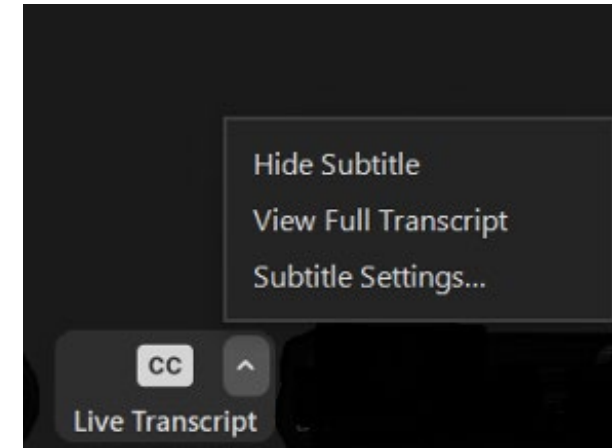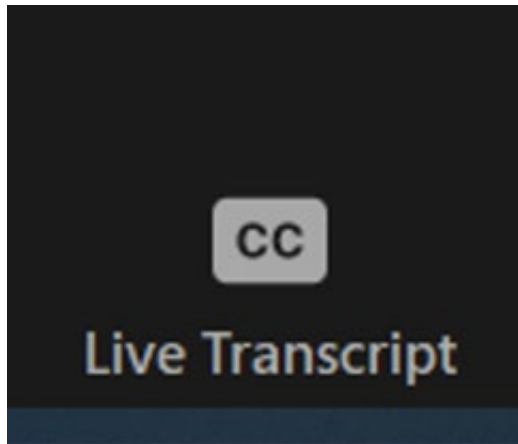# Closed Captioning

Please select closed captioning if you wish to see live captioning of the session.

Agenda

Session	Presenter(s)
Welcome and Introduction	Jessica Fehringer, Project Director, D4I
Introduction of the Panel	Susan Pietrzyk, D4I Partner Lead, ICF
Panelists	Catherine Kahabuka, CREMES International
	Gwendolyn Morgan, Surveys for Monitoring in Resilience and Food Security (SMRFS) project
	Joyanta Roy, Capacity Building Service Group (CBSG)
Q&A	Susan Pietrzyk

D4I's Work

Generate Evidence
Use routine and other existing data and generate new data through rigorous methods tailored to budget, timeline, and context

Integrate Gender
Integrate gender throughout the project to ensure high-quality data for assessment of health and gender outcomes

Strengthen Capacity
Strengthen capacity through fostering collaboration, experimental learning, mentoring, and peer networks tailored to partner's needs

Promote Data Use
Visualize and communicate data in ways that are compelling, user-friendly, and actionable

Ensure Data Quality
Focus on ensuring high-quality data for effective decision making and program outcome improvement

Learn
Encourage collaboration, improved results, and timely progress updates through idea exchange and shared learning

D4I's Localization Webinar Series

Join D4I over the next few months for the **Localization in monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning (MERL)** webinar series on lessons learned from the project.

Topics include:

- Local capacity strengthening
- Using a systems lens
- Engaging with diverse stakeholders
- Implementing other good practices for locally led development

Upcoming webinar in the series:

- Amplify Family Planning and Sexual and Reproductive Health (AMPLIFY PF) **May 21, 2024 10–11am EST / 2–3 pm GMT**

Panel Moderator

Susan Pietrzyk, PhD, is an anthropologist with over 30 years of global development experience in research, evaluation, and implementation. Over the last 10 years, she has led or been a technical team member of roughly 50 USAID activities and/or studies across a wide range of technical areas, including health systems strengthening, social and behavior change, family planning, maternal and child health, nutrition, food security, health equity, and gender.

Story Behind the Panel

Shifting Power and the Need to Better Understand Locally Led Capacity Strengthening Efforts

USAID's Four Pillars of Localization

- Adapting our policies and programs

⭐ Shifting power to local actors ⭐

- Channeling a larger portion of funding directly to local partners

- Serving as a global advocate and thought leader

LOCALIZATION
CATALYZING AND SUPPORTING LOCAL CHANGE

Thought exercise: We want to shift power to local actors; specifically, to have more ownership of capacity strengthening work. What are the options?

OPTION 1

1 Qualified international actors provide training for local actors to increase their capacity to undertake capacity strengthening work

2 Increased capacity among local actors to undertake capacity strengthening work

OPTION 2

1 Qualified local actors provide training for other local actors to increase their capacity to undertake capacity strengthening work

2 Increased capacity among local actors to undertake capacity strengthening work

Introduction of the Panelists

Dr. Catherine Kahabuka, MD and PhD, is an accomplished mixed methods researcher with over a decade of experience in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of donor-funded projects. As **the founder of CREMES International**, a private research firm in Tanzania, she has led her team to support over 60 research activities across 18 countries. Her work primarily focuses on sexual and reproductive health and rights, family planning, maternal health, gender, education, and WASH. With a passion for capacity building, in 2020, she established the CREMES Research Mentorship Program, now operational in six African countries, dedicated to enhancing research capacity with a special emphasis on M&E.

Gwendolyn Morgan, DrPH and MPH, is a senior manager and public health researcher with more than 20 years of experience managing teams, conducting population and health research, analyzing and interpreting complex data, and performing program evaluation research. She is skilled in building partnerships and providing scientific leadership and management for research projects and is committed to improving data quality, building capacity, and applying and communicating results to improve programs and advance knowledge. Currently, she leads the capacity strengthening component for the **Surveys for Monitoring in Resilience and Food Security (SMRFS) project.**

Mr. Joyanta Roy began his career in Research and Evaluation in Bangladesh, later expanding internationally. Educated in Statistics and Econometrics at the University of Dhaka, he further enhanced his skills in project monitoring, evaluation, and organizational development. In 2003, he **established the Capacity Building Service Group (CBSG)**, an international consultancy with offices in Bangladesh, Canada, and India. With over 35 years of experience, Mr. Roy has led over 40 evaluations for projects funded by international agencies like USAID, USDA, USDOS, FCDO, among others. His sectoral expertise ranges from health and family planning, food security, nutrition, agriculture, and governance.

Panel Structure

- Three questions from the moderator

- Hear from each panelist on each question

- About 10 minutes on each question

- Leave about 10 minutes at the end for questions and comments from the audience
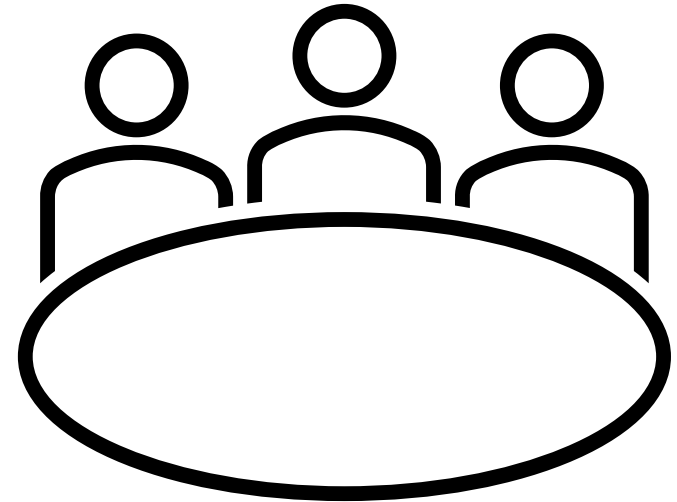
Question 1: Models for Capacity Strengthening

- In thinking about your model and how you are involved in capacity strengthening, what are some of the pros and cons of your model?

- What lessons have you learned? What challenges have you had?

By models, this broadly means as follows among the panelists:

MODEL 1 (Joyanta): Work as local subcontractor and lead capacity strengthening work

MODEL 2 (Catherine): Embed capacity strengthening into research and evaluation activities

MODEL 3 (Gwen): U.S.-based project with dedicated capacity strengthening component

Model 1
Work as local subcontractor and lead capacity strengthening work

Holistic organizational self-assessment process

- Work mostly with U.S. Government projects—help customize the Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT)

- OCAT techniques generate objective information

- Informed self-assessment process with external facilitation

- Areas of strengths and improvements are identified, which results in a realistic capacity strengthening plan

- Self-assessment process involves critical mass, which makes capacity building interventions effective and coherent

- Focus more on internal and own resources

Model 2
Embed capacity strengthening into research and evaluation activities

- **Self-funded initiative:** Using funds generated from research activities supported under CREMES international

- **Training and mentorship:** Training in all basic research skills plus ongoing mentorship through actual research projects

- **1–2 years long:** All mentees get one year; exceptionally performing mentees get an additional year for their internship

- **Professional development focus:** Strong emphasis on work ethics and professionalism

Model 3
U.S.-based project with dedicated capacity strengthening component

**Surveys for Monitoring in Food Security and Resilience (SMRFS) Project**

- **Project purpose:** Implement household surveys to monitor a country-specific set of standardized Feed the Future indicators in USAID programming zones

- **Project structure:** 20 technical staff with survey research roles; ad partners Blue Raster and Stattis offer specialized technical assistance in GIS and data management

- **Role of capacity strengthening in SMRFS:** Capacity strengthening for data use is one of our sub-Intermediate Results

- **Capacity strengthening assessments:** Adapted D4I's RECAP tool and conducted exploratory baseline and final capacity assessments, focusing on an organization's technical strengths and interests

- **Capacity strengthening approach:** Conduct assessment, then develop and implement a plan to focus on technical capacity strengthening by offering peer coaching, on-the-job mentoring, data use workshops, and formal training
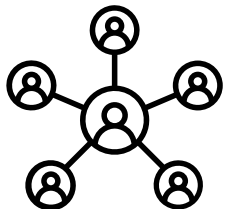
Question 2: Assessing and Planning
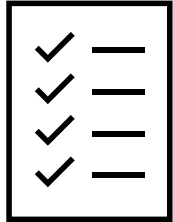
What have been your experiences in conducting a capacity assessment?
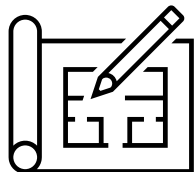
What have been your lessons learned in terms of pairing a capacity assessment with a capacity strengthening plan? How does this work? Why are both needed?

In your experience, what are some of the power dynamics that come into play with capacity assessments and capacity strengthening plans?

Question 3: Capacity Gaps and Defining Success

What do you see as areas where capacity strengthening is needed? And what are some of the reasons the capacity gap exists?

In a local context, what are examples of what success has looked like with a capacity strengthening activity or plan?

Credit: Microsoft 365

Credit: Microsoft 365

Questions