

International Centre for Local Democracy

Leadership in Local Governance 3

Final evaluation report, 7 April 2022

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Appendix I: ICLD Result Matrix 2022-2026

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List of abbreviations

ICLD: International Centre for Local Democracy

ITP: International Training Programme

KC: The Knowledge Centre at ICLD

LFA: Logical Frame Approach

M&E: Monitoring and evaluation

MEL: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

RBM: Results Based Management

SDG: Sustainable Development Goal

Sida: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

ToC: Theory of Change

ToR: Terms of Reference

SUMMARY

This report is the last out of three (including baseline, a midterm-PM and this final report) in my work with on-going, learning evaluation in the programme Leadership in Local Governance 3 (below LLG3). The evaluation is commissioned by the Swedish non-governmental organisation International Centre for Local Democracy (below: ICLD) financed by Sida, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The programme period was December 2020-December 2021.

The overall goal of ICLD’s training programmes is to contribute to combating poverty in all its forms through the strengthening of local democracy. ICLD’s training programmes target decision-makers, representatives of the grass-root organisations and civil servants at the local level in low- and middle-income countries. The opportunity for the participants to learn from Swedish cutting edge skills, experience and methodologies in the field of local democracy development is what lies at the heart of the training programmes, and for participants to learn from one another.

Training programmes involve multiple local teams that each develop their own locally based change project that represents a puzzle piece in strengthening local democratic engagement. Through the project of change, each team is expected to impact their own organisation.

The specific objectives of LLG3 are participants’:

- Gained skills and abilities to communicate and advocate on issues of inclusive governance;
- Expanded local, regional, national and international network.

Seven teams from four countries (Kenya, Namibia, South Africa and Zambia) participated. The name of the municipality/county and the objectives of the change projects are listed below.

Local context	Content/objective of project
Kitwe, Zambia	Sustainable management of solid waste
Kalulushi, Zambia	Consolidating existing WDCs, improving the formation and operations of WDCs
Kenya, Kaijado	Enhancing public participation for rural, marginalised and excluded populations (women, youth and people with disabilities)
Kenya, Muranga	Increase the number of women in leadership positions
RSA, Sundays River Local Municipality	A coherent model for local development in SRVM
RSA, Cederberg	A coherent model for local development in SRVM
Oshakati, Namibia	Efficient waste management communication with community residents

Results analysis

The planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the ICLD programmes build on a general Theory of Change (ToC) that poses a set of assumptions on how change takes place at individual, organisational and societal level. The ToC is still under development. The intervention logic, i.e. ICLD's methods, tools and activities for the implementation as well as for the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) are still being calibrated.

One part of the ITP training focuses on the four **core concepts of ICLD**: equity & inclusion, citizen participation, accountability and transparency. **Agenda 2030** is a fifth perspective that ICLD incorporates into its training and democracy development activities.

The second training component is a more practical part, and concentrates on improving the participants' and teams' knowledge and skills about *managing a change project*. The model builds on the Logical Framework Approach (LFA). It consists of nine steps, out of which the LLG3 cohort of 2021 have been thoroughly trained in three: problem, objectives and stakeholder analyses.

Change in participants' and teams' interpretations leads to action

In LLG3, the main problem was initially described as **poor implementation of policy** but the change projects and the various activities and trainings undertaken eventually became the means for change, with the common **objective of increasing citizen participation**. Change within this sphere mainly relate to the individual level in ICLD's ToC, but the objectives were set, and action was taken collectively by the team.

Change related to social networks

This report provides several pieces of evidence that indicate participants' new awareness of the importance of social networks and activities. **Action** is geared towards stakeholders (including groups of citizens) and aimed at encouraging them to get involved. **In the survey answered at programme closure, most participants indicate the various stakeholders and groups** (also comprehending organisations, such as NGOs or CSOs in society) **that have been invited and including more clearly than was the case in the initial survey**.

During the final LLG3 workshop, participants also provide many examples of how they have put knowledge and consciousness about stakeholders into action and how they have **reached out to, established networks with and trained various groups of citizens**.

There is considerable interaction with and support from executives and politicians and across departments **also within the authorities**, at organisational level.

Change within this sphere mainly relate to the organisational and societal levels in ICLD's ToC.

Change related to institutions, protocols, procedures and methods

Hence, improved knowledge, mainly about the four basic concepts of LLG3, the project management training of teams and the interaction with internal and external stakeholders result in **new policies and institutions, procedures**, etc.

Some of them are: School clubs with pupils being trained in sustainable waste management (Kitwe, Zambia); Executive committees and sub-committees with different responsibilities and roles as a part of the WDC (Kalulushi, Zambia) and Citizen participation bill adopted and round table discussions organised and will be repeated, (Kaijado, Kenya).

Testing the ToC and the programme logic of ICLD

The analysis and interpretation of data and information was done with the help of a Frame of analysis illustrated in Figure 1 in the report. It contains (1) the individual, organisational and societal level of ICLD's ToC and (2) the theoretical component about the four core concepts + Agenda 2030 as well as the training in project management and the LFA as a tool. The third part contains an illustration of the expected and desired change within three spheres: Knowledge, interpretation, etc. leading to a change in problem definitions/action; Institutions, protocols, procedures and methods and Social networks.

Conclusions and recommendations for ICLD and KC

The last chapter of this report is dedicated to the second aim of my evaluation of the LLG3, namely to assess how ICLD and KC manage their (ITP) programmes and processes. Several reflections and recommendations are provided. Some of the most important are about:

The core concepts, the local change projects and the LFA training

One observation about the four core concepts is that it is neither completely clear how ICLD expects participants to integrate these concepts into their (project) work, nor is it clear how the ICLD and KC management make sure that the training-sessions focus around these themes and their interconnection in concrete work for local democratic development.

There ought to be a way to connect theory about the core concepts in a more explicit manner to practice in the local projects and contexts. I strongly recommend for the ICLD management and KC to ponder on whether it would be possible to exchange some of the theoretical and lecture content for more interactive and project-related exercises, that would bring theory closer to practice. One solution would be to put more emphasis on, and dedicate more time to the local change projects.

As for the LFA training, my conclusion is that it works well as a tool for training in project management the way that it has been used in LLG3 and recommend that ICLD continues to use it in all (ITP) programmes. It would be a good idea to develop a manual, an inspirational guide on project management and make it available as a tool for all participants in ITP-programmes.

Mentors are important. They play an operational role in the project process. They also strongly contribute to participants' understanding of the core concepts and how they are interconnected. I would recommend ICLD to consider if mentors could take on an extended role, and get training in project management from the ICLD.

There are some aspects that could be added to the LFA training, that are currently lacking. Strategic communication and advocacy, long term sustainability and Monitoring and Evaluation.

Monitoring and Evaluation

One of the new features of this edition of LLG3 is that along with the ToC, ICLD and KC intended to change the baseline/midterm and end-survey design (see 2.2 in this report). A pilot survey has been assessed by the KC. One recommendation on this matter is for ICLD and KC to ponder on whether the existing version could be improved, rather than exchanged by a completely new and different model.

The mentors' progress reports are another tool for monitoring the project processes. I have analysed the questions posed to mentors in the reports and suggest that they should be simplified, rephrased and more to the point. Furthermore, the format of the reports would benefit from "digitalisation". This would make it easier for mentors to fill them out, but also for Programme managers (and/or other staff) to read and analyse responses.

Regarding the "E" in M&E, the Evaluation part, my recommendation for ICLD and KC is to try to build in more of (learning) evaluation in their processes in the future.

I do not know enough about ICLD and KC to understand their strategy for how evaluation is going to be handled in the programmes in the future. My opinion is that ICLD and KC need to work closer together and continue to do more of what I have done during one year.

More on-going evaluation procedures could be defined for the programmes, and performed by certain persons/roles within the ICLD/KC/mentors and Programme managers together.

Theory of Change

As mentioned earlier. The ICLD ToC is still under development. The intervention logic, i.e. ICLD's methods, tools and activities for the implementation as well as for the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) are still being calibrated. ITP programme managers have indicated in dialogues that they do not fully understand how ToC, the components of the training and the expected and desired change are related to each other.

This needs to be a dynamic, reflective and participative process, supported by the leadership at ICLD and the Knowledge Centre. The Programme Managers of the ITP and other ICLD programmes need to be involved and consulted in the building process to understand how the different pieces of the puzzle hold together.

On the road ahead, I would recommend for ICLD and KC to get inspiration from sources that rely on different approaches to evaluation than those of the Logical Framework Approach or the Results Based Management. LFA and RBM both find their origin in a linear, cause and effect discourse, that does not reflect the complexity and the non-linear context of development programmes.¹

¹ Earl, S., Carda, F. & Smutylo, F. (2001) *Outcome Mapping Building, Learning and Reflection into Development Programmes*

Long term sustainability

The “impact” stage in the ToC assumes the *incorporation and formalisation* of new practices. In my evaluation, I have translated this into “long term sustainable change”.

The assumed long term sustainability of networks and structures are the most difficult to verify in the case of LLG3. I have asked teams and the four stakeholders/executives/politicians themselves to assess whether knowledge, values, networks, policies and institutions will be sustainable in the years to come. They have been able to refer to some pieces of evidence to support their narrative.

The recommendation on the note of long term sustainability is a reminder to the ICLD and KC to stress and consider whether more could be done to strengthen the long-term sustainable impact of processes and results achieved in change processes.

I am aware of the fact that ICLD is working to establish an alumni network for programme participants, and this ought to be a good avenue to elaborate on themes of interest and concern for several local authorities, in different countries and regions. It will give participants, teams and local authorities possibilities to develop and reinforce regional, national and international networks. This could also be a good opportunity for the ICLD to reconnect and revisit local change projects.

Perhaps the “long term sustainability” is one of the “puzzle pieces” that should be incorporated into next version of the Theory of Change?

Selection procedures: local authorities, teams, countries

An observation, that some of the interviewees have touched upon, is that it is difficult for an outsider to understand ICLD’s strategies and criteria for selecting teams, local authorities and countries. Why does ICLD work with/close the cooperation with some? Can a team or a local authority apply for and participate in a programme twice, with different projects? Is it possible for a team or local authority to apply for another programme after having finished a programme period in an ICLD programme?

It goes beyond my mission in this evaluation to explore these matters in depth here. One suggestion could be that ICLD considers working with some local authorities (or teams) for a second programme cycle or for a longer period of time. It could be a new project in the same, or in a different (ITP) programme. This would then give ICLD and its programme partners the opportunity to work for sustainability over a longer time period, to support the consolidation and spread what is already being achieved, and that works well.

Lessons learned

From what I have been able to comprehend in my evaluation work for the ICLD in two of their ITPs, ICLD and KC, not least the Programme managers have high ambitions for their programmes. They work indeed hard to offer their participants the best possible condition to benefit positively from the programme. There appears to be a good cooperation and dialogue among the officers. As workshops are carried out, the Programme manager is always supported by another in the implementation.

Even for the ongoing evaluator, being involved in the ITPs is never dull. In the LLG3 programme for instance, three completely or partly new components were tested: the pilot survey, the LFA as a tool in project management and the “Organisational learning” component.² Facilitators that are new to the ICLD as well as to the mentors and participants are introduced in the programmes quite frequently.

The recommendation is for ICLD and KC to ensure a more reflective approach around the programmes, and evaluate what lessons are learned from applying certain methods and tools. This would help ICLD to enhance, reuse and build on what already works well.

Programme Managers (and mentors) are assets, and should be involved in this learning reflection on a regular and continuous basis. A continuous and more structured involvement of the group of ITP-managers and other staff ought to strengthen the programme framework. I have already identified some areas where the Programme managers could contribute with their knowledge and experience. The continuous monitoring and reporting on “change” in the programmes have been some of the issues on the agenda.³

Thus, Programme managers can be of great help in constructing on what has already been achieved and built, but need assistance, time to dedicate and peace of mind to reflect on and reinforce what already works. A soft recommendation would therefore be for ICLD and KC to slow down the renewal pace for a while, and concentrate on constructively assessing, recycling and enhancing the many things that work well in the programmes.

I would like to thank ICLD for the responsibilities that I have been entrusted. I would also like to thank the Programme management at KC and ICLD, the ITP managers, mentors and the senior consultant for contributing and participating actively in the learning dialogue with the aim to improve programme contents, procedures and organisation.

It has been a truly interesting and stimulating journey.

In March 2022, I received the Management Response from ICLD and KC. I am happy to conclude that most of the comments and recommendations were received well, and used by ICLD. Some improvements have already been made, some are being processed, and a few have been put on hold for the future.

I hope that some of the findings and recommendations can continue to accompany ICLD and its partners in the important work for local democracy and wish you all the best of luck!

Monica Johansson
2022-04-07

² The KC has been involved in developing a module on “organisational learning” that could be incorporated in the ICLD training in the future. A training component of “organisational learning” was inserted and facilitated by a KC external collaborator from the City of Göteborg in the LLG3 Swedish phase. The facilitator informed the participants that the presentation was a test, and that a handbook for organisational learning is being finalised by the KC. The facilitator made a presentation about organisational learning, and why the ICLD and the KC have been working with developing a “prototype”. The lecture also included a few group sessions, where teams were asked to reflect on and discuss questions. At the end of the session, the facilitator left the group with a few questions on whether (and how) adopting an organisational learning approach in local authorities can be useful, and what can be prepared by participants to support a learning process in their municipalities. The facilitator was back at the closing workshop to continue to work on the organisational learning approach.

³ Surveys and mentors’ reports, incorporation of the Agenda 2030 and mainstreaming gender, drafting the manual for the project management (LFA) part, exchange of knowledge about methods and tools (digitalisation and online training, games, good practice, etc.) have been discussed with the Programme managers throughout this programme.

1. BACKGROUND

This report is the last out of three (including baseline, a midterm-PM and this final report) in my work with on-going, learning evaluation in the programme Leadership in Local Governance 3 (below LLG3). The evaluation is commissioned by the Swedish non-governmental organisation International Centre for Local Democracy (below: ICLD) financed by Sida, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The programme period was December 2020-December 2021.

The evaluation work in the LLG3 programme, builds on experiences and conclusions drawn in another ITP, the “Gender mainstreaming Local Democracy programme 2018-2019” (below GMLD). The reason ITP director and the Programme manager contacted me again, so that lessons learned from the GMLD could be recycled and further developed in another ITP programme, the LLG3. In the First Evaluation Report, the reader will find several references to lessons learned that contributed to understanding the programme context, and build on lessons learned from GMLD.

1.1 LLG3, contents and aims

The programme, its contents and aims are described by ICLD in the ToR of this evaluation as follows:

The overall goal of ICLD’s training programmes is to contribute to combating poverty in all its forms through the strengthening of local democracy.

ICLD’s training programmes target decision-makers, representatives of the grass-root organisations and civil servants at the local level in low- and middle-income countries. The opportunity for the participants to learn from Swedish cutting edge skills, experience and methodologies in the field of local democracy development is what lies at the heart of the training programmes, and for participants to learn from one another.

Training programmes involve multiple local teams that each develop their own locally based change project that represents a puzzle piece in strengthening local democratic engagement. Through the project of change, each team is expected to impact their own organisation.

The programme Leadership in Local Governance has three goals:

- Increased knowledge and skills about citizen dialogue mechanisms, democratic political leadership and inclusive governance to co-create a more inclusive social contract.
- Improved capacity for coherent integration of the SDGs into local planning and policymaking.
- Enhanced skills and methods to co-create solutions to improve the wellbeing of the urban poor.

The programme has the following objectives:

- Gained skills and abilities to communicate and advocate on issues of inclusive governance;
- Expanded local, regional, national and international network.

The countries involved are: Kenya, Namibia, South Africa and Zambia.

Seven teams participated. The name of the municipality/county and the objectives of the change projects are listed below.

Local context	Content/objective of project
Kitwe, Zambia	Sustainable management of solid waste
Kalulushi, Zambia	Consolidating existing WDCs, improving the formation and operations of WDCs
Kenya, Kaijado	Enhancing public participation for rural, marginalised and excluded populations (women, youth and people with disabilities)
Kenya, Muranga	Increase the number of women in leadership positions
RSA, Sundays River Local Municipality	A coherent model for local development in SRVM
RSA, Cederberg	A coherent model for local development in SRVM
Oshakati, Namibia	Efficient waste management communication with community residents

1.2 Questions for the learning evaluation

According to the ToR, during the programme process, the evaluator should answer to the following questions:

- What are the knowledge and skills that participants get during the training?
- How do teams use and translate these knowledge and skills into action (project of change)?
- How do the training and the project of change impact the organisation (i.e. leads to new working methods at the local government level)?
- In what way/s does the municipality have access to new knowledge and skills from the project participants? (communication)
- When other government officials and politicians have accessed knowledge and skills from the project participant, how do they use it? (participant's executives, other colleagues and politicians)

- How has the training, including the project of change influenced the formalisation of new policies and practices? (new development plans, gender plans, equity policies, etc.)

Furthermore, the evaluator: *“shall assess and describe the programme components in relation to the overarching programme design, i.e. how does one workshop link to the next, how is the Swedish training linked to the other phases and look at the process of how the participants bring the learnings and tools received in the training back to their local governments.”*

1.3 Disposition of the report

The following **Chapter 2, Methodology and frame of analysis** starts out with an outline of the three stages of the evaluation: baseline, midterm and final phase and how they have been monitored and evaluated. A summary of material and sources used are presented. A brief outline of my learning approach and how it has been applied in the evaluation process follows.

Chapter 3, Frame of Analysis presents the evaluator’s interpretation and operationalisation of ICLD’s questions that framed this evaluation, as well as of the components of the training and the three spheres of change.

Chapter 4, Findings and results contains an analysis of the findings and results, focusing on the local change projects of LLG 3.

The question about what participants actually learn in the programme is answered. Then I make an attempt to capture how knowledge and skills are translated into actions, social networks, policies, institutions and procedures, etc. Thereafter, the interaction and exchange between politicians, executives and other leaders in the local authorities and the teams is described. The chapter will be concluded with a recapitulation of findings and reflections of the analysis.

Chapter 5, Conclusions and Recommendations focuses on the ICLD and the ITP and how they manage the programme. The chapter starts out with an assessment of the LLG3 programme, its goals and objectives, and whether they have been achieved.

The role of MEL (Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning) the ToC and the prospects for long term sustainability are analysed. The report is concluded with a few observations on lessons learned seen through my evaluator’s lens, underpinned by arguments from dialogues and interviews with participants, mentors, Programme managers from the ICLD as well as external stakeholders in the local processes.

2. METHODOLOGY

This chapter starts out with an outline of the three stages of the evaluation: baseline, midterm and final phase and how I have monitored and evaluated them. A summary of material and sources used are presented. A brief description of my learning approach and how it has been applied in the evaluation process then follows.

2.1 The three stages of the evaluation

The report builds on continuous dialogue and collaboration with the LLG3 Programme manager, the KC manager and staff (especially initially and at the end), one senior consultant at KC/ICLD, and, last but not least, dialogues/interview/s with the four mentors.⁴ I have attended all four workshops (three of them digital, the closing hybrid), and had the opportunity to communicate with participants at each one of them.

During the first (baseline) phase of my evaluation-work, I attended the Inception Workshop 8-10th of December, 2020 where I presented the new ICLD Theory of Change together with the Senior consultant. We then spoke of how ICLD plans to monitor and evaluate the process. I also participated at the Follow up Workshop (digital) 20-22 April, 2021, and reported briefly on the work that is being done with the Baseline, and how monitoring, evaluation and dialogue with mentors and teams would continue. I reported on this phase in May 2021. The KC manager, the ITP international manager, the Secretary General of the ICLD and the Programme manager provided response to questions and observations. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all mentors.

On 12 May, 2021 I participated at an ICLD ITP-day, where some first reflections on the baseline survey was presented. Monitoring requests and expectations from the side of ICLD for the midterm phase were also discussed. The presentation and the dialogue was planned together with the LLG3 Programme manager, the ITP director and the senior consultant.

The second (midterm) phase encompassed the so-called Swedish phase (20-24 September, 2021). I was engaged in this workshop mainly by providing advice to the ICLD management about what content would be of help for the participants. Advice was built on mine and the Programme manager's continuous dialogues, monitoring and observations, as well as communication with participants and mentors. I reported on this phase in October 2021 in a shorter, second evaluation report. Also this report was commented on by the KC manager, the ITP international manager, the Secretary General of the ICLD and the Programme manager.

During the second phase, I conducted interviews with six out of seven team supervisors.

The **third and final phase** of the evaluation covers the entire programme period 2021. At the final workshop 30 November-4 December, 2021 (in Port Elizabeth/ Gqeberha, South Africa), six out of seven teams⁵ and the four mentors managed to participate. The Swedish Programme

⁴ Dialogue in the form of semi-structured interview one week ahead of the "Follow up Workshop" 20-22 April 2021.

⁵ The Namibian team could not participate due to the pandemic. One of the team members were already in South Africa at the outbreak of the new Omicron variant, and decided to stay and participate at the workshop and was the sole representative from Oshakati.

manager and her supporting colleague, as well as myself were prevented from participating on site due to the outbreak of the new Covid variant at the end of November, 2021.

On December 15, I participated at an ICLD ITP-day, where some early results and considerations from the end report were shared. The presentation and the dialogue was planned together with the LLG3 Programme manager and the ITP director.

2.2 Material and sources

Survey

One of the new features of this edition of LLG3 is that along with the ToC, ICLD and KC intended to change the baseline/midterm and end-survey design.⁶ During the opening phase of the evaluation, I collaborated with ICLD, KC, managers and officers and the senior consultant to develop the new survey. The survey was introduced as a “pilot” by the ICLD and KC management.

A “coding template” was elaborated by the senior consultant, to be used for interpreting and assessing change at the three levels of the ToC. The coding and interpretation of answers at baseline and at programme closure was done by officers at KC. On January 31, 2022 I also had the opportunity to meet the KC officers, and discuss our different views and interpretation of the relevance and usefulness of the survey. I will briefly reflect on my take on the survey in the concluding chapter of this evaluation.

This report does not interpret or analyse survey answers with the help of the template mentioned above. Instead I produced my own analysis of the baseline survey (in the First Evaluation Report of the LLG3). I also used the survey answers at baseline/at closure as one of the sources for conducting the evaluation and drawing conclusions presented in this Final Evaluation Report.

Since my focus here is learning at “project level”, as I did the analysis, I grouped the raw survey data at project level, and analysed each team separately. My particular focus was how respondents (and teams) interpreted and explained the meaning and relevance of the four areas mentioned above in relation to their project. The questions posed on the four areas were: Does (equity & inclusion, citizen participation, accountability, transparency) relate to your local project? If yes, please describe how, and provide concrete examples. As for the fifth concept, Agenda 2030, the respondent was asked to “have a look at the 17 development goals listed below” and: “rank the top five from the most closely related to the least related.”

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all mentors during the first phase.

During the second phase, I conducted interviews with six out of seven team supervisors. The supervisors were targeted as interviewees, since I have had quite a continuous dialogue with some

⁶ I have examined the previous version of the Survey in my evaluation report of the ICLD ITP *Gender Mainstreaming Local Democracy 2018-2019*, and whether it is possible to answer the evaluation-questions by analysing the answers. One of the conclusions was that the questionnaire was too long (more than 40 questions posed at baseline, midterm and at programme closure, another that the questions were not aligned with the ToC, neither did they provide a good guidance for the ICLD management and mentors. Furthermore, the answers of the questionnaires were not processed by the ICLD Programme managers, or analysed by mentors. I suggested that the design as well as the internal working procedures at ICLD/KC should change, so that participants’ time would not be wasted, and so that answers would make more practical sense to the ICLD and KC as an organisation.

of the team members and the mentors. I assumed that I would be able to observe and analyse the process through a partly external and less subjective lens with the help of supervisors. Team members or mentors who were deeply involved and highly enthusiastic about the process and its gradual outcomes would have been more myopic, possibly also slightly biased.

The senior consultant and myself coordinated an initial session of the last LFA workshop about how to assess and capture outcomes and results of the local change projects. The workshop format was similar to a “focus group”, and was designed and facilitated by the Programme manager and myself.

In addition, I also approached the mentors, and asked them to assist me in indicating a person that would be one of the strong stakeholders of the project, preferably somebody who had contributed in the decision on whether or not the project could be carried out. I managed to interview one executive/politician from two local authorities: Sarah Baartman District Municipality, South Africa, and Kajjado, Kenya. I received written answers from another leading politician at municipal level in Oshakati, Namibia. The Muranga team referred me to an external stakeholder who was well informed about the project, whom I interviewed. The Zambian teams reported that unfortunately the persons in charge had changed since the last elections in Zambia in August, 2021 and the new representatives were therefore not considered informed enough to participate in the interview. Another proposed interviewee from South Africa never replied.

Mentors’ progress and final reports

The Programme managers monitor the learning process throughout the programme period, to understand what might be missing in the training-sessions and in the project work, so as to give the best possible support to mentors and participants. The progress at project level is, in the current ITP-model,⁷ followed up through “progress reports” written on behalf of mentors and submitted to the Programme manager four times (including the final report) during the programme cycle.

I have received and analysed these reports throughout, and used them mainly in chapter 4 of this report.

2.3 A learning evaluation approach

My evaluation seeks to stimulate dialogue in ICLD/KC about how mine and others’ analyses and reflections can contribute to improving the monitoring, evaluation and reporting on results, mainly at the LLG3 programme level, but also at the overall aggregate level.

My specific contribution to ICLD is the ongoing learning evaluation approach. It is characterised by the active participation and involvement of the programme partners. In the case of LLG3, the continuous learning dialogue with the Programme manager and the mentors is essential. Throughout the evaluation, I have also invited programme participants, mentors, as well as the ICLD and KC management to participate in dialogue about how improvements can be done in the programme processes.

⁷ The ITP programmes all have mentors, while the Municipal Partnership teams do not.

There is no fixed method for on-going evaluations, it is rather about creating a model that is adapted to a specific situation and contribute to a learning evaluation.⁸ The evaluation extends throughout the period of implementation and supports the processes taking place within the programme as well as programme actors to help them improve decisions and activities. It should lead to continuous learning and improvements with the intention of creating the necessary conditions for a more efficient and effective implementation of the programme.

In ongoing and learning evaluation, there is a continuous organised learning process in which learning and critical reflection about objectives, means and conditions for programme implementation are central features, as is the participatory approach to the evaluation activities, which, in turn is connected to the shared responsibility and focus on the prospects for continuous development. On-going evaluation also tries to bridge the gap between research and practice and share common characteristics such as collaborative working between evaluators and stake holders and a methodology involving a series of cycles of planning, action observation and reflection in which those responsible for the practises are at the centre.

The aim of the learning evaluation approach is that the evaluator/s together with the groups for whom processes, activities, projects and programmes, are evaluated get access to, communicate and re-use knowledge that, during the programme, can:

- confirm, safeguard and improve design, content, methods and implementation of processes;
- shed light upon target groups and the possibilities to change structures related to the core objectives/issues of the programme we are evaluating and
- contribute to change directed towards solutions and results during and after the programme/project period.

The evaluator analyses findings, experiences and knowledge generated through the programme process together with programme actors.⁹ Things that work well are strengthened, enhanced and recycled, while things that do not work quite as well can be adjusted or taken out.

I use knowledge and experience from earlier research in a field generally referred to as “policy analysis” (or implementation research). Policy analysis is a kind of evaluation, an investigation of delivery of programmes. Research in policy analysis explores the relation between policies (in terms of programmes and projects for instance) and action (implementation). In other words, policy analysis aims at understanding what happens when a programme or project meets its target groups.

One of the most important purposes for ICLD commissioning Eccola! for the evaluation to ensure that programme processes lead to their objectives. In the learning approach described above, the perspective on the objectives *per se* remain important, but the processes and their intrinsic learning and experiences are the actual focus of the evaluation activities. The main methodological tools applied are semi-structured interviews and participant observation.

⁸ Svensson et al, *Lärande utvärdering genom följeforskning*, Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2011.

⁹ Ibid.

3. FRAME OF ANALYSIS

This chapter contains an outline of the design of the analysis that will follow in chapter 4. The evaluator's interpretation and operationalisation of ICLD's questions that framed this evaluation, as well as of the components of the Frame as described in Figure 1 below will be described.

3.1. Interpretation and operationalisation of questions and focus

3.1.1 Operationalisation of the questions in ICLD's ToR

The commissioner, ICLD, has defined a number of questions that this evaluation sets out to answer. Below, I will present how these questions have been interpreted and incorporated into the frame of analysis of the evaluation. ICLD wants to know what knowledge and skills participants get, and how these are translated into actions in the projects of change.

Other questions relate to how change projects *impact* the organisation and: (1) whether and how politicians, executives and departments get access to, and use processes, institutions/procedures, tools, methods, networks and institutions/procedures, etc. and (2) if these processes are formalised into new policy, development plans, etc.). These questions will be investigated closer in the next chapter.

3.1.2 Focus on change projects

The change project represents the level at which team participants transform their learning and skills into action. A close up analysis of the project level permits for ICLD and KC to understand whether and how the projects interact with and contributes to change at the organisational (local authority) level.

Returning to ICLD's grid of individual, organisational and societal change, projects take place in between the individual and organisational level. The change in the individual is, in turn, expected to have an impact at organisational level, and the projects become the vehicle for collective action of members in the team.

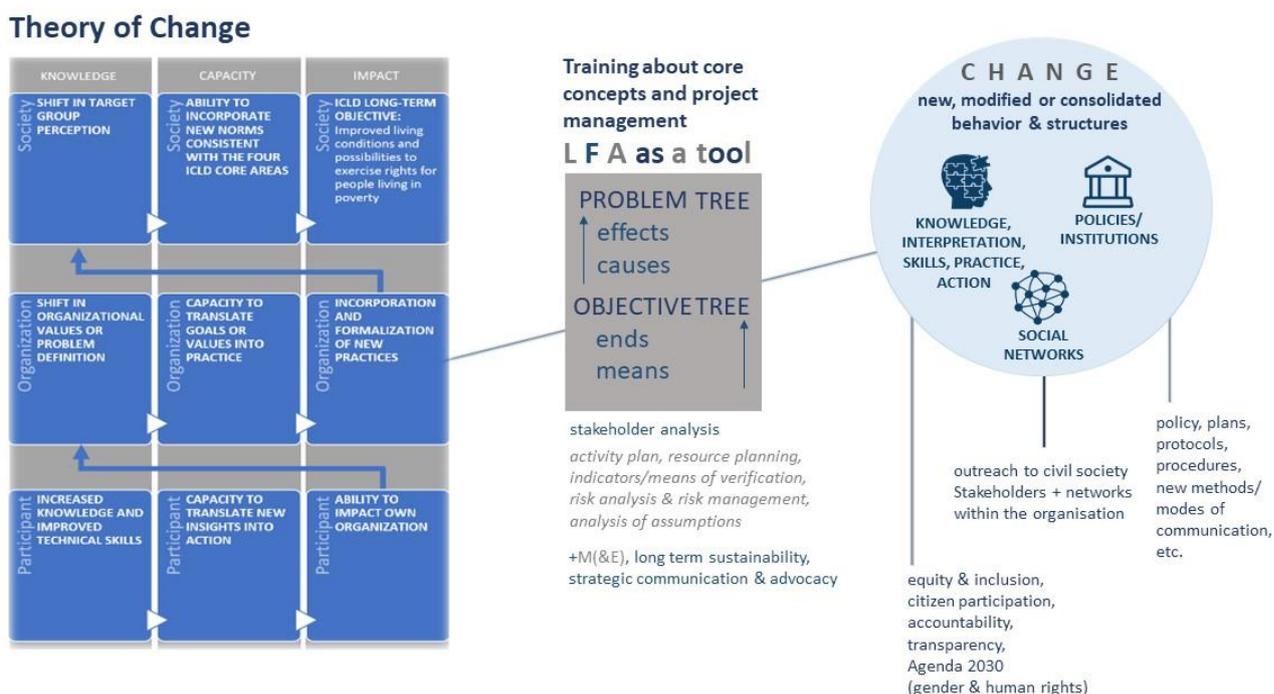
However, it is important to remember that projects have been organised within the local authorities as a cooperation of 4-5 individuals from various departments and with different roles in the processes.

Several sources have been used to generate the analysis that will follow below: comparisons of participants' survey answers at baseline, as compared to that at programme closure. LFA workshop(s), dialogue/workshop and poster at final session, interviews with six out of seven supervisors (in August 2021), the four mentors and three leaders/politicians in the local authorities/one lead stakeholder, continuous dialogue with mentors and mentors' progress reports.

3.2. Interpretation and operationalisation of the ToC, LFA and the three spheres of change

The figure below attempts to connect the ToC to the core content, the training in project management (the LFA tool is used in LLG3), and change explained with the help of three spheres.

Figure 1: Frame of analysis



3.2.1 Theory of Change

According to ICLD’s Theory of Change, positive change in local democracy is to come about through ICLD contributing to increased knowledge among representatives of municipalities, county councils, regions and similar local and regional political organisations. Knowledge and experiences contribute to increased awareness and action in three areas: equal treatment, increased participation (inclusion), transparency and improved possibilities for citizens to demand accountability.

In a longer-term perspective, this will contribute to *strengthened capacity* among local, provincial and regional political organisations as they deal with the issues just mentioned.

Eventually, programmes and actions are intended to contribute to organisations and countries cooperating with ICLD, offering all citizens equal opportunities to influence the formulation of public operations and services.

The overall, highest objective, like in other activities of Swedish international development cooperation, is to contribute to the reduction of poverty. This entails safeguarding individual freedoms, fundamental human and democratic rights of individuals from the local level, so that citizens themselves can be empowered to improve their own living conditions.

Local and regional political organisations that collaborate with ICLD in ITPs are expected to mature knowledge, and capacity that will lead to *impact*. Change is expected to happen at three levels: individual, organisational and societal. The Theory of Change has been illustrated by ICLD Knowledge Centre (KC), and inserted below. In a working-material produced by ICLD Centre of Knowledge, the various stages (knowledge, capacity and impact) and levels (participant, organisation and society) have been tentatively operationalised in a detailed Result Matrix, where “key processes” are identified at each stage and level.

There is another dimension to the Theory of Change - the temporal. As explained in the ICLD Operative Plan:

“ICLD works according to Results Based Management (RBM), which has a focus on organisational learning and continuous improvements related to (gradual) results (of programmes and processes). The terminology of RBM is adopted in monitoring and evaluation in ICLD. Results occurring within one-three years are called “short term outcomes”. Results occurring within three-five years are called medium term outcomes. The next level would be “long term impact” on societal change. The first two levels are relevant for ICLD’s monitoring and evaluation activities, while the “long term impact” is considered to be difficult for ICLD to assess at this stage.”

3.2.2 Training about what?

So, what is the training in the ICLD programme about? The two main contents will be presented below.

Training about core concepts

One part of the ITP training focuses on the four core concepts of ICLD: equity & inclusion, citizen participation, accountability and transparency. Agenda 2030 is a fifth perspective that ICLD incorporates into its training and democracy development activities. These are also the four areas that, together with Agenda 2030 make up the cornerstones in the pilot baseline and final surveys. The concepts are expected to be an integrated part of the local projects. Below, I have inserted ICLD’s own definition of the concepts.¹⁰

Citizen participation: Local governments have a responsibility to actively promote citizen participation in local decision-making processes concerning the design of public policies and services. Examples of steps in this direction are the development of instruments for increased dialogue with citizens and greater responsiveness and adaptation to their needs.

Equity and inclusion: With “Equity and inclusion”, ICLD means that citizens should be treated in an inclusive and just way. All citizens should have the same opportunity to express their needs and be treated with respect with regards to their different abilities.

¹⁰ These concepts were briefly explained to respondents in a survey that ICLD previously used as participants’ self-assessment at the beginning, mid-term and at the end of the programme.

Activities to ensure that no discrimination and no human rights violations take place, taking into account the needs of marginalised groups and focusing specifically on the position of women are examples of measures in line with this focus area.

Transparency in decision making, decision-making processes, planning and regulatory design of public activities is crucial for citizens to be able to participate in a well-informed manner. For citizens, increased transparency means that politicians and civil servants act openly and predictably to a greater extent. Measures that ensure increased transparency, openness and predictability are therefore crucial when strengthening local democracy. Transparency is closely related to the concept of “accountability” where transparency must be in place for citizens to be able to hold local governments, politicians and civil servants accountable.

Accountability in practice to all citizens requires inclusiveness & non-discrimination, broad participation, transparency. Lastly, accountability requires democratic institutions and freedom to mobilise and make demands.

Agenda 2030 and the SDGs have also been adopted as one of ICLD’s core principles. An overarching objective in ICLD’s work is that participants in international programmes learn how to integrate the SDGs in local work for democracy and development. In addition to the five mentioned above, ICLD use three additional concepts: **gender equality, environment and climate and human rights**.¹¹

In LLG3, as I read participants’ answers to the baseline survey about the core concepts, it was clear to me that participants and teams in LLG3 have come a bit further with their problem definition than teams normally have at baseline. This is due to the fact that the first LFA-session was held at the inception phase, and our “Baseline pilot” was launched at the end of January, when participants had already been working with LFA in their projects for a while.

3.2.3 Training about project management using the LFA as a tool

As I started evaluating the LLG3, I learned that the ICLD and KC had decided to use the Logical Frame Approach (LFA) as a tool for project management. LFA is a method for project or programme planning, monitoring and evaluation. It involves the use of *log frame* matrices developed in the design phase of projects or programmes. It is to be updated throughout implementation and remains a resource also in the ex-post evaluation.

In LLG3, the LFA was utilised as more of a flexible “checklist” where each “box” does not necessarily have to be checked. I have also had the opportunity to speak to participants and mentors at more than one occasion about the dangers of considering development as “linear”. As a matter of fact, some teams have had to adjust their problem tree while the project was being implemented, just to mention one instance of non-linear change.

The LFA follows the nine steps: 1) Context analysis; 2) Stakeholder analysis; 3) Problem analysis; 4) Objective analysis; 5) Activity plan; 6) Resource Planning; 7) Indicators and means of verification; 8) Risk analysis and risk management and 9) Analysis of assumptions.

¹¹ These are utilised in the progress reports that the ITPs use, so as to monitor the progress of the change projects, through mentors’ reports.

The core problem, the roots (causes) of the problem and the branches and the leaves representing consequences (if nothing is done to get to grips with the problem) are well articulated and described in each team's "problem tree."

The next step is to construct an "objective tree" with the overarching objective (corresponding with the main problem) at the central part of the trunk of the tree. The roots are the means (activities and short term interventions), and the branches and the leaves were to be the ends (the expected outcomes or intermediary objectives).

The process at baseline also encompasses constructing a stakeholder analysis, and continues with the generation of an activity plan, and so on. For various reasons it was not possible to implement all of the steps in LFA mentioned above. I will return to this discussion further ahead in this report.

LFA as applied by the seven teams in LLG3

The core problem, the roots (causes) of the problem and the branches and the leaves representing consequences (if nothing is done to get to grips with the problem) are well articulated and described in each team's "problem tree."

Problem definitions

The central problems as according to the description in the problem trees in each of the seven teams in LLG3 were as follows:

Local context	Problem definition of project
Kitwe, Zambia	Unsustainable management of solid waste
Kalulushi, Zambia	Low capacity of Ward Development Committees (WDCs)
Kenya, Kaijado	Poor public participation
Kenya, Muranga	Few women in leadership positions
RSA, Sundays River Local Municipality	Low level of well-being or low quality of life
RSA, Cederberg	Low level of well-being or low quality of life
Oshakati, Namibia	Poor waste management communication with community residents

The work with the LFA continued at the "follow up workshop" in April, 2021. This session focused on objectives. An objective tree was constructed by each team. The facilitator explained that the central objective should be geared at dealing with and solving the problem at the centre of the trunk of the tree. The roots should be the means (activities and short term strategies for instance), and the branches and the leaves were to be the ends (the expected outcomes).

The objectives

Local context	Content/objective of project
Kitwe, Zambia	Sustainable management of solid waste
Kalulushi, Zambia	Consolidating existing WDCs, improving the formation and operations of WDCs
Kenya, Kaijado	Enhancing public participation for rural, marginalised and excluded populations (women, youth and people with disabilities)
Kenya, Muranga	Increase the number of women in leadership positions
RSA, Sundays River Local Municipality	A coherent model for local development in SRVM
RSA, Cederberg	A coherent model for local development in SRVM
Oshakati, Namibia	Efficient waste management communication with community residents.

Stakeholder analysis

At the same “follow up workshop”, participants were also trained in how to identify stakeholders.

This was the last workshop that was facilitated by the same ICLD officer, who left for another work. The following workshop, in September, was the Swedish phase, and the LFA-facilitation was suspended, due to time restraints.¹² This entailed that the participants were prevented from a full test-version of the LFA, and some parts were left out, such as: activity plan, resource planning, indicators/means of verification, risk analysis & risk management, analysis of assumptions (in grey italics under ”LFA as a tool” in Figure 1).

Since the tool was well received by participants and mentors, the Programme manager and myself decided to cooperate at the last workshop in South Africa, and facilitate the concluding section about LFA by recapitulating the problem- and objective analysis, and let teams reflect on achievements (in terms of outputs, outcomes and indicators). We also wanted to leave space for the teams’ reflection on the prospects for the sustainability of activities over the next few years.

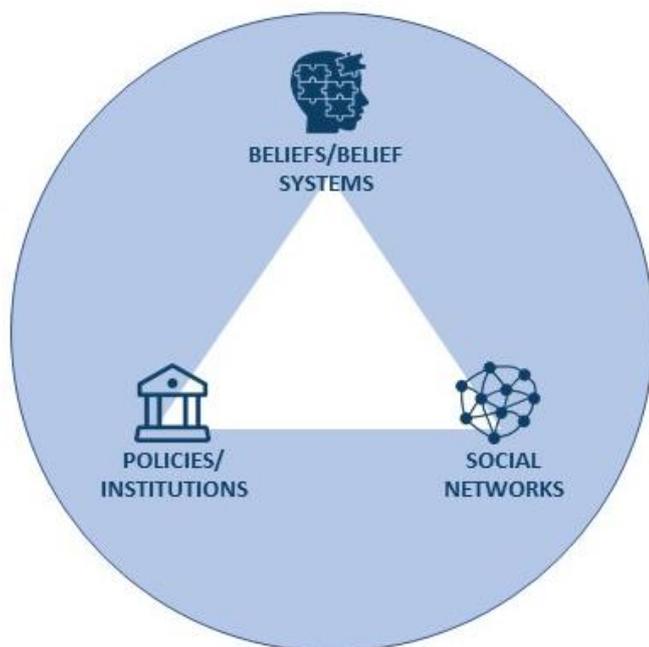
The exercise (with exception for the sustainability-part) was carried out as a teamwork, where we put teams in a group of two, from different countries. The teams were asked to communicate the answer to the question to another team. Teams were then to present the answer to the question (on behalf of the other team) in front of the entire group. The purpose was to accommodate the requests raised by participants since the start, to have the opportunity to exchange experiences with other teams and get to know the other participants (and change projects) closer.

¹² There was no space in the programme. The programme was dedicated to presentations and exchange with Swedish colleagues and projects.

My role in the first phases of the programme process was, hence, mainly to observe, and intervene sporadically to ask questions to teams with the objective to understand, and at the same time encourage reflection and learning in the teams. This role changed somewhat in the concluding phase, since the last session on LFA was co-facilitated by myself, the senior consultant and the Programme manager. The format was close to what colleagues would call a "focus group".¹³

3.2.4 Operationalisation of the three spheres of change in the Frame of analysis

Figure 2: The three spheres of change



The illustration above,¹⁴ represents three "spheres" of change. These are components in the model of organisational change used by the KC. In the presentations of the senior consultant in LLG3, the illustration of the spheres was used to stimulate participants' reflection on what change looks like (or what it might look like) in their change projects.

The first one relates to **beliefs and values** in the organisation. These beliefs and values (and the negotiation and dialogue around them) are manifest in the problem definition, the formation of objectives and the definition of target groups (or stakeholders) In the frame of analysis, I have labelled this sphere **knowledge, interpretation, skills and practice**.

¹³ This is well in line with the approach of learning evaluation, and could certainly be questioned and discussed by evaluators and academics. This is however, not the forum for such discussion.

¹⁴ Elaborated and used by the Senior Consultant in his presentations about the Theory of Change. It aims at describing three conditions that are part of the municipal level, and that make up spheres of expected change.

In chapter 4, I will analyse how the participants (together as a team) understand and incorporate knowledge about the four core areas of ICLD: equity, inclusion and just treatment of citizens, citizen participation, transparency and accountability (plus Agenda 2030) in relation to their problem, objective(s) and stakeholders. When knowledge (about these concepts) is translated into action in the projects, these bearing values and concepts take on the form of activities networks and institutions, methods and procedures, etc.

The second is about **social networks and stakeholders**. In this evaluation, this sphere has been interpreted as new or more clearly defined target groups and stakeholders. I have also looked for evidence of networking *within* the organisations (across departments and/or continuous communication with leaders).

The third and last sphere of change is **policies and institutions**. My interpretation of policies and institutions is wide and embraces also processes, procedures and new approaches or methods adopted in the project/in the municipality/county.

4. FINDINGS AND RESULTS

This chapter contains an analysis of the findings and results, focusing on the local change projects of LLG 3, and referring to the Frame of analysis (outlined in the previous chapter).

The question about what participants actually learn in the programme will be answered. Then I will make an attempt to explain how knowledge and skills are translated into actions, social networks, policies, institutions and procedures, etc. Thereafter, the interaction and exchange between politicians, executives and other leaders in the local authorities and the teams will be described. The chapter will be concluded with a recapitulation of findings and reflections.

4.1 Change in participants' interpretation and use of the core concepts

4.1.1 Knowledge, interpretation, skills and practice

Some interesting similarities could be discerned early on the analysis of the seven change projects. A first observation from the survey answers at baseline is that the teams generally already had quite a good basic knowledge about how the concepts were related to their project.

Poor implementation of policy

All of the local projects (independently of their problem and objective definition) indicate that laws and policies (sometimes also institutions, such as the Ward Development Committees in both Zambian contexts) are in place, but that policy is not implemented. Hence, the problem was defined by participants and teams as: **poor implementation of policy**.

The mentor for the two Zambian teams refers to this challenge in one of his “progress reports” to the ICLD as follows:

“In 2015, the Government of the Republic of Zambia amended the constitution of Zambia to provide for a formal and legal fourth level (community based) governance structure as a way of promoting community/ citizen participation in the development and governance processes. Consequently, the Local Government Act No. 2 of 2019 provided for a section that espouses the process of establishing and operational aspects of the Ward Development Committees (WDCs) which actualised the fourth level governance structure provided for in the constitution of Zambia.

Local authorities, Kalulushi included, face challenges in delivering services and understanding the needs of citizens they serve. This was the precursor to including the community governance structure in the amended constitution and local government act. While efforts have been made by municipalities to establish the sub-district structures in form of WDCs, capacitating the WDCs to make them effective platforms for community participation remains a challenge. To this end, the team has formulated this change project to capacity build and strengthen the linkages between the community and district/ council for improved service delivery and governance.”¹⁵

¹⁵ Mentor's Progress report 2021-10-11

Weak inclusion of civil society

All teams also report on a weak inclusion of civil society from the side of the authorities, hence insufficient participation from the side of citizens. Most of the formal documents and planning processes call for the involvement of citizens. As a matter of fact, there are many examples in the survey answers of how documents and planning processes are open for citizens' engagement and critical assessment. In brief: Policies are in place. Nevertheless, citizen participation remains low.

I have conducted evaluation work in other contexts in Africa earlier, and quite often heard interviewees complaints about citizens who are “not interested” in participating and that “people are tired of politics and authorities”. The reasons are said to be corruption scandals, bureaucracy and the distancing of authorities and (political) leaders from the everyday lives and problems of citizens.¹⁶ In the evaluation of LLG3, I have not come across the same sort of statements. This was an interesting finding in itself. Citizens and various stakeholders are certainly described as “duty bearers”, but in the baseline answers, as well as in the final surveys, the respondents indicate the local authorities as responsible of inviting, including, informing and training citizens, so that they can exercise their rights to participate in matters that concern “all”.¹⁷

Hence, according to the participants, the core challenge that needed to be faced to bridge this gap was to invite, involve, train and “sensitise” citizens to the opportunities, and get them engaged in the local change projects. One of the common objectives of all of the change projects was therefore to **increase citizen participation**.

4.1.2 Knowledge about Agenda 2030?

Agenda 2030 and the SDGs have been adopted as one of ICLD's core principles. In the survey question about Agenda 2030, the participants are asked to describe how Agenda 2030 and the SDGs are related to their local context. In question “c”, respondents are to choose the 5 SDGs that are closest related to their change project.

The Agenda 2030 question is the query in the survey, in which answers differ the most between the seven local contexts, especially when it comes to teams describing what they do, and how their project is related to the development goals. Kenya and South Africa (Sunday River Valley) are coherent in describing what SDGs their local projects deal with, while the rest are more diverse and a bit “confused”.

Kenyan participants appear to be more familiar with the SDGs and Agenda 2030 than the participants in the rest of the teams. I assume this has to do with the reform of the Kenyan Constitution in 2010, and how national laws and regulations are “passed down” to the local context.

An example from the baseline survey answers from team Kaijado, Kenya:

“Kenya ratified the Agenda 2030. All 17 goals are taken into account in all the County Integrated Development plans. Kenya’s vision 2030 amplifies Agenda 2030 and all counties are committed to its implementation. However, implementation is slow, and not well known at the local level due to inadequacy of funds to prioritise pertinent issues in Kaijado.”

¹⁶ Observations from Programme for Young Politicians in Africa, interviews with young politicians in 16 African countries.

¹⁷ Source: Answers to the baseline survey.

Participants from both teams from South Africa describe their projects in a more "holistic" way, which is in line with the intentions of Agenda 2030, but also in accordance with the specific method (the Morphogenetic approach) applied by both South African teams.

On the other hand, members of both teams (Cederberg and the Sundays River Valley) listed various and different SDGs, to answer the question about which 5 development goals relate to their project. At the poster session, we observed how the mentor from South Africa attempted to make participants refer to the SDGs in their presentation. However, as participants filled out the final survey, they related to different SDGs. Also, the team members' answers about the SDGs and how they connect to the project are not coherent with what had been presented at the final workshop.

One reflection here is that as compared to the ICLD core concepts, participants' knowledge and skills about how to put Agenda 2030 and the SDGs into practice is generally fair. In the answers of the final survey, there is not much evidence to be found about change having taken place owing to the ICLD training on this matter.

The reasons for these humble results may be that only one workshop about Agenda 2030 was held in LLG3 at the Inception workshop. The initial ambition was to include another session with the same facilitator, a Programme manager from the ICLD, who then left ICLD for another work.

A short on-line workshop about an "Agenda 2030 tool"¹⁸ developed by Chalmers University of Technology was organised by the ICLD in June 2021. The four mentors from LLG3 participated, and provided positive feedback. The tool does, however, not seem to have been introduced to or used by the teams by mentors afterwards.

During the summer of 2021, the KC Manager and the LLG3 Programme manager discussed the possibility of including the Agenda 2030 tool in one of the two workshops that remained at that point of time. For various reasons (time-restraints in particular), that session was never inserted into the programme.

4.2 Change in social networks and policies and institutions

New knowledge and skills about the core areas, but also about project management are put into practice in a number of activities. Most of the examples of the activities carried out can either be referred to as "social networks" or "institutions or policies".

4.2.1 Social networks

At baseline, respondents' answers related to "networks" are a bit vague. While baselines indicate general stakeholder groups such as "youth, women and persons with disabilities", answers to the final survey are more elaborate, and the sphere of stakeholders has expanded.

In the survey answered at programme closure, most participants indicate the various stakeholders and groups to be included and invited more clearly than was the case in the initial survey. Examples of new stakeholders mentioned are organised interest groups, civil society organisations, schools,

¹⁸<https://sdgimpactassessmenttool.org/> Last visited 2022-04-03

churches, groups of leaders of various sections of society such as business, agriculture, public sector, etc.

Also in the final session, participants provide many examples of how they have put knowledge and consciousness about stakeholders into action and how they have reached out to, established networks with and trained various groups of citizens.

The lion part of the final survey answers as well as the poster-sessions and narratives in interviews show how all local projects have established new or enhanced existing networks with the aim to reach out, interact with and engage citizens to participate in the projects. A few also describe how they have found new ways of cooperating with executives and decision makers within their own authority or how they have encouraged exchange across departments.

Below, the reader will find examples of new (or enhanced) social networks in which there is evidence of change in the respondents' answers to the survey at baseline, as compared to what is presented at programme closure.

Kitwe, Zambia:

Dialogue sessions with community leaders, involvement of women and youth, politicians, church leaders and the local authority, training of council staff and school children.

A partnership was established between the team and Alinifwe Multipurpose (an all women group) cooperative which is recycling paper and plastic. The cooperative has over 30 members and makes various products from paper and plastics and the items are sold for the members to earn an income. The primary goal of the partnership is enable the cooperative have access to the sites managed by the municipality for the smooth collection of waste materials needed to make artefacts.¹⁹

Kaijado, Kenya:

Through the change project the county assembly was able to identify various ways of **reaching marginalised groups**. The team used community friendly meeting-structures, county administrative systems, and **involved the private sector as well as the civil society**.

The change project has enabled the county assembly to explore **partnerships** with other organisations, for instance Action Aid.²⁰

The number of women attending public participation fora in the county increased. These included the **public participation** for the Village Delineation Bill and Women's Economic Empowerment Bill.

¹⁹ As a matter of fact, this is not only a network, but could also be placed under the institution/procedures heading.

²⁰ ActionAid is a global federation working for a world free from poverty and justice. <https://actionaid.org>

Muranga, Kenya:

The team **identified and included groups of men and male champions and persons with special needs**. At times, the team used activities such as **tree planting or harvesting avocado to meet and discuss leadership and gender** with local communities.²¹

Team **built collaboration with civil society organisations** working with human rights issues. The project trained “thousands of women in Muranga about their constitutional rights”.²²

Women **involved in leadership dialogue** initiated through the project has enabled the formation of several women fora and networks. The discussion continues.²³

Several meetings were held about the project, and attended by the executive and top leadership in the county and board present. Networking has taken place also within the local authority and across departments.²⁴

Sundays River Valley, South Africa:

The Team **worked closely with leaders who are based in local communities**. Members of the Team were invited to participate in Local Government Meetings. **Engagement with schools** to promote awareness of the SDGs.

The team has **formed relations with the farmers, business, municipality, and community** and promotes a multi-sector co-responsibility approach.

Cederberg, South Africa:

The team **helped the business chamber to acquire new members** from the informal economy, and ensured these informal traders received access to supply goods at VIP events, invited all the **artists in town** to perform and gave them online opportunities to promote themselves.

The team also organised **one-on-one meetings with key role players** throughout the project, and **strategic momentous events “to show what we can do if we work together”**, (for instance the wild flower show). Formal engagements with sector and departmental leaders.

Different discussions and interventions sessions were held with the relevant stakeholders to create a culture of ownership and pride in the communities. Regular updates and brainstorming sessions ensure that miscommunication and misunderstanding are limited, and that responsibilities and roles are clear.

²¹ As a matter of fact, this is not only a network, but could also be placed under the institution/procedures heading.

²² Muranga, Kenya poster.

²³ Confirmed by the mentor.

²⁴ Confirmed by the mentor.

Oshakati, Namibia:

The team **conducted meetings with community leaders for each informal settlement within town as well as schools and relevant stakeholders**. The team further raised awareness through social media platforms and public events.

4.3 Change related to policies and institutions

4.3.1 Plans, protocols, procedures, new methods/modes of communication, etc.

As mentioned above, already at baseline the local teams all indicated that formal policies and institutions were present in the local contexts. Both local projects in Zambia refer to the Ward Development Committees, while the South African teams refer to the Morphogenetic approach as a ToC (for the local project and for broad collaboration between the authorities and the civil society) and the IDPs (integrated development plans). The Kenyan teams refer to the Kenyan Constitution from 2010 and other pieces of legislation as well as Agenda 2030. The one team from Oshakati, Namibia refers to the Waste Management Policy (clause number 7: promoting waste management through awareness and education).

But there are also examples of new protocols, procedures and methods. A few examples:

Kitwe, Zambia:

Zoning of wards to identify locals and collect their views (new approach). Protocols for division of roles, time frame and budgets for the change project activities has been shared. LFA is mentioned as an approach to project management.

Formation of a school club at Musonda Community School within Kitwe District that deals with sustainable solid waste management through the involvement of pupils. Teachers were also engaged to show their support. The school has over 120 pupils. Forming school clubs on waste management is one of promoting responsible utilisation of resources and ensure the change project has several change agents that will continue to champion the programme goal in future.

Sensitisation campaign on waste management at household and community levels to encourage residents to pay for waste collection services. This was key to ensure that illegal dumping of waste in communities is reduced.

Kalulushi, Zambia:

Electoral committee formed ahead of the WDC elections (aim: to make the candidate more representative for the community/engage and include new candidates), open procedures around preparing, reviewing plans and budgets, Agenda 2030 mentioned as one of the “overarching” programmes that combine important issues of development.

Dongwe Ward Development Committee, which is the pilot ward, received further support by having an **executive committee selected and trained** in the roles and responsibility of each office bearer. The WDC also **constituted working sub- committees** for the purposes of enhancing the functions of the WDC. (Planning and Budgeting Sub-Committee, Infrastructure Development Sub-Committee and Socio-Economic Sub-Committee).

Kaijado, Kenya:

Citizen participation and village bills were tabled and taken through public participation at the county assembly (new policy), **five speakers' round tables** were conducted, **A bulk SMS platform** was developed for the county assembly to communicate with citizens (new ways of communicating with the broad public).²⁵

Muranga, Kenya:

A **communication plan** was developed and monitored by diverse interest groups. Muranga currently has the highest number ever of women political aspirants for the forthcoming general elections. **Six women have shown interest in seeking a leadership role** in the county.

One of the project team members is vying for a seat in parliament. This is a position that has never been held before, by a woman. In the team presentation, the representative is referred to as a source of inspiration for other women.²⁶

Sunday River Valley Municipality, South Africa:

A Memorandum of Understanding signed between the local government and the “collaborative” which is an NGO – i.e. the team that worked on the project and continue to work with the morphogenetic approach. **A local committee** was elected and **four groups with different foci** were formed. **The project has been incorporated in the Integrated Development Plan.**

Cederberg, South Africa:

New local resident political party formed, New Resident Committee Formed, Cederberg Social Development Foundation restructured, Local committee was elected and four groups with different foci were formed, Completing of survey (about needs) through door to door approach. **Progress report and milestone checking will enable the tracking of progress.**

Oshakati, Namibia:

A **communication plan** for how to reach out to citizens was developed.

The above are all examples of how knowledge and skills/capacities acquired and/or strengthened during the LLG3 programme were put into practice. It is difficult, if not impossible for this evaluation to establish if *all* these activities and outcomes are results from the participation of LLG3. The above is an attempt of an outline of what change looks like in the projects in terms of: knowledge, interpretation, skills, practice, social networks and policies/institutions.

²⁵ Confirmed and stressed as important outcome by one stakeholder in triangulation interview.

²⁶ Confirmed by a stakeholder in triangulation interview. The interviewee also talked about the women touring the county and encouraging other women to be leaders.

4.4 Local authorities' access to networks, policies and institutions

Some questions posed by the ICLD in the ToR of the evaluation regard how change projects *impact* the organisation and: (1) whether and how politicians, executives and departments get access to, and use processes, institutions/procedures, tools, methods, networks and institutions/procedures, etc. and (2) if these processes are formalised into new policy, development plans, etc.). Question number 2 has already been answered above under 4.3. above.

As for question number one: When mentors and participants describe how projects are being implemented, and identify important stakeholders, mentors point to key roles and persons at organisational level, while participants generally focus on anchorage and interaction with stakeholders in civil society.

It should transpire from the analysis in 4.1 that the teams' focus on sensitisation and engagement of citizens is a result of their understanding of their own and the teams' role. I learn, from participants' narratives and how they elaborate and carry out the projects that they see themselves as intermediaries that will assist the local authorities in reaching out to stakeholders in civil society, so as to communicate, train and engage them.

Mentors indicate that teams already include some representatives from the local government structures. These team members may then be important links that will ensure impact at organisational level. However, the teams are incorporated in the structures of the local authority, hence potential outcomes in terms of networks, (new) policies, institutions and procedures, etc. will be accessible to politicians and executives.

In the progress reports, mentors contribute with their view of institutional support and anchorage in the executive leadership, among local councillors, etc. and describe how (most) teams are composed to encompass executive persons in the local projects. The interest and support from the side of the Councils and leaders in the organisation also ought to indicate that the authority recognises that the organisation and the local context can gain from the project.

4.4.1 Examples of support, interaction and exchange – organisational level

The involvement of the organisational level and the institutional support is emphasised in the final reports from all mentors. Numerous examples are provided²⁷ of how the executive leadership support the teams and their activities. There are also several examples of how executives, politicians and other leaders have learned and gained from the projects, and cooperated closely with the team members.

Kitwe, Zambia and Kalulushi, Zambia:

The Council adopted the project at a Council meeting. Besides, WDCs are official structures at community level, they are acting on behalf of the local authority. The team members are given time and resources to undertake project activities.

²⁷ Texts have been extracted from the mentors' final report.

The mentor writes: The former Mayor of Kalulushi is a team member. She contested in parliamentary elections in August 2021 and came out second. She continued to work in the change project. This is a good sign of institutional support and dedication on her part, to the change project.

For **Oshakati, Namibia**, the mentor reports that the Council supported all the public meetings held. The Council also sponsored information materials used in the change process and bought uniforms for the team members. Furthermore:

The department that deals with waste management and the project team have been cooperating closely during the change project. The Waste Management Policy was implemented within the Council, and each department (including top management) completed their tasks.

All the Council's politicians are given a responsibility to work together with team officials to plan community meetings and to monitor the waste within their designated areas.

The Council has included the change project in its Strategic Plan for 2021- 2025FY. Thus, budget was availed for the period.

For **Kenya, Muranga**, the mentor reports that County government and Municipal board understand the importance of the change project and has supported the planning and implementation also beyond the ICLD timelines. The Board ensures provision of logistical support and access to its local networks during sensitisation, participation and other key activities

Several training programmes targeting the municipal board and stakeholders have been undertaken. The Municipal board of Muranga has developed internal capacity to implement the change project. Interdepartmental empowerment and networking create strong county teams in implementation of the change project. Several meetings were held about the project with the executive and top county leadership and board present. Also the mentor was invited and attended. Furthermore:

- The Governor and Chair of the boards participated in some community mobilisation efforts;
- Two political parties offer free membership and certificate to any aspiring woman leader in Muranga and neighbouring counties;
- Muranga Municipal board/ County Government assists with technical advice during stakeholder and community meetings, and has allocated resources, (human, financial and logistical) and offered use of county resources for meeting and other support and
- Muranga Municipal board has an existing Municipal partnership with Upplands-Bro, and very keen on supporting the project.

The **Kajiado team** together with the committee of legal matters has been offered financial, logistical, human resources to undertake a comprehensive public participation legal process to ensure that the bill becomes law.

The innovative speakers round table has brought together diverse stakeholders that were otherwise marginalised. They now have a forum to share their views openly and make their voices heard. The county assembly also ensures provision of logistical and financial support to change project activities. Activities are discussed at key county assembly fora and in the committee of devolution and executive department, which deals with citizen participation.

The change project has enabled the assembly to develop internal capacity to implement the change project adequately (training, awareness, exchange programmes, etc.) The assembly has also embraced key stakeholders to be part of the implementation team, hence strong network of actors that go beyond the assembly itself.

Furthermore:

- The Kaijado county Government has several relationship programmes with ICLD, thus understands how to manage and implement change projects based on previous experiences, training and exposure to effectively implement change projects;
- The speaker of the county assembly is a participant in the change project hence can command high level of support from the elected leaders (head of political wing of the Assembly);
- The clerk (CEO) of the assembly is the supervisor who ensures allocation of resources and logistical support. Mobilisation and grassroots activities are coordinated by elected leaders from the targeted wards;
- The chief of staff and chief administrative officer in the office of the Governor is a participant in the change project. The County Governor has attended some of the community activities and stakeholder meetings;
- Resources (human, financial, logistical) have been allocated to the project. county infrastructure such as community halls, notice boards, staff at sub county level is used to support change projects and
- Political goodwill through the county assembly enabled leaders to understand and support the goals of the project.

In **South Africa** (Sunday River Valley), Councillors and staff have attended ICLD workshops. Sundays River Valley recently initiated a partnership (through ICLD) with the Swedish Municipality of Falkenberg on youth and human rights.

Following the final workshop of the ICLD, the Collaborative was approached by the Municipal Manager and the Mayor. The request was to enter into a formal cooperation agreement. The municipality believes that the Collaborative has “it’s ear closer to the community” and can bring valuable international partnerships for the valley. The idea is to sign an agreement, a social compact, that will commit all parties (local government, communities, farmers and organised business) to a multi sector collaboration.²⁸

In **Cederberg** (South Africa) the support of the Acting Municipal Manager is mentioned as having contributed with important support to the project.

4.5 Recapitulation of findings and conclusion of the change process

Below, the core findings and conclusion of the analysis in this chapter, will be summarised with reference to the individual and organisational levels in the ICLD ToC.

Individual level:

Participants increase their knowledge and improved their technical skills. By collecting evidence, data and exchanging experience with other teams, being mentored, etc. participants translate their insights into action. Participants now have the ability to mobilise to impact their own organisation.

In LLG3, the improved knowledge and skills among participants about the four concepts of ICLD and project management transform into deepened understanding about the problem(s).²⁹ They are then elaborated into activities and training aimed at inviting, including and engaging citizens to participate in local development and governing processes.

Organisational level:

Moving up one level in the Matrix, local change projects are expected to generate results in terms of changed definition of the problem(s) that it needs to deal with to change and achieve its objectives.

Interviews with team supervisors, stakeholders (politicians, leaders, executives) and mentors’ accounts indicate that teams and stakeholders arrive at a shared understanding of what the most relevant or prioritised problems and desired change (objective) is about.

In LLG3, the main problem was initially described as *poor implementation of policy* but the change projects and the various activities and trainings undertaken eventually became the means for change, with the common objective of increasing *citizen participation*.

Hence, **improved knowledge and awareness mainly about the four basic concepts of LLG3, the project management training of teams and the interaction with internal and external stakeholders result in action, new networks, policies and institutions, procedures, etc.**

²⁸ Separate email from the mentor of the South African teams.

²⁹ Source: baseline surveys as compared to survey answers at programme closure.

There are many examples of change that indicate participants' new awareness of the importance of **social networks** and activities that will sensitise various stakeholders and encourage them to get involved. In the survey answered at programme closure, most participants indicate the various stakeholders and groups that have been included and invited more clearly than was the case in the initial survey. Also, in the final session, participants provide many examples of how they have put knowledge and consciousness about stakeholders into action and how they have reached out to, established networks with and trained various groups of citizens.

As has been reported in this chapter, there is considerable interaction with and support from executives and politicians and across departments and other organisations. Change projects target, include, and engage citizens in active participation. There are also **examples of new institutions, protocols, procedures and methods being developed or adopted.**

Some of them are: School clubs with pupils being trained in sustainable waste management, electoral committees for Ward Development Committees (Kitwe, Zambia); Executive committees and sub-committees with different responsibilities and roles (as a part of the WDC in Kalulushi, Zambia); Citizen participation bill adopted and round table discussions organised and will be repeated, a bulk SMS communication platform was created for reaching citizens (Kajiado, Kenya); Women's network being built and a communication plan for enabling several stakeholders the chance to monitor the project – transparency (Muranga, Kenya);

An NGO (a so called collaborative) for development was formed and signed a MOU with the local government, a local committee and four working groups were organised, the project was incorporated into the Integrated Development Plan (Sundays River Valley, South Africa); A new local resident political party and a new Resident Committee were formed, Cederberg Social Development Foundation was restructured, A local committee was elected, A system for monitoring and transparency (progress report and milestone tracking) was adopted. A communication plan about sustainable waste management was developed (Oshakati, Namibia).

The “impact” stage in the ToC assumes the *incorporation and formalisation* of new practices. In my evaluation, I have translated this into “long term sustainable change”.

The assumed long term sustainability of networks and structures are the most difficult to verify in the case of LLG3. I have asked teams and the four stakeholders/executives/politicians themselves to assess whether knowledge, values, networks, policies and institutions will be sustainable in the years to come, and will return to this question in the conclusions in the next chapter.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This concluding chapter will focus on ICLD and KC and how they manage their (ITP) programmes and processes. Below I will attempt to group conclusions and recommendations by following roughly the logic of the Frame of analysis, starting out with the training about the core concepts and project management. I will then discuss the role of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) and reflect on the ToC and long term sustainability prospects. The report will be concluded with a few observations on lessons learned seen through my evaluator's lens, and underpinned by arguments from dialogues and interviews with participants, mentors Programme managers from the ICLD as well as external stakeholders in the local processes.

But first we will go back to the LLG3 programme and assess whether and how the programme has achieved what ICLD calls "goals"³⁰ and objectives.

5.1 A brief assessment of the achievement of goals and objectives in LLG3

LLG3 has three goals. Participants are expected to gain:

- increased knowledge and skills about citizen dialogue mechanisms, democratic political leadership and inclusive governance to co-create a more inclusive social contract.³¹

Evaluator's comment: In the previous chapter, there is considerable evidence that participants have learned how to use the four core concepts of the ICLD. Teams generally knew quite a lot about the core concepts already, and were also able to relate their knowledge to the overall local contexts. It is difficult to know exactly what ICLD added to the knowledge that was already there, but it is clear that by working in the teams, individual participants have exchanged knowledge and skills amongst themselves. Participants were more concrete and specific about what had been done, how and why.

- Improved capacity for coherent integration of the SDGs into local planning and policymaking.

The results from the part of the training about Agenda 2030 and the SDGs are less manifest.

Evaluator's comment: The Kenyan teams were already well informed about the content of the Agenda, and have answered questions about the SDG and how they relate to their local contexts and projects in a coherent manner. The South African teams, have started to grapple with the operationalisation and practical use of the SDGs. This part of the training could, however be improved. The connection between the SDGs and the change projects would likely be clearer if the training included more practical examples and exercises.

- Enhanced skills and methods to co-create solutions to improve the wellbeing of the urban poor.

³⁰ "I understand these as "intermediate objectives", hence the tree crown in an objective tree.

³¹ It is unclear what "social contract" means in this context. This is also the only place in which I find the concept "co creation".

Evaluator’s comment: I have discussed this goal with the ICLD leadership and the Programme manager of LLG3. I find this goal indeed difficult to apply to the problems and objectives of the local teams. If we look through the stakeholder analysis of the teams and the network they wish to establish, “the urban poor” are never identified as a target group, and most of the local projects were “rural” more than urban in the first place.

I understand that this might be an overarching goal for all ICLD programmes and change processes, but it is not relevant to the LLG3. A few of the participants mention that economic empowerment (micro loans, and training and inspiration for aspiring female and young entrepreneurs for instance) is one of the activities that are closely related to the project. Still, it would be indeed farfetched to try to fit this in under the label “improve the wellbeing of the urban poor”.

The programme has the following objectives

- Gained skills and abilities to communicate and advocate on issues of inclusive governance;

This objective has been achieved, although the aspect of communication and advocacy can be strengthened.

- Expanded local, regional, national and international network;

The local networks (as well as some of the regional outreach activities) have been exemplified with a number of evidence. Most of them are about local networks with local stakeholders that include citizens. As shown in chapter 4 a number of “local networks” have also been established within the authority itself (across departments and between the change project and the executives, politicians and leadership in the authorities).

A few new international networks are mentioned: Murangas established partnership with Upplands Bro, Sweden and Sundays River Valley’s new partnership with Falkenberg, Sweden. Both are Municipal partnerships, established with assistance from ICLD.

At the final workshop in Gqeberha, South Africa, several of the participants and mentors expressed great enthusiasm about the new networks that had been initiated between the participants of the change projects from different countries. The latter is a somewhat unexpected result, given the extraordinarily difficult situation, due to Covid. The fact that ICLD managed to get participants of all but one African team together, was, according to participants’ evaluation surveys and mentors’ final reports a revelation. It would be overly optimistic though, to think that these networks live on.

Evaluator’s comment: ICLD could be more specific with their terminology as they elaborate the goals. What is actually meant by “social contract” or “urban poor”?

Furthermore, if these goals and objectives are supposed to feed into the report system to Sida, Programme managers would need to know what ICLD and KC need, in order for them to provide good examples from their programmes.

One question that I have pondered on while taking a closer look at the goals and objectives above is about whether the LLG3 actually trains participants in *leadership*? The goals and objectives of the programme do not appear to specifically relate to leadership as compared to other ITPs. One could perhaps argue that all ITPs deal with leadership?

5.2 The core concepts and project management

5.2.1 Framing and communicating the core concepts in the training

In the analysis chapter, it was concluded that the understanding among participants of the meaning of the four core concepts was fairly good already at baseline. So was the understanding and description of how concepts related to the overall context and the project. The change in understanding and interpretation of the concepts was mostly manifest in more concrete indications and descriptions by team members about exactly what teams were doing and why, who the main stakeholders were and how to approach, communicate and engage with them. This is an excellent result! It tells us more about what participants do with the concepts, than what they know about the theoretical concept *per se*.

Throughout the programme process, much effort has been put on “educating” participants in the four core concepts and Agenda 2030.

One observation is that it is not completely clear how ICLD expects participants to integrate these concepts into their (project) work. It is also difficult to comprehend how the ICLD and KC management make sure that the training-sessions focus around these themes and their interconnection in concrete work for local democratic development. The same goes for the three additional concepts human rights, environment and climate³² and gender. One comment and soft recommendation that I would like to leave for the next edition of the LLG, and for the rest of the ITPs would be to discuss the concepts among the Programme managers, and decide on the role they are expected to play in the various programmes of ICLD. Other questions to discuss would be whether and how concepts are connected to other expected outcomes and objectives of each programme, and communicated with the programme participants. Are all local projects in all ITPs expected to deal with all concepts?

I would suggest to give space for more dialogue within ICLD on the matter. There ought to be a way to connect theory about the core concepts in a more explicit manner to practice in the local projects and contexts.

³² These are three extra concepts that are included in the mentors’ reports. Mentors are asked to answer questions on how these concepts relate to the change projects.

I have evaluated similar programmes previously, and one of the early learnings that I as an evaluator and the implementers brought with us on the continuous journey was to let participants associate freely to the concept that was to be discussed at a training session, with the facilitator and before the lecture or training started. That way we made sure that the concept took on a more practical and applicable connotation. It was an attempt to get away from the theoretical interpretation and presentation that lecturers often adopted, and it worked well.

In LLG3, the Programme manager initially planned for having two interactive sessions on Agenda 2030, but for various reasons (the principle being lack of time), this was not possible.

If ICLD and KC aim at being able to follow up on knowledge and skills, and Agenda 2030 represents one of the themes that participants are expected to learn more about, then this theme should be inserted into more than one workshop, and combined with practical exercises.

On the same note, and in conclusion, I would like to add that I have interviewed participants and supervisors about what they found most useful in the training. They referred to the training in project management as well as to the exchange of experience of good practice as the most relevant learnings.³³

I would strongly recommend for the ICLD management and KC to ponder on whether it would be possible to exchange some of the theoretical and lecture content for more interactive and project-related exercises, that would bring theory closer to practice.

5.2.2 LFA – training in project management

My earlier evaluation work often entails questioning and challenging traditional power structures. and relates to behaviour, attitudes and values. I have concluded that conventional result management methods such as LFA or Results Based Management (RBM) are generally not suitable for capturing the dynamics of these processes. In my evaluation work, I have therefore often designed my own “hybrids” that answer to the requirements of LFA or RBM, and at the same time open up for a less linear approach to monitoring, evaluating and learning.

My reflection regarding the use of LFA in the implementation of the programme is that it appears to work well, the way that it was introduced and incorporated into the training in the LLG3. I have also checked with all four mentors whether they feel comfortable about using the LFA, and their response was positive. Two of them had already worked with the LFA in other (ICLD) programmes.

I recommend that the LFA (including the problem and the objective tree) be considered as a tool or support in project management in all ICLD programmes. The trees can also be used in dialogues about progress in the projects with mentors and the Programme manager.

It should be mentioned that this year was shorter than an “ordinary” ITP-period in the LLG3. It lasted 12 months, instead of 18 months.³⁴ Furthermore, ICLD has been forced to go digital, in almost all of their workshops and trainings, that would normally have been conducted on site.

³³ Interviews carried out in August-September 2021

³⁴ Sida asked ICLD to shorten the programmes during the Covid pandemic.

These two are the main reasons for that the programme was too full, and parts of the LFA training had to be cut out.

In the last workshop, the poster session had already been held, when the concluding session on LFA was conducted. There are still improvements to be made in the LFA training, for instance to include the critical self-assessment of the poster on behalf of the team members.

As a matter of fact, there is still some confusion among participants on whether *activities* (such as the team having organised a training) could be listed under the heading *objectives* (in terms of outcomes).³⁵ Also, a few of the teams have difficulties to “measure” the results. They refer to statistics or other evidence without being able to compare it to the baseline conditions. This makes it difficult to assess results. One additional observation is that several objectives are not realistic in relation to the short project period. Any reader who has ever worked with teams and project management will recognise these pitfalls. They are easy to detect and mitigate by assisting the group in training and analysis.

My comment here is that the project management training ought to be continuous, hence a part of all workshops including the Swedish phase and offered in parallel with more “theoretical” sessions on core concepts.

Mentors important

Mentors are important here. They play an operational role in the project process, and can also contribute to participants’ understanding of the core concepts and how they are interconnected. I have reflected together with the Programme manager of the ICLD on how the LFA training could be dealt with from the side of the ICLD. We arrived at the suggestion that mentors should have the main responsibility in the project management training. I would recommend ICLD to consider if mentors could take on an extended role, and get training in project management (using the LFA as a guide) from the ICLD.

This solution would be preferable to that of having an ICLD officer conducting the training. If ICLD and KC take on the main responsibility of “coaching” the teams, there is a risk that the role of the mentor is undermined. The mentor must be the most important point-of-reference for participants (and local authorities) for the change project, and as the ICLD intermediary. Besides, having one ICLD officer responsible for the ICLD training for all programmes and teams makes for a fragile overall programme structure.

Additional components to add to the LFA training: communication and advocacy, long term sustainability and M&E

In the first evaluation report of LLG3, I emphasised the importance of including a session on communication in the LLG3. I wrote:

As we have seen, one of the expected results of the LLG3 is that participants have “*gained skills and abilities to **communicate** and **advocate** on issues of inclusive governance.*”

³⁵ I would consider a training an output (a mean), but not an objective.

Communication was an issue already in the gender programme. The Programme manager of GMLD and myself, as well as the mentors observed that most teams had difficulties in communicating the core contents of their local processes, and how they were linked to gender mainstreaming (as well as to the four core areas). The evaluation also concluded that participants needed assistance in structuring and making sense of their processes. The same evaluation stated that participants' increased communication skills and presentation technique are an important part of the capacity building process. The individual acquires new knowledge and skills through training, which strengthens their capacities, and, in turn, enables them to make an impact on their organisations. The recommendation was to facilitate participants' communication-skills, and clearly relate them to the change projects.³⁶

In LLG3, a session on strategic communication was inserted in the concluding session of the programme. As the Programme manager and myself assessed the process, we concluded that this session should have been incorporated in the training at an earlier stage. It was indeed appreciated by the participants, and deemed useful as a part of the toolbox in all project work.

Communication (and advocacy) is an important programme component, that, in my opinion could be provided within or in close coordination with the LFA-training.³⁷

I have also talked to the Programme manager and the mentors throughout the training about the importance to encourage teams to reflect on whether and how the processes can live on when the project finishes. It is not included in the "LFA-phases", but should definitely be considered in change projects, as well as in all ITP programmes.³⁸

In the gender programme, there were requests from the participants for the training to include a component about how to monitor and evaluate projects and programmes M(&E) (Figure 2, text in grey, since it is not currently incorporated in the training). We did not get the same suggestion from the LLG3 participants, but I would recommend that it be added to the LFA training anyway, since it is currently missing. Also, it is closely connected to reflection and learning. This would contribute to making processes (or components such as networks or institutions) more sustainable or recyclable in a longer term perspective.

An idea that has been discussed with ITP-managers is to elaborate a written guide for project management, that could be used by all involved, as a backbone and point-of-reference, but also as an inspirational source.

³⁶ The gender programme did not use the Logical Framework Approach (LFA), but an alternative methodological tool, the "Equality Journey". It proved to work at the local level. However, the evaluators together with the Programme manager concluded together that the "Equality Journey" could not be compared to or replaced by the LFA, since they were very different. From 2022, all ITPs are using the LFA.

³⁷ In the gender programme a session on communication was inserted in the third (Swedish phase), and in the LLG3 programme, it was provided during the last workshop.

³⁸ This is an important issue in development processes. In other evaluations about international development cooperation, participants in programmes narrate that it is common that support organisations or "donors", as they are often called by international partners work with a short-term perspective, and leave when a programme cycle is concluded.

5.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

Why do we do monitoring and evaluation (below M&E) in the ICLD programmes in the first place? M&E fills more than one role.

Monitoring is done to follow up on the programme content and activities in the programmes throughout the implementation. In LLG3, this includes surveys and *Mentimeter* questions with participants as well as mentors' progress reports. This monitoring should aim at providing the ICLD and the programme management (as well as lecturers) with suggestions on improvements and adjustments of the programme (or the lecture/workshop), to make it more relevant and useful for the participants.

Surveys and quick feedback dialogues (at baseline, during the training and at programme closure) can also be an effective way of stimulating participants (and mentors) to reflect on their own learning process. The latter does not seem to be a prioritised ambition of ICLD, from what I have seen of the previous survey version and the questions in the mentors' progress reports.³⁹

The **Evaluation** is concerned with reporting outcomes and possible impacts of programmes at a more aggregate level. In the case of my analysis in this report it refers to the ToC, and attempts to comprehend if the underlying assumptions of the programme are valid and relevant. But this report also aspires to suggest improvements on how the ICLD (and KC) organise and manage their programmes.

ICLD and the KC have ambitions to improve on their M&E model, so as to better understand whether and how activities, methods and settings contribute to outcomes and impact at individual, organisational (and societal) level.

As explained earlier, my take on Monitoring and Evaluation also embraces a letter L, for **Learning**. I have not been around long enough to give detailed recommendations on how ICLD and its programmes could improve on their entire MEL, therefore I will be brief and more general here.

Monitoring (the survey)

One of the processes that I have actually taken active part and that would be used mainly in ICLD's monitoring at baseline and at programme closure is the new (pilot) survey mentioned in this report under Section 2.2 Material and sources.⁴⁰

Answers from the survey have been an important source for me when conducting the final part of the evaluation, although I did not use the coding template.

ICLD has been using it as a pilot, and the senior consultant has produced a coding template that was to be used by mentors or groups of students so as to map change at individual, organisational and societal level. In this pilot version, two KC officers have been responsible for the coding and comparison of answers at baseline and programme closure.

³⁹ The previous survey version was used in the ICLD programmes for several years, up until 2021 and analysed by myself in the Final report of the Gender programme in 2020. The content of the mentors' progress reports has been analysed in the First Evaluation Report of LLG3.

⁴⁰ See the First Evaluation report on LLG3 for more information on how ICLD and KC have worked with the new survey.

The new survey version represents an attempt to give participants the opportunity to look a bit closer at what these concepts actually mean and how they relate to the local contexts and the change projects. That is the reason for why the survey does not have “multiple choice” responses.

One of the mentor-reports states that the new baseline survey, as compared to the previous version *“encourages the participants to think deeper over the key democratic thematic areas. It has also enabled the mentor to further elaborate on these key-topics. The questionnaire has laid a good ground for teams to consistently keep rethinking these topics within the change process cycle. The mentor is assisting the teams to incorporate, and so far so good.”*

The KC officers are not satisfied with how the coding template works. They report that the coding is time consuming, and the analysis risks to become arbitrary and biased. ICLD and KC are currently conducting an internal evaluation of the survey and the template. The decision on whether it is useful or not must be taken by ICLD and KC, and the task is not part of my work in this evaluation. However, since the *previous* survey did not serve any of its ends, it is good that ICLD and KC are working on a new model.

One recommendation on this matter is for ICLD and KC to ponder on whether the existing version could be improved, rather than exchanged by a completely new and different model. I have discussed various solutions with the Programme managers and the KC officers, including shifting the focus to the “team level” and getting information at aggregate level from the teams through a baseline and a final workshop. The main questions that would have to be posed would then be. “How does (core concept) relate to your project?”. This does, however, not solve the question of who should document and analyse the answers and report them to ICLD?

The ambition of inviting participants to reflect on the core concepts and their practical meaning should be kept. A last recommendation would be for ICLD and KC to avoid using “multiple choice” templates.

Monitoring (the progress reports)

As for the mentors’ progress reports, I have commented closely on their content in the First Evaluation report of LLG3 as follows:

“My recommendation in regard to the mentors’ reports is that ICLD/KC and the Programme managers have a look at the questions for the reports together, and that they attempt at arriving at a common format for these reports.

It does not appear to me that these accounts need to be used for reporting to Sida. They do fill an important role as a tool for mentors to reflect on and communicate with ICLD through the Programme manager about progress and possible improvements along the way. I believe that the questions posed about progress related to ICLD’s core concepts could be simplified, rephrased to be more to the point, and less repetitive. Furthermore, the format of the reports would benefit from “digitalisation”, to make it easier for mentors to fill them out, but also for Programme managers (and/or other staff) to read and analyse responses.”

Evaluation

As for the Evaluation part, my recommendation for ICLD and KC in the future is to try to build in more of (learning) evaluation in their processes.

I do not know enough about ICLD and KC to understand their strategy for how evaluation is going to be handled in the programmes. However, in my opinion ICLD and KC need to work closer together and continue to do more of what I have done during one year.

More on-going evaluation procedures could be defined for the programmes, and performed by certain persons/roles within the ICLD/KC/mentors and Programme managers together. There will be a need to do periodical external evaluation too, perhaps of several or all ICLD programmes together. Sida generally recommends for such evaluations to be carried out by external evaluators.

A soft recommendation would be for the KC to go back to the results matrix (see Appendix I) that make up the base for what Sida needs and requires in their reports, and then build routines for the KC officers, and the Programme managers. These issues are, however, not for this evaluation to solve, and will be left for the ICLD and KC management to consider.

5.4 Theory of Change

How does this all hold together? The question was posed by one of the Programme managers of the ITP as we talked about the interventions of the ITP programmes and whether and how they actually result in impact at organisational level. The Programme manager had tried to lay the puzzle, and did not quite understand how the different activities and interventions logically fit together. I answered that I was not sure myself, and the Frame of analysis used in this evaluation attempts to test the logic of intervention of the ICLD that starts with the ToC.

The ToC describes the underlying assumptions of how change is expected to happen at the three different levels (individual, organisational and societal). However, it does not say much about what ICLD does or could possibly do to facilitate and influence impact at organisational and societal level, I added the training components that make up means to arrive at change in three different spheres.

I would have to resume the dialogue with the ITP Programme managers to understand if my model makes sense to them. If it does, then it might be of help to ICLD and KC to work through the intervention logic in order to answer questions about why, what, how and with what results things are being done in the programme.

The ToC is supposed to be of help for all. At its best, it contributes to making sense of the programmes, objective(s) and interventions/activities for ICLD and KC, at the general management level as well as to Programme managers and mentors in the ITP programmes. If my Frame of analysis is not of help, or if it simply does not resonate with the logic of ICLD, KC and the Programme managers, it might be useful for my commissioners to go back to the ToC and ponder on what is done and could be done, and to what end.

The ToC is still under development. The intervention logic, i.e. ICLD's methods, tools and activities for the implementation as well as for the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) are still being calibrated.

This needs to be a dynamic, reflective and participative process, supported by the leadership at ICLD and the Knowledge Centre. The Programme Managers of the ITP and other ICLD programmes need to be involved and consulted in the building process to understand how the different pieces of the puzzle hold together.

On the road ahead, I would recommend for ICLD and KC to get inspiration from sources that rely on different approaches to evaluation than those of the Logical Framework Approach or the Results Based Management. LFA and RBM both find their origin in a linear, cause and effect discourse, that falls short in capturing the complexity and the non-linear context of development programmes.⁴¹

5.5 Long term sustainability

One last comment relates to the long term sustainability of projects and the results (networks and policies, institutions and so on). The interaction between teams and the leadership in authorities and the support from the formal structures is one basic precondition for long term sustainability. Other important factors that need to be in place are, of course, institutions, and sturdy networks.

In my role as evaluator in LLG3, I have repeatedly reminded teams and mentors to consider the long term sustainability of projects and results. The reason is that some of the achieved objectives that participants and teams refer to in their change projects (in their poster session, for instance) are activities or temporal networks, that risk to be products of the momentum gained through the ICLD programme.

I would like to stress here, that this is not a declaration of suspicion or doubt on the success of the projects from my side. It is rather an observation made in other, similar processes where there has been no clear ambition or strategy to create projects or processes over a longer term. Mentors, team members and other key informants who were interviewed refer to new or already existing policies or institutions as well as networks that are expected to guarantee the long term sustainability of the processes initiated in the cooperation with the ICLD.

These institutions and networks are referred to also by key informants that represent stakeholders. In **Sundays River Valley**, South Africa, the NGO (the Collaborative) is cited as an intermediary and coordinator of cooperation and local development.

The interviewee representing **Kaijado** confirms that the round table discussions have been indeed appreciated by leaders and politicians as well as by the groups of citizens. The round tables will be repeated as a part of the implementation of the policy on public participation.

The (external) stakeholder from **Muranga** talks about the importance of the one-woman representative from Muranga vying to become a member of parliament, and the training, networking and empowerment she is doing, and will continue to do.

⁴¹ Earl, S., Carden, F., & Smutylo, Q. (2001). *Outcome mapping: building learning and reflection into development programs*

The executive from **Oshakati** refers to the awareness of the importance of recycling and waste management, and the waste removal calendars that are now available to citizens and households. This makes it easier for citizens to improve their sorting of waste.

The recommendation regarding long term sustainability is a reminder to ICLD and KC to stress and consider whether more could be done to strengthen the long-term sustainable impact of processes and results achieved in change processes.

I am aware of the fact that ICLD is working to establish an alumni network for programme participants, and this ought to be a good avenue to elaborate on themes of interest and concern for several local authorities, in different countries and regions. It will give participants, teams and local authorities possibilities to develop and reinforce regional, national and international networks. This could also be a good opportunity for the ICLD to reconnect and revisit local change projects.

Perhaps the “long term sustainability” is one of the “puzzle pieces” that should be incorporated into next version of the Theory of change?

5.6 Selection procedures: local authorities, teams, countries

An observation, that some of the interviewees have touched upon, is that it is difficult for an outsider to understand ICLD’s strategies and criteria for selecting teams, local authorities and countries.

For instance, in comparison with the Gender mainstreaming programme, where all projects related to gender mainstreaming, in LLG3, two projects focused on waste management, while the rest were of different character. Maybe it is the purpose to mix different types of projects, and let teams work under the common umbrella of the four core concepts, Agenda 2030 and local democracy? Some of the interviewees in Kenya and Namibia were wondering if the ICLD has the intention to continue to work with local teams in programmes like LLG3. Their understanding is that no teams from these two countries will be accepted for the next version of the programme. ICLD’s reasons for closing the cooperation are, however unclear.

It goes beyond my mission in this evaluation to explore these matters in depth here. One suggestion could be that ICLD considers working with some local authorities (or teams) for a second programme cycle or for a longer period of time. It could be a new project in the same, or in a different (ITP) programme. This would then be one opportunity for ICLD and its programme partners to work for sustainability over a longer time period, to support the consolidation and spread what is already being achieved, and that works well.

5.7 Reflection and incorporation of lessons learned

Returning to the **Learning** in the MEL described above under 5.3, much could be said about what that might mean to Monitoring and Evaluation, and time and space is limited here. As mentioned earlier in this report, my on-going evaluation takes on a learning approach. It seeks to stimulate dialogue in ICLD/KC about how mine and others’ analyses and reflections can contribute to improving the monitoring, evaluation and reporting on results, mainly at the LLG3 programme level, but also for ICLD in general. In this evaluation I have maintained a close collaboration mainly with the Programme manager, and close interaction with mentors and participants.

Below I will attempt to contribute with some overall observations that I would refer to as “lessons learned” from my perspective. These reflections and observations are my own, and my commissioners have to decide on whether and how these can be helpful for paving the way forward.

Ambitious setting, and continuous change in the organisation of the programmes

From what I have been able to comprehend in my evaluation work for the ICLD in two of their ITPs, ICLD and KC, not least the Programme managers have high ambitions for their programmes. They work indeed hard to offer their participants the best possible condition to benefit positively from the programme. There appears to be a good cooperation and dialogue among the officers. As workshops are carried out, the Programme manager is always supported by another in the implementation.

The LLG3 was 2020-2021 was successfully implemented, despite of the pandemic and three workshops (including the Swedish phase) going virtual. The dialogue in the group of Programme managers and the ITP director (so called ITP-meetings) is dynamic and encourages reflection. The ITP director has been actively and practically engaged in the programme implementation and present for large parts of the training. The Secretary General participated (digitally) to introduce the programme at its opening and to conclude at programme at the final conference.

Even for the ongoing evaluator, being involved in the ITPs is never dull. In the LLG3 programme for instance, three completely or partly new components were tested: the pilot survey, the LFA as a tool in project management and the “Organisational learning” component.⁴²

Facilitators that are new to the ICLD as well as to the mentors and participants are introduced in the programmes quite frequently.

During the first two workshops, participants were trained by lecturers⁴³ about the four core concepts. Two ICLD officers trained participants about the LFA, respectively the Agenda 2030. During the Swedish phase, all lectures were held by representatives from Swedish organisations and municipalities. The concluding workshop had one session about organisational learning, coordinated by an ICLD partner/consultant. At the final workshop, a session/workshop about strategic communication was held on-site by a South African researcher/practitioner from the field of communication and journalism.

My impression is that these ambitions, continuous change and high pace in the programmes tend to take time and energy away from the ICLD staff. As the LLG3 Programme manager put it: *“Less is more. We need to focus on what’s most important.”*

⁴² The KC has been involved in developing a module on “organisational learning” that could be incorporated in the ICLD training in the future. A training component of “organisational learning” was inserted and facilitated by a KC external collaborator from the City of Göteborg in the LLG3 Swedish phase. The facilitator informed the participants that the presentation was a test, and that a handbook for organisational learning is being finalised by the KC. The facilitator made a presentation about organisational learning, and why the ICLD and the KC have been working with developing a “prototype”. The lecture also included a few group sessions, where teams were asked to reflect on and discuss questions. At the end of the session, the facilitator left the group with a few questions on whether (and how) adopting an organisational learning approach in local authorities can be useful, and what can be prepared by participants to support a learning process in their municipalities. The facilitator was back at the closing workshop to continue to work on the organisational learning approach.

⁴³This is the term used by the Programme managers. I would call them facilitators, to stress the important interaction between participants and the lecturer.

As for the high turnover of lecturers and collaborators I have suggested that ICLD could build a more solid and continuous pool of lecturers and facilitators. These persons would have to be familiar with ICLD's programmes and mission, hence, capable of interacting with participants. Another possible solution would be to train KC/ICLD officers/mentors to be more of facilitators. A pool of (the best) facilitators would most likely have better prospects for supporting teams and the ICLD in achieving their objectives (and the desired longer term impact).

The recommendation is for ICLD and KC to ensure a more reflective approach around the programmes, and evaluate what lessons are learned from applying certain methods and tools. This would help ICLD to enhance, reuse and build on what already works well.

Programme managers (and mentors) are assets, should be involved in this learning reflection on a regular and continuous basis. A continuous and more structured involvement of the group of ITP-managers and other staff ought to strengthen the programme framework (and the ToC). I have already identified some areas where the Programme managers could contribute with their knowledge and experience. The continuous monitoring and reporting on "change" in the programmes have been some of the issues on the agenda.⁴⁴

Thus, Programme managers can be of great help in constructing on what has already been achieved and built, but need assistance, time to dedicate and peace of mind to reflect on and reinforce what already works.

A soft recommendation would therefore be for ICLD and KC to slow down the renewal pace for a while, and concentrate on constructively assessing, recycling and enhancing everything that works well in the programmes.

I would like to thank ICLD for the responsibilities that I have been entrusted. I would also like to thank the Programme management at KC and ICLD, the ITP managers, mentors and the senior consultant for contributing and participating actively in the learning dialogue with the aim to improve programme contents, procedures and organisation.

It has been a truly interesting and stimulating journey.

In March 2022, I received the Management Response from ICLD and KC. I am happy to conclude that most of the comments and recommendations were received well, and used by ICLD.

Some improvements have already been made, some are being processed, and a few have been put on hold for the future.

I hope that some of the findings and recommendations can continue to accompany ICLD and its partners in the important work for local democracy and wish you all the best of luck!

Monica Johansson
2022-04-07

⁴⁴ Surveys and mentors' reports, incorporation of the Agenda 2030 and mainstreaming gender, drafting the manual for the project management (LFA) part, exchange of knowledge about methods and tools (digitalisation and online training, games, good practice, etc.) have been discussed with the Programme managers throughout this programme.

SOURCES

Materials provided through ICLD

ICLD Operative Plan 2020

ICLD result matrix

ICLD-strategy 2016-2020

Mentors's Progress Reports

Programmes for the four workshops

Questionnaires (at baseline and closure of the programme) for participants and Coding template

Result Matrix (working material), ICLD Centre of Knowledge

Materials collected by the evaluator

Johansson, M. & Ekström, E. *Gender Mainstreaming Local Democracy* Final Evaluation Report 2020-05-18, International Centre for Local Democracy.

13 transcribed semi-structured interviews, 6 with supervisors, 4 with mentors, 3 with key informants

Participants' notes from the workshops

Literature

Earl, S., Carden, F., & Smutylo, Q. (2001). *Outcome mapping: building learning and reflection into development programs*, Ottawa: International Development Research Centre.

Svensson et al (2011) *Lärande utvärdering genom följeforskning*, Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2011.

Web references

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