or perceptions. The teams conducted interviews with individuals and in small groups. Table 1 shows the number and categories of respondents interviewed for each case study, although categorization is somewhat arbitrary as individuals sometimes occupied multiple roles, either concurrently or consecutively, over the course of the activity and thereafter.

[21] The seven categories listed in the Evaluation Guide are: Direct Beneficiary, Implementer, Assisted with Implementation, Consulted, Informed, Interested, and Detractor. The Evaluation Guide in Annex D provides definitions for each category.
[22] Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which researchers ask existing, identified respondents to identify other individuals who would have relevant information or views.

TABLE 1: RESPONDENTS BY CATEGORY

Respondent Category	Ghana	Namibia	South Africa	Uganda
Implementer Staff	3	5	5	4
Government Officials	12	8	5	8
Teaching Colleges and Centers	-	-	-	37
School Staff, Managers, and Inspectors	34	26	36	~ 30
Parents and Community Members	6	8	5	
Other	2	3	1	7
Total	**57**	**50**	**52**	**~ 86**

The case study teams received oral informed consent from each respondent at the outset of each interview and recorded this consent in the interview notes.

Case Study Analytical Framework and Methods

In addition to the previously described analysis conducted by the case study teams during the preparatory research and scoping phase, data analysis took place in three iterative phases.

During Fieldwork. At the end of each day of fieldwork, case study team members reviewed their interview notes against the research framework to incorporate insights gained from the research conducted that day. This structured analytical process allowed team members to reflect on the data to inform and identify data gaps and to confirm and disconfirm evidence. Each team then used the information to guide subsequent interviews and focus the narrative, adapting the interview guide as appropriate. The iterative process enabled case study teams to identify initial findings.

Data Analysis Workshop. In the week following the conclusion of data collection, each case study team participated in an analysis workshop held in-country. Each workshop took place over 3-4 days and was led by the case study lead, sometimes in conjunction with the evaluation team lead or senior education specialist. During each workshop, the case study team analyzed the data including interview notes (cleaned and typed in advance) against the evaluation questions. All data analysis took place manually (i.e., the team did not use specialized software designed for qualitative analysis). The research manager or evaluation team lead, as well as the case study researchers and experts, took notes.

The data analysis workshops took place in several stages:

- Stage 1 focused on identifying what remained of the USAID-intended outcome and whether unanticipated outcomes (and activities, structures, etc.) existed that could be linked to the USAID activity. Each case study team member reviewed the data and the case study teams collectively engaged in a guided discussion to develop an empirical understanding of what was achieved and what remained.
- Stage 2 focused on identifying factors that may have contributed to the sustainment (or lack of sustainment) of outcomes. Each case study team used evaluation rubrics to guide the discussion with key actors to identify their contributions and systemic push/pull factors. The rubrics provided an analytical framework for sorting data according to factors such as *motivations*, *expertise*, *control*, and *legitimacy*.[23] Throughout this stage, the case study teams discussed the data,

[23] The rubrics utilized by the case study team are described in the Evaluation Guide in Annex D.

iteratively developing and revising a narrative based upon data confirming or disconfirming potential findings, as appropriate.

- Stage 3 focused on identifying how outcomes were perceived and valued by those with significant stakes in the activity, reviewing the same data (as in stage 2) using a different lens (e.g., from different actors' perspectives).
- During Stage 4, each team discussed the findings to identify relevant systems dynamics from the data and analysis undertaken thus far. Here, the discussion drew on Appendix M of the Evaluation Guide, "Systems Dynamics Analysis," which both contained and guided the discussion (and provided an example of triangulation). Each case study lead directed this process.

In most countries, the second day of the workshop included a session with representatives of USAID/PPL/LER. USAID questioned the case study teams about how to improve this type of evaluation in the future as part of collecting data for the secondary purpose of this study. Then the case study team members discussed their experiences and early understanding of the case with USAID while the research manager and the evaluation team leader took notes.

Post-Workshop Research and Analysis: Each case study lead drafted the initial narrative in report format, which the evaluation team lead then reviewed and revised by using findings from the analysis workshop and the raw data. Where gaps were identified, the case study team conducted additional research with key informants and experts and revised the case study report accordingly. The teams provided all data to the MSI home office for storage.

At USAID's request, the findings for each case study report were structured by evaluation question. Each case study report was submitted to USAID/PPL/LER for peer review and underwent several revisions prior to finalization.

Cross-Case Analysis

The evaluation team conducted qualitative analysis of findings from each case study. The case studies and their relevant data sets provided the data for analysis; thus, the findings from the case studies became the "data" for the cross-thematic analysis.

The evaluation team conducted the cross-case analysis in two phases. The first phase addressed each evaluation question and identified emergent themes based upon an inductive analysis of the case study data. The second phase focused on identifying relevant manifestations of systems concepts—specifically with respect to systems dynamics and Midgley's categorization of the components of critical systems.[24]

Phase I: Identifying and Analyzing Emergent Themes

The evaluation team undertook cross-case thematic analysis in three stages.

Stage 1: Content Analysis: Using the case study reports and their related data sets, the evaluation team identified phrases and words relevant to any of the evaluation questions. The evaluation team started with terms related to the nature of the USAID activities and key concepts in systems thinking. Such terms included national, regional, local, community, outcome, result, adapt, adopt, motivate, expert, knowledge, skill, experience, and sustain—and their synonyms and variants. The team identified other terms related to the evaluation questions iteratively, and it was only through multiple iterations that search terms could be refined and focused.

[24] See Midgley, Gerald. "Systems thinking for evaluation." *Systems concepts in evaluation: An expert anthology* (2006): 11-34.

This cross-case content analysis allowed the evaluation team to distill core consistencies and meanings (in relation to the four evaluation questions) from the large volume of qualitative data that the case study teams had collected.

Stage 2: Pattern Analysis. Following the content analysis, the evaluation team looked for patterns by identifying words or meanings of words that suggested a pattern across cases. Where no pattern could be discerned, search terms were discarded. Patterns identified included those that showed similar actions, perceptions, experiences, relationships, and behaviors in the different cases. For example, the content analysis revealed a pattern of participants reporting how different people involved in the USAID-funded activity gained different kinds of knowledge, skills, or experience that they still used at the time of the evaluation in 2017. When looking at these words—"knowledge," "skills," or "experiences"—they were repeated in similar contexts and represented a pattern.

The process of identifying patterns from the data was not formulaic. It was instead based upon the exercise of reasonable judgment and an understanding of the contexts in which each USAID activity took place. There was no minimal number of repetitions that constituted a pattern.

Stage 3: Thematic Analysis. The final analytic stage was to develop conceptual categories, or themes, that described the cross-case patterns that the team had identified. These themes represent the patterns at a higher level of abstraction and allow for findings that are more analytically generalizable. In the example above, where a pattern has been identified in the application of the terms "knowledge," "skills," or "experiences," an appropriate theme that might describe how these terms are used consistently across the cases might be "career development." The theme of "career development" was present in each of the four cases and is presented in this report's findings.

This report is structured according to themes identified as part of this final analytical stage.

The process described above is (primarily) a standard inductive approach to analyzing qualitative data. While deductive reasoning was applied as patterns and themes emerged and could be searched for in the data, the initial engagement with the data was exploratory to identify core content, patterns, and themes relevant to the evaluation questions.

Phase II: Exploring the Data through Systems' Models

All evaluation involves interpreting data, and to do so, relies on some type of model. For example, a statistical model is used to estimate the relationships between variables, and a conceptual model describes how elements are connected. A model represents how an evaluator understands a finding. At its core, systems thinking aims at understanding how things are connected to each other within some description of what is whole. Evaluators often make connections when conducting and interpreting research, invoking some mental model about how things fit together. This evaluation is premised on the idea that a system is made up of parts that interact toward a common purpose; the sustained outcome remains as the result of multiple parts interacting together within a system. The evaluation team used systems thinking to understand a system, its parts, and the interactions within and between levels.

Systems thinking can involve a wide range of theories, which are rational sets of ideas or principles intended to explain something. It is based on a variety of scientific methods used to investigate phenomena and acquire knowledge. The theories in systems thinking aim to address complex problems. They are complex because they involve multiple interacting actors, the context in which they operate keeps changing, there are often no linear or simple patterns, and elements within the system create new patterns as they interact over time.

The evaluation team reviewed the findings from the thematic analysis using two conceptual frameworks from the systems field—one adapted from the literature on systems dynamics and the other from the literature on critical systems heuristics.

Systems Dynamics Framework

During the initial stages of the evaluation, the evaluation team lead considered five potential analytical lenses to explain sustained outcomes (See Annex D). After completing the research and identifying the sustained outcomes, she applied these five lenses to search for different types of systems changes, of which two provided plausible explanations.

- **Adaptation**. The system evaluated has adapted (or not) because of changes to the overall environment (e.g., a new national policy sets conditions for sustainment); or, the system acts to change the overall environment. An example of the latter scenario is where a girls' education program changes community attitudes, which itself creates an environment welcoming to outcome sustainment.
- **Critical paths/elements.** These describe features of the system that serve as preconditions for change—the identification of which may be essential to understanding whether and why sustainment occurred.

Critical Systems Heuristics Framework

Since the application of different conceptual frameworks can contribute to more comprehensive (or diverse) understandings, the evaluation team also applied a framework adapted from Midgely[25] to identify characteristics (often related to actors or institutions) that supported or hindered change. The team probed the case study findings with respect to the following four systems concepts:

- **Motivation** describes the value judgments of key actors with respect to the intervention or outcome, i.e., who valued the intervention and who values what remains. This analysis is conducted primarily at the level of positions and roles within the larger system (e.g., national policymakers)—not specific individuals.
- **Expertise** describes the formal and informal expert skill sets or relevant knowledge that contributed to the outcome and its sustainment (or not). This concept primarily manifests itself in the question: What was the knowledge base needed to sustain the outcome?
- **Control** describes the presence (or not) of the resources necessary to sustain the outcome. This analysis considered human and physical resources, but specifically focused on who provided the resources or made critical binding decisions with respect to resources (i.e., what was the power base for the sustained outcome?).
- **Legitimacy** describes the ways in which the outcome supports or aligns with wider interests, and is explored from a variety of perspectives including social, cultural, and legal/political.

The evaluation team identified each of these concepts in each case study, although the degree to which any of the factors could explain outcome sustainment in a case varied. Expertise was not identified as a major factor across the cases.

Evaluation Team Composition

This evaluation was led by a core team composed of an evaluation team leader and a senior education specialist. Ease case study was conducted by a team composed of approximately six researchers and educations specialists, most of whom were residents of the countries in which the research was

[25] See Midgley, Gerald. "Systems thinking for evaluation." *Systems concepts in evaluation: An expert anthology* (2006): 11-34.

conducted. Short biographies of the core evaluation team members are presented below and their CVs are included in the Evaluation Design Proposal. Evaluation team members completed and signed forms disclosing any potential conflicts of interest, which are retained by the MSI home office and available upon request.

Core Evaluation Team

Evaluation Team Leader, Dr. Donna Podems

As evaluation team lead, Dr. Podems was responsible for developing the analytical models and approaches used by the case study teams, leading the cross-case analysis, and drafting the final report.

Dr. Podems is a researcher, facilitator, and monitoring and evaluation specialist with more than 20 years of experience conducting multi-country evaluations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. She has experience conducting multi-site evaluations, such as a recent evaluation of the United Kingdom Department for International Development's Strengthening South Africa's Revitalized Response to AIDS and Health program that included evaluations of several different work streams (each delivered by a different national organization in a different location within South Africa). Dr. Podems received her Ph.D. from Union Institute and University in Evaluation and Organizational Development. She is a past National Board Member of the American Evaluation Association and the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association.

Senior Education Specialist, Dr. James Wile

As senior education specialist for the evaluation, Dr. Wile provided support to develop the analytical models and approaches used by the case study teams, led the case study work in Ghana, and provided significant support to the Uganda case study team.

Dr. Wile is a senior teacher development expert with nearly two decades of technical and executive experience in education development in the U.S., South Asia, Africa, and Europe. He has experience designing and implementing international education interventions, including school-based teacher education and the development of education systems. He also has experience developing education policy and advocacy initiatives and undertaking performance evaluations of USAID basic education activities. Dr. Wile received his Ph.D. from The Ohio State University in Language and Literacy.

Evaluation Coordinators: Tim Reilly and Gaëlle Simon

Mr. Reilly and Ms. Simon worked with Drs. Podems and Wile and the case study teams at different stages of the evaluation design, implementation, and reporting processes.

Mr. Reilly is an experienced activity manager with over 10 years of experience with USAID clients. He has provided evaluation technical advice for international development projects in Africa/Asia, including the impact evaluation of the DFID Girls' Education Challenge Fund and the development of a cross-donor M&E framework for governance interventions in Somalia.

Ms. Simon has worked on performance and impact evaluations of projects in the sectors of education and disaster relief and has extensive experience in implementing education projects. Ms. Simon received has a BS in Inclusive and Primary Education from Syracuse University and her M.Ed. from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Case Study Teams

Namibia

Anna Davis led the Namibia case study. The team also included research manager Tea Ward, education specialist Justin Ellis, education specialist Jane Shityutwete, education specialist Dee Dee Yeats, research specialist Patricia Komu, and research specialist Lisias Thiyave Kashati.

Ghana

Stephen McLaughlin, a U.S.-based researcher, initially led the Ghana case study. Julian Glucroft, also based in the U.S., served as the research manager. The team's Ghanaian researchers included Vitalis Agana (education specialist), Yussif Seini Abdul-Rauf (research specialist), and Benjamin Yeboah (research specialist). During the interim period between the team planning meeting and the start of data collection, Gideon Porbley replaced Benjamin Yeboah as research specialist and Dr. Wile replaced Stephen McLaughlin as case study lead.

South Africa

Benita Williams led the South Africa team, which included researchers Fazeela Hoosen and Gabby Kelly. Two South African education experts provided invaluable guidance, insight, and validation of findings: Pat Sullivan and Vanessa Scherman.

Uganda

Dr. Jindra Cekan led the Uganda case study team. Other team members included Jared Berenter (research manager), Wilberforce Muhwana (education specialist), Musiho Abdala (research specialist), and Leo Amanya (research specialist). The latter two replaced two initial researchers, Andrew Kagondo and Joshua Okwena, who did not continue through the six-month period between scoping and fieldwork.

ANNEX C: CASE STUDY DESCRIPTIONS

This section describes the four USAID activities selected as cases for the evaluation, including the country context, USAID objectives, and key interventions and achievements for each activity.

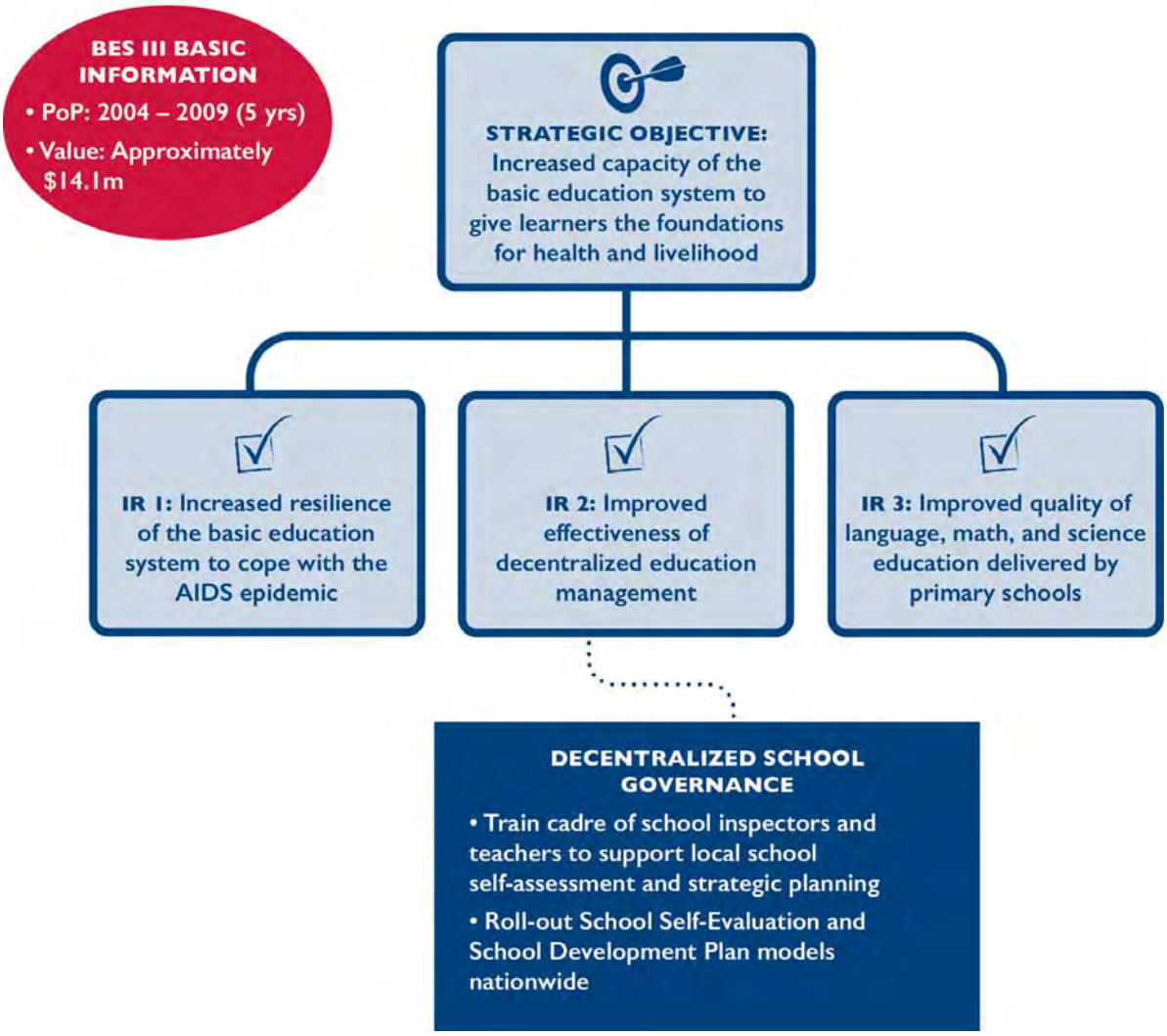
Namibia Basic Education Support, Phase III

Namibia was ruled by South Africa from the end of World War II until its independence in 1990. During this period, South Africa extended its apartheid policies to Namibia. The country's education system, intended to reinforce apartheid and fragmented along racial and ethnic lines, had vast disparities in both the allocation of resources and the quality of education offered. Bantu education received one-tenth of the resources allocated for white children's education and this left schools in the populous and deeply disadvantaged northern regions with a largely unqualified teaching force and poor infrastructure.

Post-independence Namibia initiated educational reforms that aimed to drastically address inequality in education. USAID supported one key part of these reforms—the decentralization of education management to regions, circuits, and schools—through the Basic Education Support (BES) activities. BES I (1993–1998) provided support at both the central and regional levels. BES II (1999–2004) shifted to regional- and school-level support. The $14.1 million BES III (2005–2009) activity built on the gains of BES II to embed local decentralized management. As shown in the theory of change in Figure 2, USAID designed BES as an integrated and multi-faceted intervention focused on core dimensions of Namibia's education reform agenda: support to curriculum reform, teacher education, and decentralization and democratization of the education system. While this case study focused mostly on BES III, the findings are heavily influenced by USAID's preceding basic education activities.

The case study team selected as the BES III outcome of interest: *improved effectiveness of decentralized education management.*

FIGURE 2: BES III RESULTS FRAMEWORK



By the end of BES III, target schools were equipped to administer the BES-designed School Self-Evaluation process, which the Government of Namibia had adopted as the mechanism for implementing its National Standards for Schools policy. This process included the creation of local school development plans, which established school development priorities and facilitated decentralized school management. School development plans were submitted to and tracked by the Ministry of Education's Directorate of Program Quality Assurance. By 2009, 90 percent of the BES target schools had achieved the goal of school boards implementing school development plans.

The key factors that contributed to the achievement of BES III's outcomes included strong leadership, solid partnerships, and sound technical approaches that included participatory engagement, the timing of the interventions, political will, and local culture.

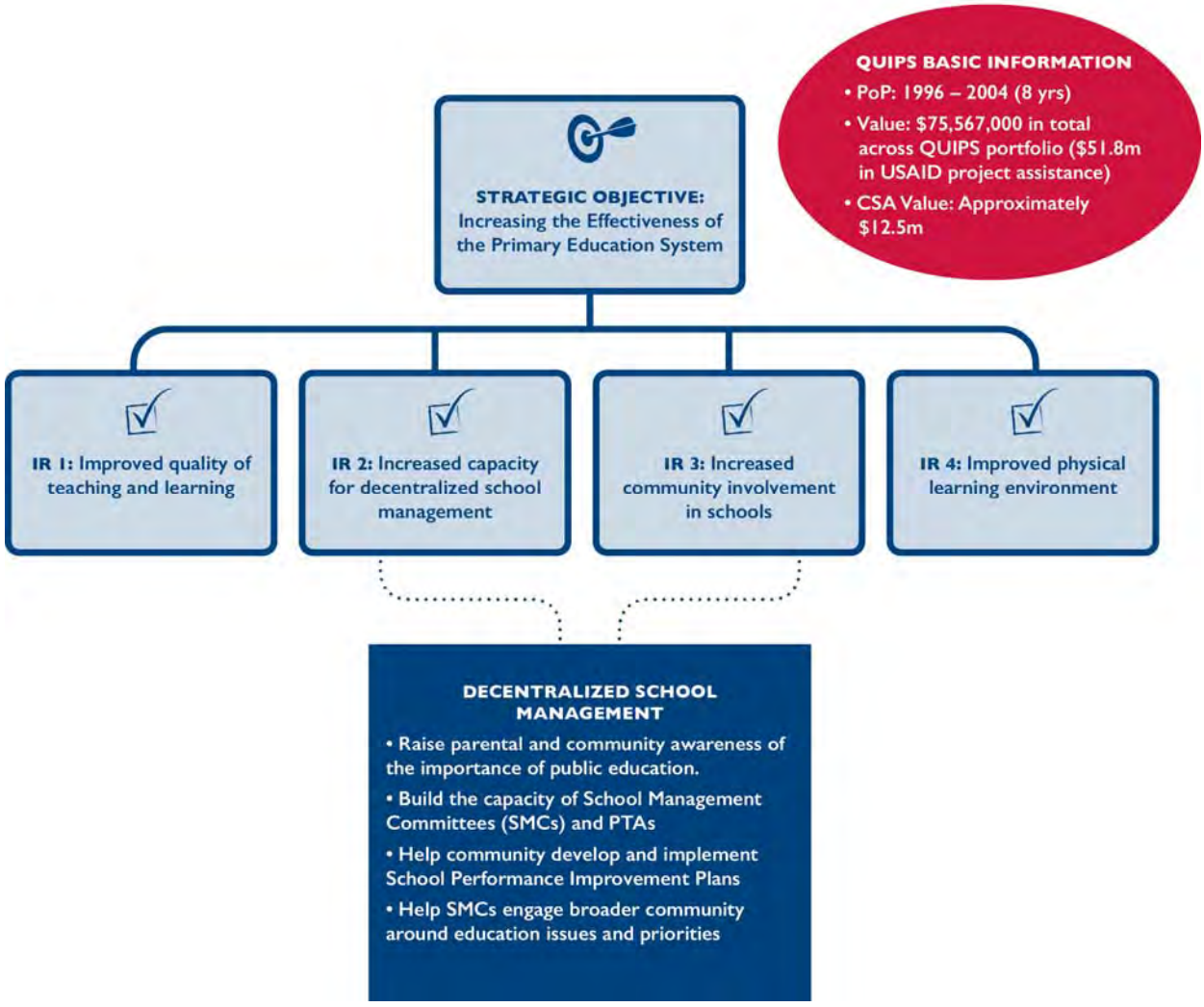
Ghana Quality Improvement in Primary Schools

In 1996, Ghana launched the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) program, the goal of which was to implement universal primary education and provide an opportunity for every school-age child in Ghana to receive a quality basic education by 2005. The primary USAID mechanism to support

fCUBE was Quality Improvement in Primary Schools (QUIPS), an umbrella program delivered from 1996 to 2004 through several activities. As shown in Figure 3, QUIPS activities had several broad and ambitious objectives: improve the quality of teaching and learning, increase the capacity for decentralized school management, increase community involvement in schools, and improve the physical learning environment.

The case study focused on the Community Schools Alliance (CSA) activity delivered in southern Ghana and its outcome *enhanced parent engagement in local education*, which is most closely aligned to the QUIPS objectives of increasing capacity for decentralized school management and increasing community involvement in schools.

FIGURE 3: QUIPS RESULTS FRAMEWORK



The $12.5 million CSA activity used public awareness efforts, participant rural appraisals, and training for school managers and leaders of parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and school management committees to build support for education, parent engagement, and shared responsibility for school management. During the life of the activity it successfully delivered training for these groups, provided and distributed grants to schools that had developed and submitted school improvement plans, and implemented a monitoring and support mechanism via the position of the community support coordinator.

An external evaluation at the conclusion of QUIPS found that the program was responsible for increasing community support for, and investment in, schools and education and strengthening the relationships between teachers and communities.[26] CSA also strengthened the role of the community in school management by building the capacity of community units such as PTAs and school management committees, and established formal and informal relationships between these units.

South Africa District Development and Support Program

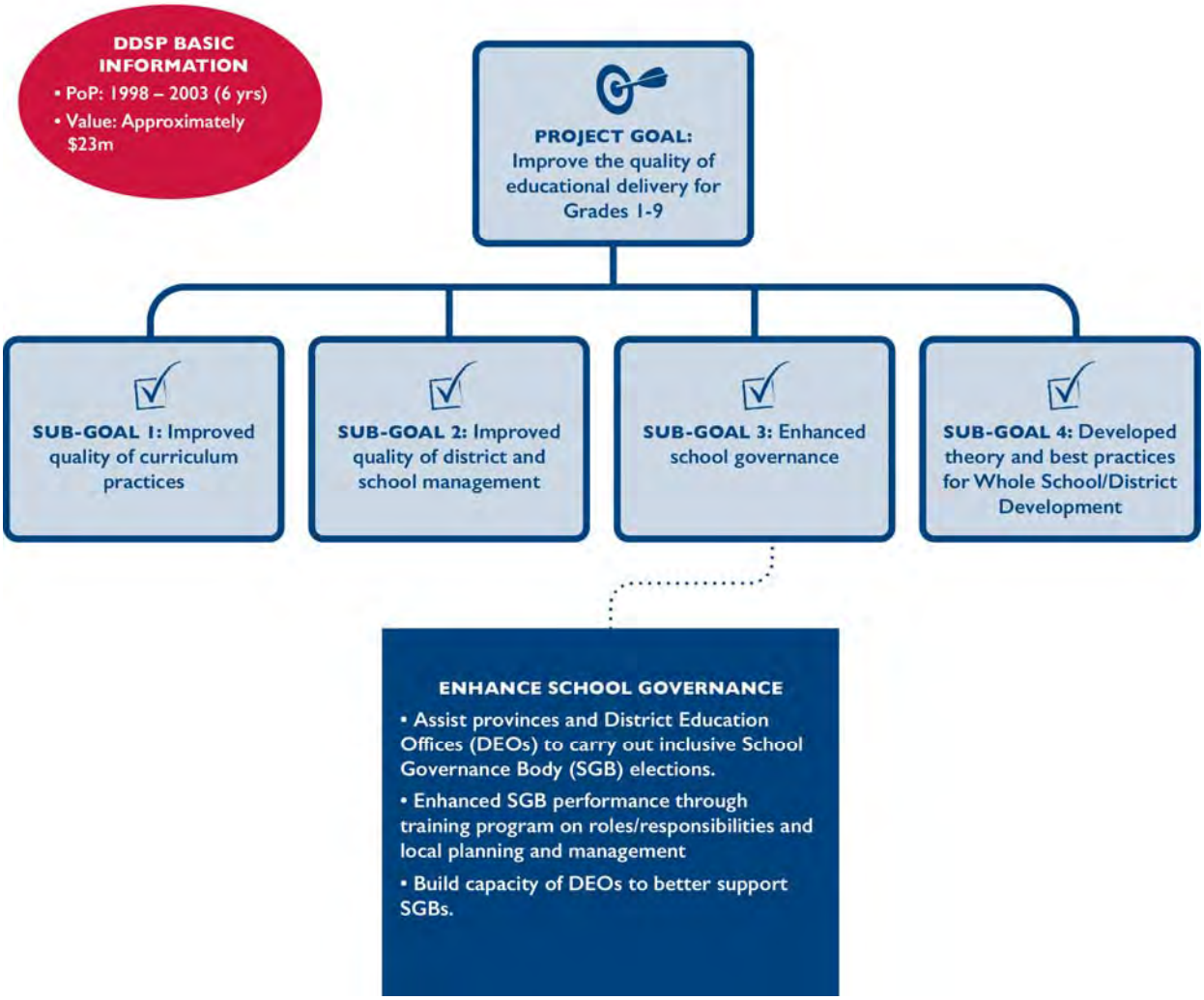
Prior to 1994, South Africa was ruled by a white minority government and the education system was fragmented, with 19 racially and ethnically divided education departments and high levels of inequality. The end of apartheid and the democratic elections in 1994 led to the rapid formulation of policies that focused on redress, equity, quality, and democratic participation. A single national Department of Education (DoE) became responsible for primary, secondary, and tertiary education.

In 1995, USAID launched the 10-year South Africa Basic Education Reconstruction (SABER) program to provide support to four of the poorest provinces to improve the quality of education for disadvantaged South Africans. The four provinces were Northern Province (now Limpopo), KwaZulu-Natal, the Northern Cape, and the Eastern Cape. The $23 million District Development and Support Program (DDSP, also known as SABER III) was delivered from 1998 through 2003 and was a continuation of these efforts. As shown in Figure 4, DDSP had four objectives: improve the quality of curricula, improve district/area and school management, enhance school governance, and develop best practices for whole school development.

The DDSP outcome of interest for this case study was *enhanced school governance.*

[26] The Mitchell Group. A look at learning in Ghana: the final evaluation of USAID/Ghana's quality improvement in primary schools (QUIPS) program, 2005. Available at: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACG661.pdf.

FIGURE 4: DDSP RESULTS FRAMEWORK



DDSP supported school governance in several ways. First, it supported the first elections for school governing bodies (SGBs) composed of community members and parents. Second, DDSP provided support to SGBs by developing manuals and training SGB members on issues such as school development, SGB roles and responsibilities, and school financial management. Finally, DDSP initiated capacity-building interventions for district officials to enable them to better support SGBs.

By the end of DDSP, school governance structures had been strengthened across all four provinces through training and school support. Most schools had democratically elected SGBs; materials and guidance was available to support the electoral process and the responsibilities of SGB members; and the roles of district officials to support SGBs had been documented if not fully realized. Overall, beneficiaries were generally satisfied with the DDSP's SGB intervention because it supported schools and communities to understand and meet the requirements of South African Schools Act.

Support to Uganda Primary Education Reform Project

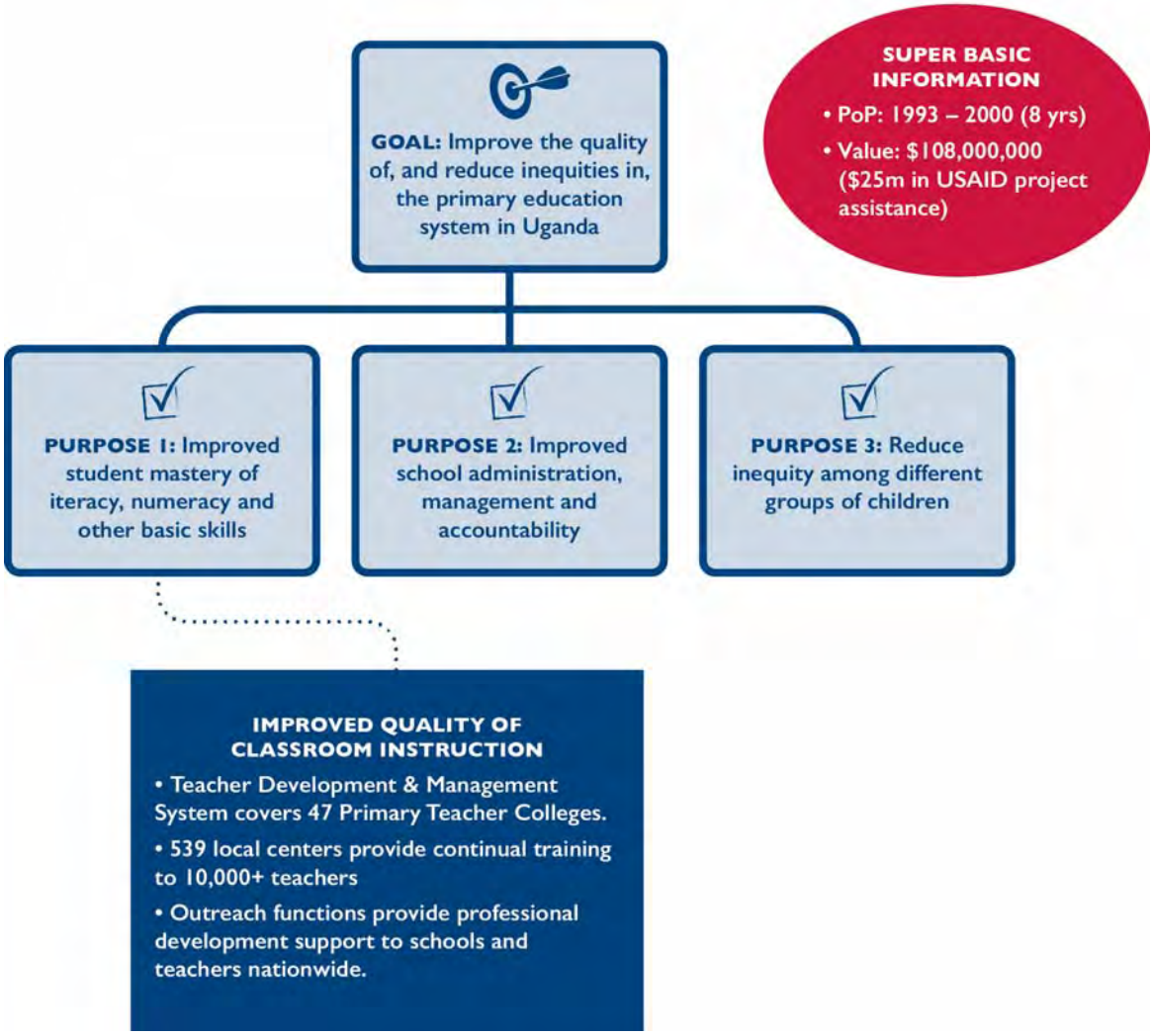
Following a period of political and economic turmoil from 1971 to 1985, the Government of Uganda launched a series of ambitious reforms in 1986. In the education sector, these reforms included overhaul of education management and teacher development, large investments in school infrastructure, and

decentralized management. Although policy development remained centrally controlled, authority and resources for basic service delivery in primary education devolved to the districts. These reforms were followed by the launch of universal primary education in 1997.

From 1993 through 2000, USAID delivered the Support to Uganda Primary Education Reform (SUPER) project, which provided both project ($25 million) and non-project ($83 million) assistance to support the government's reform efforts and prepare for universal primary education. As illustrated in Figure 5, SUPER had three purposes to support its goal of improving the quality of and reducing inequities in Uganda's primary education system. However, SUPER did not focus on these purposes and, as noted in the 1995 evaluation of SUPER with respect to the first purpose, "SUPER is aimed more immediately at improving the quality of teaching than improving students' mastery of skills."[27]

Accordingly, the case study team selected as the outcome of interest: *improved quality of classroom instruction to enhance student (pupil) acquisition of basic skills.*

FIGURE 5: SUPER RESULTS FRAMEWORK



27 Guild, Pat, et al. "Support for Uganda Primary Education Reform: A Formative Evaluation." *US Agency for International Development* (August, 1995). Available at: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDABP618.pdf.

To promote improved quality of classroom instruction, SUPER supported the development and implementation of the teacher development management system (TDMS), which had the principal objective of restructuring the role of Uganda's primary teacher colleges to strengthen teacher training. The basic premise of TDMS was the integration of pre-service, in-service, and management training for teachers and administrators in Uganda's primary schools.

By the end of SUPER in 2000, key actors in Uganda and USAID viewed the TDMS as a success. The TDMS network included 47 primary teacher colleges which, in addition to their own training activities, acted as hubs supporting 539 fully operational coordinating centers. Each of these coordinating centers provided continual in-service training to all state-supported schools in Uganda and a cumulative 10,145 teachers nationwide. In addition, the position of coordinating center tutor operated out of the coordinating centers and provided direct support to schools across the country.

ANNEX D: EVALUATION GUIDE

Evaluation Guide – Version 21

This Evaluation Guide provides step-by-step guidance for Case Study Teams to implement the evaluation of Sustained Outcomes in Basic Education (SOBE). The guidance is practical, and supports an empirical, transparent process that enables cross-country comparison among the four countries. This Guide is presented, therefore, as a manual for implementing a systems approach that is standardized yet adaptable to the diverse contexts covered in this study.

This is an internal draft document for the evaluation team that will be amended, as appropriate, throughout the life of the evaluation.

Section I: The Fundamentals

What is our purpose?

The Sustained Outcomes in Basic Education (SOBE) evaluation has two purposes:

- The primary purpose is to identify factors that contribute to sustained outcomes from international development interventions. These factors will encompass programmatic characteristics (including in the design, management and implementation, monitoring and evaluation [M&E] and learning of projects) and contextual features, including local systems.
- A secondary purpose of the evaluation is to record and learn lessons from the process of designing and implementing this ex-post evaluation using a systems approach.

What are the questions?

The following are the four evaluation questions USAID has asked that this evaluation address. They comprise the central task before the team and will serve as the main structure for reporting study results back to USAID, supported by various complementary structures and annexes as warranted:

- Evaluation question 1: Were USAID-intended outcomes sustained?
- Evaluation question 2: What other outcomes resulted from the project (positive/negative) and were these outcomes sustained?
- Evaluation question 3: What has contributed to or hindered sustaining the outcomes?
- Evaluation question 4: How are the outcomes perceived and valued by those with significant stakes in the project?

As in all USAID evaluations, USAID expects that empirical findings will be generated and presented based on high quality, replicable social science methods, and that conclusions and recommendations derived from these findings will be stated clearly and separately from the findings, with a special emphasis on the degree to which recommendations are actionable, practical and directed to specific parties.

Answering the evaluation questions

This section briefly highlights how the team will address each evaluation question. The remainder of the guide provides details for the team to conduct the research.

- Evaluation question 1: The team will review relevant indicator and evaluation data from the time the activity ended and then attempt to collect the same data for present day. This may include activity data, national data, and/or other relevant data. For example, Education Management Information System (EMIS) data could be explored. The team will also conduct primary data collection (e.g. semi-structured interviews with key informants) to gather further information.
- Evaluation question 2: In interviews, the team will probe for unanticipated outcomes, rather than depending on respondents to mention them on their own. Probing questions, such as, "what else happened when USAID assistance was provided, or because of USAID-funded activities," will be naturally linked by team members to questions about processes and outcomes that are known to be associated with USAID's efforts.
- Evaluation question 3: To understand what contributed to or hindered evaluation question 1 and Evaluation question 2 outcomes being sustained, the team will use a systems approach that gathers data from a variety of actors and perspectives and systems methods (e.g. system maps).
- Evaluation question 4: To address how evaluation question 1 and evaluation question 2 outcomes are perceived and valued, the team will conduct primary data collection. This will provide an in-depth understanding of the perceptions of a wide range of actors and institutions concerning the outcomes.

Who is my team?

The case study teams are generally comprised of a: (1) Case Study Lead[28], (2) Research Manager, (3) Local Education Specialist, and (4) two Local Research Specialists. The teams implement and adapt the evaluation design as necessary as to what outcomes are being studied, where data will be collected that provides multiple perspectives and shows inter-relationships, and setting boundaries for that data collection. All team members will take part in Team Planning Meetings (TPM).

In general, team responsibilities include:

- The Case Study Lead (CSL) oversees the entire evaluation for their case (e.g. the glue that holds the team together). The CSL leads the selection of the outcome to be studied, conducts high-level interviews, adapts the evaluation design and tools, manages the overall data collection and analysis, debriefs local researchers during the process, and writes the draft Case Study Summary Report.
- The Research Manager (RM) conducts the initial review of activity documents obtained from implementers and/or USAID, drafts the initial activity and outcomes summary to inform the selection of the outcome to be studied, and provides technical and administrative support to the teams as needed throughout the study.
- The Local Education Specialist (LES) is responsible for providing content knowledge that informs the selection of the outcome, conducts high-level interviews, describes the context that informs data collection and analysis, informs the evaluation design and tool refinement, is involved in the data analysis and critically reviews the draft and final report.
- The Local Researchers Specialists (RS) are responsible for the logistics of data collection, collecting and cleaning data, data analysis, and informing the draft report.

To support our reflective application of a systems approach, the Evaluation Team Leader (Donna Podems) and Senior Education Specialist (Jim Wile) will seek to understand the extent to which a systems approach is useful for ex-post evaluations, and will determine the pros and cons of an ex-post evaluation using a systems approach, including examining its applicability to other contexts and technical areas. To gather

[28] Please refer to each individual's specific scope of work for detailed work responsibilities.

data for this purpose, the Evaluation Team Leader will engage the case study teams in a structured reflection: (1) during the TPM, (2) following the field research, (3) during the analysis stage, and (4) after the draft Case Study Summary Report. Please see Exhibit A for the list of questions that will guide this reflective process. Each team member will take notes throughout the process to help inform these 15- to 30-minute reflections.

What is Systems Thinking?

USAID defines systems thinking as a "set of analytic approaches —and associated tools—that seek to understand how systems behave, interact with their environment and influence each other. Common to all of these approaches is a conviction that particular actions and outcomes are best understood in terms of interactions between elements in the system".[29] This is further described in an IDG Working Paper commissioned by USAID.[30] This report notes that systems are defined as the set of subcomponents and their interrelationships that "go together" and demonstrate regular interaction patterns that persist over time.

The team will use these understandings to implement the evaluation.

What is a systems evaluation approach?

Throughout this evaluation, we will be using three specific concepts to guide data collection and analysis:

- **Commitment to multiple perspectives** - The same situation can be "seen" in different ways. We need to understand the behaviour of persons, organisations and groups on the basis of their perceptions of the situation, and how the systems operate, rather than some logic defined by someone else. We also need to differentiate and examine a person's or group's common role (e.g. teachers) versus their individual values and motivations.
- **Understanding interrelationships** – Who or what is interconnected, and why and how? We need to look at the dynamic aspects (i.e. when interrelationships affect the behaviour of a situation over time); non-linear aspects (i.e. where the scale of effect is apparently unrelated to the scale of the cause); and sensitivity of inter-relationships to context (i.e. where the same intervention in different situations or areas leads to different results). This includes nested systems; we are all members of multiple systems (e.g. education sector is connected to financial systems, traditional systems, and political systems)
- **An awareness of boundaries** – In understanding perspectives and interrelationships, the evaluation has boundaries that define what is included and what is not. Therefore, the evaluation needs explicit reason for (e.g. criteria) including or excluding something. While a systems evaluation aims to be holistic, 'holism' is not about trying to deal with everything, but being methodical, informed, pragmatic and ethical about what to leave out.[31] It also involves being transparent about boundaries and keeping what is outside of established boundaries in our "peripheral vision". The question of what is in and what is out is critical and not often easy to determine.

How do we define outcomes?

[29] USAID's Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development (April 2014)
[30] USAID and RTI, IDG Working Paper No. 2015-02, April 2015
[31] This description is heavily based on the work of Williams and Hummelbrunner, and Beverly Parsons. The team is also informed by USAID's Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development (April 2014).

The USAID definition of an outcome is: "The conditions of people, systems, or institutions that indicate progress or lack of progress toward achievement of project/program goals. Outcomes are any result higher than an output to which a given output contributes to but for which it is not solely responsible. Outcomes may be intermediate or end outcomes, short-term or long-term, intended or unanticipated, positive or negative, direct or indirect."[32]

For the purposes of evaluation question 1, outcomes represent high-level objectives of the USAID activity. In the basic education sector, these could include improved education quality, improved literacy and numeracy, and improved school governance.

For evaluation question 2, the term outcomes will refer to unplanned/unanticipated results that the team discovers which appear to be traceable to the same USAID intervention (inputs/actions) that produced USAID's intended outcomes. Unplanned outcomes, in this sense may be positive or negative, and may or may not be closely linked to the intended outcomes. For example, teacher training that was intended to improve the quality of education in rural schools may have made teachers that received this training more marketable and so many left for the cities and better paying jobs, which limited the impact of USAID's activity on its intended results.

For evaluation question 3 we will draw boundaries and focus the case study teams by observing activity outcomes in embedded practices, interrelationships, ideas and ideologies, and resources. It is critical to realise that these areas may explain why we found or did not find sustained outcomes under evaluation question 1 (e.g. explanatory factors). This will depend on the context and interpretation of the finding.

How do we define sustained?

Our team will look for changes on the ground where USAID interventions were located to determine the condition of USAID intended outcomes in the current time and compare them to the condition that had been achieved on those same outcomes as of the end of the USAID activity. The team may also compare what it learns about the condition of unintended outcomes in the present time that have found to be plausibly linked to the USAID activity, compared to any information on their condition as at the end of the activity.
The evaluation will draw upon the USAID Local Systems Framework to assist in understanding the factors that have contributed or hindered sustainability. The framework describes sustainability as "building skills, knowledge, institutions and incentives that can make development processes self-sustaining". Brinkerhof notes that discrete projects contribute to sustainability when they strengthen the system's ability to produce valued results and strengthen its ability to be both resilient and adaptive in the face of changing circumstances.

How will we analyze and report on country level data we collect?

Case study teams will engage in several analysis steps that will, in turn, contribute to the Evaluation Team Leader's synthesis of evaluation findings across cases. At the case study team level, Step 5 of this Guide's overview of tools in Section II describes how case study team members will produce interview notes and focus group transcripts and then utilize content analysis to code these data resources for themes and patterns that they will then compare across interviews, and across focus groups that addressed parallel topics. Comparisons across interview and focus groups will yield analyzed findings about patterns and themes that will be further examined in a synthesis process. Case study team findings will then be organized into a Case Study Summary Report, following the outline provided in Exhibit N of this Guide. In addition to this Case Study Summary Report, each case study team will prepare a detailed

[32] USAID Automated Directives System, Chapter 200 Definitions.

input to the Final SOBE Evaluation Report in the form of an internal document that lays out the case study team's findings based on all country data sources by evaluation question. This cross-case input document will be a key resource for the preparation of the Final Evaluation Report's cross-case synthesis.

Section II: The Evaluation Process

Overview of Evaluation Steps

The evaluation process has five steps: (1) preparatory research, (2) team planning meetings (TPMs), (3) tool refinement and field work preparations, (4) field work, and (5) data analysis and report writing. The following table provides a summary of the evaluation questions and associated evaluation steps:

TABLE 1: EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND STEPS

USAID's Evaluation Questions (Guides the entire evaluation process)	**Preparatory Research** Informs evaluation design	**Team Planning Meetings (TPMs)** Informs evaluation design and related tools, selects the outcome to be researched and identifies site(s) and actors	**Tool Refinement and field work preparation** Tools are refined, interview packet organised, all logistics sorted for field work, teams trained on interview process	**Field Work** Data gathered through transparent and empirical process. Using a focused evaluation design, data are collected that allow (to the extent possible) questions to be answered.	**Data Analysis and Report Writing** Analysis workshop in country. Cleaned data provided to CSL. Case Study Summary Reports are written and cross case comparison conducted.
Evaluation Question 1: Were USAID-intended outcomes sustained?[33]	Identifies all potential outcomes to be investigated, and their related systems. Provides background information to understand context for those outcomes.	Identifies the outcome that will be investigated and potential sources of primary data.	Adapt interview guide, focused map, education system map, outcomes sheet with activities, obtain any formal introduction needed. Organise packet. Train team, where feasible in person and otherwise remotely. Organise interviews, organise related logistics.	Gathers primary and secondary data that confirms or disconfirms the intended outcome's sustainment	On a country by country basis, describes whether the outcome selected was sustained.

USAID's Evaluation Questions (Guides the entire evaluation process)	**Preparatory Research** Informs evaluation design	**Team Planning Meetings (TPMs)** Informs evaluation design and related tools, selects the outcome to be researched and identifies site(s) and actors	**Tool Refinement and field work preparation** Tools are refined, interview packet organised, all logistics sorted for field work, teams trained on interview process	**Field Work** Data gathered through transparent and empirical process. Using a focused evaluation design, data are collected that allow (to the extent possible) questions to be answered.	**Data Analysis and Report Writing** Analysis workshop in country. Cleaned data provided to CSL. Case Study Summary Reports are written and cross case comparison conducted.
Evaluation Question 2: What other outcomes resulted from the project (positive/negative) and were these outcomes sustained?	This will be brainstormed in this phase.	This will be brainstormed in this phase.	Adapt interview guide, focused map, education system map, outcomes sheet with activities, obtain any formal introduction needed. Organise packet. Train team. Organise interviews, organise related logistics.	Identify unanticipated outcomes that resulted from the project. Gathers primary and secondary data that confirms or disconfirms if the unintended outcome was sustained	On a case by case basis, describes whether the selected unanticipated outcome was sustained. A cross-case comparison explores the thematic similarities.
Evaluation Question 3: What has contributed to or hindered sustaining the outcomes?	Identifies and draws a time line of key actors in the political, social, economic and education systems at the time of the outcome which contributed to or hindered its success, and current ones that potentially influenced the outcome's sustainment. *This initial draft informs the TPM.*	With the larger political, social, economic and education system mapped, this phase explores and identifies potential underlying relationships, boundaries, and perspectives that ***are likely to be linked to*** the activity outcomes. Answers to these responses will further focus the data gathering (boundaries).	Adapt interview guide, focused map, education system map, outcomes sheet with activities, obtain any formal introduction needed. Organise packet. Train team. Organise interviews, organise related logistics.	This phase explores factors that explain if and how the selected outcomes were sustained and includes: • The political, social, economic and education systems, including those external to the activity that influenced the activity's outcome, in the past and over time? • The underlying relationships and perspectives that contributed to or hindered sustainment • The extent to which the outcome is consistent with cultural norms and systems	On a case by case basis, using a systems lens, this phase describes how and why that outcome was sustained. With a systems lens, the cross-case comparison explores the thematic similarities among these findings, with a focus on understanding what systems and contextual factors influenced the sustainment of the outcome.

USAID's Evaluation Questions (Guides the entire evaluation process)	**Preparatory Research** Informs evaluation design	**Team Planning Meetings (TPMs)** Informs evaluation design and related tools, selects the outcome to be researched and identifies site(s) and actors	**Tool Refinement and field work preparation** Tools are refined, interview packet organised, all logistics sorted for field work, teams trained on interview process	**Field Work** Data gathered through transparent and empirical process. Using a focused evaluation design, data are collected that allow (to the extent possible) questions to be answered.	**Data Analysis and Report Writing** Analysis workshop in country. Cleaned data provided to CSL. Case Study Summary Reports are written and cross case comparison conducted.
Evaluation Question 4: How are the outcomes perceived and valued by those with significant stakes in the project?	Initial identification of key actors that have significant stakes in the activity.	Clarification of which key actors had significant stakes in the outcome. This focuses the data collection. Identifies other potential actors who may have influenced the sustainment of the outcome.	Adapt interview guide, focused map, education system map, outcomes sheet with activities, obtain any formal introduction needed. Organise packet. Train team. Organise interviews, organise related logistics.	This phase answers evaluation question 1 and evaluation question 2 within the boundaries drawn to explore multiple perspectives.	On a case by case basis, the outcome is described in terms of who valued it and those who did not and how it was perceived. A cross-case comparison explores the thematic similarities among those findings.

Overview of Evaluation Tools

There are several methods, tools and formats for collecting different types of data in different stages of the evaluation process (e.g. preparatory research, TPMs). Therefore, in this section we explain each tool's purpose and when it is used. Logistical tools are also provided in this table.

Preparatory Research	
Tool or Format	**Purpose and use**
Key Expert Semi Structured Interview Guide. The Key Expert(s) is then a part of the TPM for 1 day.	• Informs activity description and timelines; identifies key documents and people • Semi structured interview (**Exhibit B)**
Timeline(s)	• Informs TPM discussion decision on outcome to be studied, and informs related systems maps. • Templates for drafting timelines and maps can be found at piktochart.com **(Exhibit C provides an example)**
Team Planning Meeting	
Tool	**Purpose and Use**
Formal Education System Map	• Illustrates the formal education system (e.g. how it should work-overview) • Templates for drawing maps can be found at piktochart.com **(Exhibit D provides an example)**
Outcome Selection Tool	• Provides a short narrative with reasoning for selecting an outcome (criteria listed) **(Exhibit E)**
Focused Map	• Demonstrates boundaries for evaluation showing potentially relevant systems • Templates for drawing maps can be found at piktochart.com **(Exhibit F)**
Key Actor Identification Tool	• Allows for the selection of key actors, thus drawing the boundaries of the evaluation **(Exhibit G)**
Field Work	
Tool	**Purpose and Use**
Interview List	• Provides list of those interviewed, those who were not, and reasons for the lack of interview **(Exhibit I)**
Interview Guide	• Guides overall interview and elicits facts, perceptions and ideas • Begin adaptation at the TPM **(Exhibit B)**
Education System Map	• Developed during the TPM, this finalized map is used in this phase to guide respondent during overall context discussion and collects data on relationships **(Exhibit D)**
Focused Map	• Developed during the TPM, this finalized map is used in this phase to guide respondent during overall context discussion and collects data on relationships **(Exhibit F)**
Data Analysis and Report Writing	
Tool	**Purpose and Use**
Data Analysis	• Provides overall guidance for analyzing data **(Exhibits K, L, M)**
Report Outline	• Provides guidance on key areas to be addressed in response to the 4 evaluation question s **(Exhibit N)**

Step 1 – Pre TPM

Output	Purpose and description
1-2 Key experts identified Expert panel in place for the TPM	Identify key experts. Invite for: (1) interview and (2) confirm for outcome and system identification session. This team forms the expert panel for the TPM. A contract should be in place for these experts (ranging from 1-3 depending on budget and team needs) for taking part in the panel. The expert panel member(s) provide information to inform the TPM, and also take part in the TPM to provide additional guidance for the selection of the outcome to evaluate, and additional contextual knowledge. They will also be drawn upon in the evaluation process, as needed.
Local team assembled; TPM date and venue confirmed; travel and other logistics organised	Team assembled, SOWs in place, travel arrangements approved and in place. Location for meeting.
Key expert data collected.	Gather initial expert perspectives on outcomes, key events, key informants and document through key expert interview. This informs the activity description and timelines. **(Exhibit B)**
Draft timeline Description of all sectors presented and discussed	Draft description of education sector key events in a timeline as well as key political, cultural and economic events from project implementation to present. This will inform the outcome selection and systems identification. **(Exhibit C)**
Draft formal education system map	Draft description of education system. These are structured and will show the education system based, likely quite linear, on what should be. This map will become one of the interview tools. **(Exhibit D)**
Meeting with USAID organised	This is part of the evaluation protocol. This is not an interview. Introduction facilitated via email and meeting organised to discuss project and protocol. Meeting approximately 20-30 minutes.
Material sent to the case study team and key experts	The Case Study Lead (CSL) will assemble the analysed key expert findings, activity description, and timelines for distribution to the team two weeks prior to the TPM. The CSL will also send the Evaluation Guide.

Step 2 – Team Planning Meeting

The TPM lays the foundation for an empirical and transparent evaluation that enables cross-case comparison. The TPM has four objectives: (1) introduce systems evaluation and the evaluation approach and model to the case study team; (2) using Outcome Harvesting, identify the outcome to be explored, the systems, the geographical areas and generate a list of key actors; (3) inform the adaption of the evaluation tools and further inform context timelines, and (4) identify logistical and other issues related to the evaluation and to plan a way forward.

TPM Agenda

Activities	Person Responsible (to be decided by each team)	Purpose and description	Tools	Output
Day 1: Introduction to SOBE and the selected USAID Activity				
Present overview of SOBE		To clarify purpose of evaluation	PPT	Team understands evaluation objectives and questions

Activities	Person Responsible (to be decided by each team)	Purpose and description	Tools	Output
Introduce Systems Thinking		To introduce the team to a systems approach	PPT	Team is familiar with a systems approach
Present evaluation tools and processes		Evaluation tools and processes described	PPT Tool handouts	Team understands evaluation steps and tools
Present intervention to be evaluated		Intervention and context described	PPT Project Description and Timelines	Team understands project and its context
Present Final Report Outline		To clarify what the final product needs to say	PPT	Team understands what the final product will look like, and can use this understanding to inform learning and adapting the methodology
Day 2: Selection of outcome				
Present timeline		Provide context	Timeline **(Exhibit C)**	**Draft timeline refined** Team understands context since USAID activity ended
Select outcome		Identifies which higher level outcome will be investigated.	Outcome selection criteria **(Exhibit E)**	**Evaluation question 1 Outcome selected** **Exhibit E completed**
Revise Formal Education System Map		Revise formal education system. These are structured and will show the education system based, likely quite linear, on what should be. This map will become one of the interview tools.	Identification of systems **(Exhibit D)**	**Education System Mapped** This map is the larger, formal education system that shows where the outcome is located within that system.
Brainstorm relevant systems that likely influenced the outcome selected		A list of potential cultural, political, social, economic, health and other systems that may need to be considered for exploration will be generated. These will be used to inform the Focused Map.	This is a facilitated process that generates potential systems and informs brainstorm on actors.	List systems that likely influenced the education system.

Activities	Person Responsible (to be decided by each team)	Purpose and description	Tools	Output
Brainstorm on inter-relationships among systems that likely influenced the selected outcome, and draw map		This Focused Map will show the relationships of key actors, which may be in different systems, and have a high likelihood of influencing sustainability of the outcome being researched. This map will become one of the tools used during interviews.	**(Exhibit F)**	**Focused Map** Focus map on the outcome being explored (Draft) that shows potential influence of other systems.
Day 3: Evaluation Approach Adapted				
Identify key actors		Identification of key actors to interview	Identification and format (**Exhibit G**)	**List of key actors** List initial key actors (individuals, organisations and groups)
Discuss interview tool revision		Adapt tools to local context for field work, as possible. Share with larger team, adapt.	Interview guides, system maps and timelines	Data gathering tools adapted in draft (**Exhibits B, C, D, F)**
Fill in the Plan of Action		List evaluation tasks, assign responsibility, and determine dates	Plan of Action Format	**Plan of Action (Exhibit H)**
Clarify systems concepts related to data analysis		To review and understand data systems concepts related to data analysis		Clear understanding of data analysis from a systems perspective
Meet with USAID Mission		To introduce SOBE and seek advice on local protocol and introductions to the Ministry of Education	SOBE Overview document	Clear understanding of formal protocols and introductions, as needed.

Purposive Sampling

Once an outcome has been chosen, and an initial formal education system map is drawn, we need to select a case that is manageable in terms of time and budget. To select the case, we are guided by the qualitative sampling criterion: provides the most information about the selected outcome, as well as insight into using a systems evaluation approach. Within each case, we will need to select a site(s), systems, and informants.

Once an outcome has been chosen, and an initial formal education system map is drawn, we need to define the scope and scale of the "case study" we will conduct concerning the selected outcome, so that the field research is manageable in terms of time and budget. When we define the scope and scale of the field research effort for a case study, we will examine options and select the one that will provide the most information about the selected outcome, given the time we will have available. Within each case, we will need to select a site(s), systems, and informants. It is anticipated that these case elements will be chosen purposively, and that criterion sampling will be the dominant method. The rest of this sub-section describes the criteria the team intends to use when selecting specific elements of the case to examine.

There are two specific selection criteria to identify **the site**(s) (e.g. which district, school):

- Sites should be data rich (e.g. sites have people that were there when the implementation took place; sites have previous evaluation data).
- Sites should be accessible (e.g. the team can physically get there within the evaluation time and budget; the team is likely to be granted permission to visit that site)

There are two selection criteria to identify **systems**:

- **Education system:** Elements of the system are likely connected to this site and the outcome.
- **Other systems:** Systems that likely influenced results.
- All selected systems need to be accessible, and can be investigated within the time and resources of this evaluation.

The selection criteria to find **initial informants:**

- High likelihood of being able to contact this person, and their willingness to engage
- High relevance in terms of their ability to talk about the topic (e.g. are they in contact with the initial implementation area; are they knowledgeable about the technical and/or local area?)
- Ability to tell the same story from a different perspective
- Three actors in each of the categories (see Exhibit J), to the extent possible with higher representation in the implementer and beneficiary categories.

Generally speaking, sites, systems, and informants will be selected from existing lists and some information will be available about them to which the team's criteria for selection can be applied. At the informant level, however, the team may find it necessary to interview types of people who were not on existing lists. In those instances, the team may use snowball sampling, i.e., obtain names from one informant about other possible informants. Instances where snowball sampling (which inherently involves the potential for bias by letting others define who we should talk with) could be used, include following up on leads provided by one informant about either the condition of an intended outcome or an unplanned outcome, or follow up on leads to locate someone who can speak knowledgeably about a perspective on why an outcome was or was not obtained, e.g., a tribal representative in area where people from multiple tribes live and the team would not be able to sort this out themselves.

Two additional criteria include:

- High likelihood of being able to contact this person, and their willingness to engage
- High relevance in terms of their ability to talk about the topic (e.g. are they in contact with the initial implementation area; are they knowledgeable about the technical and/or local area?)

End of Activity Condition Verification and Data Collection for Evaluation Question 1

The sites and informants that the team selects from which to gather data on evaluation question 1 will be driven by the expectation that we will do our best to compare the condition of USAID's intended outcome in the present time frame to its condition at the time the USAID activity ended. Simply put, this means that we will try to find out what changed since the end of the activity in the sites in which the activity was active, and from people who were familiar with the condition of the intended outcome both then and now.

For evaluation question 1, the team will examine the feasibility of using pre-post data for outcome indicators of interest considering a combination of activity and administrative data. Where possible, the team will use these data to report on the condition of USAID-intended outcomes that replicates, in whole or part, the site/units from which USAID and its implementing partner collected end-of-activity condition data on those outcomes. If not possible this will be noted, and explained, in the Case Study Summary Report.

For evaluation question 2, the team may find that its enquiries about unanticipated outcomes lead beyond the sites and informants examined to address evaluation question 1. Similarly, because evaluation question S 3 and 4 ask about why both intended and unanticipated outcomes were or were not sustained, and how they were perceived, the sites and informants the team studies may be somewhat broader than for evaluation question 1 alone. Sites and informants for these last two evaluation questions will include those selected to address evaluation question 1, in order to explain why intended outcomes were or were not sustained, while examining why for unanticipated outcomes may involve somewhat different sites and informants.

Step 3 – Tool Refinement and Field Preparation

Prior to the field work, the CSL needs to: (1) adapt the semi-structured guide, (2) develop an Outcomes Sheet and Activity Sheet which gives a quick summary that explains the USAID activity outcomes and a list that briefly shows each intervention implemented (activity outputs) that led to the outcomes (e.g. teacher training, development of manuals); (3) finalise the focused map, (4) finalise the education system map, and (5) finalise the list of actors to be interviewed.

The CSL will then need to meet with her/his team to ensure: (1) interview packets are organised and practiced by each team member, (2) interview schedule is in place and it is clear where additional snowballing is needed to identify additional actors (NB: actors can be people, policies, institutions, organisations).

Step 4 – Field Work - Logistics and Data Collection

Each case study team will likely collect data using different forms of qualitative data collection. Desk reviews will be used to identify quantitative and qualitative data for the USAID-intended outcome on which the case study focuses, for when the activity ended, and for the same outcome in 2016. Other methods that may be used will likely include, but are not limited to: (1) focus group discussions, (2) individual semi-structured interviews, (3) group semi-structured interviews, and (4) document and data review (e.g. EMIS). For example, some data may be collected using participatory learning approaches that engage larger groups with drawing, mapping, crosswalks, and other participatory engagement. Other situations may only require more formal interviews. This will depend on the country's culture, the outcome of focus, the case study team's experience with different methods, time, and resources available.

Logistics

- Photocopy interview packets. The CSL will organise how and where interview packets are assembled
- Local protocols. CSL is responsible for ensuring that all local protocols are followed
- Interview lists. CSL may delegate organising interviews to the Research Specialist or other team members, as appropriate. Lists of potential and actual respondents must be recorded for the final report **(Exhibit I)**

- Field visit. The CSL will work with the local team to organise local logistics (e.g. car hire, hotel)
- Travel. The Home Office team will assist with regards to approvals and reimbursement

Logistics – Preparing for the interview

- Read background materials as selected by CSL. (e.g. activity description, evaluations)
- Organise the interview packet. Each interview packet should have: (1) Interview guide, which includes the consent (2) Photocopy of the Focused Maps, so that there is one Focused map for each interview; (3) Education System Map, (4) Outcomes Sheet, (5) Timeline (5) Activity Sheet, and (6) any formal introduction needed.
- Practice using the tools. The case study team will practice using the interview packets before going into the field. Changes can be made at this time as necessary.
- Have an assortment of markers and pens.

Step 5 - Data Analysis and Report Writing

Data Analysis
Through our data analysis, we seek to understand who the actors were, what their relationships were to each other and to the system(s) and how organizations within diverse systems interacted in ways that sustained or constrained the activity's outcomes.

Connecting multiple views and understandings will likely lead to multiple descriptions of the same phenomena. In other words, we are not necessarily looking for agreement, but different ways to explain results. We will be drawing on three systems approaches, as each brings elements of what we need to answer the evaluation questions. These are: (1) causal loop diagram, (2) stakeholder mapping and (3) rubric analysis.

Data analysis will be systematic and ongoing (it does not just happen at the end), guided by the following:

- Data collection and analysis will be **iterative**. This means that analysis will be based on the theory and patterns that emerged from the previous analysis (e.g. as data are gathered, maps are changed, in pen or pencil, and then shared with the next interviewee. The next interviewee will also get a blank map, or s/he can add to the previous map. This is at the discretion of the data collector).
- The associations and patterns of change that emerged will be constantly compared to ensure that **relationships** between themes or changes are continually defined and explored in sufficient depth (e.g. principals may mention that school improvement continued after the activity, however we need to look for other sources that confirm this; parents may mention that the school cooperated, however we need to check with the interviewee how the word "cooperation" is used).
- Data analysis conducted by the evaluation team will be synthesized to produce a combined **evidence-based narrative** that explains the extent to which the USAID outcome has been sustained, and by what systems (e.g. how, why, for whom, under what conditions and with what range of actors, was this outcome sustained).

We will also use political, social and economic analysis (drawn from the research that was used to construct the time lines) to make sense of the information that we come across in our research.

These questions include:

- The interests and incentives facing different groups in society and how these generate particular policy outcomes that may encourage or hinder the outcome.
- The role that formal institutions and informal social, political and cultural norms play in shaping human interaction and systems that supported or presented a barrier to the outcome.

- The impact of values and ideas, including political ideologies, religion and cultural beliefs, on political behavior and public policy.

In order to synthesize the data, the CSL will facilitate a two-day group analysis that considers all the data and different types of interpretation. The discussion will be guided by:

- **Sources of heterogeneity**, including the narrative, degrees of data credibility, cultural sensitivities and contextual factors;
- **Sources of bias** that particular types of data and information were susceptible to. The triangulation of findings and analyses from a range of different sources will be used to explore different perspectives of the same finding;

We will use two types of triangulation: (1) data triangulation – use of two or more data sources, for example the time lines, the maps, and the interview data which will be explored through a grounded theory approach; and (2) researcher triangulation – engaged at least three team members to analyze the same data.

Iterative Analysis in addition to cataloguing of transcripts/notes
After every interview (i.e., focus groups, interviews, group interviews), a transcript is prepared for focus groups and detailed notes are typed up for individual interviews and checked for completeness by the CSL (to avoid incomplete sentence and shorthand answers); data are cleaned and a copy of every transcript and interview notes is forwarded at that time to the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project Home Office for data archiving per USAID requirements.

Interview notes or transcripts will be analyzed and used to generate findings against the two evaluation rubrics. The person undertaking the analysis should strive to note findings rather interpret conclusions from this initial process. Findings can include reported opinions of those interviewed. The interviewer then summarises their data at the top of the interview schedule that highlights key data, and as they go on, themes, etc. So analysis is iterative throughout. This can include provisional conclusions.

Content Analysis
The data **analysis** will start with open coding of data (to initially identify key categories, actors, relationships or themes), using the evaluation rubrics, which will be used to direct thematic coding (to shape the relationships between actors and the sustained outcome) and develop a more in-depth understanding how the systems influenced the outcome, and inter-relationships and perspectives (e.g. what are the maps telling us about relationships? What interview data are telling us about power, accountability and responsibility?).

The thematic coding will be undertaken to draft a findings document that will be used during the case study analysis workshop. The coding should be organized by themes and common findings and examine the propensity for themes to emerge within and between types of stakeholders. MAXQDA or similar analytical software may be used to thematically code the documents in the case that manual content analysis is not practical.

Data Synthesis
In preparation for the two-day data analysis workshop, key findings documents for different data sources will be prepared to facilitate synthesis into conclusions. Findings documents may include:

- Rubric analysis
- Findings for evaluation question 1

- Systems maps and Casual Loop Diagram maps
- Content analysis findings by respondent categories (e.g. parents, teachers, officials, beneficiaries).

The synthesized conclusions from the two-day data analysis workshop will be used for a presentation back to the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project management team at a date to be agreed upon between the case study team and Task Order Manager.

Writing the Case Study Summary Report

Exhibit N provides the Case Study Summary Report outline. Some general guidelines are:

1. **Write in active tense**. For example, do not write "The survey was conducted…" Rather write "In 2012 the Ministry of Education conducted a reading literacy survey that covered…" It should always be clear who did what, to whom.
2. **Cite, cite, cite.** The information sources should always be clear. If we use these data and it is later challenged, we need to be able to say, "These numbers, this fact, came from XXX…" Use APA formatting. Do not use endnotes. Limit footnotes.
3. **Synthesise.** This report should be concise. Every sentence must have a fact or finding. Write as if each word costs you US1.
4. **Stick to the outline, font, font size, and style settings**.
5. **Annexes.** The Case Study Summary Report will have a minimum of 6 annexes: (1) Bibliography; (2) Interview list, including those that you interviewed, those that you could not reach (e.g. email bounced back), and those that did not get interviewed (**Exhibit I);** (3) Education Map – initial and final; (4) the Focused Map - initial and final; (5) Time lines - final only; and (6) adapted interview guides.

Exhibit A: Reflective Thinking Questions

The Evaluation Team Leader will engage with the case study teams in a reflection process, regarding their experience with using a system evaluation approach. This will happen at four time periods: (1) during the TPM, (2) following the field research, (3) during the analysis stage, and (4) after the draft Case Study Summary Report. Please review these questions and where useful, keep notes to record your experiences.

Questions during the team planning meeting

- Have familiar are you with a system approach?
- If you had to explain the systems approach, would you be able to?
  - What would you find easy to explain?
  - What would you find challenging?
- Regarding the systems approach, what do you anticipate being a challenge with its implementation? Why?
- What are some strategies we can use to overcome that challenge?
- Is there anything else you would like to share?

Questions following the field research

- In what ways, if any, did you find the systems approach useful? Challenging?
- Compared to other approaches you have used, what about the systems approach was more useful? What was less so?
- How do you think using the systems approach strengthened the data collection process?
- Do you think another approach would have been more useful? If yes, why?
- Is there anything else you would like to share?

Questions following the data analysis

- To what extent was it challenging to analyse data?
- Can you share what worked well with analysing your data?
- How did this approach enhance your ability to analyse, and create deeper meaning than "it was achieved?"
- Is there anything else you would like to share?

Questions following the draft report

- Tell me about your overall experience using a systems approach
- Would you recommend it? If so, under what circumstances?
- What were your key barriers during the process?
- What were your key facilitators?
- What were your key lessons?
- What is in the report that is likely to NOT have been there, if we had not used a systems approach?
- Anything else you would like to share?

Exhibit B: Key Expert Semi-Structured Interview Form

This questionnaire covers experts external to the activity, and/or those that are familiar with the activity and/or its interventions. It is for preparatory research (before the TPM) and during the rest of the field work. It is for any Key Expert, and will be modified based on the case study.

Key Expert
Semi-structured Interview
Topic Guide

Case Study Title:			
Interviewer(s)		**Country**	
Interviewee(s)		**Organization/Role**	
Date of interview		**Location of interview/Type of interview (phone, Skype, in person, group)**	

I. Introduction

- **(Establish rapport)** My name is _____ and I am part of a research team working on an evaluation funded by the US Agency for International Development. Thank you for making the time to meet with me.
- **(State purpose)** I am here today to ask some questions about the education system and context in general. *We will use this information to help understand the [project] and its sustained results. [Read this statement: "Our research is about understanding why some interventions and results are sustained and others are not sustained. It is not an evaluation of the [Program], which was selected in part because it was successful."]*
- **(Time line)** We have [45 minutes - 1 hour] for our time together. Are you available to respond to some questions during this time?
- **(Consent)** This interview is entirely voluntary and you may choose not to participate. If you agree to participate, you can choose to stop at any time or to skip any questions you do not want to answer. If you wish, you may choose for your answers and your participation in this interview to remain completely confidential. We will not share any information that identifies you with anyone outside of the evaluation team.
  Please feel free to stop this interview at any time to ask questions you may have about this consent or anything else.
- **(Transition)** Do you have any questions for me before we start?

I. General

- Can you tell me a bit about your experience and how long you have been working in the field of education?

II. Education Context ("I would like to spend some time speaking with you about [country name] education system.)"

- *Can you please explain the formal education system, in terms of power/hierarchy? (Hint: Have them draw this if you can)*

- *What have been some major changes in the Education System over the past X years? (Probe: policy, curriculum, ministers)*
- *What has remained more or less the same?*
- *Can you tell me a bit about the teacher's unions? (Probe: existence, power, issues)*
- *What have been some other changes that have influenced education? (Probe: economic issues, health issues, culture, transport, infrastructure)*
- *Who were the major funders/donors for education X years ago? Who are they now? (Probe: local, international)*
- *What are the key roles that non-profits play in the education sector, if any (Probe: training, support learners, education movement)?*
- *What are some of the challenges faced by the education sector?*
- *What are some of the facilitators?*
- *We are trying to use the education context, and other information you provided, to better understand what happened to [name of programme/activities/areas of focus]. Is there any other information that you would like to share that would help us to better understand?*
- *What documents or websites would you recommend?*

If they are familiar with the programme, continue on to section III

III. Programme

- General
  - *Do you remember [name of programme]?*
  - *How long did you work on the programme?*
  - *What were your main responsibilities?*
  - *To whom did you report?*
- Were you involved in the design or the inception of the programme?
  - *Can you tell me about why the programme decided to focus in this area?*
- Who were the main external persons or organizations that you interacted with in the delivery of the programme?
  - *Government institutions or departments*
  - *NGOs*
  - *Other Donors*
- Were there other stakeholders that might not have interacted with the program directly, but which were very influential and relevant to how the programme were delivered?
  - *Parochial schools*
  - *PTA*
  - *Municipal or District government*
  - *Teachers' unions*
- What do you think the programme's most significant achievements were? Why?
- Where do you think the programme could have achieved more? Why?
- What were the most significant challenges to delivering the programme successfully?

IV. Sustainability ("I would like to ask you a few questions about the end of the programme and any knowledge you have of what happened post-program…)

- Do you know what happened to the programme's interventions after they ended? I am particularly interested in (INSERT OUTCOME – ANSWER QUESTION 1) Did this produce any lasting changes? Did this have any lasting effects?

    - *Were any of the interventions or results from the programme intended to continue after the program ended?*
    - *Were they continued?*
    - *Did they stop immediately?*
- Do you know or can recall if the Outcome that we are studying had a specific focus on sustainability?
    - *Was there a sustainability plan?*
    - *Were there specific steps that were taken to ensure that the programme was sustained?*
- The main focus of our research is to understand why the Outcome (Insert name) was sustained or why it wasn't sustained. Do you have any ideas about why the achievements of might have been sustained or might not have been sustained?
    - *What were the challenges in embedding this Outcome into the education system?*
    - *What were the opportunities for embedding this Outcome into the education system?*
- Who could we speak to that could tell us more about the Outcome?
- Do you have any other information that you would like to share that might help us with this research?
- Do you have any questions for me?

Exhibit C: Timelines

The timelines are completed prior to the TPM, to the extent possible, and vetted during the TPM. The timeline is updated during the data gathering process and will be used to analyse the findings. Below is a sample from the South Africa research.

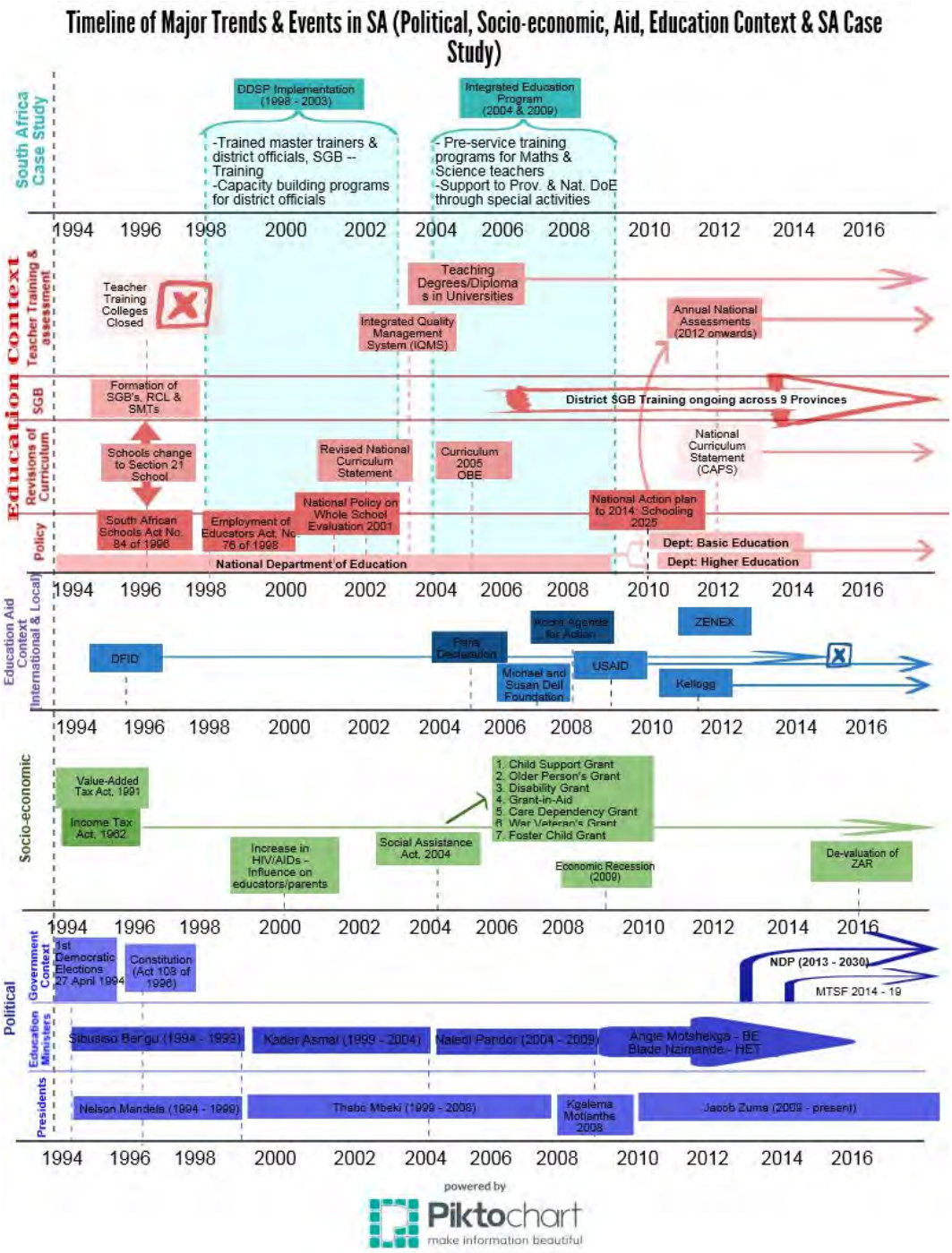


Exhibit D: Education System Map

This map is a description of the formal system that allows for an understanding of how and where the USAID intervention was implemented. It is to be completed by the CSL and vetted during the TPM. It will be used to analyse the findings. Below is a sample from the South Africa research.

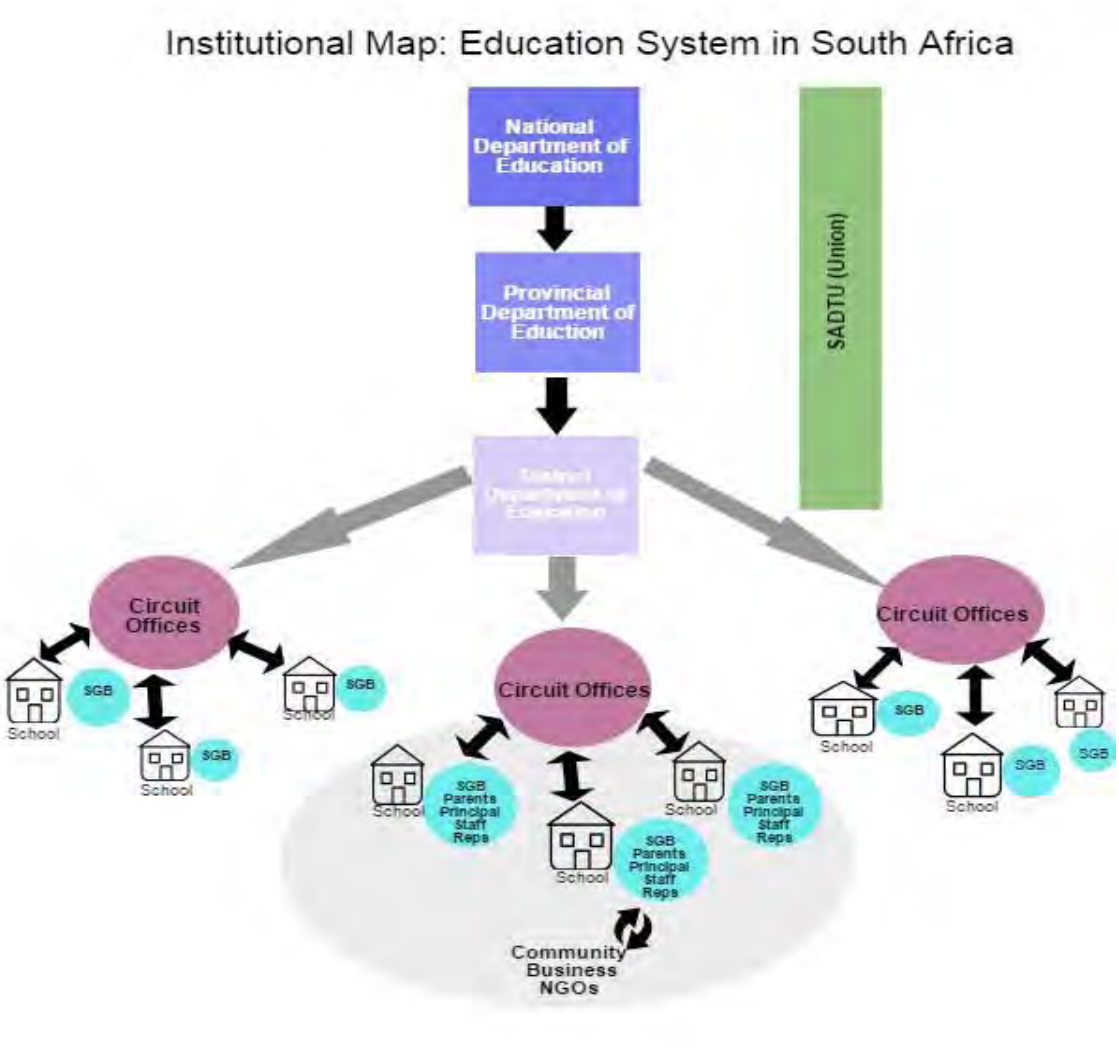


Exhibit E: Outcome Selection

Criteria for Selecting Outcomes

Criteria 1: Are there likely to be **sufficient data** (including key informants and outcomes data) to study this activity and to construct a trail of interactions and interrelationships that proceeded from the intervention phase to the present day;

Criteria 2: How central was the outcome to achieving the overall aim of **improving learner performance**; and

Criteria 3: How likely was it that the original activity **created "ripple effects**" through, for example, human capacity developed, technical skills introduced, conceptual frameworks or innovative perspectives introduced.

These three criteria reflect the *legacy* of the outcome, the *centrality* of the outcome, and the *power* of the outcome.

A larger discussion will be facilitated by the Evaluation Team Leader or Case Study Lead clearly depicting which outcomes will be studied, and why. The chart below is to be used to summarise the discussion on selecting the outcome.

Outcomes Listed ***(List all outcomes)***	**Criteria 1 Sufficient Data**	**Criteria 2 Improving learning performance**	**Criteria 3 Ripple effects**	**Justification Selected or not**	**Expert Confirmation**

Exhibit F: Focused Map Tool

This focused map is a team effort, and drawn during the TPM. It depicts the outcome that is being studied and the likely people, organisations and groups that influence it. It is finalised with no arrows and used as a tool to gather data during the field work. The map, with various drawings and interpretations, will be analysed and one or several maps will be presented in the final report to explain how different systems contributed to sustaining (or not) the outcome. Below is a sample from the South Africa research. Exhibit H: Team Planning Meeting - Evaluation Plan of Action

Exhibit G: Identifying Key Actors

Stakeholder Mapping: This map should list organisations, groups, or people. This list will then be used to determine where to focus interviews.									
Key Actors *(organisation, group, policy, infrastructure or key person)*	**Role on the Activity** *(Describe what they did)*	**Positioning**[34] *(Choose 1)*							**Person to contact** *(Name, email and phone)*
		Direct Beneficiary	**Implementer**	**Assisted with implementation**	**Consulted**	**Informed**	**Interested**	**Detractor**	
Other Potential Current Stakeholders									**Person to contact** *(Name, email and phone)*

POSITIONING DEFINITIONS

- **Direct Beneficiary:** direct receiver of service (e.g. parent who received training on being a committee member)
- **Implementer:** an organisation, group or person that provided direct services (e.g. implemented school committee training)
- **Assisted with implemented:** a group, organisation or person that contributed to an enabling environment (e.g. signed legislation enabling the formation of school committees)
- **Consulted:** a group, organisation or person whose opinions are sought; and with whom there is two-way communication.
- **Informed:** a group, organisation or person who are kept up-to-date on progress; and with whom there is one-way communication
- **Interested:** a group, organisation or person not involved, who took an interest in the project, or who had a potential interest in the project, and was not part of the project (e.g. University that could potentially continue with the committee training; an NGO that could continue the project in another area)
- **Detractor:** a group, organisation or person that was openly against the project, or elements of it (e.g. district officials that wanted to maintain more direct control in the schools)

Exhibit H: Team Planning Meeting - Evaluation Plan of Action

A detailed plan of action is one output of the TPM.

Action	Person Responsible	Intended Completion Date	Notes
Update timeline			
Update activity description			
Draw map of overall education system			
Draw map of focus area			
Customize interview tools			
Additional local protocol confirmed and obtained			
Dates Set for Work			
Dates for organising field work logistics			
Dates for data collection			
Dates for data analysis workshop			
Dates for reflection on approach			
Date for draft report			

Exhibit I: Managing Stakeholder Lists

The interview lists will be a part of the overall understanding of the approach's feasibility. For example, understanding how many people were contactable, how many were contacted, and how many actually granted an interview, can provide an understanding of the research effort to gather data.

Stakeholders identified and not interviewed

Name	Organisation	Position	Role End of Activity	Contacts by email/phone (circle number of contacts)	No Response	Refused	Initial Response but No Further	Cancelled
				1 2 3				
				1 2 3				
				1 2 3				
				1 2 3				
				1 2 3				

Stakeholders interviewed

Name	Organisation	Role End of Activity	Position/Role Now

Exhibit J: Systems Actors

Systems Conversation
Semi-Structured Interview Guide

(NB: Interviewer—Should you be pressed for time, focus on these three areas: What was sustained, what were the relationships and what were the dynamics)

Case Study Title:	**SOBE – South Africa DDSP and IEP**		
Interviewer(s)		**Country**	**South Africa**
Interviewee(s)		**Organization/Role**	
Date of interview		**Location of interview/Type of interview (phone, Skype, in person, group)**	

Introduction

- **(Establish rapport)** My name is _____ and I am working on behalf of MSI, who is contracted by USAID. Thank you for making the time to meet with me.
- **(State purpose)** I am here today to ask some questions about [the programme] You may also remember this activity/project because [list]
- The key outcome was to [state outcome]
- We would like to ask you about this outcome, to get a better understanding of your role in this 10 year ago, your role today and if that role has changed, and if anything remains that emerged from the [programme] activities or their outcomes. *[Read this statement: "Our aim is to understand why some interventions and results are sustained and others are not sustained. It is not an evaluation of the [Program], which was selected in part because it was successful."]*
- **(Time line)** We have [45 minutes - 1 hour] for our time together. Are you available to respond to some questions during this time?
- **(Consent)** This interview is entirely voluntary and you may choose not to participate. If you agree to participate, you can choose to stop at any time or to skip any questions you do not want to answer. Your answers and your participation in this interview are completely confidential. We will not share any information that identifies you with anyone outside of the evaluation team.

  Please feel free to stop this interview at any time to ask questions you may have about this consent or anything else. Do I have your consent to proceed?

(Transition) Do you have any questions for me before we start?

Interviewee Profile

1. How were you involved in the **[programme?]** (Was not involved –Skip to Question 5) *(Probe: Organization and role, the timeframe involved)*
2. From your description, it sounds like your role in the initiative could be best described as [**Provide Name from Column 1 in the table below**], because you did [**Provide description from table column 2**] Do you agree? (**Mark in table, if confirmed, and add any comments**).

3. Did you hold any other roles in the **[programme]** during the implementation period? **(Mark table, add comments)**

4. If so, which would you say was your key role? **(Complete table. Then skip to Q7**)

5. You mentioned that you were not involved, were you aware of this [**describe activities**] [35]taking place? (**If yes, skip to Q6. If no, skip to Initiative Background**)

6. You say you were aware of these activities. Can you explain how you were aware? For example, were you consulted or informed about these activities or their outcome? Can you tell me a bit about this? (**Mark table if applicable**)

Role in *the initiative	**Description**	**Mark with x if yes. Write which was main role**	**Comments**
Donor	Provided resources for the initiative		
Manager	Provided oversight and control on the initiative		
Implementer	Conducted the initiative activities – either a grantee or contractor		
Assisted with Implementation	Provided support for the implementation of activities		
Consulted	Those whose opinions are sought; and with whom there is two-way communication.		
Informed	Those who are kept up-to-date on progress; and with whom there is one-way communication		
Interested	Not directly involved with the activity, but was aware of it		
Detractor	Shows resistance to the [outcome] or its aims.		
Beneficiary	Activities were directed at this person		

7. Once the USAID funding ended, did you feel responsible for completing or continuing the **[activity]** or pursuing the outcome?

[35] The person may not know the project or programme name, but may remember the activities that were implemented.

8. If not, who do you think was responsible for continuing that activity? Pursuing the outcome?

9. Did any group/organisation/individual hold someone accountable for **[activity] or outcomes**?

Introduce the [Activity] Background

Since it is a long time since the **[activity]** *was implemented, let me remind you what it did.*
[SHOW OUTCOMES SHEET. Briefly describe to interviewee]
For the purposes of this conversation, we would like to focus on one area only. We are interested in finding out if any of the work that focused on ***[outcome]*** *have been sustained. (Point to relevant outcome on Outcome Sheet)*
The activities that were conducted to achieve this outcome included:
[SHOW ACTIVITIES SHEET. Briefly describe to interviewee]
The stakeholders that were involved were the following ones:
[SHOW FOCUSED SYSTEMS MAP]
It sounds to me like you/your organization/group were here (point to stakeholder systems map) during the implementation, is that right? [Draw position on map]

Outcome

(Refer to outcomes and indicators handout)

1. Tell me about the need for [outcome]. Does this need still exist?
2. Does [outcome] still exist? Describe what this looks like now.
3. Who is responsible for this [outcome]?
4. Who holds this organisation/group accountable for this [outcome]?
5. Who benefits from this [outcome]?
6. Who values this [outcome]
7. Who does not support this [outcome]?

8. What is the link between [this outcome] and learner achievement? (*Probe: How does this contribute to the student obtaining better grades, getting a better education?)*

[Where appropriate, asking the respondent about the indicators may work well. For example, asking a teacher or principal about ***learner performance****. If this is the case, use the following questions].*

Refer to EXHIBIT C1: DDSP Sub-Goal 3 Indicators

9. Are these indicators still relevant?
    a. If yes, how is your organization performing on these indicators now?

Indicator	9 Still Relevant?	9a) If relevant, how is your organization performing on these?	9b) If no, why are these indicators not relevant anymore?	9c) If there are alternative indicators that relate to the [outcome], what are they and how is your organization performing on them? *(Ask for copy of results or where we can obtain them)*
	Yes / No	Worse, Same, Better, I don't know		

Indicator	**9 Still Relevant?**	**9a) If relevant, how is your organization performing on these?**	**9b) If no, why are these indicators not relevant anymore?**	**9c) If there are alternative indicators that relate to the [outcome], what are they and how is your organization performing on them? *(Ask for copy of results or where we can obtain them)***
	Yes / No	Worse, Same, Better, I don't know		
	Yes / No	Worse, Same, Better, I don't know		
	Yes / No	Worse, Same, Better, I don't know		
	Yes / No	Worse, Same, Better, I don't know		
	Yes / No	Worse, Same, Better, I don't know		
	Yes / No	Worse, Same, Better, I don't know		
	Yes / No	Worse, Same, Better, I don't know		
	Yes / No	Worse, Same, Better, I don't know		
	Yes / No	Worse, Same, Better, I don't know		
	Yes / No	Worse, Same, Better, I don't know		

10. Which individuals, organizations or relationships, if any, support the achievement of [outcome]? (*Probe: What do they do?)*

11. We have talked about relationships, what else has contributed to this being sustained?

12. What is the link between the performance on these indicators and learner outcomes?

Context Mapping

I would like to talk to you about the organization/group we discussed earlier.

Organizational/group

1. Is the organization/group you represented in the **[activity] outcome area** still around?
    - If yes: Was the organization/group involved in any activity, or anything to promote a similar or the same outcome, since the USAID funding ended? Please tell me about this (Probe: What happened, similarities, timeframe.)
    - If not: What happened to the organization/group, when and why?
    - Would you say that your organization/group's involvement in the [activity/outcome/activity] was a significant contributor to [outcome]? What makes you say this?

Broader Context

2. What significant changes have taken place since the **[activity] /your involvement**] ended? **(Map these on the timeline below – be sure to change the time period to reflect your activity)**

COMMUNITY (as relevant – economic, physical environment such as new school, new road, electricity, internet, others)

94	98	2000	02	04	06	08	10	12	14	16

ORGANIZATIONAL (as relevant- change in funding, new relationships, change in focus, change in leadership, or others)

94	98	2000	02	04	06	08	10	12	14	16

BROADER CONTEXT (as relevant- change in legislation, natural disasters, change in government, health issues, or others)

94	98	2000	02	04	06	08	10	12	14	16

Activities

We are interested in finding out if any of the activities introduced by the **[activity]** *has been sustained.* **[SHOW ACTIVITIES SHEET]**
The **[activity]** *had the following* **[activity]** *interventions [**Activities completed by Interviewer**].*

1. Which of the activities are still taking place? (Tick and provide a short comment)

	Yes, continuing as in the project	Continuing as in the project, taken over by someone else •Specify who	Changed into something else • Specify what • Specify who	No. Specify why it ended
DDSP Activity 1 Center for Policy and Development (CEPD) supported election preparations for SGBs by assisting in the preparation of documents, advocacy programs, and databases. For the advocacy program, CEPD developed illustrative materials in local languages trained master trainers and trained district officials.				
DDSP Activity 2 Trained SGBs on school development planning, roles and responsibilities of SGB, school policy, school financial management, effective meetings and conflict resolution				
DDSP Activity 3 Provided capacity building programs for district officials to better support SBGs				
IEP Activity All provinces: Trained SGB members through cluster training and school support visits from Education Management and Governance Development (EMGD) specialists and trainers[36].				
Other Activities not mentioned?				

You told me that these activities are still around in some way.

1. Which individuals, organizations, or groups involved in these activities are still actively supporting these or similar activities? (*Probe: Are any relationships still supporting this?)*

2. Who do you think is benefitting from these activities?

3. Who do you think values these activities?

4. Who does not provide support who should, and/or who prevents these activities from happening?

5. We have talked about relationships, what else has contributed to this being sustained?

6. Do these activities sustain the Outcome we mentioned (PUT HERE) or do the activities you are describing contribute to something else?

Resources

Some of the resources **(RESOURCE FILLED IN PRIOR TO INTERVIEW**) provided by the [activity] were **(SHOW RESOURCES LISTED ON THIS PAGE)**

1. Which of these resources are still around?

	Yes, originally provided resources are still around and provided by the same organisation/group	Yes, same resources however taken over by someone else •Specify who •Specify when this happened, if possible	Changed into something else • Specify what • Specify by who • Specify when, if possible	No • Specify why it is no longer around?
List resource				
List resource				
List resource				
List resource				
Other Resources?				

2. **You told me that [resource] is still around.**

   - Who is using these resources?
   - Who values these resources?
   - Who benefits from these resources?
   - Who do you think, if any group or organisation, is threatened by these resources? (Probe: prevents it from being used)

3. **We have talked about relationships, what else has contributed to this being sustained?**

4. **Are there any new resources that exist that are related to the previous ones?** (Provide relevant example, such as computerised data collection with tablets that resulted from a paper based M&E system).

5. Do the resources you mention here sustain the Outcome we mentioned (PUT HERE) or do the resources you are describing contribute to something else?

Relationships

1. Let's look at the Focused Systems Map. [***Show Focused Map****]*. This map shows who we think are the key actors in the [*outcome]*. This map aims to represent relationships about 10 years ago; would you change anything on this map to make it more accurate, as it was 10 years ago? ***(Change map as needed).***

2. Let's continue to look at the *(now changed)* Focused Map. I am going to ask you about now, in 2016, who are the major actors in the [outcome/idea/activities]. We would like to get some specific information on how roles have changed in relation to [outcome]. ***(Take respondent through table)***

Donor- Manager- Implementer -Assisted with Implementation- Consulted- Informed -Interested- Detractor- Beneficiary

	Role during the initiative *(Use choice from Section 1)*	Role Now (*specify if and how related to the idea, activity, outcome or resource*)	Describe change and reason for change. *(If appropriate, ask about link to outcome or involvement in the USAID intervention)*	Relationship shifts and how positioned to others on the Map (Accountable to, responsible for, partner to implement, share information, receive information, oversight, conflicting role). **DRAW ON MAP**
You as a professional				
The organization you represented in the [outcome/project]				
The organization you represent now				
Districts				
Provinces				
National Education Department				
Donors				

3. How did the initiative contribute to these relationships (Probe: Strengthen, weaken, change communication structure, changed power structure, changed accountability structure, brought in new actors?)

4. How did this change in relationships bring about the changes (contribute to lack of changes) that you have told me about?

5. Do these resources sustain the Outcome we mentioned (PUT HERE) or do the resources you are describing contribute to something else?

Thank you for your time. This concludes the interview. We are going to use the information that you provided to us, to try and understand how an outcome, activity or idea can be sustained. Before I go,

1. Do you have anything else you would like to add that I haven't asked you?

2. Who else do you think I should talk to that can provide a different viewpoint?

3. Do you have any questions for me?

TO BE COMPLETED BY INTERVIEWER

1. **Gender of respondent** Female Male Other
2. **Living in country of project** Yes No Not sure
3. **Role changed** Yes No Not clear

Exhibit K: Data Analysis and Report Writing – Analytical Rubric 1

Using data collected, these rubrics will be applied in the two-day analysis workshop.

	Place the actor and/or events that contributed to sustaining this finding Label each contributor: H (helper) D (Detractor) I(Implementer) B(Beneficiary) Circle the actor if their role has changed since the activity ended. **Activity outcomes and/or structures**	**Understanding the extent that different organisations, groups or individuals contributed to the sustained outcome**			
		No contribution	**Some Contribution**	**Contributed**	**Meaningful Contribution**
Achievement of a sustained outcome	• The activity outcome (or structure) still exists o *Example: Committee still exists and is active with school management*				
	• The activity outcome led to new programs o *Example: Informal parent forums meet monthly and provide input into school governance* o *Here is an example where an effect can take place outside of the system studied: Committees now exist that guide the local health clinic, and include the head nurse, local health NGO and community representatives*				

	Place the actor and/or events that contributed to sustaining this finding Label each contributor: H (helper) D (Detractor) I(Implementer) B(Beneficiary) Circle the actor if their role has changed since the activity ended.	**Understanding the extent that different organisations, groups or individuals contributed to the sustained outcome**			
	Activity Interrelationships (individuals, groups, and/or organizations)	**No contribution**	**Some Contribution**	**Contributed**	**Meaningful Contribution**
Achievement of a sustained outcome	• Relationships formed or strengthened during the program still exist and are actively engaged o *Example: NGOs that worked together to implement the USAID-funded intervention have a strong relationship and engage in various community strengthening initiatives*				
	• Relationships spin off to form new or re-configured relationships (expanded social networks) o *Example: Committee members work together to address child headed households, and local NGOs and the government departments to engage with and develop solutions for local community crime against child headed households*				

	Place the actor and/or events that contributed to sustaining this finding Label each contributor: H (helper) D (Detractor) I(Implementer) B(Beneficiary) Circle the actor if their role has changed since the activity ended.	**Understanding the extent that different organisations, groups or individuals contributed to the sustained outcome**			
	Activity Resources	**No contribution**	**Some Contribution**	**Contributed**	**Meaningful Contribution**
Achievement of a sustained outcome	• Materials, manuals, equipment and other tangible products developed by the intervention outcomes exist. o *Example: Committee manual exists*				
	• Materials, manuals, equipment and other tangible products have led to the development of new materials, manuals, equipment and other tangible products. *Example: Committee manuals exist that are now updated, have improved content and are downloadable to phones and computers*				
	• Materials, manuals, equipment and other tangible products are used to enable/facilitate other objectives or contributed to the creation, purchase and/or use of new materials, manuals or equipment. o *Example: Committee members now have a dedicated room at the local city council for their meetings, which contains the manuals, on-line references and a local facilitator who is present for any conflict resolution or negotiation between the community, the parents and/or the principal.*				

Place the actor and/or events that contributed to sustaining this finding Label each contributor: H (helper) D (Detractor) I(Implementer) B(Beneficiary) Circle the actor if their role has changed since the activity ended.	**Understanding the extent that different organisations, groups or individuals contributed to the sustained outcome**			
Perspectives	**No contribution**	**Some Contribution**	**Contributed**	**Meaningful Contribution**
• Activity introduced and implemented new perspectives and these remain o *Example: While committees no longer exist, principals continue to engage with the community on education are being trained with the same curriculum and by the same NGO*				
• Activity introduced new perspectives and these have informed or catalysed new ideologies, perspectives and/or change o *Example: The school regularly sends phone messages, and hard copy messages, to all parents so that parents can engage in key school decisions, and those activities that contribute to learning, such as organised evenings when teachers "teach" parents the concepts that children are learning, and offers ways to engage their children at home to ensure continued and supported learning.*				

Exhibit L: Data Analysis and Report Writing – Analytical Rubric 2

	Understanding the push and pull of the systems				
Motivation What is the sustained outcome, and who are the intended beneficiaries? **This block describes the value basis for what sustained the outcome.**	**Expertise** Provided formal or informal expert skill sets and/or relevant knowledge that contributed to the outcome (e.g. or a false guarantee?) **This block describes the knowledge base needed to sustain the outcome**	**Control** What were the necessary resources to sustain this outcome? Provided resources, and/or made critical/binding decisions. Includes human capital, such as access to networks of influence. **This block describes the power basis of what sustained the outcome**		**Legitimacy** In what ways was the outcome valued and describes what wider interest does this support. **This block describes the social, cultural and legal approval that sustained the outcome.**	
				What was the legal or political policy that sustained this outcome? What informal support was provided?	What made this dangerous, damaging or coercive.
Individual/group/organisation					
Individual/group/organisation					

Exhibit M: Data Analysis and Report Writing – Systems Dynamics Analysis

System Dynamics Analysis – Themes to Explore[37]

This annex provides different ways to think about systems when we trying to find—and understand, what contributed to sustaining a certain outcome. The list is not exhaustive, and much of it may not be applicable to the case study with which you are working.

Use

Adaptation: The systems we are evaluating are most likely evolving over time; they adapt with the context. Here we can look for two patterns of change: (1) the system evolved, (or failed to evolve) because the environment is changing (e.g. the education policy changed), or (2) the system acts to change their environment. For example, a girls' education program makes a point of showing the community how successful the girls are and how life in the community is improving. Essentially, the program is acting to make its environment more welcoming to sustaining the change.

Aggregate of small change in many programs: For instance: (1) The intervention showed a small amount change, and other interventions did as well; (2) Many education programs have taken place within the same geopolitical entity – maybe a regional authority, or even a school system. The aggregate impact of all these small changes may account for what an evaluation team finds.

Critical paths/elements: There may be some critical paths or critical elements in a system, and identifying them may be key for providing an explanation for the evaluation findings. For example, if there is a strong social pressure not to send the girls to school, the girls won't go no matter how much money or effort is spent. We need to identify these critical paths/elements.

Distributions: How did the activity affect different groups differently, or different areas, or both? The extent to which the results are distributed are important. The difference in these outcome distributions is really important. For example, there is a higher likelihood that a difference will be found if an intervention addresses all 20 schools in a district, as opposed to 20 schools across the country.

Environmental conditions: This is where an outcome may or may not be sustained, depending on other things that are not part of the system that can still impact it. For example, high HIV/AIDS rates that affects teachers' attendance, perhaps a bridge breaking that prevents attendance. Another example would be providing text books and now 10 years later all children are using electronic books.

Feedback loops: Here, an evaluation team may find that how feedback is provided, or not, influenced the sustainability of the outcome. These can be positive or negative. For example, suppose the NGO that trains teachers on teaching literacy to third graders, however the NGO does not pay attention to whether its program is improving children's literacy scores (which it is not), and does not change its technical advice.

Multiple paths: The evaluation may find that the outcome identified 10 years past is in existence today (e.g. outcome is consistent). However, the exact way the outcome is achieved may differ. Let's say we have a

[37] This work modified from an in-depth email discussion with Jonny Morell, and used with his permission.

program to increase girls' participation in school. We posit five important variables: 1) parents' motivation, 2) social pressure, 3) cost in terms of school fees, 4) criticality for the family of the work girls do when they are not in school, and the 5) school capacity in terms of room, numbers of teachers, and books. What we need to explore is the possibility of different configurations that might have led to the same outcome.

Phase shifts: It is a characteristic of systems that sometimes they change incrementally and then sudden dramatic change appears. For example, evidence may show how incremental changes may have taken place for seven years, then in year eight (since the intervention) the change increased dramatically.

Redundancy: Sometimes system processes have backups. For instance, imagine an educational system that has a high density of parents (or nonprofits) with lots of education and experience who could step in to do some teaching in a pinch. The backup process may be formalized and ready to kick in, or simply implicit in the situation, ready to be actuated.

Exhibit N: Analysis and Report Writing – Case Study Summary Report Outline

1. Country and USAID Activity (insert name)

1.1 Country Description (.5 page)

This is modified from the preparatory research and TPM, taken from the activity documents and supplemented as needed from literature review and interviews.

1.2 Activity Background (2 pages)

Overall goal
Outcome selected (reasoning and result in XXXX)
Data for outcome at the time the activity ended (e.g. indicator, evaluation, administrative)
This is modified from the pre-TPM and TPM, taken from the activity documents and supplemented as needed from literature review and interviews.

1.3 Context - Timelines (1-page graphic with 2-page narrative)

Education System
Social
Political
Economic
The USAID activity in that timeframe.
This is the beginning of the project through to now, and is modified from the pre-TPM and TPM, taken from the activity documents and supplemented as needed from literature review and interviews.

1.4 Context – Education Systems Mapping

Formal system map and short narrative, formal system at end of activity and formal system now.
This is modified from the pre-TPM and TPM, taken from the activity documents and supplemented as needed from literature review and interviews. It helps to focus the narrative in understanding how the systems physically looks.

2. Case Study Methodology

- Data collection and analysis methods
- Facilitators and limitations to the approach

3. Case Study Findings: Evidence of Sustained Outcome

3.1 Area of Focus - Specific Context – Systems Mapping (1 page)

This map shows actors, relationships and other key factors that influenced what was (or was not) found. There may be one map, or multiple ones, depending the findings and perspectives.

3.2 Selected Outcome from (Activity Name)

- Was the USAID-intended outcome from XXXX year sustained or not sustained? (Question 1)
- What has contributed to or hindered sustaining the Outcome? (Question 3)
    - Which relationships and systems supported the USAID Outcome/ or detracted from the USAID Outcome? (Systems Question)
    - What system dynamics contributed to the sustained/not sustained outcome? (Systems Question)
- How is the outcome perceived and valued by those with significant stakes in the project? (Question 4)

3.3 What other outcomes resulted from the project (positive/negative) and were these outcomes sustained? (Question 2)

The boundaries of the evaluation when exploring other outcomes that resulted from the project are contained within the following areas. Expand on each of the following areas as applicable to the empirical data, with no more than 2 pages per area. (Embedded practices, interrelationships, ideas and ideologies, and resources).

Specify area here (2 Pages per area)

What has been embedded into the institutional practice/systems that is plausibly linked to the USAID Outcome were identified, if any? How are they contributing to what education or other development outcome?

- What has contributed to or hindered sustaining the Outcome? (Question 3)
    - Which relationships and systems supported the USAID Outcome/ or detracted from the USAID Outcome? (Systems Question)
    - What system dynamics contributed to the sustained/not sustained outcome? (Systems Question)
- How is the outcome perceived and valued by those with significant stakes in the project? (Question 4)

Using the multiple perspectives gathered, we tell the story about how and why. Who valued it, and who benefited, and who opposed it or negatively affected. What were the relationships –reflect on perspectives of implementers, helpers, detractors, beneficiaries, interested parties.

4. Case Study Conclusions

This section summarizes, (1) if the USAID outcome under study was sustained or not and why, and how this was perceived and valued by whom; (2) what else exists that is plausibly related to the USAID intervention and how this was perceived and valued by whom and (3) the usefulness and challenges of using a systems evaluation approach in an ex-post evaluation.

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