

DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE

Measuring progress towards locally led development co-operation: Towards a shared framework

This Perspectives paper provides insights for measuring progress towards locally led development co-operation. It proposes a tentative four-layered approach for a shared measurement framework that practitioners can adopt and adapt when considering ways of measuring their progress towards locally led development co-operation.

This paper is part of a broader peer learning exercise on locally led development within the Development Assistance Committee [[DCD/DAC\(2023\)5](#)]. The complete series of perspectives papers is available [here](#).

Related case studies of member practices can be found on the OECD platform [Development Co-operation TIPS -Tools, Insights, Practices](#).

Contacts:

Renwick Irvine, Renwick.Irvine@oecd.org

Joëlline Benefice, Joelline.Benefice@oecd.org

Anjeza Llulla, Anjeza.Llulla@oecd.org

JT03549002

Perspectives Paper on Locally Led Development

Measuring progress towards locally led development co-operation

Towards a shared framework

This *Perspectives paper* provides insights for measuring progress towards locally led development co-operation. It is part of a broader peer learning exercise on locally led development within the Development Assistance Committee [[DCD/DAC\(2023\)5](#)]. The paper proposes a tentative four-layered approach for a shared measurement framework that practitioners can adopt and adapt when considering ways of measuring their progress towards locally led development co-operation.

Related case studies of member practices can be found on the OECD platform [Development Co-operation TIPs – Tools, Insights, Practices](#).

1. Introduction

For DAC members and other development co-operation providers, a robust measurement framework measuring locally led development co-operation can help understand and track their progress towards locally led commitments and ambitions. Measuring also provides the basis for external stakeholders to keep the performance of providers in check with their promises.

Australia, Canada, and the United States are the three DAC members that to date have designed comprehensive measurement tools. Based on their vision for locally led development co-operation and business models, these three members have been experimenting with a mix of measurement modalities; balancing quantitative (volume of funding directly provided to local actors) and qualitative (assessing the agency of partners and enabling systems) indicators with targets (United States) or grades along a spectrum (Canada and Australia).

Other providers, including Denmark, Ireland and Switzerland, are introducing measurement frameworks and shaping accountability for locally led development co-operation in their partnerships with international agencies. Denmark has integrated indicators based on the localisation framework developed by the Network for Empowered Aid Response (NEAR) into its partnerships with Danish CSOs. Ireland has included negotiated benchmarks in partnership agreements with Irish CSOs and Switzerland has developed equitable partnership principles for its contract agreements with international multilateral and national humanitarian agencies in Ukraine (OECD, forthcoming^[1]).

Frameworks developed by CSOs have a more granular and qualitative approach, with a strong focus on processes. These frameworks include indicators that can generally be grouped under the following categories: partnerships, leadership, capacity, co-ordination and complementarity, funding, participation, policy influence and advocacy (Piango and HAG, 2019^[2]), with the objective of being empirically grounded in specific country contexts with a greater involvement of local actors (Barbelet et al., 2021^[3]). These categories are all accompanied by a large number of indicators, intended to function as guidance and to be tailored to the context.

However, no approach or method is suitable to all circumstances and contexts. Challenges arise especially in relation to definitions, coverage and data collection.

- **Definition:** Indicators related to direct funding to local organisations get a lot of public attention but face some controversy regarding the scope and definition of local actors.
- **Coverage:** Establishing an overall figure or percentage measuring funding directed at local actors with a “reasonable degree of certainty” is challenging, not least due to lack of transparent reporting (Els and Carstensen, 2015^[4]). DAC members report on the first channel of delivery in the OECD Creditor Reporting System (CRS) meaning only funding provided directly to recipient governments and local organisations is captured. There are no international databases collecting information on the amounts transferred to local organisations by intermediaries (such as multilateral organisations or international CSOs). In addition, indicators related to direct access alone are not sufficient to determine whether an approach is locally led and would need to be accompanied by information about the level of involvement by local actors.
- **Data collection:** Few institutions have business models that enable the processing of extensive and detailed information beyond access to direct funding without adding a heavy administrative burden on staff and partners. As it is challenging to add reporting requirements for implementing partners, indicators can be informed *ex post* based on existing material and by mobilising staff, through external support, or during the evaluation process, therefore covering only part of the portfolio.

There is no one-size-fits-all for measurement frameworks and continued adjustments may be needed. Each institution will require approaches that reflect what best works for their own business models. It is important that the process of designing and agreeing approaches to measurement are as inclusive as

possible for the data collected to be considered legitimate by the target audience. For these reasons, while a basic shared understanding is helpful, aiming towards a standardised measurement framework may not be the most relevant.

As part of the OECD DAC peer learning exercise on locally led development, this *perspectives paper* presents options for a shared framework for measuring progress towards supporting locally led development co-operation, which can serve as sources of inspiration for practitioners and policy makers. This paper does not aim to discuss how to assess the effectiveness and impact of locally led approaches, which falls outside the scope of this OECD DAC peer learning exercise. It draws on a desk review and board consultations including semi-structured interviews with localisation and monitoring and evaluation experts in DAC member countries and in CSOs, and a virtual peer learning exchange with the participation of around 120 experts in April 2024.

This paper is directed towards DAC members, but findings also apply to other organisations, including across delivery chains, such as multilateral organisations, CSOs and other implementing agencies working directly with local partners. It provides ideas for how development providers can be held accountable and measure progress against their locally led development ambitions.

2. Proposition for shared measurement approaches

Any approach to measuring progress towards co-operation that enables and supports locally led development must be multifaceted to address access to resources, level of agency and systemic enablers and barriers. To respect this ambition while being mindful of the diversity of contexts and to avoid adding an additional administrative burden, a four-layered approach, mobilising existing international reporting could include approaches to measuring as shown in Figure 1.

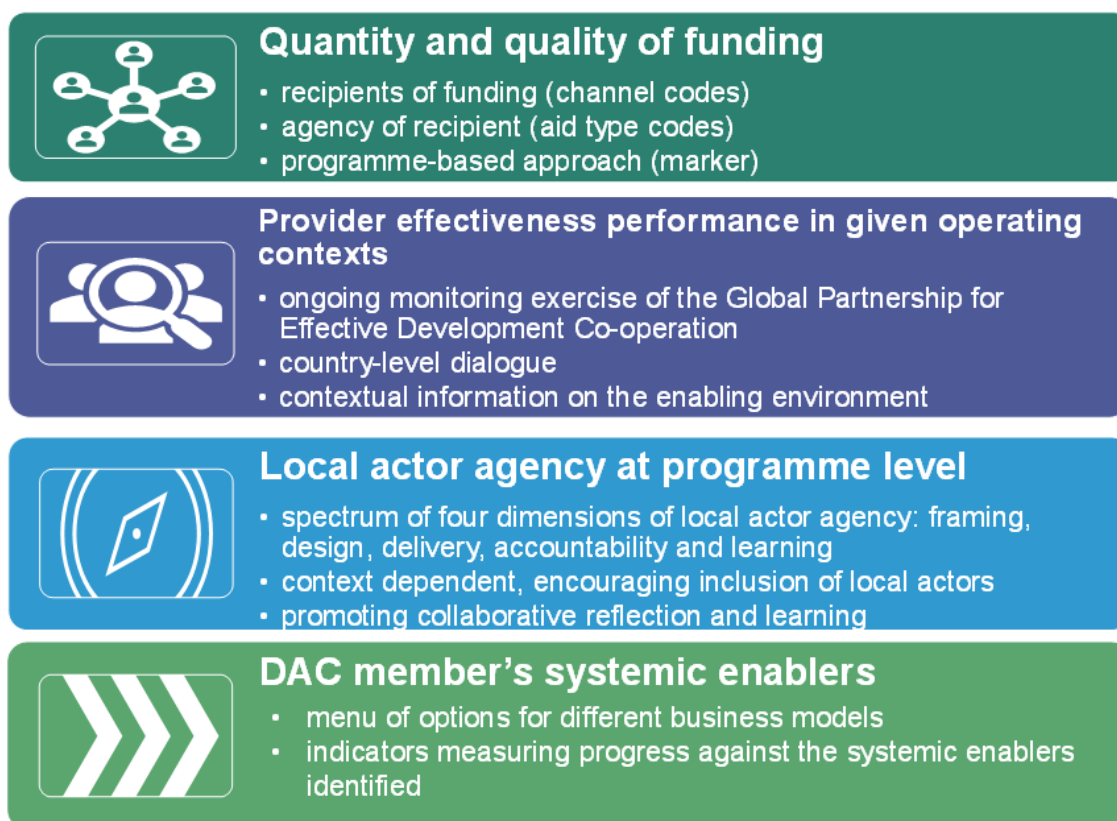
The first two layers relate to the analysis of data that is already being collected, but that could be leveraged and interpreted through a specific lens that can function as a proxy for measuring locally led development. These layers also offer the possibility to gain a broader understanding and overview across DAC members, should practitioners wish to do so.

The remaining two layers are to be interpreted as indications and aim at providing inspiration to practitioners and policy makers who would like to establish institutional frameworks based on a shared understanding of some critical aspects of locally led development co-operation. These could be taken as a starting point and adapted depending on different institutions' business models, needs and purposes of the measurement.

For reference, the definitions used by the peer learning exercise are as follow:

- **Local actors:** individuals and entities based and operating within the local context of reference, subject to local laws, whose actions are centred on local issues.
- **Locally led development co-operation:** development co-operation that supports locally led humanitarian and development assistance by recognising and enabling diverse local actors' agency in: i) **framing**; ii) **design**; iii) **delivery**, including resourcing; and iv) **accountability and learning**.¹

Figure 1. A four-layered approach to measuring locally led development co-operation



Quantity and quality of funding to local actors

Direct access to quality funding is a repeated request from local actors and forms the majority of what is currently being tracked. However, the ability to provide direct funding is heavily dependent on the institutional arrangements of DAC members. For instance, not all members are legally able to sign sovereign loans or contracts with civil society organisations that are not registered in their home countries.

The OECD Creditor Reporting System (CRS) provides a comparable database of type of funding and channel of delivery mobilised by development co-operation providers. It can provide a proxy for funding made available to local partners and some indication of its quality (see Table 1). Quantitative indicators for bilateral support to locally led development could look at the overlap of channel codes and aid types as a proxy for the level of funding that enables local actors to have the highest level of agency (see Table 4 on the spectrum of local actors' agency).

- **Channel codes** provide information on which local partners have direct access to funding.
- **Aid-type codes** can serve as a simplified proxy for the level of agency of the recipient, with core and budget support most conducive to local agency at least in terms of framing and design given the nature and flexibility of funding. Comparatively, project-based funding requires qualitative analysis of the governance each project to be able to assess the level of agency.
- **The programme-based approach marker (PBA)²** is used to identify co-ordinated support for which the host country or organisation is exercising leadership, a single comprehensive programme and budget framework is used, procedures are harmonised, and local systems are used. PBA can be provided through budget support, project support, pooled arrangements, and trust funds. As the marker identifies programmes for which local organisations have leadership, it can be used both as a proxy for recipient and for level of agency.

Table 1. Mapping CRS data as a proxy indicator

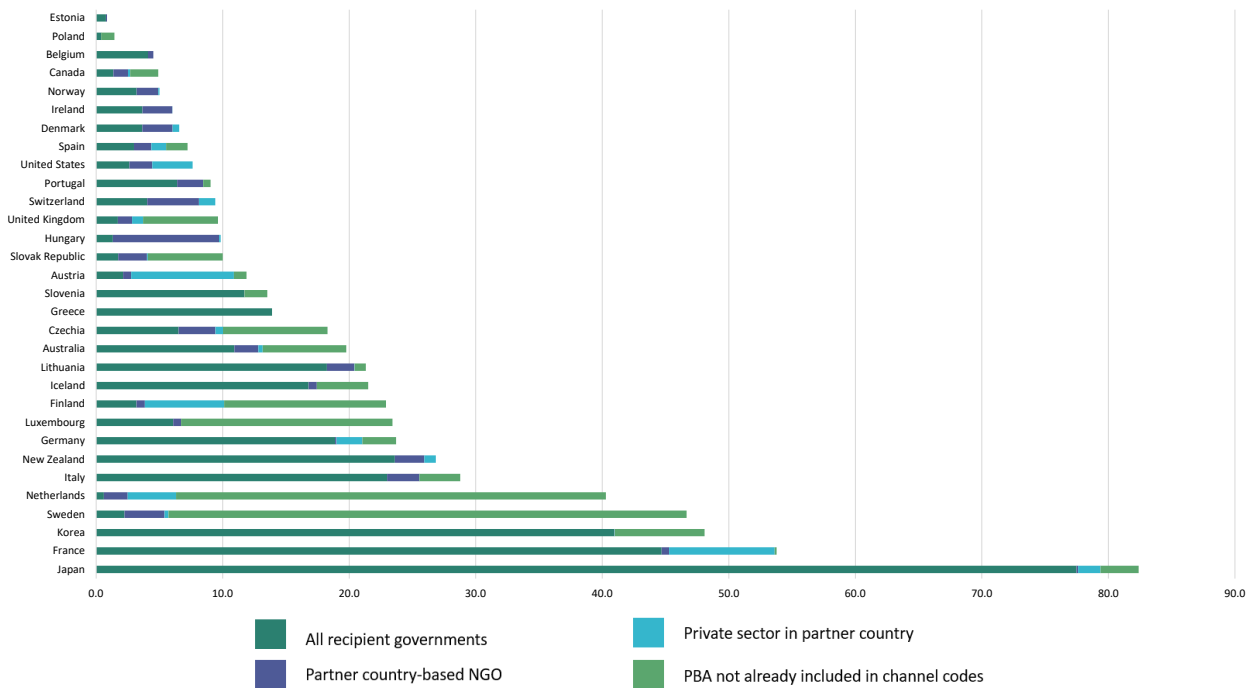
| Proxy for recipient | | Proxy for agency | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Channel codes | | Aid type codes | |
| All recipient governments* | | General budget support | |
| Partner country-based non-governmental organisation (NGO) | | Sector budget support | |
| Private sector in partner country | | Core support to NGOs, private bodies, PPPs and research institutes in partner countries | |
| Programme-based approach marker (PBA) | | | |

Note*: All recipient governments include i) recipient government; ii) central government; iii) local government; iv) public corporations; and v) other public entities in recipient country.

Mobilising the CRS has the merit of being relatively simple and replicable. It does not require additional reporting as it makes use of the CRS dataset which has existed for years and will continue to be reported on, allowing for historical trend analysis and comparisons across providers and partner countries. It allows the user to select a provider (or partner country if there is demand) and observe trends across each data category. There could also be options for a more layered or consolidated approach that allows the user to select across data categories. For example, the user could start with the channel code categories and PBA marker to get a sense of who receives funding and then further filter results by using the aid type to get further understanding of measures of agency.

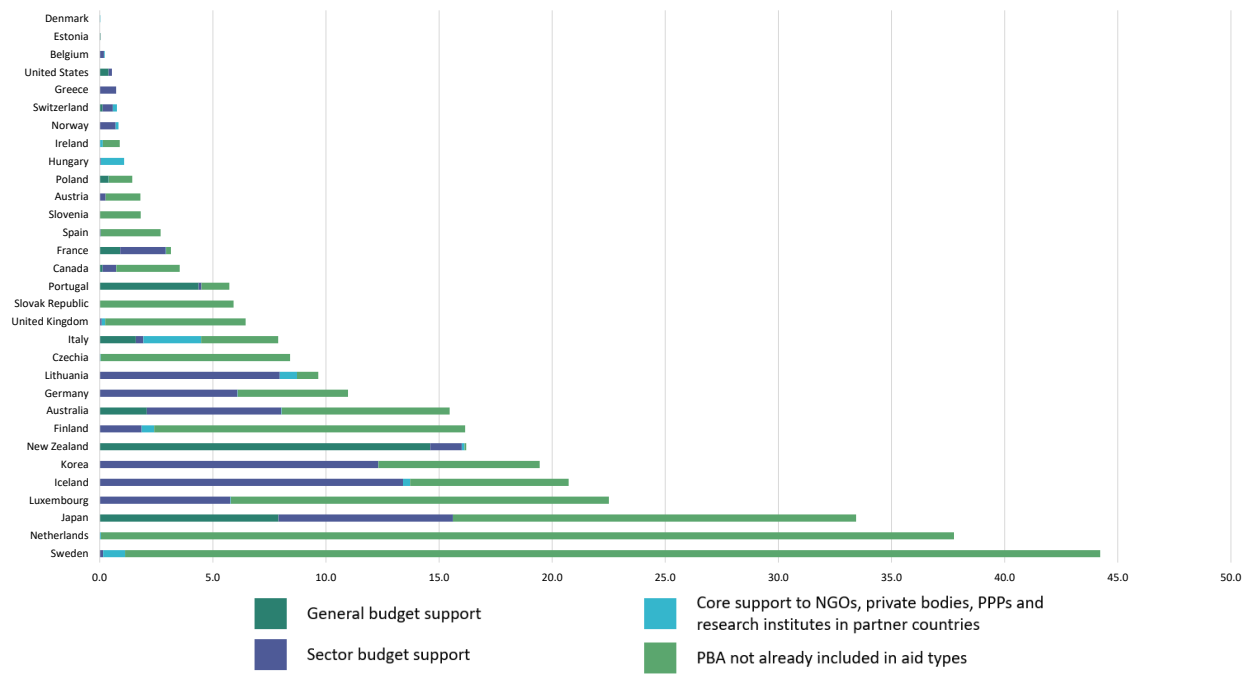
Figure 2 and Figure 3 illustrate the value of mapping CRS data as a proxy indicator for quality funding to local actors. Governments (in this instance, without specification the level of government) are the main local recipients of direct funding. PBA seems to be the way of engaging used by DAC members enabling local agency and locally led development, followed by sector budget support. Core support to partner country-based non-governmental organisations (NGOs) is a modality not often used by DAC members.

Figure 2. DAC members ranking: Percentage of “locally led” bilateral ODA based on channel codes and PBA, two-year average (2021-22)



Note: The data presents a share of bilateral ODA, therefore the European Union does not appear in the figure as it is counted as multilateral ODA. Source: OECD (2024^[5]), *Creditor Reporting System*, (database, constant prices 2022), <http://data-explorer.oecd.org/s/c> (accessed in 28 July 2024).

Figure 3. DAC members ranking: Percentage of “locally led” bilateral ODA based on aid type and PBA, two-year average (2021-22)



Note: The data presents a share of bilateral ODA, therefore the European Union does not appear in the figure as it is counted as multilateral ODA. Source: OECD (2024^[5]), *Creditor Reporting System*, (database, constant prices 2022), <http://data-explorer.oecd.org/s/c> (accessed in 28 July 2024).

As with all approaches, there are limitations:

- For example, CRS data only captures the first channel of delivery, which is not necessarily the end recipient. This means CRS data likely underestimates providers' total support for locally led development by omitting locally led development support through intermediaries. To fill this gap and provide a more accurate picture of DAC members' localisation performance, in particular for those with a centrally managed procurement, the DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics (WP-STAT) is planning to pilot several methods to capture data on sub-awards (pending approval from the Working Party).
- As for other markers, the accuracy of the coverage of the PBA markets relies on the quality of reporting by DAC members. Some members more acquainted with the DAC statistics may more systematically use the marker than others.
- Using CRS data in this way does not show if a funding flow is predictable and multi-year, so does not allow for gauging flexibility beyond instances of core funding.
- The timeliness of this dataset (published with a two-year time lag – i.e., 2022 data published in 2024) can be hard to reconcile and align with the other layers proposed below. Nevertheless, even if not comparable, it could be complemented with data from national aid data platforms, if available.

Measuring development providers' effectiveness performance in different operating contexts: Mobilising GPEDC monitoring

The monitoring exercise of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) is a partner country-led exercise to promote collective accountability³ on the effectiveness of development co-operation. The 4th monitoring round takes place between 2023 and 2026. Within this time frame, countries can choose when to participate based on their national processes and priorities. A global monitoring report will be produced in 2026.

While the GPEDC monitoring exercise was not originally designed as a framework to measure locally led development, several aspects provide contextual evidence which speaks to local actors' agency in framing, design and accountability in development efforts. This evidence emerges both from the data collected through the monitoring and through country-level dialogue.

- Data collected through the GPEDC's monitoring exercise provides valuable contextual information on the enabling environment for engagement and representation of a diversity of country-level stakeholders in development efforts – therefore giving indications of what could be expected from DAC members in distinct contexts should stakeholders mobilise the monitoring with a locally led lens for advocacy purposes. Additionally, certain metrics shed light on the behaviour of individual providers concerning the four dimensions of local agency (see Table 3).
- Country-level dialogue is an opportunity to sustain and further the engagement of various partners through qualitative discussion – a critical success factor identified by measurement efforts conducted by CSOs. Depending on the inclusivity of the process, these dialogues can be an opportunity for local actors to discuss DAC members' behaviour concerning inclusive consultations, alignment and involvement in decision making. In turn, DAC members can use such dialogues to debate the progress of other actors such as national governments on development effectiveness commitments and sense check and sharpen their ambitions.

Table 2 presents a selection of GPEDC monitoring components and areas of measurement that are relevant when assessing dimensions of agency and can inform discussions on progress towards enabling locally led development.

Table 2. Mapping of GPEDC monitoring components against the definition of locally led development co-operation and dimensions of local actor agency

| GPEDC monitoring component | Dimensions of agency | Relevant indicator for contextual information | Relevant indicator for providers' performance |
|--|------------------------|---|--|
| Engagement and dialogue | Diversity Framing | The degree to which partner country governments engage a diversity of stakeholder groups in preparing their national development strategies and communicate on development priorities and results, with joint assessments towards development co-operation targets. | The degree to which development partners engage a diversity of stakeholder groups in preparing their country-level strategies or partnership frameworks. |
| CSO enabling environment | Diversity Framing | Perception of CSOs on the degree to which partner country governments promote a CSO enabling environment, through the legal and regulatory environment , and by consulting and engaging CSOs as development actors. Perception of CSOs on the degree to which development partners promote CSO enabling environments (political, financial, legal and policy aspects) in their policy dialogue with the government and through financing mechanisms that maximise sustainable engagement of CSOs. Perception of the partner country government and development partners on the effectiveness of the co-ordination and accountability mechanisms used by CSOs in the country. | |
| Private Sector Engagement (PSE) | Diversity Framing | The degree to which countries engage country-level stakeholders in national dialogue and in developing national policies/strategies for private sector engagement. | The degree to which development partners engage country-level stakeholders in dialogues or consultations on private sector engagement in development co-operation. |
| Planning | Framing Accountability | Countries have developed their national development strategies/plans inclusively , tracked implementation progress transparently and linked them to sectoral and subnational strategies and implementation sources. | |
| Respect country's policy space | Framing Accountability | | The degree to which development partners use country-owned results frameworks and planning tools for developing their country-level interventions (SDG 17.15.1). |
| Public financial management | Delivery | Quality of partner country's Public Finance Management systems (from the country's most recent Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability assessment). | The degree to which development partners use partner country PFM systems when channelling funding to the public sector. |
| National budget | Delivery | | The degree to which development partners are predictable in the mid-term (through forward spending plans received by the government). |
| Accountability mechanisms | Framing Accountability | Countries have an inclusive, regular, transparent, results-focused accountability mechanism , which includes a policy framework and joint assessments. | |
| Information management | Accountability | | Development partners report to country information management systems. |

| | | | |
|---------------------|--|---|---|
| Consultation | Diversity Framing Accountability | Countries engage representatives of women and girls, youth and children, and marginalised groups in the preparation of their national development strategies, in dialogue on development priorities and results (using the national development strategies/progress reports); and in joint assessments towards development co-operation targets. | Development partners engage representatives of women and girls, youth and children, and vulnerable and marginalised groups in the preparation of their country-level strategies/partnership frameworks. |
|---------------------|--|---|---|

Source: Author – extracted from (Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, n.d.^[6]), Monitoring Framework <https://www.effectivecooperation.org/dashboard/monitoring-framework> (accessed on 20 August 2024)

However, using GPEDC monitoring components also comes with limitations:

- The length of the monitoring process, including the timeliness of the different rounds of reporting and analysis, limits the possibilities for timely comparisons. However, it still provides a snapshot of the context and providers' performance in a specific country at a specific time.
- The validity of this approach is also heavily dependent on the level of inclusivity of data collection and country dialogue. Yet, it can be considered as an initial step for further research into a country context which can be complemented by other independent sources should development partners wish to do so.

Measuring the level of local actor agency in locally led development co-operation at programme level: Mobilising the local actor agency compass

Efforts towards enabling and strengthening locally led development co-operation requires adjusting approaches at programme level – even beyond direct core funding to local actors. Based on extensive consultations and on the working definition of locally led development co-operation used for this exercise, the following tables can help frame the assessment of progress towards enabling locally led development co-operation at programme level by questioning who has agency and to what extent. This structured reflection can in turn help identify barriers (internal or external) and find concrete ways forward.

Table 3. Four dimensions of local actor agency in development co-operation.

| What is the agency of diverse local actors in development co-operation? | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Framing | Design | Delivery | Accountability |
| Priorities: identifying challenges and needs, and setting development co-operation priorities including capacity strengthening and sharing. | Programmes and projects: planning, designing, and adapting initiatives. | Funding: accessing flexible and sustained funding, facilitating distribution and controlling its use. | Accountability locus: defining the lines of accountability and learning. |
| Standards: setting guiding principles and standards for accountability and learning. | Partnerships: designing partnership and collaboration mechanisms. | Processes: selecting management and delivery processes/practices (e.g., financial, auditing, procurement). | Monitoring, evaluation, and learning: developing frameworks and selecting, producing, and sharing evidence. |

Achieving locally led development co-operation is a process of shifting agency dynamics in specific contexts (local and systemic). This means that, depending on context, local actor agency across the four dimensions can differ and evolve. Applying a spectrum approach (see Table 4) enables a more granular and operational understanding of local stakeholders' agency, different stakeholders' expectations (local and development co-operation providers), where barriers or conflicting objectives remain and how the role of different stakeholders should evolve. Applying this spectrum to local stakeholders can also help in understanding the level of inclusion and therefore the diversity of actors with agency.

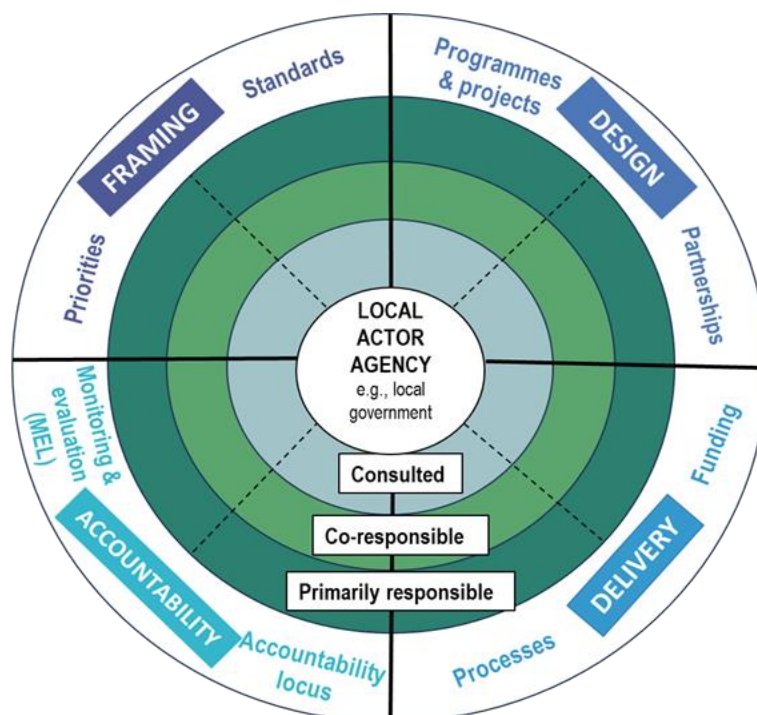
Table 4. The spectrum of local actor agency

| Omitted | Consulted | Co-responsible | Primarily responsible |
|--|--|--|---|
| Local actors are unaware of opportunities for engagement and support (i.e. funding). Providers do not share information or set up consultation mechanisms. | Local actors receive timely information on policies/strategies/ programmes and engage in dialogue after consultation with their own constituents. Providers allow space for timely and effective engagement and commit to considering the views expressed. | Local actors are part of a formal system and processes enabling joint decisions with the provider or independently within an agreed framework. | Local actors take decisions and actions independently. Providers recognise and value local actors' decisions. |

Source: OECD (2023^[71]), *Framing DAC member approaches to enabling locally led development*, [https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD\(2023\)47/en/pdf](https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD(2023)47/en/pdf).

Applying this spectrum to the four dimensions of agency in development practice can help better understand and assess the extent to which DAC member approaches enable or constrain locally led development and identify concrete ways forward, as well as understand the implications of the degree of agency on the partnership (e.g. how equitable it is) (see Figure 4). This local agency framework can serve as a guide for developing measurement, evaluation and learning models, building on existing tools that aim to raise awareness of power dynamics in development and humanitarian programming (Partos, 2020^[81]). Recognising that *how* we measure is just as important as *what* we measure, an approach to operationalising this framework might consider models where different stakeholders, including funders and their local and international partners collectively assess and respond to the distribution of decision-making power across different dimensions of development co-operation (King et al., 2023^[91]). Collective and participatory approaches can allow different perspectives and experiences to surface and be addressed in a manner that is contextualised and tailored to the specific programme and its stakeholders. Beyond operations, this conceptual framing aims to explore how local knowledge, values and expertise are valued and mobilised, and where bottlenecks remain.

Figure 4. Compass for understanding local actor agency



The challenges connected to this approach include:

- Measuring degrees of agency and power is notoriously difficult. The legitimacy of this framework depends on the way it is used. This compass does not necessarily represent an ideal configuration of agency but should be context specific, recognising diverse perspectives within programmes. Practitioners are encouraged to allow local actors flexibility in how they shape and use the framework. Capturing perception-based data of diverse local actors and comparing it with the perception of development co-operation providers on the agency of diverse local actors, could also be integrated when utilising the compass in a specific context.
- The proper use of this framework requires an understanding that there not always be a full alignment with all stakeholders involved. Nevertheless, the compass can serve as a basis for further discussion.

Addressing DAC members systemic enablers for locally led development

Policies, institutional arrangements, and management systems underpin all DAC members' strategies and operations. Recognising this is critical to supporting more systemic change by identifying which barriers members need to address and where there is a margin of manoeuvre, quick wins and key enablers. According to findings from the DAC peer learning exercise, key enablers for locally led development could include those outlined in Table 5, along with their respective examples of possible indicators. There is no one-size-fits-all for measurement frameworks and different members are facing different challenges. While some aspects of these challenges cannot change, enhancing awareness of binding constraints and key entry points can support DAC members in shaping and actioning diverse pathways for change.

In adopting this framework, adapting it to the specific needs of the institution and context in which it is applied will be crucial. This list is not to be considered as exhaustive, but as an indication of what development co-operation providers can track to better enable locally led development co-operation. The ability to implement these would vary based on the different DAC member business models. Therefore, this

should be interpreted as a menu of options, out of which DAC members and potentially other development co-operation providers can choose from and adapt as needed. While some of these indicators are reported in the DAC Development Co-operation Profiles (OECD, 2024^[10]), the institutions should not rely on an external entity for the regular collection of this data, as these indicators have been developed for the internal learning of an institution.

Table 5. Mapping DAC member enablers and possible indicators

| DAC member systemic enablers | Enablers | Possible indicators |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| Policy | Clarity of intentions | Presence of a clear policy statement on locally led development or a shared definition (Y/N) |
| | Partnership principles | Presence of clear commitments to equitable partnerships (Y/N) |
| Institutional arrangements | Level of local staffing | Percentage of local staff in country offices and average length of postings for international staff |
| | Local staff with responsibility | Percentage of local staff with leadership, advisory, expert, or fiduciary responsibility (i.e., sex, age, and disability disaggregated data) |
| Financing | Delegation of authority | Percentage of projects initiated by headquarters versus country offices; financial thresholds for decision-making |
| | Legal framework authorising direct funding to a diversity of local actors/ incentivising local procurement | Presence of legal framework (Y/N) |
| | Flexibility in financial planning, including via local intermediaries | Modalities that incentivise multi-year funding; ease of adapting funding between years and/or budget lines; presence of country and/or regional strategies (Y/N) |
| | Providing incentives to international intermediaries by explicitly including provision of overheads costs to local actors and incentives to sub-contract locally | Presence of policy on equitable overhead costs (Y/N) |
| Management systems | Due diligence mechanisms | Ability to use due diligence procedures of others (Y/N) |
| | Demand driven capacity strengthening support | Flexible budget allocations for capacity support (Y/N) |

The limitations faced by this approach include:

- The value and impact of this approach is potentially reliant on the presence of institutional demand for change in development co-operation practices.
- The proposed enablers and indicators are not an exhaustive list. While some indicators are related to the overall system, others are context specific (e.g. capacity support, incentives to intermediaries). Similarly, not all the indicators can be tracked through simple quantitative or binary (Y/N) measurements; some indicators will require more qualitative assessments.

3. Outlook

This paper has presented a four-layered approach that DAC members can adopt and adapt when considering ways of measuring their progress towards locally led development co-operation. The first two proposed avenues build on data that already exists and is being collected, which avoids creating an additional reporting burden. The second two options provide flexibility for practitioners to consider and modify measurement frameworks in line with what is most appropriate for their institution's business model.

In particular, DAC members could explore:

1. Ensuring local actor involvement in measurement through validating the frameworks development providers develop based on suggested approaches from local partners.
2. Working towards a better understanding and increased transparency of quality funding building upon data collected in the CRS.
3. Considering more systematic reporting from intermediary partners on outflows to local actors.
4. Introducing locally led development considerations in their programming cycle building upon the compass for local agency.
5. Mobilising GPEDC monitoring with a locally led lens as a source of information when agreeing on localisation ambitions in specific contexts.
6. Introducing the systemic enablers identified in their business models where possible and starting to collect the suggested data.

4. Annex 1: Examples of frameworks developed by DAC members

Australia

Within its 2023 international development policy, Australia has developed a performance and delivery framework with the commitment to using “local actors in design, delivery and evaluation”. DFAT has recently finalised a guidance note to support the implementation of this commitment (DFAT, 2024^[11]). The guidance note includes a menu of indicative indicators for use by staff and partners, some being mandatory as part of the overall DFAT performance framework and some optional to be adapted as needed.

- Mandatory (standard) indicators, for example, consider the number of institutions receiving support, including capacity building support, as well as the involvement of local actors in delivery. These indicators are to be aggregated with the caveat that it does not capture the totality of the supply chain.
- Optional indicators will look at the different dimensions of agency, efforts to promote diversity and value local knowledge and expertise. They are not aimed to be aggregated at corporate level.

The overall aim is to progress investments along the continuum over time taking into account the specific objectives of local actors, the context, capabilities of local and international partners, the scale of operations, choice of modalities and management of risk safeguards.

The continuum establishes a rubric with nine dimensions of local agency: 1) ideation, planning, concept and design; 2) implementation and delivery approach; 3) decision making and responsibility; 4) resource distribution; 5) partnership approach; 6) staff profile and procurement; 7) technical advisers; 8) monitoring, evaluation and learning approach, and accountability for results; and 9) the role of intermediaries. Progress is measured along a continuum or sliding scale: emerging (local actors consulted); partial (local actors co-responsible); and advanced (local actors primarily responsible), with criteria identified for each level.

Canada

Global Affairs Canada (GAC) has developed a localisation analysis framework (GAC, 2023^[12]). Given the granularity of the information collected and the focus on agency, this framework will be used to structure evaluations rather than to conduct regular monitoring. The evaluative framework is not standard for all of GAC yet and has been piloted in programmes explicitly aiming at localising development co-operation. The framework includes nine dimensions, evaluated against specific descriptions, on a scale from "No alignment", "Poor alignment", "Partial alignment" to "Good alignment". The dimensions are 1) partner organisations are local organisations; 2) level of funding provided to local organisations; 3) nature of partnerships; 4) degree of local ownership and leadership – project design; 5) degree of local ownership and leadership – project management; 6) degree of local ownership and leadership – project governance; 7) degree of local ownership and leadership - monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL); 8) relevance of GAC/provider-funded capacity strengthening support; 9) GAC/provider administrative and operational requirements and capacity.

United States

USAID's measurement framework is the first publicly tested DAC member framework (USAID, 2024^[13]). It relies on two main targets to get a comprehensive understanding of the efforts towards supporting locally led development and nudging approaches across all channels of delivery. Data collection for both indicators is internal. The targets are:

- 25% of USAID funding obligated directly to local partners by the end of 2025. This indicator looks at Direct Local Funding (acquisition and assistance obligations given directly to local partners in a given fiscal year) and Direct South-South Funding (acquisition and assistance obligations given directly to developing country partners working in a third country in the Global South). It explicitly excludes Partner Government assistance, interagency agreements, personal services contracts, and agreements with Public International Organisations.
- 50% of USAID programming will place local communities in the lead by 2030. This indicator looks at all local actors, including partner governments. It measures the percentage of USAID funded activities in which local partners and/or local communities lead development efforts. Activities are considered as placing local communities in the lead if they implement at least two good practices of the following: direct local funding; creating effective local partnerships; recognising and investing in local capacity; and engaging communities directly.

5. Annex 2: Examples of frameworks developed by civil society organisations

Accelerating Localisation through Partnership Consortium

The Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships programme conducted research to identify a partnership model which consists of partnership practices that local and national actors believed to be most conducive to localisation (Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships, 2019^[14]). The research, learning and findings from the programme informed the development of national localisation frameworks with contributions from local and national actors and other humanitarian stakeholders including international NGOs, UN agencies, development providers, Red Cross/Crescent societies and relevant government authorities. The four national localisation frameworks are context specific to the very different operating environments and humanitarian crises in Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria and South Sudan. However, there are several priority actions and areas common across the framework, linking four main areas: partnerships, capacity, financial resources, co-ordination. Drawing from existing frameworks, in particular, NEAR and Global Mentoring Initiative, they have proposed selected indicators for each area.

Both ENDS

This study focused on small grant funds only and suggests a sample of indicators that could be useful for measuring impact, bearing in mind the limited applicability (Both ENDS, 2019^[15]). These impact indicators are 1) number of grants provided to grassroots and community groups; 2) amount of money provided to grassroots and community groups; 3) size and strength of the Small Grants Fund network (number of new groups introduced and number and quality of joint actions/collaborations); 4) experienced flexibility in grant making; 5) experienced decision-making power by grassroots groups; 6) follow-up fundraising for small grants.

Equity Index

Not specifically created for measuring locally led development, the equity index has developed an indicator assessment framework for measuring organisational practices following principles of equality (The Equity Index, 2021^[16]). The section on external indicators focuses on the relationship of the organisation filling out the assessment with the organisation in the Global South.

GlobalGiving and Global Fund for Community Foundations (GFCF)

A community-led assessment tool was developed following a measurement study conducted by GlobalGiving and the Global Fund for Community Foundations (GlobalGiving and GFCF, 2020^[17]). This tool only focuses on “essential features of CLD approaches”. It presents nine statements: “your organisation or initiative...” 1) cultivates community ownership; 2) garners community trust; 3) understands and respects community context; 4) prioritises community needs/aspirations; 5) facilitates a change in community beliefs or outlook; 6) fosters voluntary community engagement; 7) is relationship-oriented; 8) models transparency; 9) is flexible in its approach. The organisation has to rate each statement from 1 to 5, where 1 = never true, 2 = rarely true, 3 = sometimes true, 4 = often true, 5 = always true.

Global Mentoring Initiative

Global Mentoring Initiative proposes a revised and deepened version of the seven dimensions previously identified in the START Network study (GMI, 2018^[18]). The revised seven dimensions identified are: 1) relationship quality and partnership; 2) participation revolution; 3) funding and financing; 4) capacity enhancement; 5) co-ordination, task forces and collaborative capacities; 6) visibility; 7) disaster and humanitarian policies, standards and plans. Each dimension is accompanied by several indicators, mostly of qualitative nature.

Grand Bargain Self-Reporting Exercise

From the Grand Bargain Workstream 2 on localisation (IASC, 2023^[19]), two indicators are being reported by the signatories in the self-reporting: 1) percentage of partnership or funding agreements that incorporate multi-year institutional capacity strengthening support for local and national responders, with optional reporting on the percentage awarded to women-led and women rights’ organisations; 2) percentage of humanitarian funding awarded as directly as possible to local and national responders, with optional reporting on the percentage of that funding awarded to women-led and women rights’ organisations.

Humanitarian Action Group (HAG) and Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO)

This framework was developed to measure progress on localisation in a holistic way and is intended to be adaptable as not all components may be relevant in different contexts (Piango and HAG, 2019^[21]). The

framework was developed after a localisation baseline project was conducted in four Pacific countries and draws upon the work done by the STARK Network. For providers, the framework promotes an understanding of progress on the localisation agenda in different country contexts. This framework also focuses on seven areas: 1) partnerships; 2) leadership; 3) co-ordination and complementarity; 4) participation; 5) policy influence and advocacy; 6) capacity; and 7) funding. Each area has an impact indicator and multiple progress indicators. For each progress indicator, several means of verification (e.g. self-assessment surveys and interviews) have been identified.

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)

IASC has developed guidance to support efforts to strengthen the meaningful participation, representation, and leadership of local and national humanitarian actors within IASC humanitarian co-ordination structures (IASC, 2021^[20]). They have developed a series of indicators across six areas: 1) participation and representation; 2) leadership; 3) capacity strengthening; 4) resourcing for co-ordination; 5) visibility; 6) preparedness response and humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) collaboration. Each area is comprised of indicators (often percentages) measuring the level involvement of local actors. Interestingly it also suggests at what level, i.e. global or local, each indicator should be tracked.

Keystone Accountability and Root Change

The Pando Localisation Learning System is an innovative, interactive tool that draws data from network mapping and feedback loops (Keystone Accountability and Root Change, 2020^[21]). It is based on four measurement criteria: leadership, mutuality, connectivity and finance.

Movement for Community Led Development (MCLD)

MCLD developed a comprehensive community-led assessment tool (MCLD, 2024^[22]) The tool (excel spreadsheet) is available in English, French and Spanish and can be used as a self, peer, or participatory review tool at various programme junctures to determine how the programming aligns with community led development (CLD) characteristics and thus undertake course corrections as needed. It can be used by funders, governments and NGOs.

It is divided into two segments, characteristics and processes, with each segment comprising multiple dimensions. Segment one, characteristics, includes participation inclusion and voice, local resources and knowledge, exit strategy linked to sustainability, accountability mechanisms, responsiveness to context specific dynamics, collaboration within and amongst communities, CLD linked to sub-national governments. Segment two, processes, comprises monitoring and evaluation practices supporting CLD, facilitation investment and intensity. For each dimension there are several indicators or benchmarks. Each indicator is evaluated against specific descriptions under a 4-point range. 0= insufficient information, 1= does not try, 2= tries, 3= progressed, 4 = succeeds. The final score is an average of all points, per section, helping determine the overall quality of interventions.

Network for Empowered Aid Response (NEAR)

NEAR has developed probably the most well-known framework, the Localisation Performance Measurement Framework (LPMF) (NEAR, 2019^[23]). The LPMF's main focus is the concerns that local and national actors face in measuring progress towards achieving localisation commitments. It argues however that framework could also be relevant for donors, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and United Nations' agencies.

The framework has six components: 1) partnership; 2) funding; 3) capacity; 4) co-ordination and complementarity; 5) policy influence and visibility; and 6) participation. Each of these components has a

“desired change”, an “impact indicator” and key performance indicators (KPIs). Each KPI (there are multiple per component) has various means of verification and measurement strategies. Most of the measurement strategies rely on reviewing, revising or examining documents, assessing a situation and conducting interviews. These are often related to a specific set of means of verification or targets.

Pledge for Change

The Pledge for Change Accountability and Learning Mechanism (PALM), developed in partnership with RINGO, aims to hold international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) accountable by measuring the degrees to which they are living up to the Pledge (Pledge for Change, 2024^[24]). Three of the pledges are equitable partnerships, authentic storytelling and influencing wider change.

Publish What You Fund

Publish What You Fund has conducted two “Metrics Matter” studies (Publish What You Fund, n.d.^[25]). It builds on the USAID approach, while using the IASC definition of local and a denominator that includes all project funding but still excludes government to government.

START Network

With the emerging benchmarks for seven dimensions of localisation, the START Network was one of the first to propose benchmarks for a localisation framework (Start Network, 2017^[26]). The seven dimensions identified are: 1) funding; 2) partnerships; 3) capacity; 4) participation revolution; 5) co-ordination mechanisms; 6) visibility; and 7) policy influence. Each dimension comprises a vast set of benchmarks.

Terre des Hommes

As part of their localisation policy, Terre des Hommes has also developed policy tracking indicators, complementary to their policy monitoring, to quantitatively track progress against the localisation policy (Terre des Hommes, 2024^[27]). The indicators cover the topics of long-term partnerships, funding, capacity development and adapted methodologies.

References

- Accelerating Localisation through Partnerships (2019), “Pathways to Localisation: A framework towards locally led humanitarian response in partnership-based action”, [14]
<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/pathways-localisation-framework-towards-locally-led-humanitarian-response-partnership>.
- Barbelet, V. et al. (2021), *Interrogating the Evidence Base on Humanitarian Localisation: A Literature Study*, HPG Literature Review, Overseas Development Institute, London, [3]
<https://odi.org/en/publications/interrogating-the-evidence-base-on-humanitarian-localisation-a-literature-study> (accessed on 9 August 2024).
- Both ENDS (2019), “Putting people first: the transformational impact of small grants funds”, [15]
https://www.bothends.org/uploaded_files/document/Putting_People_First.pdf.
- DFAT (2024), “DFAT Guidance Note: Locally Led Development”, [11]
<https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/dfat-guidance-note-locally-led-development.pdf>.
- Els, C. and N. Carstensen (2015), “Funding of Local and National Humanitarian Actors”, [4]
https://www.local2global.info/wp-content/uploads/l2gp_local_funding_final_250515.pdf.
- GAC (2023), “Evaluation of the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI), 2015-16 to 2020-21”, [12]
<https://www.international.gc.ca/transparency-transparence/audit-evaluation-verification/2022/cfli-fcil-report.aspx?lang=eng>.
- Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (n.d.), *Monitoring Framework*, [6]
<https://www.effectivecooperation.org/dashboard/monitoring-framework>.
- GlobalGiving and GFCF (2020), *Community-led Assessment Tool*, [17]
<https://globalfundcommunityfoundations.org/resources/what-does-it-mean-to-be-community%E2%80%91led-community-leaders-perspectives-on-principles-practices-and-impacts-part-1/> (accessed on 9 August 2024).
- GMI (2018), *Localisation in practice: Emerging indicators and practical recommendations*, [18]
https://www.preventionweb.net/files/59895_localisationinpracticefullreportv4.pdf.
- IASC (2023), “Grand Bargain Self-Reporting Exercise 2022 - 2023”, [19]
<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain-official-website/grand-bargain-self-reporting-exercise-2022-2023>.
- IASC (2021), “Strengthening participation, representation and leadership of local and national actors in IASC humanitarian coordination mechanisms”, [20]
<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/operational-response/iasc-guidance-strengthening-participation-representation-and-leadership-local-and-national-actors>.
- Keystone Accountability and Root Change (2020), “Mutual Accountability in International Development: The Pando Localization Learning System”, [21]
https://www.rootchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Pando-LLS-White-Paper_Full_Final-2020.pdf.
- King, M. et al. (2023), “The Decision Mapping Tool”, [9]
<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/political-economy/assets/the-decision-mapping-tool.pdf>.

- MCLD (2024), *Participatory CLD Assessment Tool and Guidance Documents*, [22]
<https://mclcd.org/download-the-scoping-tool/> (accessed on 9 August 2024).
- NEAR (2019), “Localisation performance measurement Framework”, [23]
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5fc4fd249698b02c7f3acfe9/t/6011621dba655709b8342a4c/1611751983166/LMPF+Final_2019.pdf.
- OECD (2024), *Creditor Reporting System*, <http://data-explorer.oecd.org/s/c> (accessed on [5]
 28 June 2024).
- OECD (2024), *Development Co-operation Profiles*, [28]
https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/development-co-operation-profiles_2dcf1367-en.html.
- OECD (2024), *Development Co-operation Profiles*, OECD Publishing, Paris, [10]
<https://doi.org/10.1787/2dcf1367-en>.
- OECD (2023), *Framing DAC member approaches to enabling locally led development*, OECD ONE [7]
 Members and Partners Database, [https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD\(2023\)47/en/pdf](https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD(2023)47/en/pdf).
- OECD (forthcoming), *Pathways towards effective locally led development co-operation: learning by [1]
 example*.
- Partos (2020), “The Power Awareness Tool”, [https://www.partos.nl/wp- \[8\]
 content/uploads/2021/05/Power-Awareness-Tool.pdf](https://www.partos.nl/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Power-Awareness-Tool.pdf) (accessed on 23 July 2024).
- Piango and HAG (2019), “Measuring Localisation: Framework and Tools”, [2]
[https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Measuring-Localisation-
 Framework-and-Tools-Final_2019.pdf](https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Measuring-Localisation-Framework-and-Tools-Final_2019.pdf).
- Pledge for Change (2024), *Pledge for Change Accountability and Learning Mechanisms*, [24]
<https://pledgeforchange2030.org/metrics-accountability/> (accessed on 9 August 2024).
- Publish What You Fund (n.d.), *Localization*, [25]
<https://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/projects/localization/>.
- Start Network (2017), “The Start Fund, Start Network and Localisation: current situation and future [26]
 directions”, [https://coastbd.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/The-Start-Fund-Start-Network-and-
 Localisation-full-report-WEB.pdf](https://coastbd.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/The-Start-Fund-Start-Network-and-Localisation-full-report-WEB.pdf).
- Terre des Hommes (2024), “Partnership and Localisation Policy”, [27]
https://locallink.childhub.org/sites/default/files/2024-04/Localisation_Policy_Tdh2024v3.pdf.
- The Equity Index (2021), “Indicator Assessment Framework and Guidance Document”, [16]
[https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/954f357e-ae94-4991-a193-
 b5adafdice23/The%20Equity%20Index_Indicator%20Assessment%20-ee118a6.pdf](https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/954f357e-ae94-4991-a193-b5adafdice23/The%20Equity%20Index_Indicator%20Assessment%20-ee118a6.pdf).
- USAID (2024), *Measuring Progress on Localization*, [13]
<https://www.usaid.gov/localization/measurement> (accessed on 9 August 2024).

Notes

¹ Also referred to as the four dimensions of local actor agency.

² Providers can support and implement programme-based approaches (PBA) in different ways and across a range of modalities including budget support, sector budget support, project support, pooled arrangements and trust funds.

For an activity to qualify as PBA, all four of the following tests must be met:

- The host country or organisation is exercising leadership over the programme supported by providers.
- A single comprehensive programme and budget framework is used.
- There is a formal process for provider co-ordination and harmonisation of provider procedures for at least two of the following systems: 1) reporting; 2) budgeting; 3) financial management; and 4) procurement.
- Support to the programme uses at least two of the following local systems: 1) programme design; 2) programme implementation; 3) financial management; and 3) monitoring and evaluation.

³ Collective accountability moves beyond mutual accountability and is in line with the DAC recommendation on CSOs, the CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness and its membership in the GPEDC Steering Committee. This reflects a greater openness to include a broader range of stakeholders as partners (CSOs, local organisations, and communities) in development co-operation and a shift away from two-way accountability between donor and partner country governments.