



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# Beneficiary Feedback and Engagement

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# Why do we engage local stakeholders?

“Achieving and sustaining any development outcome **depends on the contributions of multiple** and interconnected **actors**...Each set of interconnected actors whose collective actions produce a particular outcome is a **local system**.”  
~ USAID Local Systems Framework (2014)



## LOCAL SYSTEMS:

A FRAMEWORK FOR SUPPORTING  
SUSTAINED DEVELOPMENT

APRIL 2014

# USAID's 2021 Local Capacity Development Policy

- Local capacity development is the cornerstone of sustainable development, which depends on local actors designing and leading efforts to improve their communities
- Principle 3: Align capacity development with local priorities.



Raise your hand if you have read the Local Capacity Development Policy



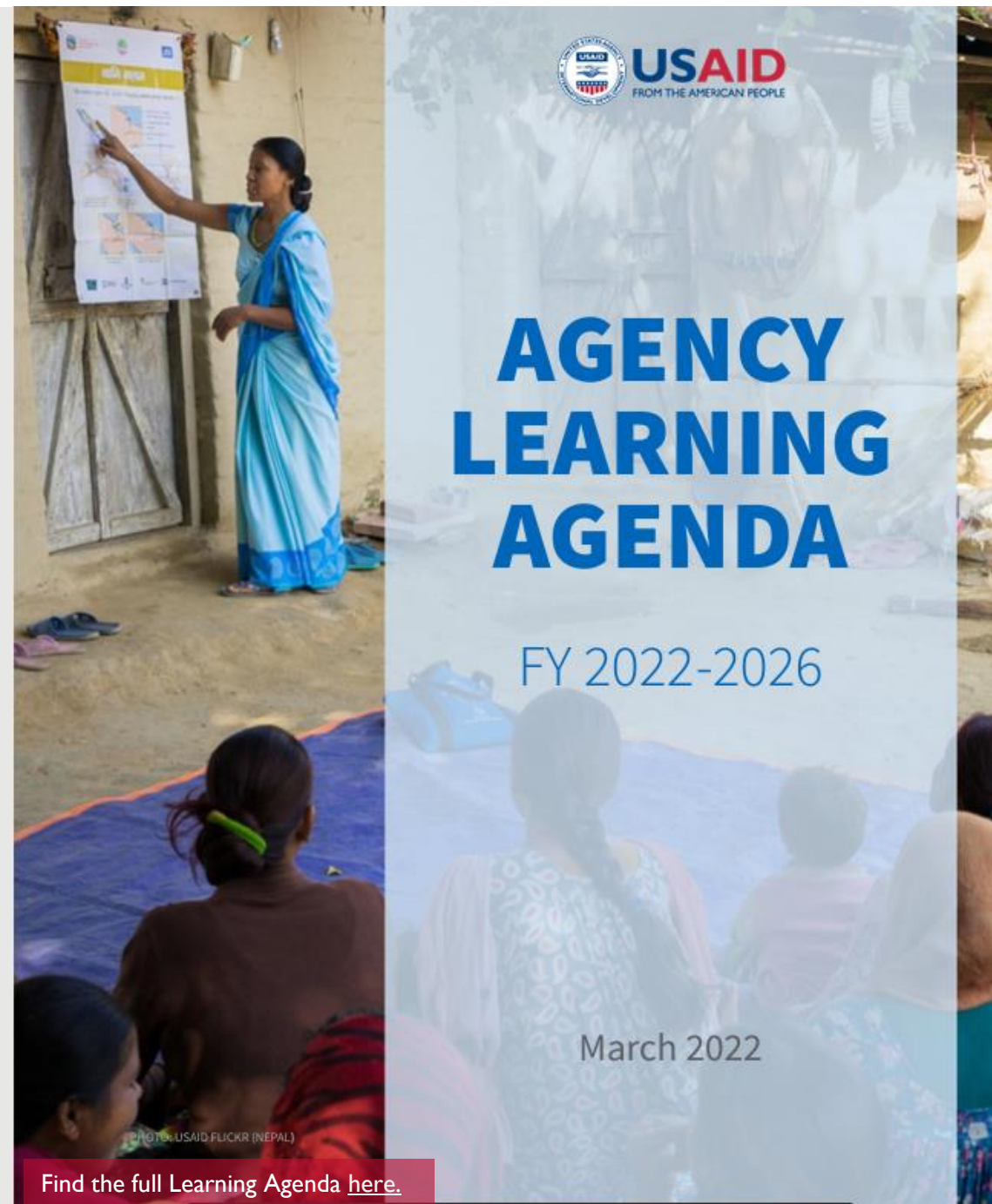
Find the full Policy [here](#).



# USAID's Learning Agenda



Raise your hand if you have read the recent Learning Agenda.



How can USAID more equitably engage **local knowledge, assets, and practices** and align programming with local priorities and metrics for success?

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

To inform these shifts, Question 8 focuses on how USAID can more equitably engage the knowledge, assets, and practices of local actors. This means investigating and documenting promising local practices that can be amplified through our work, the ways that USAID currently interacts with local actors and knowledge systems, the power dynamics inherent to these engagements, and opportunities for local actors to lead technical direction and agenda setting. This question also aims to explore how USAID might better share data and evidence with local actors to support their initiatives and programs.

USAID can catalyze and facilitate local leadership of development and humanitarian assistance in a variety of ways throughout the design, procurement, management, and measurement of assistance. Question 7 additionally aims to explore how local priorities and metrics for success are and can be incorporated across the program cycle.

# What is the Beneficiary Feedback Plan?



## Definition:

A section in the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan that describes an activity or award's approach for collecting and reporting on beneficiary feedback.



## Key Considerations:

- This section is required as appropriate
  - *IPs must provide a written justification if not included*
- Applicability may depend on type of award or activity
- Feasibility of collecting feedback should be considered

## What to Include?

- Procedures for **collecting** feedback from beneficiaries
- Procedures for **responding** to feedback from beneficiaries
- Procedures for **reporting** to USAID

# AMELP Template



## Location:

After the Monitoring Plan and before the Evaluation Plan

## Key Inclusions:

### ACTIVITY THEORY OF CHANGE

*Include a brief summary description of the activity theory of change.*

### LOGIC MODEL

*Add a logic model that graphically depicts the activity theory of change. Performance indicators and learning questions may be added to the logic model where relevant to indicate the connection between elements of the theory of change and MEL tasks.*

## 2. Monitoring Plan

*Describe the activity's monitoring approach, including monitoring processes and systems.<sup>1</sup>*

### PERFORMANCE MONITORING

*Describe the efforts to monitor activity performance.*

*A summary of the relevant performance indicators of the activity's outputs and outcomes, their baseline values (or plan for collecting baseline), and annual targets should be listed in the Annex.<sup>2</sup>*

### CONTEXT MONITORING

*Describe any efforts for monitoring the activity's context and emerging risks that could affect the achievement of the activity's results.*

## 3. Beneficiary Feedback Plan<sup>3</sup>

1. Determination on whether collecting beneficiary feedback is appropriate for the activity. If not, then a written explanation for why not
2. Describe procedures for collecting feedback from beneficiaries.
3. Describe procedures for responding to feedback from beneficiaries.
4. Describe procedures for reporting to USAID.

# Individual Exercise: (The key questions Q1)

- There is a handout at your table with:
  - The key questions you need to answer as part of your beneficiary feedback plan in your AMELP;
  - and a worksheet on the second page to help you think through these key questions.
- *If you have one already completed in your AMELP*, that's awesome!!!

What we'd like you to do today is use that AMELP as you're engaging in the training to see if you'd make any changes to the current plan. Are all beneficiaries captured? Are the questions developed are helpful to you? Please use the worksheets provided to make notes and capture any gaps
- *If you don't have one already complete*,

please start using the worksheet as we're going through the sections to think through how this applies to your activity – who are YOUR beneficiaries, what do you and the USAID need to know from them – and when and why, how would you collect information from them, and how will your IPs report this information to the mission – and WHEN so that you get it in the right time.



# What is the Accountability and Feedback Plan?



## Definition:

Accountability and Feedback Plans (AFPs) seek to improve the work of USAID and its partners by **integrating local voices**, including constituent (beneficiary) feedback, **into activity planning and implementation**. Focus more on reaching and consulting underserved and marginalized voices including, women, youth, with particular focus on girls, LGBTQI+, indigenous and persons with disabilities.

## What to Include?

- ADS 201.3.4.10.A. requires AMELPs to “[establish] effective procedures for collecting and responding to feedback from beneficiaries.”
- There are no requirements for AFPs only BFPs, and only guidance on what questions to ask of whom



## Key Considerations:

- Applicability depend on type of award or activity
  - This section is required for New Partners Initiative only
  - *However, it is viewed as good practice*
- Feasibility of collecting feedback should be considered

### • WHAT IS ACCOUNTABILITY?

**Accountability:** the obligation to explain, justify, and take responsibility for one's actions.

For USAID, this means being as accountable to people in the communities where we work as we are to the American taxpayer.

### • WHAT IS FEEDBACK?

**Feedback:** reactions to a product, a person's performance of a task, or anything else for which reactions can be used as a basis for improvement.

For USAID, feedback means a diversity of perspectives the Agency can incorporate into activity planning and implementation to elevate key voices and community priorities.

# What is the value of soliciting and incorporating diverse perspectives into activity implementation?



Explore perceptions of the **relevance** of interventions to constituents



Explore perceptions of **fair access** to USAID-funded interventions and assistance



Explore perceptions of the **quality** of interventions



Explore perceptions of the degree to which different groups **feel they are contributing to decisions**



Build **local leadership and community support** for the activity



Increase **trust and cooperation**



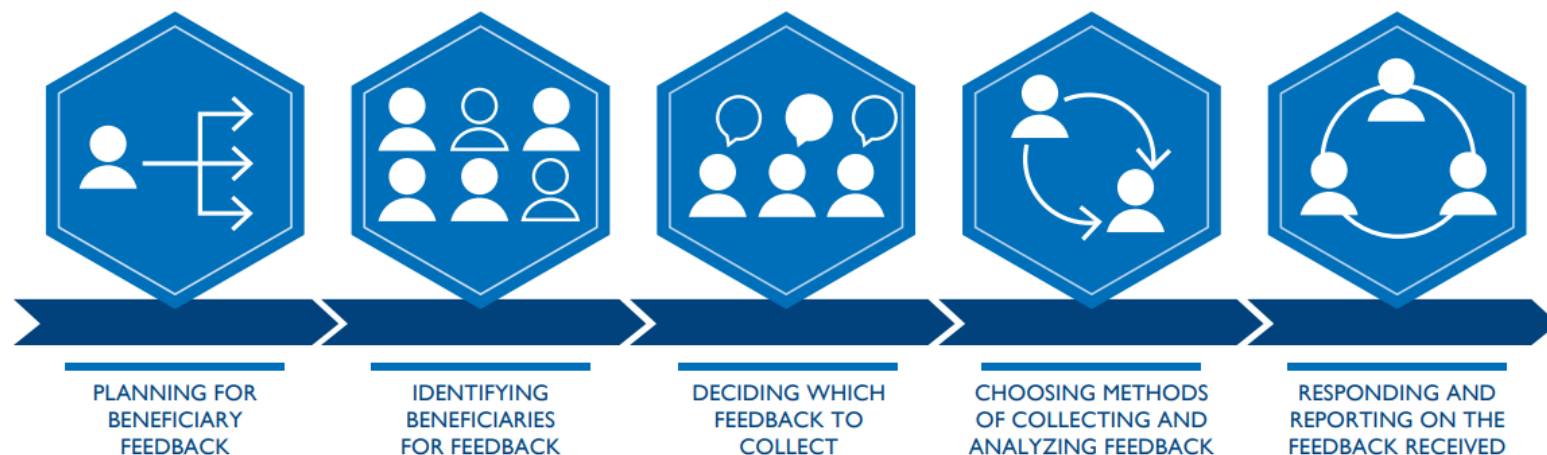
Identify opportunities to **adapt** activities



Advance **equity, inclusion, and accessibility**

# The Feedback Plan Journey

## COLLECTING FEEDBACK



## The Beneficiary Feedback Plan Process

## The Accountability and Feedback Plan Process





# How would you determine from which beneficiaries to solicit feedback?



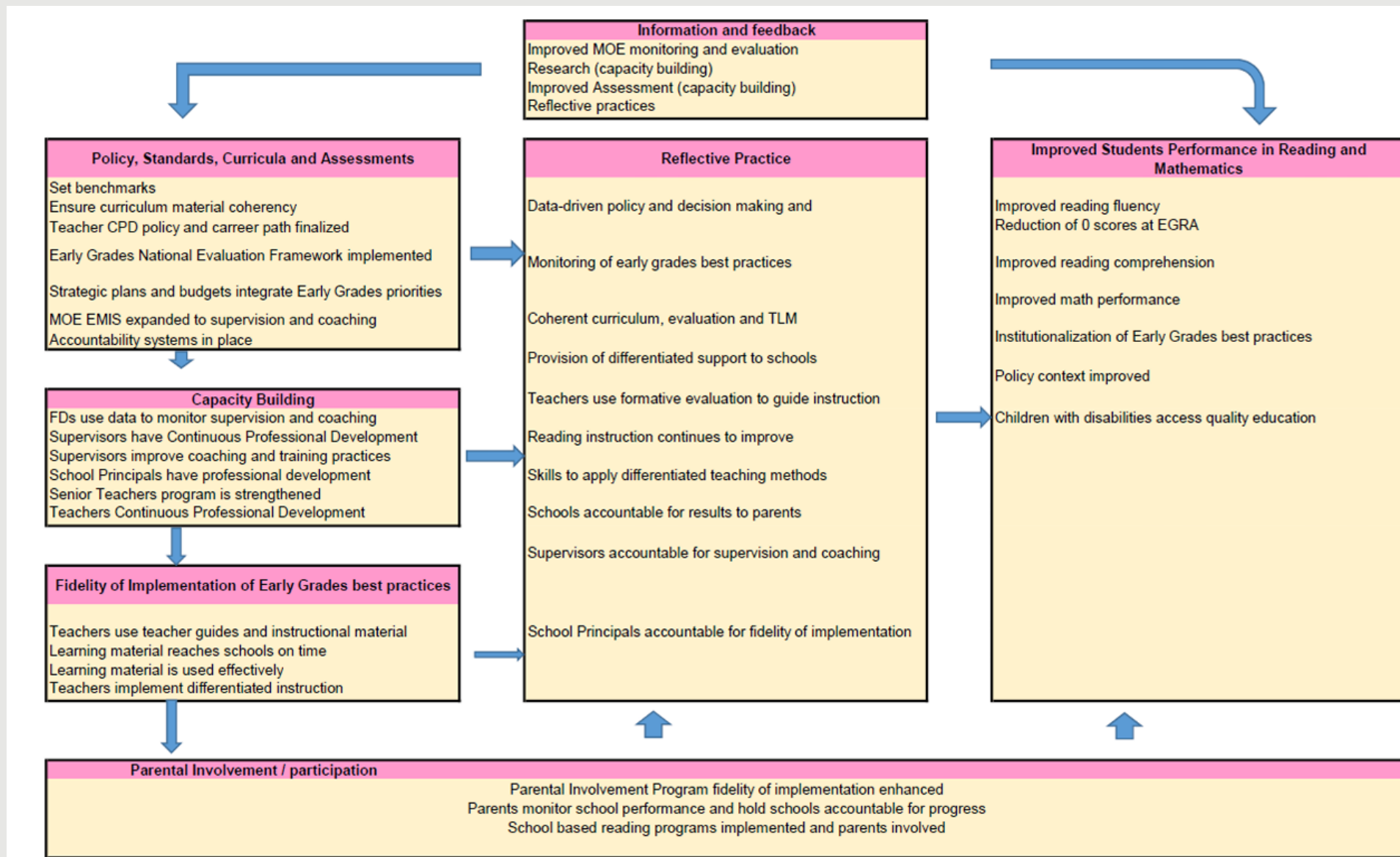
**Individual Activity:**  
For your own Activity, who  
are your key beneficiaries?  
How will you use this  
information?



# Example: LogFrame or Theory of Change

## Early Grade Reading and Mathematics Initiative (RAMP)

RTI International  
Jordan



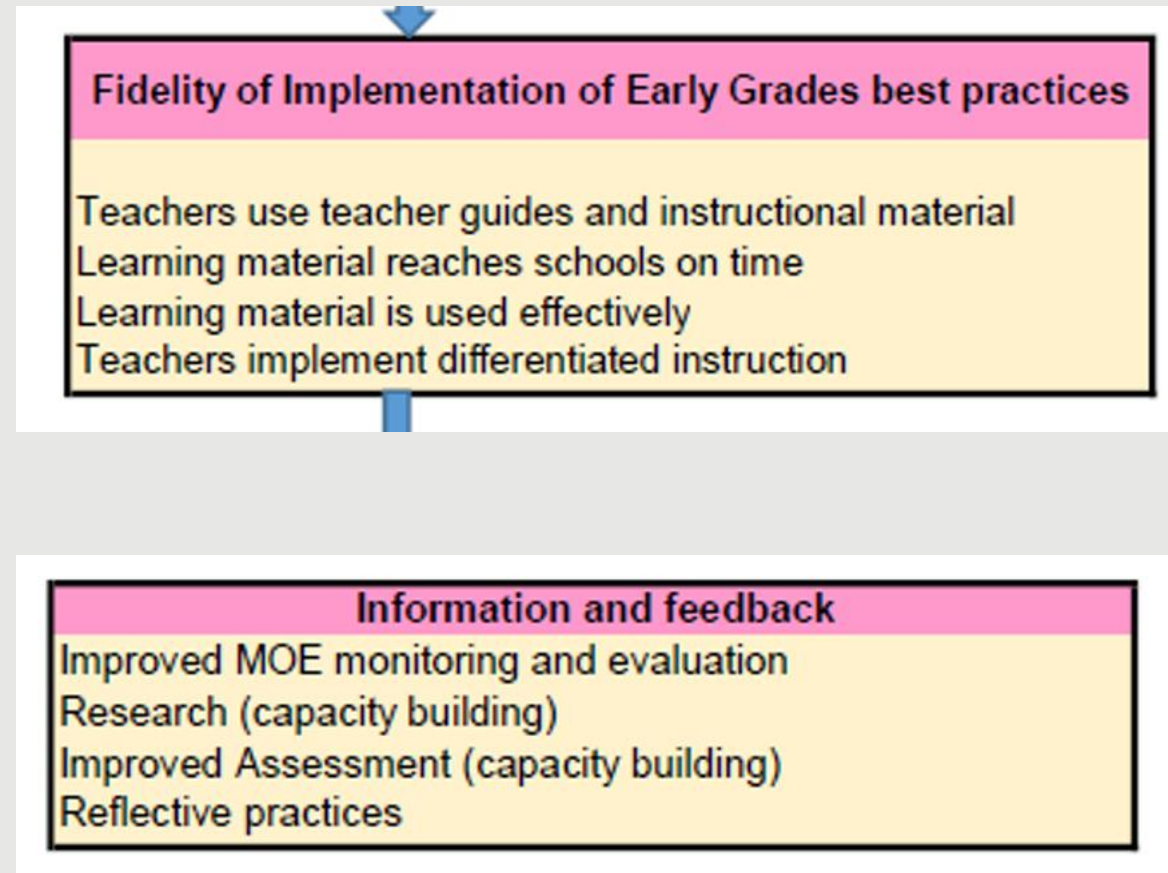
# LogFrame or Theory of Change

LogFrames and TOCs are great because

- Snapshot of what the Activity or Award intends to achieve
- Easy to surmise the intended stakeholders or beneficiaries from interventions

**Teachers:** Solicit feedback on the teacher guides.  
Understand how they are using it (if they are using it).  
What could be done to support the implementation of best practices from these guides?

**MOE:** Solicit feedback on what they use most from their M&E toolkit. How practical is it to collect indicator data?  
How can MEL better be built into their daily tasks?

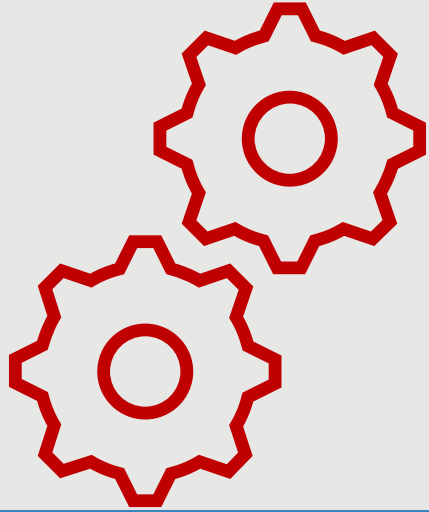


# Individual Exercise: (worksheet)

- In your Activity MEL Plan, look at the LogFrame or Theory of Change
- Determine from which beneficiaries to solicit feedback?
- Time: 5 minutes



# What will I do with the information?



## Individual Activity:

What do I need to know  
from my beneficiaries?

How will I use this  
information?

## How will this information be used?

- Modifications to existing interventions
- Equitable targeting of stakeholders
  - Think do different services need to be provided in order to ensure certain groups gain access.
- New Project Design or Activity Design
- CDCS MCST
- Developing New CDCS

This determines → **WHEN** you need to ask the questions, how you ask the questions, and what types of questions you ask



# What questions will I ask?



Individual Activity:  
What questions will I ask  
of my beneficiaries?  
Why do I need to ask  
them?



# How will I collect feedback?



## Feedback Approaches

Surveys

Suggestion  
Boards/Boxes

Interviews

Pause and  
Reflect Sessions

Direct  
Observations

Complaints  
Mechanism

Round Tables

Focus Group  
Discussions

Dot Voting

Online Tracking

### Individual Activity:

How will you collect feedback for your own MEL Plan? What methods make the most sense for each beneficiary?

# Key Considerations for Feedback Collection

1. Make sure your approach aligns with the type of feedback solicited.
2. Account for the respondent type (e.g., their time limitations, knowledge on the item your soliciting feedback)
3. Think about how much identifying information is needed.
4. For sensitive feedback, make sure beneficiaries know how you are going to store, analyze, and use the data.



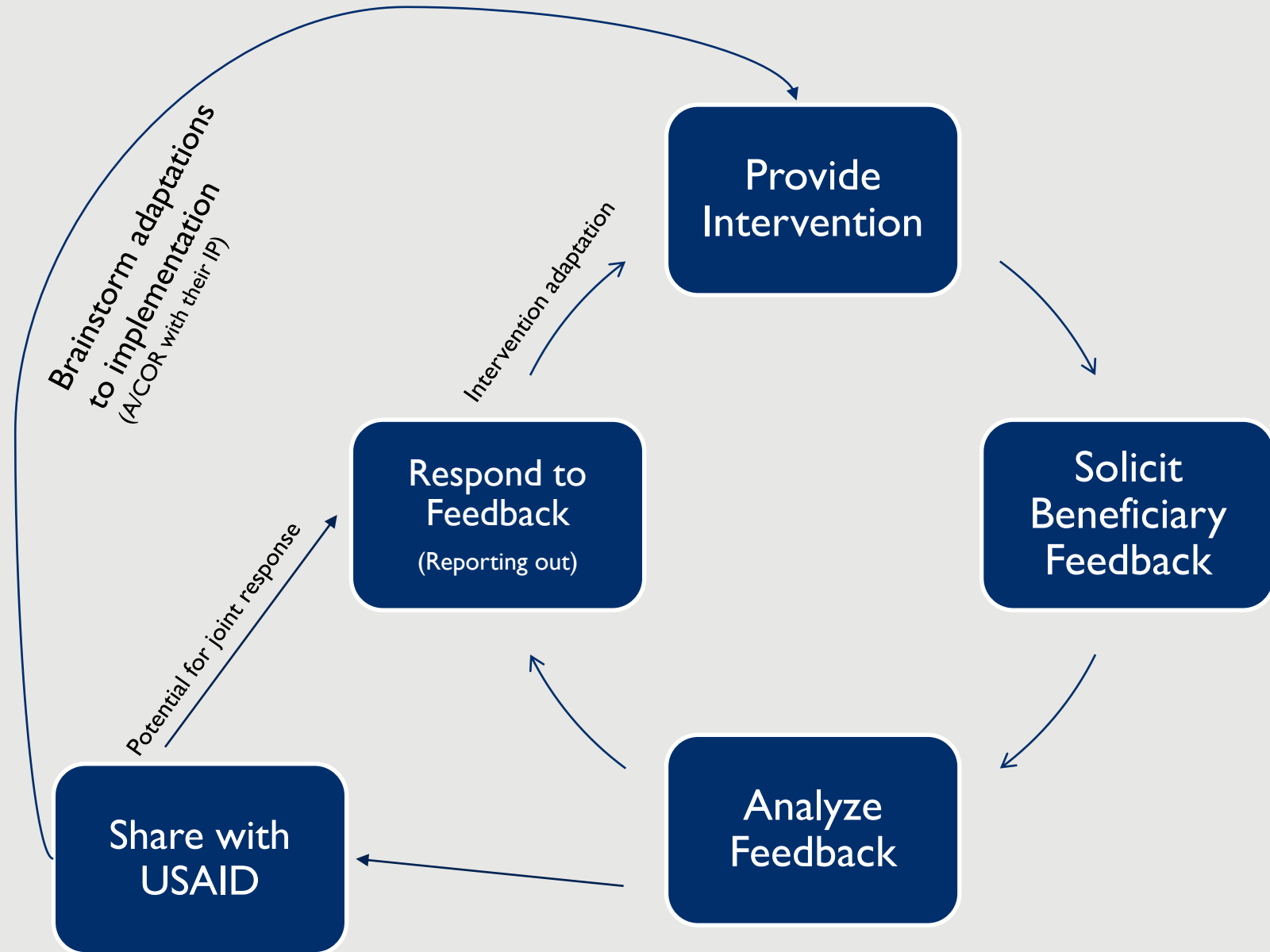
# Individual Exercise: (The key questions Q3)

- Describe procedures for collecting feedback from beneficiaries
- Time: 5 minutes





## Feedback & CLA



# Individual Exercise: (The key questions Q4,Q5)

- Describe procedures for responding to feedback from beneficiaries
- Describe procedures for reporting to USAID.
- Time: 5 minutes



# Examples

from the DEC

## 3. Beneficiary Feedback Plan

For SMRFS activities, USAID/RFS, USAID Missions, USAID implementing partners, in-country survey implementers, and other in-country survey stakeholders (eg. government ministries) will be considered beneficiaries. SMRFS will solicit feedback on SMRFS activities and performance through interviews with stakeholders in each country where a survey takes place, with a specific request that they provide input from a diverse group of individuals, including women and youth when possible.

Surveys for Monitoring in Resilience and Food Security (SMRFS)

IFC Incorporated  
Global

from the DEC

## Improving Private Sector Competitiveness

Deloitte Consulting  
Vietnam

### BENEFICIARY FEEDBACK PLAN

IPSC will leverage feedback from direct beneficiaries of the Activity as well as government counterparts, implementing partners, and other stakeholders to gauge how well the interventions are meeting the needs of the beneficiaries, and to inform adjustments to the approach or set of activities in response to beneficiary input. Beneficiary, GVN, and implementing partner feedback will be gathered during the following annual activities, undertaken by the MEL Manager:

Source of Feedback	Description	Frequency
<b>Informant Interviews</b>	IPSC will use informant interviews to better understand, contextualize, and act on changes in the needs of beneficiaries. These informant interviews will be conducted in advance of focus groups or surveys of beneficiaries in order to inform the topics and questions that should be covered by those tools. The approach may also be used to help interpret information gathered through other means.	As needed, after completion of a supporting package
<b>Focus Groups</b>	IPSC will engage beneficiaries through focus groups at key points of the Activity, included during the design of capacity building support for SGBs and prior to the annual SGB survey. The intent of the focus group is to gather information about beneficiary needs to integrate in project planning and learning, as outlined in IPSC's learning table above. It will also support the development of the annual SGB survey, to better tailor questions and gather insights from a wide range of beneficiaries.	As needed/ Annually
<b>Post-event feedback</b>	IPSC will ask the vendor/service provider to send out surveys to SGBs who participated in each supporting package. The intent of this post-event survey is to gather feedback from participants to adapt and adjust the package design, methods of delivery, quality of trainers, mentors, and consultants.	After completion of every supporting package
<b>SGB Survey</b>	The SGB survey will support gathering of data elements for reporting performance indicators, however, it will also enable IPSC to gather qualitative data to inform the learning priorities, especially Question 2.1 in the Learning Table.	Annually



# Example from the *CLA in Practice* Training

For USAID Jordan Implementing Partners

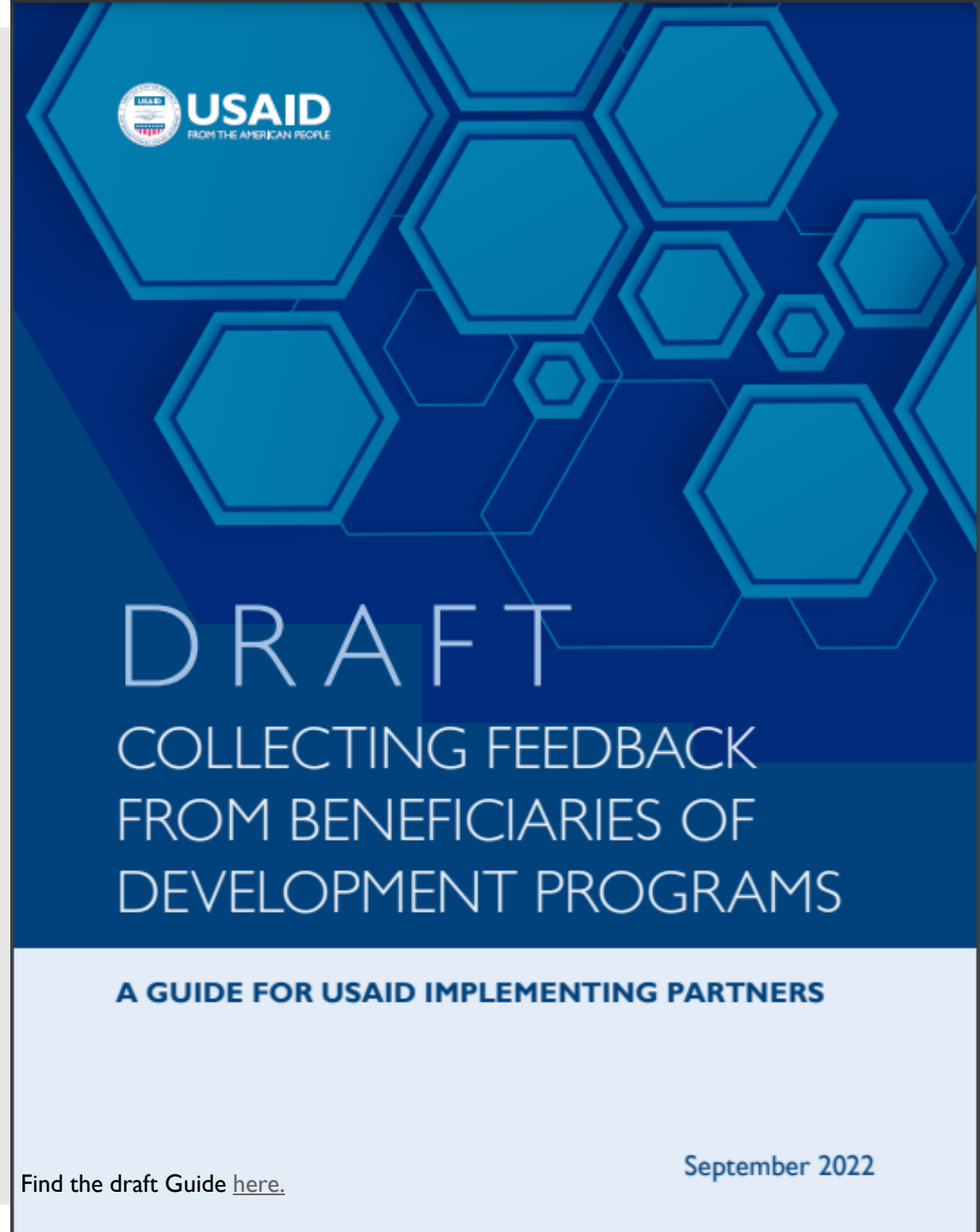
Beneficiary Name	Beneficiary Type and Means of Identification	Summary of Interventions with the Beneficiary	Methods and Frequency for Collecting Feedback	Analysis and Response to Feedback	Method and Frequency of Reporting to USAID
Capacity Building for Good (CBG) CSO	A local CSO, this is an intermediate beneficiary, we will be training this group to conduct additional trainings for the ultimate beneficiary.	Trainings, both on subject and facilitation skills development. Will also receive mentoring support on organizing trainings and reporting to USAID.	Participant feedback will be collected after each training using the training assessment form. The assessment will focus on the relevancy of training topics to the beneficiaries' needs.	Will post quarterly summaries on the Training Website of key feedback and how the Activity made revisions to training approaches.	Summaries of feedback and responses will be shared as part of QPR with USAID. If there is feedback that may have significant implications to implementation, this will be shared immediately with the client.
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Training Beneficiaries	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.
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# Draft Beneficiary Feedback Guide, 2022

- For Implementing Partners of USAID development Activities
  - Useful for humanitarian assistance, but may need to be tailored



Raise your hand if you have heard of the Draft Beneficiary Feedback Guide



## Real World Project Example:

### Learning From CRS' Beneficiary Feedback Mechanism in the DRC

- Toll-free beneficiary feedback hotline through which participants could share their inputs, concerns and complaints on project activities.
- 15,684 instances of feedback received in X years
- Feedback from participants has led directly to changes in project implementation, to increased engagement with local authorities, and to a change in the way CRS approaches its projects.
- Many challenges including the low participation of women in accessing the hotline, difficulties in processing the volume of calls received, and the additional time burden created for project staff.
- Through a series of focus group discussions held in 2017, CRS DRC's Accountability, Protection and Gender Focal Point engaged directly with project participants and staff in the field to gauge the use and impact of the hotline.

# Comments? Thoughts?



Photo from Pixabay geralt



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# Annexes



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# Why do we engage local stakeholders?

- “Achieving and sustaining any development outcome **depends on the contributions of multiple** and interconnected **actors**...Each set of interconnected actors whose collective actions produce a particular outcome is a **local system**.” ~ USAID Local Systems Framework (2014)



## LOCAL SYSTEMS:

A FRAMEWORK FOR SUPPORTING  
SUSTAINED DEVELOPMENT

APRIL 2014

# USAID's Guidance Note- Participatory Evaluation: Locally Led Approaches to Evaluation (2022)

- Locally-led approaches involves local stakeholders taking the lead in all aspects of the development process, including:
  - determining visions of success,
  - measuring progress,
  - learning and adapting, and
  - evaluating results.



Raise your hand if you have read the Guidance Note on Participatory Evaluation



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**GUIDANCE NOTE:  
PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION**  
*Locally Led Approaches to Evaluation*

PHOTO: JREX FOR USAID

Locally led development involves local stakeholders taking the lead in all aspects of the development process, including determining visions of success, measuring progress, learning and adapting, and evaluating results. The [USAID Evaluation Policy](#) highlights that by respectfully engaging partners, beneficiaries, and stakeholders, evaluations can promote local ownership while leveraging and building local evaluation capacity. One way to practice locally led development in monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) is through **participatory evaluation**: applied social research where evaluators partner with local stakeholders to shape and contribute to the research process.<sup>1</sup>

This document offers practical guidance to help USAID Missions plan, commission, and carry out evaluations in more participatory, locally led ways. All evaluations - be they performance or impact, quantitative or qualitative, developmental or formative evaluations - can be made more participatory. Participatory evaluation is about more than who is hired to lead the evaluation (though hiring a local evaluator or evaluation firm can be a strong starting point<sup>2</sup>). It instead focuses on *how* the evaluation is carried out, integrating local stakeholders and decision-making at any stage of the evaluation process, including:

- Planning an Evaluation
  - [Decision to Evaluate](#)
  - [Evaluation Purpose and Questions](#)
- Managing an Evaluation
  - [Data Collection](#)
  - [Data Analysis](#)
- Sharing, Using, and Learning from an Evaluation
  - [Evaluation Dissemination and Utilization](#)

**LOCALLY LED DEVELOPMENT**  
describes the extent to which local actors are empowered in decision-making throughout priority-setting, design, management, measurement, and other processes through which development assistance contributes toward improving local development systems and outcomes.

ABOVE: Mandala Washington Fellows participating in USAID-funded professional development opportunities filmed one another's most significant change stories as part of a participatory impact assessment.

USAID LOCAL, FAITH, AND TRANSFORMATIVE PARTNERSHIPS HUB | 1