



Data for Impact— D4I Approach to Individual and Institutional Capacity Strengthening

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Data for Impact (D4I), a five-year cooperative agreement funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), supports countries to **mobilize the power of data** as actionable evidence that can improve programs, policies, and—ultimately—health outcomes. D4I seeks to achieve the following results:

- Generate **strong evidence** needed for program and policy decision making through expanded use of existing data sources and with new data generated through innovative evaluation methods and data collection strategies
- **Strengthen individual and institutional capacity** to generate evidence for health decision making and to receive direct funding from USAID
- **Facilitate data use** to improve global health programs and policies through compelling data visualization and communication strategies

This approach document focuses on the result: **Strengthen individual and institutional capacity to generate evidence for health decision making and to receive direct funding from USAID.** At the foundation of this approach is our belief that individuals and institutions have existing capacity, and they should lead in their own capacity strengthening. D4I's role is to assist those individuals and institutions to assess, plan, and implement strategies to strengthen or enhance their current ability. Our approach is to establish with partners a shared understanding of their capacity and to jointly develop a capacity-strengthening plan while implementing USAID-funded activities. With this “learning by doing” approach, we work in partnership with local institutions to generate evidence, ensure data quality, integrate gender, and promote data use. D4I adds to that experience additional opportunities for learning and training, coaching, and mentoring.

D4I believes the technical and organizational capacity dimensions are of equal importance for local institutions to respond to the information needs in their country. Our approach is informed by a capacity strengthening framework, *Framework and Toolkit to Strengthen Evaluation Capacity*, developed by MEASURE Evaluation. D4I focuses on four core competencies of the local partner: human resources; organization resources; technology; and data collection, analysis, and use (see text box).

D4I is committed to USAID's strategy of supporting each country's [Journey to Self-Reliance](#), including a country's ability to plan, finance, and implement solutions to address its own development challenges and meet the local targets of the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). D4I's goal is for local partners to improve their technical and organizational competencies and systems so that they can become direct recipients of USAID funds, including transition awards (See the USAID Automated Directive Services [ADS] Chapter 303).

D4I will work with missions to identify potential local partners to receive transition awards and, as a step toward that end, may provide a sub-award to a local partner(s) deemed to be near-ready for transition awards. D4I will also assist the local partner with developing a concept note to respond to a mission request for applications (RFA). The *Framework and Toolkit to Strengthen Evaluation Capacity* has been specifically developed and tested to strengthen capacity of local institutions to generate evidence and use data. D4I further tailors capacity strengthening approaches to the local context by drawing on other USAID-endorsed tools, specifically the *Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA)* and the *Non-US Organization Pre-Award Survey (NUPAS)*.

Four Competencies for Local Partners

Human resources relate to *staffing, design, and leadership*. D4I supports organizations to define staff skills, expertise, roles, and responsibilities and to assess strengths and gaps in skills to articulate research questions, study designs, protocol writing, ethical review applications, questionnaire development, and other technical skills such as sampling and gender integration. D4I mentors leaders so that those leaders can guide, mentor, and coach team members as part of his or her regular duties.

Organizational resources relate to *operations and management, communications, and work plan development*. D4I supports organizations to assess budgeting, financial management, study



documentation and compliance processes, organizational structure, and procurement processes. This domain also includes processes that ensure clear and transparent communication policies and performance monitoring and amelioration practices.

Technology relates to *electronic data capture and storage* and *analysis tools and skills*. As part of this competency dimension, D4I supports the development of electronic questionnaires; the procurement of adequate mobile units for data capture, with an accompanying asset management plan; and secure data storage, as required by ethics approvals. Technology competency includes both qualitative and quantitative data analysis software, as appropriate, and team members with the skills to use them.

Data collection, analysis, and use relates to *fieldwork planning, data collection, data analysis and report writing, and dissemination*. D4I supports a wide range of skills including development of standard operating procedures, sensitization of local communities, coordination with partners, logistics and scheduling, and courtesy protocols. Other elements include data collector recruitment and training, instrument field testing, quality assurance during data collection, management of electronic data capture process, data file management, analysis plan development, data analysis, report writing, and data visualization appropriate for different audiences.

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