

Localization Within MOMENTUM

How Awards are Contributing to USAID's Vision for Locally-Led and Sustainable Solutions

MOMENTUM Knowledge Accelerator

MOMENTUM Learning Exploration Summary Report | April 2024



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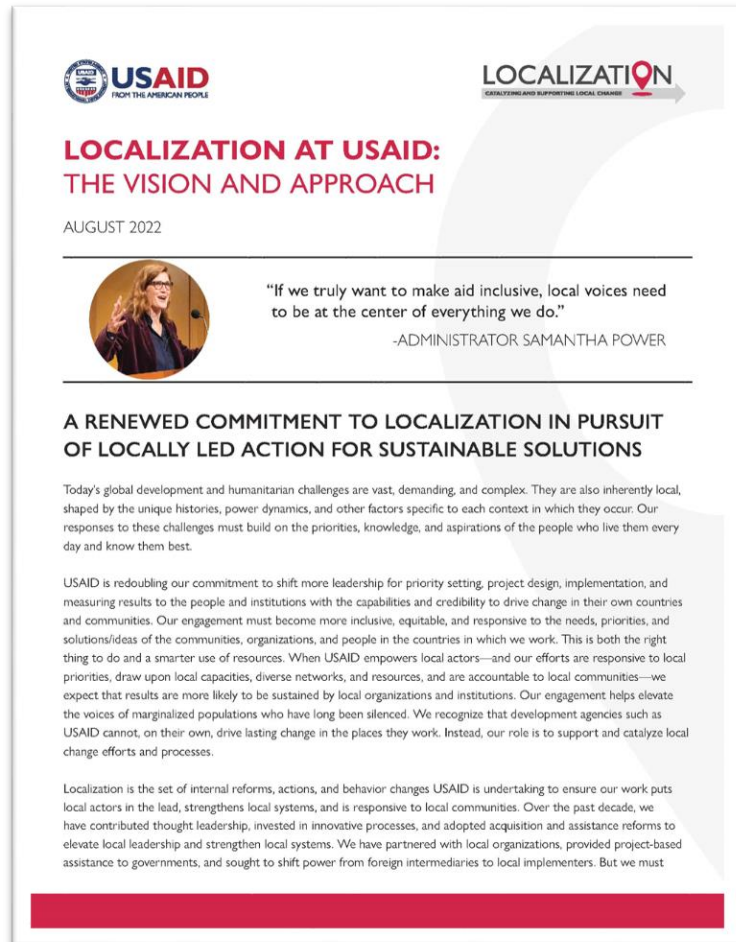




SECTION 01

Background

USAID's Vision and Agenda for Localization



[Localization at USAID: The Vision and Approach](#)

USAID is committed to supporting local change in partner countries through shifting funding and decision-making power to the people, organizations, and institutions that are driving change in their own communities.

USAID's localization agenda includes four key components:

1. Adapting policies and programs to foster locally led development
2. Shifting power to local actors
3. Channeling a larger portion of funds directly to local partners
4. Serving as a global advocate and thought leader to catalyze shifts toward locally led development

In pursuit of this goal, USAID has committed to directing a quarter of its funding directly to local partners by FY2025 and ensuring that, by 2030, at least half of the Agency's programs place local actors to lead priority setting, activity design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

USAID MOMENTUM

MOMENTUM is USAID's flagship suite of interconnected awards working to accelerate reductions in maternal, newborn, and child morbidity and mortality and improve equitable access to high-quality voluntary family planning and reproductive care. Each award is a partnership of local and international private and civil society organizations (CSOs) and other stakeholders working alongside governments to improve health outcomes. Building on existing evidence and experience implementing global health programs and interventions, the suite helps to foster new ideas, partnerships, and approaches and to strengthen the resiliency of health systems.

The suite currently includes six centrally managed global awards and their associated country awards, plus five Mission-led bilateral country awards.



Learning How Localization Is Practiced by MOMENTUM

USAID and MOMENTUM partners convened in 2023 to discuss how the suite of awards are operationalizing localization across their activities to improve maternal, newborn, and child health, nutrition, voluntary family planning, and reproductive health (MNCHN/FP/RH) outcomes.

This report summarizes learning shared during the convening that describes how MOMENTUM is contributing to USAID's localization agenda. MOMENTUM's experiences and lessons learned may inform the pathways for other global projects to reinforce and support locally-led health and development efforts. This learning also contributes to multiple parts of the MOMENTUM learning agenda, since working to build and sustain local capacity and ownership of development activities is the foundation of the MOMENTUM theory of change.

MOMENTUM's learning agenda complements award-specific learning agendas and is intended for use by the MOMENTUM awards to collaborate, learn, and adapt. Its objectives include capturing relevant, prioritized learning; contributing to filling critical knowledge gaps for MOMENTUM, USAID, and country and global stakeholders; and telling MOMENTUM's story.

Learning Area Addressed



What is MOMENTUM's legacy in supporting countries toward sustainable development?

Relevant Learning Topics

- What **capacity strengthening** strategies are effective in increasing capacity at the individual, organization, community, and system levels?
- What strategies are MOMENTUM awards adopting to strengthen **country commitment**?
- Which **strategic partnerships** are important to foster and strengthen country progress toward sustainable development?



SECTION 02

MOMENTUM Insights on Defining Localization

Defining Localization

USAID defines localization as the set of internal reforms and actions undertaken by the Agency to ensure its programs are led by local actors or communities, are responsive to local communities, and strengthen local systems.

Source: [USAID. \(2022\). Localization at USAID: The vision and approach.](#)

USAID has identified 14 good practices for local leadership across four domains: direct funding, effective partnerships, capacity recognition and investment, and community engagement. Complementing projects managed by USAID Missions, centrally-funded projects such as MOMENTUM can integrate, learn from, and strengthen their application of these practices, thus contributing to USAID's localization commitments and their own development mandates.

Source: [USAID. \(2023\). Locally led programs indicator.](#)



MOMENTUM Reflections on the Complex Definition of Localization

Representatives from the MOMENTUM awards agreed that the term “local” is often applied too broadly.

Who is “local?” In development programming, “localization” is often applied to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) from the perspective of actors from a high-income setting, which could reinforce a sense of otherness.

Historically, localization approaches focus on local actors and organizations who are often affiliated with a larger organization based in a high-income country, rather than indigenous organizations. Donors such as USAID find it efficient to work with international organizations that are already familiar with their systems, and international organizations have experience designing winning project proposals.

What level of “local?” In some cases, a national organization that operates in a specific area of a country may not have representation from or expertise in that area. **Generally, representatives from the MOMENTUM awards agree that to achieve the goals of localization, indigenous, local actors and institutions should be leading priority setting and defining the outcomes and transformations they want to see in their own communities and countries.**

What Is Not Effective Localization?

While the definition of localization remains complicated, MOMENTUM representatives shared their perspectives on what localization is not.

- **Localization should not be inflexible.** Efforts to advance the goals of localization should be flexible and leave room for adaptation over time, informed by periodic assessments of what is and is not working. Localization should not hold everyone to a single set of standards, especially one that is externally-driven. For example, intensive editorial standards applied for U.S.-based audiences should not override the voice and tone of content generated by country-based authors.
- **Localization should not be impatient or haphazard.** It is unreasonable to expect non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to drastically overhaul ways of working without the time and resources needed to build sustainable practices and responsive systems. As a specific example, implementing organizations require time to plan for and respond to procurements. Funding cycles for USAID are unpredictable, and timelines that shift by months or years do not facilitate effective planning for organizations with smaller budgets.
- **Localization should not be artificial or disingenuous.** In some cases, calls for localization have resulted in cases of shadow-priming or “leading from behind.” This occurs when an international NGO is a subawardee to a local NGO as the prime for a USAID-funded project, but the international NGO leads development of the project proposal and intervention design. Activities designed by international donors without local voices but implemented by local actors are also artificial efforts.
- **Localization should not be overly complicated.** Operational requirements and procedures initiated by international donors have a history of being inaccessible or incomprehensible to anyone not already steeped in the system, requiring understanding of esoteric technical jargon and operational systems. For example, the USAID business forecast Q&A illuminates the significant learning curve needed to track jargon, processes, and timelines for organizations that have not previously worked with the Agency.



SECTION 03

Localization in Practice Under MOMENTUM

MOMENTUM's Localization Practices

- Co-Creation with Local Partners
- Resource Mobilization for Joint Implementation Plans
- Building Strategic Partnerships with Local Actors
- Amplifying Local Voices and Improving Social Accountability
- Strengthening the Capacity of Local Actors in Technical and Organizational Management
- Strengthening Data Systems, Data Use, and Adaptive Learning and Management
- Shifting Power to Local Partners During Implementation
- Measurement of Capacity Strengthening and Localization

Co-Creation With Local Partners

MOMENTUM awards use co-creation among their approaches to engage local institutions and partners, particularly to build buy-in and ownership during activity design. This usually takes the form of hosting in-person or hybrid meetings with stakeholders, including representatives of the community, and using human-centered design and participatory research approaches to identify the causes of a specific problem. **Discussion with and among those who are most familiar with the problem in the community allows for community-led identification and development of solutions that inform the design of project activities.** These activities are more likely to be relevant to actual community needs and have a greater chance of sustainability.

Often co-creation is paired with follow-up meetings and activities involving the same stakeholders, such as:

- Stakeholder mappings
- Key informant interviews
- Health facility or other baseline assessments
- Validation workshops
- Technical or project advisory groups
- Inclusive policy dialogue process and advocacy meetings
- Work plans or action plans for implementing partners

MOMENTUM projects have initiated co-creation activities across almost all their portfolios to generate local solutions and empower local actors to address challenges.

To date, the suite has facilitated the co-creation of project work plans in more than 30 countries.

SPOTLIGHT: CO-CREATION WITH LOCAL PARTNERS

Building Youth-Led Accountability

MOMENTUM Country and Global Leadership

Youth's communities are their future, and they are driven to address and improve local issues. Recognizing the rising demand for youth-led social accountability, MOMENTUM Country and Global Leadership invested in partnerships with two youth-led organizations: Youth Advocacy on Rights and Opportunities (YARO) in Ghana and Youth for Sustainable Development (YSD) in Kenya. MOMENTUM collaborated with each organization to co-develop youth-centric social accountability activities that suited their unique contexts and operating environments. Both organizations also received capacity strengthening support to address organizational and technical gaps that members of YARO and YSD identified and prioritized with assessment tools. **As a result of the co-created social accountability activities, 80 youth volunteers were trained to facilitate community scorecard assessments at 44 health facilities and clinics.**



Photo credit: YSD Machakos Chapter



“Co-creation is not very common. This should be followed by other international donors; it will allow them to understand what is the field situation and it gives us space to give our opinions and share our views.”

—Key informant, local youth-led partner, MOMENTUM Country and Global Leadership

Resource Mobilization for Joint Implementation Plans

Work plans and objectives designed through co-creation often need resources to become reality. MOMENTUM projects actively seek opportunities to shift power and responsibility, considering not only who is implementing activities but also who is providing resources to support implementation. Many MOMENTUM global implementing partners manage subawards to country-based NGOs who directly manage their own budgets and are responsible for implementing project activities.

Adapting funding mechanisms so that local actors directly receive donor funding is one way to shift power, but it is also important to mobilize resources from local or domestic sources to reduce reliance on international donors. Mobilization can occur in the form of domestic funders and through the procurement of in-kind materials and supplies in local markets. For example, policy dialogue processes and collaborations with government partners often seek to update health policies and to increase health funding that supports the operationalization of those policies, which funds activities. Government partners are sometimes able to leverage other partners to co-fund activities, as well.

PROJECT EXAMPLE

MOMENTUM Country and Global Leadership has successfully mobilized domestic funding to support new policies and co-created plans.

Globally, the project has contributed to:

- Revising or creating 27 policies to address MNCHN/FP/RH issues
- Mobilizing more than \$940,000 through country partnerships to address MNCHN/FP/RH issues
- Providing \$17 million in sub-awards to 134 local partners

Building Strategic Partnerships With Local Actors

MOMENTUM projects partner with a range of local organizations and institutions in different ways during activity design, implementation, and monitoring. The development of these strategic partnerships makes it easier for local stakeholders to participate in decision-making processes and contributes to building activity ownership and buy-in among leaders. These partnerships also improve the sustainability of project activities and outcomes by ensuring relevance and responsiveness to the local context, actors, and needs. In many cases, these partnerships also help to connect stakeholders working in the same technical or geographic areas, improving collaboration across health system actors.

Developing strategic partnerships requires time and intentional effort to build relationships and trust between partners. The MOMENTUM projects do this primarily through:

- Conducting stakeholder mappings to identify potential partners and their strengths or potential contributions to co-created activity goals
- Hosting consultations and coordination meetings with partners to monitor activities and exchange knowledge or learning relevant to activities
- Establishing and hosting technical advisory groups for locally-led oversight of program implementation
- Coaching community members or other actors who can serve as champions and lead community engagement activities

PROJECT EXAMPLE

MOMENTUM Safe Surgery in Family Planning and Obstetrics has built partnerships with a wide range of multisectoral organizations through its country projects. These include:

- Government actors (e.g., National Youth Service Corps)
- National professional associations and educational institutions (e.g., obstetrics and gynecology associations, nursing schools, and universities)
- Private sector organizations (e.g., telecom companies and private health facilities)
- Community-based organizations and groups (e.g., social workers, community health workers, and youth groups)
- Local radio stations (e.g., broadcast and narrowcast stations)

Supporting Sustainable Fistula Training Programs in Nigeria

MOMENTUM Safe Surgery in Family Planning and Obstetrics

MOMENTUM Safe Surgery in Family Planning and Obstetrics's localization strategy includes three fundamental components: co-creation at project inception, co-implementation, and cultivation of strategic partnerships. **In Nigeria, partnerships with teaching hospitals and the Center for Population and Reproductive Health (CPRH) are grounded in listening to partners' feedback and adapting co-implemented activities in response.** Feedback from partners about previous implementation of fistula training elevated concerns about alignment between training content and certification needs and the costs incurred for pooled efforts. Informed by this feedback, CPRH held meetings with MOMENTUM and medical directors of multiple teaching hospitals to identify potential resources for an adapted training approach, including resident doctors, bed spaces, consumables, a pathway to consultancy certification, and cost share for the project.

MOMENTUM's efforts in Nigeria secured financial support for the urogynecology units at teaching hospitals to ensure the sustainability of a revamped fistula training program. Further, a beginner-level fistula management training was initiated for resident doctors, with pathways established for continued education through master's degree programs. MOMENTUM also helped facilitate South-to-South learning by supporting trained surgeons from Nigeria to train Mozambican surgical technicians in surgical fistula repair. **Most importantly, these strategic partnerships have reduced implementation costs and improved the coverage and quality of services delivered in Nigeria.**



Photo credit: K. Levin, MOMENTUM Safe Surgery in Family Planning and Obstetrics

SPOTLIGHT: BUILDING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL ACTORS

Partnering With Non-Traditional Actors to Improve COVID-19 Vaccine Demand in DRC

MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity's approach to localization entails innovative partnerships with non-traditional collaborators to improve demand for and uptake of COVID-19 vaccination in the country. Using the project's partnerships framework, toolkit, and playbook to identify non-traditional partnerships, MOMENTUM engaged with 116 local faith leaders, the private sector, women's businesses, and media associations to raise awareness and dispel myths and rumors surrounding the COVID-19 vaccine. Next, the project supported local partners to develop educational materials on COVID-19 vaccines for the community. Finally, MOMENTUM facilitated collaboration between local partners and immunization managers to tailor COVID-19 vaccination strategies.

MOMENTUM's approach produced significant outcomes in DRC. The network of women's associations organized the country's first mass vaccination campaign targeting women. Through the faith-based partnership, 240 faith leaders in Kinshasa received training, while other partnerships in DRC facilitated 75 public education sessions. Additionally, a successful media campaign resulted in 47 appearances of DRC partners on radio and television.



Photo credit: Charly Nandisa and Sylvain Kabangu, MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity, DRC

Amplifying Local Voices and Improving Social Accountability

Joint implementation and strategic partnerships can expand the reach of a smaller local partner's work to wider audiences. In many cases, country-based local partners seek opportunities for partnerships and connections with global networks and organizations, not only to diversify funding opportunities but also to participate in learning exchanges. **The MOMENTUM suite advances country voices in global leadership discussions, ensuring that the experiences of the countries and communities most closely impacted by an issue are represented within and inform decisions made at the global level.**

Similarly, the MOMENTUM projects work at the country level to improve social accountability, an approach that amplifies community voices and ensures they inform actions to improve the responsiveness of local health systems. Participatory tools and approaches, such as Community Score Cards and Partnership Defined Quality, have been proven to effectively advance dialogue between health system users and actors and catalyze change in health policies and services.

PROJECT EXAMPLES

MOMENTUM Country and Global Leadership has engaged 76 country representatives as active participants in various global technical leadership fora, such as international conferences.

In Mali, MOMENTUM Private Healthcare Delivery partnered with the Network of Youth Ambassadors to improve their communication skills and activities; the project supported the ambassadors to create social media content about FP/RH topics and to raise awareness of youth-responsive SRH services within their partners' online networks.

Learning Together Through Co-Authored Resources

MOMENTUM Knowledge Accelerator

Project knowledge management (KM) and learning resources are most useful when the primary audiences can relate to the topic and trust that the author(s) understand it in practice. MOMENTUM Knowledge Accelerator elevates local voices and contexts by supporting country-based staff from across the suite to develop blogs, webinars, briefs, and other learning products that are shared with global audiences. The project also provides on-demand KM capacity strengthening resources to strengthen writing and communication skills so that country staff and partners can more effectively communicate about their work. **As much as possible, the project maintains the voice of local authors by including their bylines and tailoring content to what local teams want to express or document, rather than what staff from headquarters think might be of interest.**

Blogs with country staff bylines now represent most submissions for the MOMENTUM blog; in addition, many KM and learning products are co-authored by country staff.



SPOTLIGHT: AMPLIFYING LOCAL VOICES AND IMPROVING SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Strengthening Health Resilience Through Community Engagement Approaches in Mali

MOMENTUM Integrated Health Resilience

Political instability and the security crisis in the northern region of Mali have made it difficult for patients to access health facilities and for community health associations to continue their activities. To build health resilience in times of conflict or crisis, MOMENTUM Integrated Health Resilience seeks to strengthen community engagement, improving health service quality and access. In one such approach, MOMENTUM supported community members to adopt a locally owned fundraising strategy for solidarity funds to support the transportation of referral/evacuation cases to health facilities. **In Timbouctou District, the project held community dialogues to inform the fundraising strategy and worked with the general assembly of community health associations to adopt the initiative.**

Through these activities and buttressed by other MOMENTUM support, the community health associations successfully adopted fundraising plans. Households in the communities committed to contributing 100 FCFA per month, along with an additional 25 FCFA per prescription issued at a community health center. **From February 2023 to June 15, 2023, a total of 1,678,500 FCFA (\$2,686) was mobilized across nine out of 10 communities. These funds served the critical purpose of ensuring the timely transportation of people experiencing medical emergencies from the community to health facilities.** In the future, the funds could be used to acquire tricycles/motorcycles to provide community transportation services.



Photo credit: MOMENTUM Integrated Health Resilience Mali

Strengthening the Capacity of Local Actors in Technical and Organizational Management

Capacity strengthening helps to shift power so that local partners are better equipped to improve their organizational performance, effectively implement activities, and mobilize resources without relying on international partners. **MOMENTUM applies many approaches to strengthen local organizations' technical and organizational capacity to achieve their goals in line with their priorities.**

The MOMENTUM projects' capacity strengthening support to local partners includes conducting capacity needs assessments and trainings and providing mentoring and technical assistance in content areas prioritized by the partners. These efforts often focus on responding to USAID's rules and regulations so that local partners are able to work directly with USAID.

Technical capacity refers to knowledge and skills in thematic areas relevant to the programs and services delivered. These areas could include safe surgery, medical counseling, infection prevention and control, community discussion on FP, and data collection and use.

Organizational capacity refers to the organization's processes, functions, and activities that create the conditions necessary to achieve development results. It includes financial management, work plan development, training, resource mobilization, and human resource management.

Source: MOMENTUM Knowledge Accelerator. (2022). [*Strengthening organizational capacity – Lessons learned from MOMENTUM.*](#)

Tools for Assessing and Strengthening Organizational Capacity

MOMENTUM’s activities often begin with assessments of local partners’ organizational capacity. These assessments are led by the local partner, with MOMENTUM providing technical assistance in data interpretation and developing action plans that address needs assessment findings. Periodically revisiting the assessments can help partners monitor how their performance changes over time. MOMENTUM uses several tools, described below.

Tool	Characteristics
Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) ¹	Outlines all key structures and functions of an organization, based on Western business models. Used as a participatory, self-diagnostic tool to establish a baseline for organizational improvement activities and to inform a change action plan to improve capacity gaps.
Integrated Technical and Organizational Capacity Assessment (ITOCA) ²	Considers technical capacity (in the thematic areas related to programs and services delivered) alongside organizational capacity as part of an organization’s functions. Builds upon the OCA tool.
Organizational Performance Index (OPI) ³	Focuses on organizational performance as the outcome of organizational capacity. The tool measures changes in organizational performance and maps the relationship between capacity development inputs and community-level impact
Organizational Network Analysis (ONA) ⁴	Maps the relationships between different actors within an organization. The ONA can track the exchange of information and resources between actors, as well as the strength and quality of relationships and collaboration among stakeholders in the organization’s network. Measures efficiency, effectiveness, density, and reach.
Performance Mapping Improvement System (PERFORM) ⁵	Developed by MOMENTUM Knowledge Accelerator, an easy-to-use, systems-oriented tool based on the Enhanced Capacity Development Framework that assists partners and program implementers in identifying needed capacity development course corrections in a timely manner.

1. JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc. (2021). Advancing Partners & Communities: [Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool](#). Advancing Partners & Communities.
 2. Pact. (2020). [Integrated Technical Organizational Capacity Assessment for MOMENTUM Country and Global Leadership: Facilitator’s Guide](#). Washington, DC: United States Agency for International Development (USAID), MOMENTUM Country and Global Leadership, and Pact.
 3. Pact. (2015). [Organizational Performance Index Measurement Tool](#). USAID.
 4. Pact. (2011). *Pact organizational network analysis (ONA) handbook*.
 5. Levinger, B. & Kinghorn, M. (2022). [Capacity Mapping System \(CMS\) Guidance Documents](#). MOMENTUM Knowledge Accelerator. (Formally named the Capacity Mapping System [CMS]).

Building Organizational and Technical Capacity in Togo

MOMENTUM Country and Global Leadership

An assets-based approach to capacity strengthening emphasizes leveraging existing structures and mechanisms to help an organization improve their performance and cultivate their strengths. **In Togo, MOMENTUM Country and Global Leadership supported the capacity strengthening of four local partners—Espoir Vie-Togo (EVT) and Forces en action pour le mieux-être de la mère et de l'enfant (FAMME) in the Golfe district and ARPDC and SOS-Vita in the Ogoou district—using an assets-based approach.** Following an introduction from MOMENTUM, the partners applied the ITOCA tool to evaluate their own technical and organizational capacities. Collectively, they identified strengths including the existence of long-term strategic plans with outlined activities, established financial and procurement management policies and procedures, and strategic information systems and processes. MOMENTUM capitalized on these existing assets by assisting the organizations to update their strategic plans and delivering trainings on internal audit and control policies and procedures.

In close collaboration with the partners, MOMENTUM also designed activities to address capacity gaps identified through the assessment. These activities included training sessions on USAID rules and regulations, project management, and addressing workplace harassment. To assess the effectiveness of these capacity strengthening efforts, the OPI tool was utilized. Results were promising: **Within one year, all four partners demonstrated improved organizational performance. The strongest area of improvement was influence; the partners significantly increased their strategic partnerships with governments, NGOs, and donors.**



Strengthening Data Systems, Data Use, and Adaptive Learning and Management

Data use and adaptive learning and management are vital skills for local organizations to improve their performance and the quality of services they deliver to communities. MOMENTUM’s capacity strengthening and co-implementation efforts often focus on engaging local partners in project monitoring to improve data use. For example, MOMENTUM provides training and mentoring to partners on data collection in facility registers or project tools, data quality audits, and use of health management information systems (HMIS) to improve data quality and use. **MOMENTUM also facilitates the integration of data reviews into routine project coordination and management meetings to support a culture of data-driven decision-making and adaptive management.**

MOMENTUM conducts periodic “pause and reflect” sessions to review activity progress and data with partners, resulting in strategy refinement and strengthened performance. Local partners are supported to lead project evaluation and reporting activities when possible. Baseline, midterm, and endline evaluations, assessments, and surveys are often led by local partners, with technical support from MOMENTUM to refine evaluation tools or analyze data.

Partner-led evidence generation is paired with evidence dissemination efforts, helping partners better communicate their findings with key audiences at national or sub-national levels. This both elevates visibility of the organizations’ work and incentivizes them to collect and use data. At the global level, MOMENTUM promotes peer and South-to-South learning across awards so that partners can apply contextually relevant learning from other organizations to their own activities.

Developing HMIS Fistula and Cesarean Dashboards in Nigeria

MOMENTUM Safe Surgery in Family Planning and Obstetrics

To improve sustainable data quality, access, and utilization within the Nigeria Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, MOMENTUM Safe Surgery in Family Planning and Obstetrics began with listening sessions with government partners to identify critical challenges. These discussions at the state and national levels surfaced several key issues, including the exclusion of secondary and tertiary facility data on fistula and cesareans in the health management information system (HMIS). Data pertaining to fistula and cesareans were not available to providers, administrators, and key decision-makers. Further, HMIS officers faced a high burden coordinating data entry, and a power imbalance existed between local government authority staff and hospitals.

To better understand these issues and find solutions, key actors participated in collaborative learning sessions. Meetings were held with government stakeholders at federal and state levels, as well as with the executive directors of the Hospital Management Board and tertiary hospitals. **MOMENTUM implemented several solutions, including extending logins and permissions for the national HMIS to secondary and tertiary health facilities, enabling them to directly input and review data. In addition, a fistula and cesarean dashboard was developed within the national HMIS and a DHIS management training program was provided to data officers.** These measures collectively helped fortify the national health data system in Nigeria.

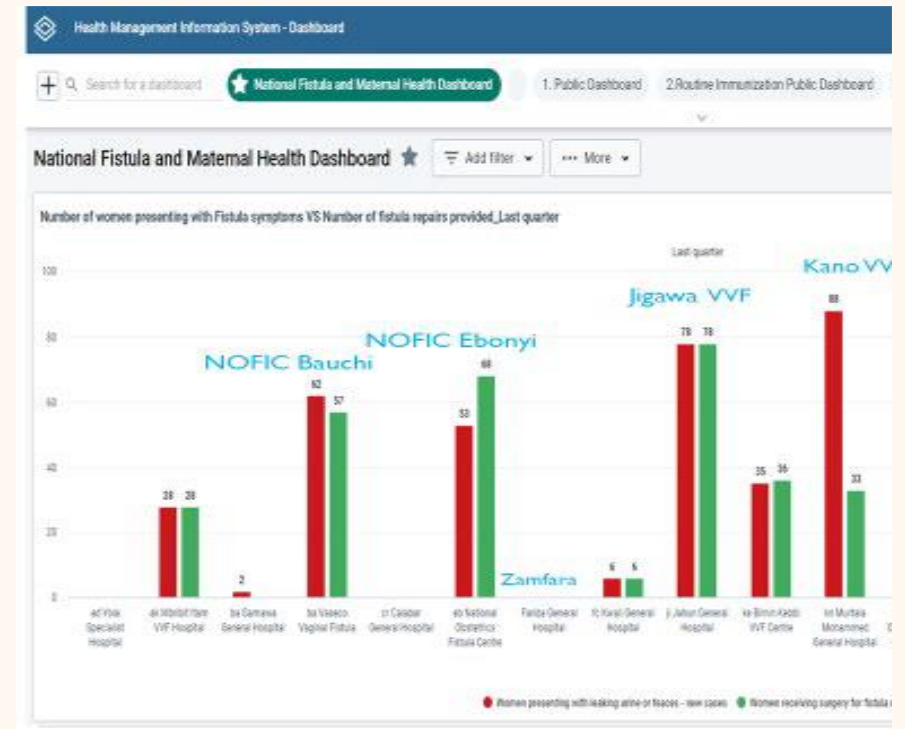


Photo credit: MOMENTUM Safe Surgery in Family Planning and Obstetrics, Nigeria

SPOTLIGHT: STRENGTHENING DATA SYSTEMS

Integrating Private Sector Data for a More Responsive Health System in Burundi

MOMENTUM Private Healthcare Delivery

MOMENTUM Private Healthcare Delivery's localization approach empowers and collaborates with local private sector partners while amplifying local voices. In Burundi, the project partnered with two local organizations, the National Association for Social Franchise (ANFS) and Network of Religious Denominations for the Promotion of Health and the Integral Well-Being of the Family (RCBIF), which manage and support networks of private and faith-based private health providers. **MOMENTUM provided technical assistance and mentoring to ANFS and RCBIF to improve the capacity of their private facilities in various areas, including data reporting.**

The ANFS partnership generated significant outcomes, particularly in improving data quality and reporting into the national data systems. ANFS is now actively involved in the validation of newly revised national data collection tools and reporting templates, and the organization is viewed as a private sector representative in this critical effort. ANFS played a key role in updating private sector data entry forms to enhance reporting into national health databases. **As a result, 100% of the data from MOMENTUM-supported health facilities was captured in the national HMIS.**



Photo credit: Jeannette Nimpagaritse/PSI Burundi

Shifting Power to Local Partners During Implementation

At its core, USAID's vision for localization seeks to shift power away from international NGOs and donors and toward local institutions and partners. It will take time and systemic change for local partners to be adequately resourced, in both financial and human capital, to lead development activities in their own communities. The MOMENTUM projects, currently led by international NGOs, are supporting efforts to shift power through co-implementation of their project work plans.

Whenever possible, MOMENTUM collaborates with local organizations and leaders to implement activities jointly, with technical assistance provided by the projects as needed. Co-implementation approaches leverage the complementary knowledge and expertise of both global and local partners. **Efforts to build strategic partnerships and strengthen the capacity of local partners are integrated into intervention implementation so that the partners can ultimately manage activities, deliver high-quality services, and steward funds from international donors.**

PROJECT EXAMPLE

In DRC, MOMENTUM Integrated Health Resilience shares its technical understanding of global-evidence based practices with local leaders who have deep knowledge of what works to address barriers to SRH service utilization in their communities. The project trained and coached 18 youth clubs across six health zones to help youth raise awareness of SRH issues with their peers and in their communities. MOMENTUM also co-developed an implementation work plan with the local partners, combining expertise and resources to implement activities together.

SPOTLIGHT: SHIFTING POWER TO LOCAL PARTNERS DURING IMPLEMENTATION

Improving Leadership and Technical Capacity to Mobilize New Funding in South Sudan

MOMENTUM Integrated Health Resilience

In South Sudan, MOMENTUM Integrated Health Resilience partnered with The Rescue Initiative–South Sudan (TRI-SS) to conduct organizational capacity assessments using the LOICAT and OPI tools and then develop a 100-day plan to improve staff performance using the PERFORM assessment tool developed by MOMENTUM Knowledge Accelerator. To strengthen project implementation, MOMENTUM trained TRI-SS staff in several skill areas:

- Communication on FP/RH topics, gender-based violence, and gender awareness
- Social and behavior change and communication skills to engage community members on FP/RH topics
- Organizational efficiency and sustainability approaches, such as resource mobilization, strategy and planning, grants and financial management, and administrative operations
- U.S. Government resource utilization

Funded by a sub-award, TRI-SS led various MOMENTUM activities to strengthen feedback and accountability mechanisms between communities and the health system and ensure health services are responsive to patient needs. **As a result of its partnership with MOMENTUM, TRI-SS received \$2 million in direct funding from PEPFAR for four years to lead an HIV-focused project across 10 states in South Sudan.** Under this funding, TRI-SS is monitoring the implementation of HIV services through data collection and analysis and collecting feedback from key populations.



Photo credit: Christine Lasway/ MOMENTUM Integrated Health Resilience



Measurement of Capacity Strengthening and Localization

Because the concept of localization is complex and means different things to different stakeholders, it is difficult to measure directly. Localization indicators, some required by USAID, primarily examine the number of local partners engaged in MOMENTUM's activities, the improved performance of the local partners, the use of adaptive learning, and community engagement efforts. MOMENTUM projects routinely monitor and report on the proportion of award funding that is provided to local partners via sub-awards or professional service agreements. Whenever possible, local partners lead documentation and reporting of data on the activities they are charged with implementing.

Generating program learning and evidence from activities that contribute to localization is built into the learning agendas of many of the MOMENTUM awards. This feature allows multiple sources of information and perspectives to contribute to broader learning about achieving USAID's localization vision, including the overall MOMENTUM learning agenda.



Metrics for Measuring Localization Efforts

The table below illustrates some of the indicators related to localization in use by MOMENTUM:

Indicator	Country and Global Leadership	Integrated Health Resilience	Private Healthcare Delivery	Routine Immunization	Safe Surgery in FP and Obstetrics
Percent of USG-assisted organizations with improved performance (CAP.5/CBLD-9)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Percent of organizations with increased organizational and/or technical capacity (CAP.6)	✓	✓	✓		
Number of approaches implemented by project that engage the community (CE.2)			✓	✓	
Percent of targeted actors using data generated through their monitoring systems to modify activities or strategies (AL.2) OR Percent of supported facilities and health departments utilizing data for planning and decision-making OR Percent of organizations improving their ability to employ adaptive learning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Number of country representatives serving as active members of global technical consultations and leadership fora as a result of project efforts (GL.1)	✓		✓	✓	✓
Number of partnerships supported, facilitated, or catalyzed by project (PSE/MSP.1)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Number of USG engagements jointly undertaken with the private sector to achieve a U.S. foreign assistance objective (PSE 1)		✓	✓		
Number/percent of service delivery points (SDP) with a functioning mechanism in place for community members to hold the SDP accountable for the quality of health services [XM.CE.1]	✓	✓			

SPOTLIGHT: MULTIFACETED LOCALIZATION IN ACTION

A Holistic Localization Approach to Improve COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake in India

MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity

Most of MOMENTUM's localization efforts are holistic and multifaceted. One such example is MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity's support to local organizations to improve COVID-19 vaccine uptake among communities in India. MOMENTUM established a network of 26 community-based NGOs to co-design and implement community interventions. MOMENTUM and the local NGOs used capacity assessments to identify gaps within the organizations and co-designed support plans to strengthen capacities in those areas. The project also helped foster relationships between the local NGOs, government stakeholders, and other local entities, understanding the importance of these relationships in building trust and cultivating sustainable change. With the NGO partners, the project crafted context-specific community engagement interventions to reach those who had not yet received the COVID-19 vaccine. Finally, MOMENTUM provided technical assistance to the local NGOs to help them manage their community activities and mobilize additional resources to sustain activities beyond the life of the project.

This holistic localization approach resulted in an increase in trust, confidence, reach, and acceptance of COVID-19 vaccines in communities; improved capacity of NGOs to manage substantial grants; early evidence that innovative partnerships are progressing toward sustainability; and development of local organization and community structures for continued involvement in program planning and implementation.



Photo credit: Jon Snow India Pvt. Ltd.



SECTION 04

MOMENTUM Insights: Lessons Learned

What Is Working to Achieve Localization Goals?

- **Support from donors.** USAID Headquarters and Missions have been very supportive of co-creation approaches and efforts to transfer implementation responsibility to local organizations, allowing for alignment of goals, needs, and priorities during project design and implementation. USAID's willingness to embrace work with local partners has fostered many new partnerships around the world.
- **Capacity strengthening of local partners via gap assessments and customized approaches.** Partner capacities and strengths differ; hence, a one-size-fits-all approach cannot work. Needs or capacity assessment tools (such as ITOCA) are effective in identifying organizational capacity needs and targeting capacity strengthening efforts to those needs. Recent needs assessments may not be available when starting a partnership with a local organization, and time and monetary resources are needed to develop targeted support. Conducting an initial assessment is a labor-intensive process that can require trust, relationship building, and a team with diverse skills, including representatives from finance, human resources, and monitoring and evaluation.
- **Shifting power through co-creation and joint implementation.**
 - **Co-creation/co-design:** Working closely with local partners from the start ensures that local priorities and perspectives from the community, health system actors, and other local stakeholders inform program design. Co-creation does not substitute for co-implementation. Both must be embedded within project processes to ensure local ownership and enhance sustainability.
 - **Leveraging local expertise and knowledge:** Co-creation and co-implementation leverage unique understandings of communities' needs, cultural nuances, and existing networks. When implementation activities are grounded in local priorities and needs, there is potential for greater buy-in and ownership by local partners. However, it is important to align expectations among all stakeholders early and check on that alignment periodically.

What Is Working to Achieve Localization Goals? (continued)

- **Capacity strengthening beyond technical areas.** To be sustainable, organizational change requires shifts in culture and attitudes and strong leadership. Teams need skills in areas such as project management and performance measurement, adaptive management, resource mobilization and management, and human resources. Many MOMENTUM efforts have successfully bridged technical and organizational capacity strengthening.
- **Cross-country learning and exchange.** The knowledge, skills, and resources gained from different contexts can improve every individual's work with partners. Locally-led is the goal, but globally-connected is also important, and it is beneficial for local organizations to learn from and share their own experiences with others. Localization does not mean growing separately but rather, growing together.
- **Flexibility to maintain local partner engagement.** Trust and relationship building are essential ingredients to strengthen local systems and shift power to local institutions. International partners need to find ways to adapt according to local priorities and changing contexts. Trust and responsiveness can be strengthened when local leaders lead.
- **Promise for long-term sustainability.** There is some evidence across MOMENTUM of local partners taking on roles previously held by international partners; this shows promise for the long-term sustainability of MOMENTUM investments. Sustained local engagement could enhance resilience as local partners are increasingly able to respond quickly to emerging challenges and impromptu requests.

PROJECT EXAMPLE

In Burundi and Mali, local organizations are taking on many of the social franchising roles that were once held by international actors. This localized approach taken by MOMENTUM Private Healthcare Delivery has strengthened the private sector's engagement with government, as these local partners typically have long-standing relationships and trust with the government.

What Is Not Working in Localization Efforts?

- **Short project timelines.** Localization involves changes in organizational culture/attitudes, skills development, and resource flows. Co-creation and capacity strengthening are time-intensive. A project practicing meaningful localization may generate outputs later in its project cycle compared to previous modalities that force early definition of work plan activities. Further, investments in organizational capacity strengthening may not yield the desired results until after the funding period. Donors and stakeholders must be open to longer initial engagement and design processes and to periodic program adjustments based on touchpoints throughout implementation. Donors should formally recognize the budget and timeline required for co-creation and incorporate those realities into Requests for Applications (RFAs) and start-up plan guidance.
- **Imbalanced power dynamics may not be susceptible to gradual approaches.** MOMENTUM's approaches to USAID's localization agenda lean toward strategies that catalyze incremental changes within a health system through partnering with local actors to identify and implement solutions, rather than seeking a radical overhaul of systems. Whether this is enough to challenge entrenched power dynamics is yet to be seen.
- **Donors' and projects' mandates do not always match local priorities or capacities.** Localization does not equal Westernization, and local operating contexts may not always align with donors and their systems. There are many motivated and dynamic local organizations with the potential for significant achievement, but they are not designed to absorb and manage direct funding as currently programmed by many donors. Both donors and the projects they fund need to meet local organizations where they are and accept differences in their priorities. USAID processes can be challenging for smaller, local organizations to navigate and serve as an unintentional barrier to funded partnerships. In lieu of onerous reporting requirements, purpose-driven deliverables or evidence of milestone completion can be meaningful to partners and alleviate reporting burdens. Donors should be particularly mindful of the burden on staff time placed by ad-hoc and short-turnaround reporting requests, which are often driven by donors' leadership and divert attention and effort from strategic planning and implementation.

What Is Not Working in Localization Efforts? (continued)

- **Some partners are resistant to demands for change.** In some contexts, factors such as organizational culture, fear of failure, or skepticism of strategies to shift responsibility and power generate resistance to adopting new approaches or strategies. The concept of shifting power to local partners through localization is not fully accepted by some traditional managers who are used to authoritarian, top-down program management styles. Concerted effort is needed to address these mindset issues within donor organizations and both local and international partners.
- **Localization efforts and objectives are not always appropriate for all contexts.** Local partners and governments in low-income or fragile contexts may not be ready to assume more decision-making and implementation responsibility and will remain reliant on development assistance for many years. Security challenges make it difficult to work with community-based organizations (CBOs) in areas of insecurity and these CBOs also face challenges with their own work. Changes in government require building new relationships and can lead to implementation delays.
- **Limited resources to support capacity strengthening.** Local partners often have limited financial resources, infrastructure, and human capital. Donors need to adjust funding mechanisms to enable adequate needs assessments from the beginning of partnerships, acceptance of early challenges, implementation of plans that reflect local realities and priorities, and appropriately-funded levels of capacity strengthening to enhance implementation. Prioritization of capacity strengthening over other priorities may be necessary at times given limited financial resources.
- **Measurement of localization is challenging.** USAID's localization efforts are currently measured with the CBLD-9 indicator, against which all projects must report. However, CBLD-9 focuses on the number of local organizations supported, which does not meaningfully capture the efforts nor the progress toward localization. Innovative measurement, including complexity-aware monitoring efforts, are needed to better capture achievement of localization objectives. Quantitative measures may not sufficiently capture how well localization is being achieved. USAID's Locally Led Programs Indicator, announced in 2023, is a step forward in measurement of this complex topic.

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