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THE DEPA-MERL ACCULTURATION WORKSHOP IN JANUARY 2017

A STUDY OF THE FAMILY CARE FIRST IN CAMBODIA DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION

How does developmental evaluation work in the USAID context, what factors help and hinder its success, and what is its value to stakeholders?

September 2018

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

DEPA-MERL   Developmental Evaluation Pilot Activity - Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Learning
FCF   Family Care First in Cambodia
HQ   Headquarters
MERLIN   Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Learning Innovations
Search   Search for Common Ground
USAID   United States Agency for International Development
WDI   The William Davidson Institute at the University of Michigan

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Developmental Evaluation Pilot Activity (DEPA-MERL) under the US Global Development Lab's Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning innovations (MERLIN) program at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is testing the effectiveness of developmental evaluation in the USAID context. Developmental evaluation was created to evaluate innovative programs that operate in complex environments and are thus expected to adapt over time. From November 2016 to March 2018, DEPA-MERL conducted a developmental evaluation with Family Care First (FCF) in Cambodia, in service of FCF's goal of increasing the number of children living in safe, nurturing family-based care. The DEPA-MERL consortium consists of: Search for Common Ground (Search), which implemented the developmental evaluation with FCF, including hiring, managing and supporting the Developmental Evaluator; Social Impact, which served as the prime awardee on the consortium and provided support to Search on the FCF developmental evaluation; and the William Davidson Institute at the University of Michigan (WDI), which studied the effectiveness of this approach in FCF.

EVALUATION BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

This report focuses on better understanding the implementation of the developmental evaluation approach in USAID programming. Readers of this report include USAID stakeholders, organizations funding or implementing developmental evaluation, and Developmental Evaluators themselves. Using the information collected, the DEPA-MERL consortium aims to build on existing literature and offer readers targeted data and guidance to improve the effectiveness of developmental evaluation. Additionally, the findings from this study will be compared to findings from other developmental evaluation pilots conducted by DEPA-MERL. This across-case comparative report is expected to be released in September 2019.

METHODOLODY AND LIMITATIONS

During all 15 months of the FCF developmental evaluation, WDI (henceforth called the team) collected data to answer the following three research questions:

- **Research Question 1:** How is developmental evaluation able to capture, promote, and enable the utilization of emergent learnings[1] in support of ongoing development of programming, in a complex system, in the USAID context? (Please note: emergent learnings are defined as new programmatic or environmental developments, including new information gained, changes in existing stakeholder relationships etc.)
- **Research Question 2:** What are the barriers and enablers to implementation of developmental evaluation in the USAID context?
- **Research Question 3:** What do key informants consider to be the value (added or lost) of conducting a developmental evaluation compared to a traditional evaluation approach in this instance?

The team used a mixed-methods approach including outcome harvesting to answer these questions. The team conducted a document review, semi-structured interviews with the Developmental Evaluator and key FCF stakeholders, and an electronic survey administered to key FCF stakeholders. Limitations of the study were respondent selection bias, funding bias, resource constraints (time and money), and lack of a counterfactual.

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[1] Emergent learnings are defined as new programmatic or environmental developments, including new information gained, changes in existing stakeholder relationships etc. Capturing emergent learnings in developmental evaluation is important because it can affect program implementation and success. For example, a key component of the Developmental Evaluator's role is to capture ideas and interactions which can then be discussed with program staff to inform options for future development of the program.

FINDINGS

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Research Question 1: How is developmental evaluation able to capture, promote, and enable the utilization of emergent learnings in support of ongoing development of programming, in a complex system, in the USAID context?

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A systematic review of the 17 outcomes harvested reveals that the developmental evaluation used a variety of different approaches to *capture, promote,* and *enable the utilization* of emergent learnings. The Developmental Evaluator documented emails, meetings, and one-on-one conversations that he had with stakeholders to capture emergent learnings. He conducted key informant interviews and facilitated workshops to gather and promote emergent learnings and data with all relevant stakeholders. He attended meetings and shared recommendations both formally and informally to enable the utilization of emergent learnings for program adaptations with the goal of increased impact. The team presents the following key takeaways:

1. **The developmental evaluation captured (n=3), promoted (n=3), and enabled the utilization (n=11) of emergent learnings across three types of changes** (engagement and relationships, institutional and policy, and knowledge and capability) **and four levels of change** (program-level, sector-level, government-level and USAID-level).

2. **Nearly one out of every five outcomes of the developmental evaluation (24%) had both positive and negative impact** in the short-term on the FCF program, while only two of 17 harvested outcomes of the developmental evaluation (12%) resulted in short-term negative impact on the FCF program.

3. **The developmental evaluation contributed to changes of all sizes:** small (18%), medium (65%) and large (18%) in the short-term.

4. Even when issues are known amongst stakeholders, the developmental evaluation can formally capture these issues and develop recommendations to address them. In FCF, **the Developmental Evaluator served in a valuable role because he was a third-party, independent voice** and raised challenges with leadership.

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Research Question 2: What are the barriers and enablers to implementation of developmental evaluation in the USAID context?

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Results of the analysis of barriers and enablers using data collected from monthly interviews with the Developmental Evaluator and from the substantiation interviews with key FCF stakeholders, show that:

1. *Leadership*, *stakeholder relationships*, and *integration of Developmental Evaluator* were the top barriers to implementing developmental evaluation in FCF. *Skills of the Developmental Evaluator*, *data collection and sharing,* and *leadership* were the top enablers to implementing the approach in FCF. However, **the Developmental Evaluator and FCF stakeholders did not always agree on which factors influenced the evaluation most frequently.**

2. **Factors that influenced the implementation of the developmental evaluation served as both barriers and enablers.** For example, in FCF, the *skills of the Developmental Evaluator* enabled the Developmental Evaluator to document, collect, and synthesize data throughout the evaluation. However, some of the methods the Developmental Evaluator used to communicate information to stakeholders were not well received and were considered a barrier to implementation.

3. **The prevalence of some key barriers and enablers were not dependent on time.** That is, they were important from beginning to end of the developmental evaluation. For example, different aspects of *developmental evaluation readiness* and *integration of the Developmental Evaluator* were coded just as frequently in the beginning, middle, and end of the developmental evaluation.

4. ***Developmental evaluation readiness*** and ***integration of the Developmental Evaluator*** **overlapped the most with** ***USAID dynamics***. For future developmental evaluation, this signifies that that USAID plays a role in how ready the Mission and/or Bureau will be to partake in a developmental evaluation and how successfully the Developmental Evaluator will be integrated into the program team.

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Research Question 3: What do key informants consider to be the value (added or lost) of conducting a developmental evaluation compared to a traditional evaluation approach in this instance?

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Based on the analysis of the *value of developmental evaluation survey* completed by 14 FCF stakeholders (53.85% response rate), including three USAID staff, WDI found:

1. Respondents said **the developmental evaluation was valuable overall**: They found the FCF developmental evaluation *better* than traditional evaluation on six of the eight sub-items on which respondents were asked to compare the two approaches.

2. Respondents reported that **interactions with the Developmental Evaluator were mostly positive and that he provided value to the FCF program.** A majority of respondents reported receiving useful information and feeling understood by the Developmental Evaluator.

3. Feedback was not all positive: **Five out of 14 respondents (36%) reported the Developmental Evaluator only addressed the challenges they faced** *about half the time* **or less**.

4. Two main areas identified **as value lost through the use of developmental evaluation were the cost-effectiveness and time savings of the approach**. For cost-effectiveness, three out of 14 respondents (21%) reported the developmental evaluation was *somewhat worse* or *much worse* than traditional evaluation in FCF. An equal number said that the FCF developmental evaluation was *much worse* than traditional evaluation in terms of time savings.

5. Results showed that the average composite score of respondents from **implementing partners** for all sub-items related to interactions with the Developmental Evaluator and for comparing the FCF developmental evaluation to traditional evaluation in this pilot **was higher than the average of USAID respondents.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the combined findings of the three research questions outlined above, the team identified seven key recommendations. These recommendations are organized into themes which follow the order in which one would execute a developmental evaluation, from deciding whether to select developmental evaluation as the evaluative approach and launching a developmental evaluation, to utilizing developmental evaluation data for decision-making.

Theme	Recommendations
Selecting developmental evaluation as the evaluative approach	1. The funder(s) should confirm that a learning culture exists within the organization before selecting the developmental evaluation approach
Launching a developmental evaluation	2. The funder(s) and the Developmental Evaluator should identify and work with a diverse set of developmental evaluation champions from the start 3. The Developmental Evaluator should develop familiarity with stakeholders to design and implement activities from the start
Implementing a developmental evaluation	The Developmental Evaluator should… 4. Include technical evidence and use interpersonal skills when sharing negative findings 5. Maintain objectivity and impartiality to stakeholders of the developmental evaluation The funder(s) should… 6. Find strategies for promoting the objectivity of the evaluation
Utilizing developmental evaluation data for decision-making	7. The Developmental Evaluator should provide program decision-makers with tools to make well-informed decisions

INTRODUCTION

The Developmental Evaluation Pilot Activity (DEPA-MERL) consortium conducted a developmental evaluation with Family Care First in Cambodia (FCF) from November 2016 to March 2018. FCF aims to increase the number of children living in safe, nurturing family-based care. The DEPA-MERL consortium, funded by USAID's MERLIN[2] program, consists of: Search for Common Ground (Search), which implemented the developmental evaluation with FCF[3], including hiring, managing and supporting the Developmental Evaluator; Social Impact, which served as the prime awardee on the consortium and provided support to Search on the FCF developmental evaluation; and the William Davidson Institute at the University of Michigan (WDI), which studied the effectiveness of this approach in FCF.

Figure 1: Developmental evaluation differs from traditional evaluation because it supports the continuous adaptation of programs whereas for the purposes of this study, traditional evaluation is typically formative or summative in nature

TRADITIONAL EVALUATION	DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION
Render definitive judgments of success or failure.	Provide feedback, generate learnings, support changes in direction.
Measure success against predetermined goals.	Develop new measures and monitoring mechanisms as goals emerge and evolve.
Position the evaluator outside to assure independence and objectivity.	Position evaluation as internal, team function integrated into action and ongoing interpretive processes.
Design the evaluation based on linear cause-and-effect logic models.	Design the evaluation to capture system dynamics, interdependencies, models and emergent interconnections.
Aim to produce generalizable findings across time and space.	Aim to produce context-specific understandings that inform ongoing innovation.
Accountability focused on and directed to external authorities, stakeholders and funders.	Accountability centered on the innovators' deep sense of fundamental values and commitment.
Accountability to control and locate responsibility.	Learning to respond to lack of control and stay in touch with what's unfolding and thereby respond strategically.
Evaluator determines the design based on the evaluator's perspective about what is important. The evaluator controls the evaluation.	Evaluator collaborates with those engaged in the change effort to design an evaluation process that matches philosophically with an organization's principles and objectives.
Evaluation results in opinion of success or failure, which creates anxiety in those evaluated.	Evaluation supports ongoing learning.

Developmental evaluation supports the continuous adaptation of programs by providing evaluative insight and timely feedback to inform ongoing adaptation in complex, dynamic situations. This is done by embedding an evaluator into the program for the duration of the evaluation.

The Developmental Evaluator, in close collaboration with other stakeholders, uses a variety of monitoring and evaluation methods and tools to collect and share data. The Developmental Evaluator enables real-time, evidence-based reflection and decision-making consistent with USAID' Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting[4] approach. See Figure 1 for differences between traditional and developmental evaluation.[5]

WDI's role in the DEPA-MERL consortium is to facilitate learning on the implementation of the developmental evaluation approach in USAID programming and context. To accomplish this objective, WDI studied the FCF developmental evaluation during all 15 months of the evaluation implementation. Through the data collected, the DEPA-MERL consortium aims to build on existing literature focused on developmental evaluation in practice.[i] Readers of this report including USAID stakeholders, other organizations implementing developmental evaluation, and Developmental Evaluators themselves, can use the data and recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the approach. Additionally, the findings

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from this study will be compared to findings from other developmental evaluation pilots conducted by DEPA-MERL for a cross-case comparison report, forthcoming in September 2019.

METHODOLOGY

WDI (henceforth called the team) used a mixed-methods approach to understand the effectiveness of the developmental evaluation approach, how it can be improved in practice, and what value it provides for its stakeholders within the USAID context.[ii] Table 1 lists the three research questions developed by the DEPA-MERL consortium for this study and the associated data collection methods used to answer each question. In total, the team conducted over 46 hours of interviews and analyzed 192 pages of qualitative data, including 96 pages of monthly reflection interview data, 91 pages of substantiation interview data, and approximately five pages of survey data. To DEPA-MERL's knowledge, research of this kind – a systematic evaluation of developmental evaluation – has only been conducted in a handful of other instances.[iii,iv,v]

Table 1: DEPA-MERL assessed the FCF developmental evaluation based on three research questions and a mixed-methods approach

Research question	Methods	Data sources
1: How is developmental evaluation able to capture, promote, and enable the utilization of emergent learnings in support of ongoing development of programming, in a complex system, in the USAID context?	Outcome harvesting (qualitative)	• Developmental Evaluator event log • Monthly reflection interviews with the Developmental Evaluator (n=14) with relevant program document review, as required • Stakeholder substantiation interviews at endline (n=8)
2: What are the barriers and enablers to implementation of developmental evaluation in the USAID context?	Semi-structured interviews (qualitative)	• Monthly reflections with the Developmental Evaluator (n=14) • Stakeholder substantiation interviews at endline (n=8)
3: What do key informants consider to be the value (added or lost) of conducting a developmental evaluation compared to a traditional evaluation approach in this instance?	Survey (quantitative and qualitative questions)	• *Value of developmental evaluation* survey with stakeholders at endline (n=14)

METHODS AND DATA TREATMENT FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 1

The team used the outcome harvesting approach to answer Research Question 1: *How is developmental evaluation able to capture, promote, and enable the utilization of emergent learnings in support of ongoing development of programming, in a complex system, in the USAID context?* Please note: emergent learnings are defined as new programmatic or environmental developments, including new information gained, changes in existing stakeholder relationships etc. In this method, researchers "collect (harvest) evidence of what has changed (outcomes) [in the program] and then, working backwards, determine whether and how an intervention has contributed to these changes"[vi]. The team selected this method because of its usefulness in understanding how individual outcomes contribute to system-wide changes, particularly for complex programming with unclear cause and effect.[vii] A developmental evaluation outcome is any change in behavior, relationship, action, policy, and/or practice of stakeholders that the developmental evaluation contributed to, either directly or indirectly. Contributions of the developmental evaluation include the Developmental Evaluator providing documentation, collecting data, developing recommendations, and/or promoting ideas and best practices. In this study, the team expanded the definition of what constitutes as an outcome to also include products and deliverables produced by developmental evaluation, to answer the research question. A detailed write-up of the methodology can be found in the Annex. Sources used to gather data were:

• **Developmental Evaluator event log:** The Developmental Evaluator and Search captured priority emergent learnings related to the developmental evaluation using an event log, updated monthly (usually 2-3 days before the monthly reflection interview).

- **Monthly reflection interviews**: The team harvested 17 outcomes through 14 monthly reflection interviews[6] with the Developmental Evaluator.[7] The Developmental Evaluator provided evidence in the form of emails and documents, when possible, to support the data he provided. WDI gathered the following information in each monthly interview: details on the high-priority emergent learnings (these were a sub-set of the priority emergent learnings captured in the event log), any resulting changes (or lack thereof) to the program from these emergent learnings, the significance of these emergent learnings on the program, and the relevant actions of the Developmental Evaluator as related to these emergent learnings.
- **Substantiation interviews:** The team conducted eight substantiation interviews with key FCF stakeholders in April 2018 after the conclusion of the FCF developmental evaluation. In each interview, the team discussed harvested outcomes' descriptions, significance to the program, and the Developmental Evaluator's role in the outcomes with the interviewee. The team also asked interviewees to consider alternate reasons why changes in the program could have taken place (i.e., was the developmental evaluation the sole contributor to these outcomes or could they have been caused by other factors?)

METHODS AND DATA TREATMENT FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 2

Research Question 2 reads: *What are the barriers and enablers to implementation of developmental evaluation in the USAID context?* During the monthly reflection interview with the Developmental Evaluator and in the substantiation interviews with key FCF stakeholders, the team asked open-ended questions to learn of barriers and enablers to the implementation of the developmental evaluation. These included factors that the interviewees experienced or faced, were particular to the program and/or sector, and/or those that existed due to the local context. WDI conducted line-by-line coding[8] for barriers and enablers using summaries from these interviews. The team ensured an inter-coder reliability of 80-90 percent on all codes or factors and discussed any coding-related discrepancies during internal weekly meetings. The team identified 13 factors that could influence the implementation of developmental evaluation through a literature review conducted before the launch of the developmental evaluation with FCF (deductive approach); WDI also identified additional factors by carefully reviewing the coded data such that new factors were informed by the data itself (inductive approach).

METHODS AND DATA TREATMENT FOR RESEARCH QUESTION 3

The team distributed an anonymous online survey to answer Research Question 3: *What do key informants consider to be the value (added or lost) of conducting a developmental evaluation compared to a traditional evaluation approach in this instance?* The survey was administered through Qualtrics, a web-based survey software. The data was analyzed in Qualtrics and Excel. The team distributed the *value of developmental evaluation survey* to 26 key FCF stakeholders of which 14 responded (53.85 percent response rate). The Developmental Evaluator identified stakeholders to receive the survey based on their role in the FCF pilot, with the objective of selecting persons from different affiliations and levels of involvement with the developmental evaluation[9]. The full survey is available in the Annex.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The team faced challenges in collecting data during the FCF developmental evaluation. These limitations are related to:
- **Resources (time and funding)** – Due to the time-intensive nature of interviews (both with the Developmental Evaluator and the substantiators), it was not feasible to interview all individuals who participated in the developmental evaluation. Additionally, the length and location of the developmental evaluation coupled with available funding required remote data collection
- **Selection bias** – The sampling method for selecting FCF stakeholders to participate in substantiation interviews (Research Question 1) and respond to the *value of developmental evaluation survey* (Research Question 3) was likely subject to selection bias. WDI did not conduct random sampling of all FCF members because stakeholders needed to be knowledgeable of specific outcomes from the developmental evaluation. WDI worked with the Developmental Evaluator to select interviewees and survey respondents. To hear all perspectives, the team sought to interview and survey individuals who had both positive and negative perceptions of the developmental

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[6] The duration of each interview was between 1.5-2 hours and each was conducted via phone. These calls were recorded with the permission of the Developmental Evaluator.

[7] The Developmental Evaluator's reflection data from months 6 and 7 of the evaluation were collected by the team in one combined interview.

[8] Coding is an analytical process in which data, in qualitative form (such as interview transcripts) are categorized to facilitate analysis. See Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., and Saldaña, J. (2014).

[9] The DEPA-MERL consortium validated this list of FCF stakeholders. FCF key stakeholders did not review this list

evaluation to better understand their concerns. In addition, the Developmental Evaluator was not present in any substantiation interviews and the team encouraged interviewees to speak candidly.

- **Funding bias** – USAID was the sole funder of the FCF developmental evaluation. Hence, any responses related to the cost-effectiveness of the developmental evaluation may have been biased since information on FCF expenditures was not available to all stakeholders at the start or end of the evaluation.
- **Lack of a counterfactual** – There was no counterfactual available in this study. To overcome some of the challenges associated with not having a counterfactual, the team collected data while the evaluation was ongoing (to reduce recall bias), triangulated data through verification from two sources when possible i.e., interviews with key stakeholders and document reviews, and asked about other contributing factors (besides the evaluation) that influenced the outcomes harvested.

PILOT FINDINGS

The findings shared in this report are organized by the research questions. Information related to each question is structured into two over-arching sections: 1) data findings and 2) key takeaways. For each research question, the team first presents a comprehensive set of findings based on all relevant data collected. These findings are followed by a short list of key takeaways and associated insights.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: DATA FINDINGS

> **Research Question 1: How is developmental evaluation able to capture, promote, and enable the utilization of emergent learnings in support of ongoing development of programming, in a complex system, in the USAID context?**

The team harvested 17 outcomes using the outcome harvesting approach. As discussed earlier, the team expanded the definition of outcome to also include products and deliverables produced by developmental evaluation. For example, the DEPA-MERL Partners Report and the DEPA-MERL bright spot case studies are considered 'outcomes' of the developmental evaluation.

Of 17 outcomes harvested during the developmental evaluation, the team selected 11 outcomes for substantiation based on two primary justifications: 1) ensure that substantiated outcomes included those outcomes where the developmental evaluation captured, promoted (shared with stakeholders) or enabled the utilization of key emergent learnings within FCF; and 2) ensure that by verifying this subset of outcomes, the remaining harvested outcomes (e.g., those that were not being substantiated) would automatically be validated or indirectly substantiated due to the inter-connectedness of the outcomes within a narrative.

The team reviewed the transcripts from the substantiation interviews to determine the substantiators' level of agreement with each presented outcome description and the description of the contribution of the developmental evaluation to the outcome. There are three levels of substantiation: *fully, partially,* and *disagree*. Of 11 outcomes, six were *fully* substantiated and five were *partially* substantiated. A partial substantiation meant that the interviewee did not *fully* agree nor *disagree* with the outcome description and/or the contributing role of the Developmental Evaluator. In these cases, the substantiators provided additional details, clarifications, or recommendations for alternate wording. For the outcomes that were *partially* substantiated, the team edited the descriptions to align with what substantiators had shared. For example, the team updated an outcome to more clearly state that the developmental evaluation was a contributor to, and not the only cause of, the outcome. In another update, the team edited that the Developmental Evaluator was not the only stakeholder who identified an issue within FCF. Rather, the Developmental Evaluator documented the known issue. Comments on substantiators' partial agreements can be found in the Annex.

Importantly, none of the substantiators *disagreed* with the description of the outcome or with the Developmental Evaluator's contribution to the outcome. Furthermore, WDI incorporated new data captured during the substantiation interviews into the outcome descriptions, including its significance to the program. Search reviewed and re-verified each updated outcome for accuracy. More details related to the outcomes can be found in the Annex, including detailed

outcome descriptions, a table showing substantiators' level of agreement with each outcome substantiated, the substantiation protocol, and the documents shared with substantiators prior to the substantiation interview.

After substantiation and updating the outcomes that were partially substantiated, each outcome of the developmental evaluation was classified into five categories of analysis:

- **Role of the developmental evaluation**. Did the developmental evaluation capture, promote, or enable the utilization of the emergent learning in the particular outcome?
- **Type of change.** Did the particular outcome reflect changes primarily related to the knowledge and capabilities of stakeholders? Their engagement and relationships? Or, did more formal institutional and policy changes occur?
- **Orientation of change.** Did the particular outcome have positive, negative, or both positive and negative effects in the short-term on the FCF program?
- **Level of change.** Which level of the system did the particular outcome affect in the short-term: the program level (e.g., FCF- or partner-level changes), the sector level (e.g., child protection sector), the government level (e.g., Cambodian government), or the funder (e.g., USAID)?
- **Size of change.** Was the size of the change associated with the particular outcome small (e.g., affected 1-2 organizations), medium (e.g., affected 2-3 organizations), or large (e.g., affected more than three organizations), in the short-term in the FCF program?

WDI and Search also organized the harvested outcomes into three key themes:

- **Learning, collaboration, and decision-making.** Seven harvested outcomes were related to FCF's efforts to promote collaboration and address challenges in sharing lessons learned. These outcomes articulated issues and opportunities related to decision-making between organizations involved in the FCF initiative.
- **Leadership and governance.** Nine harvested outcomes were related to the FCF's leadership and governance structures, paying close attention to leadership roles within the FCF initiative.
- **Government.** One harvested outcome was related to the FCF initiative's relationship with the Cambodian government.

Table 2 lists all of FCF's harvested outcomes, organized by theme, with their associated classifications within each category of analysis.

Table 2: Seventeen outcomes were harvested during the FCF developmental evaluation and analyzed across five categories

Outcome harvested during the developmental evaluation	Theme * (LCD, LG, GOVT)	Level of substantiation (Fully, Partially, Disagree, N/A- not substantiated)	Capture, promote, or enable the utilization of emergent learning?	Type of change** (ENGAGE, INST, KNOW)	Orientation of change on the program in the short-term (positive, negative, both)	Level of change (Program-, Sector-, Government-, USAID-level)	Size of change on program in short-term (small, medium, large)
1. The developmental evaluation identified challenges and opportunities to further engage the Khmer members of FCF and provided recommendations to support their long-term involvement for the sustainability of the initiative. These recommendations supported the changes made by the Integrating Partner*** to engage Khmer members with the initiative.	LCD	N/A	Utilize	ENGAGE	Positive	Sector	Medium
2. The developmental evaluation identified that FCF members desired more knowledge sharing platforms and developed recommendations to address this need. Based on this, the Integrating Partner restructured FCF's Thematic Sub-Group meetings and established Communities of Practice to emphasize knowledge sharing activities.	LCD	Fully	Utilize	INST	Positive	Program	Medium
3. The developmental evaluation identified insufficient use of verifiable data and contextual evidence for decision-making and developed recommendations to address this issue. This encouraged the Integrating Partner to hire a Knowledge Sharing Specialist.	LCD	Fully	Utilize	ENGAGE	Positive	Program	Medium
4. Based on the finding that partners' support for FCF was negatively impacted by leadership turnover, the developmental evaluation recommended better integration of Khmer leaders within FCF (e.g., using the local language in meetings). This supported the Integrating Partner's move to hire additional local staff to meet program needs and decentralize leadership.	LCD	Fully	Utilize	INST	Both	Sector	Medium
5. The developmental evaluation captured challenges in collaboration and relationship management among the initiative's member organizations. This encouraged the Integrating Partner, USAID, and other relevant FCF implementing organizations to propose having a facilitated meeting to discuss partner dynamics and concerns, including one member organization's decision to pull out of a joint proposal.	LCD	N/A	Capture	ENGAGE	Negative	Sector	Medium
6. The developmental evaluation recommended a re-branding and re-organizing strategy to address issues around knowledge sharing and Khmer engagement. This contributed to leadership's efforts in re-branding the Thematic Sub-Groups as 'Learning Summits' to create space for knowledge sharing and reflection among group members, center Khmer language and voices, and re-focus attention on prioritized content.	LCD	Fully	Utilize	KNOW	Positive	Program	Small
7. The DEPA-MERL team conducted a 'bright spot' analysis to better understand FCF's co-creation process. This analysis helped FCF stakeholders understand how partners worked well together, identified utilization-focused support mechanisms to amplify successes, and prioritized opportunities for collaboration. The sharing of this analysis at the Learning Summit workshop provided FCF members and the Integrating Partner and USAID an opportunity to collaboratively identify and prioritize opportunities surfaced through the analysis for continued development.	LCD	N/A	Utilize	KNOW	Positive	Program	Medium
8. Based on the developmental evaluation's findings and recommendations, FCF reconsidered its application of the Collective Impact approach after facing multiple challenges with implementation.	LG	N/A	Utilize	ENGAGE	Both	Program	Medium
9. The developmental evaluation identified a missing shared measurement system that is necessary in a Collective Impact approach. He documented that this system went unrealized because of the Backbone organization's*** lack of understanding of the model and relevant technical capacity.	LG	N/A	Capture	INST	Negative	Program	Small
10. Through various methods, the Developmental Evaluator documented numerous incidents of the Backbone organization's unilateral decision-making and other challenges. He also conducted and analyzed data from a survey to assess the performance of the coalition. Based on this evidence, FCF	LG	Fully	Utilize	ENGAGE	Positive	Program	Medium

Outcome harvested during the developmental evaluation	Theme * (LCD, LG, GOVT)	Level of substantiation (Fully, Partially, Disagree, N/A-not substantiated)	Capture, promote, or enable the utilization of emergent learning?	Type of change** (ENGAGE, INST, KNOW)	Orientation of change on the program in the short-term (positive, negative, both)	Level of change (Program-, Sector-, Government-, USAID-level)	Size of change on program in short-term (small, medium, large)
leadership visited the idea of restructuring FCF's governance structure to address the lack of collaborative processes in the initiative.							
11. The developmental evaluation documented evidence of the Backbone organization's lack of technical capacity. The Developmental Evaluator conducted a survey of member organizations to assess the performance of the coalition. From its analysis, the Developmental Evaluator developed recommendations to address identified issues. USAID used these data in their decision-making to de-scope the Backbone organization's roles and responsibilities within FCF.	LG	Partially	Utilize	INST	Positive	USAID	Large
12. The Developmental Evaluator, in collaboration with the DEPA-MERL team, developed and disseminated the DEPA-MERL Partners Report with findings and recommendations based on data gathered from 14 key informant interviews with different FCF membership organizations, program documents, and approximately 235 hours of FCF meetings, events, and phone calls. The Partners Report provided the FCF core members with evidenced-based data for decision-making to build on existing strengths and support adaptation and improvement of the initiative.	LG	N/A	Promote	KNOW	Both	USAID	Small
13. The developmental evaluation documented that an unclear understanding of roles and responsibilities among FCF stakeholders had led to confusion and operational redundancies. The developmental evaluation recommended adaptations to the governance structure and drafted a new structure that leveraged each organization's strengths. Based on this data and recommendation, USAID proposed the restructuring of FCF's governance structure.	LG	Partially	Utilize	INST	Positive	Program	Large
14. The developmental evaluation documented the shared concerns of FCF stakeholders on the improper handling of a case of sexually-harmful-behavior and the need to establish initiative-wide whistleblowing and child protection policies. This supported the Integrating Partner's action to draft and disseminate initiative-wide child safeguarding policies.	LG	Partially	Promote	INST	Positive	Program	Medium
15. The developmental evaluation provided extensive documentation on the process and procedures related to the handling of a case of sexually-harmful-behavior, including a timeline of communications and events, to an independent social worker. The social worker considered this evidence collected by the Developmental Evaluator as part of an assessment report on how the situation was handled by FCF.	LG	Fully	Capture	KNOW	Positive	Program	Medium
16. The Executive Board of the Backbone organization decided to cease all operations in Cambodia and globally. The contributions of the developmental evaluation to this outcome are unknown. However, some substantiators speculated that the developmental evaluation's findings expedited the Backbone organization's decision to cease operations. This is because evidence captured by the developmental evaluation consistently included the Backbone organization's misalignment in roles, responsibilities, and technical capacity.	LG	Partially	Utilize	INST	Both	Sector	Large
17. The developmental evaluation shared data that supported the Integrating Partner's proposal to hire a Khmer Deputy Chief of Party to manage FCF- Cambodian government relations.	GOV	Partially	Promote	ENGAGE	Positive	Government	Medium

* The harvested outcomes are grouped into three themes: LCD: Learning, collaboration and decision-making; LG, Leadership and governance; GOV, Government.
** KNOW: knowledge and capability changes; ENGAGE: engagement and relationship changes; INST: institutional and policy changes.
*** FCF in Cambodia was designed as an initiative led by two organizations: a Backbone organization and an Integrating Partner.

ANALYSIS OF OUTCOMES

The developmental evaluation was able to *capture* (n=3), *promote* (n=3), and *enable the utilization* (n=11) of emergent learnings. Please note that any harvested outcomes categorized as *enabled utilization* of emergent learnings means that this outcome was first *captured* and *promoted* by the Developmental Evaluator. However, to avoid double counting, each harvested outcome was only categorized with one code, i.e., 'Utilize'. Table 3 displays the distribution of the harvested outcomes by the different categories.

Table 3: The FCF developmental evaluation outcomes were very diverse based on their classification across five categories

	Role of developmental evaluation			Type of change			Orientation of change on the program in the short-term			Level of change				Size of change on the program in the short-term		
	Capture	Promote	Enable Utilization	Engagement and Relationship	Institutional and Policy	Knowledge and Capability	Positive	Negative	Both	Government	Program	Sector	USAID	Small	Medium	Large
Number of outcomes	3	3	11	6	7	4	11	2	4	1	10	4	2	3	11	3
Percentage of all outcomes	18%	18%	65%	35%	41%	24%	65%	12%	24%	6%	59%	24%	12%	18%	65%	18%

Of 17 outcomes harvested during the developmental evaluation, 11 had positive (65%) consequences, two had negative consequences (12%), and four (24%) had both positive and negative consequences in the short-term on the program. The short-term changes associated with the outcomes varied in size: three were small- (18%), 11 were medium- (65%) and three were large-sized (18%) changes. Interestingly, all three harvested outcomes associated with the large-sized change occurred at the institutional and policy level. With regards to the level of change, 10 out of 17 outcomes (59%) occurred at the program-level, which supports existing literature that states most developmental evaluation findings help enable programmatic or process-level adaptations.[viii]

The FCF developmental evaluation captured, promoted, and enabled the utilization of emergent learnings across all three types of changes. As shown in Figure 2, the developmental evaluation contributed to changes in engagement and relationships, institutions and policy, and knowledge and capability. Even when the FCF developmental evaluation only captured or promoted an emergent learning, it was still able to contribute to changes of small and medium sizes in the short-term (Figure 3). The analysis of outcomes also showed that changes of various sizes occurred across the multiple types of change (Figure 4). Please see the Annex for additional data related to Research Question 1.

Figure 2: The developmental evaluation approach captured, promoted, and enabled the use of emergent learnings across three types of programming changes
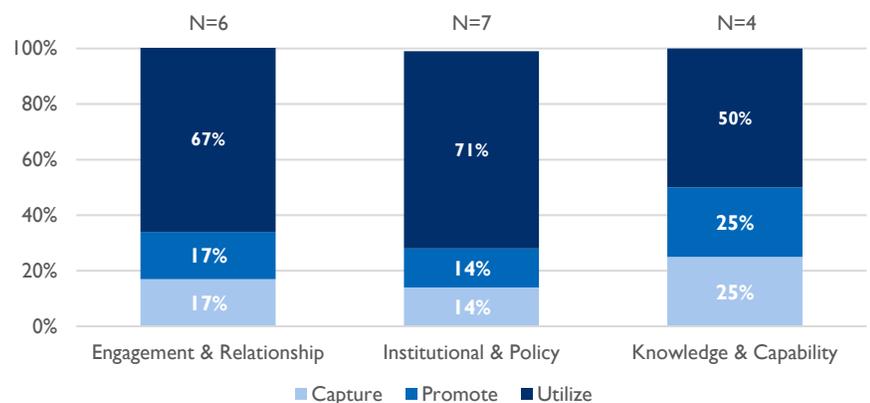
Figure 3: The size of the change was most diverse for two types of outcomes: institutional and policy and knowledge and capability
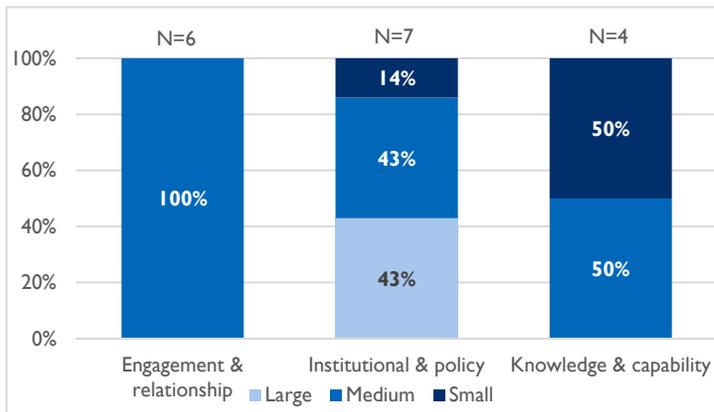
Figure 4: The developmental evaluation facilitated changes of small and medium size even if its role was only to capture or promote the emergent learning in that instance
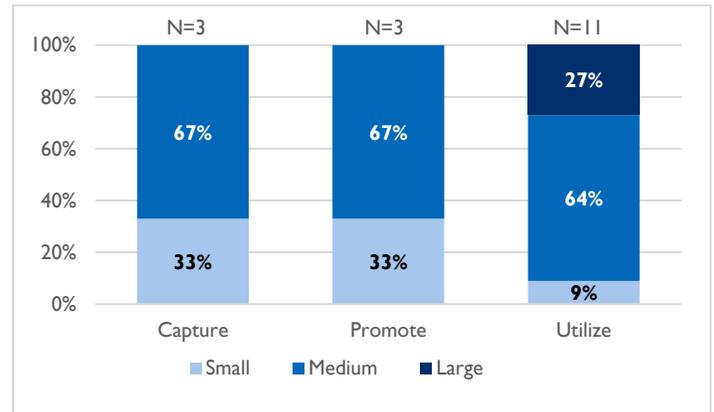
HOW DID THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION CONTRIBUTE TO PROGRAM ADAPTATIONS IN FCF?

The developmental evaluation used a variety of approaches to capture, promote, and enable the utilization of emergent learnings in FCF. The Developmental Evaluator documented emails, meetings, and one-on-one conversations that he had with stakeholders to capture emergent learnings. He conducted key informant interviews and facilitated workshops to gather and promote emergent learnings and data with all relevant stakeholders. He attended meetings and shared his recommendations both formally and informally to enable the utilization of emergent learnings for program adaptations with the goal of increased impact.

In cases where the Developmental Evaluator did not identify the emergent learnings, he still documented them and promoted the information. It elevated the Developmental Evaluator to – as one substantiator described – "an evidence collector, [a] sounding board and the conscience of the group." The team learned from substantiation interviews that once the Developmental Evaluator shared these challenges in the DEPA-MERL Partners' Report, USAID could promote these and seek the necessary adaptations to the program. Additionally, the developmental evaluation was able to expedite changes to manage these challenges, which according to one substantiator was a "big win" for the developmental evaluation. As described in a substantiation interview, "what the developmental evaluation excelled in doing was that it made the necessary change happen sooner through the 'greasing of wheels' and 'setting things into motion.' It was the channel or the medium through which the change happened sooner."

SYNTHESIZING HARVESTED OUTCOMES BY THEMES

In Figure 5 and Figure 6, the team provides a visual representation of how the developmental evaluation was able to capture, promote, and enable the utilization of emergent learnings in support of ongoing development of programming within the USAID context as related to the theme on leadership and governance in the FCF initiative. Figure 5 explains the evolution of the outcomes related to this theme, including: (a) challenges related to FCF that were identified by stakeholders during the developmental evaluation, (b) additional change agents[10] involved, (c) contributions of the developmental evaluation to promote change related to the challenge, (d) resulting changes within FCF[11], and lastly (e) affected objectives of the FCF initiative. A visual representation of the learning, collaboration and decision-making theme can also be found in the Annex. Figure 6 is a visual that demonstrates how the outcomes harvested during the developmental evaluation informed changes to the strategies in managing FCF's leadership and governance over time. Loosely adapted from Mintzberg's 'Strategy Model', the visual shows the *intended, realized,* and *unrealized* program strategies in FCF's leadership and governance as illustrated by the relevant outcomes that were harvested during the developmental evaluation. [ix]

In complex programs such as FCF, leadership launches the program with an understanding of types of activities and partnerships they will pursue to achieve certain outcomes. This *intended* strategy is based on the reality that exists during the design phase of the program. Often, however, programs unfold in ways that were not initially conceived during the design phase; leadership finds that their planned approach does not work or they gain access to data (emergent learnings) that inform the creation of alternate activities, i.e., their *realized* strategy. At the same time, other previously intended activities are never implemented, i.e., they are *unrealized* strategies of the original design. Unrealized strategies could result from a variety of reasons, but it is important to note that neither *realized* nor *unrealized* strategies are inherently good nor bad. They are simply the result of leadership gathering new information and making decisions to develop (or stop) an activity in a manner that was not previously conceived at the start of the program.

For more detail on the program adaptations made throughout the developmental evaluation in FCF, including a more comprehensive description of the *intended*, *realized*, and *unrealized* strategies, please see the Developmental Evaluation Pilot: Family Care First in Cambodia Report[12].

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[12] This can be found at https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/content/Detail_Presto.aspx?vID=47&ctID=ODVhZjk4NWQtM2YyMi00YjRmLTkxNjktZTcxMjM2NDBmY2Uy&rID=NTEwMTQ1

Figure 5: The developmental evaluation contributed to changes in the FCF initiative's governance and leadership structure

Change strategy: Progress towards leadership and governance of the FCF initiative during the DEPA-MERL evaluation

Description: This diagram displays a condensed version of the change process related to governance and leadership of the Family Care First initiative (FCF) during the DEPA-MERL developmental evaluation. It captures the evolution of FCF's governance structure, including: a) challenges related to FCF that were identified by stakeholders during the developmental evaluation, (b) additional change agents involved, (c) contributions of the developmental evaluation to promote change related to the challenge, (d) resulting changes within FCF, and lastly (e) related objectives of the FCF initiative.

Challenges Identified

- FCF faced multiple challenges implementing the collective impact approach (outcomes 8 & 9)
- The Backbone organization engaged in unilateral decision making, impeding collaboration among FCF members
- The Backbone organization had limited technical capacity which created challenges for program implementation
- Stakeholders identified a need to re-align roles and responsibilities of initiative's leadership
- FCF leadership wanted to streamline the initiative's governance by transferring the award from DC to Cambodia
- FCF members lacked official protocols for properly handling cases of sexually harmful behavior

Contributions of Developmental Evaluation

- Gathered data from stakeholders via coalition performance assessment survey and key informant interviews
- Served as an embedded and reflective participant in FCF initiative activities, including TSG meetings
- Produced detailed written documentation of FCF's existing decision making processes and governance structures
- Shared findings related to mis-aligned leadership roles via various data channels, including Terms of Reference sessions, Partners Report (outcome 12), and the Options Memo
- Contributed to drafting recommendations, including USAID's proposal to re-assign roles and responsibilities and the Integrating Partner's child safeguarding policies (outcomes 13, 14 & 15)

Additional FCF members contributed to identifying and addressing challenges faced by the initiative

Additional Change Agents

- Integrating Partner's staff
- USAID Cambodia Mission Staff
- USAID DC Staff
- Backbone organization's staff and Executive Board members

Related Initiative Objectives

- Activity: Streamline overarching governance structure to support FCF's diverse membership
- Activity: Realign funding to allow more funds to be allocated to on-ground activities of FCF membership organizations
- Programmatic: Maximize the initiative's ability to serve an effective and beneficial role within the child protection sector
- Sector: Ensure children have appropriate care through FCF initiative's programming

Changes within the Initiative

- FCF leadership discussed options for restructuring the initiative's governance structure to clarify roles and responsibilities of core FCF members (outcomes 10 & 11)
- USAID decided to de-scope the Backbone organization's role within FCF (outcome 10)
- Integrating Partner drafted and disseminated initiative-wide child safeguarding policies to promote better governing in the event of sexually harmful behavior (outcomes 14 & 15)
- Executive Board members from the Backbone organization decided to cease all operations in Cambodia and globally (outcome 16)

These changes directly or indirectly help meet various goals of the initiative

Key:
The outcomes were...

Captured by developmental evaluation

Promoted by developmental evaluation

Utilized by FCF

FCF Leadership & Governance Change Strategy Over Time

Key
Intended Strategy
Unrealized Strategy
Realized Strategy

Backbone organization
ceases operations
(Outcome 16)

USAID proposes how to
reassign roles & responsibilities
of core members
(Outcome 13)

Implementing Partner
Child Safeguarding Policy
drafted disseminated
(Outcomes 14 & 15)

USAID decides to descope
Backbone organization
(Outcome 11)

Discuss options for
restructuring FCF governance
(Outcomes 10 & 12)

Intended Collective Impact Approach

Challenges implementing
Collective Impact
(Outcome 8)

Shared measurement
approach not utilized
(Outcome 9)

Start of Developmental Evaluation

End of Developmental Evaluation

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: KEY TAKEAWAYS

Based on the analysis above, the team identified the following key takeaways:

1. Of the 17 outcomes harvested, the team selected 11 for substantiation with key FCF stakeholders. **Six of 11 outcomes were fully substantiated and five were partially substantiated.** All partially substantiated outcomes belonged to the leadership and governance theme. Importantly, none of the substantiators disagreed with the descriptions of the outcome or with the developmental evaluation's contribution to the outcome.

2. **Nearly one out of every five outcomes of the developmental evaluation (24%) had both a positive and negative impact on the program in the short-term,** while only two of 17 harvested outcomes of the developmental evaluation (12%) resulted in short-term negative impact on the program. From substantiation interviews, the team learned that time and resources needed to be re-allocated to make program adaptations. This could be one potential reason why an outcome was perceived to have both positive and negative impact on the program in the short-term. See Figure 3.

3. **The developmental evaluation contributed to changes of all sizes on the program in the short-term: three were small (18%), 11 were medium (65%) and three were large (18%).** Interestingly, all three harvested outcomes that had large changes to the program in the short-term occurred at the institutional and policy level. In such cases, there is a potential for a far more wide-reaching effect that goes beyond the program i.e., these changes can prove beneficial to other stakeholders in the sector as well. See Table 3 and Figure 4.

4. **Even when issues are known amongst stakeholders, the developmental evaluation can formally capture and promote the known issues to leadership and develop recommendations to address them.** The Developmental Evaluator can hence serve in the role of a third-party, independent voice to raise challenges with leadership.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: DATA FINDINGS

> **Research Question 2: What are the barriers and enablers to implementation of developmental evaluation in the USAID context?**

Through deductive and inductive approaches, WDI identified 13 codes or factors (Table 4) that influenced the implementation of the developmental evaluation approach in FCF. The team coded all monthly reflection and substantiation interviews and identified how frequently each factor was perceived to affect the implementation of the developmental evaluation. The three *most* frequently referenced factors were *leadership* (n=307), *data collection and sharing* (n=273), and *stakeholder relationships* (n=180). In contrast, the *least* frequently referenced factors were *funding dynamics* (n=95), *local and international dynamics* (n=96), and *data utilization* (n=102).

Table 4: Key factors that influenced the implementation of the FCF developmental evaluation (listed alphabetically; continues onto next page)

Factor	Definition
Cultural dynamics	Cultural and social norms related to the region that could influence the developmental evaluation process.
Data collection and sharing	Methods and processes for collecting and sharing data produced by the Developmental Evaluator or DEPA-MERL as part of the developmental evaluation.
Data utilization*	Utilization of data related to the developmental evaluation by stakeholders (e.g., USAID, FCF implementing partners etc.) to help achieve goals of the developmental evaluation or the program.
Developmental Evaluation Readiness*	Willingness and/or preparedness of stakeholders to engage fully in the developmental evaluation approach. Readiness includes any reference to stakeholders' understanding of the purpose of developmental evaluation or their buy-in and support for the developmental evaluation.
Funding dynamics	The influence that funding had on different stakeholders involved with the developmental evaluation.
Geography	Geography of the regions that impacted the developmental evaluation.
Integration of Developmental Evaluator*	Level of engagement between key FCF stakeholders and the Developmental Evaluator that increased or decreased the Developmental Evaluator's sense of belonging. Examples of integration include: any effort of the implementing partner to physically, functionally, or socially assimilate the Developmental Evaluator in their organization.
Leadership	The fulfillment or lack of fulfillment of a person or organization of their assigned roles and responsibilities. This includes roles and responsibilities related to the implementation of the developmental evaluation.

Factor	Definition
Local and international dynamics	Stakeholder relationships that focused on the dynamics between local stakeholders and international stakeholders.
Political dynamics	Political dynamics related to the region that impacted implementation of the developmental evaluation. For example, this could include references to government processes or laws, political conflicts, elections, etc.
Skills of the Developmental Evaluator*	Skills, needed or desired, for a person to function efficiently and effectively as a Developmental Evaluator. This includes 'hard' technical skills as well as 'soft' interpersonal skills referenced by the Developmental Evaluator or stakeholders.
Stakeholder relationships	Collaboration and engagement efforts among different stakeholders, including the relationships and interactions among implementing partners, the Developmental Evaluator, and/or the DEPA-MERL consortium. Any change or evolution in roles and relationships of stakeholders within the scope of the developmental evaluation.
USAID dynamics*	Dynamics between USAID and other developmental evaluation stakeholders that affected the implementation of developmental evaluation.
* Indicates a high-priority factor. These were selected as most likely to result in lessons that could affect future implementation of developmental evaluation within USAID Missions and programs.	

Table 5 displays each factor and the percentage of the total enablers and total barriers it represented. Coding analysis revealed that the *skills of the Developmental Evaluator* comprised 19% of all the enablers coded across the monthly reflection interviews and substantiation interviews, making this one of the most important influencing factors in the implementation of the FCF developmental evaluation. Other significant enabling factors included *data collection and sharing* (15%), *leadership* (12%), and *integration of the Developmental Evaluator* (10%).

Table 5: Skills of the Developmental Evaluator was the biggest enabler, while leadership was the biggest barrier to the implementation of the FCF developmental evaluation

Factor	Percent of all enablers+	Percent of all barriers+
Skills of Developmental Evaluator*	19%	7%
Data collection and sharing	15%	11%
Leadership	12%	20%
Integration of Developmental Evaluator*	10%	9%
Stakeholders relationships	10%	11%
Developmental Evaluation readiness*	9%	7%
Data utilization*	9%	8%
USAID dynamics*	7%	12%
Local and international dynamics	5%	7%
Funding dynamics	2%	5%
+ Percentages do not total 100% because only the top 10 (of 13) most frequently occurring factors are shown.		
* Indicates a high-priority factor. These were selected as most likely to result in lessons that could affect future implementation of developmental evaluation within USAID Missions and programs.		

Leadership served as the most substantial barrier and accounted for 20% of all barriers coded. Other significant barriers to the FCF developmental evaluation included *data collection and sharing* (11%), *stakeholder relationships* (11%), and *USAID dynamics* (12%). Notably, all factors served as both barriers and enablers during the FCF developmental evaluation. *Leadership* offers a prime example. For instance, the dual-leadership structure of FCF's Collective Impact approach served as a barrier to the developmental evaluation. FCF was designed as an initiative led by two organizations: a Backbone organization and an Integrating Partner. While the initiative's Integrating Partner was willing to fully embed the Developmental Evaluator, the Backbone organization was not willing to do so e.g., the Backbone organization copied the Developmental Evaluator only on some non-priority emails. However, *leadership* also served as an enabler with regards to *integration of the Developmental Evaluator* - with support from the leadership of the Integrating Partner, the Developmental Evaluator was effectively able to participate in activities and create connections with other stakeholders.

COMPARING STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES: DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATOR AND KEY FCF STAKEHOLDERS

In order to understand differences in perceptions between the Developmental Evaluator and FCF stakeholders on factors that influence the implementation of the developmental evaluation, the team conducted a side-by-side comparison of the two perspectives. Figure 7 below displays the most frequently occurring enablers and barriers identified by the Developmental Evaluator (from the monthly reflection interviews), compared with those identified by key FCF stakeholders (from the substantiation interviews).

Perceptions of enabling factors. FCF stakeholders identified *skills of the Developmental Evaluator* as the biggest enabler (i.e., the factor was most frequently mentioned as an enabler). For example, from the substantiation interviews with two key stakeholders, the team learned that the Developmental Evaluator was applauded for his ability to gain the trust of stakeholders, especially as an expat in "'the 'battle-hardened' child protection sector in Cambodia." The FCF Developmental Evaluator used strong communication skills including persuasion, tactfulness, and negotiation skills throughout the course of the evaluation, especially when he shared uncomfortable and/or negative information. This characteristic was considered most critical by substantiators. In contrast, it was the fifth (out of ten) most mentioned enabling factor by the Developmental Evaluator; the Developmental Evaluator was more focused on the factors of *data collection and sharing* and his own *integration* within FCF.

Perceptions of barriers. Analysis from both data sources identified *leadership* as the biggest barrier to implementation of the developmental evaluation. Key FCF stakeholders interviewed placed *skills of the Developmental Evaluator* as the third most frequently mentioned barrier compared to ninth (per the Developmental Evaluator). For example, certain exercises designed and conducted by the Developmental Evaluator in the FCF Acculturation Workshop[13], held in January 2017 at the start of the developmental evaluation, to prioritize the scope of the developmental evaluation, did not allow individuals to express their opinions. This was because a voting exercise was held in an open-room format where everyone could see each other's voting preference. This made junior individuals feel uncomfortable to vote in a manner different from those in leadership positions. In another example, there was an instance where the Developmental Evaluator's informal sharing of recommendations caused tensions between different organizations that were not privy to certain conversations.

Figure 7: The Developmental Evaluator and FCF stakeholders had different perceptions about which enablers and barriers to the implementation of the FCF developmental evaluation occurred most frequently (listed in descending frequency)

Enablers		Barriers	
Developmental Evaluator (Monthly reflection interviews, n=14)	**FCF Stakeholders** (Substantiation interviews, n=8)	**Developmental Evaluator** (Monthly reflection interviews, n=14)	**FCF Stakeholders** (Substantiation interviews, n=8)
Data collection and sharing	Skills of Developmental Evaluator*	Leadership	Leadership
Integration of Developmental Evaluator*	Data collection and sharing	Integration of Developmental Evaluator*	USAID dynamics*
Leadership	Leadership	Stakeholders relationships	Skills of Developmental Evaluator*
Stakeholders relationships	Data utilization*	Data collection and sharing	Data collection and sharing
Skills of Developmental Evaluator*	USAID dynamics*	USAID dynamics*	Local and international dynamics
Developmental Evaluation readiness*	Developmental Evaluation readiness*	Developmental Evaluation readiness*	Stakeholders relationships
Data utilization*	Stakeholders relationships	Data utilization*	Data utilization*
USAID dynamics*	Local and international dynamics	Local and international dynamics	Developmental Evaluation readiness*
Local and international dynamics	Integration of Developmental Evaluator*	Skills of Developmental Evaluator *	Political
Funding dynamics	Political	Funding dynamics	Funding dynamics

* Indicates a high-priority factor. These were selected as most likely to result in lessons that could affect future implementation of developmental evaluation within USAID Missions and programs.

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[13] The Acculturation Workshop or kick-off workshop was conducted by the Developmental Evaluator early-on in the developmental evaluation. All stakeholders were invited to attend such that the Developmental Evaluator could inform them of the developmental evaluation approach, build buy-in into the developmental evaluation process, develop familiarity among the group, and explain their own role to stakeholders along with what is needed from them. The Developmental Evaluator also used this meeting to co-develop the research questions of his engagement.

DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION: TOP FIVE PRIORITY FACTORS

Five factors were selected for further analysis[14] because of their potential to produce learnings related to the future implementation of the developmental evaluation approach at USAID. These are: *integration of the Developmental Evaluator, data utilization, developmental evaluation readiness, skills of the Developmental Evaluator,* and *USAID dynamics.*

Importantly, selection of these factors was not solely dependent on how frequently each factor was coded. WDI also considered which codes were least researched and could offer the most significant insights for developmental evaluation. Although *leadership* was one of the most frequently coded factors, it was not selected as a priority code for two primary reasons. First, existing literature explains the barriers and enablers to successful leadership, and many of these findings can be applied directly to the context of conducting a developmental evaluation. Second, the team found that *leadership* and other frequently coded factors like *stakeholder relationships* were so often double coded with other less-frequently coded factors such as *USAID dynamics* (45% overlap) and *developmental evaluation readiness* (24% overlap) that the role of leadership within these codes would surface naturally.

INFLUENCE OF FACTORS OVER TIME

To understand how the five priority factors changed over time, the team divided the FCF developmental evaluation into three stages: beginning (months 1-5), middle (months 6-10), and end (months 11-15). Figures 8 and 9 provide a heatmap display of the time analysis results. The darker the color, the more frequent a given factor (Figure 8) and a factor's sub-theme (Figure 9) was coded in a particular stage of the developmental evaluation. Please note: for the *skills of the Developmental Evaluator*, the team also used relevant data from the eight substantiation interviews to analyze how the Development Evaluator's skillset was perceived to change over time because limited data was available for this from monthly reflection interviews.[15]

Figure 8: Heatmap display: The frequency in which factors influenced the FCF developmental evaluation varied depending on the stage of the evaluation

	Stage of FCF Developmental Evaluation		
	Beginning [Months 1-5]	Middle [Months 6-10]	End [Months 11-15]
Developmental evaluation readiness	High	Medium	Medium
Integration of Developmental Evaluator	High	Medium	High
Skills of Developmental Evaluator	High	High	High
Data utilization	Low	Medium	High
USAID dynamics	High	High	High

Key:
- High frequency
- Medium frequency
- Low frequency

The results from the time analysis demonstrated that the frequency in which factors influenced the FCF developmental evaluation varied depending on the stage of the evaluation. For example, as shown in Figure 8, the Developmental Evaluator referenced the *developmental evaluation readiness* of the FCF initiative most frequently in the first five months of the

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developmental evaluation. *Integration of the Developmental Evaluator* was mentioned just as frequently at the end of the evaluation as it was in the beginning. Two factors were coded with the same high frequency across all three stages: *USAID dynamics* and *skills of the Developmental Evaluator*.

Next, the team conducted a deep-dive analysis of the five priority factors to understand when sub-themes within each factor occurred. Exploring each factors' sub-themes allowed for a more nuanced understanding of how a parent factor influenced implementation of the developmental evaluation over time (Figure 9). For example, by looking only at Figure 8, it appeared that *developmental evaluation readiness* was most important at the beginning of the evaluation. However, its associated sub-themes (*promote understanding and buy-in, openness to learning,* and *adaptability and comfort with change*) told a different story i.e. this parent code was a complex construct with different components that were important throughout the various stages (Figure 9). Below are brief explanations of the findings from this in-depth analysis.

- **Integration of the Developmental Evaluator.** Compared to all other factors, *integration of the Developmental Evaluator* had the most sub-themes occurring at the beginning stage of the evaluation. Within the first five months, *ensuring clarity about the roles and responsibilities* of the Developmental Evaluator, *enabling high-quality engagement with stakeholders*, and *establishing trust* were critically important components of the developmental evaluation. Integration was a continual process which appeared across all stages of the evaluation. For example, there was a need to re-clarify the Developmental Evaluator's role as his responsibilities and objectives changed over time. Additionally, one FCF stakeholder highlighted the importance of *establishing trust* not only at the beginning of the evaluation but throughout, especially when sharing data back with stakeholders: "as soon as findings became less than positive, people started seeing [the Development Evaluator] as too entangled in the internal politics." In the later stages of the evaluation, the *integration of the Developmental Evaluator* became less dependent upon *ensuring clarity about the roles and responsibilities* of the Developmental Evaluator, and more dependent upon *communicating and sharing information openly across all stakeholders*, especially since the Developmental Evaluator had collected a large body of data by that time.

- **Developmental evaluation readiness.** At the beginning of the FCF developmental evaluation, the DEPA-MERL team including the Developmental Evaluator, focused on *promoting understanding and buy-in* for the approach by conducting specific activities to ensure stakeholders had knowledge of the methodology and were fully aware of the purpose of this evaluation. Results from the monthly reflection interviews highlighted how important it was for the Developmental Evaluator to ensure that he was being seen as a valuable resource within the program and not just as an outside evaluator. In the middle stage of the evaluation, it was critical for stakeholders to demonstrate their *openness to learning* to the data findings produced by the developmental evaluation. This was necessary to have transparent conversations required to enable program adaptations. Lastly, in the middle and final stages of the FCF developmental evaluation, the team found that stakeholders' *adaptability and comfort with change* was a critical component for ensuring that the evaluation was able to function, let alone be successful. In order to be fully ready for a developmental evaluation, all stakeholders (including the evaluator, funder, and the implementing partners) needed to be comfortable "rocking the boat." That is, they needed to be able to share and receive both positive and negative findings in the face of uncertainty and, sometimes, rapidly changing timelines.

- **Skills of the Developmental Evaluator.** The data revealed that the Developmental Evaluator concentrated on *staying focused and managing competing priorities* of the evaluation and *documenting, collecting, and synthesizing data* throughout. It is important to note that the *skills of Developmental Evaluator* include not only technical skills but also interpersonal soft skills. In the middle stage of the developmental evaluation, the team found that *providing strategic counsel*– a technical skill– increasingly went hand-in-hand with *providing social support*– a soft skill– to FCF stakeholders. For instance, as shared by a substantiation interviewee, the Developmental Evaluator can "help individuals make that leap of faith and help them to change the way that they think to a different way [of thinking]. This requires patience, tactfulness, and negotiation skills. [The Developmental Evaluator] has to use emotions in order to make this happen." This is especially true, when the data shared has negative connotations or there is a fear of acknowledging failure. In the final five months of the evaluation, the *skills of the Developmental Evaluator* also revolved around his *maintaining objectivity and being prepared to present negative findings* in ways that were sensitive

to stakeholders needs while also *challenging the status quo of the program* such that the initiative could improve. Part of being objective included being aware of stakeholders' perceptions of his working relationship with other key stakeholders. For instance, some stakeholders thought that the Developmental Evaluator was very good friends with the Integrating Partner's key staff members because he ate lunch with them and thus would look out for those persons' interests over others.

- **USAID dynamics.** In the first five months, it was important for USAID to *clarify funding and procurement boundaries.* As heard in one interview, "a critical barrier to the developmental evaluation was the award. The cooperative agreement and the different levels of understanding that USAID had in terms of what leeway they had to change the [governance] structure and use different intervention strategies.... there was lack of clarity on what could be done." The interviewee also mentioned that one of the barriers faced was the need to *promote the objectivity of the evaluation*, "for FCF, one of the challenges that it continues to have is that it [the developmental evaluation] is identified with USAID." Some non-USAID stakeholders felt that the developmental evaluation only focused on issues of interest to USAID, as opposed to gathering data on the initiative more broadly. In the middle stage of the evaluation, *USAID dynamics* centered on how USAID staff were *managing different levels of buy-in*. According to the Developmental Evaluator, it was critical to have one member of USAID serve as a champion for the developmental evaluation. This person, who believed strongly in the importance and purpose of the evaluation, helped share data gathered by the developmental evaluation and assert the value the approach provided. USAID played a role in *sharing evaluation data* and deliverables with FCF stakeholders and *communicating findings between the USAID Mission and D.C.* staff. The majority of evaluation deliverables needed USAID approval prior to being shared with partners and some believed this steered the direction of the evaluation, again proving that *promoting the objectivity of the evaluation* is important during the last five months as well as the beginning.

- **Data utilization.** None of the sub-themes (*sharing data effectively to promote utilization*, *pausing and reflecting on data,* and *creating mechanisms for data-led decision-making*) appeared with high frequency in the first stage of the developmental evaluation. Further, the team found that there was some uncertainty around who, how, when, and with whom data from the developmental evaluation would be shared, especially in the second and third stages of the evaluation. This lack of clarity, in addition to partial or incomplete sharing of data by USAID, limited which stakeholders could utilize data for decision-making. This was also confirmed in substantiation interviews; organizations on the periphery of the developmental evaluation did not know what recommendations were shared and with whom, even though they knew that recommendations had been submitted to USAID. They were confused as to what role they continued to play in the developmental evaluation, given that they had shared data with the Developmental Evaluator and were engaged in the process earlier. Once findings and recommendations of the evaluation were shared, stakeholders needed adequate space and time to *pause and reflect* on the data. As pointed out by the Developmental Evaluator and substantiation interviewees, conducting structured activities after data was shared, helped to "force a pause" to reflect on evaluation findings. Data analysis revealed that stakeholders only began *creating mechanisms for data-led decision-making* in the last two stages of the developmental evaluation.

	Stage of FCF Developmental Evaluation		
	Beginning [Months 1-5]	**Middle** [Months 6-10]	**End** [Months 11-15]
Integration of Developmental Evaluator			
Ensuring clarity about their role and responsibilities	High frequency	Low frequency	Medium frequency
Enabling high-quality engagement with all stakeholders	High frequency	Medium frequency	Low frequency
Communicating and sharing information openly	Medium frequency	High frequency	High frequency
Establishing trust	High frequency	High frequency	Medium frequency
Developmental Evaluation Readiness			
Promoting understanding and buy-in	High frequency	Low frequency	Low frequency
Being open to learning	Medium frequency	High frequency	Medium frequency
Endorsing adaptability and comfort with change	Low frequency	High frequency	High frequency
Skills of Developmental Evaluator			
Staying focused and managing competing priorities	Medium frequency	Medium frequency	Medium frequency
Documenting, collecting, and synthesizing data	High frequency	High frequency	High frequency
Providing strategic council and social support	Medium frequency	High frequency	High frequency
Maintaining objectivity and being prepared to present negative findings	Low frequency	Medium frequency	High frequency
Challenging the status quo of the program	Low frequency	Medium frequency	High frequency
USAID Dynamics			
Clarifying funding and procurement boundaries	High frequency	Medium frequency	Medium frequency
Promoting objectivity of the evaluation	High frequency	Low frequency	High frequency
Managing different levels of buy-in	Low frequency	High frequency	Low frequency
Sharing of evaluation data filtered by USAID	Low frequency	High frequency	Low frequency
Creating communication platforms between USAID Mission and D.C.	Low frequency	High frequency	Low frequency
Data Utilization			
Sharing data effectively to promote utilization	Low frequency	Medium frequency	High frequency
Pausing and reflecting on data	Low frequency	Medium frequency	High frequency
Creating mechanisms for data-led decision-making	Low frequency	High frequency	High frequency

Key:

■ High frequency

■ Medium frequency

■ Low frequency
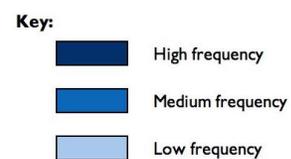
FINDINGS FOR USAID: THE OVERLAP OF PRIORITY FACTORS WITH 'USAID DYNAMICS'

USAID played a critical role in managing the various factors that served as barriers and promoting those that served as enablers to developmental evaluation implementation in the FCF program. To understand how the remaining four priority factors interacted with the *USAID dynamics* (also a priority factor), the team identified how each of these factors was coded in relation to *USAID dynamics* and what USAID did well in such instances as well as what they could have done better. Data from both the monthly reflection interviews and substantiation interviews were used in this analysis. The percentage overlap between each priority code and *USAID dynamics* with relevant quotes are included in Table 6 below.

Table 6: USAID staff played a significant role in managing barriers and enablers of the FCF developmental evaluation

Factor	Percent overlap with USAID dynamics	How did the factor serve as an enabler?	How did the factor serve as a barrier?	What did USAID do well?	What could USAID have done better?
Developmental evaluation readiness	28.18%	Stakeholders' **understanding and buy-in for developmental evaluation** enabled a more effective implementation process. Stakeholder's **openness to learn** was a pre-requisite for effectively engaging in the developmental evaluation process.	Lack of comfort with change and lack of **willingness (or ability) to adapt based on data** from the developmental evaluation hurt readiness.	• USAID project leads and award management staff helped coordinate the Acculturation Workshop. • USAID project leads had champions that advocated for developmental evaluation at the start of the approach. • USAID project leads and award management staff expressed openness to trying something new. • USAID project leads and award management staff were willing to discuss developmental evaluation data and recommendations to make changes to FCF. • USAID project leads and award management staff created space for thinking reflectively.	• Not all USAID award management staff attended the kick-off Acculturation Workshop in D.C and Cambodia. • USAID award management staff did not always serve as strong champions throughout the evaluation. • Because developmental evaluation readiness in FCF varied throughout the period of evaluation, especially when conflicts arose, USAID project leads and award management staff were not always adequately prepared to manage different levels of buy-in for the developmental evaluation within the different stakeholder organizations.

Relevant quotes from FCF stakeholders and the Developmental Evaluator:
- "If USAID is going to take on a developmental evaluation they have to be prepared, be open to change…"
- "A participant of the Acculturation Workshop wrote on a post-it that they wished the developmental evaluation had begun earlier in the initiative's life."
- "I have been impressed by USAID's commitment to learning and changing their program to incorporate that."
- "For instance, the AOR in D.C. from USAID did not come for the Acculturation Workshop. I think it is really important that they understand the process. Key advocates from USAID are important."

Factor	Percent overlap with USAID dynamics	How did the factor serve as an enabler?	How did the factor serve as a barrier?	What did USAID do well?	What could USAID have done better?
Integration of Developmental Evaluator	17.29%	Stakeholders were **willing to have frequent interactions and high-quality engagements** with the Developmental Evaluator.	Stakeholders **did *not* always have clarity on the Developmental Evaluator's roles and responsibilities.**	• The role and responsibilities of the Developmental Evaluator were clearly outlined at the start of the evaluation. This role was also shared with stakeholders during a kick-off workshop in D.C. • USAID project leads and award management staff were proactive and made intentional steps to integrate the Developmental Evaluator such as including him on email communications and inviting him to in-person meetings.	• Not all aspects of the Developmental Evaluator's role and responsibilities including his expected engagement with program stakeholders were well-defined as the developmental evaluation progressed. For example, the Developmental Evaluator was uncertain if he had the authority to share data from the evaluation with all partners directly. Additionally, USAID award management staff did not revisit the description of his role after various 'turning points' in the evaluation, which caused confusion for the Developmental Evaluator. • USAID project leads and award management staff did not establish protocols for sharing negative and/or sensitive information. Also, USAID project leads did not share certain negative and sensitive information with all stakeholders. This sometimes put the Developmental Evaluator in an awkward position given that developmental evaluation is meant to share findings in a timely manner with all stakeholders.
		Building trust was critical for the evaluator to successfully integrate into the program.	**Lack of open communication and transparent information sharing** hurt the ability of the Developmental Evaluator to integrate into the program.		

Relevant quotes from FCF stakeholders and the Developmental Evaluator:
- "The open dialogue and trust that I've built with members of the USAID team allowed us to determine what would be most useful for them to address [and] what was clearly a bottleneck within the chain of command."
- "They see it as you work with USAID… and you've already shared a negative perspective or finding on us, so therefore we don't want to work with you and see more of that.…"
- "Currently, I am only being copied on emails by USAID and the Integrating Partner's staff. Even though assurances have been made by the Backbone organization's leadership that their staff would be asked to comply with this request, I am only copied on matters that are limited to meetings or event planning and general updates that include USAID and the Integrating Partner."
- "We discussed how I would communicate with USAID given their position as both funder and subject of the research. This could make certain reporting uncomfortable. For instance, we discussed sharing sensitive issues with USAID first before the other members. While this will make it easier to establish a protocol, in instances in which I am communicating something that is sensitive and involves the USAID staff member(s) who will be receiving the report, it will be challenging to navigate the tension."

Factor	Percent overlap with USAID dynamics	How did the factor serve as an enabler?	How did the factor serve as a barrier?	What did USAID do well?	What could USAID have done better?
Data utilization	12.75%	The developmental evaluation created **space for stakeholders to pause and reflect on data** they received. Both: **How and with whom data was shared** affected whether data could be utilized effectively by stakeholders.	FCF stakeholders **did *not* always have mechanisms in place for engaging in data-led decision-making.** Instead, they needed to create these through the course of the developmental evaluation.	• USAID project leads and award management staff participated in activities to pause and reflect on data findings in to successfully utilize data from the developmental evaluation.	• Differing perspectives related to the award and implementing partners prevented USAID award management staff from making certain decisions or changes to the initiative to adapt the program in real-time.

Relevant quotes from FCF stakeholders and the Developmental Evaluator:
- "[For USAID] to make any decision, it almost takes ages. [As an example,] this is just a request for an extension, and it takes almost since we started in August and we just got approval in February. That's like six months."
- "He would give us great ideas in meetings, [but] by the nature of how [the developmental evaluation] was set up, it didn't allow for adaptive management."
- "The benefits [of developmental evaluation], though, will depend on the ability of USAID to act on the recommendations, as well as the other partner's willingness to receive feedback."
- "There is hesitance from USAID to make tough decisions which allows the Backbone organization to operate as is."

Factor	Percent overlap with USAID dynamics	How did the factor serve as an enabler?	How did the factor serve as a barrier?	What did USAID do well?	What could USAID have done better?
Skills of the Developmental Evaluator	8.73%	The Developmental Evaluator consistently **documented, collected, and synthesized data** for FCF stakeholders.	The Developmental Evaluator sometimes struggled to stay focused and **manage competing priorities of the evaluation.**	• USAID project leads and award management staff played a major role in ensuring that the Developmental Evaluator hired possessed the right skill set.	• The Developmental Evaluator received numerous, sometimes competing, requests for data from stakeholders including USAID. Though it was the Developmental Evaluator's responsibility to stay focused on the scope of the evaluation and manage incoming priorities, USAID project leads and award management staff did not work closely with each other as well as the Developmental Evaluator on a routine basis to manage scope and organize priorities.
		The Developmental Evaluator played a critical role in encouraging stakeholders to **challenge the status quo of the program.**	The nature of developmental evaluation required the Developmental Evaluator to **maintain objectivity and present negative findings** which was not always easy to do**.**		
		Both: The Developmental Evaluator needed to provide both **strategic advice and social or emotional support** for program stakeholders			

Relevant quotes from FCF stakeholders and the Developmental Evaluator:
- [The Developmental Evaluator's] personality... he is a nice person to be around. He's not robotic like some researchers can be. There are soft skills that you need in our work, certainly [when you need] to get any information out of people... [He] has them."
- "[The Developmental Evaluator] brought in a good perspective... We learned a lot from the experience."
- "It goes back to what I said before [regarding] unmuting voices, in this specific situation... I don't think we would have gotten this outcome without DEPA-MERL, he [the Developmental Evaluator] tuned in to the things we were saying, but weren't being listened to [by leadership]."
- "In a little way [developmental evaluation allowed for adaptive management]. In a meeting we had one incident where [the Developmental Evaluator] recommended: 'why don't you have an MOU with partners', this changed the entire way of engaging with partners."
- "Yesterday, it was clear that the partners felt good to have someone with a bird's eye view to help reflect... [The Developmental Evaluator] helped us realize that we didn't do that bad.''

RESEARCH QUESTION 2: KEY TAKEAWAYS

Based on the analysis above, the team identified the following key takeaways:

1. **Factors that influence the implementation of the developmental evaluation can serve as both barriers and enablers. This applies to sub-themes of each priority factor as well** (Figure 6 and Table 6). For example, in the FCF program, the *skills of the Developmental Evaluator* allowed him to document, collect, and synthesize data throughout the evaluation, which served as an enabler. However, some of the ways the Developmental Evaluator presented information to stakeholders were counterproductive i.e., a barrier. For example, stakeholders wished that the Developmental Evaluator would have shared data and insights sooner; and that the Developmental Evaluator had greater awareness of how, when, and with whom any negative information was being shared. Sharing negative information in person versus in writing as well as with one versus many stakeholders were specific suggestions made by FCF stakeholders regarding how the Developmental Evaluator could have shared negative findings differently.

2. **The prevalence of some key barriers and enablers were not dependent on time. That is, they were important from beginning to end of the developmental evaluation.** See Figure 7. For example, different aspects of *developmental evaluation readiness* and *integration of the Developmental Evaluator* were coded just as frequently in the beginning, middle, and end of the evaluation. These are factors that should be consistently developed and managed by both the Developmental Evaluator as well as leadership and the funder(s).

3. ***Developmental evaluation readiness* and *integration of the Developmental Evaluator* overlapped the most with *USAID dynamics* (28% and 17% of the time, respectively).** The overlap between *developmental evaluation readiness* and *integration of the Developmental Evaluator* is 21.8%. This shows that *USAID dynamics* is a contributing factor to how prepared a Mission or Bureau might be to partake in a developmental evaluation. This also indicates that USAID plays a role in ensuring the successful integration of the Developmental Evaluator into the program team.

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: DATA FINDINGS

> **Research Question 3: What do key informants consider to be the value (added or lost) of conducting a developmental evaluation, compared to a traditional evaluation approach in this**

WDI distributed the *value of developmental evaluation survey* to 26 persons to assess the developmental evaluation approach in the FCF context of who 14 responded. Respondents comprised of 10 FCF members from non-profit organizations (72%) and one other (7%), all of who were counted as the implementing partners, and three from USAID (21%). The 11 respondents were from the Integrating Partner organization, the Backbone organization, and from organizations implementing activities in the FCF Initiative.

INTERACTION WITH THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATOR

To measure the value of their interactions with the Developmental Evaluator, survey respondents were asked a question with five sub-items. Respondents answered using the following five-point scale (1-5): never (1), sometimes (2), about half the time (3), most of the time (4), and always (5). Results are reported in Figure 10. Overall, respondents reported positive interactions with the Developmental Evaluator. Nine out of 14 respondents (64%) reported that they *always* felt comfortable sharing information with the Developmental Evaluator. Exactly half (50%) of respondents said that the Developmental Evaluator *always* understood the challenges they faced. Moreover, five respondents (36%) reported that they *always* received useful information from the Developmental Evaluator while another 43% of respondents (six out of 14) reported they received useful information *most of the time*. Interactions with the Developmental Evaluator were not always positive– five respondents (36%) reported the Developmental Evaluator addressed the challenges they faced *about half the time* or less. Additionally, two respondents (14%) said that the Developmental Evaluator *never* provided them with timely information.

Figure 10: Survey respondents reported mostly positive interactions with the Developmental Evaluator (n=14)

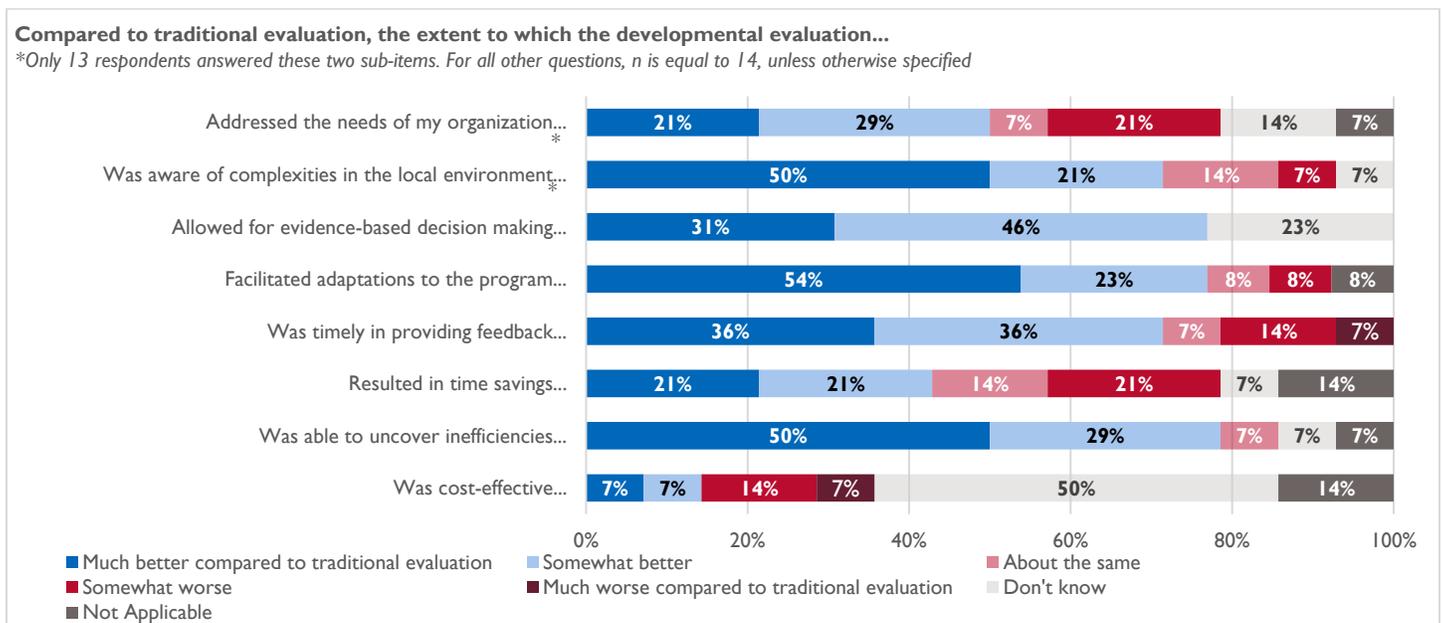|	Always	Most of the time	About half the time	Sometimes	Never	Not Applicable
I felt comfortable sharing information with the Developmental Evaluator	64%	21%	7%	7%		
I received useful information from the Developmental Evaluator	36%	43%	7%	7%	7%	
The Developmental Evaluator understood the challenges I faced	50%	29%	7%	7%	7%	
The Developmental Evaluator addressed the challenges I faced	21%	21%	14%	14%	7%	21%
The Developmental Evaluator provided me with timely information	43%	21%	14%	7%	14%	
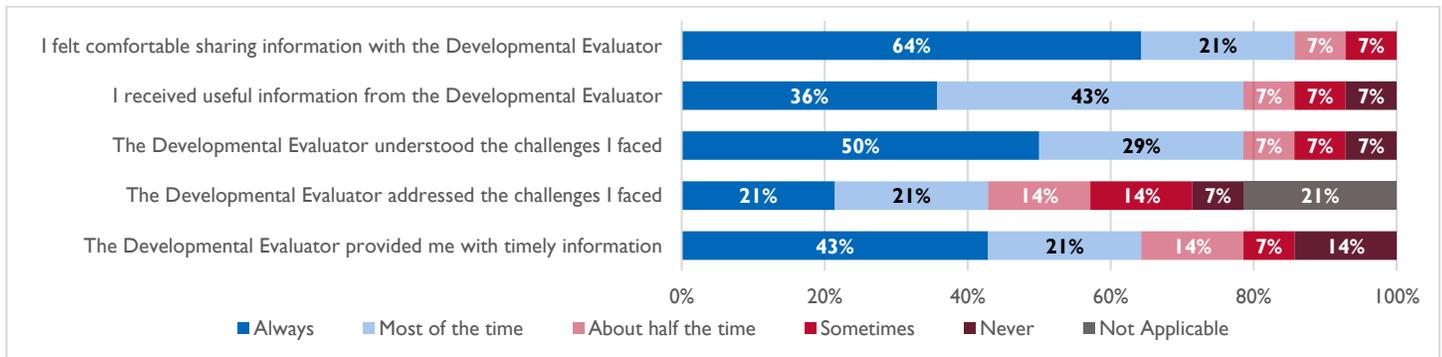
DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL EVALUATION IN THE FCF CONTEXT

To assess how the FCF developmental evaluation compared to traditional evaluation, survey respondents were asked a question with eight sub-items. They answered each sub-item on a five-point scale, where one meant that the developmental evaluation was *much worse* compared to traditional evaluation and five meant the developmental evaluation was *much better* compared to traditional evaluation in this instance. The results are reported in Figure 11. Overall, survey respondents reported that the FCF developmental evaluation was *much better* than traditional evaluation in three ways: it facilitated adaptations to the program (54%; seven of 13 respondents), it had awareness of complexities of the local environment (50%; seven of 14 respondents); and it was able to uncover inefficiencies in the program (50%; seven of 14 respondents). Of the 13 respondents who answered the sub-item, 10 (77%) said that the developmental evaluation was either *much better* or *somewhat better* at allowing for evidence-based decision-making when compared to traditional evaluation approaches in this instance. For cost-effectiveness, three out of 14 respondents (21%) reported that the developmental evaluation was *somewhat worse* or *much* worse than traditional evaluation in this instance. Furthermore, half of all respondents said they did not know how cost-effective the developmental evaluation was. Please note, USAID was the sole funder of the FCF developmental evaluation. Any responses related to the cost-effectiveness of the developmental evaluation may be biased because information about funding was not disclosed to all key stakeholders at the start of the evaluation. With regards to time savings, three out of 14 respondents (21%) said the FCF developmental evaluation was *much worse* than traditional evaluation in this instance. Survey respondents may have interpreted cost-effectiveness and time savings in different ways because definitions for these terms were not provided in the survey.

Figure 11: Survey respondents generally perceived the FCF developmental evaluation as more valuable than traditional evaluation, except with regard it's cost-effectiveness and time savings (n=14)

Compared to traditional evaluation, the extent to which the developmental evaluation...
Only 13 respondents answered these two sub-items. For all other questions, n is equal to 14, unless otherwise specified

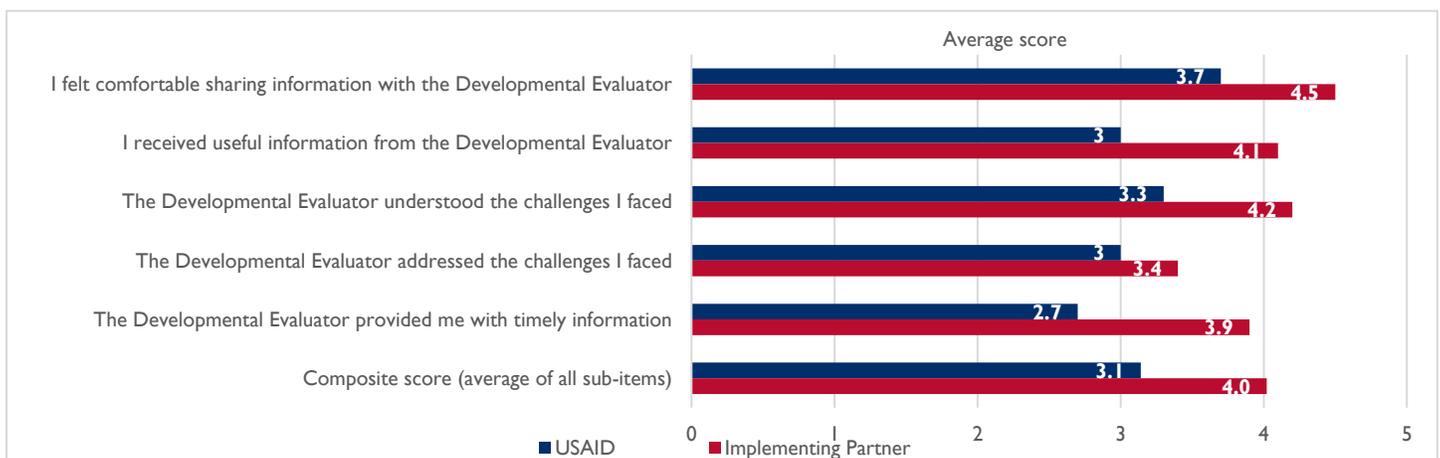|	Much better compared to traditional evaluation	Somewhat better	About the same	Somewhat worse	Much worse compared to traditional evaluation	Don't know	Not Applicable
Addressed the needs of my organization... *	21%	29%	7%	21%		14%	7%
Was aware of complexities in the local environment... *	50%	21%	14%	7%		7%	
Allowed for evidence-based decision making...	31%	46%				23%	
Facilitated adaptations to the program...	54%	23%	8%	8%		8%	
Was timely in providing feedback...	36%	36%	7%	14%		7%	
Resulted in time savings...	21%	21%	14%	21%	7%		14%
Was able to uncover inefficiencies...	50%	29%	7%	7%		7%	
Was cost-effective...	7%	7%	14%		7%	50%	14%

COMPARING STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES: USAID AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

To understand how the perspectives of USAID and implementing partners differed, the team created composite scores for each group for the two questions discussed below. Across both composite scores, results showed that implementing partners' average was higher on all sub-items as compared to USAID. Please note: the higher the composite score the more valuable the stakeholder group perceived the Developmental Evaluator and the developmental evaluation.
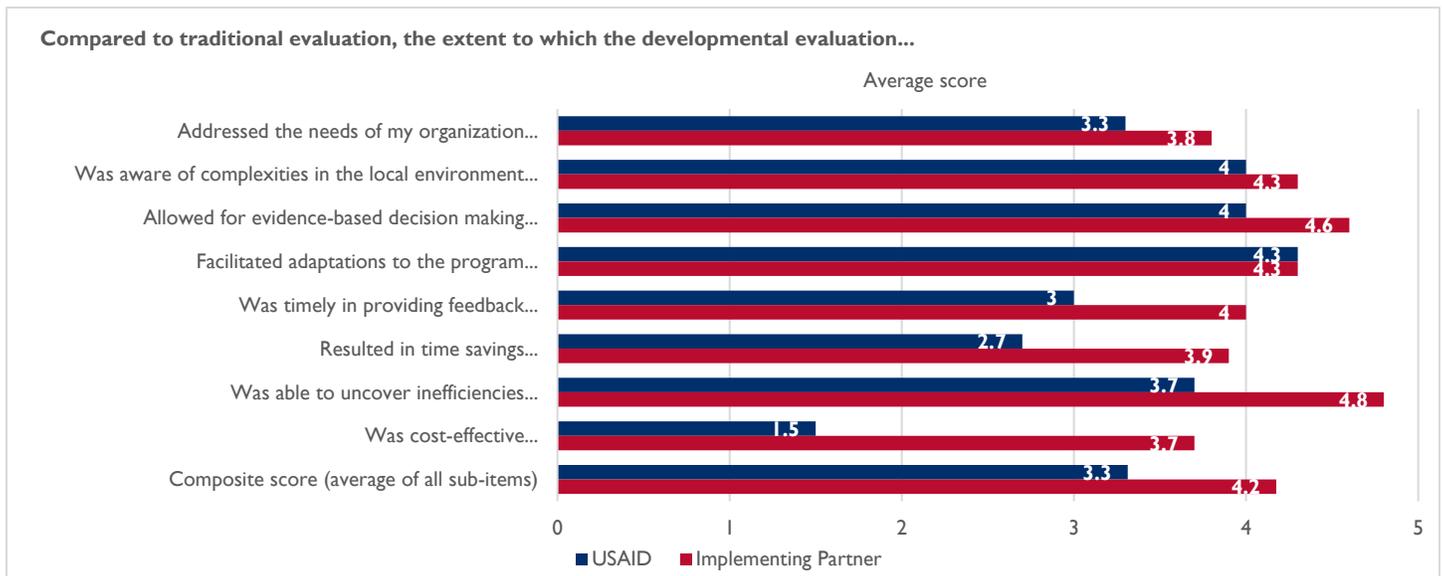
Interaction with Developmental Evaluator. Respondents from the implementing partners organizations reported more favorable interactions with the Developmental Evaluator as compared to respondents from USAID. The average composite score for USAID respondents (3.1 out of 5.0) was lower than the composite score for implementing partners' respondents (4.0 out of 5.0). Please note: the average composite score for implementing partners was higher than USAID's for each sub-item. Figure 12 displays the comparison between the two groups.

Figure 12: On average, implementing partners rated their interactions with the Developmental Evaluator more positively compared to their USAID counterparts (N=14)

FCF Developmental evaluation compared to traditional evaluation. Results showed that the average composite score for USAID respondents (3.3 out of 5.0) was lower than the average composite score for respondents from implementing partner organizations (4.2 out of 5.0). (See Figure 13). The results indicated that the two groups had similar perspectives on how developmental evaluation a) facilitates adaptation to the program, b) brings awareness of complexities in the local environment, c) addresses the needs of my organization, and d) allows for evidence-based decision-making. On the remaining four sub-items, the difference in perspectives was notable: The average of the implementing partners' responses was at least one point higher than USAID's average. For instance, 7 out of 13 (54% of respondents; average score 4.8 out of 5) respondents from implementing partner organizations said that the developmental evaluation could uncover inefficiencies *much better* than traditional evaluation in this instance. In contrast, none of the USAID respondents reported feeling this way. With regards to developmental evaluation's ability to result in times savings, the average score for implementing partners was 3.9 out of 5, 1.2 points higher than USAID's average score.
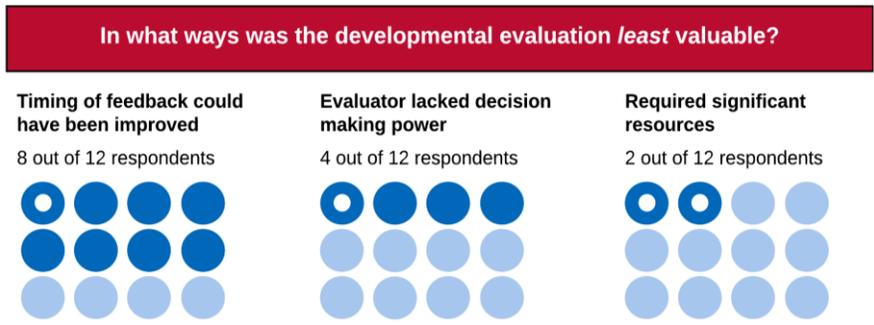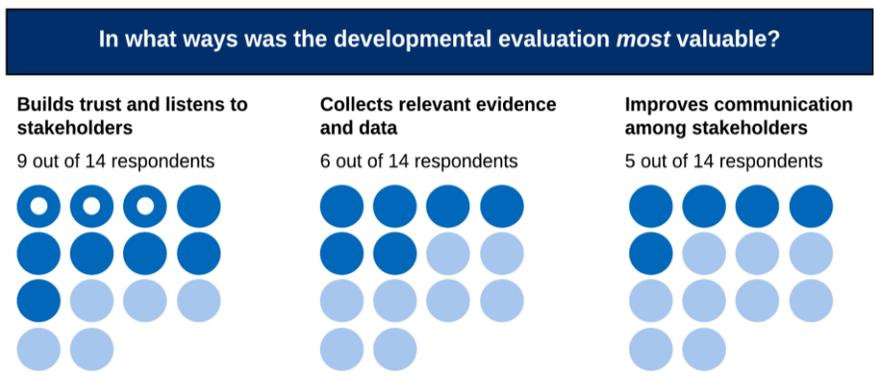
Compared to traditional evaluation, the extent to which the developmental evaluation...

Average score

	USAID	Implementing Partner
Addressed the needs of my organization...	3.3	3.8
Was aware of complexities in the local environment...	4	4.3
Allowed for evidence-based decision making...	4	4.6
Facilitated adaptations to the program...	4.3	4.3
Was timely in providing feedback...	3	4
Resulted in time savings...	2.7	3.9
Was able to uncover inefficiencies...	3.7	4.8
Was cost-effective...	1.5	3.7
Composite score (average of all sub-items)	3.3	4.2

■ USAID   ■ Implementing Partner

MOST AND LEAST VALUABLE ASPECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION

Respondents emphasized the value of the developmental evaluation's ability to build trust and listen to stakeholders' needs, collect relevant evidence, and improve communication among stakeholders (Figure 14). The need for relevant and timely data was supported by a substantiator who said, "a lot of new approaches were being used in FCF for the first time; but then this is exactly when you want to use a developmental evaluation over a traditional approach because you can receive and use that feedback in real time versus months or years later."

Figure 14: Respondents emphasized that the developmental evaluation was valuable because of its ability to build trust and listen to stakeholders, collect relevant evidence, and improve communication among stakeholders

In what ways was the developmental evaluation *most* valuable?

Builds trust and listens to stakeholders
9 out of 14 respondents

Collects relevant evidence and data
6 out of 14 respondents

Improves communication among stakeholders
5 out of 14 respondents

In what ways was the developmental evaluation *least* valuable?

Timing of feedback could have been improved
8 out of 12 respondents

Evaluator lacked decision making power
4 out of 12 respondents

Required significant resources
2 out of 12 respondents

Key:
○ USAID stakeholder
● Implementing partner

Cost effectiveness and time savings were the least valuable components of the developmental evaluation approach according to these stakeholders. Two-thirds of respondents (67%) who answered the question reported that the timing of feedback was the least valuable aspect of the developmental evaluation. For example, some respondents said that the evaluation should have happened sooner. Ot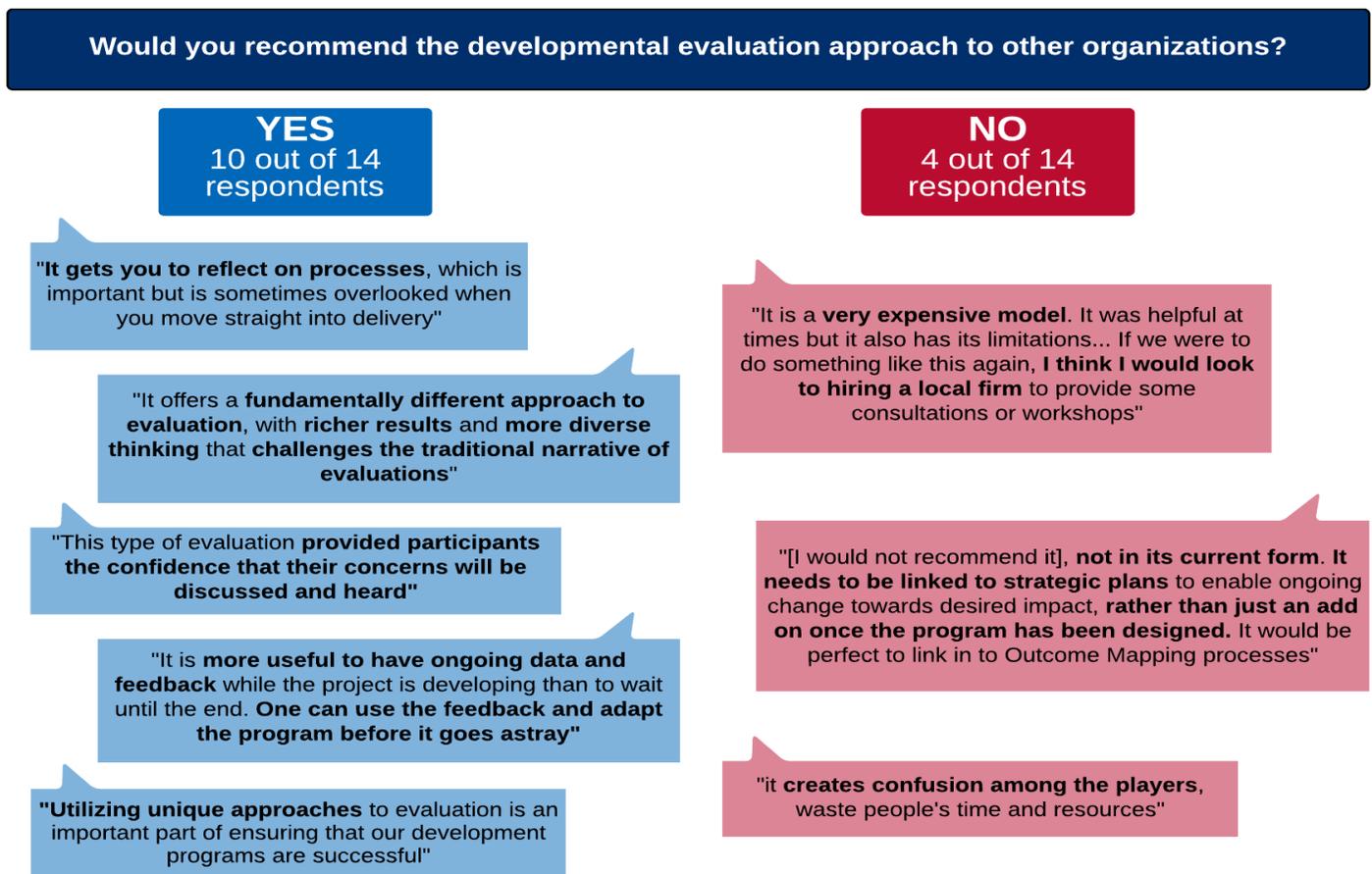hers commented more specifically about the feedback provided during the evaluation. One person commented that "it was challenging to get written feedback in a

consistent and timely manner[16]." Respondents also said the developmental evaluation was least valuable in regard to its lack of decision-making power and the amount of human and capital resources[17] required to implement this type of evaluation. Readers should note, however, that the developmental evaluation approach does not aim to have the Developmental Evaluator make decisions on program-level activities and implementation processes. He/she only provides the data, insights and potential recommendations to decision-makers. As one FCF stakeholder explained in their substantiation interview, a developmental evaluation can provide a "bird's-eye view to help reflect on the program."

STAKEHOLDERS PERSPECTIVES ON USING DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION AGAIN

Respondents were asked two separate questions about whether they would recommend developmental evaluation. First, they were asked whether they would like to see its continued use at their own organization (closed-ended question). All 14 respondents provided an answer to the question: eight respondents (57%) said *yes;* one respondent said *no;* the remaining five respondents (36%), including all three USAID respondents, said *yes, but with changes.*[18] The second question asked respondents whether they would recommend the developmental evaluation approach to other organizations and also asked why. Here, 10 of 14 respondents (71%) said *yes,* while four respondents (29%) said *no.* Figure 15 below highlights key reasons as to why respondents would or would not recommend the approach.

Figure 15: The majority of respondents would recommend developmental evaluation to other organizations

Would you recommend the developmental evaluation approach to other organizations?

YES
10 out of 14 respondents

"**It gets you to reflect on processes**, which is important but is sometimes overlooked when you move straight into delivery"

"It offers a **fundamentally different approach to evaluation**, with **richer results** and **more diverse thinking** that **challenges the traditional narrative of evaluations**"

"This type of evaluation **provided participants the confidence that their concerns will be discussed and heard**"

"It is **more useful to have ongoing data and feedback** while the project is developing than to wait until the end. **One can use the feedback and adapt the program before it goes astray**"

"**Utilizing unique approaches** to evaluation is an important part of ensuring that our development programs are successful"

NO
4 out of 14 respondents

"It is a **very expensive model**. It was helpful at times but it also has its limitations... If we were to do something like this again, **I think I would look to hiring a local firm** to provide some consultations or workshops"

"[I would not recommend it], **not in its current form. It needs to be linked to strategic plans** to enable ongoing change towards desired impact, **rather than just an add on once the program has been designed.** It would be perfect to link in to Outcome Mapping processes"

"it **creates confusion among the players**, waste people's time and resources"

---

[16] The size of the change required to address the challenge influenced the timeline in which it could be implemented. Furthermore, all stakeholders had unique perspectives and were not necessarily aware of all the work streams that the Developmental Evaluator was engaged in.
[17] USAID was the sole funder of the FCF developmental evaluation. Any responses related to the cost-effectiveness of the developmental evaluation may be biased because information about funding was not disclosed to all key stakeholders at the start of the evaluation.
[18] This was a not an open-ended question.

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: KEY TAKEAWAYS

Based on the analysis above, the team identified the following key takeaways:

1. **The majority of respondents found that the Developmental Evaluator addressed the challenges they faced. However it is worthwhile to understand the perspective of those who felt differently. Five out of 14 respondents (36%) reported the Developmental Evaluator only addressed the challenges they faced *about half the time* or less** (Figure 10). In exploring how *data collection and sharing and data utilization* served as barriers (via the analysis for Research Question 2), the team found: (1) the Developmental Evaluator's scope of work increased considerably through the period of evaluation and he had to prioritize tasks. (2) The Developmental Evaluator was not equally embedded across all the key FCF implementing organizations, as the DEPA-MERL consortium had initially envisioned. These factors may have contributed to why some of the respondents felt their challenges were not addressed. Additionally, it is unknown whether these challenges were within the scope of the Developmental Evaluator's manageable interests. Also, as the Developmental Evaluator shared negative findings, key stakeholders at the organizations who received these findings began to change the manner in which they interacted with him i.e., sharing less data, which may have affected how the Developmental Evaluator could successfully address challenges faced by the survey respondents. This finding on behavior change towards the Developmental Evaluator was triangulated across monthly reflection interviews, substantiation interviews, and the *value of developmental evaluation* survey.

2. The **majority of respondents found that the developmental evaluation approach was better than traditional evaluation in the FCF context**. However, two main areas identified **as value losses were the cost-effectiveness and time savings of the approach**. In response to a qualitative question, stakeholders again reported that the timing of the feedback (and the timing of the evaluation in general) was one of the least valuable aspects of the evaluation (Figure 11). A tradeoff exists between the positive aspects of the developmental evaluation and the lack of time savings and cost-effectiveness of the approach compared to other traditional approaches. Additionally, in this developmental evaluation, both decision-making by leadership and execution of these decisions took time; both these challenges highlight that developmental evaluation can provide real-time data, but decision-making and the associated implementation processes can slow down the response necessary to the emergent learning.

3. Results showed that **implementing partners rated the value of the developmental evaluation higher overall, as compared to USAID**. Readers should note that the number of USAID respondents (n=3) is considered a limitation of this study (Figure 12 and 13). This small sample size makes it hard to draw conclusions about why there is a difference between implementing partners' perceptions of the value of developmental evaluation compared to USAID. Given that developmental evaluation is a utilization-focused approach that enables continuous learning and improvement (i.e., practicing adaptive management), it is possible to assume that implementing partners would receive greater value for this reason. Understanding the reasons for this shift in orientation of value for funder and implementing partner can be an area of exploration in future studies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the FCF developmental evaluation, the team has identified and organized recommendations into themes which follow the order of developmental evaluation implementation (Table 7).

Table 7: Seven key recommendations to strengthen how developmental evaluations are launched, implemented, and utilized to promote decision-making

Theme	Recommendations
Selecting developmental evaluation as the evaluative approach	1. The funder(s) should confirm that a learning culture exists within the organization before selecting the developmental evaluation approach
Launching a developmental evaluation	2. The funder(s) and the Developmental Evaluator should identify and work with a diverse set of developmental evaluation champions from the start 3. The Developmental Evaluator should develop familiarity with stakeholders to design and implement activities from the start
Implementing a developmental evaluation	The Developmental Evaluator should… 4. Include technical evidence and use interpersonal skills when sharing negative findings 5. Maintain objectivity and impartiality to stakeholders of the developmental evaluation The funder(s) should… 6. Find strategies for promoting the objectivity of the evaluation
Utilizing developmental evaluation data for decision-making	7. The Developmental Evaluator should provide program decision-makers with tools to make timely and well-informed decisions

SELECTING DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION AS THE EVALUATIVE APPROACH

1. THE FUNDER(S) SHOULD CONFIRM THAT A LEARNING CULTURE EXISTS WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION BEFORE SELECTING THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION APPROACH

Findings from the analysis of the barriers and enablers of the FCF developmental evaluation supported that FCF stakeholders' adaptability and comfort with change was a critical component for ensuring that the evaluation was able to function effectively. The data corroborates existing literature that a culture of reflective practice and critical thinking at an organization is an essential condition for using the developmental evaluation approach.[x]

Action items for the funder(s):

- Funder(s) should survey or interview key stakeholders before the launch of a developmental evaluation to understand the learning culture[19] at their organization. An example of critical questions to ask can be found in the *DEPA-MERL Developmental Evaluation Readiness Survey*[20] which was adapted from Tamarack Community's *Developmental Evaluation Diagnostic Checklist*. The Spark Policy Institute's *Developmental Evaluation Readiness Assessment tool* can help assess whether the contracting mechanism, organizational culture, personalities of stakeholders, and program scope are amenable for program adaptation.
- In a program with multiple implementing partners where a diversity of learning cultures may exist, the funder(s) should have organizations co-develop a Standard Operating Procedure to determine a shared learning culture. This can help stakeholders set clear expectations of each other's behaviors *before* the approach is implemented.
- The funder(s) should also ask five key questions outlined in Box 1 to set themselves up for a successful developmental evaluation.

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[19] A learning culture exists when both leadership and staff are willing to accept (and learn from) both favorable and unfavorable performance data or program outcomes; when stakeholders can share uncomfortable information transparently without fear of repercussion from leadership and, as one substantiation interviewee said, "where there is no fear of what recommendations will be made."

[20] The team conducted a self-reported readiness survey in January 2017 with key FCF stakeholders to assess stakeholder's readiness for developmental evaluation. Based on learnings from this experience and the possibility of reporting biases, the team believes there would be value in having the Developmental Evaluator conduct an external assessment as well such that any discrepancies in result could be discussed.

LAUNCHING A DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUTION

2. THE FUNDER(S) AND THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATOR SHOULD IDENTIFY AND WORK WITH A DIVERSE SET OF DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION CHAMPIONS FROM THE START

The FCF Developmental Evaluator recognized the value of champions: in addition to increasing stakeholders' understanding and buy-in, which were key components of the *developmental evaluation readiness* factor, champions also supported the *integration of the Developmental Evaluator*. They helped facilitate interactions and data sharing between the Developmental Evaluator and key stakeholders.

Action items for the funder(s) and Developmental Evaluator:

- The funder(s) and the Developmental Evaluator should find person(s) in key stakeholder organizations who understand inter- and intra-organizational dynamics, are personable, and understand the value of adaptive management practices to serve as champions. Champions should be individuals with decision-making power who can help integrate the Developmental Evaluator into their team(s) and enable transparent sharing of information with him/her. The Developmental Evaluator should ask organizational leadership to identify champions based on this selection criteria. This will help to hold leadership accountable in allowing champions to fulfill their role.

- In programs that have teams in both U.S. headquarters (HQ) and worldwide, the Developmental Evaluator should identify persons to serve as champions in both locations. These champions' role must include helping facilitate increased timeliness and transparency of communication between HQ and local country teams. The Developmental Evaluator should interact with these champions regularly to keep them abreast of challenges in the HQ-local country dynamics.

> **Box 1: Top five questions for the funder(s) to answer before beginning a developmental evaluation**
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> To administer a successful developmental evaluation, the funder(s) should address the challenges that arise from the implementation of the approach. To help the funder(s) accomplish this, here are questions that can aid the process:
>
> 1. **What changes can or *cannot* be made to the program award during the period of performance?** Findings from a developmental evaluation are often directed at developing *processes* to enhance the innovation at hand. The funder(s) should include language in contracts that allows for flexibility to make evidence-based changes to the program.
>
> 2. **How will data gathered during the developmental evaluation be managed?** The Developmental Evaluator is constantly collecting and generating massive amounts of data. The funder(s) should develop a scope of work for the developmental evaluation to prioritize what data is collected. The Developmental Evaluator should co-define the research questions for evaluation with program stakeholders, including the funder(s), at the start of the evaluation.
>
> 3. **Is there a plan for how to share sensitive information?** The funder(s) and the Developmental Evaluator should discuss how the Developmental Evaluator will navigate certain sensitivities– personal, budgetary, etc. Developmental Evaluators have intimate, honest interactions with stakeholders, which often make them privy to certain information that might not be appropriate to share with other stakeholders. USAID should develop a Code of Conduct with the Developmental Evaluator to manage this challenge.
>
> 4. **How will resources – time, finances, and etc. – be deployed?** Developmental evaluation is a resource-intensive approach. Further, the level and quality of the support required may change over time as the evaluation evolves to meet the shifting needs of the program. USAID and the Developmental Evaluator should discuss how resources will be managed.
>
> 5. **How will the developmental evaluation be closed out? What is the off-ramp strategy?** Developmental evaluation is different than other traditional approaches which provide recommendations only at the end of the evaluation. In this approach 'the end' is not inherently defined by the production of a final report. Instead, data collection, findings, and recommendations are continuous. USAID staff should be prepared to have a conversation about what a successful close of a developmental evaluation will look like.

3. THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATOR SHOULD DEVELOP FAMILIARITY WITH STAKEHOLDERS TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT ACTIVITIES FROM THE START

From the very beginning of the FCF developmental evaluation, the Developmental Evaluator began to identify scope of the evaluation; learned about critical decision-makers and decision-making processes; understood key stakeholders' expectations of the developmental evaluation; developed trust; and provided information about the developmental evaluation approach as well as shared the value proposition of developmental evaluation. This helped him to develop familiarity with stakeholders and ensured that they felt represented in the activities conducted as part of the evaluation.

Action items for the Developmental Evaluator:

- The Developmental Evaluator should understand the local and organizational culture and ensure all kick-off and training activities account for this. The Developmental Evaluator should get to know stakeholders, including the dynamics between them, before a group kick-off event (such as an Acculturation Workshop). He/she should use formal techniques as well as informal set-ups such as lunches and coffee meetings to understand the sector's culture, the local culture, and individual personalities. In these meet-ups, the Developmental Evaluator should encourage open sharing of information from the beginning. He/she should review organizational and program documents such as the Code of Conduct, Context Analysis Report, Needs Assessment Report, etc. to understand local culture. If the Developmental Evaluator finds that a group kick-off event may not be the right format to co-create research questions of the developmental evaluation, he/she should identify another channel.

- The Developmental Evaluator should facilitate conversations on learning and decision-making in the group kick-off event. The *FSG's Facilitating Intentional Group Learning Guide* is a resource for such tools.

- The Developmental Evaluator should share real examples of challenges created by past developmental evaluations and how they were rectified in the kick-off event to minimize any existing buyer's remorse.[21] The DEPA-MERL consortium conducts quarterly Developmental Evaluator Clinics to discuss challenges that Developmental Evaluators face in their programs. Contact Gabrielle Plotkin at gplotkin@socialimpact.com to sign up for the clinics or receive meeting notes.

IMPLEMENTING A DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION

4. THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATOR SHOULD INCLUDE TECHNICAL EVIDENCE AND USE INTERPERSONAL SKILLS WHEN SHARING NEGATIVE FINDINGS

As mentioned earlier, the FCF Developmental Evaluator used strong communication skills including persuasion, tactfulness, and negotiation skills throughout the course of the evaluation, especially when he shared uncomfortable and/or negative information. On the flip side, there was an instance where his informal sharing of recommendations caused tensions between different organizations and teams that were not privy to certain conversations.

Action items for the Developmental Evaluator:

- Early on in the evaluation, the Developmental Evaluator should decide how data will be shared with key stakeholders such as determining the format, timing, and method for sharing. The Developmental Evaluator should identify the most effective way of sharing insights, findings, and recommendations such that they are solution-oriented, though recognizing that this way may change over time depending on context. He/she should ask developmental evaluation champions for their thoughts on these techniques as well as ask key stakeholders during key informant interviews and informal chats. DEPA-MERL's *Developmental Evaluation in Practice: Tips, Tools and Templates* guide has a variety of recommendations on types of deliverables that can be developed. The American Evaluation Association's AEA365 Resources provides tips for sharing negative findings: see *Part 1* and *Part 2*.

- The Developmental Evaluator should engage in two-way data sharing pathways such that stakeholders who are willing to share information openly also receive relevant inputs or at least are informed of how their data was used. If the Developmental Evaluator does not engage in such manner, he/she risks reducing the willingness of some stakeholder's participation in the developmental evaluation. The Developmental Evaluator should negotiate with the funder(s) and key stakeholders on the appropriate level of transparency to share negative findings and associated recommendations.

- The Developmental Evaluator should acknowledge relationships and underlying tensions between individuals and/or organizations when sharing information. This can be done transparently through the conversation with the stakeholder or through the use of a communication strategy that accounts for this. The Developmental Evaluator should develop a flexible, action-oriented plan to engage with all. The *Community Tool Box* by the University of Kansas provides resources for developing a communication plan.

- The Developmental Evaluator should develop a Code of Conduct for himself/herself with final approval received from the funder(s) to ensure a respectful relationship with all stakeholders. The Developmental Evaluator should also develop an enforcement method with stakeholders on the Code of Conduct and build trust with them. Ways

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[21] Buyer's remorse can occur after leadership and staff fully understood the extent of integration required and how transparently data needed to be shared with the Developmental Evaluator.

to build trust include: providing rapid, relevant, and right-sized feedback to stakeholders and the funder(s), managing stakeholder expectations, and sharing uncomfortable or negative information in sensitive ways.

- The Developmental Evaluator should understand the sub-themes of the priority barriers and enablers identified in this report and how they varied over time to anticipate and plan for similar factors. He/she should strategically target these sub-themes most likely to occur to bolster the success of the approach. For example, the Developmental Evaluator should prioritize *developmental evaluation readiness* such as through champions early on and continue to emphasize its importance throughout the period of evaluation.

5. THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATOR SHOULD MAINTAIN OBJECTIVITY AND IMPARTIALITY TO STAKEHOLDERS OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION

In the FCF developmental evaluation, substantiators confirmed that the Developmental Evaluator worked hard to maintain objectivity with all stakeholders. However, they shared that there were instances when other stakeholders did not find the Developmental Evaluator to be objective because of their perception of his relationship with the Integrating Partner.

Action items for the Developmental Evaluator:

- The Developmental Evaluator should maintain and also appear to maintain neutrality with different stakeholders. He/she should seek to balance positions from stakeholders' with opposing sources of view by speaking with both parties when investigating challenges. The Developmental Evaluator should manage stakeholders' perception of his/her work. While it may be easier to be seen as objective at the start of a developmental evaluation, it may become trickier with time and especially, as the Developmental Evaluator shares negative findings. He/she should watch for instances of partiality and address them as soon as possible as these can create seeds of doubt that can influence stakeholders to hold back information or to provide data that manipulates the truth.
- When documenting and sharing emergent learnings, the Developmental Evaluator should think of himself/herself as a journalist who documents and shares facts and data through the use of objective language rather than stakeholders' or their own personal opinions. The Developmental Evaluator should remind stakeholders throughout the period of evaluation that the analysis and suggested recommendations are evidence-based.
- The Developmental Evaluator should work closely with funder(s) and key stakeholders in identifying the physical location where the Developmental Evaluator will work - including considering which organization they are based at as this can be perceived as partiality to that organization.
- The Developmental Evaluator should routinely review his/her scope of work with the funder(s) to manage competing requests from different stakeholders.

6. THE FUNDER(S) SHOULD FIND STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING THE OBJECTIVITY OF THE EVALUATION

Similar to the above recommendation, this relates to what steps the funder can take to ensure that the developmental evaluation and its results are perceived as independent and objective. Data from the qualitative analysis of barriers and enablers for the FCF developmental evaluation showed that establishing trust with stakeholders was a continual process which appeared across all stages of the evaluation. The trust stakeholders had in the Developmental Evaluator (and the developmental evaluation process as a whole) was at least partially connected to stakeholders' perceptions of USAID as the funder of the evaluation. USAID's role as the only funder of the developmental evaluation provided them with unique power in the developmental evaluation including deciding who received which information and data as well as when they received it.

Action items for the funder(s):

- The funder(s) should be present at the initial kick-off meeting with all key stakeholders. They should openly acknowledge trust and transparent information sharing in the meeting and throughout the evaluation. They should be prepared to engage in candid conversations about the evaluations' objectivity early on to ensure partner buy-in. These initial discussions should also include a collaborative deliberation to determine how and with whom, information will be shared throughout the evaluation.
- The funder(s) should co-develop with the Developmental Evaluator a communication plan that includes protocols for sharing negative and sensitive information for themselves as the receiver and also with other key stakeholders. This allows for developing a culture of trust that can help remove the stigma around failing, such that lessons learned can be used to improve programming for greater developmental impact.

- The funder(s) should ensure that the Developmental Evaluator has the right technical and interpersonal skills through the interview process. They should ask behavioral and situational interview questions and analyze their skills through a case study test. When it is hard to find one person with all of these skills, they should consider splitting the skills between two Developmental Evaluators or having a team support the Developmental Evaluator, depending on availability of resources.
- The developmental evaluation should be co-funded (if feasible) to make the evaluation more objective. The funder should explore funding models that involve other stakeholders contributing funds to reduce the power dynamics that can occur with a single funder.
- The funder(s) must ensure their role does not hinder key principles of developmental evaluation such as *timely feedback*, *co-creation*, and the *utilization-focused* principles. Leadership within the funder organization/s should themselves serve as formal or informal champions of this approach within their organizations and in the program.

UTILIZING DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION DATA FOR DECISION-MAKING

7. THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATOR SHOULD PROVIDE PROGRAM DECISION-MAKERS WITH TOOLS TO MAKE TIMELY AND WELL-INFORMED DECISIONS

In the FCF developmental evaluation, only some key stakeholders recognized a key fact of the developmental evaluation approach: the Developmental Evaluator can only develop recommendations; he/she cannot make the decisions on the execution of these recommendations. The outcomes of the developmental evaluation depend on the decisions made by key stakeholders. These decisions can result in lack of or negative programmatic impact even after a successful developmental evaluation has been put in place in a program. Additionally, the time taken to reach a decision can also slow down the response to an emergent learning.

Action items for the Developmental Evaluator:
- The Developmental Evaluator should strike a balance between developing recommendations that account for resources available and developing recommendations outside of the limiting boundaries of the program and contract. This is in order to think 'outside the box' and find creative, innovative solutions to challenges.
- The Developmental Evaluator should facilitate the use of tools for reflection and decision-making to help key decision-makers come to timely, well-informed, evidence-based decisions on program changes. USAID's *Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting Toolkit* has materials for guidance. The Developmental Evaluator should help make space for proactive thinking among key stakeholders and facilitate conversations between them to co-create insights. E.g. he/she can facilitate reflection on data through sense-making methods such as 'data galleries' to generate ideas for action. In these galleries, key findings are displayed on charts for individuals to review and discuss how they interpret the data, what questions the data brings to mind, and/or what surprises them about the data.
- The Developmental Evaluator should facilitate meetings between decision-makers to review recommendations together and help prioritize them based on available resources.
- The Developmental Evaluator should focus on building credibility, respect and gravitas with stakeholders throughout the period of evaluation such that their evaluation data and recommendations are given due consideration by stakeholders' leadership.

CONCLUSION

Developmental evaluation should be used only when the prerequisite conditions are met. Within the landscape of evaluation methods typically used by USAID, developmental evaluation offers a promising approach to evaluate innovative programs that operate in complex environments and need to adapt over time. In this report, the team presented data findings related to three research questions. Together these findings culminated to the following conclusions:
- **Developmental evaluation is able capture, promote, and enable the utilization of emergent learnings such that they lead to the adaptive management of a program and allow for a multitude of different types of changes that vary by theme, size, level, and positive or negative impact.** To capture emergent learnings the Developmental Evaluator documented emails, meetings, and one-on-one conversations that he had with stakeholders. To promote emergent learnings and data with relevant stakeholders he conducted key informant interviews and facilitated workshops. To enable the utilization of emergent learnings for program adaptations with the goal of increased impact he attended meetings and shared his recommendations

both formally and informally. The research and data findings support the use of developmental evaluation by USAID as an approach capable of capturing, promoting and enabling emergent learnings for adaptive management.

- **Several barriers emerged in the FCF developmental evaluation, including:** *leadership*, *data collection and sharing*, **and** *USAID dynamics*. **Many equally important enablers such as** *Skills of the Developmental Evaluator and data collection and sharing* **were present as well. The presence of these barriers and enablers and associated sub-themes varied over time.** The team provided recommendations for leveraging enablers and addressing challenges that emerged and thus encourage continued use of this approach across Missions and Bureaus.
- A majority of stakeholders reported experiencing many benefits from the FCF developmental evaluation. Stakeholders also reported that **in the context of the FCF program, developmental evaluation was better than traditional evaluation, for six of eight sub-items**. The uniqueness of the Developmental Evaluator's role introduced some key advantages over traditional evaluation. Overall, these survey results are promising support for continued use of developmental evaluation within the USAID context.

AREAS OF FUTURE RESEARCH AND EXPLORATION

While the team does not consider the study of a single developmental evaluation in the USAID context sufficient to fully understand how the developmental evaluation approach can be leveraged in this context, the team believes there are valuable findings from the DEPA-MERL pilot with FCF. The lessons learned provide useful insights and can be applied to identify areas of future research in the field of developmental evaluation. Most notably, additional research should be conducted on the change process facilitated by developmental evaluation.

There is also a need to further explore the enablers and barriers that help or hinder a successful developmental evaluation, and to see if they hold true in other developmental evaluations conducted within USAID. DEPA-MERL is currently exploring some of these areas for future research through other developmental evaluations being employed within USAID. DEPA-MERL will compare and share findings across these developmental evaluations in a forthcoming report (expected in September 2019). Additional research should also be conducted to see if implementing recommendations found in this report reduce barriers to developmental evaluation. Additionally, since stakeholders said that they did not see developmental evaluation to be a cost-effective approach, the team encourages other researchers, USAID, and other implementers to explore the effects of different cost models of developmental evaluation, such as having a part-time Developmental Evaluator, on the success of the approach. The team also considers that additional research to understand the differences in perspectives of implementing partners and USAID on the value of developmental evaluation will make this approach more effective in the USAID context.

The DEPA-MERL team looks forward to working with other evaluators, funders, and implementers interested in creating a stronger, more effective developmental evaluation approach.

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