

# Enduring Results Study 4.0 Summary Report



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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**Dalberg**

Dalberg Advisors is a global social impact consultancy and long-time partner to USAID. Dalberg worked closely with USAID to develop ERS 1.0 and 2.0 and create a replicable methodology to guide future studies. The Dalberg team drove the overall development of this study, with guidance from USAID and CRS.



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**LASER PULSE**

LASER (Long-term Assistance and Services for Research) PULSE (Partners for University-Led Solutions Engine) is a five-year, \$70M program funded through USAID's Innovation, Technology, and Research Hub, that delivers research-driven solutions to field-sourced development challenges in USAID interest countries. A consortium led by Purdue University, with core partners Catholic Relief Services, Indiana University, Makerere University, and the University of Notre Dame, implements the LASER PULSE program through a growing network of 3,000+ researchers and development practitioners in 71 countries.

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## ABSTRACT

This report is the fourth iteration of the ‘Enduring Results Study’ (ERS) and serves as a guiding reference for USAID, the private sector, and the development and humanitarian communities to explore what drives enduring results in USAID’s partnerships with the private sector. In ERS 4.0, 82% (14 of 17) partnerships studied were assessed to have produced enduring results. Of these, the results of about half of the partnerships that sustained also grew in scale. ERS 4.0 took a closer look at particular partnership characteristics that past studies found to be especially relevant in shaping enduring results, including local vs. global partnership orientation, private sector contributions, market orientation, and partnership duration. In the study’s examination of these characteristics and their role in producing enduring results, the three ‘building blocks of enduring results’ - ownership, trust, and agility - emerged through interviews and analysis as an underlying explanation for why certain partnership characteristics could be relevant in producing enduring results. Building on ERS 4.0’s findings, USAID will continue to investigate and analyze private sector partnerships that endured (or not) and refine its recommendations and analytical framework for future private sector partnerships that aim to create enduring activities and outcomes.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background & Objectives

Today, the private sector is playing an unprecedented role in creating and shaping opportunities that improve the lives of the people and communities USAID supports. USAID recognizes that increased collaboration among donors, NGOs, and the private sector is crucial in driving and sustaining positive development and humanitarian outcomes. In response to the shifting landscape, USAID has committed to a major cultural and operational transformation in the way development programs are conceived, designed, and delivered – emphasizing collaboration, co-designing, and co-financing with the private sector.

To support this journey, the Agency launched a series of Enduring Results Studies (ERSes) in 2016 to examine what drives enduring results in its private sector partnerships. Building on the three previous ERS reports, this report represents the fourth iteration of the ‘Enduring Results Study.’ These studies serve as a guiding reference for USAID, the private sector, and the development community to explore what drives enduring results in USAID’s partnerships with the private sector. The lessons in this report contribute to an evolving evidence base intended to be refined and developed over time as the Agency continues to expand its private sector engagement and provide guidance for private sector partnerships seeking enduring results.

### Enduring Results Study 4.0 Overview and Purpose

The study aimed to test previous conclusions, examine newly emerging findings, and further bolster the evidence base on the potential for private sector partnerships to produce enduring results in the global development space. The study focused on evaluating 17 USAID private sector partnerships to:

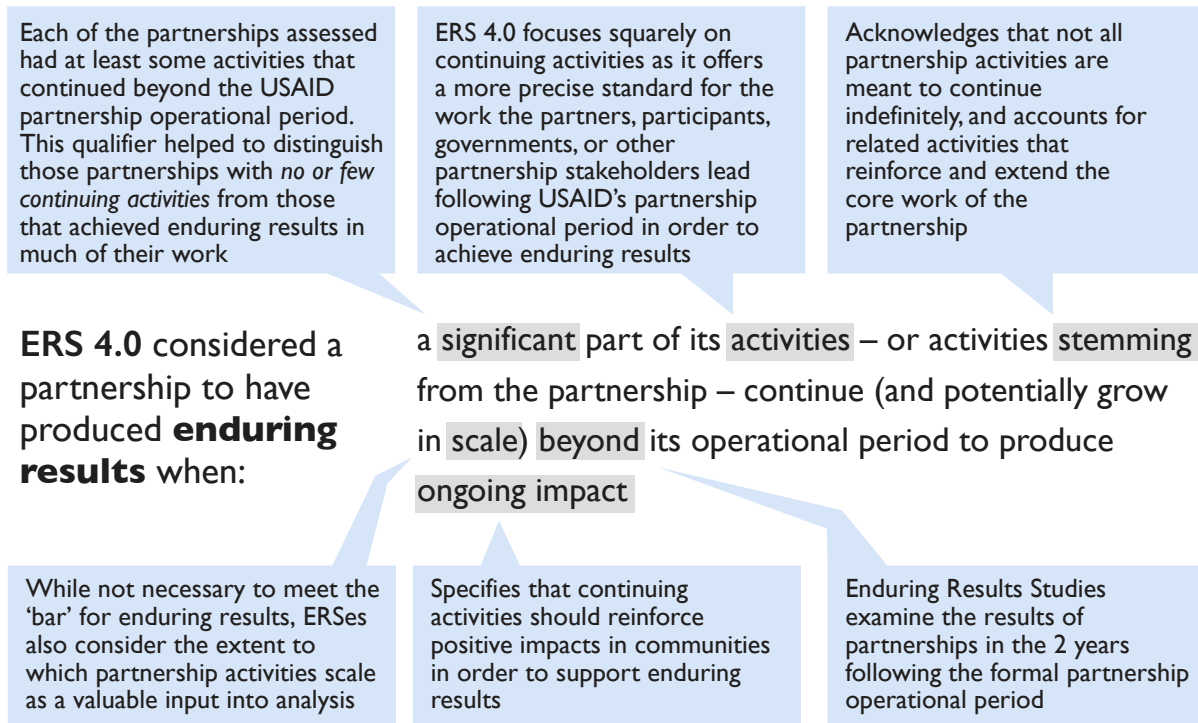
1. Understand the partnership’s status since USAID’s funding ended in 2019 (>2 years prior to this study), and whether it has produced enduring results,<sup>1</sup>
2. Gather multi-stakeholder perspectives and lessons learned to inform a broad set of findings on when, why, and how partnerships achieve enduring results
3. Identify and analyze the characteristics found in partnerships that produced enduring results (or not) across each phase of the partnership
4. Distill identified enduring results characteristics into few foundational cross-cutting components or ‘*building blocks*’ to cement essential elements found in private sector partnerships that achieve enduring results

### What are Enduring Results?

In ERS 4.0, a partnership is considered to have produced ‘enduring results’ when a significant part of its activities – or activities stemming from the partnership – continue (and potentially grow in scale) beyond its operational period to produce ongoing impact. While a partnership is considered to have achieved ‘enduring results’ based on the continuation of activities, ERSes also examine how partnerships go on to achieve greater ‘scale’ (defined as growth from increasing the size and/or effect of activities and outcomes that stem from the partnership period) to help inform the work of future partnerships.

<sup>1</sup> Further explanation on how ERS 4.0 defines as ‘enduring results’ can be found on page 6

Figure 1. 'Definition of enduring result'



Across the study sample, partnerships were evaluated for enduring results through the framing of five distinct 'pathways to sustainability' - or categories of activities that can be pursued by a partnership to produce sustained results after the partnership period ends. To be considered as achieving enduring results, partnerships demonstrated the continuation of partnership activities (or activities stemming from the partnership) through **one or more** of the following pathways: (1) Establish/expand market linkages, (2) Enable new product or service innovation, (3) Enable a new market, customer segment, or target participant population, (4) Change in practices through policies or campaigns, (5) Establish capacity or ongoing capacity building activities (see the [Appendix](#) for more details on these pathways to sustainability).

While the 'enduring results' definition focuses on the sustainability of partnerships, Enduring Results Studies also examine how partnerships go on to achieve greater scale in their work to help inform the work of future partnerships. Scalability can be understood as growth from increasing the size and/or effect of activities and outcomes that stem from the partnership period (e.g., by reaching additional participants, expanding the geographic scope of activities). Across the study sample, partnerships were also evaluated on the extent to which they grew in scale following the USAID partnership period through one or more of the following three 'pathways to scale': (1) Market-based relationships outcomes and activities, (2) Partners operating at scale, (3) Broader policy change (see the [Appendix](#) for more details on these pathways to scale).

## Focus Areas

At the outset of the study, USAID identified four partnership design characteristics or "focus areas" to explore in more depth in ERS 4.0: partnership duration, involvement of local vs. global partners, contributions of private sector partners, and the market orientation of partnerships. These design characteristics of partnerships each came up in past ERSes as being associated with enduring results. ERS 4.0 took a closer look at these four partnership characteristics to deepen existing findings and draw out additional qualitative insights around *why* and *how* partnerships with these different characteristics may or may not achieve enduring results. Findings specific to these focus areas can be found within the [Key Findings](#) section of this report.



- **Local vs. global partners:** ERS 3.0 found that *among the partnerships that sustained and scaled, local private sector partners continued their contributions more often than the global private sector partners.* ERS 4.0 built on this finding to explore the factors that play a role in driving enduring results with both local and globally-based partners.



- **Private sector contributions:** Previous ERSes found that *private sector partners bringing highly distinctive assets tend to be associated with enduring results.* ERS 4.0 dug deeper on this theme to explore how private sector engagement and involvement partnership design and implementation can drive enduring results.



- **Market orientation:** Previous ERSes found that *market oriented private sector partnerships were more likely to scale than non-market oriented partnerships.* ERS 4.0 aimed to look closer at the differences between market oriented and non-market oriented partnerships in shaping and achieving enduring results.



- **Partnership duration:** ERS 3.0 found that *market oriented partnerships are more likely to produce enduring results over a more rapid time frame, whereas non-market oriented partnerships benefit from a longer time frame to pilot approaches and demonstrate results.* Building on this work, ERS 4.0 took a more comprehensive look at how the diverse contexts, constraints, and assets present within shorter vs. longer partnerships can impact their sustainability and scalability.

## Building Blocks

As ERS 4.0 examined partnerships and dug deeper into the above focus areas, a number of cross-cutting themes emerged as crucial ‘building blocks’ for enduring results: **ownership, trust, and agility.** These building blocks reflect some of the most foundational components of enduring partnerships, regardless of sector, region, market orientation, or other attributes, and can be cultivated intentionally across the full partnership life cycle (design, execution, and post-partnership phases). The building blocks aim to dig deeper than the specific processes and practices that those driving partnerships can implement, as those can often shift or be constrained by contextual factors, and instead reflect something that most - if not all - USAID partnerships can aspire to.

**Ownership** in the context of ERS 4.0 refers to the commitment and capacity to sustain (and potentially scale) partnership activities financially and/or operationally after the formal partnership period closes. Ownership can be cultivated across multiple actors and actors types. While global organizations can act as long-term owners of development programs, enduring results are often anchored through some form of local ownership, wherein local organizations and stakeholders drive the strategy and continuous work of long-term efforts anchored in their communities.

*For a detailed look at ERS 4.0 findings on ownership, including case studies, please see the ownership ‘thematic brief’ [here](#)*

**Trust** in the context of ERS 4.0 refers to the expectations and confidence partners and stakeholders have in one another to act in ways that consider each other's interests as they pursue shared goals and position activities for sustainability (and possibly scale). Mutual trust helps motivate partners to offer their best to the work of the partnership, to communicate their needs and ideas openly, and to deliver on the expectations that have been placed on them. Each of these elements contributes to a smoother collaboration over the course of a partnership and sets it up to continue serving its mission after USAID’s support comes to an end.

*For a detailed look at ERS 4.0 findings on trust, including case studies, please see the trust ‘thematic brief’ [here](#)*

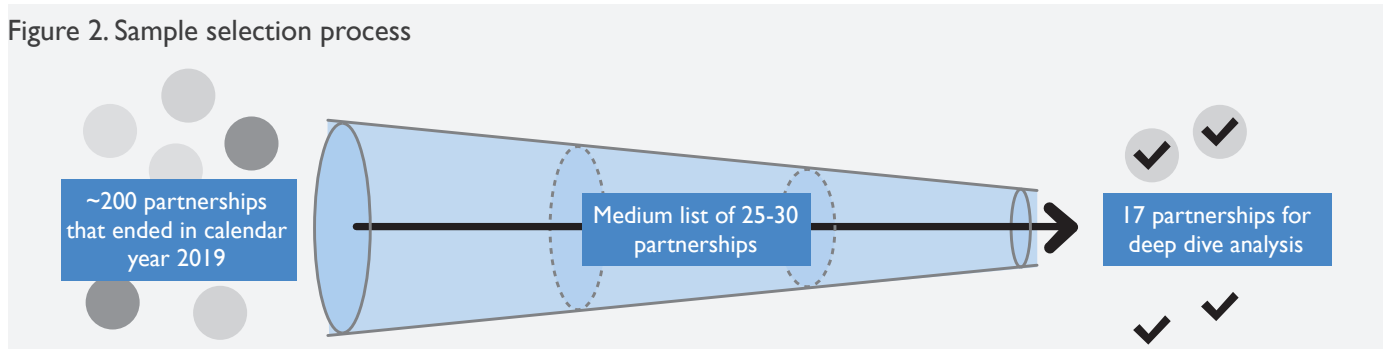
**Agility** in the context of ERS 4.0 refers to a partnership’s ability to adapt quickly and position activities for sustainability (and possibly scale) within dynamic and/or challenging circumstances, based on a continuous process of learning and reflection. ERS 4.0 partnerships tended to demonstrate agility through its ways of working (i.e., related to internal partnership dynamics) and strategic approach (i.e., related to defining a project’s vision and objectives as well as the approach to deliver on them).

*For a detailed look at ERS 4.0 findings on Agility, including case studies, please see the Agility ‘thematic brief’ [here](#)*

## Methodology overview

The Enduring Results Study 4.0 findings are based on data collection and analysis across a diverse sample set of 17 partnerships that ended in 2019. The sample, however, was not representative of USAID’s private sector engagement, more broadly. Data was collected through a range of sources, including the Foreign Assistance Coordination and Tracking System’s Public-Private Partnership Module; partnership documentation available through the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) and online; interviews with 37 USAID staff, implementing partners, and private sector partners; and secondary research. These partnerships were selected through a rigorous process that aimed to build a diverse sample across core dimensions and partnership attributes.

Figure 2. Sample selection process

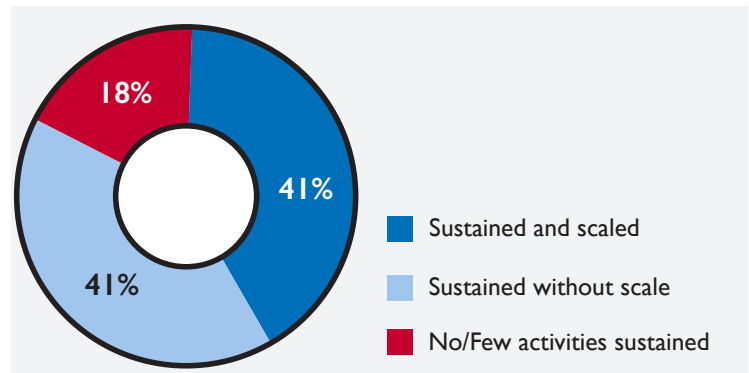


More details about the methodology can be found in the [Appendix](#).

## KEY FINDINGS

Overall, 82% (14 of 17) partnerships studied were assessed to have produced enduring results (see Figure 3). Of these, half of the partnerships sustained without scale while the results of half of the partnerships that sustained also grew in scale (41% of the total sample). The three partnerships that were evaluated as not producing enduring results each achieved distinct successes over the course of USAID funding, including stimulating new markets, building crucial workforce capacity, and driving policy changes. However, they each struggled to find self-sustaining pathways to continue this work, particularly due to the impacts of COVID-19.

Figure 3. Partnership enduring results



Partnership characteristics observed across the group of partnerships that produced enduring results included:

- Inclusion of participants in the design and implementation phases:** 13 of the 14 partnerships studied (~93%) had strong channels for integrating participant perspectives (e.g., through co-design workshops, regular consultations, etc.). In fact, neglecting to include participants in this way may have been a powerful hindrance to enduring results, as it appeared to be the main commonality among the three partnerships studied that fell short of enduring results.
- Demonstrating an intent to sustain and scale:** 10 of the 14 partnerships studied (~71%) that produced enduring results included deliberate planning for sustainability and scale-up within its design phase (e.g., charting a course for government adoption of solutions, designing a community-led committee to manage infrastructure developed through the partnership).

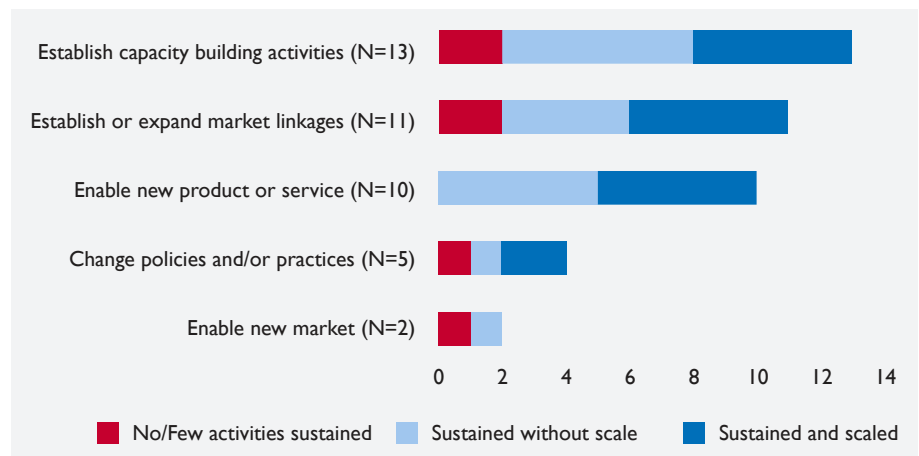


- **Greater number of assets contributed by the private sector:** in 9 of the 14 partnerships studied (~64%) that produced enduring results, private sector partners contributed 3 or more distinctive assets<sup>2</sup> throughout the implementation phase (*investment capital and brand reputation were among the most frequent types of assets contributed*).
- **Market orientation:** 8 of the 14 partnerships studied (~57%) that produced enduring results were market oriented (*i.e., core activities were focused on addressing barriers in existing markets or by creating/catalyzing new markets*).
- **Additionality of the private sector:** in 7 of the 14 partnerships (~50%) that produced enduring results, the private sector played a critical role during the partnership, as no other actor was likely to have achieved the same results.
- **Role of private sector partners:** in 7 of the 14 partnerships (~50%) that produced enduring results, the private sector served as a **'co-partner'** - not only providing funding, but playing a more involved role in the design and implementation of partnership activities.

These characteristics are discussed in greater depth and brought to life through examples in the [Findings across ERS 4.0 'focus areas'](#) section below.

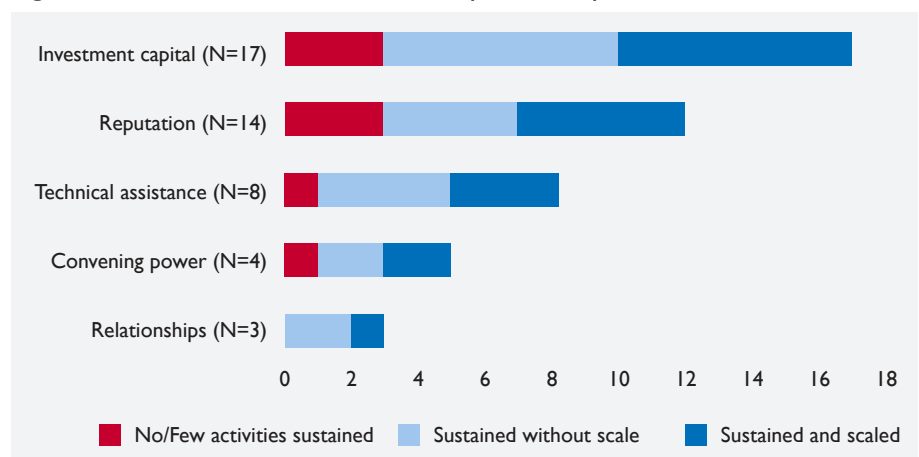
The most common pathways to sustainability among the partnerships that produced enduring results were enabling new products, ensuring continuity of capacity building activities, and expanding market linkages (see Figure 4). Some of these potential pathways to enduring results were more likely to be found in partnerships that sustained their results, or that sustained and scaled results. For instance, all of the 10 partnerships that enabled new products or services saw enduring results - and half were also able to grow in scale.

Figure 4. Partnership pathways to enduring results



Among the assets (defined as financial or non-financial resources contributed by different partners to the partnership) USAID contributed to partnerships, there were few differences between those found in partnerships that did not sustain, sustained without scale, and scaled. **Investment capital was present in every partnership, and reputation was the second-most common asset contributed.** Quantitative analysis indicates that all assets were equally distributed across partnerships regardless of their results (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. USAID assets contributed to partnerships



<sup>2</sup> As part of ERS 3.0 highly distinctive assets were defined as assets that were unlikely to have been as effective coming from other partners, such as relationships, brand value, or proprietary information that are unique to a private sector partner. In contrast, less distinctive assets include contributions that could have come from any actor and had the same effect, such as funding.

A number of partnerships studied were able to sustain - and sometimes scale - partnership activities through collaboration with host governments. ERS 3.0 found that host governments' roles in sustaining the work of partnerships included implementing policy-level action or owning and operating assets, and that their role in scaling partnership activities most often included additional funding, policy changes, or integrating the work into national-level systems. These findings largely held true within ERS 4.0 as well, albeit among a relatively small sample of partnerships that worked substantively with governments.

## Findings across ERS 4.0 'focus areas'

As noted above, ERS 4.0 took a closer look at particular partnership characteristics that past studies found to be especially relevant in shaping enduring results, including local vs. global partnership orientation, private sector contributions, market orientation, and partnership duration. Key findings across these four focus areas are shared below.

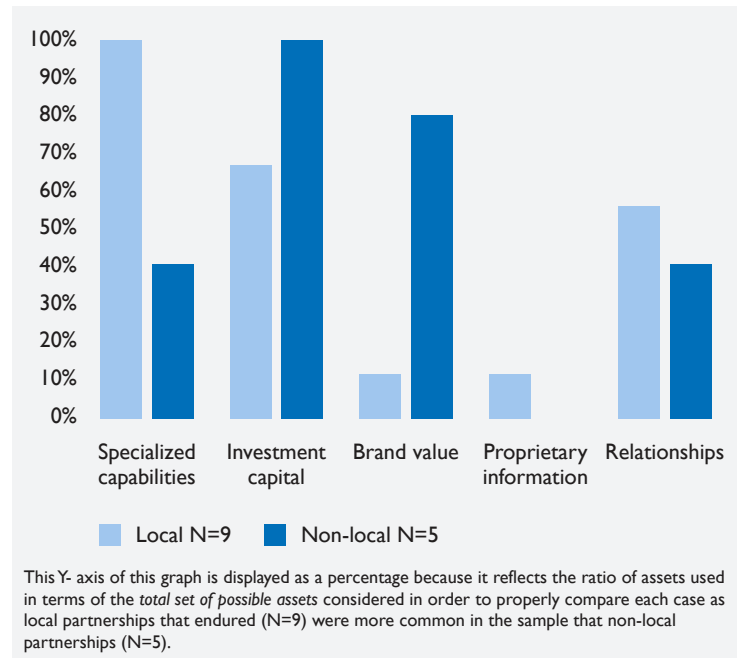
Note: In the study's examination of these characteristics and their role in producing enduring results, the three 'building blocks of enduring results' - [ownership](#), [trust](#), and [agility](#) - emerged through interviews and analysis as an underlying *explanation* for why certain partnership characteristics could be relevant in producing enduring results (e.g., *local partners are important in driving enduring results among partnerships that operate in post-conflict settings or work with vulnerable populations because of the trust they are able to cultivate with participants and key stakeholders*). These linkages are indicated throughout the sections below.

### Local vs. global partners

Global partners more commonly provided *investment capital* to drive activities and contributed their *brand value* and reputation to building the initiative's credibility. Oftentimes, these assets support partnerships to scale across geographies or cultivate buy-in from national stakeholders. *Locally-based partners were more likely to contribute to a partnership's sustainability through specialized capabilities and relationships*, leading efforts to tailor approaches and activities to their local context and build [trust](#) and buy-in among community stakeholders.

Certain partnerships were able to cultivate additional financial or other support during the partnership period through effective amplification of their results (*i.e., positive exposure leading to additional private sector partners and demonstrated success leading to government uptake*). **Global partners were often able to facilitate this dynamic by tapping into their broader networks to elevate successes and cultivate buy-in from a broad variety of actors**, as evidenced in the case study on the following page.

Figure 6. Private sector assets contributed to partnerships (that produced enduring results) by local and non-local private sector partners



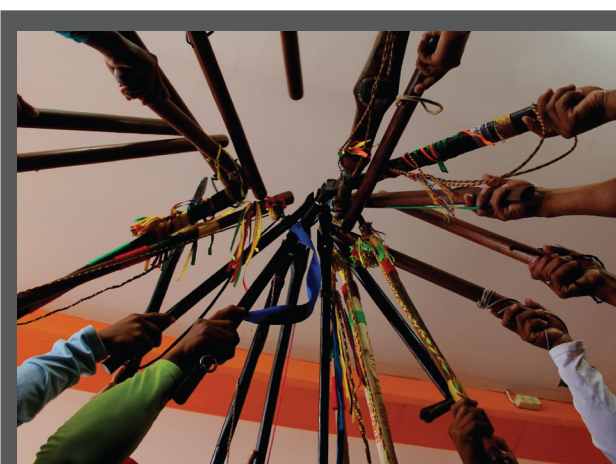


The *Accelerating Change: Mainstreaming Hygiene Practice* project in India partnered with a non-local hygiene consumer goods brand and the government of India and developed a Hygiene Index to help cities monitor and strengthen their hygiene and sanitation. The private sector leveraged their far-reaching network and media linkages (including celebrity campaigns and influential coverage at the Global Citizen Festival in India) to amplify the initial successes of the 25-city pilot, which provided the program with significant exposure. The exposure played a key role in the partnership’s success, drawing increased funds from influential stakeholders and interest from the national government, which later scaled the model to over 4,000 cities across India. (See [Table 1](#) for more information.)

Local partners often provide critical expertise and leadership for partnerships operating in sensitive contexts, such as post-conflict communities or working with youth or vulnerable populations (e.g., marginalized genders, refugees or displaced peoples). Understanding cultural nuances, sensitivity to interpersonal dynamics, and deep community ties are key to establishing trust with community stakeholders in these settings. Designing and executing activities in ways that effectively consider the needs, constraints, values, and assets of a particular population is key to good programming and also to maintaining enduring results by avoiding disruption of activities and by strengthening the ability of partners to continue undertaking the most impactful activities.



In the *Global Give Back Circle* partnership in Kenya, for example, the local implementing partner used its local knowledge and cultural sensitivity to provide socio-psychological support and to address the often challenging, acute needs of program participants, creating trusted bonds that helped to motivate and empower program alumni to become GGBC leaders themselves and drive the continuing work of the partnership: “We have the program continuing now with alumni - the alumni association has been registered with the Kenyan government and are managing their activities.” – USAID staff (See [Table 1](#) for more information.)



The *Reconstructing collective memory – Artesanías de Colombia* initiative worked to build the capacity of indigenous artisans in Colombia and integrate them into the local crafts market. Selecting a trusted local partner with deep community ties to indigenous communities was critical to ensure the success and sustainability of the initiative, due to the systematic exclusion indigenous communities face from the “national narrative.” The initiative empowered the artisans with the resources and tools to enter the broader art market and sell high-quality crafts specially designed to represent their collective memory. Since the conclusion of agency funding, indigenous artisans have continued to leverage market linkages established by the partnership, with the increase in revenues benefiting both the artisans and their communities. (See [Table 1](#) for more information.)

Likewise, emerging findings suggest that **neglecting to sufficiently incorporate local perspectives can be a hindrance to enduring** including the perspectives of program participants throughout the design and implementation phases- the strongest predictor of enduring results of all the characteristics examined in ERS 4.0.



The Value Chain for Rural Development partnership in Myanmar worked to build and establish multiple value chains just as the economy began to open after long periods of political volatility. However, the partnership faced challenges navigating the complex sociopolitical context as they struggled to engage closely with local experts who could translate the cultural and political nuances that contributed to Myanmar’s nascent private sector; this challenge, among others, appeared to prevent this partnership from achieving enduring results. *“They didn’t necessarily have the local perspective...,”* the USAID POC shared, *“this created some friction sometimes. Myanmar was just opening its economy at this point, so people didn’t really understand the value chain. It was helpful to have international expertise but you missed having the local context.”* (See [Table 1](#) for more information.)

**Local partners had strong incentives to drive enduring results due to the strength and longevity of their commitment to the populations and sectors of focus.** These commitments, and the name recognition local partners often developed with the work of the partnership over its operational period, helped cultivate a sense of ownership among local partners.



In *Advanced Marketing and Agribusiness Logistics (AMAL) GDA Egypt*, the initiative demonstrated how establishing linkages between smallholder farmers and exporters will significantly increase overall revenue. As the revenue potential became clear, major Egyptian exporter associations began to increasingly seek smallholder farmer contracts and drive the growth of smallholder farmer exports. Development Innovations’ enduring results were also largely due to Cambodian tech company partners being naturally incentivized to develop their country’s digital ecosystem. Since the conclusion of the partnership, local partners have continued to drive both new advances in technology (e.g., scaling a tech start-up incubator) and the development of a skilled tech workforce (e.g., coding camps). *“DI worked with a public university ITC Institute of Cambodia to work on ‘technovations’ (girls coding). When DI ended, Smart Axiata continued to support ITC and worked with Ministries of Telecom and Education. Telecom continued the ‘technovation’ program and MoE expanded it to the provinces,”* the USAID POC shared. (See [Table 1](#) for more information.)

**Local partners can also be especially invested in sustaining infrastructure initiatives, the impacts of which tend to be easily observable and deeply felt in communities.** In *Green Infrastructure at the Gurabo river watershed*, the initiative intentionally partnered with a local organization to cultivate enduring ownership of the newly built infrastructure (‘green’ wastewater treatment) post-partnership, knowing that this organization’s deep roots in the community and reputational association with the project would incentivize strong and ongoing contributions. *“At the outset of the project, we were looking for a local partner because we felt at the beginning that the way we could have sustainability and ownership would be derived from a local organization. When we were putting together that proposal from USAID, it was precisely how we could help develop the local capacity.”*

## Private sector contributions

ERS 3.0 pointed to private sector partners' initiation of the partnership as a contributor to enduring results, finding that private sector partners were more likely to drive continued activities beyond the partnership period when they initiated the work. The large majority of ERS 4.0's study sample were partnerships created through a competitive USAID procurement, and thus it was not possible to substantiate this finding quantitatively (*there were only 3 partnerships in this study sample where the private sector partner - or implementing partner - initiated the partnership, though each of them demonstrated enduring results*).

Past ERSes suggested that the *number* of assets contributed by the private sector might be more important than driving enduring results than the types of assets. As mentioned previously, ERS 4.0 found that **the number of assets contributed by private sector partners may help drive enduring results** - in 9 of the 14 partnerships (~64%) that produced enduring results, private sector partners contributed 3 or more distinctive assets throughout the implementation phase. This may be due to the work of shared value partnerships being intrinsically more aligned to the specific goals and capabilities of private sector partners- as well as private sector partners being more directly invested in the outcomes and continued success of partnerships linked to their own commercial and financial objectives. Likewise, as was found in previous studies, the particular types of assets contributed did not appear to be a significant determinant of enduring results.

This dynamic is further enhanced when partnerships are specifically designed to bolster the mission and strategy of a private sector partner, which organically led to increased partner contribution - in some cases, going beyond the scope of the initial partnership agreement such as in the case study below:



In **Riqueza Natural Colombia**, USAID partnered with a local tourism start-up to develop a digital tourism platform aimed at increasing travel to nature destinations and generating income for local providers. The start-up drove the development and implementation of the app, drawing on their tourism capabilities, expertise, and incentive to see growth in the travel sector. The app, initially piloted in two locations famous for their natural landscapes, successfully connected local travelers with local hosts and enabled communities in lesser-known destinations to benefit from new streams of revenue. The start-up has since expanded the travel app to over 60 different locations across Colombia. (See [Table 1](#) for more information.)

Consistent with previous Enduring Results Studies, ERS 4.0 found that **the distinctiveness of private sector partners' roles in a partnership can contribute to enduring results**. In half of the partnerships that produced enduring results, the private sector partner played a critically additive role (i.e., no other actor is likely to have achieved the same results). For example, one particularly distinctive private sector partner, ASISA of the *ASISA Enterprise Development Fund* partnership, leveraged its technical expertise and its unique positionality as a bridge between high-powered investors/large industry players and small-businesses to develop one of the largest funds primarily focused on investing in SMEs in South Africa. USAID staff attested to ASISA's distinctiveness saying, "*It is one of the best models corporate created; instead of individual firms driving their own initiatives, ASISA established a fund for the industry, to pool resources from corporates and large industry players into a fund that targeted small businesses, suppliers etc—particularly black-owned enterprises.*"

ERS 4.0 found that **engaging private sector partners in more substantive roles through partnership design and implementation played a role in driving enduring results**, as they encouraged private sector actors to contribute a greater number of relevant assets and capabilities. Indeed, five of the seven partnerships that sustained and scaled engaged a private sector actor as a "co-partner" in designing and implementing partnership work. Further, within four of these five partnerships, private sector partners contributed technical expertise to help strengthen the design of interventions, such as through helping to design a new product or innovation (e.g., Awake Travel driving the design of the nature tourism app in the *Riqueza Natural*

partnership) or strengthening the partnership’s strategic approach (e.g., private sector companies involved in the *Higher Education for Economic Growth* partnership in El Salvador helping academic partners to improve the career development services).



In the *Water and Development Alliance WADA II* partnership in Nigeria, for example, USAID worked closely with the Coca Cola Foundation as a global private sector partner, positioning them to play a more substantive role in overseeing the work and motivating a stronger performance from the implementing partner. This role encouraged the private sector partner to contribute assets beyond financial resources, including on-the-ground personnel to contribute to strategic decision-making. “There was value in having Coca Cola people on the ground; it was no longer just USAID. We had to meet and agree on everything collectively, which forced us to agree on next steps and discuss issues so that everyone was on the same page.” (See [Table 1](#) for more information.)

This type of engaged collaboration between USAID, implementers, and private sector partners was identified as a core enabler to building trust within partnerships, as it allows partners to feel that their perspectives are heard and reflected in the work of the partnership. Further, engaging private sector actors more substantively over the course of partnership design and implementation can have the added impact of **bolstering their sense of ownership over the work**, which can lead to deeper investment and more enduring commitment. In the *Higher Education for Economic Growth* partnership in El Salvador, for example, the partnership team overcame inherent distrust between academic and private sector partners by fostering an environment of dialogue and collaboration. They cultivated private sector buy-in and created a platform for private sector partners to contribute their expertise by forming ‘cluster’ groups around each key sector and inviting industry representatives to facilitate cluster meetings, ensuring that their inputs were consistently affirmed and integrated. As a result of the innovative collaboration structure, private sector partners organically assumed ownership over their part of the work, which included building up a scholarship program for talented, economically disadvantaged students in El Salvador with the support of the government. The relationships formed among universities, private sector leaders, and government are a broader enduring impact of the program.

Emerging evidence suggests that engaging private sector partners in these more substantive roles can also help enable agility within the collaboration dynamic and approach.



In the *Growing Social Businesses* partnership in Albania, the substantive, “co-partner” role played by Yunus Social Business empowered the organization to equally leverage USAID’s resources and their own capabilities to achieve the partnership objectives, and push for adapting the activity design in order to address challenges that emerged in applying their model to the distinct business environment of Eastern Europe. “We experienced a lot of flexibility with USAID...We finally understood that this was not just a standard USAID project where we had to write an annual work-plan and stick to it. This was about partnership; making targets together and being flexible.” (See [Table 1](#) for more information).

## Market orientation

Past Enduring Results Studies suggested that market oriented<sup>3</sup> partnerships are more likely to sustain and scale their results than non-market oriented partnerships, particularly if the partnership activities align with the partner’s core business interest and activities. ERS 4.0 observed enduring results from both market and non-market oriented partnerships in roughly equal proportion, likely due to the small size and diversity of the partnership sample. ERS 4.0 findings thus focus on how partner capabilities, roles, and set-up drove the enduring results in both market- and non-market oriented partnerships.

3 As in past ERSes, ERS 4.0 defined market oriented partnerships as partnerships whose core activities or mechanisms contribute to development outcomes either by addressing barriers in existing markets or by creating/catalyzing new markets. Non-market oriented partnerships are defined by partnerships whose core activities or mechanisms result in development outcomes without relying on the market (e.g., advocacy).

By design, market and non-market oriented partnerships tend to rely on distinct pathways to sustainability. Market-oriented partnerships are often designed around a revenue-specific sustainability pathway from the very beginning (e.g., creating a new product, establishing market linkages), while non-market oriented partnerships often design around their intended impact and then need to identify and deliberately cultivate pathways to sustainability - as well as follow-on funding - afterwards in order to sustain activities (e.g., collaborating with governments to integrate partnership activities into their policies and practices, engaging participants in leading activities). In order to enable enduring results, non-market oriented partnerships in their early stages generally need to identify their particular pathway to sustainability and conduct explicit sustainability planning, such as identifying high-potential owners for ongoing activities and planning for incremental scale-up of their responsibilities and/or financial commitments across the partnership period (*this is discussed in further detail within the ownership building block section*).

In market oriented partnerships, the potential for commercial benefit plays a large role in aligning incentives, cultivating buy-in, and enabling increased contribution from private sector partners, which is linked to greater commitment to sustain activities. Particularly in broader, multi-partner initiatives, clear commercial benefit played a significant role in aligning incentives across various stakeholders in the studied partnerships (e.g., private sector partners, government actors, participants) which empowered greater collaboration and drove enduring results, such as in *Higher Education for Economic Growth*, where private sector companies were greatly incentivized to contribute to the partnership as the objective was to produce higher-quality university graduates, many of whom would eventually be hired by the participating companies and contribute to increased industry growth.

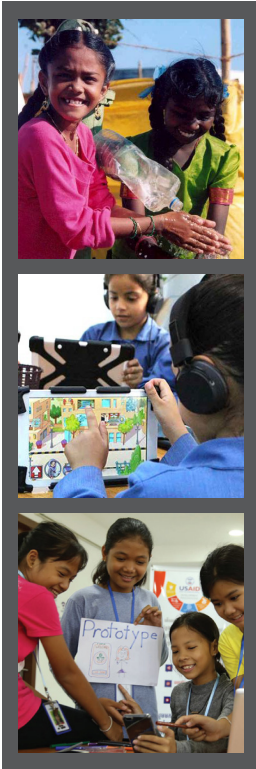


In the Advanced Marketing and Agribusiness Logistics (AMAL) GDA partnership in Egypt, USAID partnered with a major Egyptian exporter association to strengthen agricultural exports and establish linkages between smallholder farmers and exporters. Prior to the partnership, smallholder farmers were not represented by the exporter association, as most of its members were wealthy and influential exporters. USAID and its partners demonstrated how establishing linkages between smallholder farmers and exporters could significantly increase overall revenue - a return well worth the additional investment in training and capacity building for the smallholders. “We taught [the exporter association] that these smallholder farmers would help them reach a bottom line,” the implementing partner shared. As the revenue potential became clear, major Egyptian exporter associations began to increasingly seek smallholder farmer contracts and drive the growth of smallholder farmer exports. Since the conclusion of the partnership, exporter associations have continued to maintain and grow their linkages with smallholder farmers, and invest their own resources in continuing capacity building efforts. “They didn’t work with [smallholders] at all before and now they’re not only through us but on their own they are creating these linkages and even investing in training.” (See [Table 1](#) for more information.)

In market oriented partnerships where the private sector partner’s commercial priorities align with the partnership objectives, partnerships tend to also find natural ownership in those actors positioned to reap continuous rewards from championing the work of a project, leading to enduring or scaled results. Where natural synergies emerged in market oriented partnerships, partners often drew on their internal capabilities to strengthen the partnership activities and were likely to identify clear pathways for both sustainability and scale. For example, In the *Growing Social Businesses* partnership in Albania, Yunus Social Business was an already established organization working to increase social entrepreneurship across the globe, so the partnership was able to leverage Yunus’ existing activities to further expand the initiative’s reach beyond Albania into neighboring Balkan states. In the *Riqueza Natural* partnership in Colombia, USAID partnered with local travel start-up Awake Travel to launch a travel app connecting local tourists to local hosts in nature destinations in Colombia and was able to cultivate enduring ownership because the partnership activities matched with the partner’s core capabilities. “Being aligned with the company’s strategy made it possible to maintain the learning in the company when the project was over.” Since piloting the app in two locations, the app has since expanded to over 60 locations nationally.

However, when commercial incentives shift or are disrupted by external events (e.g., COVID-19), the continued work of partnerships can be left without a committed partner and organizational infrastructure to secure its sustainability. Several broad, market-building partnerships studied in the agricultural sector did not sustain programming in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly as the end of USAID funding (which often included substantial subsidies to targeted products or sectors) coincided with broader market and ecosystem disruptions, making it challenging for private sector partners to increase their investment in the activities launched through the partnership.

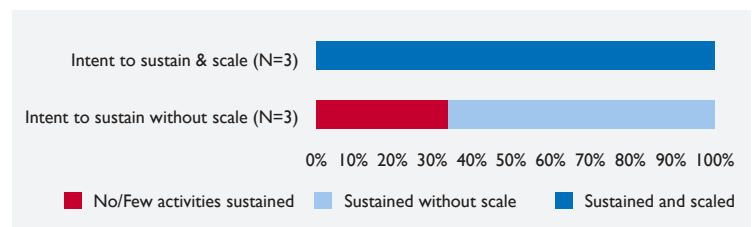
**Non-market oriented partnerships often aim for government or other stakeholders to adopt their activities to enable sustainability and scale of partnership activities and results.** Especially if their objective was to achieve scale as well as sustainability, these partnerships aimed for government adoption through advocacy and demonstration of results. Notably, three major non-market oriented partnerships that both sustained and scaled (*Accelerating Change: Mainstreaming Hygiene Practices in India*, *War Child Holland/Can't Wait to Learn*, and *Development Innovations*) worked on cultivating buy-in and ownership over time and were able to nurture government adoption that far surpassed their expectations. The following provides brief summaries and quotes describing how the partnerships leveraged government adoption to drive enduring results.



- Accelerating Change: Maintaining Hygiene Practices in India:** The initial 25-city hygiene assessment pilot was later adopted by the government and implemented in over 4,000 cities across India. *“The government buy-in was pretty much a mandate that we had. Of course, when we started the program, we had no clue on how big you know this can transform into. But of course we had to make sure that the government is aware of these initiatives. So from that standpoint, engaging with the government was always the mandate.”*
- War Child Holland: “Can’t Wait to Learn”:** WCH aimed for government adoption by adapting the e-learning game to local educational contexts so that the game would be sustained by the Ministry of Education after the partnership operational period. *“We always worked with MoE [Ministries of Education] wherever we went. We based our programs (the game) on the local curriculum and adapted to the local contexts. Moving the MoE’s overall ecosystem at the point that they wanted us to.”*
- Development Innovations:** DI found that engaging closely with the government secured government adoption and financial support past the partnership. Relevant government ministries found the partnership’s product offerings (e.g., coding camp focused on providing ICT education for girls) useful and continued to support activities after the partnership’s operational period. *“There was also a continued engagement as well between the governments that DI and the private sector companies supported... Eventually they won’t need to rely on resources from the private sector anymore. Money will come from the national [government] budget in the future and it will allow them local ownership... it’s our original aim to bring them [the government] in for sustainability and to support implementation. The Ministry of Education and Telecom played a key role in making the project successful.”*

For non-market oriented partnerships, ERS 4.0 found that government and policy engagement has a strong impact on the partnership’s enduring results, largely consistent with previous ERSes. Of the seven partnerships that had government involvement, only one partnership did not experience enduring results due to disruptions from COVID-19.<sup>4</sup> Four partnerships targeted policy as a primary or secondary pathway of sustainability and of these partnerships, only one did not experience.

Figure 7. Non-market oriented partnerships and sustainability planning



4 While activities from the government-involved partnership that did not experience enduring results continue to operate, the partnership is still dependent on Agency funding due to COVID-19 disruptions on operational capacity



enduring results. This builds on a similar insight from ERS 1.0, which asserted that “*partnerships that achieve policy change demonstrate strong potential to both sustain and scale, without requiring additional funding.*” Similarly, ERS 3.0 found that “*non-market oriented partnerships often sustained and scaled through primary involvement from other partners such as the host government.* Overall, government involvement in non-market oriented partnerships has been an indicator of enduring results throughout the ERS series.

For non-market oriented approaches without an option or need for government adoption, partnerships typically relied on adoption by stakeholders (e.g., co-partner or program participants) to ensure sustainability of partnership activities. In either case, non-market oriented partnerships have to consider their path to sustainability and potential scale from the very beginning, including through deliberate sustainability planning (e.g., identifying and cultivating future activity owners, creating mechanisms for participants to drive ongoing activities, etc.) Notably, **deliberate planning for both sustainability and scale-up of activities may be especially critical for non-market oriented partnerships**, as each of the three partnerships in the study sample that did so were successful across the board in achieving sustainability and scale (see Figure 7).



The Green Infrastructure at the Gurabo River watershed in Santiago, Dominican Republic worked to improve the collection and treatment of water for vulnerable communities located by the Gurabo river using green infrastructure. During the project design stage, the partnership planned for sustainability and identified a private sector partner with deep community ties to ensure that the infrastructure operations would sustain past USAID funding. “*The main advantage that we put in our proposal was our plan for sustainability. During the process of pulling together the proposal, we went to the different stakeholders in Santiago. We identified this type of leader in the community, the president of an association who really had the capacity to really bring people together. They are the ones who really mobilized.*” The private sector partner leveraged their local networks to establish credibility from the community and draw implementation support from local municipal governments. Due to intentional and long-term sustainability planning, the same partner continues to work closely with the Gurabo river communities and sustain infrastructure operations. (See [Table 1](#) for more information.)

## Partnership Duration

**Partnership duration’s impact on enduring results is often linked to the scope and set-up of the work.** Some broad partnership set-ups (e.g., sector building activities or innovating product offerings) benefited from a longer operational period to test approaches and build a track record of success, while more narrowly-focused partnerships tend to benefit from the condensed focus of a short duration. One possible explanation for this dynamic is the space that a longer duration creates for partnerships to operate with agility - adapting their ways of working and strategic approaches to changing needs and contexts. Indeed, ERS 4.0 found that longer partnerships (>2 years) were more than twice as likely to see agility as a key driver of enduring results than shorter partnerships (<2 years).

Building on a similar finding on ERS 3.0, **longer partnership periods appear to be valuable for partnerships in more nascent sectors and those focused on testing or launching new solutions**, in part because of the agility this dynamic partnership context demands. These types of partnerships can benefit from a longer planning period up-front to conduct research on the sector or market and then sufficient time for cycles of iteration and testing on best-fit approaches. A longer duration also allows these partnerships to build up an evidence base of success for their work, along the way cultivating the stakeholder buy-in necessary for sustaining continued investment. “*This is ecosystem building, so we need more time...*” said one implementing partner interviewed, “*it’s important to balance the tension between that long-term funding and how you make sure people are able to be adaptable within that term.*” Similarly, ERS 3.0 found that non-market oriented partners viewed it as “*overly-optimistic*” to reach sustainability within the two to three years timeframe as it required a massive amount of foundational work to test ideas, develop activities, and form new relationships in target communities.”



In the *War Child Holland/Can't Wait to Learn* partnership, USAID supported War Child Holland to pilot their e-learning game aimed at supplementing primary school education for Syrian refugee children in Jordan and Lebanon. In order to gain approval from both Ministries of Education for official use of the game, War Child Holland had to prove the effectiveness of the e-learning game using iterative, evidence-based approaches which required a substantial amount of time and required shifts in programmatic approaches to meet the dynamic needs of a vulnerable population. “We based our program (game) on the Ministry of Education's curriculum and adapted to their context...Took a while to get approval from the ministries, USAID helped provide us with support and advice around working with the ministries...” The four-year-long project duration allowed sufficient time to develop a high-quality e-learning game, demonstrate effectiveness, and eventually gain the buy-in of the Ministries of Education, which went on to widely implement the game in their school systems. (See [Table 1](#) for more information.)


Emerging evidence suggests that a longer partnership period can allow for substantial capacity building of the local implementing partner, a powerful - if indirect - impact of USAID's work. This dynamic was observed in the *Global Give Back Circle* partnership in Kenya, where the global organization initiating the work - Global Give Back Circle International - brought on a local, community-based implementing partner that had not yet partnered with USAID and was new to working with global donors. Over the course of the partnership, which was extended three times for a total of eight years, USAID demonstrated strategic agility by investing in substantial capacity building for the local organization around its financial and reporting mechanisms, empowering them to be a continued implementer for USAID and other major donors since the close of the partnership period. As the implementing partner interviewed put it, “The opportunity of having funding from USAID gave us a good profile as an organization... We grew in our private sector engagement, we grew as an organization, and it gave us a good profile and good recognition in the private sector.” This kind of capacity building not only invests in strengthening the ecosystem of development actors within a community, but can also be a crucial tool in cultivating ownership and incrementally increasing the level of responsibility local partners hold over program activities, enabling them to lead activities beyond the USAID partnership period.

Shorter partnerships are more likely to lead to enduring results when the partnership objectives are narrowly focused and the partners' core activities are closely aligned with the project's main objectives. For shorter partnerships, a narrower activity focus with clear and attainable objectives typically enables an efficient transfer of ownership to relevant actors after the partnership, leading to more enduring results. For example, in the *ProMedia* partnership, a short one-year time frame was sufficient as the project's narrow focus (developing educational agricultural media content in a rural region in Moldova) enabled clear and attainable objectives (providing content-producers with high quality equipment). Similarly, in the partnership in Colombia, the partnership's selection of a mission-aligned local travel start-up as the private sector partner and its clearly defined focus to connect local travelers with local hosts in Colombia's nature destinations allowed for a streamlined solution (travel app) which was completed in just a year. The app, which was initially piloted in two locations, has since launched to over 60 locations in Colombia.

Project extensions can be a valuable support to partnership teams, but must be wielded carefully. ERS 4.0 found a range of attitudes and outcomes related to project extensions. In some cases, multiple project extensions allowed successful efforts to scale up dramatically and created a strong foundation for self-sustaining programming. The *Global Give Back Circle* partnership successfully applied for three extensions which allowed for the necessary time to train and impact the lives of thousands of vulnerable girls and women who as program alumni went on to lead or stay closely involved in the program. The possibility of project extensions can sometimes give teams the space to react and adapt to unforeseen challenges, enabling a strategic agility that can be a valuable driver of enduring results. However, the promise of extensions can also create a dependency on Agency funding that discourages partners from investing appropriately in sustainability planning. For example, in the *Arangkada Philippines* partnership, the private sector partner successfully applied for an official extension and other ad-hoc grants after their original plan for financial sustainability was disrupted by COVID-19. While the extensions and additional grants allowed for continued advocacy successes, they have not yet identified an alternative path to sustain their resource-intensive advocacy without USAID funding.

## POSITIONING PARTNERSHIPS FOR ENDURING RESULTS

The considerations below are intended to inform actions that USAID mission staff, PSE staff, implementing partners, and private sector partners can take to build successful collaborations that drive towards enduring results. These suggestions reflect learnings and good practices shared by participants in ERS 4.0, as well as analysis based on the findings shared above. *Linkages to the building blocks (ownership, trust, agility) and ERS 4.0 focus areas (local vs. global partners, partner contribution, market orientation, and duration) have been indicated in bold and blue highlighted text, respectively.*

 <b>Design</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Post-partnership</b>
<b>Considerations for USAID teams</b>		
<p><i>When structuring partnership proposal requests and selecting partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structure PSE solicitations to require implementing partners apply for USAID funding jointly with a private sector co-funding partner (i.e. proactively bring on a private sector partner with whom they have a relationship) to leverage or build in trust from the outset (<i>can be especially crucial for <b>short-term partnerships</b> and those in sensitive sectors, which can hinge on building trust quickly</i>). Direct awards with private sector partners may offer advantages in terms of <b>agility</b>, but would require the Agency to keep simplifying compliance requirements and for Missions to have sufficient bandwidth to manage additional direct awards.</li> <li>Aim for a longer <b>partnership duration</b> for broad, market-building partnerships and those testing new products and innovations to allow sufficient time for research and iterative testing and promote <b>agility</b> (e.g., via periodic checkpoints to take stock of what is and is not working regarding the pathway to sustainability and scale, then adapt accordingly)</li> <li>Where appropriate, institutionalize partnerships within a larger initiative or network from the outset to foster deeper and longer-term relationships as well as build in a strong infrastructure for <b>ownership</b></li> <li>Within <b>longer partnerships</b>, consider selecting <b>local implementers</b> with whom USAID has not worked before and invest in building their capacity to empower long-term, sustainable <b>ownership</b> while strengthening the local ecosystem of development actors</li> </ul>	<p><i>In setting up partnership structures and norms for collaboration:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate a conversation among partners to proactively align on their foundational 'building blocks' of enduring results and other partnership principles that could drive enduring results</li> <li>Provide guidance and technical assistance to partnership teams - particularly those running <b>non-market oriented partnerships</b> - around sustainability planning, including identifying potential sources of funding beyond USAID and working to align stakeholder incentives to support ongoing activities</li> <li>Provide guidance and technical assistance to <b>market oriented partnership teams</b> to cultivate project structures (e.g., external-facing initiatives, coalitions) that embed programmatic activities and insulate enduring results from unforeseen shifts in commercial environment</li> <li>Where possible, allow flexibility in internal processes and reporting structures to encourage implementers and private sector partners to operate with <b>agility</b> and land on collaboration approaches (e.g., meeting cadence and structure, report formats, etc.) that work for each organization (<i>this is especially valuable for businesses that are less familiar with USG processes</i>)</li> <li>Set clear norms around internal project communications (e.g., tools, style, cadence, data privacy) to build trust through transparency and encourage engaged collaboration among all partners</li> </ul>	<p><i>Upon close-out:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold end of program feedback discussions with partners so everyone can consolidate their learnings and apply to future partnerships</li> <li>Conduct light-touch evaluation activities in the years following the partnership to track program ownership to inform approaches for future partnerships</li> <li>Evaluate the extent to which (and ways in which) agility contributed to the partnership's enduring results to gather learnings to replicate successes in future partnerships</li> </ul> <p><i>On an ongoing basis:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to serve as an ambassador for the work of the partnership after the end of the funding period (e.g., by making connections, uplifting successes) while maintaining space for partners to fully own and drive continuing activities</li> <li>Stay in touch with partners after the funding period is over to understand continued results and be ready to serve as a thought partner as well as receive and give "five-minute favors"</li> <li>When checking in post-partnership, explore ways to partner again and leverage the foundation of trust and collaboration that has already been developed</li> </ul>



## Design

## Implementation

## Post-partnership

### Considerations for USAID teams

- As suggested in ERS 3.0, seek partnerships that align with private sector partners' commercial and strategic interests to encourage greater **private sector contributions** over the course of the partnership and promote **ownership** of continuing activities. For example, include market oriented activities such as buying/selling products that also allow private sector partners to realize direct commercial benefits such as increased sales from the partnership. This may enable the private sector partner to continue and scale activities once USAID funding ends
- For projects that aim to eventually scale in scope or geographic reach, support mission teams in identifying and engaging the types of **local or global partners** best fit to expand project activities beyond their initial scope (*may be a different type of partner than those tapped to drive activities initially*)
- As suggested in ERS 2.0, seek to design partnerships where the **private sector contributions** can reflect a range of distinctive assets and high additionality. USAID should look for private sector partners that can bring multiple assets to bear on a partnership and where the partners' contributions would be unlikely to be brought by another partner

#### Upon selection of partners:

- Engage **private sector partners** in shaping partnership objectives and activities to build trust through engaged collaboration and begin establishing a foundation for partners' ownership of ongoing activities
- In longer partnerships (>2 years), especially broad, market-building partnerships and those testing new innovations, establish clear expectations and norms (e.g., around approval processes) that empower implementation teams to react quickly to roadblocks and environmental shifts, setting a standard for operational **agility**
- Design partnership structures to allow for **agility** in ways of working, such as allowing for both short-term and long-term hires, easing extension requirements, availability of ad-hoc grants, etc.

#### As the partnership unfolds:

- Ensure predictability and transparency around potential funding extensions to promote partners' **ownership** and financial planning and reduce risk of overdependence on USAID funding
- Engage partners in co-creating plan for cultivating financial and operational **ownership** among identified owner(s) on an incremental schedule according to defined milestones
- Create opportunities to leverage the network and brand value of **global partners** to amplify project successes and cultivate support from relevant private sector stakeholders (e.g., co-branded events, articles, blogs, etc.) that can support the financial sustainability of ongoing activities
- Promote capacity building not only as a component of partnership implementation, but as a set of activities that can continue beyond the partnership (e.g., through training of trainers)

- Encourage teams to establish relationships with aligned, potential private sector partners outside of the typical project life cycle to develop a **pipeline of trusted partners** and better understand where opportunities of mutual interest lie. As other priorities and time constraints often make this difficult for USAID personnel, so USAID should consider providing additional support and incentives, such as allocating dedicated time to staff to engage with private sector counterparts (e.g., at convenings or through individual outreach), or discussing private sector relationship-building efforts (e.g., at periodic staff meetings) to share key learnings and publicly recognize those making progress.
- Update future partnership agreements and policies to be more conducive to partnerships operating with agility (e.g., amending grant structures and contract mechanisms) based on past learnings



## Design

## Implementation

## Post-partnership

### Considerations for implementing partners

*When structuring partner roles and engaging communities:*

- When working in sensitive contexts (e.g., post-conflict) or with vulnerable communities (e.g. refugee populations, youth), ensure **local partners** are leading on both activity design and direct engagement with communities to help cultivate **trust** and ensure programming reflects the community's needs, constraints, values, and assets
- Involve governments and community stakeholders in project design sessions to cultivate trust early and create a feedback loop / network of potential 'champions' for programming
- As suggested in ERS 3.0, integrate awareness-building into the partnership design, especially where sustainability of activities or outcomes depends (at least in part) on long-term behavioral change among participants and trusted relationships across stakeholders. For example, conduct community outreach and campaigns with the help of locally respected stakeholders such as religious/political leaders, reputable local private sector companies, and civil society organizations which know and work closely with the target participants of the partnerships to continue activities without ongoing support
- As suggested in ERS 3.0, consider creating a steering committee with representatives from all partners that meet regularly as one way of building **trust** through engaged collaboration and enabling shared decision-making between partners. For example, partners may establish a forum that meets regularly to foster decision-making such that issues may be mitigated collectively with inputs from all partners. Additionally, especially in partnerships with multiple private sector actors and partnerships that mix **local and global actors**, partners may want to clearly define forum roles such as decision-makers vs. a collaborators to further achieve consensus effectively.
- Particularly for initiatives with several private sector partners, design lighter-touch governing bodies that can quickly make decisions when needed, and empower team members to efficiently implement decisions within their purview

*Solidify and nurture bonds with key stakeholders:*

- If possible and safe, co-locate partners together for strategy sessions or other substantive activities over the course of the partnership period to build interpersonal bonds in addition to remote touchpoints
- Leverage strong project communications with stakeholders and participants (e.g., newsletters, blogs, 'town hall'-style events) to cultivate trust through transparency (may be particularly helpful when partners are **non-local**)
- When working with governments, consider strategies that build trust incrementally, such as using relationships at the city or district level to reach national government, or with one government sector / department to reach another
- Create opportunities to include participants shaping partnership activities on a continuous basis, both through actions that create an ongoing 'feedback loop' (e.g., regular 1:1 meetings with local leaders, community forums, creating a seat for a community member of the partnership steering committee), as well as targeted mechanisms for input (e.g., engaging community members in designing / testing messaging for awareness creation campaigns, serving as trainers to disseminate practices to other community members). This work can help build trust and cultivate ownership among participant groups, as well as improve the efficacy of programming by better reflecting community needs and preferences

*Embed and promote agility within partnership practices:*

- Among all partners, embed more informal learning practices (e.g., stakeholder reflection meetings, expert input) and follow up to ensure teams are integrating learning from these efforts as well as formal MEL activities
- Where appropriate, structure activities as prototypes or pilots to encourage rapid iteration and build learning and adaptation into the process
- Develop a collaborative platform (e.g., virtual workspace, shared data collection) that enables partners to co-design effectively and work across moving parts with agility and transparency

*On an ongoing basis:*

- Ensure natural continuity of activities by supporting programming that fosters connections between partners, participants and stakeholders (e.g., virtual networks, alumni initiatives)
- Maintain open communication channels with community stakeholders outside of distinct funding opportunities of partnership cycles to share successes and maintain strong relationships for future engagement



**Design**

**Implementation**

**Post-partnership**

**Considerations for implementing partners**

*As part of initial sustainability planning:*

- Assess best-fit owners for ongoing project activities according to their fit across key dimensions, such as technical capabilities, networks and reputation, longevity in the community/sector, and presence of continued incentives to both sustain and scale up activities
- Account for gaps in capacity when identifying likely **owners** for ongoing work, and consider how to structure capacity building efforts to shift responsibility incrementally (e.g., building partner capacity in a technical area over a defined period, after which the partner takes greater ownership over relevant workstreams)

*Invest in ongoing sustainability planning:*

- Revisit resource planning at key points to identify where funding sources could come from post-USAID; consider multiple options and scenarios to account for contextual shifts and contingencies
- Where ownership is anchored on commercial incentives (e.g., many **market oriented partnerships**), help insulate enduring results from market shocks by building in other structures (e.g., external-facing initiatives, coalitions) to embed programmatic activities and incentivize continued commitment from partners
- Empower local actors who are well-placed to continue reinforcing partnership goals and trust across stakeholders, such as associations, media partners, and civil society organizations, through ongoing outreach, capacity building opportunities, and other light-touch engagement



## Design

## Implementation

## Post-partnership

### Considerations for private sector partners

*When structuring partner roles and engaging communities:*

- As suggested in ERS 2.0, when starting partnership discussions, clearly articulate goals, needs, and potential assets as well as vision for sustainability and scale to help USAID structure the partnership in ways that are mutually beneficial and produce enduring results, and begin building a foundation of trust through engaged collaboration
- Actively engage in the visioning and design of partnership activities to ensure they are set up to leverage your organization's most distinctive **contributions** and assets - and that they create space for partners to operate with **agility** and other characteristics important to private sector ways of working
- Socialize the vision and activities of the partnership among organizational leadership to begin building buy-in for the work and possibly identify additional internal stakeholders or assets that might be leveraged to strengthen the partnership

*Solidify and nurture bonds with key stakeholders:*

- Support partnership activities that are well-aligned with emerging commercial priorities and invest in marketing and narrative-building internally to cultivate buy-in from leadership and plant the seeds for deeper investment / **ownership** of activities
- As suggested in ERS 2.0, approach relationship-building with USAID as an opportunity to develop an ongoing collaboration, rather than a single project. As an organization evolves, there are multiple ways to partner with USAID and draw on collective assets to build sustainable and scalable results.
- As suggested in ERS 2.0, ensure partnership leads (like their USAID counterparts) demonstrate the requisite soft skills for a successful and enduring partnership. The soft skills of private sector partners are equally as important as the technical abilities, and it is critical that private sector partners demonstrate commitment to the partnerships, as well as strong communication skills and **agility** to work effectively with USAID and other stakeholders
- Share knowledge and practices used within the private sector to maintain **agility** within collaborations (e.g., more frequent, informal communication; concise reporting methods, lighter decision-making structures) to cultivate positive behavior changes over the course of the partnership

*On an ongoing basis:*

- Maintain contact with USAID points of contact and provide periodic updates on status of activities and results
- Continue nurturing the relationship with USAID (e.g., by providing information as requested, participating in evaluations or studies, collaborating on external-facing lessons-learned or success story documents); in turn, this can provide opportunities to request limited, ad-hoc support (i.e., introductions, sponsored participation in industry conferences, etc.) that can benefit the overall program

## APPENDIX

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The definitions of the terms below are exclusively for the purposes of the Enduring Results 4.0 study and, therefore, may differ from ADS 201 definitions. This glossary is not intended to replace definitions in ADS 201.

- **Activities:** distinct interventions and actions that partners take on to advance identified development result(s).
- **Assets:** financial or non-financial resources contributed by different partners to the partnership.
- **Program participants:** refers to the population(s) targeted by partnership activity outputs and outcomes or whose well-being is expected to improve. This group may also be referred to as “local stakeholders,” “community members” or more specific terminology (e.g., “entrepreneurs”) as appropriate in context.
- **Participant engagement in partnership design:** refers to when partnerships engaged participants and/or community members in designing the partnership activities, wherein participants shared their challenges, perspectives, and/or needs through focus group discussions. These discussions informed the partnership activities such that they address the participant needs more accurately and effectively.
- **Participant engagement in partnership implementation:** refers to when partnerships engaged participants in implementation of partnership activities during the partnership, wherein participants contributed in several ways such as contributed land and labor for demonstrations, conducted training sessions to share learnings with their peers (e.g., other smallholder farmers), or engaged in buying or selling of products (such as hybrid crops or medicines).
- **Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR)/Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR):** USAID direct hire employee who performs functions delegated by the Contracting or Agreement Officer, or are specifically designated by policy or regulation as part of contract or assistance administration.
- **Design phase:** the period of discussion between USAID and private sector partners, to agree on partnership details, such as duration, required resources, end goals, and required stakeholders for the partnership. The final outputs for this phase are agreed-upon details of partnerships, which are formalized in Memoranda of Understanding and, as applicable, award agreements.
- **Enduring results:** a partnership is considered to have produced ‘enduring results’ when a significant part of its activities – or activities stemming from the partnership – continue (and potentially grow in scale) beyond its operational period to produce ongoing impact.
- **Implementation phase:** the period during which USAID and partners implement agreed-upon partnership activities.
- **Local partner:** an individual, corporation, nonprofit, or other group that is legally organized under the laws of a recipient country, has its principal place of business or operations in the country, is majority owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of the country, and is managed by a governing body the majority of who are citizens or residents of the country.
- **Market oriented approaches/activities/mechanisms:** activities or mechanisms that contribute to development outcomes either by addressing barriers in existing markets or by creating/catalyzing new markets. These typically include, but are not limited to buying, selling, or other profit-driven interactions, either at the partner or participant level, such as making connections between producers and buyers, or between distributors and end customers. Partnerships that leverage these approaches/activities/mechanisms to aid development are called market oriented partnerships.



- **Non-market oriented approaches/activities/mechanisms:** activities or mechanisms that result in development outcomes without relying on the market (e.g., communications campaign to fight trafficking of persons). Partnerships that leverage these approaches/activities/mechanisms to aid development are called non-market oriented partnerships.
- **Outcome:** refers to intended effects from partnership activities for the program participants. Outcomes are results at a higher level than an output and focus on program participants, and are either completely or partially attributable to the partnership.
- **Output:** produced as a direct result of partnership activities and are primarily intended to measure the progress of partnership activities. They are tangible, immediate, and are within the partnership's control or influence.
- **Post-partnership phase:** Post-partnership period begins after USAID ends its financial support to the partnership.
- **Private sector:** USAID's Private Sector Engagement Policy defines the private sector as: for-profit, commercial entities and their affiliated foundations; financial institutions, investors, and intermediaries; business associations and cooperatives; micro, small, medium, and large enterprises that operate in the formal and informal sectors; American, local, regional, and multinational businesses; and for-profit approaches that generate sustainable income (e.g., a venture fund run by a non-governmental organization or a social enterprise).
- **Results:** outputs or outcomes that originate due to intervention attributable to the partnership.
- **Scale:** growth from increasing the size and/or effect of activities and outcomes that stem from the partnership period.
- **Sustainability:** the ability of a local system to produce desired outcomes over time by obtaining the resources necessary to produce those outcomes.

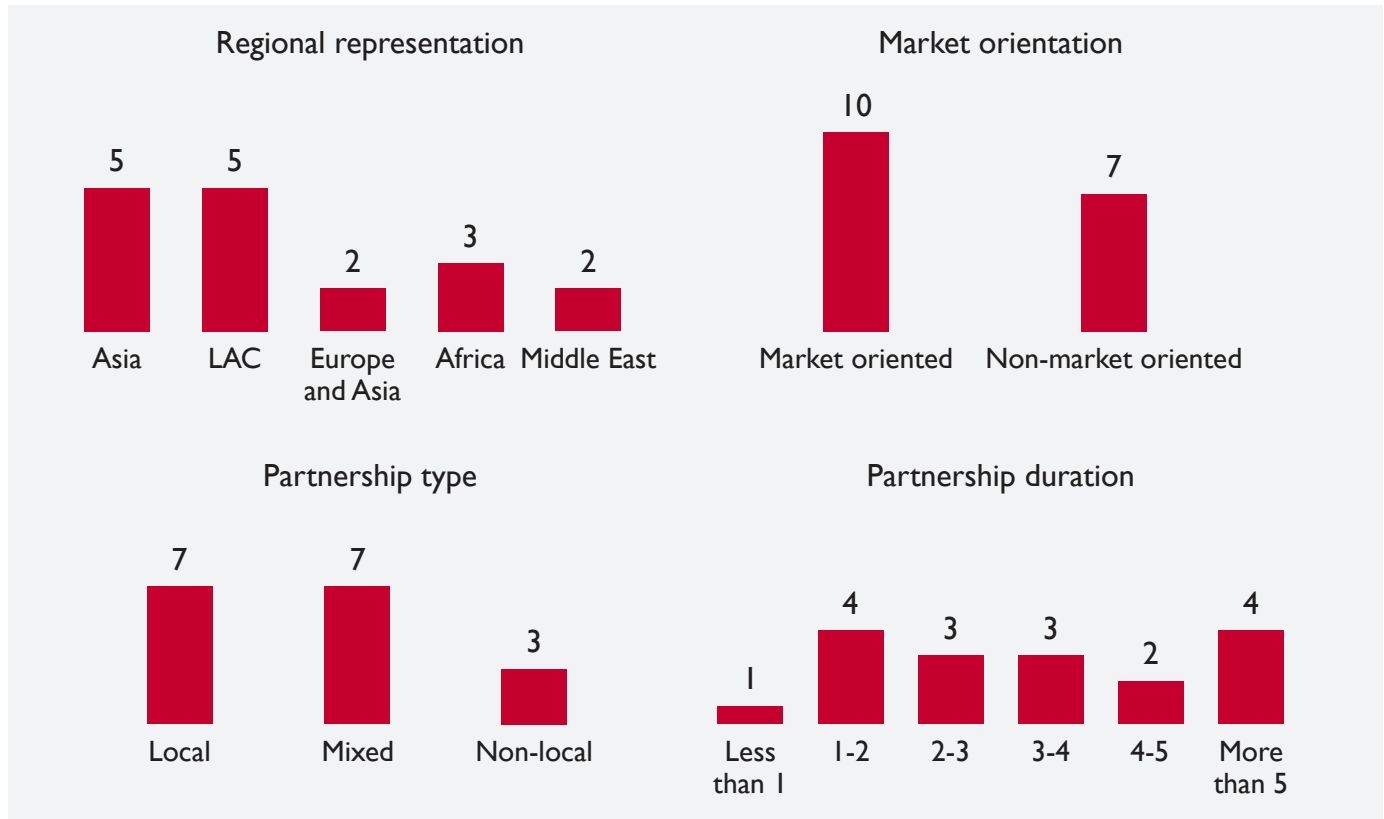
## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Enduring Results Study 4.0 findings are based on data collection and analysis across a diverse sample set of 17 partnerships that ended in 2019. Partnerships were selected through a rigorous process to build a sample of 17 partnerships that was sufficiently representative across regional representation, partnership type, partnership duration and market orientation.

Data was collected through a range of sources, including the Foreign Assistance Coordination and Tracking System's Public-Private Partnership Module, partnership documentation available through the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) and online, interviews with 37 USAID staff, implementing partners, and private sector partners, and secondary research. These partnerships were selected through a rigorous process that aimed to build a diverse sample across core dimensions and partnership attributes.

Despite the extensive data collection process, the study acknowledges certain limitations to the evidence base that informed the findings and the recommendations: 1) *Some partnership stakeholder were inaccessible for interviews*, 2) *The sample and its sample estimates cannot be assumed to be representative of the broader set of partnerships ending in 2019*, 3) *Limited documentation of partnership activities/outcomes after USAID funding ended:* Due to the small study sample, there were limited findings available on specific sub-groups and sub-sectors, and 4) *COVID-19:* Although partnerships in this study sample ended in 2019, there were unexpected effects on outcomes and activities after the partnership operational period due to the dramatic economic, political, and social changes brought by the COVID-19 pandemic (still ongoing as of the publication of this report in 2022).

Figure 8. Partnerships representation



## PATHWAYS TO SUSTAINABILITY & SCALE

Across the study sample, partnerships were evaluated for enduring results through the framing of five distinct ‘pathways to sustainability’ - or categories of activities that can be pursued by a partnership to produce sustained results after the partnership period ends. To be considered as achieving enduring results, partnerships demonstrated the continuation of partnership activities (or activities stemming from the partnership) through one or more of the following pathways:



### Establish / expand market linkages

A partnership often achieves sustainability through the market relationships and/or market exposure they create. For example, a partnership might help establish continuing connections between value-chain actors such that it reduces search cost and off-takers’ risk afterwards. Sometimes this is achieved by aggregating small actors to leverage scale.



### Enable new product or service innovation

Community actors and private sector partners often lack the support necessary to build a new product, service, or community asset (such as training materials or new infrastructure) that meet critical development needs. A partnership provides this vital support and subsidizes the creation of a new product /service and transfers ownership to ensure sustainability. By providing this critical support upfront, a partnership would then enable the activities to persist in the market even after the end of the partnership.

## Enable a new market, customer segment or target participant population



Where there is a dearth of infrastructure or public goods to build a market or reach a new customer segment / target population with existing products or services, a partnership can help overcome the lack of incentives to invest in market infrastructure. Similarly, where markets may suffer from a misperception of risk, partnerships can provide capital to help overcome the misperception and crowd-in new funding. In other instances, a partnership can help establish quality standards or certifications necessary for a new market to flourish. For non-market oriented partnerships, this pathway reflects an opportunity for enduring results through continued service to a new participant population or stakeholder group.

## Change in practices through policies or campaigns



This pathway is employed to capture potential long-term behavior or practice changes through government policy or awareness campaigns aimed at influencing public perception or actions. For example, a partnership advocates for a specific policy change by engaging the right actors and/or bringing the necessary information, resources, and tools to affect the policymaking debate, resulting in a policy that is continuously implemented and driving positive impact after the partnership comes to an end.

## Establish capacity<sup>5</sup> or ongoing capacity building activities



Through this pathway, a partnership establishes a training program that continues to engage new participants beyond the period of the partnership in order to create long-term behavior change. For example, a partnership develops labor training programs to fill a skills gap in the market. These training programs would then sustain, funded by employers who benefit from the availability of new skills in the market or, in some cases, by future employees who have a greater likelihood of obtaining jobs following the training. *Many partnerships may solely build the capacity of partner organizations, stakeholders, or participants over the course of the partnership; while this enhanced capacity can produce impact that sustains beyond the life of the project, such as an implementing partner growing in their ability to support the work of USAID or other donors, it is not considered a pathway to sustainability in and of itself.*

While the ‘enduring results’ definition focuses on the *sustainability* of partnerships, Enduring Results Studies also examine how partnerships go on to achieve *greater scale* in their work to help inform the work of future partnerships. Scalability can be understood as growth from increasing the size and/or effect of activities and outcomes that stem from the partnership period (e.g., by reaching additional participants, expanding the geographic scope of activities). Across the study sample, partnerships were also evaluated on the extent to which they grew in scale following the USAID partnership period through one or more of the following three ‘pathways to scale:’

## Market-based relationships outcomes and activities



Profit-seeking behavior by new or existing private sector partners or partnership participants was described by interviewees as a powerful driver of scale. Market-driven activities and relationships typically have financial sustainability and growth as primary objectives. USAID partnerships can support the development of these market-based relationships and thereby position partnership results to scale – for example, by linking buyers and sellers in a market, where there is desire for continued profitability and expansion.

<sup>5</sup> While these ‘pathways to sustainability’ remain generally consistent with those of past ERSes, there is a key distinction worth noting. ERS 3.0 categorized capacity building as an independent pathway to sustainability; which helped contribute to 97% of partnerships studied in 3.0 being evaluated as producing enduring results. ERS 4.0 returns to the standard used in ERS 2.0, which considers capacity-building as a pathway to sustainability only in conjunction with other activities. Indeed, in ERS 1.0, only two partnerships pursued capacity building as a primary pathway (without additional pathways) and neither produced enduring results; this finding helped drive the update to the language used in 2.0 and 4.0.



### Partners operating at scale

In some instances, especially in partnerships with philanthropic private partners, scale can be achieved by identifying a new or existing scaling partner after USAID involvement ends. The scaling partner may be the government, a philanthropic entity, or a company through non-market based activities. This type of scale usually involves embedding the partnership activities within a larger organization to replicate or expand them beyond the life of USAID involvement.



### Broader policy change

USAID partnerships with the private sector can also lead to policy change. Policy change can produce enduring development results related to a discrete issue (e.g., enacting a law to limit pollution) or broader enabling environment (e.g., reducing trade barriers, regulating a market by introducing standards). Depending on the nature of change that the policy generates, either type of policy outcome can also drive impact at scale.

## PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW

A high-level summary of each partnership and its results is included below:

**Table 1. Overview of partnerships studied in ERS 4.0**

Partnership name	Description	Region/ Duration	Private sector orientation	Market orientation
<b>1.</b> Accelerating Change: Mainstreaming Hygiene Practice	Developed and promoted a Hygiene Index (HI) to help 25 cities monitor - and eventually strengthen - their hygiene and sanitation. After the successful pilot, the model was adopted by the Government of India and later implemented across 4,000 cities	<b>India</b> 2 years 11 months	Non-Local	Non-market oriented
<b>2.</b> The Global Give Back Circle Program	Girls' empowerment program that supported orphaned and economically-disadvantaged girls through mentoring, scholarship, and training. Since the launch of the program, GGBC has graduated 2,000 alumni in Kenya and many currently lead or remain involved in the program's ongoing initiatives	<b>Kenya</b> 8 years 6 months	Mixed	Non-market oriented
<b>3.</b> Growing Social Businesses	Promote the entrepreneurship and growth of social businesses that effectively addressed the needs of low-income, vulnerable and under-served communities in Albania. YSB has since expanded to multiple other countries in the Balkans region in an effort to promote social entrepreneurial activity in the region	<b>Albania</b> 3 years	Mixed	Market oriented
<b>4.</b> Development Innovations	Developed an ecosystem of tech-enabled civil society organizations and Cambodian suppliers of technology solutions to help civil society use ICT solutions to improve their programming. Several programs launched during this initiative have continued, including the first female coding education program in Cambodia	<b>Cambodia</b> 6 years	Mixed	Market oriented

**Table 1. Overview of partnerships studied in ERS 4.0**

Partnership name	Description	Region/ Duration	Private sector orientation	Market orientation
<b>5.</b> Advanced Marketing and Agribusiness Logistics	Improved the livelihoods of rural households by building their capacity to integrate into high-value commercial horticulture markets. The partnership established linkages between Egypt's major export association and smallholder farmers, which have continued to improve farmer output despite COVID-19's disruptions to some partnership activities	<b>Egypt</b> 3 years 11 months	Mixed	Market oriented
<b>6.</b> Feed the Future Agricultural Value Chains	Expanded the use of higher quality inputs such as improved seeds, appropriate fertilizers, and bio-pesticides to boost productivity of farmers. The partnership was able to promote a more 'customer service mindset' among private sector companies; however, many activities were unable to continue due to challenges with financially sustaining the programming after the USAID funding period	<b>Bangladesh</b> 5 years 4 months	Mixed	Market oriented
<b>7.</b> ProMedia – Production and broadcasting of mass-media educational programs	Supported the production of innovative media solutions for educational programming targeting farmers to expand their business. Since the partnership, ProMedia has continued to develop high-quality agricultural content for their audience	<b>Moldova</b> 1 year 1 month	Local	Non-market oriented
<b>8.</b> Reconstructing collective memory – Artesanias de Colombia	Strengthened the capacity of indigenous artisans and enabled them to be competitive in the artisan crafts market while conducting reconciliation programming among participations. Linkages established through the partnership have remained and artisans now have expanded their market reach, though it is not clear that collective memory / reconciliation efforts have continued	<b>Colombia</b> 9 months	Local	Market oriented
<b>9.</b> Green Infrastructure at the Gurabo River watershed in Santiago	Improved the collection and treatment of residue water through green infrastructure in vulnerable communities located in the middle watershed of the Gurabo river. The infrastructure continues to be operated by the local municipality, with strong engagement from the local private sector partner	<b>Dominican Republic</b> 1 year 4 months	Local	Non-market oriented
<b>10.</b> The Arangkada Project II	Reformed foreign investment and introduced business-friendly policies. While Arangkada continues to operate, it has experienced difficulty identifying a viable path for financial sustainability, and many in-person networking activities have been constrained as a result of COVID-19	<b>Philippines</b> 1 year 11 months	Mixed	Non-market oriented

**Table 1. Overview of partnerships studied in ERS 4.0**

Partnership name	Description	Region/ Duration	Private sector orientation	Market orientation
<b>11.</b> Value Chains for Rural Development	Worked with smallholder farmers and local organizations to strengthen value chain linkages and upgrade five separate value chains. While the coffee value chain has strengthened and continued at modest levels, the other four value chains have not found a viable path for sustainability	<b>Myanmar</b> 5 years	Mixed	Market oriented
<b>12.</b> Association of Savings and Investment South Africa (ASISA) Enterprise Development Fund	Launched a fund aimed at improving the capacity of small and medium enterprises (SMES), and to increase their access to finance and markets. Since the launch, the ASISA fund has expanded sixfold to reach almost one thousand SMES	<b>South Africa</b> 2 years 11 months	Local	Market oriented
<b>13.</b> Higher Education for Economic Growth	Built partnerships between industry sectors and higher education institutions to develop demand-driven educational programs and research, as well as to train faculty members to build professionals who contribute to industry growth. Multiple initiatives have been launched through partnership including an ongoing scholarship program for talented, economically disadvantaged students	<b>El Salvador</b> 4 years 11 months	Mixed	Market oriented
<b>14.</b> Water and Development Alliance	Expanded the access to water and sanitation services for 56,000 community members across 58 communities in Nigeria. The community-based committees established to operate infrastructure have continued to maintain the WASH facilities	<b>Nigeria</b> 2 years 4 months	Non-Local	Non-market oriented
<b>15.</b> War Child Holland/Can't Wait to Learn	Piloted an eLearning game ("Can't Wait to Learn") that provided supplemental learning activities and blended practical applications of the national curriculums. In the wake of the pandemic's broader shift to eLearning, the initiative has since been adopted by the Ministries of Education in Jordan and Lebanon and the program has expanded to other countries	<b>Jordan and Lebanon</b> 3 years 9 months	Non-Local	Non-market oriented
<b>16.</b> Low Emission Development in Guatemala Agriculture and Industry	Partnered with private sector organizations in Guatemala to enhance competitiveness and manufacturing efficiency through planning a national low carbon economic growth strategy. The national government has since adopted the plan as part of its official guidance, though it is not clear that it has been fully implemented	<b>Guatemala</b> 5 years	Local	Market oriented
<b>17.</b> Articulation of supply and demand of nature tourism	Developed a digital platform that helped to expand the digital marketing of nature tourism to generate income for local providers in two different territories. Since the launch of the program, the initiative has expanded to over 60 territories across Colombia	<b>Colombia</b> 1 year	Local	Market oriented

