USAID FUNDS AND LOCALS OWN: LOCAL OWNERSHIP OF PROJECTS IN SITUATIONS OF FRAGILITY AND INSTABILITY. THE CASES OF IDEJEN IN HAITI AND BUILDING PEACE AND PROSPERITY IN CASAMANCE, SENEGAL

by

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A Dissertation
Submitted to the
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of
Doctor of Philosophy
Public Policy

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Spring Semester 2013
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Fairfax, VA
USAID Funds and Locals Own: Local Ownership of Projects in Situations of Fragility and Instability. 
The cases of IDEJEN in Haiti and Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance, Senegal

A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at George Mason University

By

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Master of Science
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Spring Semester 2013
George Mason University
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DEDICATION

To my wife, Melanie and our four children; I hope this work inspires them to continuously make a meaningful contribution for the betterment of humankind.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to my wife, Melanie, who advised, supported and encouraged me to move forward with this research, when obstacles seemed insurmountable. Writing a dissertation is not only an intellectual endeavor, it is also a psychological one. It tests one’s resolve, stamina and determination. My mother Banen Christine, who left this world during this research, has always encouraged me to finish what I have started. The spirit of achievement, self-discipline and hard work, which helped her raise nine children, inspired me. I felt her gentle presence during the entire six years of this research.

I would like to thank members of my dissertation committee. My chair, Dr. Jack Goldstone helped me translate complex concepts such as local ownership into operational constructs with concrete implications for development projects. Dr. Goldstone also guided and kept me focused throughout this project. Dr. Janine Wedel introduced me to qualitative research methods and taught me tools and tips without which, I could not have learned so much from my field work. Dr. Terrence Lyons’s advices enriched my analysis and helped me grasp the complexity of many conflicts in Africa, including the conflict in Casamance, Senegal. Dr. Allison Frendak-Blume’s constant feedback and constructive criticisms empowered me to apply analytical rigor and discipline required for this type of academic research. Dr. Clare Ignatowski offered her insightful perspectives that helped ground this dissertation in the field of international development and guided me through the maze of USAID’s operations.

Beth Eck and Shannon Williams constantly reminded me of all the deadlines; without their patience and understanding, I would not have been able to complete this work.

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<tr>
<td>3C</td>
<td>Commitment, Capacity, Contribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAA</td>
<td>Afrique Aide l’Afrique</td>
</tr>
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<td>ACA</td>
<td>Association Conseil pour l’Action</td>
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<td>ACVFA</td>
<td>Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Assistance</td>
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<td>ADS</td>
<td>Automated Directives System</td>
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<tr>
<td>AJAC</td>
<td>Association des Jeunes Agriculteurs de la Casamance</td>
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<tr>
<td>AOA</td>
<td>Assistance Objectives Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>AOTR</td>
<td>Agreement Officer’s Technical Representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>APRAN</td>
<td>Association pour la Promotion Durable de l’Arrondissement de Nyassia</td>
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<td>APS</td>
<td>Annual Program Statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community based organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDD</td>
<td>Community Driven Development</td>
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<td>CoP</td>
<td>Chief of Party</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>CYM</td>
<td>Community Youth Mapping</td>
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<td>DAC</td>
<td>Development Assistance Committee</td>
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<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
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<td>EDC</td>
<td>Educational Development Center</td>
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<td>EGAT</td>
<td>Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>EQUIP 3</td>
<td>Education Quality Improvement Program 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>FONHEP</td>
<td>Fondation Haïtienne de l’Enseignement Privé</td>
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<td>GAO</td>
<td>Government Accountability Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus infection / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome</td>
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<td>IDEJEN</td>
<td>Initiative pour le Développement des Jeunes</td>
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<td>INFP</td>
<td>Institut National pour la Formation Professionnelle</td>
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<td>LWA</td>
<td>Leader With Associates</td>
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<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<td>MFDC</td>
<td>Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>MINUSTAH</td>
<td>Mission des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en Haïti</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>PEPFAR</td>
<td>President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief</td>
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<td>PEPNet</td>
<td>Promising and Effective Practices Network</td>
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<td>PRSP</td>
<td>Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper</td>
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<td>PVO</td>
<td>Private Voluntary Organization</td>
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<td>RFA</td>
<td>Request for Application</td>
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<td>SIDA</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Agency</td>
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<td>SpO2</td>
<td>Strategic program Objective</td>
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<td>U.S.</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<td>U.N</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>USG</td>
<td>United States Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>VSN</td>
<td>Volontaires pour la Sécurité Nationale</td>
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<td>YERC</td>
<td>Youth Earthquake Relief Corps</td>
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GLOSSARY

KEY TERMS FREQUENTLY USED

Capacity: Systems, resources and knowledge, that stakeholders (institutions, organizations, communities, and individuals) can use to address issues, perform operations, achieve and sustain results.

Commitment: Demonstrated willingness to engage, support an issue, a policy or a project and take responsibility for its outcomes.

Contribution: Resources, systems and other assets (knowledge, legitimacy, and positive image) put at the disposal of a project to support its design, implementation, evaluation and sustainability.

Elite capture: A process through which resources from donors or a central government (to a local community) destined to serve the masses or address a public issue are disrupted, misappropriated or drifted away from their original aims by an advantaged group of people, with access to decision-makers, economic resources, high social status and politically influential people either as individual or as a group.

Local actors: Indigenous and home grown actors (groups, institutions and organizations) whose focus and locus of actions as well as their origins are grounded in the local space and history. Not only do they identify themselves as from the country or the local society, they are also perceived as such by other actors.
Local ownership: Dynamic process characterized by the fact that local actors participate in the design of a project or policy, contribute to its implementation in a sustainable way and envision their involvement beyond donor’s intervention.

Stakeholder: A group, an organization or an individual who is impacted or has an impact on a project.

State fragility: A systemic phenomenon that undermines the legitimacy and effectiveness of state institutions and its ability to engage peacefully with citizens and other non-state actors; as well as provide security and social services to the population.
ABSTRACT

USAID FUNDS AND LOCALS OWN: LOCAL OWNERSHIP OF PROJECTS IN SITUATIONS OF FRAGILITY AND INSTABILITY. THE CASES OF IDEJEN IN HAITI AND BUILDING PEACE AND PROSPERITY IN CASAMANCE, SENEGAL

Joseph N. Sany, PhD
George Mason University, 2013
Dissertation Director: Dr. Jack Goldstone

Many actors in international development recognize local ownership as a key factor in the success of internationally funded projects, but developing strategies to facilitate local ownership remains a complex issue for development organizations. Using extended case study research method, this dissertation addresses the issue of local ownership in two USAID funded projects.

In addition to examining the policy debate on local ownership, the dissertation also focuses on micro-processes at a project level. This focus helps uncover components that have escaped the discussion of local ownership so far, for example: indicators of local ownership and the evolving nature of power distributions among actors. The research finds that local ownership emerges when
local stakeholders are committed to use their resources and increased capacity in sustaining a particular project even after the involvement of donor actors. Furthermore, the perceived power asymmetry between local stakeholders and international ones is transformed during the course of a project, into some forms of mutually beneficial collaboration through processes of participation, negotiation and institutional learning. Thus, suggesting that, these processes are crucial in facilitating local ownership.
INTRODUCTION

Major development institutions such as the United Nations, Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (DAC/OECD), World Bank, and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) continually stress the importance of local ownership. As stated by Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary General, “national ownership is the core principle of peace building, and the restoration of national capacity to build peace must therefore be at the heart of the international efforts.” The international adoption of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness Development by developed and developing countries alike, to effectively promote sustainable aid set the stage for Annan’s argument. Development actors often argue that they have prioritized local ownership at the center of their international assistance

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2 The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was developed and adopted by Ministers of developed and developing countries responsible for promoting development and Heads of multilateral and bilateral development institutions development institutions, meeting in Paris on 2 March 2005. It looks at the responsibility of developed and developing countries for delivering and managing aid in terms of five principles: 1) Ownership: Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, and strategies and co-ordinate development actions; 2)Alignment: Donors base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, institutions and procedures 3) Harmonization: Donors' actions are more harmonized, transparent and collectively effective; 4) Managing for Results: Managing resources and improving decision-making for results and; 5)Mutual Accountability: Donors and partners are accountable for development results.
programs in fragile states, post-conflict and conflict-torn societies; however that remains to be seen.

As often debated by actors of international aid, project ownership and sustainability are facilitated when “locals” participate and assume initiative in donor-funded programs.\(^3\) Thus, donors’ institutions should respect and encourage strong local commitment, participation, capacity development and ownership.\(^4\) This suggests implicitly that international assistance programs initiated and managed by donors may encounter more difficulties in facilitating local ownership than programs initiated by or managed by recipient countries. As argued by James Wolfenson, former president of the World Bank:

The ten case studies that make up this volume also show that country ownership is the way to make assistance effective. These studies of aid and reform in Africa confirm that when aid supports a country-owned development strategy, it can lead to sustained growth and poverty alleviation. The case studies also show that when reform is imposed from abroad, even as a quid pro quo for aid, it is not sustainable.\(^5\)

Despite recommendations and shared viewpoints among donors that local ownership promotes successful international assistance, the history of aid, particularly in fragile and post-conflict settings, shows that international intervention remains externally driven.\(^6\)

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\(^4\) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation*.

\(^5\) Wolfensohn, “Foreword.”

\(^6\) Donais, “Empowerment or Imposition? Dilemmas of Local Ownership in Post-conflict Peacebuilding Processes.”
PROBLEM STATEMENT: UNITED STATES FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AND LOCAL OWNERSHIP

The United States is one of the largest international aid contributors worldwide in dollar amounts. Currently, the U.S. is engaged in the stabilization and peacebuilding operations of numerous developing states. As do many donor countries, the U.S. adopts the notion of local ownership as a core principle in international assistance programs. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) considers local ownership as a key strategy for sustainable development, and views local ownership as a mechanism that can propel reconstruction and development efforts, and promotes strong leadership, participation, and commitment of a country and its people.\(^7\) The concept of local ownership as promoting sustainability is often argued by U.S. government officials; such strategy has called for the restructuring of USAID in the delivery of international assistance.\(^8\)

The concept of local ownership is not a novelty in U.S. international assistance, but it has gained significant attention with the paradigm shift in U.S. development assistance as a result of the terrorist attacks on America in September, 11, 2001. This shift has made international development one of the

\(^7\) United States Agency for International Development (USAID), *US Foreign Aid: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century*.

key pillars of national security.\textsuperscript{9} As stated by Henrietta Ford, former acting USAID administrator and acting Director of Foreign Assistance:

The ultimate goal of this reform effort is transformational development. Although the primary responsibility for ultimately achieving this transformation rests with the leadership and citizens of the developing nations themselves, U.S. assistance and policy can and must play a vital and catalytic role in supporting our host countries’ own national vision for advancement. Sustainability and local ownership are the keys to transformational development.\textsuperscript{10}

The ongoing change process at USAID captured in USAID Policy Framework 2011-2015 and commonly known as “USAID Forward” has among its central tenets, the following:

a) Above all, development is in the hands of a country’s leaders and people. External partners can open doors to expertise, technology, relationships, trade, and financing, but this support cannot substitute for the efforts and sustained commitment of local communities and leaders.

b) Development efforts should aim to nurture sustainable local institutions, systems, and capacities that enable developing countries to manage their national challenges effectively.\textsuperscript{11}

The new framework has guided USAID’s practices, programming and actions as it carries its mission with developing and fragile states. Country ownership takes a key place in the decision to launch new programs, as indicated in this policy framework:

\textsuperscript{9} The White House, \textit{The National Security Strategy of the United States of America}.
\textsuperscript{10} United States Agency for International Development (USAID), \textit{USAID Strategic Plan for the 2007-2012}, 8
Only launch programs and projects where there is demonstrable local demand and ownership, and where a broad segment of the community has a stake in ensuring that the activity or service continues after the USAID program or project ends.\textsuperscript{12}

USAID, in delivering international assistance, adopts numerous mechanisms that are guided by a desire for programmatic and financial controls and competition. USAID, like other international donor agencies provides the majority of international aid and funds, directly to foreign governments and private organizations, mainly civil society organizations. In addition, USAID uses three types of “implementing mechanisms:”

a. Host country managed mechanisms - Channeled through obligating Assistance Objective Agreements (AOA). The host country government, rather than USAID or a third party, manages these programs.

b. Third party mechanisms - These mechanisms can be used as an option under an Assistance Agreement or directly funded by USAID without an Agreement.

c. USAID-managed mechanisms –Mechanisms under an Assistance Agreement or directly funded by USAID without a bilateral agreement (including situations where legislation precludes USAID working directly with host country government). One of the particularities of these mechanisms is that USAID and U.S.-based contractors (private voluntary

organizations (PVO), businesses and universities) initiate the project and are responsible for its implementation in the recipient country.\textsuperscript{13}

This research focuses solely on USAID’s third mechanism (USAID-managed mechanisms). The two first mechanisms (a and b) presumably do not pose as much of an issue of local ownership, since in most cases, local stakeholders or the host countries drive the initiative and manage projects and programs. By focusing on USAID-managed mechanisms, the research addresses one important question: How can a donor managed program facilitate local ownership? The requirement of privately managed funds and programs by USAID is unarguably pressing in fragile, unstable and war torn societies. In these contexts, many obstacles, among others, lack of trust, legitimate actors and institutions, violence and dearth of supportive networks and institutions make initiating, implementing and sustaining these programs very difficult.

USAID-managed mechanisms are based on a triangular arrangement whereby USAID has a level of control over programmatic elements and funds. International non-governmental organizations or contractors mostly U.S.-based, usually serve as implementing agents working with local partners in host countries of operation (see figure 1).

According to a report from the General Accountability Office (GAO), about two-thirds of the funding USAID obligated for programs in 2000 were

awarded to U.S.-based voluntary organizations in the field of international development, while the remaining one-third of USAID funding was for international third party and local organizations. Historically, the percentage of the program budget obligated for PVOs between 1995 and 2000 ranged from 14.2 percent in 1997 to 19.1 percent a year later.\textsuperscript{14} A study by the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Assistance (ACVFA) raised concerns that USAID is increasingly selecting contracts as the implementation mechanism which are under USAID-managed mechanism.\textsuperscript{15} This is an increasing trend. Therefore funding through USAID-managed mechanisms and particularly contracts are becoming more of the rule than the exception.\textsuperscript{16}

In a recent book on U.S. democracy assistance, Carothers summarizes the shortcomings of U.S. assistance as follows:

Among the agency’s myriad general institutional deficiencies, three problems stand out in relation to its democracy and governance work: punishing bureaucratization that chokes off innovation and flexibility, a high degree of externality in the design and implementation of aid programs and a consequent low degree of local ownership of assistance, and inadequate integration of democracy and governance priorities and capacities within the agency’s own institutional structures.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{14} United States General Accounting Office, \textit{Report to the Chairman, Subcommittee on National Security, Veterans Affairs, and International Relations, Committee on Government Reform, House of Representatives: FOREIGN ASSISTANCE USAID Relies Heavily on Non-governmental Organizations, but Better Data Needed to Evaluate Approaches}, 2–3.

\textsuperscript{15} United States Agency for International Development (USAID), \textit{Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid: Reviewing the Foreign Assistance Framework}.


\textsuperscript{17} Carothers, \textit{Revitalizing US Democracy Assistance: The Challenges of USAID}, 1.
In theory, and as frequently mentioned in many policy documents, U.S. international assistance programs encourage local involvement, participation and local ownership. However, in practice, programs under these mechanisms are generally designed by U.S. contractors. The participation of “locals,” that is stakeholders in the recipient countries, largely amounts to consultation during pre-assessments for program design, collaboration during the implementation phase and consultations during evaluations and assessments, which are also heavily influenced and controlled by the USAID mission and U.S. based contractors.

A basic search and content analysis of USAID project solicitations of the past ten years (September 2002 – 2011) illustrates a small shift and evolution of the language towards themes related to local ownership, capacity building, participation and project sustainability (see tables 1 and 2). The tables and figure 2 below demonstrate the occurrence of themes related to local ownership, at least once in each solicitation. In other words, the tables and figure show the number of solicitations in which one of the themes has been mentioned at least once. In

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18 ‘Locals’ and related terms (local stakeholders) throughout this dissertation refer to indigenous and home grown actors (groups, institutions and organizations). These are actors whose focus and locus of actions as well as their origins are grounded in the local space and history. Not only do they identify themselves as from the country or the local society, they are also perceived as such by other actors. For more on the topic see: The international Peace alliance (Interpeace)’ article published in 2010 by K. Van Brabant: “Peacebuilding How? “Insiders” – “Outsiders” and Peacebuilding partnerships’ used the terms “insiders” and “outsiders. Also see: Anderson, M. and Olson, L in Confronting War. Critical lessons for peace practitioners. Cambridge MA, Collaborative for Development Action, 2003.

19 The results originate from a web based search of the website: https://www.fbo.gov/. The search covers the period between January 2002 and December 2011. The research could not verify that all USAID solicitations are posted on the website, but from many people at USAID and in the American international aid community, the majority of solicitations are posted.

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addition, the tables reveal that a relatively small number of USAID solicitations contain the identified themes, with “capacity” leading the trend and the term “ownership” lagging far behind, suggesting that despite reference to the themes of local ownership in policy documents and frameworks of intervention, when it actually comes to projects to be implemented, local ownership seems to be buried under other more pressing results. Even though there are some steady progresses in the use of these themes in solicitations. This gap in the language of proposals may suggest that despite the emphasis at policy level, at the project level the attainment of local ownership is not prioritized or at least emphasized in the solicitations.

It flows that a better understanding of factors that can facilitate local ownership of USAID-funded projects in unstable and post-war contexts required addressing the question of whether local ownership can be attained or found in USAID- initiated and funded projects.
### Table 1: Occurrence of themes related to local ownership in USAID contract (2002-2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3.44%</td>
<td>0.79%</td>
<td>0.84%</td>
<td>1.65%</td>
<td>2.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
<td>17.14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7.35%</td>
<td>6.25%</td>
<td>3.44%</td>
<td>9.52%</td>
<td>13.55%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>31.42%</td>
<td>16.12%</td>
<td>16.17%</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>13.79%</td>
<td>15.87%</td>
<td>22.03%</td>
<td>22.31%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>17.14%</td>
<td>12.90%</td>
<td>13.23%</td>
<td>9.37%</td>
<td>20.68%</td>
<td>19.84%</td>
<td>14.40%</td>
<td>20.66%</td>
<td>24.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of opportunities (726)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: source: https://www.fbo.gov

### Table 2: Occurrence of themes related to local ownership in USAID grants (2002-2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.84%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.62%</td>
<td>1.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1.69%</td>
<td>3.07%</td>
<td>2.51%</td>
<td>6.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>18.18%</td>
<td>21.18%</td>
<td>16.92%</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>28.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7.62%</td>
<td>8.46%</td>
<td>6.28%</td>
<td>6.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number opportunities (605)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>176</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: source: http://www.grants.gov/
Figure 1: Occurrence of themes related to local ownership in USAID contracts 2002-2011
This dissertation addresses the issue of local ownership in USAID funded projects by answering the following key question:

How is local ownership attained in U.S. funded projects in situations of fragility and instability?

Two projects funded by USAID in Haiti and Senegal constitute the cases through which the issue of local ownership is explored; these cases are: “IDEJEN” (youth development project) in Haiti and Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance, in Senegal.

These two projects shared one characteristic that is; they were both initiated and funded by USAID, and designed by U.S.-based international non-governmental organizations with the assistance of local stakeholders during program implementation. These projects are not unique in USAID portfolio; they all fall under the typology of USAID-managed mechanisms.20

From the theoretical discussion on local ownership, the case studies selected for this research are “extreme cases,” although the funding mechanism (USAID managed mechanism) is statistically significant in USAID portfolio of projects. The two projects are considered “extreme” because in addition to the fact that they were designed and implemented in fragile and disrupted societies, and contrary to the Paris Declaration and the DAC/OECD21 recommendations, they are a result of USAID Country Strategic Plan

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20 United States Agency for International Development (USAID), ADS Chapter 200 Introduction to Programming Policy.
21 Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation
which reflects the U.S. government’s interests and priorities for a particular country, as well as U.S. understanding of that particular country’s priorities. In some cases, USAID’s priorities for a country are aligned with the way that particular country defined its own priorities, in other cases they are not. From a research standpoint, extreme cases present important potential for learning, as well as provide opportunities to affirm or challenge some underlying premises about local ownership. If evidence of local ownership can be found in such cases, these findings could better inform processes of facilitating local ownership in projects funded through mechanisms where host countries or local organizations have more control over the initiative and implementation of the projects or programs.

**Research assumptions and hypotheses:**

To answer the central question of the research and learn from the two cases, the basic assumption of the research is that local ownership is understood and demonstrated differently by local stakeholders involved in the project, and is more likely to emerge

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22 From the standpoint of local ownership, these projects present different challenges compare to those initiated by local stakeholders or host governments, e.g., Gacaca in Rwanda or the constitutional reform process in post-apartheid South Africa, or other budget support mechanisms.

23 In the 1990s, democratization, transparency and the rule of law were among priority areas for USAID in many French speaking countries in Africa. These priorities were in opposition with those set by government in these countries, as they were resisting democratization and battling with the adverse effects of IMF and World Bank structural adjustment programs and the recent devaluation of their currency (CFA franc). Recently in Senegal in June 2010, there was a vigorous exchange between President Abdoulaye Wade and the US ambassador to Senegal, Marcia S. Bernicat, over the US focus on corruption in Senegal and USAID anti-corruption activities. This exchange broadcasted on National Television demonstrated the conflicting views and the differences of priorities between the Government of Senegal and USAID mission in Senegal.

24 Perry, “A Structured Approach to Presenting Theses.”
when the goals and priorities of donors, international implementers and those of local stakeholders are aligned.

From this basic premise, the following hypotheses were developed:

*H1:* Alignment of organizational goals and priorities of all stakeholders with those of the project facilitates local ownership more effectively than technical capacity alone.

*H2:* Donor’s institutional arrangements and implementation mechanisms can facilitate or stymie local ownership.

*H3:* The power asymmetry in favor of international actors (donors and contractors) obliges local stakeholders to submit to expectations and contractors’ views on the project.

*H4:* The local and national contexts predetermine the level of local ownership expressed for aid projects.

More than hypotheses to be tested, they offered entry points to research, study and learn about the issues surrounding local ownership of projects funded by international agencies and development organizations in contexts of fragility and instability.
Figure 2: Stakeholders model in USAID funded projects

- - - - Direction of informal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direction of funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direction of formal reporting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHY IS THIS RESEARCH RELEVANT?

The importance of local ownership as a key principle in international development has been advocated in policy documents by most international development agencies and institutions. Thus far, the focus of local ownership has been on the work strategy of state actors (central government and authorities) at policy and macro levels. However, what has been missing is the implementation at the project level in general, and in particularly in situations of fragility and instability. While recognizing the importance of the policy discussion as well as the challenges and opportunities at that level, this dissertation provides a deeper analysis on the issue of local ownership. The dissertation looks at local ownership of individual projects focusing on micro-processes surrounding the design, the implementation and the evaluation of projects; as well as interactions between a wide range of actors, including local authorities, civil society organizations, business sectors, local leaders and international actors.

This particular focus on the micro-level processes of individual projects allows the research to look at operational issues that have long escaped the policy discussions, notably issues such as indicators of local ownership, frameworks for assessing and measuring attainment of local ownership, and processes for facilitating local ownership of projects in situations of fragility and instability. By addressing some of the conceptual ambiguities and operational issues surrounding local ownership of internationally funded...
projects in environments of fragility and instability, this research inscribes itself in a long and complex pioneering research path.

In examining these issues, this dissertation aims at providing new insights into the understanding of local ownership and more importantly how best to implement it; thus providing tools and frameworks to development agencies and practitioners alike in their continuing struggle for making sure that projects implemented are locally owned, sustainable and scalable.

* * *

The dissertation contains five main chapters that follow the introduction.

Chapter one: Local ownership of international interventions in fragile societies and those emerging from war – This chapter is an assessment of the literature and the practice of intervention in fragile societies and local ownership. Addressing the central question of the research requires an understanding of the policy and theoretical underpinnings of the connection between international interventions and local ownership. The literature review helps situate the relevancy and the key questions to be addressed by the research. After assessing the issues and the gaps in the current literature on local ownership, this chapter fills these gaps and presents the theoretical and operational underpinnings upon which the research is based.
Chapter two: Research design – This chapter expands on the research questions, the key assumption, hypotheses and the research model and method. The use of the extended case study is justified and the two case studies are presented. The research model lays out assumed connections between variables and explains the data collection and analysis. The concept of local ownership is also broken down into proxy indicators.

Chapter three: The case of IDEJEN in Haiti – The chapter begins with an analysis of the history of violence and instability in Haiti and the role of U.S. assistance in the country. This analysis sets the background for the study of IDEJEN, a USAID-funded project. The chapter concludes with key learning points from the case.

Chapter four: The case of Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance in Senegal – The chapter starts with the presentation of Senegal and the region of Casamance; followed by an in-depth analysis of the protracted conflict in Casamance between the separatist movement the MFDC (Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance) and the Government of Senegal. The conflict analysis provides a better entry into the analysis of the contribution of USAID in the region and the strategic framework within which the project Building and Prosperity in Casamance was designed and implemented. The chapter concludes with learning points from the case.

Chapter five: Comparing and contrasting the cases: Emerging learning themes and findings – The chapter highlights key similarities and differences between the cases of IDEJEN and Building and Prosperity in Casamance. Important findings emerge from the
comparison, some of which strengthen the key assumptions and hypotheses of the research while others raise unanticipated issues surrounding local ownership.

Conclusion – The dissertation ends with a concluding chapter that brings together the key results of the research and highlights policy and programming implications of the findings from the research, and then makes policy recommendations. The dissertation also offers a brief discussion on new avenues for future research regarding local ownership in developing states.
I. LITERATURE REVIEW:
LOCAL OWNERSHIP OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE IN
SITUATIONS OF FRAgilITY AND INSTABILITY

Following the Marshall plan that helped the reconstruction of Europe, international interventions to aid societies rigged by conflict and instability lost its appeal during the Cold War. The end of the Cold War, rather than issuing a peaceful world led by the U.S., instead resulted in a new wave of conflicts particularly in countries in the former Soviet Union and sub-Saharan Africa. This wave of conflicts and instability, unlike the wars of independence preceding them, called in most cases for the intervention of the international community through United Nations peacekeeping operations, regional organizations, and independent states. In 2008 alone, there were more than 170,000 troops from various international organizations (UN, NATO, EU, AU) deployed in more than 20 conflict zones around the world (OECD 2008), excluding U.S. forces in Iraq and NATO forces in Afghanistan.25 In addition to major destructions and millions of death, these conflicts also led to the collapse, failure or weakening of states, all of which posed a major threat to the stability of the international system and individual states.26

26 Coyne, “Reconstructing Weak and Failed States: Foreign Intervention and the Nirvana Fallacy,”
Eizenstat, Porter, and Weinstein, “Rebuilding Weak States.”
While there is still a rich debate on the underlying causes of instability and state fragility, there is a general consensus among policy-makers and practitioners on the fact that international interventions in this context of instability require new approaches.\textsuperscript{27} Therefore in addressing the issue of local ownership of international funded projects in unstable societies, a discussion of instability and state fragility must be examined.

The literature review examines the concept of local ownership and identifies issues relating to local ownership of intervention in unstable and fragile societies. The research also examines some assumptions guiding development agencies’ interventions in situations of fragility. The literature review further provides a conceptual definition of local ownership and the framework used in analyzing the cases of IDEJEN in Haiti, and Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance in Senegal.

**INSTABILITY, SITUATIONS OF FRAGILITY: A CRITICAL LOOK**

Fragility, instability, and state failure are expressions commonly associated with societies or countries experiencing a set of systemic difficulties that prevent them from reaching a desired stage of development defined by themselves or by outside organizations. Among political scientists and development workers, there is an important debate on the causes and how to remediate to the various problems faced by countries experiencing either instability or situations of fragility.\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{27} Saunders, A Public Peace Process.
\textsuperscript{28} For an extensive and in-depth discussion on fragility, see Mcloughin, C., 2012, *Topic Guide on Fragile States, Governance and Social Development*. Resource Centre, University of Birmingham, UK. 
http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/CON86.pdf
**Definitions of fragility and instability**

Development agencies and organizations have led the trend in trying to describe states facing difficulties that threaten stability and peace. The OECD/DAC defines fragile states as: “unable to meet [their] population’s expectations or manage changes in expectations and capacity through a political process.”

In the same vein, the British Department for International Development (DFID) defines these states as: “those where the government cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor.”

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) uses the term “fragile states”:

To refer generally to a broad range of failing, failed, and recovering states. However, the distinction among them is not always clear in practice, as fragile states rarely travel a predictable path of failure and recovery, and the labels may mask substate and regional conditions (insurgencies, factions, etc.) that may be important factors in conflict and fragility. It is more important to understand how far and quickly a country is moving from or toward stability than it is to categorize a state as failed or not.

Beyond the subtleties highlighted by USAID, one shared trait by international agencies in defining fragile states lays on their performance level. This functional view of the state seemed to be normative. It tends to impose western norms on the rest of the world by suggesting an idea of how a state should behave.

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30 Department for International Development (DFID), *Fragile States Policy*.

31 United States Agency for International Development (USAID), *Fragile States Strategy*. 1
In academia, unlike in the development and policy world, the discussion on instability, fragility or failed state is richer and holistic. There is recognition that “fragility” is a term that captures complex and interrelated dimensions of state and society. Authors and researchers in the field of international development view the need of going beyond the functions of a state to recognize intrinsic attributes in the form of leadership, authority, and legitimacy.\(^{32}\)

This dissertation embraces the holistic view of state fragility, a view that captures both the performance of the state and its intrinsic characteristics as well as the global system within which a state interacts. This view is closer to the definition of fragility by Stepputat and Engberg-Pedersen who define fragility as “institutional instability undermining the predictability, transparency and accountability of public decision-making processes and the provision of security and social services to the population.”\(^{33}\) In addition, this research also recognizes the importance of citizens’ expectations vis-à-vis the state; as well as the interaction with other states and non-state actors inside and outside state boundaries. What sets this approach of fragility apart and makes it relevant to the discussion of local ownership of projects emanating from international interventions in situations of fragility and instability is the notion that fragility is context-specific and defined by local populations’ expectations and how they relate to the state. This view also recognizes the fact shared by many authors that fragility is not a dual

\(^{32}\) Stewart and Brown, *Fragile States: CRISE Overview*; Stepputat and Engberg-Pedersen, *Fragile States: Definitions, Measurements and Processes in Fragile Situations*; Goldstone, “Pathways to State Failure’.”

\(^{33}\) Stepputat and Engberg-Pedersen, *Fragile States: Definitions, Measurements and Processes in Fragile Situations*.
concept with a yes or no value, rather is best captured in a continuum with different levels and situations of fragility or “difficult environments.”

**Causes of situations of fragility and instability**

There is a rich discussion on the causes of fragility both in the development sector and academia. The literature review examines four main factors: a) structural and economic factors; b) political and institutional factors; c) social factors, and d) international factors.

**Structural and economic factors** – These factors are those related to the creation and distribution of wealth, poverty and the geography of a country. There is a growing body of research and literature that show the correlation between low levels of economic development and state fragility, indicators such as foreign direct investment, trends of Gross Domestic Product and poverty levels. Collier captures these factors in his seminal book *The Bottom Billion* in which he uses the notion of traps to identify four main traps of state fragility: conflict trap; natural resources trap; trap of a bad neighborhood; and bad governance.

**Institutional and political factors** – This is an emerging line of argument made by political scientists, who see fragility as the result of competing claims to power and the multiplicity of some times incompatible arrangements between elites that undermine the

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35 European University Institute, “Economic Factors Can Magnify Fragility.”
36 Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*. 
state and public interest. The argument views the core of instability and state fragility as the nature of the bargain between elites and their influencing and rent-seeking behaviors; which exacerbates other drivers of instability (poverty, discrimination, socio-economic inequality, etc). In addition to institutional factors, political scientists also view political transitions as a risk of instability. Studies of unstable regimes and politics show that the character of political competition among major political groups and the power of the chief executive have the highest explanatory power regarding the risk of instability. According to these findings, regimes that present higher risk of instability are those that lie between autocracies - where political competition is almost nonexistent and the power of the executive is relatively unrestrained - and liberal democracies - where there is open political competition and the power of the executive is restrained by the legislature and the judiciary. Therefore, as the country is transformed from a ‘collapsed’ or ‘failed’ autocracy to a liberal democratic system, it opens itself up to crisis that may undermine the process of stabilization. Democratization necessitates new changes to the political arrangements, inviting different kinds of struggle by the elite that may resort to manipulation and in some cases intimidation.

40 Mansfield and Snyder, “Incomplete Democratization and the Outbreak of Military Disputes.” Haiti (where one of the cases studied in this dissertation), experiences a difficult transition in addition to other factors explored in this research.
Social factors - These factors include social inequality and exclusion, identity polarization and a weak civil society. These factors result from the interaction between state leaders and other stakeholders or organizations be them ethnic, religious, unions or civil society organizations. Some authors argue that fragility is mainly driven by the dysfunctional relations between different actors and a state. Authors of associational democracy literature who see civil society as a critical element of a well-functioning society, playing a key role in the strengthening and re-emergence of grassroots democracy see the decline or the weakness of the civil society as a driver of instability or at least trigger a key driver of instability. This argument derives from the conceptualization of civil society both as a space of collective human action and a vast array of diverse organizations and voluntary associations; and as the focus on common interest. As a space, civil society enables collective action through providing citizens the opportunity to come together to debate,

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41 Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States.*
43 The role of civil society organizations in the context of local ownership of international funded projects will be discussed further in the document.
deliberate, inform one another and take actions for the general interest;\(^{45}\) thus creating new channels and space for dialogue and for dealing constructively with potential conflicts, making civil society a key element of liberal democracy.\(^{46}\)

**International factors** – These are major events and trends, such as colonialism, the end of the Cold War, climate change, global economic recessions, and transnational conflicts. These major events or trends tend to dismantle or change the internal political structures and the international context with consequences beyond the control of any one single state. For instance, it is argued that, by challenging the power of states, globalization has favored the emergence of non-state actors making it difficult for the states to assert their authority and sustain themselves.\(^{47}\) Some of these actors evolve and operate in the shadow of the mainstream; these are criminal networks.\(^{48}\) The developments of technologies, the mobility of capital and financial resources across countries have helped minimize the risk taken by criminal networks. Just by helping minimize the risk, technological innovations have helped criminal organizations scale up their activities and impact. Beside globalization, transnational conflicts are also major drivers of fragility for states that are caught in bad neighborhoods rigged by conflict. These conflicts mainly occur in a context of erosion of state power and monopoly over the use of violence and in many cases, loss of legitimacy. These conflicts have the propensity to ‘spill over’ and become regionalized, particularly when neighboring states

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\(^{47}\) Clapham, “The Challenge to the State in a Globalized World.”

\(^{48}\) Duffield, *Global Governance and the New Wars,* Kaldor, *New and old wars.*

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are weak. In other words, these conflicts happen in states where the rule of law is relatively weak, as is the ability to raise revenues and protect their territory.\footnote{Fearon and Laitin, “Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War.”} These conflicts are different from interstate wars in the sense that they exist without attention to state borders. The increased power of non-state actors, such as corporations and transnational organizations, has multiplied the number of parties involved directly and indirectly in the conflict, making the peace negotiations more complex. These conflicts create a mutually reinforcing system of drivers of instability, such as poverty, illegal trade, trafficking, and violence. The conflict in Casamance, Senegal, which constitutes one of the case studies of this dissertation, is an illustration of this mutually reinforcing system of drivers of instability. The system hosting the ‘Casamance conflict’ stretches from Gambia to Guinea Bissau passing through Casamance region in Senegal.

Countries going through violent transitions or systemic situations of fragility experienced at least one or a combination of all the factors discussed above. If there tends to be a general consensus in the literature, it is that situations of fragility have at least one of these factors. However, the most convincing models recognize that, no single but rather several factors better explain instability. Andrimihaja, Cinyabuguma and Devaraja in looking at fragility in Africa in the context of international aid, identify three main features: political instability and violence, insecure property rights and unenforceable contracts, corruption – slow growth - and poor governance equilibrium. In his review of causes and consequences of fragility, Di John argues for a more integrative model that
includes institutional factors, state capacity and capability, influencing or rent-seeking elite, coalitional analysis (shifting power relations within formal or informal institutional arrangement). Goldstone in his research on state failure also suggests a framework of analysis that identifies five main pathways to state failure: escalating ethnic conflicts, state predation, regional guerilla rebellion, democratic collapse, and succession/reform crisis in authoritarian states.

These multi-causal explanations of fragility and instability constitute the base of several models of assessing and predicting state fragility and instability. For instance, the work of Goldstone feeds into the research agenda of the Political Instability Task Force (PITF) Project, which has developed a global forecasting model of instability using four independent variables: a categorical measure of Regime Type, as indicated by patterns in the process of executive recruitment and the competitiveness of political participation; Infant Mortality, a Conflict-Ridden Neighborhood indicator, flagging cases that have four or more bordering states with major armed civil or ethnic conflict; and a binary measure of State-Led Discrimination. In similar view, Marshall develops the

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51 Goldstone, “Pathways to State Failure.”
53 Goldstone et al., “A Global Model for Forecasting Political Instability.”
Fragility model of instability. Today, most development agencies and organizations have their model of assessing and classifying countries in situation of fragility.

There are many theories that explain causes of state fragility and instability. Their differences lie more on the emphasis each of them put on a given factor. However in reality, situations of fragility and instability are characterized by the combination of many of these factors who in most cases, are mutually reinforcing. One important learning point from these various authors is that international interventions aimed at addressing fragility and instability face unusual difficulties and require a good understanding of drivers of instability, and the nature of the interactions between local stakeholders and the power dynamics among them. This particular point is relevant to local ownership in the sense that, at the heart of state fragility and instability is the competition among and between elites, the state and other organized groups, most of whom are the local stakeholders who will get involved with international funded projects to address fragility and instability. Whether they are spoilers, profiteers of instability or working towards stability, their role in the success or failure of international interventions is determinant.

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Foreign policy and Fund for peace Failed states Index: [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/failed_states_index_2012_interactive](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/failed_states_index_2012_interactive). The World Bank’s Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA), which is one of the most used models by development agencies; Brookings Institution Index of State Weakness in the Developing World – Center for systemic peace state fragility Index and Matrix.
This understanding raises some questions: Will these actors support or undermine these interventions? Will they contribute and/or benefit from these interventions? Will they sustain their impact or abandon them as soon as international funding stop? All these questions constitute core issues related to local ownership; they require an examination of the notion of local ownership itself.

**LOCAL OWNERSHIP: A CONCEPT AT THE CROSSROADS**

The notion of local ownership in the field of development is not new, but since the beginning of the 1990s, the idea remains at the forefront of development cooperation, but less so in the academic literature. In March 2, 2005, in Paris, heads of states, political figures, actors of multilateral and bilateral institutions demonstrated their resolve to more effective aid by signing the Paris Declaration, which stressed among other things, local ownership as a critical element of development aid. Prior to the Paris Declaration, the DAC/OECD, in its 1996 report “Shaping the 21st Century: The

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57 There is a dearth in the literature on local ownership, particularly of international funded projects. Local ownership in the context of fragility and instability has been discussed through the lenses of security sector reforms; which is only one element of stabilization and post-conflict reconstruction. This dearth of literature can be explained by two main reasons: the cynicism that permeates among practitioners and some authors on ineffectiveness of all the speeches on local ownership; and the fact that beyond policy recommendations, the operationalization of local ownership in measurable indicators has been a daunting task. This last issue is one of the key aims of this dissertation.
Contribution of Development Cooperation,” advised that “sustainable development must be locally owned.” The advice has been adopted at least in policy documents by several development agencies and donor countries. However, the complexity of the notion and the debate it has ignited are fed on one hand by the ambiguity of the concept, and on the other by the fact they are several conflicting agendas and policy assumptions behind international interventions in situations of fragility and instability. In addition to the definitional issues and tensions between peacebuilding approaches as they relate to local ownership; there are issues embedded in the context sustained by dynamics of fragile and unstable societies, such as weak political and social institutions, history of violence, resentment, lack of trust between actors, fractionalized body politics, and the nature of international interventions, which focus more on assistance than partnership with the assumption that fragile states do not have capacity to be partners.

Local ownership: Framing and definitions

While the notion of local ownership has rallied development practitioners, there is no agreed-upon definition. There are two schools of thoughts on local ownership that offer a sharp contrast on what it means and implies. There are those who argue that the notion is meaningful as long as it is not a goal to be achieved by foreign donors, but rather a means, an asset to build upon for the success of foreign interventions. This

58 Development Assistance Committee (DAC), *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation*, 13
implies that while the locus of ownership lies ultimately with the locals, foreign donors can facilitate, but not create it. For these authors, local ownership can be achieved but required that local stakeholders are involved in every aspects of the decision-making process and design and shared the desired outcomes. Narten emphasizes these features in his definition of ownership of policy reforms:

Local ownership is the process and final outcome of the gradual transfer to legitimate representatives of the local society, of assessment, planning and decision-making functions, the practical management and implementation of these functions, and the evaluation and control of all phases of statebuilding programs, with the aim of making external peace and statebuilding assistance redundant.

The opposing schools of thoughts argue that local ownership has become a politically motivated, catch-all word rather than a genuine development concept that helps deliver what it promises; in other words, the rhetoric has surpassed any substance. Some authors in this school of thought see local ownership as a practical euphemism for exit strategies, as it provides foreign donors with the theoretical base for exiting. That argument is also shared by those who perceive local ownership as a concept used to legitimize and disguise the power asymmetry that is consubstantial to international

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63 Cornwall, “Historical Perspectives on Participation in Development”; Chandhoke, The Conceits of Civil Society; Scheye and Peake, “Unknotting Local Ownership.”
64 Biljana, Western Civil Society: Empowerment and Lessons Learned from the Balkans; Crawford, “Partnership or Power? Deconstructing the ‘Partnership for Governance reform’ in Indonesia.”
assistance. In the same vein, other authors argue that, local ownership as a concept is very complex and cannot be observed, measured, thus making it elusive. But the multiple interpretations and lack of definitional clarity persist on the fact that local ownership is considered both as a principle and an outcome of international assistance for peace building. This ambiguity is emphasized by Laurie Nathan in the introduction of a major report commissioned by the United Kingdom on security sector reform:

Local ownership is therefore more than an important theme. It should constitute the fundamental framework and point of departure for security reform. It should be a primary objective and outcome of all external programmes to support SSR [Security Sector Reform].

The ambiguities exposed by the debate are further exposed in peace building and post-war interventions. These interventions take place in a context characterized by a lack of trust between some local stakeholders in the same sectors of activities, scarcity of resources, capacities and skills. This situation creates a perception of power asymmetry between local stakeholders and outside interveners. The change of relationships between stakeholders and power dynamics are critical in interventions in societies embroiled in violent conflicts and instability. Furthermore, if the root causes of instability and conflicts

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66 Boughton and Mourmonas, *Is Policy Ownership and Operational Concept?*.


68 In 1999-2000 Laurie Nathan was an adviser to the Foreign Minister of Swaziland in his capacity as the Chair of the Inter-State Defense and Security Committee in Southern Africa. Laurie Nathan was the principal drafter of the SADC *Protocol on Politics, Defense and Security Co-operation* (2001). In late 2005 Laurie Nathan was an adviser to the Palestinian security services and the Ward Mission on the preparation of a Palestinian White Paper on Safety and Security.

are not recognized, these changes risk creating new winners and losers.\textsuperscript{70} A situation that has prompted the \textit{Joint Utstein Study of Peacebuilding}\textsuperscript{71} to argue that:

\begin{quote}
\ldots In the context of violent conflict, local ownership becomes a more complex concept and needs to be handled with care. Local ownership can unintentionally come to mean ownership by conflict parties, or by the most powerful sectors of society […] A failure to recognize the reality of the conflict context might make a simple commitment to local ownership almost fatal to hopes of successful peacebuilding.\textsuperscript{72}
\end{quote}

This requirement places local ownership at the crossroads of different approaches of intervention in unstable societies.

**LOCAL OWNERSHIP OF INTERVENTIONS IN UNSTABLE CONTEXTS**

There is an emerging consensus on the key components of international interventions and engagement in situations of instability, such as infrastructure development and political, institutional and economic reforms. But questions persist as to the significance of these interventions, their length, and whether there are elements or lessons that could be replicated in different settings. These questions are by no means new. They have fueled a rich body of scholarly work and prompted the development of several frameworks of interventions reflecting the interests and agendas of those countries and organizations that created them. However, what is least understood or

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{70} Caparini and Otwin, \textit{“Process and Progress in the Reform of Policing Systems.”}
\textsuperscript{71} The Joint \textit{Utstein} Peacebuilding study was collaborative project by the Evaluation Departments of the respective foreign and development cooperation ministries (Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the UK), with Norway taking the lead, to carry out a survey of peacebuilding experience.
\textsuperscript{72} Smith, \textit{Toward a Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding: Getting Their Act Together. Overview Report of the Joint Utstein Study Of Peacebuilding.}
\end{footnotes}
discussed are how they are perceived by local stakeholders; how they mobilize them? Can they be sustained by local stakeholders? What are locals’ contribution and capacity as they get involved? These questions will be studied within the theoretical context of stabilization and post-conflict reconstruction; since these are in practice the frameworks that shaped interventions in situation of fragility.

These questions are made relevant by the fact that interventions in situations of fragility and stabilization have been studied through several fields of practice and theory, from economics to political science and from international relations to anthropology. Each field stresses the value of its tools and frameworks in better understanding and capturing the critical dynamics of reconstruction, making a holistic understanding of reconstruction elusive. It not only poses conceptual challenges, but also practical ones by bringing to bear different actors, some with competing agendas and interests.

This research takes a systemic approach to analyze these international interventions focusing specifically on local ownership looking at assumptions, risks, constraints and opportunities driving them.

**Conceptual issues**

There is an emerging consensus that international interventions in situation of fragility and instability entails security and political reform as well as infrastructure development. Authors in the field of political science and constitutional economy frame
reconstruction as an institutional rebuilding and strengthening process.\textsuperscript{73} Fukuyama for example, delineates between reconstruction and development, both of which are part of the nation-building agenda. In identifying that difference, he defines reconstruction as: “the restoration of war-torn or damaged societies to their pre-conflict situation. Development, however, refers to the creation of new institutions and the promotion of sustained economic growth, events that transform a society into something that it has not been previously.”\textsuperscript{74} This concept of reconstruction presupposes that the conflict has not destroyed the basic formal (state) and informal institutions; and that the formal institutions were functioning in the first place.

The institutional approach focuses more on the institutional capacity important in a fragile or post-war context given the level of destruction and institutional depletion caused by most conflicts. The literature in political science and institutional development consider post-war reconstruction and stabilization as processes of state building within a post-war context.\textsuperscript{75} However, institutional legitimacy is less discussed in this literature as it is assumed that the legitimacy of formal institutions emerges from performance, accountability, participation and inclusion. Yet in situations of fragility and instability, these notions can be elusive and mutually exclusive in the short term. For example, in some cases when power-sharing is the key feature of post-war institutional settings, accountability could easily become the first casualty, as it has been the case in the

\textsuperscript{73} Cowen and Coyne, “Postwar Reconstruction: Some Insights from Public Choice and Institutional Economy”; Fukuyama, \textit{Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq}; Call and Cousens, “Ending Wars and Peacebuilding.”

\textsuperscript{74} Fukuyama, \textit{Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq}. 5

\textsuperscript{75} Ghani et al., \textit{Closing the sovereignty gap}. 37
Democratic Republic of Congo and Cote d’Ivoire during the Gbagbo regime (2000-2010), with increased corruption and clientelism.

Some authors in economic science argue that stabilization interventions should focus on addressing issues of government spending, procurement, taxation and distribution policies that exacerbate inequalities and exclusion.\textsuperscript{76}

The literature appears to point to institutional reform, stability (avoid recurrence to violent conflict) and growth as the basic common goal of stabilization and international interventions in situations of fragility.\textsuperscript{77} Outside of the consensus on this broad point, the field of stabilization and reconstruction is relatively new, and its definition and boundaries as a stand-alone field of inquiry are still very fluid.

However, as argued by Donais, a discussion on local ownership of stabilization projects or those in situations of fragility cannot escape the tension between a) the liberal perspective of peace building and stabilization, which focuses on alleged international norms of democracy, individual rights and freedom, openness, political competition and free enterprise and b) the conflict resolution and transformation perspectives which focuses on local agency and bottom-up processes. A further expansion of Donais’s argument reveals several issues and risks related to local ownership of international interventions in situations of fragility and instability.

\textsuperscript{76} Burnell, “Political Strategies of External Support for Democratization”; Nafziger and Auvinen, “Economic Development, Inequality, War, and State Violence.”
\textsuperscript{77} Cowen and Coyne, “Postwar Reonstruction: Some Insights from Public Choice and Institutional Economy.”
The liberal perspective - The liberal tradition embraced by most Western donors views the ultimate goal of stabilization and related interventions as the achievement of a self-sustaining democratic country that respects the rule of law and ensures property rights, an open economy, and the security of its citizens. The United States for example views the attainment of this goal through progress in the following areas: security, governance and participation, humanitarian assistance and social-well being, economic stabilization and infrastructure, as well as justice and reconciliation.78

The following two major assumptions are made through this framework: 1) stabilization, liberal democracy and open markets reinforce each other; and 2) external actors are well placed to effectively bring about reforms toward a peaceful, participatory, and stable society.

In examining the first assumption: stabilization, liberal democracy and open markets reinforce each other - The end states defined in this assumption, or at least the trade-offs they require, may not be appealing or relevant to local actors in the host country who will either truncate them during implementation or pursue them as long as the international community is paying, abandoning them as soon as the international community leaves, thus relapsing into instability. In her analysis of Western aid to Eastern Europe, just after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Wedel rightly defines this underlying discrepancy as:

78 Center for Strategic and International Studies (Washington, D.C.), Winning the Peace; United States Agency for International Development (USAID), US Foreign Aid: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century.
[T]he disjuncture between what donors and recipients defined as “help”; the discrepancy between how aid was perceived by its recipients and the ‘success stories’ conveyed in donors’ reports; the difference between the glossy brochures of aid agencies and the realities on the ground; and the disconnect between the resounding words echoed at international conferences and the actions actually taken.  

Also, democratization necessitates new changes to the political arrangements, inviting different kinds of struggle by the elite that may resort to manipulation and in some cases intimidation. In addition to the potential destabilizing effects of democratization, there are existing trade-offs and tensions between security, political and economic objectives. For example, in the short term, security priorities may actually undermine long term political objectives of democratic societies.

In addition, the sudden infusion of resources and new opportunities without proper distribution mechanisms and processes, may reproduce the patterns of exclusion that are already driving the instability; these are situations whereby a small groups of elites capture the economic peace dividends without any incentives to create institutions and structures that will enable the majority to have access to these new opportunities.

More often than not, international actors intervening in situation of fragility are more willing to accommodate the warlords and spoilers, or at least connected elite in the name of social peace. In most cases, the reliance on local elites (generally the connected) to implement some aspects of the intervention gives opportunity to elites considering

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79 Wedel, Collision and collusion. 6
80 Mansfield and Snyder, “Incomplete Democratization and the Outbreak of Military Disputes.”
parochial and particular interests; leaving the majority of the population on the sideline.\textsuperscript{81}

The social polarization that results becomes a fulcrum for frustration and resentment and clientelism. Clientelism becomes, as Root rightly points out, a survival strategy:

People often adapt to polarized social conditions through clientelism. Reciprocal relationships between two entities that differ greatly in size, wealth, and power arise because weaker individuals typically need and seek patronage to obtain assistance and protection against adversity. The purpose of clientelism is to create personal obligation and to ensure loyalty […] The purpose is not to develop social overhead or to encourage investments that build social welfare.\textsuperscript{82}

It is needless to say that the potential social unrest or clientelistic networks that could result from social polarization ironically becomes the first obstacles to the success of the intervention.

The second assumption of the liberal tradition: \textit{external actors are well placed to effectively bring about reforms toward a peaceful, participatory, and stable society} – This assumption means that foreign interveners succeed where locals fail. However, many researchers and authors have argued the contrary; they show empirically that foreign interventions fail more often than they succeed.\textsuperscript{83} Also, this assumption overlooks local or endogenous capacities and context dynamics; as well as the negative unintended consequences of such interventions. However, this assumption is justified in the eyes of donors by the situation of a society emerging from conflict or affected by violent

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{82} Root, \textit{Alliance Curse}. 60
conflicts. Using an anthropomorphic language, these societies are described as ‘fragile,’ ‘weak,’ ‘under stress,’ and ‘ill,’ therefore lacking the resources and capacity to move to ‘normal’ and well functioning democracies and economies without external assistance and actors. Narten in his analysis of local ownership of international intervention in Kosovo argues that this view of unstable countries exposes international interveners to a dilemma: “[T]he need for external intrusiveness vs. creating responsible self-government.”84 In other words, the assumption that there is a vacuum of authority, capacity and legitimacy may compel international to fill in; thus running the risk of alienating local actors. The model of intervention that derived from this assumption is based more on assistance than partnership. It is mainly characterized by small funds over short time periods, policy discussion and dialogue rather than systems support and implementation, projects rather than budget support, focused on civil society organizations rather state implementers, and humanitarian aid and agencies over development.85 In this paradigm, the question of who are the owners is answered as those who embraced a project and are able to implement key elements of the intervention agenda imposed or recommended by outside interveners;86 or those who may present a threat to the agenda and have to be bought in, e.g. former rebel leaders and their backers.

Conflict resolution and transformation perspectives - The conflict resolution and transformation perspectives reject the premise of a universal set of norms to be imposed

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84 Narten, “Dilemmas of Promoting ‘Local Ownership’: The Case of Postwar Kosovo.” 255
85 Warrener and Loehr, Working Effectively in Fragile States: Current Thinking in the UK.
86 Hughes and Pupavac, “Framing Post-conflict Societies: International Pathologisation of Cambodia and the Post-Yugoslav States.”
on a given society. From these perspectives, peace building and reconstruction for that matter are bottom-up processes rooted in local norms, institutions and driven by locals themselves. In this case, the aim of reconstruction is “to nurture and create the political, economic and social space within which indigenous actors can identify, develop, and employ the resources necessary to build a peaceful, just and prosperous society.” Rather than locals adopting an externally imposed agenda, proponents of these perspectives view externals supporting a locally designed and driven reconstruction agenda. Two assumptions are at the core of these approaches to peace building.

The first assumption states there is a human dimension to peace building and people who have experienced the bitterness and the stressed relationships brought by conflict are well placed to rebuild their society. As Saunders puts it, “only human beings can transform hostility into relationships of peace. There is a human dimension in starting and ending conflict, and building peace is also a human not just an institutional task.” The human dimension of conflict and the role of citizens as individuals or in organized structures has become the backbone of many conflict resolution strategies.

The second assumption is that locals know best what society they want for themselves, and will be committed to see it through. This assumption implies that local

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87 Bush, “Beyond Bungee Cord Humanitarianism: Towards a Developmental Agenda for Peacebuilding.”
89 Saunders, A Public Peace Process. 4
people possess the knowledge and understanding of the context necessary to design desired future and appropriate solutions.\textsuperscript{90}

These alternative perspectives put the locus of the initiative of the intervention and stabilization agenda in the hands of local stakeholders. They also imply some sort of consensus on what the locals want and envision for their society. That is, the citizenry is sufficiently organized into alliances or societal groups with discernible expectations in order to engage in a process of framing a shared vision and projects they can own. However, in a context marred by lack of trust, power asymmetry and exclusion as generally found in post-war situations, ensuring an inclusive and fair outcome of the consensus-building process is problematic. Even if one concedes that, there is an emerging consensus on the agenda and that, locals have the initiative and control; it is still a reality that there is a lack of resources and capacity to implement such agenda. The question of whether locals have the capacity to implement a just, stable social order is still posed.\textsuperscript{91} Beyond this question, there is a more important one, which is: How can we determine which locals reflect local interests without the institutions to do so?

Through reviewing the literature related to interventions in situations of fragility and reconstruction through the prism of local ownership, the research identifies some key conceptual issues and risks, notably exclusion of masses, a reliance on elites with competing agenda, the difficulties to identify the local actors’ motives and capacities,

\textsuperscript{90} Lederach, \textit{Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies}.
\textsuperscript{91} Donais, “Empowerment or Imposition? Dilemmas of Local Ownership in Post-conflict Peacebuilding Processes.”
potential resentment, and conflicting priorities. These risks raise questions about the goals of these interventions as defined by donor countries and how they can be interpreted by local elites that may be implementing them or the majority of the local population that are expecting benefits. In addition to these risks, researchers, practitioners and development agencies have been struggling with operational issues related to local ownership of international interventions. Issues related to relations between actors, the identification of local owners, analytical framework to assess and measure local ownership, and processes to facilitate its attainment.

**Operational Issues**

Despite the differences raised by the discussion, local ownership appears not to be just passive acceptance of foreign assistance projects by local stakeholders instead; it is their active engagement, support and responsibility to the project and its results.\(^{92}\) Local ownership therefore implies a redefinition of relationships among stakeholders and the balance of power between international donors and recipients on one hand and civil society organizations, other organized groups (corporations, rebels, etc) and the government on the other.\(^{93}\) However, the debate on local ownership of interventions in situation of fragility and instability is far from over. The debate brings important issues worth exploring: a) the notion of power difference (perceived or real) between local stakeholders and international implementers; b) the importance of local commitment; c)


\(^{93}\) Moore et al., *Ownership in the Finnish Aid Programme*. 

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the issue of local capacity and; d) the question of local owners and the dynamics of power among them.

Power asymmetry in situations of fragility and instability

The concept of power asymmetry represents an important issue in the debate of local ownership in international funded projects in fragile states. The main critics of local ownership of international donors funded projects in general are based on the argument that the power asymmetry that exists between donors and recipients stymies genuine partnership and effective participation of local stakeholders. As the result of that imbalance of power, local ownership amounts to locals accepting or “buying –in” the will of donors and their projects. But before discussing the notion of power asymmetry, it is important to look first at power. The concept of power is one of the most debated concepts in the field of political and social sciences, with variable and contentious definitions.

Very few authors have shaped the debate on the definition of power as Robert Dahl has in his research. In Dahl’s definition of power, actor A has power over actor B to the extent to which actor A can influence actor B to do something that B would not otherwise do. One of the problems with Dahl definition of power is that, it is difficult to

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94 Crawford, “Partnership or Power? Deconstructing the ‘Partnership for Governancereform’ in Indonesia”; Fowler, “Partnerships in the New Policy Agenda for International Aid: Dead End or Light Ahead?”.  
95 In conceptualizing the definition of power, Dahl considers four core elements of power relations. First, he identifies the source or the base of power which includes resources, financial capital, tangible and non-tangible skills that an actor can use to influence the behavior of another party. As such the base is inert and need to be exploited. Second, he introduces means as the way in which the base is used to obtain the desired behavior. Means may involve different forms of relations and events through which the base of the power is used to obtain a desired behavior. In the fields of international development and international
prove. It implies a counterfactual that actor “B would have done something else in the absence of the action of A;” and only observable conflict of interests provide this counterfactual.\(^{96}\) Thus limiting the relevancy of the definition of Dahl to situations of decision-making where there are observable conflicts of interests.

One other criticism leveled against this approach to power, is that in this view, power is considered through the narrow prism of individual acts ignoring the power sustained by social groups and structures.\(^{97}\) Lukes notes that power may go beyond imposing a set of responses from others, to shape the needs and desires contrary to people interests; for instances “through the control of information, through the mass media and through processes of socialization.”\(^{98}\) In other words, actor A may exercise power over actor B by getting him to do what he does not want to do, but he also exercises power over him by influencing, shaping or determining his wants.

Burton, in his analysis of structural violence recognizes the power wielded by structures and collectivities in his notions of ‘power frame.’\(^{99}\) Burton argues that in their pursuit of social economic and political interests, the more influential members of the society (elites) have developed throughout history norms and systems to ensure the status interventions, the means might include consultations, grants and contract mechanisms. Third, is the **scope**, which consists of actor B’s responses, different options that actor B might behave in responding to the use of the base by actor A. The **scope** includes the types of projects implemented by local stakeholders based on the framework defined and the funding mechanisms designed by international donors. The last element is the **amount** of power, which is more related to the base and the scope; it is a ratio or a probabilistic event. It can be defined as the chance that actor B does action X if actor A uses Y type of means. This last point implies indeed that power relations are a constant sum or a zero sum game (the sum of probabilities is one).

\(^{96}\) Crawford, “Partnership or Power? Deconstructing the ‘Partnership for Governancereform’ in Indonesia.”
\(^{97}\) Stevens, *Power: A Radical View*.
\(^{98}\) Ibid., 23.
quo, to ensure law and order. This has led to the development all sort of institutions to ensure compliance (police, courts, armies, etc), which unfortunately as evidences shows have led to alienation and anti-social behaviors from the oppressed and powerless.  

Thus far, the form of power discussed, whether exercised through human agency, institutions or structures, means ‘power over ‘or against the other. This form of power is generally based on the possession and control of resources; authority or one’s relations to authority; leadership, persuasive skills; and possession of knowledge or expertise.

In contrary to “power-over,” there is another conceptualization of power, which shies away from the competitive or adversarial framework, to embrace a more collaborative one-- “power with.” As defined by Deutsch, “power is a relational concept; it does not reside in the individual but rather in the relationship of the person to his or her environment. Thus, the power of an agent in a given situation is determined by the characteristics of the situation.”

It is a win/win or a lose/lose framework. Stretched further, this form of power can be argued to be one of the underlying dynamics of cooperative institutions and partnership. Elinor Ostrom illustrates this form of power in her concept of ‘Common Pool Resources,’ where individuals come together through collective action to generate mutual benefits that they would not otherwise achieve if they were working alone. Collective action theories provide relevant examples of this form of power and game theorists in some extent put those various forms of power into play,

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102 Ostrom, Governing the Commons.
through various models of pay-off structures. Bethke sees the relational power behind the ‘social compact’ that keep the community together and is behind practice of mutual aid, solidarity and dynamics behind community project carried by community members for their common good. ¹⁰³

These various approaches to power reveal three main points which are relevant to understanding power asymmetry in international interventions in situations of fragility: 1) Power is a **transformative capacity**, wielded by individual agents or a collectivity or by structures. ¹⁰⁴ The transformative capacity comes through the use of resources and opportunities. 2) Power is a **perceived notion**. Perception shapes reality and consequently behaviors. If agents perceived themselves to be more resourceful (money, skills, and legitimacy,) they may project that perception to others; who in turn may feel less powerful; thus creating a perception of power asymmetry. Of course, reality may limit the implications of the perception; if the party perceives itself to be more powerful, but in reality he or she is not, that actor may be caught by reality and fail. ¹⁰⁵ The same reasoning applies to structures; if structures and institutions are perceived as powerful, they may compel individuals or other agencies to take certain types of actions (or desist from action). Perception of power or lack of it can also encourage parties to engage in cooperative actions to produce desired outcomes that they may perceived unattainable should they act alone.

¹⁰³ Bethke, “The Communitarian Individual.”
¹⁰⁴ Crawford, “Partnership or Power? Deconstructing the ‘Partnership for Governance reform’ in Indonesia.”
¹⁰⁵ Rubin and Zartman, “Asymmetrical Negotiations: Some Survey Results That May Surprise.”
Seen as a transformative capacity and perception, power and consequently power asymmetry is viewed from the standpoint of parties involved in the social interaction looking to achieved particular outcomes. Rather than been considered from a fixed and presumably objective standpoint, the outcomes of the interactions results from the parties perception of their power, the power of others how they relate to each other and or the structure within which they operate.\textsuperscript{106} This understanding of power as a perceived notion and as a transformative capacity used by agents and structures to get compliance from others or shape their wants and desires, is the one adopted in this research. This understanding of power captures best the evolution and complexity that characterized the relationships among local stakeholders and between them and international actors.

\textit{Commitment of stakeholders}

Commitment is consubstantial to the visions, expectations and priorities of stakeholders. The notion of local ownership implies therefore that there is an alignment or compatibility in the vision and priorities of the reconstruction agenda or projects. However, as previously mentioned, at the heart of the question of local ownership and international assistance in general, there is inequality of resources and perceived asymmetrical power relations international between actors and local recipients. The inequality is further exacerbated in conflict situations, where there is a scarcity of resources pushing local stakeholders to seek for them. As a result, some local stakeholders adapt their priorities and mission to meet the requirements of the donors,

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid.
without similar changes in their organizational structure and culture. In other words, they become opportunistic. It thus becomes difficult to separate local stakeholders who genuinely are willing to own the project and take responsibility of its results from those whose sole purpose is to get hold of resources brought in by the project. This situation also poses the problem of designing incentive structure that will facilitate ownership by legitimate stakeholders, that is, those who share the vision and priorities of the donor-driven program and are willing to develop the capacity and muster resources for success.

The issue of commitment is equally present among some northern or international implementing organizations. Market-style competition imposed by some international development agencies, USAID for example, and the amount of money at hand has created challenging conditions for organizations. In this situation, the race to win the bid has overcome the commitment to development. Hence the expression the “beltway bandits” in the United States, that has come to characterize a type of “for profit” development organizations. These organizations seem to be driven by profit and their actions determined by the contractual obligations they have toward a particular U.S. funding agency. They have developed capacities to “win” development contracts and grants; relying quite often on local intermediaries and implementers in recipient countries to implement projects. They have become middle-men within the value chain of international projects. Their value added is more visible in terms of efficiency and

\[107\] Wolverson, “Beltway Bandits.”
management of sometime complex and high risk projects in remote and dangerous places around the world.

In addition to the issue of commitment over the goals, there are also questions around commitment of international implementers on local ownership and local participation. There is a widespread perception that local stakeholders lack the managerial capacity and the skills to manage projects. In some cases this perception is justified. However, this leads to a paternalistic behavior from the part of international implementers and consequently frustration from their local counterparts. The paternalistic behavior is generally matched by weak commitment to local participation or a lack of experience in working in partnerships with local stakeholders.

*Capacity for ownership*

In the United Nations terminology database, capacity building is defined as:

> [a] process by which individuals, groups, organizations, institutions and countries develop, enhance and organize their systems, resources and knowledge, all reflected in their abilities, individually and collectively, to perform functions, solve problems and achieve objectives.\(^{108}\)

There is the recognition of the importance of capacity and the necessity to develop it incrementally. Developing and strengthening the capacities of stakeholders both local and international is an important aspect for facilitating local ownership, as it helps local contribute effectively to the success of the project and for international to learn from and improve.\(^{109}\) However, the notion of capacity building of locals feeds into the anthropomorphic narrative. Unstable societies and those emerging from conflict are


\(^{109}\) Fukuda-Parr, Lopes, and Malik, *Capacity for Development.*
described in this case as ill and dysfunctional, therefore needing outside help. In practice, capacity building schemes designed on these assumptions may ignore the existence of local resources and knowledge, operating as if stabilization or reconstruction has to be implemented from scratch, thus running the risk of alienating locals.

In a pioneering research project focusing specially on the meaning of local ownership for “locals,” Ambro identifies different notions used by locals in referring to ownership, such as “sacrifice for benefits,” “pride,” “respect,” and “taking initiative.” This possible difference in the ways of referring to ownership makes an integrative approach to capacity building relevant. Such an approach integrates both locals and donors perspectives. Through such an approach, the issues of commitment and capacity building are not only viewed as a shortcoming from the locals, but also as the need, in some cases, for donors to learn or adapt their procedures, competencies and organizational capacity in order to be effective. Such an approach also does not place the responsibility of facilitating local ownership solely on donors’ shoulders, but considers the implications of local ownership on local stakeholders, some of whom are important actors in civil society.

While necessary in some cases, the process of capacity development can be jeopardized if the “wrong” stakeholders are involved or the focus is more on formal stakeholders. In fact, there is always the issue of focusing on formal structures and institutions while excluding informal ones who may share the same goals and priorities as

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the donors, but lack the capacity and expertise to speak the language of the donors, e.g.
English, result oriented, measurable goals, etc. There is equally the need to be cautious
and constantly ask questions as to whether the process is exacerbating conflict or
undermining legitimate structures and institutions.111

However, enabling the development of local capacity requires from international
implementers certain organizational capacities that they may not have. The operating
assumptions according to which international implementers have better capacities and are
well managed, hides serious limitations. While it may be true that international
implementers often have better management processes and a good general understanding
of the subject matter of the project or programs; their local knowledge as well as their
learning capacity may be limited.112 This is part due to limited experience and exposure
with the issue in the local context, the paternalistic behavior and also the short time frame
of some projects. Also, international implementers may not be apt or structured to
facilitate participative processes. Since they operate as intermediaries with different set of
contractual constraints and interlocutors, they may be less equipped and motivated to
engage in participatory methods, unlike their local counterparts who are closer to the
communities and the end of beneficiaries. These differences of approaches lead in some
cases to frustration and resentment as locals expect a more inclusive process while
international implementers are less inclined to do so.

111 Prendergast and Plumb, “Building Local Capacity: From Implementation to Peacebuilding.”
112 Fowler, “Partnerships in the New Policy Agenda for International Aid: Dead End or Light Ahead?”
Elite capture

Elite capture is a process through which resources from donors or a central government (to a local community) destined to serve the masses or address a public issue are disrupted, misappropriated or drifted away from their original aims by a group of people known as the elite.113 Elite in this case fall in many categories depending on the society; however, the elite groups are an advantaged group of people, with access to decision-makers, economic resources, high social status and politically influential people either as individual or as a group.

Many donor agencies and international development organization have embraced the idea of local participation as a way to improve the effectiveness of aid. These development institutions view the top-down approach in decision making with local partners as risks that contribute to the misappropriation of project funds. This new shift of working directly with local actors to implement projects has also allowed the emergence of new frameworks such as Community Driven Development (CDD) adopted by the World Bank and UNDP, tools such Rapid and Participatory Rural Appraisal, and Community Youth – Mapping.114 All of these tools and frameworks aim at empowering project beneficiaries. The rationale behind this drive toward these bottom-up and community driven approaches is that the proximity to the issues provides project

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114 The policy discussion taken place at USAID around what is commonly called “USAID forward” illustrates this new shift.
beneficiaries with relevant information, knowledge and an understanding that a remote actor would not have prior to the implementation of a project.\textsuperscript{115}

This phenomenon of elite capture is more likely to emerge in situations where the donors or the funders misunderstand the local dynamics on the ground at the community level and the power relations between actors. In other words, they ignore or overlook the relationship between leaders and the governed, identity groups (ethnic, gender, and religious), as well as social class. For example, in communities affected by war or social instability, the prevailing order may be based on a distribution of power that is biased toward a few who control resources and are in position of deciding who benefit and how they benefit from them in the way that do not necessarily reflect the intended purpose of the donor or the project. There is a selection bias introduced by the elite group through which some people who are well connected, with access to decision-makers or with a particular social status benefit from resources the public does not have access to.\textsuperscript{116} In some cases, there is a clear understanding by the donor of the power relations in the community and an awareness of the risk of elite capture, but the imperative to achieve rapid and demonstrable results is prioritized over a more prudent approach of resources transfer or project implementation.\textsuperscript{117} Laffont and Tirole argue that elite capture happens

\textsuperscript{115} Hoddinott et al., Participation and Poverty Reduction: Issues, Theory, and New Evidence from South Africa.
\textsuperscript{116} Dutta, “Elite Capture: Concepts and Definitions: Bibliography with an Overview of the Suggested Literature.”
\textsuperscript{117} Platteau and Gaspart, The “Elite Capture” Problem in Participatory Development.
because of inefficient regulations and asymmetry of information born from extraordinary access to decision-makers enjoyed by some few in a given community or country.\textsuperscript{118}

There is a general consensus on the fact that elite capture is a serious externality to donor and international development agencies’ embrace of participatory approaches and their justified suspicion against top-down process. However, the phenomenon feeds from donors approach to local participation. Platteau and Gaspart make a compelling argument that:

The extent of misappropriation varies not only with the preferences of the donor agency, –most notably, its degree of impatience in disbursing aid money in favor of the poor– but also with the effectiveness of its fraud detection technology and with the characteristics of the aid environment.\textsuperscript{119}

The “degree of impatience” created by the urge for quick results pushes the donors to skip a key element of participation which is the empowerment of the masses through information sharing and capacity building to hold leaders accountable.

If not addressed, elite capture represents an obstacle to local ownership of international funded projects, as the intended aims of these projects is corrupted, disrupted and the resources misappropriate with important adverse consequences, notably the ills of the top-down approach that made local participation attractive in the first place.

\textit{Who are the local owners? Can civil society organizations be legitimate owners?}

The discussion on local ownership of international funded projects is more relevant when it goes beyond the scope of a local and central government. By their prerogatives and

\textsuperscript{119} Platteau and Gaspart, \textit{The “Elite Capture” Problem in Participatory Development}, 3.
their legal authority, local and central government tends to be involved (the level of involvement varies) in one way or another to international funded projects. Meanwhile, the idea of civil society organizations as owners raises issues of representativeness and legitimacy that are worth exploring. As well argued by the *Joint Utstein Study of Peacebuilding* that:

There needs to be very careful research about the identity and background of project partners […] Otherwise, local ownership risks being a code for working with the most powerful and most opportunistic sectors of society.120

This question is made relevant in part by the idea that local stakeholders do not constitute a monolithic group. For example, an autocratic government may not favor projects that promote human rights and, while these projects will be embraced by civil society organizations. Some infrastructure projects with potential negative impact on the local ecosystem may be supported by government and not have the local support from environmental groups.

The notion of civil society as local owners and civil society capacity development go beyond the democracy promotion agenda in the focus of state stabilization and reconstruction. The relevance of civil society is seen by many authors in the balance and the corrective action it plays both on the excesses of the state through government actions and the excess of the market and their potential destructive impact on

associational life. As such, civil society “is a vital alternative, because it allows for a realm of free socially connected action in public realm.” For development practitioners, civil society through its vast array of voluntary associations and organizations, as well as its presumed focus on the common good, represents a good conduit for delivering development programs and operations. It is also a fulcrum for citizens’ empowerment and participation both in political and social life.

Civil society has thus emerged as a critical element of a well-functioning society, playing a key role in the strengthening and re-emergence of grassroots democracy. It is worth noting that many of the arguments about the relevancy and usefulness of civil society build on the role of intermediate groups, voluntary associations, organizations and networks, particularly cross-cutting groups and affiliations in moderating political views and mediating between political elites and masses.

Authors in the associational democracy literature, such as Putnam, Fukuyama, Mathews and Hirst have been supportive of civil society mainly because it places so much emphasis on the activities of ordinary citizens working together and talking to one another to build their community and hold their leaders accountable, thus making governance work for the common good.

125 Farrington, Reluctant Partners?
The discussion on the relevance of civil society and the necessity of civil society capacity strengthening is based on the premise that civil society organizations are more efficient and dynamic than the state, which is marred by heavy bureaucracies, inflexibility and dominated by rent-seeking behaviors of bureaucrats. It has been well documented that rent-seeking by state's bureaucrats leads to waste of resources, corruption and inefficiencies and counter-productive outcomes of all sorts. This assumption is in part built on the liberal reasoning that private initiatives by citizens are more likely to be efficient and relevant, as citizens’ groups better understand the problems they are trying to address, and the close ties between them also make monitoring and enforcement possible.

This reasoning holds intuitively as long as the initiatives are local, but as these local groups, or NGOs for that matter, start to scale up and scale out, taking on more complex operations, the argument does not necessarily hold. In fact to date, there have been no systematic studies that compare the performance of state bureaucracies with that of NGOs or other civil society organizations. Rather, there is emerging literature raising questions on the presupposed efficiency and cost effectiveness of NGOs.

In situations of fragility and instability, NGOs and civil society organizations have come to depend on donor funding. And since funding comes with different types of administrative requirements and procedures to ensure accountability, organizations have

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126 Bhagwati, “Directly Unproductive, Profit-seeking (DUP) Activities.”
127 Taylor, Public Policy in the Community.
increasingly become bureaucratic, hierarchical and ineffective as well, similar to
government agencies.\textsuperscript{129} Carrol suggests the following useful indicators to assess the
capacities of NGOs to facilitate participation:\textsuperscript{130} 1) Participation is a priority of an
organization; 2) planning is made in consultation with local and target communities; 3) there are bottom-up accountability mechanisms; 4) an NGO encourages and seeks for community contribution in terms of cash, labor and other inputs; and 6) the NGO has a track record of working within the targeted community or similar target groups.

At the same time, the growing dependence on donor funding has also raised serious questions about legitimacy and competition between civil society organizations. Civil society organizations have become increasingly accountable to donors than to their constituencies or the society they represent.\textsuperscript{131} In the same token, in an environment of scarce resources, they can become suspicious of each other; thus organizations become engaged in a fierce competition to capture donors’ funding.

More importantly, it is the impact that this dependency on donors’ resources can have on the values, vision, priorities, and commitment of these local organizations that is of interest. In fact, these organizational attributes (vision, priorities, capacity and commitment) allow civil society organizations to contribute to the success of various projects, but also defines their influence with stakeholders, which in turn contributes in building their legitimacy and ability to facilitate people’s participation so critical for local

\textsuperscript{130} William, “Social Movements and Counter-hegemony: Canadian Contexts and Social Theories.”
\textsuperscript{131} Syed, “NGO Accountability in Bangladesh. Beneficiaries, Donors and the State.”
ownership. But the necessity to acquire resources may compel these local organizations to change or abandon their values and priorities, thus running the risk of becoming irrelevant and illegitimate in their targeted communities.

PROCESSES FOR FACILITATING LOCAL OWNERSHIP

This research focuses on three main processes for facilitating local ownership among project beneficiaries: participation, negotiation and learning. Local participation is a well professed concept in the field of international development; while learning has been widely discussed in the field of organizational development, and negotiation has been the subject of debate in the field of conflict and peace. However, these three processes share in common the fact that they are credited to be useful in transforming relationships among stakeholders, informing practice and addressing conflicts. All these benefits are needed in achieving the kind of results aimed in internationally funded projects in situations of fragility and instability.

Local Participation

Local participation in international development has been the subject of many debates, and casted in the light of North – South relations. The notion of local participation can be traced back to the 1960s, with the work by the Pearson Commission\(^\text{132}\) *Partners in Development*, the policy debate in the U.S. on Title IX of the

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\(^{132}\) Formed in August 1968 by Robert McNamara then president of the World Bank, the Pearson Commission on International Development headed by the former Canadian Prime Minister and Nobel Peace Prize winner Lester Bowles Pearson, investigated the effectiveness of the World Bank’s development assistance in the 20 years to 1968 and made recommendations for future operations of the organization.
While these reports and the subsequent ones put emphasis on partnerships in development, they actually brought to light the importance and necessity of local stakeholders’ participation in development aid. Calls for participation were obstructed by the realities of the Cold war and the geopolitics of that era, where aid and development assistance to the South was dictated by the cold realities of geopolitical interests rather than the imperative of development of partners from the south, to some exceptions. Still, if at a policy levels the concept of participation did not make headways during the Cold War period, at a more programs level, participation was more or less part of projects’ strategies, particularly in areas of agricultural development, rural development, and resource conservation. A new paradigm emerged in the 1990s following the Cold War, a paradigm articulated in the Paris Declaration and made practical by subsequent OECD reports.

In most of these reports, participation has in essence been defined either as a means or an end; and may mean both things within an agency or a particular project. As a means, participation becomes an input provided by people, local citizens and organizations in the form of labor, knowledge, skills in different stages of the project or

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133 See Butler, “Title IX of the Foreign Assistance Act: Foreign Aid and Political Development.”
134 Crawford, “Partnership or Power? Deconstructing the ‘Partnership for Governancereform’ in Indonesia.”
135 Oakley, People’s Participation in Development Projects.
136 Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation.
137 Jennings, “Participatory Development as New Paradigm: The Transition of Development Professionalism.”
As an end, participation is more a “liberating” process, through which the participants are active players in the design, implementation and evaluation of the project or policy. Participation in this latter case is seen as a process through which local stakeholders (informants, actors, beneficiaries be it from government, civil society or business) people take informed decisions, guided by their ideas and understanding, using means and resources that they have effective control over. In other words, it means that people define for themselves their needs; are part of the decision-making process, and its implementation, as well as assume the responsibility of the consequences of reforms, policies or projects. It is for many an empowering process that balances the power asymmetry between local stakeholders and the donors. This last point raises concerns and offers ammunition to critics who argue that it is the reason why in reality, participation in international development amounts more likely to consultation and gaining inside knowledge from locals, who are excluded from the decision-making process, design and evaluation (not implementation) of development project.

The widespread literature and practice of development point to the fact that participation cannot be captured in one single data point; it is situated within a spectrum. The spectrum ranges from a narrow scope, where it amounts to consultation resulting to locals embracing the agenda or project design developed by the donors. This level of participation is also seen as a means, or what Brohman calls “instrumental”

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139 Freire. *Pedagogy of the oppressed.*
140 Jennings, “Participatory Development as New Paradigm: The Transition of Development Professionalism.”
participation\textsuperscript{141} and Freire associates with “dehumanization”.\textsuperscript{142} Participation in this case occurs within the boundaries defined by the donors; and local participants’ ideas, knowledge and expectations are “domesticated” within them.\textsuperscript{143} In this case, Fowler argues, instead of empowering local stakeholders, participation becomes “a more subtle form of external power imposition.”\textsuperscript{144}

On the other end of the spectrum, there is what Brohman termed “genuine” participation or “active participation;”\textsuperscript{145} which amounts to some form of liberation, through which individuals are actively engaged in the decision-making process related to the design, implementation and evaluation of the reform of a project. “Genuine” participation implies that local participants have the capacity and the will to contribute to the design, provide inputs to the project or policy and contribute to the implementation and evaluation. Local stakeholders are not only beneficiaries but they are part of the solution; and active participants in identifying issues and problems and framing them in their own terms. Such level of participation is consubstantial to self-determination, which also implies that power is shared among various actors.

In his review of theories on people’s participation, Oakley differentiate four interpretations of participation: participation as collaboration; participation as specific

\textsuperscript{141} Brohman, \textit{Popular Development}, 252.
\textsuperscript{142} Freire, \textit{Pedagogy of the oppressed}.
\textsuperscript{143} Sinwell, “Using Giddens’s Theory of ‘Structuration’ and Freirean Philosophy to Understand Participation in the Alexandra Renewal Project.”
\textsuperscript{144} Fowler, “Beyond Partnership: Getting Real About NGO Relationships in the Aid System.”
\textsuperscript{145} Oakley, \textit{People’s Participation in Development Projects}, 3.
targeting of project benefits; participation as organization and participation as empowerment.  

*Participation as collaboration* – Participation in this case amounts to people or local organizations contributing their ideas, labor or time to a project defined by ‘outsiders.’ Locals in return of their collaboration expect some sort of benefits derived from the project. The participation is encouraged through incentives or other forms of persuasion. Participants have no controls over resources or the decisions making process; nor are they the initiator of the activities. The participation of people or locals in the case of internationally driven projects constitutes an input; it is a means toward desired outputs and outcomes.  

*Participation as specific targeting of project benefits* - This interpretation of participation encourages more involvement of local population, who are recognized as active beneficiaries of the project, not just as passive receivers of benefits. Through this interpretation commonly shared among development agencies toward the end of 1980s, new concepts has emerged to designate local participants to a project, such as ‘beneficiaries,’ and the latest concept of ‘stakeholder’ to mean ‘someone having a stake.’ First used by the World Bank and later embraced by almost all development agencies and non-governmental organizations, the concept of stakeholders has come to describe all actors who are benefitting or are affected by a given project. The term does

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146 Oakley, *People’s Participation in Development Projects*.  
147 Paul, *Community Participation in Development Projects*.  
not only include beneficiaries but a broad group of actors. More than whom it includes, the term implies some sort of ownership and responsibility of some parts (inputs, outputs or outcomes) or entirety of the projects. Participation becomes “an active process whereby beneficiaries influence the direction and the execution of the development projects rather than merely receiving a share of the project benefits.”

**Participation as organization** – The assumption underlying this interpretation of participation is that people cannot participate because they are not organized. Organization in this case is viewed as people coming together to build alliances, harmonize their views, prioritize their expectations and increase their power. Participation in this view is sustained and effective when the impetus to form the organization emerges from an endogenous process driven by the people or locals. Such a process contributes to enrich norms of cooperation between individuals and build social capital and civil society, which is argued as a critical element of viable and democratic communities and societies.

**Participation as empowerment** – The term empowerment in development practices evokes many interpretations. For some, it relates to processes of skills and capacity development in order for people to take the lead and contribute to development activities be them political or social affecting their lives. In this perspective, participation becomes an end in itself. The focus is more on the excluded or marginalized segments of

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150 Oakley, *People’s Participation in Development Projects*.
the population, the way power is distributed and exercised becomes a crucial aspect in determining who is included or excluded from the decision-making process and control over resources.  

In addition to these different interpretations of participation identified by Oakley, one could add, participation as a form of partnership. More international development agencies are using a model of program implementation based on three types of players: the donor agency, the international contractors or implementers, and local implementers. Within this model of project delivery, the terms “local partners” is been increasingly used to describe local organizations responsible of implementing different elements of the project. The level of involvement of these local actors, also called implementers may vary from contractors (implementing specific tasks) to partners. This later term, is used to recognize their contribution and their level of power and control over resources. But more importantly, participation as partnership acknowledges the subtle reality of the interdependency in which are locked international donors, their international contractors and local counterparts. The formers rely on the achievements of the later to build domestic credibility and justify their relevancy. Participation as partnership is therefore an ongoing process of joint decision-making, mutually supportive and interdependent interactions to achieve shared or compatible goals. Such process

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152 Friedmann, *Empowerment.*
153 A model widely used by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).
implies mutual trust and an acknowledgement by all parties of each other’s contribution, capacities and constraints.

Participation as collaboration, “specific targeting’ and partnership are means to achieving development goals, while participation as “empowerment” and organization are ends in themselves. As the result of these various forms of participation, there are multiple tools, such as rapid and participatory rural appraisal, community youth mapping, future search and open space approaches, and community deliberation approaches. These tools and methodologies are used by various donors and development organizations to facilitate local participation depending on the organization’s /agency’s vision and practice of participation. The description of each of these tools and when they are utilized go beyond this research, but it suffices to say that, these tools vary from consultation to shared-decision-making.

All these different interpretations of people’s participation represent in fact different situations in which participants in a project or program find themselves. Depending on the power they possess (power in the form of resources, skills, capacities, and legitimacy), the objectives of the project, participants may be informants, passive beneficiaries, engaged stakeholders or partners at different phases of the project or program.

Because participation in its various forms can be liberating or disempowering, it is therefore not a neutral process.\textsuperscript{155} When it is genuine, it provides local stakeholders

with more control and power to decide how to address their needs and expectations; when it is “instrumental,” local stakeholders have to fit into the frameworks and structures decided by the donors. It appears that power relations are at the heart of the concept of participation.\textsuperscript{156} Participation is a dynamic process where power and control over resources which are the currency of the process shift in the course of a project or program; and consequently the nature of participation varies during the lifespan of that particular project or program.

Authors such as Freire and Giddens and many others in the field of political science studied changing nature of power relations.\textsuperscript{157} In this body of literature, the changing nature of power relations is not examined; however, it is worth mentioning two core arguments enunciated by Freire and structuration theory in regard to the variability of power relations. The first argument is that human interactions are not static; they are always in a process of transformation. That is, the world to which we relate is not static, a given reality men must accept and to which they must adjust; rather it is a problem to be worked and be solved. This argument implies that relationships, realities, and structures are constructed and deconstructed. Sometimes agents are neither unaware of the transformation process nor their transformative actions.

The second argument is that all human beings are capable of critical thinking and can exercise their free will. Every human being no matter how ignorant he or she may be

\textsuperscript{156} See Freidmann 1992.
\textsuperscript{157} Sinwell, “Using Giddens’s Theory of ‘Structuration’ and Freirean Philosophy to Understand Participation in the Alexandra Renewal Project.”
is capable of looking critically at the world in a dialogical encounter with others. When provided with the proper tools, capacities and knowledge for such encounter, individuals can gradually perceive personal and social realities as well as their contradictions. They can become conscious of their own perception of that reality, and deal critically with it. This is also called human agency that is, humans make choices in their behaviors particularly in their interactions with others and the world around them.¹⁵⁸

**Negotiation as a transformative process of power relations**

International funded projects put together various groups of actors with different agendas and interests; some of these agendas and interests may in some cases be compatible, complementary or incompatible. Nonetheless they need each others to reach their goals, which then make negotiation indispensable. In a broad sense, negotiation could then be defined as a process of discussion with the goal of finding terms of agreement over overlapping or perceived incompatible goals and interests.¹⁵⁹

In looking at power dynamics and how they influence the outcomes of negotiation, there are two main schools of thoughts. Those who argue that negotiation as a process, levels the playing field; as it raises the awareness that parties are locked in an interdependent relationship and need each other to achieve part or the totality of their goals.¹⁶⁰ There are those who argue that power differences in terms of resources, skills, legitimacy and knowledge do subsist and affect the process and outcomes of negotiation,

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¹⁵⁸ Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*.
¹⁶⁰ Umbreit, *Mediating interpersonal conflicts*. 71
not necessarily to the best interests of both parties. Wilmot and Hocker summarize the debate by arguing that: “At its best, negotiation is active, direct, constructive problem solving. At its worst, negotiating is power tripping or manipulation.”

Rubin and Zartman in their article on asymmetrical negotiations, analyze the work of Rubin and Brown review of 1000 experimental studies of negotiation. It is worth mentioning that in Rubin and Zartman’s analysis, power is defined from the standpoint of the parties involved that is “perceived capacity of one side to produce and intended effect on another through a move involving the use of resources.” This definition of power is relevant to the situation created by international interventions where what matters the most is the parties’ perceptions of their own power, whether this perception is real or not. The analysis by Zubin and Zartman reveals one important point relevant to the relations between international donors or implementers and locals stakeholders. They found that, with relations established over time, the stronger party may dominate initially, but their domination is restrained by three main factors: 1) The tactics used by the weaker party, who in context of sustained relations may have learned to better handle the stronger party. In the case of donor funded project, some of the projects are relatively long (3-5 years) and have enabled a good understanding by both parties of each other modus operandi and leverages. 2) The competing priorities that the stronger party may face due to other problems or concerns. In fact, the donor agency may face political pressure from

162 Wilmot, Interpersonal Conflict, 211.
163 Rubin and Zartman, “Asymmetrical Negotiations: Some Survey Results That May Surprise.”
164 Ibid., 350.
the donor government or other financial concerns; these situations may distract the donor or the contractor from the particular project. 3) The relationship itself may limit the “crushing effects” of the stronger party, thus allowing the weaker party to get its way. The authors conclude that “weaker parties do better than expected because they look for ways of empowering themselves.”

More often than not, international donor agencies with their international contractors and local stakeholders are in asymmetrical power relations in the context of international funded projects and programs. This power asymmetry has compelled many critics to argue against or doubt that genuine partnership, and consequently local ownership can be achieved in these circumstances.

While the power difference, whether perceived or real is at the advantage of the international actors, this does not necessarily lead to an outcome that is at the disadvantage of the local actors. Practice of, and studies in, the field of negotiation reveal that initial power asymmetries, as the one observed in the international interventions can be transformed or their “crushing effects” be mitigated to produce mutually beneficially outcomes leading to genuine partnerships between international and local actors.

Just as in the case of international relations, actors in stabilization or reconstruction projects funded by international donors are locked in an interdependent relationship. The need to preserve the relationship in a long period of time (at least till the

165 Ibid., 359.
completion of the project) and the necessity to achieve the expected outcomes of the projects limit the domination that the stronger party would have liked to exercise and allow the weaker party to resist and not cede to submissive behavior.

Viewed through the prism of negotiation, the interaction between international actors and local ones opens new possibilities for correcting perceived or real power asymmetries and creating a mutually beneficial working relationship. In such interaction, the perceived weaker parties can be empowered by the use of numerous tactics or alliance building that enable that party to reach beneficiary agreements; thus, leading to the ownership of both the process and the outcomes of the interaction.

**The role of learning in shaping relationships among actors in a project**

In their discussion of organizational learning, Argyris and Schön argue that while learning entails the detection and correction of error, it can be expressed at two levels. At one phase, the correction of errors occurs without questioning the fundamental assumptions, norms and values; this phenomenon is what the authors define as “single loop learning.” The second level, also called by the authors “double loop learning” implies the questioning of key assumptions and goals, which may leads to a shift or change of organizational goals, assumptions and values. At this second level, learning leads to more profound corrections. Argyris and Schön use an analogy to describe the differences between these two types of learning in organizations.

When the error detected and corrected permits the organization to carry on its present policies or achieve its present objectives, then that error-and-correction

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process is single-loop learning. Single-loop learning is like a thermostat that learns when it is too hot or too cold and turns the heat on or off. The thermostat can perform this task because it can receive information (the temperature of the room) and take corrective action. Double-loop learning occurs when error is detected and corrected in ways that involve the modification of an organization’s underlying norms, policies and objectives.\textsuperscript{168}

In organizational development literature, the focus has been put on learning as a process that allows for adaptation (single loop) and radical changes (double loop).\textsuperscript{169} This approach to learning has been widely embraced in the corporate and management practices. However, some authors have argued that learning has remained the soft belly of development practices, as eloquently remarked by Smillie:

\begin{quote}
Development is, or should be, a knowledge-based endeavor. The importance of learning what works, and why, is essential to success. Knowing what does not work is almost more important. Knowledge, however (too often confused with information), involves awareness, consciousness and the familiarity that develops with experience and learning. Just as messages are not always received, lessons taught - in school and in life - are not always learned. This is particularly true at an institutional level; the inability to learn and remember is an acknowledged and widespread failing of the development community as a whole.\textsuperscript{170}
\end{quote}

This criticism of the sector of development is also a clear recognition of the importance and necessity of learning in international development and particularly in interventions on complex context of instability and conflicts. The importance of learning, however, goes beyond knowing what works well. In her discussion of local ownership, Hannah Reich argues and rightly so that learning is also a way to alter perceived power

\textsuperscript{168}ibid., 2–3.
\textsuperscript{170}Smillie, “Painting Canadian Roses Red,” 158.
asymmetries between international interveners and local actors. She borrows the concept of “learning sites” from Norbert Ropers\textsuperscript{171}, which she refers to as:

\ldots [T]he way in which different members of a peace constituency mutually learn from each other and ascertain their common ground. [...] The idea of learning sites can be seen as a first step towards establishing an equal partnership, in that it clarifies differences in attitudes, interests, values and even working styles between the different stakeholders.\textsuperscript{172}

This perspective on learning provides the opportunities to stakeholders of a given project not only to discuss issues about the projects and their respective organizations, but also to build shared meaning, understanding and transform their relationships to hopefully achieve mutually beneficial results. These ‘learning sites’ can take several forms, from multi-stakeholders retreat to focus on particular issues on a project, to virtual community of practice around different components; thus reinforcing the commitment of stakeholders and the sense of ownership.

Organizational development theorists cited here focus on the organizational and managerial advantages of learning. While authors in the field of the development view the concept of learning as a way to mitigate power asymmetries between various stakeholders and provide opportunities for explanations, transparency and building shared norms. But very little is said about indicators of learning. How do we know that learning is taking place?

\textsuperscript{172} Reich, “Local Ownership” in Conflict Transformation Projects: Partnership, Participation or Patronage?, 24–25.
The most common framework used to show that learning is occurring has been the “action-analysis-reflection-dissemination-improved action” model. In other words, a demonstration that a new course of action has been taken as the result of newly acquired knowledge. In the field of international development, the term “lessons learned” is used to indicate that learning is occurring in a particular project, program or the implementation of a policy. In his study of organizational and institutional learning, Van Brabant reviews efforts to identify indicators of learning by theorists and practitioners alike. While recognizing the dearth of indicators of learning, he suggests that the following characteristics of learning organizations identified by Chris Roche constitute basic indicators of learning:

…Enhanced recognition of the importance of learning in the organization; improved structures and systems to extract learning; improved opportunities and mechanisms to disseminate learning; open information systems; evidence of cross-team, cross-department and cross-programme learning; managers acting as enablers rather than controllers; a participative and learning approach to policy development and strategy making; a climate or culture conducive to learning; a better learning from outside the organization; a clear vision for organizational excellence and individual fulfillment.

These indicators while important in demonstrating learning within an organization, still fall short of recognizing the learning points between organizations and stakeholders; the type of learning that transforms the nature of relationships and eventually institutions.

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174 Cited in Ibid., 38.
Whether it is within an organization (organizational learning) or between organizations (institutional learning), learning appears to be a critical process that allows on one hand, adaptability and radical changes; and on the other hand, also transforms the nature of relationships among different stakeholders.\textsuperscript{175} This last point is relevant to the discussions of local ownership, given the nature of actors and the complexity of the context of fragility within which these actors interact.

\* \* \*

As previously discussed, interventions in unstable or situations of fragility imply by essence the introduction on new resources, new capacities, new ways of interacting and relating but more importantly they create new working relationships and rapport between local stakeholders and outsiders. These interventions may exacerbate existing tensions, power imbalances or create new ones among local stakeholders or between locals and outsiders. There may be indeed power asymmetry at the onset of most international interventions; the question then becomes, is this situation permanent and immutable? Freire’s work, structuration theory, learning and the practice and theories of negotiation suggest that the power asymmetry displayed at the onset of the intervention can be overcome and leads to outcomes that are satisfying for the parties or some sort of power balance leading to a more active participation of local stakeholders. These theories

\textsuperscript{175} More on the distinction between Organizational Learning and Institutional learning see: Van Brabant, Koenraad. 1997. Op. Cit.
suggest that in this case, participants in a policy reform or international funded project are not locked in a static relationship. They may not start in a partnership, but could evolve and be transformed, because of the interdependency that exists between actors. One process through which this transformation occurs is negotiation.

Looking at the interactions between international donors, their contractors or implementing agents and local stakeholders, through the processes of participation, negotiation and learning provides new insights and perspectives that help better understand the power dynamics at play during interventions in situations of fragility and instability. These are important processes happening in various forms with different outcomes during international interventions. These processes are not new, but identifying and recognizing their importance as far as local ownership is concerned make the difference between projects.

These processes have inspired practitioners and organizations to consider several approaches that help attain local ownership, even though one of the challenges has been to assess and measure it. An inventory of strategies used by the multitude of donors and international development agencies around the world to assess, frame and indentify indicators of ownership goes beyond this research. However, it is helpful to examine some attempts by development agencies and practitioners to frame local ownership in measurable terms.
ASSESSING AND OPERATIONALIZING LOCAL OWNERSHIP:
EXPERIENCES FROM RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

So far, the discussion on local ownership has focused mainly on a more abstract level; however there is a need to look at how local ownership can be demonstrated. Some authors and international development organizations and agencies have focused on this matter, and looked at what local ownership means in practice. The focus here is on how to indicate or show local ownership. This body of work provides a base for any attempt to demonstrate evidence of local ownership.

The OECD Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations\textsuperscript{176} (OECD/DAC) and the Paris Declaration

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, with 30 member countries,\textsuperscript{177} has organized a series of research projects, consultations and high-level meetings through the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) that have led to the “Principles of Good International Engagement States and Situation.” The framework is based on ten principles\textsuperscript{178} with the long term aim of “[Helping] national reformers to


\textsuperscript{177} Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

\textsuperscript{178} 1) Take the context as the starting point; 2) Do no harm; 3) Focus on state-building as the central objective; 4) Prioritize prevention; 5) Recognize the links between political, security and development objectives; 6) Promote non-discrimination as a basis for inclusive and stable societies; 7) Align with local priorities in different ways in different contexts; 8) Agree on practical coordination mechanisms between international actors; 9) Act fast but stay engaged long enough to give success a chance; and 10) Avoid pockets of exclusion.
build effective, legitimate, and resilient institutions capable of engaging productively with their people to promote sustained development.” The OECD/DAC puts a strong emphasis on state-building which is reflected in its engagement in post-conflict contexts. In this case, state-building is not just a process of institutional capacity building or establishment of new effective institutions and strengthening of existing ones. The OECD, while recognizing the necessity of security and the need for a security framework, presupposes that long term security should be the result of political processes through which citizens’ expectations are negotiated. This presupposes that citizens and local authorities are in control of the reconstruction process and reinforces the Paris Declaration which describes ownership in such: “Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, and strategies and co-ordinate development actions.” Recipients are therefore in the driver’s seat and have equal leverage if not a leading voice on the direction and implementation of development aid. In this case, a key indicator of ownership is that:

Partners have operational development strategies — Number of countries with national development strategies (including Poverty Reduction Strategy) that have clear strategic priorities linked to a medium-term expenditure framework and reflected in annual budgets.

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180 Fukuyama, Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq.


Even though this applies to national level initiatives, the logic remains the same for individual projects; that is locals take a lead or play an important role in the design and implementation of development aid and develop indicators of results.

The Paris Declaration and the Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States have constituted a well established framework for most development agencies among donor countries. However, government ownership is the key indicator of ownership, this is problematic given the fact there are many non-state actors involved in reconstruction and stabilization efforts.

**United Nations’ take on ownership**

The United Nations has been blamed for a lack of coordination in its interventions in situation of fragility and post-conflict contexts; it had adopted a stove-pipe approach with several agencies operating with different frameworks and pursuing different goals, such as cessation of hostility and restoration of security through the peacekeeping mission, reduction of poverty by implementing the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) framework. These multiple frameworks have resulted in redundancies and a lack of focus.

While it is necessary for the United Nations to address the issue of coordination among its various agencies as well as marshal resources to meet its broad mandate, it continues to operate within the same strategic framework of the security/development continuum. However, one of the limitations of this strategic framework is that, it is based on foreign aid. Countries emerging from conflict are in dire need of both financial
resources and qualified personnel; however, several studies have questioned the impact of aid on growth in countries emerging from conflict in the absence of appropriate institutions and macroeconomic policies.\textsuperscript{183}

More increasingly, the UN is recognizing that peace-building and interventions in situations of fragility require the active participation of local actors beyond the government. Therefore, there is a need to adopt models and mechanisms that go beyond a government’s role to involve civil society organizations. In reporting on a UN workshop on ownership, Macholds and Donais capture some of the key recommendations by the Secretary General’s Senior Advisor Group on Civilian Capacity in the Aftermath of Conflict:

\begin{itemize}
  \item stronger international support for key government capacities, particularly capacities around aid coordination, policy development and public financial management;
  \item greater emphasis on local procurement as a means of stimulating the local economy;
  \item developing the private sector;
  \item prioritizing the use of local capacity and expertise, to the extent of deploying international capacity only as a last resort; and
  \item taking seriously both the needs and the participation of women in peacebuilding contexts.\textsuperscript{184}
\end{itemize}

The UN continues to face challenges in offering clear guidelines on how to operationalize and assess local ownership, but there is an ongoing debate and research work on these issues; suggesting the need and the necessity to go beyond principles to provide concrete tools and frameworks at projects and policy levels.

\textsuperscript{183} Collier and Dehn, “Aids, Shocks, and Growth”; Collier and Dollar, “Aid Allocation and Poverty Reduction.”
\textsuperscript{184} Rhys and Donais, \textit{From Rhetoric to Practice: Operationalizing Peacebuilding in Post-conflict Peacebuilding}. 

83
Attempts to Operationalize Local Ownership from Action-Research

In Saxby’s analysis of the role of Canadian NGOs in promoting local ownership, he identifies the same factors as Moore et al (1996)\textsuperscript{185} in his study dealing with local ownership in Finnish aid projects. These shared key factors include the influence beneficiaries have in the conception, design, implementation of strategies and initiatives and the location of implementing agencies, transparency and accountability.\textsuperscript{186}

In an attempt to develop an analytical framework from which to measure ownership, Johnson and Wasty identified four key indicators: a) locus of initiative, b) level of intellectual conviction among key policymakers, c) expression of political will by top leadership, and d) efforts toward consensus-building among various constituencies (Johnson and Wasty 1993).\textsuperscript{187}

De Valk and his colleagues in their analysis of ownership in several Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)-funded projects in Eastern Europe, take a functional approach by assessing how ownership translates into a project’s logical framework (input, processes, and outputs). In their analysis, they argue that:

A working definition of ownership therefore requires that some distinctions are made to facilitate its use: ownership of material inputs and outputs (i.e. objects), of non-material inputs and outputs (particularly, in the case of technical assistance projects, technical knowledge), and ownership of objectives and of processes. Ownership has different meaning in each of these references.\textsuperscript{188}

\textsuperscript{185} Moore et al., \textit{Ownership in the Finnish Aid Programme}.
\textsuperscript{186} Saxby, “Local Ownership and Development co-Operation - The Role of Northern Civil Society.”
\textsuperscript{187} Johnson and Wasty, \textit{Borrower Ownership of Adjustment Programs and the Political Economy of Reform}.
\textsuperscript{188} De Valk, Aphorpe, and Guimaraes, \textit{Local Ownership, Co-ownership and Capacity Building in Aid Projects: The Findings of a Comparative Study}, 8.
They note in their analysis that ownership of objectives by local organizations equates to the organization’s commitment to that objective, which can be established through organizational priorities, visions and goals. Some level of organizational capacity is required for ownership of objectives to translate into ownership of program processes and outcomes.

De Valk’s study is important for the literature, as it shows that ownership is not exclusive and can be shared. Most importantly, the study shows that local ownership can be expressed differently for different elements and phases of a project, and that ownership of objective does not necessarily translate into ownership of program processes, which includes design, implementation and control of inputs, outputs and impact. The emphasis is put on what is owned. This nuanced conceptualization of ownership brings the literature closer to understanding factors that influence local ownership of particular donors driven projects. Valk and his colleagues identify three project elements than can be owned: objectives, processes, inputs and outputs.

*                                      *

Local ownership of international development projects is a laudable concept that a majority of donors and development actors embrace in their programs. However, its definition and implementation have proven to be more complex and challenging. The debate on local ownership could be viewed from two lines of thoughts. There are
researchers who argue that the responsibility and impetus for local ownership lies ultimately with locals, foreign donors can facilitate, but not create it. While the cynics, however, consider local ownership of international projects to be an elusive goal that amounts to an euphemism for foreign domination.

The ambiguities exposed by the debate are further exposed in the context of interventions in situations of fragility and instability. These interventions take place in a context characterized by lack of trust between some local stakeholders of same sectors of activities, scarcity of resources, capacities and skills, and power asymmetry between local stakeholders and outside interveners. The literature review on fragility and instability highlights the potential risks inherent to core assumptions underlying some of the major policy framework used, and exposes some of the negative externalities that further complicate the attainment of local ownership of international projects.

**PROPOSED ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL OWNERSHIP:**

**THE “3C” – CAPACITY, CONTRIBUTION AND COMMITMENT**

The literature review suggests the need to examine how local ownership can be demonstrated. From this research, local ownership is a process demonstrated by local stakeholders contributing to a project and using existing and acquired capacities and resources, with the ambition to sustain project’s activities and impact without the support of international funders. Therefore the analytical framework used throughout the research builds on three core indicators of local ownership that flow from the definition used: commitment to a project, contribution to a project, and improved capacity and/or skills.
acquired through a project. The framework also includes the three supportive processes of local ownership: negotiation, learning and participation.

**Commitment to the project**

Local stakeholders’ commitment to a project is expressed through their present and past involvement in projects that share similar objectives. The commitment can be measured through the level of satisfaction and willingness of stakeholders in supporting a project. Organizational features that can be used to assess commitment to such project include:

*Experience working on the issue and with the constituency targeted* – This is probably the most important indicator of commitment. The experience working on the issue and with the targeted constituency provides legitimacy, trust, and a better understanding of issues from people’s perspectives. Generally, issues are framed in technical terms inaccessible to all actors. Experience helps frame issues in terms that are accessible and invite for a more inclusive approach that encourages different stakeholders to get involved. Experience working on the issues prior to donor’s project also suggests that the local stakeholder could have reached the impact (not necessarily at the same scale) aimed by the donor regardless of the donor’s intervention.

*Mission and value* – The mission and values (oral or writing) explain the identity of an organization and its purpose. However, an organization’s mission and value statement oftentimes are vague and lack clarity; this can be the case in grassroots organizations. An organization’s mission and value can be reflected in ways members
perceive the role of the organization. The meaning is shared or well articulated; the lack of clarity or agreement between members of the organization is in itself indicative of how an organization relates to its project. The mission and value of an organization must be cleared and communicate easily its work practices and beliefs.

Theories of change – Theories of change are the underlying assumptions or hypotheses that drive the programming of a particular organization.\textsuperscript{189} Each program approach is based on one or more theories of change that explains the achievement of expected results from an organization. The theory spells out the causal links between activities and impact at various levels: 1) personal (attitudes, behaviors, skills, knowledge, and values); 2) relationships between individuals and groups (attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors); and 3) structures and institutions (policies, politics, processes, socio-cultural patterns of behaviors).\textsuperscript{190} Theories of change permeate all stages of programming, from planning and implementation to monitoring and evaluation. Generally, grassroots organizations do not always clearly express a theory of change.

\textbf{Contribution to the project}

The contribution to the project often flows from local stakeholders’ commitment for the project. Local stakeholders’ contribution can be made at different stages (design, implementation, and evaluation); contribution to a project can also take different forms (finances, in-kind, intangible such as information, and knowledge); and can be made at

\textsuperscript{189} Anderson, \textit{The Community Builder’s Approach to Theory of Change: A Pratical Guide to Theory and Development}.

\textsuperscript{190} Adapted from “Conflict Transformation and Four Dimensions of Change,” Chap 5 in \textit{Reflective Peacebuilding: A planning, Monitoring, and learning toolkit}, by John Paul Lederach, et al., 2007.
different time scales, when outsiders are still involved and/or when they have left. The level, nature and timing of local contribution affect in part the sustainability of the project.

**Improvement of relevant capacities and skills**

The acquisition of relevant capacities and skills shows local ownership of outputs and results. The most important factor is the usefulness of the acquired or improved capacity and skills. The usefulness of the skills reinforces the contribution locals can make, as well as ensures the sustainability of the results achieved by the project. There are three main categories of indicators related to capacity: a) management capacities, such as planning, financial management, fundraising, accountability mechanisms; b) technical capacities or project related such as farming and microfinance; c) process oriented capacities, such as participation, bottom-up and accountability mechanisms, adaptability and learning. Adaptability is therefore the ability of a project in adjusting to unexpected circumstances. Adaptability is crucial in fragile and unstable context such as post-conflict reconstruction. Learning capacity enables the organization to process and use feedback, build on previous experience to improve its operations.

The latter three factors could be used to determine the level of ownership and conditions necessary to sustain assistance projects (see figure 3 and table 3).

191 Carroll, *Intermediary NGOs: The Supporting Link in Grassroots Development*.
192 Fowler, *Non-governmental Organisations in Africa: Achieving Comparative Advantage in Relief and Micro-development*. 89
Table 3: Indicators of local ownership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to the international funded project</td>
<td>Project or policy funded reflects or is reflected through these elements:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mission and vision statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strategic priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Experience working on the issue and targeted constituencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to the international funded project</td>
<td>Finances, in-kind, intangible such as information, knowledge, legitimacy, contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity acquired and relevant</td>
<td><strong>Managerial:</strong> planning, reporting, financial management, governance, fundraising, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Process oriented:</strong> participation, bottom-up and accountability mechanisms, adaptability and learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Technical or project related</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Local contribution and organizational capacity are important results or manifestations of local ownership; and participation is a key facilitating process. As discussed above, participation is not static or a binomial factor, it is multilayered and best captured through a spectrum with multiple levels.

**Indicating levels of participation**

The theoretical discussion covered in Chapter one of this research based on participation also reveals that participation takes place within a spectrum, from ‘genuine’ or high level of participation to ‘instrumental’ participation or low level of participation. Indeed the former describes a situation where agents are involved in all aspects of the projects or the process and control parts of the resources and decision-making; while the latter form of participation, agents are at best consulted for their opinions and knowledge and at worst be asked to endorse or support the outcome of a decision-making process they were not aware of.

Building on the literature on participation discussed above, this research is based on the view that the level of participation in the context of international funded projects in situation of fragility and instability has two components: a) influence on the decision-making process, which translates into level of control and access to inputs, outputs and results; and b) the level of initiative or responsibility local stakeholders have in the design and implementation of the project (see figure 4). Based on this understanding, this study proposes four levels
of local participation in international funded projects in situations of fragility and instability. The focus is primarily on locals’ influence in decision-making processes and the responsibility for initiative. The responsibility for the initiative amounts to the role played in the design, implementation and evaluation of the project. Meanwhile influence in decision-making processes is the control locals have on inputs, resources, outputs, and results of the project; this also implies some level of accountability. In this case, participation is considered as a means or a process to achieving local ownership.

The following four levels of local participation have been identified:

1) **Consultation**: Local stakeholders are consulted and their advice influences the design of the project, but they have no direct influence over the decision-making process. They sometime play a role in the implementation of a project.

2) **Collaboration during implementation**: Local stakeholders are informed about the initiative and assigned a specific role in the implementation. They have no influence on the key decisions affecting the design. This is closer to local contracting mechanisms with terms of reference defined by outsiders (donors and or international contractors).

3) **Shared initiative and decision-making**: Local stakeholders are involved in project design, execution, and funding. Locals participate in designing the project; then support and training is provided so that locals can work side by side with outsiders to execute the project. In addition, local government and communities are involved in developing some funding mechanisms, either for initial contribution or long-term maintenance.

4) **Locally initiated and partially funded**: Local stakeholders initiate the project and control the project design, execution, funding, and expansion/continuation. In this case, outsiders support locals in developing the capacity and acquiring the resources to execute and manage the project, so that they can continue or scale up the project independently.
While mapping out different levels helps analyze local involvement; in practice, there are many more combinations and hybrid forms of involvement at different levels and time scale of the project. The importance of this classification lies on the fact that it recognizes two important aspects of participation: relations and power. The nature of the relationships between locals and international actors and how the former relate to the project is evidenced by the level of initiative and responsibilities. While power is indicated by the control over projects inputs (money, labor, skills, knowledge, organizational capacities, etc.) outputs (products from the projects, e.g. number of classrooms constructed, trained individuals, number of water wells built) and outcomes (impact of the project).
Figure 4: Participation from local stakeholders’ perspective
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Instances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relations: level of initiative</td>
<td>No influence in the decision-making and no control over inputs, outputs, and results.</td>
<td>Quite often in the initial phase of the design (feasibility studies, program design assessment, etc.), locals are solicited for their ideas, opinions on various aspects of the project.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>Input the design through information sharing</td>
<td>No influence in the decision-making and no control over inputs, outputs, and results.</td>
<td>This is closer to local contracting mechanisms with terms of reference defined by the outsiders (donors and or international contractors).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration in implementation</td>
<td>No or limited input on the design and planning of the project</td>
<td>No or limited influence on the decision-making process. Some level of control over outputs and outcomes</td>
<td>This is closer to local contracting mechanisms with terms of reference defined by the outsiders (donors and or international contractors).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared initiative and decision making and</td>
<td>Influence the design, the planning of the project</td>
<td>Shared control of inputs, outputs and results of the project; and decision-making</td>
<td>Situation of partnerships and recognized interdependency between stakeholders both local and international</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally initiated and partially funded</td>
<td>Designed and planned by locals with the support of international actors</td>
<td>More control over resources and decision-making process</td>
<td>In this case, outsiders support locals in developing the capacity and acquiring the resources to execute and manage the project, so that they can continue or scale up the project on their own. The examples of “USAID host country mechanisms,” many Truth and Reconciliation commissions around the world, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Framework for understanding the link between local ownership and supportive processes

This suggested framework guide the analysis of the cases of this dissertation. It illustrates the understanding that local ownership in international interventions in situations of fragility emerges through supportive processes of local participation, negotiation and learning. These supportive processes in addition to allowing the project to adapt and eventually be owned by local stakeholders; they may transform relationships among stakeholders from those based on perceived power asymmetries to more collaborative and mutually beneficial ones.
Figure 5: Supportive processes of local ownership
II. RESEARCH DESIGN AND THE CASES

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

In the United States, donor-initiated and managed programs in war-torn societies and political instability are particularly relevant. The U.S. foreign aid institutions have adopted local ownership as a key principle of its international assistance policy. While practitioners and international donors commonly discuss the desirability of and need for local ownership, the actual mechanisms and strategies to facilitate meaningful local ownership remain a complex issue.

This research identifies local conditions and factors conducive to achieving local ownership in situations of fragility and peace building countries. The research further explores strategies of engaging and working with local stakeholders in ways that facilitate and strengthen local ownership of international funded projects in situation of fragility or conflict. Through the cases of USAID-initiated and funded projects, the research examines strategies and factors that promote or stymie local ownership. While local ownership is not explicitly the goals of these USAID-funded projects, the foreign policy framework from which they emerge is presumably driven by the principles of local ownership.
The Research Question

To fulfill the purpose of this research, the following central question is addressed:

How is local ownership attained in U.S.-funded projects in societies facing instability or violent conflicts?

The question will be answered using two projects initiated and funded by USAID. Answering the central question brings us to look at the following:

• What strategies and approaches were used to facilitate local ownership in these projects?

• Are there identifiable patterns of facilitating local ownership in the ways USAID-initiated and managed programs are funded and implemented (supply side of reconstruction programs)?

• Are there organizational attributes supportive of ownership by local stakeholders?

• What are or can be the incentive structures both for USAID contractors and local stakeholders for local ownership?

Central Question, Assumption and Hypotheses

Central assumption

Local ownership is attained differently by stakeholders, and emerges when donors’ and local stakeholders’ goals are aligned jointly.

This assumption shifts the debate from the notion of local ownership as a principle or goal to achieve to the notion of local ownership as a means, an asset to
recognize and build on for the success of the international assistance programs. It is the
difference between “building on” local ownership versus “building” local ownership.
Another implication is that some programs may lack ownership at no fault of the donor
organizations. This is not meant to exempt the donor from building on local ownership.
However, it might require in some cases a more comprehensive and inclusive effort in
assessing the feasibility of the program, considering both the local needs and local
resources, capacities and priorities. As Béatrice Pouligny suggests:

This implies fundamental changes in the intelligence and communication
capacity of outsiders, in order that they might better understand local contexts
and, more particularly, identify the local actors likely to be major motors for
change. \(^{193}\)

The assumption leads the researcher to frame the following hypotheses:

**Hypotheses:**

*H1: Alignment of organizational goals and priorities with those of the project
facilitates local ownership better than technical capacity alone.*

Local civil society organizations and stakeholders whose goals, priorities and
capacities are aligned with a project’s objectives and implementation strategies
demonstrate ownership at a higher level than those who do not share the project’s goals,
even if they have the technical capacity. More often, some local stakeholders participate
in all levels of the project cycle because they have the technical capacity to achieve the
immediate results without necessarily sharing the project’s goals. Arguably, this does not

\(^{193}\) Pouligny, “Civil Society and Post-conflict Peacebuilding Ambiguities of International Programmes
Aimed at Building ‘new Societies’,” 507.
result in local ownership. The involvement of such “technical partners” will not generally survive the departure of the donors, as the donor’s project in this case serves more as a business development opportunity than a development project with a humanitarian driven mission. Meanwhile organizations who share the goals and the priorities of a project are more likely to stay involved, contribute to and continue the mission of that particular project (not necessarily in the same magnitude and with the same level of means) even when donors have departed. The project feeds into their core work, mission and their legitimacy in the community. But the real difficulty is to distinguish genuine goals and priorities from opportunistic ones put forward by actors whose main motivations are to access the funding and the opportunities provided by donors.

H2: Donor’s institutional arrangements and implementation mechanisms can facilitate or stymie local ownership.

Donors in general and USAID in particular use different aid mechanisms. These mechanisms present U.S.-based contractors responsible for implementing projects, with different procedures and incentives that affect local ownership of projects. Beside administrative procedures imposed by USAID, the organizational attributes and contractors’ strategy for designing and implementing the project are critical factors.

H3: The power asymmetry in favor of international actors (donors and contractors) obliges local stakeholders to submit to expectations and contractors’ views on the project.
One of the criticisms leveled against the proponents of local ownership in situations of fragility, conflict and post-conflict reconstruction projects has been that local stakeholders lack the resources (financial and knowledge) to challenge the views and the interests of international donors and implementing organizations. Furthermore, the international community may be working with a narrow set of (relatively powerful) local stakeholders. Therefore, since these local stakeholders need resources to operate and strive, they are most likely to embrace an external driven agenda out of their scope of work. These views have been reinforced by paternalistic attitudes observed in various projects as well as cases of elite capture and corruption that have been decried in reconstruction projects around the world.

H4: The local and national contexts affect the level of local ownership expressed for a given aid project.

The level of mistrust, destruction and fragility found in countries in or emerging from conflict, as well as the necessity to achieve sustainable results, makes local ownership critical in international development. At the same time, serious difficulties exist to reach this goal. In addition to the specific context of conflict or post-conflict, the quality and capacity of local civil society, the regime type and the nature of the interactions between the various stakeholders involved in the project also affect local ownership.
Research model

The key assumption of this research implies that local ownership varies throughout a project cycle and is more likely to emerge when there is alignment and compatibility between local stakeholders’ vision, priorities, capacities (organizational attributes). The local context influences the organizational structures, capacity and priorities of local organizations, as it presents constraints and opportunities of different kinds. At the same time, the local context also influences donors’ priorities, areas of interventions, and eventually aid mechanisms and projects. Meanwhile both organizational attributes and aid mechanisms shape locals’ involvement which consequently determines the level of local ownership. Using the analytical framework developed in the conclusion of the literature review, the following research model is used to guide the analysis of the cases (see figure 6).
RESEARCH METHODLOGY: EXTENDED CASE STUDY

The overall research methodology is summarized in four areas:

- Justification of the extended case study method
- Justification of cases
• Unit of analysis

• Data collection

Justification of the methodology

This research provides new insights into the interplay between local ownership, and reconstruction and stabilization programs in post-war and war-torn contexts. There are many forms of international assistance mechanisms. They range from those where the recipient country or local stakeholders have the lead in the design and implementation with outsiders support (Local development plans, national budget support and other projects using recipient government systems) to those where outsiders or donors have the lead in the design, control the inputs and use their disbursement mechanisms (e.g. Aid using parallel systems other than the government, aid using international private contractors or volunteer as the conduits for disbursement and implementation, and other multi-donor trust funds).194

In development work, USAID uses different assistance mechanisms. However, this research focuses on cases where USAID and international contractors or private organizations take the lead in identifying priority areas, designing the project, and applies USAID’s own disbursement procedures and accountability criteria. According to the literature and development practices these mechanisms are less likely to facilitate local ownership.195 Based on the research model developed in this research, projects emerging

195 Koeberle, Stavreski, and Walliser, *Budget Support as More Effective Aid? Recent Experiences and Emerging Lessons.*
from such aid mechanisms are qualified “extreme cases” in theory even though increasingly common in practice, as they present a high variation, as far as local ownership is concerned, compared to projects that result from other more flexible mechanisms, where local stakeholders share responsibilities with outsiders. Also they are implemented in difficult contexts rigged by violence, instability and adverse phenomenon (diseases, natural disasters, etc). However, “extreme cases” could yield important insights for the understanding of complex phenomenon, such as local ownership.\textsuperscript{196}

Moreover, the research question also implies: 1) a study to understanding multiple case studies and learn from them, and 2) an explanation of the relations between multiple variables, in this case, local ownership, aid delivery mechanisms, local stakeholders’ commitment and capacity. Therefore, the research will use an extended case study approach which facilitates a holistic understanding of a process and phenomenon through exploring particular cases.

This research method while testing hypotheses will also learn from the researched cases themselves. As argued by Eysenck in his defense of case study method (after been a long time critic): “sometimes we simply have to keep our eyes open and look carefully at individual cases, not in the hope of proving anything, but rather in the hope of learning something.”\textsuperscript{197} The aim is not to provide generalized conclusions, but knowledge that will

\textsuperscript{196} Perry, “A Structured Approach to Presenting Theses”; Patton, \textit{Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods}.

foster the understanding of the relationship between local ownership and reconstruction and stabilization projects in post-war and war-torn societies.

The argument that case study is a facilitator of understanding and learning has been shared by several authors. In general, case study method enables the disentanglement of the complex causal links implied by the hypotheses and helps to increase understanding of “real-life” interactions between variables. The hypotheses and the variables provide a guiding framework from which to analyze the cases; they become guideposts and dimensions of theoretical replication around core learning points.

In addition to the general advantages that a case study method provides, the fact that the research focuses on two main cases with multiple units of analysis, requiring a more detailed analysis makes the extended case method more relevant. As illustrated in figure 8, each case contains multiple units of analysis, and together, all the cases provide a better understanding of the phenomenon or the research question posed. Not only does the extended case method helps yield more detailed analysis, it can be used to integrate quantitative and qualitative methods into a single research study.

The two cases for this research have been selected, not on the basis of representation, but for the richness of information they can yield in understanding how

199 Perry, “A Structured Approach to Presenting Theses”; Patton, Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods.
200 Yin, Applications of Case Study Research.
201 Scholz, Embedded Case Study Methods.
donor-initiated projects address local ownership in fragile situations and intervention in war-torn societies. Yin warns that “multiple cases” should be regarded as “multiple experiments” and not “multiple respondents in a survey.” \(^{202}\) In other words, knowledge is obtained by piecing together learning points from a finite set of cases rather than inference from a set of larger N cases. \(^{203}\) This means that the choice of multiple cases is guided by replication logic rather than sampling logic. \(^{204}\) The two case studies from this research offer opportunities for cross-case analysis and help discover patterns, if any, in ways in which local ownership is facilitated or obstructed in U.S.-initiated and managed assistance projects in post-conflict and war-torn societies.

The two main cases are:

a) **IDEJEN** in Haiti, a youth development project initiated by USAID and managed through EQUIP3, a mechanism funded by the Economic Growth Agriculture and Trade (EGAT) in USAID. The project **IDEJEN** was implemented by Educational Development Center (EDC), a U.S. based NGO.

b) **Building for Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance** region of Senegal - A USAID funded project in Senegal and implemented by World Education, a U.S. based organization.

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\(^{202}\) Yin, *Case Study Research*.

\(^{203}\) Goldstone, *Revolutions*.

Justification of cases

My interest in international development projects funded by USAID grew as I was involved in designing, assessing, and evaluating USAID funded projects in Haiti and African countries since 2006. From interactions with different actors in the field of development, I learned that international workers were often frustrated and concerned about project sustainability and continuity among local stakeholders. While the issue of project sustainability was a major concern, issues such as local participation, corruption and opportunistic behaviors from stakeholders were also of concern among stakeholders.

The two cases selected for this dissertation gave me the opportunity to fully grasp the complexity of project sustainability and ownership. There was nowhere else I could have had the access and local and international contacts to study issues related to international interventions than Haiti and Senegal. I lived and worked in both countries. I also visited these two countries several times during the course of my research in my capacity as an international development consultant working on projects funded by USAID and the United Nations.

Both of the two projects that constitute the main cases of this research emerged from mechanisms that leave the initiative of the project to USAID, donor agency. These two independent cases provide the opportunity to explore different dimensions of the issue of local ownership as it relates to donor-initiated and funded projects and the role of local civil society.
IDEJEN project in Haiti – My interest in analyzing the work of this project stemmed from my stay in Haiti from 2008 to 2011. I had the opportunity to perform consulting work on USAID funded projects and advised the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (the Division of Human Rights). Through my work, I built a network of informants and gained access to decision-makers and also gained the trust of local communities benefiting from the work of development projects. I attended both policy and community meetings to design, plan and execute many international funded projects; I witnessed firsthand the frustrations and satisfaction that came with the delivery of international aid. During my stay in Haiti, I also developed an interest in Haitian history, particularly the politics of the country and the history of U.S. foreign aid to the country. Haiti has a rich and tumultuous history that provided me with insights into some important aspects of U.S. foreign policy and development aid. The project IDEJEN provided me with a conduit to study the issues of international funded projects because in part, during the life span of the project, Haiti experienced several episodes of political instability and natural disasters.

IDEJEN was launched in 2003 (prior to President Aristide’s departure from office) as a non-formal education project to minimize the negative effects of the “youth bulge” experienced by Haiti. However, IDEJEN over the years has evolved to a project of stabilization, reconstruction and progressively to integrate a humanitarian component because of the January 12th, 2010 earthquake. IDEJEN constitutes a rich case that provides the opportunity to study local ownership in different societal context in the same
country. These changing natures of the context of implementation and of project’s goals help explore the impact if any on local ownership.

**Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance region of Senegal:** I first visited Senegal in April 2000, as a technical advisor to a youth project funded by Francophonie (international organization). But my interest for international development in Senegal and the conflict in Casamance piqued in 2010. At that time, I was contributing as the lead consultant to the pre-assessment and design of a 20 million U.S. dollar project funded by USAID related to democratic elections, accountability in Senegal and peace in Casamance. During the design phase, I identified and negotiated roles and responsibilities with local partners, potential staff members, and communities where the project would be implemented. Issues such as the contribution of local stakeholders, motivations, and capacity were front and center of these discussions. It seemed at the time that some of the questions related to these issues could only be addressed later in the implementation of the project. I realized how ill-equipped international organizations and U.S. contractors were in addressing issues raised. Even though these issues were not included in the USAID list of desired results nor was local ownership mentioned in the proposals documents, they where nonetheless crucial to the success and sustainability of the project. I also realized that to begin to answer questions related to local ownership and sustainability, I had to look at past projects; since these projects would have completed their cycle and provided or not tangible results I could learn from.
The project *Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance* region presented me with the opportunity to study local ownership in a context of conflict. Where high level of mistrust between stakeholders and issues of legitimacy and impartiality of interveners exist and are critical to the achievement of project objectives. The project was completed in 2004, before I started my research, therefore allowing for the study of the impact and issues of sustainability.

The project was designed to respond to the disruption of social and economic activities in the region. It was a three-year project of $1.2 million funded through a USAID cooperative agreement and implemented by World Education, a U.S. based NGO. World Education also worked with a network of local organizations and rebel groups to achieve the objectives of the project.

**Units of analysis**

A unit of analysis is an event, individual(s) and or action by individual(s) at the lowest level of abstraction of the case, which possess information or knowledge that can shed light on the problem posed by the research. While the unit of analysis is determined by the purpose of the research, it does however help clarify and shape the findings of the research itself.\(^{205}\) It also means that a unit of analysis can be different from key informants\(^{206}\) who are individuals selected because they possess knowledge and

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\(^{205}\) Grünbaum, Niels. 2007. Identification of ambiguity in the case study research typology: what is a unit of analysis. *Qualitative Market research: An international journal* 10 (1): 78-97

\(^{206}\) In a study about behaviors of a particular group, members of the target group can be key informants since they possess knowledge related to their behaviors, in addition to some experts.
information on a unit of analysis that can help the purpose of a research. In this research, there are multiple units of analysis (which justifies the use of an extended case method) in each analyzed case study. The following units have been identified:

Funding agency’s intervention: USAID missions in Senegal and Haiti

US-based voluntary organizations: U.S. contractors implementing the projects. The research focuses on program implementation strategies and organizational practices.

Local stakeholders, including civil society organizations, local and national governments’ officials and other local implementers: The research focuses on their organizational practices, leadership, values and priorities as they relate to the case studies.

\[207\] Light, By Design.
Figure 7: Units of analysis
USAID initiated and managed projects in situations of fragility

USAID Haiti

IDE/FW (Out of school youth)

World Education International

Educational Development Center (EDC)

Unit 1: Implementation mechanisms and institutional arrangements (Goals, Priorities, Strategies and Capacity)

Unit 2: PVOs and international contractors

Unit 3: Local stakeholders

Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance

USAID Senegal

Local ownership of projects in post-war societies

Main Cases:

Unit 1: Implementation mechanisms and institutional arrangements (Goals, Priorities, Strategies and Capacity)

Unit 2: PVOs and international contractors

Unit 3: Local stakeholders

Units of Analysis

Local ownership of projects in post-war societies

Figure 8: Extended model of analysis
Data collection methods and analysis

The strength of the case study methodology is the ability to combine a variety of information and sources to assist in bringing the richness of data together for better understanding and validity through triangulation. In this research, the following data collection methods were used: interviews, field visits and focus groups discussions, and USAID databases (particularly Federal Government databases and document review).

During my stay and field visits in Haiti and Senegal, I conducted in-depth open-ended interviews at each unit of analysis (USAID, U.S. implementing organizations, local staff and other local stakeholders). The interviews were conducted with the Cognitive Technical Officers (CTO) directly responsible for the USAID cases, the Chief of Party from both projects, the Directors of the project in the U.S. contractor’s home office in the U.S. (EDC) and program officers in the local office (See Table 5).

I conducted structured interviews with program officers and assistants, specialists responsible from the back stopping of IDEJEN in both Washington, D.C. and Port-au-Prince, Haiti. In addition, to the structured interviews, I conducted open-ended interviews with local authorities, local stakeholders and community beneficiaries of the project, using my interviews protocols approved by the George Mason University’s Human Subject Review Board (HSRB) (See

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Yin, *Case Study Research.*
Annexes A, B, and C). In addition to project site visits in Haiti and Senegal, I organized focus groups discussions with representatives of selected local organizations.

In summary, approximately 185 people were interviewed and or involved in focus group discussions during the period of 2009 – 2011, in three countries, Haiti, Senegal and the USA. Out of those interviewed, approximately 90 were interviewed “on-the-record”. Many of these people were interviewed several times with follow up conversations throughout the research in Haiti, Senegal and the U.S.

Since I lived in both countries and worked in the field of international development for many years, I was connected to a dense network of development experts, decision-makers and policy makers. My work gave me access to cabinet level meetings, workshops and conferences related to international aid in both countries. In addition to the formal interviews and focus groups, I had numerous “off-the-record” meetings and continuous discussions with representatives of international agencies and NGO (European Union, World Bank, Transparency International, World Vision, etc.), United Nations officials, international aid consultants, business owners, communities leaders, government officials on issues related to the cases and international aid in both Haiti and Senegal. In Casamance, I also met with some MFDC combatants and former combatants; they shared with

\[209\] See list of people interviewed or who attended focus group discussions in Annex D.
me their views on the conflict and the project Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance. Their views were valuable as I discussed with other stakeholders, particularly members of the Groupe de Contact of MDFC. Informal and “off-the-record” meetings provided me with valuable data relevant to the cases and the overall context of international aid in Haiti and Senegal.

To understand funding mechanisms of USAID, various USAID programs and procurement guidance were reviewed. For example, the research reviewed documents such as those related to the Automated Directives System (ADS), aid delivery mechanisms related documents (Request for Proposal, Annual Program statements, cooperative agreements and contracts related to the cases), and other relevant documents.

I analyzed project proposals, evaluation reports and other related documents to fully comprehend the role and programmatic strategies used by the U.S. based private voluntary organizations, non-governmental organizations, and contractors involved in both projects.

In addition to the data collected from interviews, focus groups, observations during site visits and documents; quantitative data were collected from U.S. government online databases and websites and USAID, U.S. contractors’ reports related to the cases. I also requested and received permission

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from the authors\textsuperscript{211} to use the State of Fragility Index and Matrix dataset\textsuperscript{212} in analyzing the situation of fragility in both Haiti and Senegal.

**Verification and Validation**

The nature of the topics, the quantity of data and sources require a process of verification, to ensure reliability and accuracy of the data. Stakes argue that it is important and necessary for a case study research to use the triangulation of information and member checking.\textsuperscript{213} The use of different sources did not only improve the understanding of the cases, it also allowed for verification of facts through triangulation; that is using multiple and different sources and methods in analyzing information for clear understanding and perspective, As argued by Wedel:

As insightful as some informants may be, it is incumbent upon the ethnographer to arrive at his or her own account, informed by their demonstrated agency and perspectives. It is necessary to talk with many people in different positions, to assess their motives, the influences upon them, and networks connecting them and to return to them repeatedly.\textsuperscript{214}

During interviews in Haiti and Senegal, initial interpretation of the data or information received from one sources was tested and double checked by soliciting the views of interviewees.

\textsuperscript{212} http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/inscr.htm.
\textsuperscript{213} Stake, The Art of Case Study Research.
\textsuperscript{214} Wedel, Collision and collusion, 160.
Table 5: Data collection per unit of analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units of analysis</th>
<th>Interviews with key informants</th>
<th>Documents and databases</th>
<th>Focus groups</th>
<th>Field visits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USAID missions:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID/DCHA-USAID mission in Haiti USAID-Senegal</td>
<td>Cognizant Technical Officers (CTO) – In Haiti and Senegal Program officers in USAID Washington</td>
<td>Procurement database, aid mechanisms related documents, Automated Directives Systems, Projects documents, etc.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Development Center (EDC) World Education International</td>
<td>Chief of Party of IDEJEN and the Chief of Party of World Education in Senegal, Program officers IDEJEN project Director at EDC</td>
<td>Project proposals, Evaluation reports, Assessment reports prior to launching the project, request for proposal for sub-grants, application for sub-grants by local organizations and other related documents</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local stakeholders in Haiti and Casamance, Senegal</td>
<td>Person responsible of the “partnership” with the project. (Person(s) in the line ministries of government institutions supposedly involved or responsible of the project.</td>
<td>Project documents, organization year plan and budget, program evaluation, and other organizational documents</td>
<td>Focus groups discussions with local stakeholders of the project.</td>
<td>Site visits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Analysis

The analysis of the data followed five stages circular process that included the stages of the “data analysis spiral” advised by Cresswell. These stages included for each of the cases: data managing; reading and memoing; describing, classifying and interpreting; as well as representing. It should be noted that an additional stage was added, where both cases were compared and contrasted to highlight similarities and differences.

Data managing – Data gathered from all the collection methods (interviews, focus groups, observations during site visits and documents) were organized into computer files. After each field trip, the handwriting notes were converted in electronic format.

Reading and “memoing” – Data were reviewed in order to get an overall picture of each case. Through the process of initial review, memos and notes were written on the margins and in some cases, ideas that were related to some hypotheses or indicators of local ownership were color-coded.

Classifying and interpreting – The assumptions and hypotheses served as guiding post in the process of classification and interpretation of patterns; while indicators of variables as defined in the research model helped interpret the patterns. In other words, the interpretation of patterns which led to findings from

\[\text{Creswell, Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design, 143.}\]
each case where conducted around indicators of variables (commitment, capacity, contribution, participation, negotiation, etc.). Other patterns were not anticipated, they escape the set of research hypotheses, and they were labeled as “unanticipated findings” and interpreted using my familiarity and knowledge of the countries and communities in each of the cases.

Representing – Some finding from each case were represented on tables and figures to express the connections between variables as assumed through hypotheses.

Comparing and contrasting the two cases – The two cases were studied simultaneously; this created a back and forth process between the cases at each stage of analysis. The main goal of comparing and contrasting cases was to allow the emergence of key learning points in the forms of similarities and differences between the cases. As argued by Cresswell “At this point of their analysis, researchers step back and form a larger meaning of what is going on in the situation or sites.”216 Findings from studying the cases were grouped under categories termed as ‘learning themes’ to reflect my personal interpretations of the differences and similarities between the cases in combination with the construct of local ownership as discussed in the literature and framed in this research model.

216 Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 103 and 403.
Scope and limits of the research

It is worth mentioning that projects and programs covered in this research fall in the “extreme cases” that is projects initiated and managed by international donors and their contractors. When projects are initiated by recipients or host countries e.g., Gacaca in Rwanda or the constitutional reform process in post-apartheid South Africa, or budget support mechanisms, the issue of local ownership presents different dynamics worth exploring. In post-war contexts they may reflect local dynamics of power relations and struggle, and mirror relationships of power emerging directly from the conflict or peace process. While recognizing the importance of local ownership in these instances, this study does not focus on them.

The research also worked on cases of ongoing conflicts or those that have ended prior to the research, as it is the case of Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance that ended in 2004. The direct advantage for the research was the opportunity to observe the presence or not of indicators of ownership and sustainability long after USAID involvement has ended. However, the challenge was to find data and other documents related to the activities at the local level or find participants to the peace process in Casamance conflict.

The ongoing violence in Casamance, the January 12, 2010, earthquake in Haiti followed by the cholera outbreak also posed logistical challenges to data
collection, limiting the quantity of data as well as the number of informants willing to share their views on the project’s studies.
III. THE CASE OF IDEJEN IN HAITI

HAITI: OVERVIEW

Haiti on the Western portion of Hispaniola shares the island with its neighbor the Dominican Republic on the Eastern part. Haiti is 600 miles off the coast of Florida, with a population of 10.1 million people,\(^\text{217}\) out of those, 5 million live in the rural areas and 58 percent is below 25 years of age. With a growing number of young people who are out-of-school, undereducated and unemployed, Haiti remains one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere. An estimated of 70 percent of the population earns less than U.S. $2 a day, while 4 percent (elite families) owns approximately 66 percent of the country’s wealth. Sustained political instability, long periods of autocratic rule and repeated natural disasters (hurricanes, earthquakes, and epidemic diseases) constantly impact the country since it gained independence from France on January 1, 1804.

Analysts investigating the root causes of Haiti’s violence and instability have identified the following to be critical factors for the country’s current state: a

long history of political violence; social inequality and exclusion; poverty; high unemployment particularly among educated youth; weak state institutions (police and criminal justice system, etc.); widespread availability of small arms; and organized crime.  

Haiti is certainly not the only Latin American country to struggle with these issues, yet Haiti’s long periods of political and social instability in addition to its weak economy have provided a particularly fertile environment for its current state.

The latest democratic presidential election of President Michel Martelly in March 2011, carried the hopes of stability and reconstruction for a new country.

**Haiti’s Fragility: A Brief History of Instability and Violence**

Haiti consistently occupied a low rank among organizations that track fragility among third world states. Data from the state fragility index and Matrix of the Center for Systemic Peace shows the fragility of Haiti since the country returned to civilian rule in 1994. Despite some variability of the score of fragility, the overall situation of the state has remained bleak (See Figure 9).

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221. The State Fragility Index and Matrix 2011 lists all independent countries in the world in which the total country population is greater than 500,000 in 2011 (165 countries). The Fragility Matrix scores each country on both Effectiveness and Legitimacy in four performance dimensions:
The tumultuous history of Haiti holds the key to understanding the political instability, violence and poverty that regularly follows the reputation of the country. The instability also poses difficulties to aid effectiveness and local ownership of international funded projects.

![Figure 9: Haiti's situation of fragility](http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/inscr.htm)

**Figure 9: Haiti's situation of fragility**

Security, Political, Economic, and Social, at the end of the year 2011. Each of the Matrix indicators is rated on a four-point fragility scale: 0 “no fragility,” 1 “low fragility,” 2 “medium fragility,” and 3 “high fragility” with the exception of the Economic Effectiveness indicator, which is rated on a five-point fragility scale (including 4 “extreme fragility”). The State Fragility Index, then, combines scores on the eight indicators and ranges from 0 “no fragility” to 25 “extreme fragility.” A country’s fragility is closely associated with its state capacity to manage conflict; make and implement public policy; and deliver essential services and its systemic resilience in maintaining system coherence, cohesion, and quality of life; responding effectively to challenges and crises, and sustaining progressive development.


Shortly after gaining independence from its colonial rule, Haiti experienced a civil war from 1807 to 1820 between group factions from the northern region led by Henri Christophe and the southern republic governed by Alexandre Petion. Following Henri Christophe’s suicide, Jean-Pierre Boyer reunified the country in 1820. Embolden by his success, Boyer invaded the island of Santa Domingo (Dominican Republic) from 1821 to 1844. Between 1843 and 1915, Haiti experienced 22 heads of state, most of whom left office as a result of violent events (assassination, coups, and riots.). In addition to internal drivers of instability, Haiti also experienced a U.S. invasion and occupation from 1915 to 1934.

In the second half of the 20th century from 1957 to 1986, Haitian politics was dominated by the authoritarian regimes of the Duvalier: François Duvalier, “Papa Doc” (from 1957 to 1971) and his son, Jean-Claude Duvalier, “Baby Doc” (from 1971 to 1986). The 29-year rule of the Duvalier regime was characterized by political violence that caused the death of thousands of Haitians and forced many people to flee the country.

François Duvalier engaged in a campaign of unprecedented intimidation and political violence after winning a presidential election in 1957; as a result, thousands of political opponents and their family members were killed, imprisoned or disappeared. Duvalier restructured the military; thereby building
an alternative security apparatus that reported directly to him. This entity known as the “Volontaires de la Sécurité Nationale” (Volunteers for National Security) was widely known by the Haitian masses as the “Tontons Macoutes” or “Bogeymen.” The Duvalier regime recruited landless peasants, urban slum dwellers, community leaders, and voodoo priests to be part of the Bogeymen. In a country where women were considered second class citizens, the VSN provided a rare case of equality, where women enjoyed the same status as men.\textsuperscript{223} In fact, a woman named Rosalie Bousquet even led the VSN at one point. By 1961, the number of Macoutes reached approximately 10,000 members outnumbering the regular army and the police force. By the end of the Duvalier regime they were estimated to be approximately 300,000 strong.\textsuperscript{224}

The VSN was a central piece of the Duvalier’s regime; it provided a diverse group of Haitians with a source of income, social status, and particularly the opportunity to terrorize members of the mulatto class. This profound power offered the VSN what no nationalistic rhetoric could provide; at the same time, it fueled the black nationalistic ideology used by Duvalier as rally cry among the black majority (poor and middle class alike). Duvalier did not rely solely on the Macoutes, but also the black administrative bourgeoisie, that is, educated blacks that were running the administration, an inner circle of cadres, as well as some

\textsuperscript{223} Girard, \textit{Paradise Lost.} \\
\textsuperscript{224} Ibid.
members of the mulatto business community. This coalition was held together by fear and greed.

While fear was displayed through intimidation, mass killings and other forms of political violence, greed was demonstrated through a system of rewards of financial and material benefits of private goods rather than public goods.

After the overthrow of the Duvalier regime in 1986, Haiti endured violent political transitions and multiple changes of leadership. In 1990, the first democratic elections were held since the overthrow of “Bébé Doc.” In these elections, Jean-Bertrand Aristide became President. However, Aristide’s tenure was interrupted by a military coup led by the Lieutenant General Raoul Cédras in September 29, 1991. While remaining the de facto leader of Haiti as commander of the country's armed forces, Cédras did not retain his position as head of state; Haiti's Parliament appointed Supreme Court Justice Joseph Nérette as provisional President until elections could be held. Under the strains of mounting pressure from the U.S. and a weaken economic, the military government ultimately abandoned the reins of power on October 11, 1994, and Aristide returned back to power.

Even after the return of Aristide in office, Haiti’s political and social structures remained unstable. In 1995, Rene Préval replaced Aristide, who was barred by the Constitution to run for office again. Despite the election irregularities which brought Preval into office, the inauguration of Préval in
February 1996 marked the first ever transition between two popularly elected presidents in Haiti’s history.

Aristide was elected President for a third time after winning the November 2000 election even though the election was rigged by widespread fraud and irregularities and deemed not transparent and fair by observers and opposition parties.

Aristide’s tenure in office did not come without challenges, in January 2004, the Haitian masses called for Aristide’s resignation. The country encountered numerous strikes and mass demonstrations. Several protestors were killed in clashes with the national police. As a result, on February 29, 2004, Aristide was forced out of office and escorted out of the country with U.S. assistance.

On April 30, 2004, the United Nations Security Council adopted the Resolution 1542 to establish the United Nations Stabilization Mission to Haiti (MINUSTAH). The Resolution included a mandate to provide a secure and stable environment through demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration of gang members. In addition, the resolution would have enabled a democratic political process; good governance; and promoted the respect of human rights and the rule
of law.\textsuperscript{225} It is worth mentioning that MINUSTAH was not the first UN mission in Haiti; it followed a succession of UN missions beginning in 1994.\textsuperscript{226}

The continued presence of the UN Missions has helped create a less volatile environment and facilitated the elections of three presidents, Rene Preval in 1996, Aristide in 2004, and Michel Martelly in 2010.

\textbf{Drivers of Insecurity}

A complex intersection of political, environmental, economic and social factors produced and perpetuated a multi-layered state of insecurity in Haiti. Lack of democratic control of the military, criminalization of state security apparatuses, natural disasters, debilitated economy, and major demographic shifts formed the nexus of Haiti’s instability.

Throughout the Duvaliers’ and Aristide’s regimes, the persistent independence of the military combined with the presidents’ reliance on private security forces resulted in the lack of government control over the state security forces and a proliferation of criminal, armed non-state actors. The military continually perpetrated coups d’état made them an unreliable source of state security for Duvaliers and Aristide. Meanwhile, the Duvaliers and Aristide secured their own interests by building private militias such as the Duvaliers’

\textsuperscript{225} United Nations Stabilization Mission to Haiti (MINUSTAH): http://minustah.org/?page_id=7565
\textsuperscript{226} Before MINUSTAH, Haiti has hosted the following United Nations missions: The United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) in March 1995; the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH); the United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti (UNTMIH); and the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH)
Tonton Macoutes and Aristide’s Chimeres. This arming of non-state actors in combination with these regimes’ repression of political dissent fostered an environment necessitating of the formation of armed groups and gangs to protect civilian interests. Thus, a legacy of a political and security vacuum arose in Haiti.

In addition to a long history of political instability and violence, Haiti also experienced numerous violent natural phenomena such as hurricanes, earthquakes, disease outbreaks and flooding that have increased the vulnerability of the population and the country as a whole. In fact, tropical storms in particular have increased in severity in this region over the course of the past century.\textsuperscript{227} While one could argue whether natural Disasters could lead to political instability, the fact is that in Haiti, the magnitude of the socio-economic impact and the number of fatalities of extreme natural phenomenon could be blamed on political instability in the country (See table 7). The latest disaster occurred on January 12, 2010, an earthquake of 7.2 magnitude with an epicenter near the capital city, Port-au-Prince, killing approximately 250,000 people and destroying almost all administrative buildings including the Presidential palace. The earthquake left more than one million Haitians homeless.

One of the major consequences of natural disasters in Haiti has been the movement of people from affected villages into the capital city of Port-au-Prince. During the latest earthquake, more than one million migrated into Port-au-

\textsuperscript{227} Klose and Webersik, “Long-term Impacts of Tropical Storms and Earthquakes on Human Population Growth in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.”
Prince—mainly in already poor and crime ridden neighborhoods, such as Carrefour-feuilles, Cité soleil, and Bel Air. This influx of people has put great pressure on a weak central government to provide almost inexistent social services. In addition, the economy in both rural and urban areas, more so the latter, has been increasingly disrupted by insecurity and rising business costs due among other factors to gang extortion of business owners.

In addition to a weakening economy, community support structures, lack of education opportunities, and political instability, Haiti also experiences an increased proportion of youth among the population. Youth between the ages of 15 to 35 years make up a relatively large proportion of the total population in Haiti. Some authors have argued for the correlation between increased youth population and social unrest and revolution in the context of unemployment and economic downturn. In the case of Haiti, some vulnerable youth turn to gang groups, which provide protection and fulfill basic needs of livelihood and social recognition. The result is a self-sustaining gang system perpetuated by socio-economic needs and dismantled family support systems.

While the drivers of insecurity are manifested at personal, structural, cultural and personal levels, they are fueled by economic, social and political factors:

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228 Fuller, The Youth Crisis in Middle Eastern Society; Fuller, “The Demographic Backdrop to Ethnic Conflict: A Geographic Overview”; Goldstone, Diehl, and Gledistch, “Demography, Environment and Security.”
Table 6: Drivers of instability in Haiti

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic factors</th>
<th>Social factors</th>
<th>Political factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• High unemployment particularly among youth;</td>
<td>• Social exclusion;</td>
<td>• Political instability with successive dictatorial regimes;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High levels of poverty;</td>
<td>• Low literacy level;</td>
<td>• Dysfunctional judiciary and corrupted police;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Diminishing purchasing power particular among the poor;</td>
<td>• The disintegration of communities and families under the combined pressure of urban migrations, immigration, poverty and crime;</td>
<td>• Rampant corruption in different levels of the government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of investment in key sectors of the economy and infrastructures;</td>
<td>• Permeability of some communities, particularly in urban areas to gang culture and networks;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Combined effects of globalization and international competition with negative effects on rural agricultural production;</td>
<td>• Availability of small arms and assault weapons.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Increased informal economy; illegal and criminal economic networks (e.g.: drug trafficking)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/18/1751</td>
<td>Major earthquake</td>
<td>South of Haiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/21/1751</td>
<td>Major earthquake</td>
<td>South of Haiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/03/1770</td>
<td>Magnitude 7.5 earthquake</td>
<td>South of Haiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/07/1842</td>
<td>Major earthquake</td>
<td>North of Haiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/08/1860</td>
<td>Major earthquake</td>
<td>South of Haiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/23/1887</td>
<td>Earthquake</td>
<td>North of Haiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/29/1897</td>
<td>Earthquake</td>
<td>North of Haiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/22/1998</td>
<td>Category 2 hurricane</td>
<td>(Haiti and Dominican Republic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/18/2004</td>
<td>Hurricane Jeanne</td>
<td>North West Haiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/15/2008</td>
<td>Category 2 hurricane</td>
<td>Haiti and Dominican Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/29/2008</td>
<td>Category 1 hurricane</td>
<td>Southwest Haiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/03/2008</td>
<td>Tropical storm Hanna</td>
<td>North Haiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07-09/2008</td>
<td>Category 4</td>
<td>West Haiti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Major natural disasters in Haiti


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In the face of numerous adverse events and sustained political instability, Haitians have been struggling to build a viable state and society. For better and for worse, this struggle has invited the intervention of the international community in the form of bilateral and multilateral assistance. The sustained support of MINUSTAH and the election of President Préval in 2006 have paved the way for a modicum of stability, including efforts to build democratic institutions, the police and promote economic development. These reforms have encouraged many donor countries and multilateral development organizations to contribute the stabilization and reconstruction of the country. The January 12 earthquake reconstruction efforts and the election of Michel Martelly have made Haiti one of the priority recipients of development assistance in the Caribbean region. While Haiti is back on the radar of donor countries, it has never left the priority list of the United States, which has encouraged significant donor pledges to maintain Haiti as their top regional priority. The United States has been the longest and the most constant donor country to Haiti (See Figure 10).
Figure 10: Net Official Development Aid to Haiti (10 biggest countries)$^{230}$

$^{230}$ http://data.worldbank.org/
UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE TO HAITI

Throughout history, Haiti has been considered a strategic country for U.S. national security and interests. The means used to ensure that Haiti does not pose a threat or contribute to undermining U.S. interests and security have evolved to reflect the agendas and dynamics of U.S. politics. Since the 1915 U.S. invasion of Haiti (an invasion that lasted twenty years), the U.S. has used a wide variety of military, diplomatic and foreign assistance strategies with the hope of turning Haiti into “a stable, pro-American, prosperous, and reasonably democratic society.” After almost one hundred years (since July 1915) of U.S. intervention and interference with Haiti, U.S. policy-makers were still asking themselves:

What will it take to help Haiti become a peaceful democratic country that respects human rights and the rule of law? How can the U.S. support Haiti in building an economy with opportunities for its people to lift themselves out of poverty, illiteracy, and hunger? How can we help settle the political crisis made worse by the flawed elections in 2002? And how can we safeguard our own national security from the dangers posed by illegal migration and narcotics trafficking?

History of U.S. Foreign Assistance in Haiti: The Cold War and the Post Cold War

With the launch of World War I in 1914, multiple factors were at play which contributed to the U.S. invasion of Haiti. Among other factors, the presence of French and German business networks threatening U.S. economic

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231 Girard, Paradise Lost, 89.
interests in the region; coupled with the risk of a German take-over of the island as a strategic position to launch attacks against U.S. soil prompted America officials to invade Haiti “before any power could use it” (namely Germany). In addition, Haiti controlled the Windward Passage to the main sea-lane to the Panama Canal which was a key economic asset.\textsuperscript{233}

At the height of the Cold War, Haiti’s strategic location in the Caribbean with the proximity to communist Cuba and to the U.S. made the small island an ideal military location that the U.S. could not afford to concede to its nemesis, the Soviet Union. In addition, the potential for a communist takeover in Haiti favored the further spread of communism throughout the entire region of Latin America. This evolving and conjectural definition of U.S. security interests continued to shape the strategic importance of Haiti until 1989, thus influencing the foreign policy toward the country.

\textbf{Cold War Era}

Haitian politics during the Cold war had been dominated by the Duvalier regimes (both father and son). The regimes survived six U.S. presidents before being toppled during Reagan’s second term in office on April 7, 1986. While U.S. presidents, regardless of their political affiliations, designed and implemented foreign policy through the prism of the communist threat;\textsuperscript{234} the patterns of U.S.

\textsuperscript{233} Girard, \textit{Paradise Lost}.
\textsuperscript{234} Bacevich, \textit{American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of US Diplomacy}; Gaddis, \textit{The Cold War}; Gaddis, \textit{Russia, the Soviet Union, and the United States}; Friedman, \textit{The fifty-year war}; Root, \textit{Alliance Curse}.
foreign policy and assistance to Haiti reflected the differences between Republicans and Democrats on the use of foreign assistance in guaranteeing U.S. security (See figure 11),

*The Republicans: Eisenhower, Nixon, Ford, and Reagan*

When Duvalier took the oath of office in 1957, Eisenhower held office. Eisenhower believed in the Cold War but warned against imposing democracy on people who were not ready for it. Like other Republican Presidents who followed Nixon, Ford, and Reagan, Eisenhower applied a fear-based foreign policy, bolstering regimes for the sake of regional stability. With respect to foreign aid, he used aid as a tool to reward U.S. allies. Therefore, he strengthened alliances with countries aligned with his anti-Soviet campaign by dispensing aid.

In Haiti’s case, Eisenhower created a template for other Republican Presidents to follow, which was based on strengthening a U.S.-Haiti alliance and providing support to Duvalier as long as he was aligned with the U.S. policy against the Soviet regime. After Cuba failed to Communism, it was crucial for the U.S. to maintain its influence over in Haiti. As illustrated by a senior member, of the Eisenhower administration:

Colonel, the most important way you can support our objectives in Haiti is to help keep Duvalier in power so he can serve out his full term in office, and maybe a little longer than that if everything works out.\(^\text{235}\)

\(^{235}\) Blum, *Killing hope*, 146.
This quotation comes from the Commander of a Marine mission to rescue the Duvalier regime after a failed coup on August 12-13, 1959; it is indicative of Eisenhower’s and his successors’ policy vis-à-vis Haiti. As the data show (see Graph 1), aid to Haiti grew more under Republican presidents in comparison to Democratic presidents. The Duvaliers responded in kind to this favorable policy that promoted stability and channeled the much needed aid without challenging the political survival of their regime. The regime remained loyal to the West and supportive of the United States’ foreign policy. The Duvalier regimes opened Haitian markets to U.S. companies, providing businesses with tax exemptions and cheap labor. This favorable business environment for American businesses spoke well to an important local Republican constituency. Even though Haiti remained poor and its citizens were suffering under an autocracy, the autocrat was a staunch supporter of the U.S. against the Soviets, and he offered economic advantages to a key constituency, the business community.

*The Democrats: Kennedy, Johnson and Carter*

Democrats and Republicans shared the Cold War paradigm of equating communism with the Soviet Union. However, Democrats supported internal reforms and modernization abroad while Republicans tended to buttress alliance solidarity (which meant accept autocratic regime as long as they were against communism). This sharp contrast was clearly exemplified in Kennedy’s approach to Haiti. Kennedy despised the Duvalier regime, and opted for regime change by
suspending military aid to Haiti and initiating CIA covert operations. However, the emergence of Cuba as a strong ally of the Soviet Union made it a necessity to support Haiti since the U.S. wanted to remove Cuba from the Organization of American States (OAS) and limit the influence of Cuba in the Caribbean and Americas. The imperatives of the Cold War once again had won the day: Kennedy and Democratic presidents after him continued supporting the Duvalier regimes. However, the Democrats’ support came with strings attached in the form of calls for internal reforms, and these calls intensified with Carter’s focus on human rights.

Despite the support provided by the Reagan administration, which almost tripled foreign assistance to Haiti, the repeated calls for reform and the budgetary cuts initiated by the Democrats before him created openings for potential challengers and opportunities for revolt against the regime. These openings were aggravated by other factors including mistakes committed by Jean-Claude Duvalier himself, such as his multi-million dollar wedding to Michele Bennett, a mulatto, in 1982, which alienated key constituencies of the black middle-class coalition and the suffering landless peasants. Another gaffe included Pope John Paul II’s visit in 1983, which was intended to boost Duvalier’s stature but

\footnote{Blum, \textit{Killing hope}.}

\footnote{Failure of understanding the importance of the Black Nationalism and its symbols would cost Jean-Claude Duvalier the loyalty of the black middle class and bourgeoisie, thus contributing to his downfall in 1986.}
turned out to be a call for change. In February 7, 1986, the wind of change blew strong in Haiti, eventually bringing down the Duvalier regime.

While the U.S. succeeded in warding off the communist threat to Haiti, not much of stability was left in the country after the tyranny of the Duvalier regimes.
Figure 11: U.S. Economic assistance to Haiti from 1957-2006 by U.S president (US $ per capita)

238 USAID Foreign Assistance Database (FADB) via http://gbk.eads.usaidallnet.gov/.
Figure 12: U.S. Economic assistance to Haiti (US $ disbursements) FY 2001 - 2009
Post Cold War Era

Since the democratic election of President Aristide in 1990 and the military coup that followed a year later, Haiti has been marred by political instability. Post Cold War U.S. foreign policy toward Haiti has been dominated by programs in support for democratization and addressing the influx of Haitians due to political instability and poverty. For many U.S. politicians, the refugee issue poses a national security threat. Mass migration of Haitians arriving in the U.S. by sea has strained American homeland security forces, leading to an immigration policy aimed at deterrence of further Haitian migrations through either urgent repatriation or detainment with special attention to bond considerations related to this goal.

Political instability and the vast migration of Haitian refugees in the U.S. generated passionate debates and thorny discussions in the U.S. For many like Randall Robinson, a Washington-based human rights advocate, these two issues were linked:

Until democracy is restored in Haiti, we must as a nation respond to those fleeing Haiti in fear for their lives with the same compassion and decency with which we have responded to those feeling tyranny anywhere else.\textsuperscript{239}

President Clinton more than President Bush (Senior) set the stage for Post Cold War American foreign policy to Haiti. This policy was roughly twofold: a) Support for democratic process, and b) support for economic and military elite. The first was to

\textsuperscript{239} Greenhouse, “Clinton Policy Toward Haiti Comes Under Fire.”
ensure stability and economic development, and the second to stymie any popular and leftist movements, remnant of the Cold War.240

This particular strategy married the Cold War approach of both the Republican and Democratic presidents toward Haiti. Despite its seemingly bipartisan approach, it was not without tensions within the Clinton administration and Congress, as many members of Congress, including Democrats such as Christopher J. Dodd and Ronald V. Dellums, were angry at the administration for not doing enough to tighten the embargo against the military junta that had ousted President Aristide.

The result of these tensions led to two very different simultaneous policies towards Haiti in the early 1990s, with a public policy advocating democratization in Haiti on the one hand and a more traditional, covert policy of support for the elite and military power structures on the other. The latter approach had become the norm throughout American foreign policy towards the developing world both during and after the Cold War, giving the Pentagon and CIA justification to pursue this policy independently of the White House’s conflicting policy in the case of Haiti. The White House claimed neither control over the CIA nor knowledge of its activities in Haiti; meanwhile, the CIA and Pentagon publicly rejected the White House’s policy. This tension within the Clinton administration came to the climax when President Clinton attempted to provide U.S. military support to return Aristide into power in October 1993.241 The CIA subverted the

240 McGowan, “Haiti.”
President by leaking misinformation to key Republicans in Congress, making Aristide to appear “a psychopath” according to Haitian military informants. President Clinton’s action to restore the democratically Aristide set a novel precedent.

For many years, U.S. has found itself in what Root calls a “commitment trap”\(^\text{242}\) in which it was forced to support unpopular autocrats out of fear of losing Haiti to communism during the Cold War or having an ambiguous policy toward the elite groups out of fear for populist and leftist leaders (in this case Aristide). Haiti on the other hand was caught in a “dependence trap,” that is the inability and/or unwillingness of the leadership and the citizenry to develop any endogenous institutions and infrastructures to support the social and economic well being of the population. Both traps have undermined U.S. security and the development goals of Haiti as a country.

Towards the end of the 90s, Haiti faced a series of natural disasters in addition to political instability, social unrest, and economic challenges. In September 22, 1998, Hurricane George a category two storm ravaged part of the island destroying approximately three-quarter of farmland and leaving thousands of residents homeless. This deadly combination of political instability and natural disasters profoundly altered U.S. foreign policy in Haiti. Support for democratization was still a priority, but addressing the structural causes of instability and poverty through a multilateral approach by working with other countries and the United Nations gradually became a modus

\(^{242}\) When a donor follows through his aid commitment for several years despite lack of results; and still keeps the hope that the next round of funding will achieve the desired results.
operandi of subsequent U.S. administration from the Bush administration to the presidency of Obama.

Much like past administrations, the Obama administration understands the political and social challenges in Haiti. The 2010 earthquake transformed U.S. foreign policy in the country. U.S. leaders have acknowledged new approaches for the development of a better Haiti. U.S. Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton, has framed United States’ support to Haiti as a long term commitment, recognizing that United States’ influence in the country will not be a quick exit strategy. Secretary Clinton further claimed that the development strategy in Haiti must be accomplished differently in that, the international community must be engaged and involved for the long haul.

Past U.S. administrations have had significant impact on the political spectrum of Haiti. Policy-makers in the U.S. have been increasingly supportive of the notion that to make the most effective use of the scale and different types of resources, it is important to work in an integrated and coordinated manner for the development of a new Haiti.

More than ever before, USAID has become the leading funding and implementing agency of U.S. foreign assistance through various mechanisms. However, USAID’s strategy in Haiti faces multiple challenges including difficulties coordinating other agencies activities and lack of local capacity and systems to manage and absorb the influx of assistance money.
Figure 13: Cumulative disbursement ($ US) of U.S assistance to Haiti by agency between 2005-2009 by agency²⁴³

²⁴³ USAID Foreign Assistance Database (FADB) via http://gbk.eads.usaidallnet.gov/
USAID strategy in Haiti Since 2004

USAID represents an important component for development programs among third world actors. With a set strategy in place, USAID’s programs have yielded important results in various countries across the globe. However in Haiti, there are many internal difficulties that have put a strain on the work strategy of USAID agents. The lack or weak structure of organizational coordination has weakened the operational work of the agency in the country.

244 USAID Foreign Assistance Database (FADB) via http://gbk.eads.usaidallnet.gov
USAID’s developmental strategy encounters several challenges due to the organization’s inability to work with and coordinate the work of other U.S. agencies providing assistance and other development actors in Haiti. It is also evident that the local government’s lack of a viable development strategy has meant that U.S. government officials and international implementers must discover alternatives or new means of coordination.

In 2004, the Office of the Coordination for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) was established to improve the lack of coordination strategy. This organization’s mandate was put in place to integrate U.S. government planning process for stabilization and post-conflict efforts. Although S/CRS proved to be beneficial for development among organizational actors, many program implementers discovered that the strategy itself at times had been time consuming (taking 18 months for a one-year strategy) and also too prescriptive and detailed. As a result, this mechanism limited program implementers’ goals in carrying out their objectives.

The work of USAID is channeled through international NGOs and contractors. Projects funded by USAID through third party actors are based on close collaboration and coordination with local and national government actors in a country to increase and strengthen the capacity of third world agents. However, in delivering the missions and objectives of USAID’s requirements, international NGOs and contractors often encounter several obstacles due to the complex bureaucratic structure of USAID.
In Haiti, USAID’s bureaucratic process has placed several limits on NGOs to conduct their work. As USAID’s program increased over the years in Haiti, aid implementers experienced additional work load due to Washington’s oversights and micromanagement. For instance, since the responsibility for project design and preparing scopes of work rests mostly with USAID in Washington, international NGOs and contractors note that there is too little hands-on staff involvement and guidance in designing and implementing programs. Thereby, mission staff from aid implementers found it difficult to alter the design or their work.\textsuperscript{245}

Despite these limitations, the USAID’s mission managed to implement dozens of programs. In the case of Haiti, most projects were implemented using “USAID managed mechanisms.” Projects from these mechanisms presented a complex set of difficulties of sustainability and ownership, as they were generally initiated by USAID either at the mission or the headquarters in Washington, D.C and were designed by international NGOs or U.S. based contractors who work with local entities for implementation.

While they represent an important vehicle for international assistance, these projects raise some issues regarding local ownership. In relation to the research on sustainability and ownership, the projects represent an important opportunity to study processes and dynamics between actors as they struggle to accomplish the goals of the projects and ensure its sustainability.

\textsuperscript{245} Save the Children, \textit{Modernizing Foreign Assistance. Insights from the Field: Haiti.}
IDEJEN (Out-of-school Youth Livelihood Project), which is one of the two cases of the dissertation, falls under the category of “USAID managed mechanisms” and is worth exploring.

THE CASE OF HAITIAN OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH LIVELIHOOD INITIATIVE (IDEJEN)

The Context of the Project

Prior to the late 1990s, most Haitian children did not attend school despite the fact that education is compulsory from age 6-12. One of the biggest obstacles in education for children was the attendance fees for both public and non-public schools. The population of out-of-school youth in Haiti continues to increase in number as a result of increased poverty, political instability and a weakened economy. Less than 4 percent of children who enter secondary school actually complete their schooling. However, those who complete secondary level often encounter challenges in finding employment to earn a livelihood.

There was considerable concern that these out-of-school and unemployed youth constituted a powder keg waiting to explode in social unrest that might further destabilize the country as it transitioned from the Aristide era to post-Aristide democratic government. Longstanding poverty, social disparities and institutional fragility and

246 As for the academic year 2011-2012, the newly elected President Michel Martelly has lifted school fees for public schools. In partnership with telecommunication companies, the Haitian government charges an additional fee on all international calls to Haiti; this fee goes to a special education fund managed by the Haitian government to cover the cost of education fees for children of vulnerable and poor families.
illegitimacy contributed to political unrest, violence and contribute to the high prevalence of gang activity. These gangs have often attracted a growing number of unemployed and disenfranchised youth. IDEJEN was designed in the wake of these challenges to address the needs of vulnerable youth for livelihood opportunities.

**IDEJEN: Project History and Evolution**

The project was developed by a U.S.-based consortium led by Education Development Center (EDC) under a cooperative agreement with USAID under its Educational Quality Improvement Program/Youth Trust (EQUIP3) program. EDC designed the project to expand youth’s employment and educational opportunities.

**The program model**

The IDEJEN model targeted out-of-school youth, 15-24 years old, who never attended school or dropped out after two years of elementary school (“école fondamentale”). These youth typically enter a learning program of 18 months: 12 months of training in youth centers and six months running an income-generating activity independently with mentoring services from youth workers. This training is

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247 The Educational Quality Improvement Program 3 (EQUIP3) is designed to improve earning, learning, and skill development opportunities for out-of-school youth in developing countries. EQUIP 3 also provides technical assistance to USAID and other organizations in order to build the capacity of youth and youth-serving organizations. EQUIP3 is composed of one lead organization, Education Development Center (EDC), Inc., and several partners that represent together diverse capacities and areas of expertise ranging from education to peacebuilding to workforce development. The implementing agency for EQUIP3 projects is the Education Development Center. Current technical partners include the Academy for Educational Development; the International Council on National Youth Policy; the International Youth Foundation; the National Youth Employment Coalition; Opportunities Industrialization Centers, Inc.; Street Kids International; and YouthBuild USA. [http://www.equip123.net/webarticles/anmvviewer.asp?a=600&z=123](http://www.equip123.net/webarticles/anmvviewer.asp?a=600&z=123)
complemented by two components that proved to be crucial to the success of this model: health and recreational activities.

All youth participants in the IDEJEN project received a modular work readiness training course. The curriculum associated to the course was designed to promote functional literacy and numeracy, as well as the acquisition of core employability skills required by employers, including life skills such as communication, leadership, work habits, financial literacy, problem solving, conflict resolution, and more. Upon successful completion of the program, participants received a work readiness certificate attested by the Ministry of Education Agencies of Vocational Training (INFP).

In addition to the educational training, participants benefited from an accompaniment program that included advanced entrepreneurship and business plan development, short term specialized technical training, health, and HIV-AIDS prevention.

An important component of the project’s activities was the linkages with the private sector. Beyond training, IDEJEN worked with community based organizations (CBOs) and career centers hosted by regional Chambers of Commerce to increase beneficiaries capacity in linking the program’s youth graduates to sustainable livelihood pathways—either through pursuing formal and non-formal education and training or linking them to jobs, internships and/or helping them to start small businesses. The private sector was determinant at this stage, as its needs and advice influenced the orientation and the content of the internship program as well as the opportunities available.
Implementing institutions, including government agencies, involved in the project benefited from a capacity building program. The capacity building program was designed to address the specific organizational needs of each institution and to build the capacity of the network local partners as a whole. The focus of the capacity building program was to enable these institutions to better serve youth and enable them to seize livelihood opportunities.

The capacity building covered areas such as the delivery of workforce education and training services; career counseling and job placement services; understanding labor market demand and working with the private sector; and organization and management. The minimum capacity building package provided to all implementing partners included training of trainers on the work readiness curriculum, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation.
The *IDEJEN* framework involves out-of-school youth, 15-24 years old, in the following cycle:

**Initial Training Phase – 12 months**

- Basic Employability Training:
  - Basic education
  - Life skills
  - Vocational training (One Year)
  (Graduation with National Vocational Training Institute certification level 1)

**Orientation to 2 tracks**

- **Employment Track**
- **Education Track**

- Access to jobs and internships (6 months)
- Entrepreneurship training and small business development (6 months)
- Optional short term job experience (2-8 weeks)
  *Concurrent with Initial Training and/or*

**Accompaniment Phase – 6 months**

- Primary School (enter in 5th or 6th grade)
- Vocational School Level 2 (1-2 years)
- Access to quality Vocational Training Level 2 without primary school certificate

Figure 15: *IDEJEN* project model
The IDEJEN project went through several extensions starting from a pilot project funded by USAID and implemented by EDC in 2003 to its own locally run NGO currently managed by Haitians.

**Study and pilot: 2003-2004**

The project IDEJEN had three major objectives:

1. Strengthening organizations preparing youth for a livelihood;
2. Increasing basic education and technical skills of out-of-school youth; and
3. Applying lessons learned from its activities to develop a long-term strategy for serving out-of-school youth.

From September-December 2003 a study funded by USAID was conducted by EDC to explore the existing resources and economic opportunities for Haitian youth. Based on the research, the vision of the project was the following: after two years, the situation of these young people and their needs would be better understood; programs already working with these young people and helping them to gain a livelihood would be further strengthened; and more of Haiti’s young population would be able to support themselves and their families.

During the pilot phase of the project, 450 out-of-school youth in three communities were trained in non-formal basic education, life skills, and technical training. A report which was finalized in June 2006 recognized the successes of the pilot phase (including developments of certain partnerships and improved
education among participants) and also made recommendations (including obtaining greater knowledge about the Haitian labor market).

**Extension 2006 – 2008**

After the conclusion of the pilot phase in September 2006, *IDEJEN* was extended for a second time until September 2008. EDC received additional funding of approximately 3.6 million U.S. dollars. During the extension, *IDEJEN* introduced an accompaniment phase for graduates. Furthermore, an assessment team identified an obstacle to formal employment for the project’s beneficiaries: the private sector perceived the youth as actors involving in kidnapping individuals as well as contributed to other form of social unrest. As a result, businesses in the private sector failed to collaborate with *IDEJEN* in placing youth in internship opportunities. In response to this situation, the assessment team suggested that *IDEJEN* identify private sector “champions” committed to placing youth in internships and employment opportunities. The project also proposed to strengthen its work with Haitian government institutions.

**2007-2010 Extension**

EDC received an estimate of US$ 11,119,000 for extension of its activities until September 2010. The extension focused more on scaling up the outcomes already achieved and reaching out to additional youth outside the city. The several program extensions allowed the project to accomplish numerous results:

1. Reintegration of marginalized youth into society;
2. Improved capacities of Community Based Organizations (CBO) to address programming needs of out-of-school youth;

3. Strengthened Haitian government institutions, to provide and/or oversee improved services to out-of-school youth; and

4. HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention messages were disseminated to out-of-school youth, ages 15-24.

Since 2003, the extensions served 13,050 youth who have participated in a basic employability training program; out of whom an estimated 9,300 youth transitioned to the livelihood accompaniment phase; 4,700 of these youth pursued their education, out of those 2,500 received partial scholarship and 2,000 benefited from additional training, coaching services as well as received capital to start their own small business.

The project also increased the capacity of local community based organizations (CBOs) and Centres d’Education Familiales (CEFs) of the Ministry of Education. Additionally, all youth training centers embedded a HIV-AIDS prevention training curriculum in their life skills lesson.

2010: Early close-out and establishing local NGO

During the 2008 extension, two major changes occurred: a catastrophic earthquake on January 12, 2010 and a subsequent notification from USAID requesting early closure of the project significantly affected IDEJEN’s programming.
Following the earthquake, IDEJEN established the Youth Earthquake Relief Corps (YERC) with the purpose of providing opportunities for IDEJEN youth to utilize their skills to assist earthquake survivors. As a result of the earthquake, IDEJEN halted its continuation of policy support that consisted of accompanying government capacity building and many training activities. Due to the damage of training centers, youth whose training was delayed had the opportunity to participate in recreational and psychosocial support activities via child/youth-friendly spaces.

On March 8, 2010, USAID notified EDC of the decision to stop funding IDEJEN project; as a result, the project would not receive its final allocation of funding even though the planned close-out was not expected until September 30, 2010.

To ensure the continuation of the project, IDEJEN was converted into an independent local NGO. The local team applied and obtained in June 2010 the legal status of a local NGO, as a result of the close collaboration between the project and administrative authorities. The Haitian leadership of IDEJEN, mainly the former Chief of Party\textsuperscript{248}, diversified sources of funding and established partnerships with institutions such as the International Labor Organization and other international development agencies.

\textsuperscript{248} The designation of the chief of project in the vocabulary used by USAID and its partners
The announced early closure of the project greatly affected IDEJEN in many ways, particularly in the loss of key personnel and positions. As part of the strategy to transition from a USAID-funded project to a local NGO, changes took place in the realms of human resources, youth career development centers, enterprise development, and accompaniment. After determining that the remaining funding would no longer cover the accompaniment phase for the cohort of 5,500 youth, IDEJEN closed 110 training centers, 10 Youth Career Development Centers, and 8 Ecoles Ateliers (vocational workshops) and HIV/AIDS Centers earlier than planned.
Figure 16: IDEJEN Timeline
IDEJEN started as a USAID-funded project but was designed and implemented by EDC and its international partners from EQUIP 3 as a cooperative agreement, which falls under “USAID managed mechanisms.” Seven years after its launch, however, the project has morphed into a local NGO both led and managed by Haitians and funded by multiple international development institutions and agencies including USAID. As a local NGO, IDEJEN has kept the focus on youth livelihoods (not only out-of-school youth) and aims at achieving the same outcome as the previously USAID-funded project.

The story of IDEJEN is a project that has been implemented through several social and political contexts experienced by Haiti. The project was designed to help Haiti resolve social instability by addressing one of the key drivers of social instability: youth unemployment and illiteracy. The project operated under stringent conditions such as political instability, natural disasters, as well as civil unrests.

The transformation and the resiliency demonstrated by IDEJEN raise important questions for development practitioners and policy makers. Of all the questions, a certain one remains fundamental: what have been the factors and processes that have driven this transformation and built the resiliency of the project?
In seeking answers, the research uncovered key factors that help understand in part the resiliency and evolution of *IDEJEN* but more importantly, gave insights into the core issue of this research: local ownership of externally designed and funded projects.

What can be learned from *IDEJEN* as far as local ownership is concerned? How has local ownership been facilitated or stymied? Also, is local ownership obtained in this particular case? If so, who are the owners and what is owned?

**LEARNING FROM IDEJEN**

Several important themes emerge from the case *IDEJEN*. The themes raised do not describe the only factors or processes relevant to explaining local ownership of externally funded and designed reconstruction projects; however, understanding how they have emerged or been obtained in a complex project such as *IDEJEN* could facilitate local ownership and sustainability of many projects around the world. The findings are divided in three categories below: a) the emergence of local ownership through three variables: capacity, commitment and contribution of stakeholders; b) processes that facilitated ownership in the case of *IDEJEN*; c) factors and processes that have constituted an obstacle to local ownership.
The Emergence of Local Ownership Through Three Variables: Capacity, Commitment and Contribution of Stakeholders

The assumption guiding this research is that local ownership emerges when local stakeholders are committed to and have used their current or acquired capacity to contribute to the project. The research sought evidence of local ownership in the IDEJEN through the prism of these three variables and how they were expressed.

Ensuring commitment through building on local assets and initiatives -
Addressing the issue of out-of-school youth in a context of social and political instability was welcomed by most stakeholders. At the government level, the Secretariat d’ Etat à la jeunesse et aux Sports (State Secretary for Youth and Sport) showed interest in the standards for livelihood programming during the assessment phase. Developing Haitian standards for effective youth livelihood/employment practice became a core activity of the project. And there were also early discussions within the Ministry of youth on the development of a national youth policy; these discussions were stalled in part because of the political instability and lack of resources. The IDEJEN team suggested working with the Ministry of Youth to explore ways of adapting the PEPNet assessment instrument249 to lay the ground work for the development of standards for youth livelihoods.

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249 The Promising and Effective Practices Network (PEPNet) was developed by the National Youth Employment Coalition in the United States to create standards of effective youth
livelihood programming in Haiti and to develop a capacity development plan for each service provider and monitor progress in the use of the standards. The same interest was also expressed by the Institut National pour la Formation Professionnelle (INFP) (National Institute for Vocational Training), which already had a vocational training program in the formal education. However, the INFP program did not target out-of-school youth. The governmental institutions’ commitment for IDEJEN was based on their different mandates to support youth, but more importantly on the potential for IDEJEN to assist them to improve and increase their impact. This commitment also facilitated the legalization of the local NGO IDEJEN. This process took less time than anticipated (four months), in part because of the continuous commitment of Haitian authorities to the goals of the project.

EDC, through the IDEJEN project, tapped into an urgent need that Haitian authorities had identified and were working on. Youth literacy and socio-professional reinsertion were already national priorities in 2003 and continue to be prioritized under the current Michel Martelly presidency. Political instability and gang-related crimes created a sense of urgency that made IDEJEN relevant to the eyes of officials.

At the community level, they were already some community-based organizations working on the issue of youth basic education and livelihood. All employment practice, recognize effective programs and create an inventory of effective youth employment practices.
IDEJEN local awardees were working on youth issues at different levels. However, the IDEJEN project still had to win the trust and commitment of the stakeholders at the community level, which included community based organizations, community leaders and youth themselves. The Community Youth Mapping activity was important in ensuring that accurate information was collected on both the needs and assets of the communities and youth. The mapping activity also facilitated a gradual introduction of the project into communities through working with youth and community leaders. Several stakeholders’ retreats were held to introduce the project. Local stakeholders may not have significantly influenced the design of IDEJEN, however, their commitment was determinant for the project to move forward, and as it did, their influence on the implementation grew with it. “The enthusiasm of my Haitians counterparts was encouraging; we knew that we had champions inside the Government and the communities,” said a member of the initial assessment team, recounting what the team felt during their various meetings. This commitment was one of the factors that influenced EDC to put community based organizations at the core of the project implementation. It is also important to mention that participants in focus groups with community based organizations viewed the

Community Youth mapping is a process developed by the Academy for Educational Development (AED). Through this process, young people locate and document information about “places to go and things to do.” It involves young people going block by block to canvass their neighborhoods in search of programs, services, places, opportunities and caring adults available to them, their families and their peers. Upon identifying these resources, they will be entered into a computer system that will make the data available in user-friendly ways.

http://cyd.aed.org/cym/tensteps.html
development of the standards for youth livelihood programming as a capacity building tool that helped them to improve their work:

This tool [Standards for youth livelihood programming] and all the discussions and training related to it helped us better know our community, helped us develop a disciplined and systematic way to do our job.\textsuperscript{251}

In fact, despite the enthusiasm and commitment, there was a capacity gap that needed to be addressed.

The project \textit{[IDEJEN/EDC]}, with USAID, made the decision to work with organizations running very simple operations – some without physical offices – but which were real community-based organizations with the capacity to reach out to those out-of-school youth most in need of support. Making this choice, the team also realized that more technical support was necessary, both on the organizational and programmatic levels.\textsuperscript{252}

This strategic choice was motivated by USAID’s and EDC’s interest in prioritizing local commitment over capacity, knowing that capacity could be built by local or international organizations, while commitment has to be endogenously developed and emerge from within the organization.

\textit{Comprehensive and customized approach to capacity development and strengthening} -Having made the choice to work with community based organizations; the trade-off was to invest more resources on capacity strengthening and development. But the initial assumption for the capacity strengthening was that the community based organizations had the capacity to

\textsuperscript{251} Participant in a focus group, June 15, 2011 in Pétionville, Haiti.

\textsuperscript{252} Excerpts of the Application to amend the Associate Award – September 14, 2005 – “Haitian Out-of-School Livelihood Initiative (\textit{IDEJEN})”- EQUIP3 / Youth Trust Education Development Center.
deliver services to the youth, an assumption that the evaluation of the pilot phase proved to be wrong. As clearly admitted in the application of amendment to USAID by EDC:

The original design of the project made assumptions that did not hold true regarding the capacity of local organizations to provide education and livelihood preparation programs for out-of-school youth. The different studies done by IDEJEN, especially the youth mapping, revealed that out-of-school youth were much marginalized, and that few programs existed to really serve their needs, except maybe on health issues.\(^{253}\)

In light of this feedback, the project had to rethink the capacity building strategy. Given that the project had to work with several local stakeholders, including government agencies, the strategy had to be holistic and customized to the capacity needs of each stakeholder. Furthermore, at the project level, the monitoring and evaluation plan (M&E plan) had to include specific indicators that capture these efforts. The capacity development entailed both the skills set development of the personnel of local stakeholders through training, programmatic and organizational systems and equipment (computers, photocopiers, etc.).

The analysis of the project’s documents and discussions with former staff of the project showed two main categories of capacities: organizational capacity (related to the structure and processes of the entity) and programmatic capacity.

\(^{253}\) Excerpts of the Application to amend the Associate Award – September 14, 2005 – “Haitian Out-of-School Livelihood Initiative (IDEJEN)”- EQUIP3 / Youth Trust Education Development Center. An observation confirmed during interviews with former senior staff on the project.
(related to activities and aspect of implementation of the project). The organizational capacity was viewed as systems, processes and infrastructures needed to run the organizations or the institution. The programmatic capacity was the set of skills, knowledge, as well as resources (curricula, documents, and finances), strategies to provide education, livelihood opportunities and accompaniment to out-of-school youth.

A more in-depth analysis reveals that within these two main categories, there were three overlapping and intertwined types of capacities with specific aims: a) capacity for the delivery of services to youth targeted by the project; b) capacity for sustainability and; c) capacity for supportive policy frameworks and tools (See Figure 6). These three types of capacities reflected not only the diversity of local stakeholders, but also the interdependence between them and EDC, as well as the willingness of USAID to see the project sustained and be owned by Haitian organizations.

*Capacity for the delivery of services:* This component entails building and improving the skills set, systems, processes and equipments necessary for the community based organizations to provide education and livelihood opportunities to out-of-school youth targeted by the project. At a programmatic level, this included training the staff on “key elements of youth program” as well as working with CBOs on an outreach strategy and youth participation strategy through the use of tools such as Community Youth Mapping. At the organizational level, it
entailed financial management and monitoring and evaluation as well as development of reporting and financial systems of CBOs. There was little focus on fundraising training during the first year. In terms of processes, there was an emphasis on procurement as well as “advance and reconciliation” processes of USAID’s financing to enable community based organizations to better manage sub-grants. The capacity development was done at the level of each youth center managed by CBOs with the support of a field agent paid by IDEJEN project.

Capacity for sustainability – The focus was both on financial and programmatic sustainability, with the underlying assumption that as long as a community based organization was financially sustainable it would continue to deliver services to youth. This assumption held true for some non-governmental organizations, particularly those managed by young leaders and religious leaders. While all community based organizations were committed to youth development and provided youth with livelihoods, the youth-managed community based organizations and religious ones had better organizational capacity. In order to facilitate financial and organizational sustainability, the project focused on income generating activities and developing strategies for diversifying sources of funding. For programmatic sustainability, the goal was for each youth center to be registered and recognized as a technical mid-school by the Ministry of Social Affairs or the Technical Institute for Vocational Training; by the end of the project, nine youth centers were recognized as vocational centers. To ensure
development of capacity for sustainability, the emphasis was put on training of
trainers, strengthening the partnerships with the Technical Institute for Vocational
Training to train more technical educators and information technology training
through community cyber centers. The most successful CBOs received some
initial funding to start income generating activities.

Capacity for supportive policy frameworks and tools – IDEJEN worked
with different government agencies. The Ministry of Youth, Sports and Civic
Action collaborated in the development of a youth national policy; the Technical
Institute for Vocational Training helped coordinate the design and development of
training programs and manual and certified IDEJEN training; in addition, the
Ministry of Education worked with IDEJEN to develop a national policy on non
formal basic education.

The overall aim for this dimension of capacity was for the government
agencies and ministries to create a conducive and supportive framework that
supported the delivery of education services and livelihood opportunities to out-
of-school youth as well encouraging the scaling up and outreach of IDEJEN-type
services to the rest of the country. One senior staff of the Technical Institute for
Vocational Training highlighted this aspect of capacity development in the
following terms:

Prior to IDEJEN, INFP [the Institute] was not targeting out-of-school
youth. We cater to the training needs of those youth in the formal
education system. IDEJEN gave us the incentive to tackle this category
of youth . . . We are using what we have gained from working with
IDEJEN to service other organizations such as OXFAM, OIM and other USAID funded projects. We have reconsidered all aspects of our work and looked particularly at the underserved, that is out-of-school youth.

The capacity development and strengthening entailed technical assistance, policy analysis and recommendations, mobilization of resources in the form of international consultants, equipment and materials; no direct financial support was provided.

The strong emphasis on capacity development and strengthening of local stakeholders was the consequence of the strategic choice to prioritize commitment over capacity alone. Working with local community based organizations who enjoyed proximity to youth and their communities, and demonstrated credibility and experience with youth, but lacked the capacity meant that a comprehensive and customized capacity strengthening and development had to be implemented. An approach of capacity development that promoted local appropriation of skills, processes and tools, as described in the job profile of the Youth Livelihood Specialists trained by EDC/IDEJEN:

Their role [was to] ensure that the CBOs appropriate the approach and training to themselves and are able to continue improving their training and mentorship of the youth. IDEJEN, through its livelihood specialist staff member, will ensure that lessons learned are collected and shared among the youth centers to continuously increase the relevance of its approach to livelihood preparation.254

254 From the “Revised proposal for additional activities and extension to September 30, 2008” – Submitted by Educational Development Center, Inc. September 26, 2008.
The work with government agencies followed the same logic of working with the most committed agencies and providing them with the capacity necessary to support the results aimed at by the project. The level of capacity differs from one community based organization to the other and from one government agency to the other; the same can be said for the level of commitment. These differences between stakeholders were reflected in their respective contribution to the results of the project and sustainability of these results.
**Table 8: Capacity for ownership of IDEJEN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of capacity</th>
<th>Programmatic</th>
<th>Organizational</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Types of capacity</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity to deliver services to youth</strong></td>
<td>Training the staff on “key elements of youth programming”; Outreach strategy and youth; Participation strategy; Community Youth Mapping.</td>
<td>Financial management; Monitoring and evaluation; Development of reporting and financial systems of CBOs-Procurement processes; Advance and reconciliation processes of USAID’s financing.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity for sustainability</strong></td>
<td>Youth center to be registered and recognized as a technical mid school by the Technical Institute for Vocational Training (INFP); Mentorship and accompaniment services to out-of-school youth.</td>
<td>Income generating activities; Funding for start-up activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity for supportive policy frameworks and tools</strong></td>
<td>Development of a youth national policy; Design and development of training programs and manual policy analysis; Policy recommendations. At this level, the local stakeholders targeted were government agencies. The CBOs did not benefited from this strategy; however, at the CBO level, it would have meant the strengthening of their advocacy activities in support for youth policies and funding as well as their abilities to dialogue and lobby the government and other organizations for youth friendly programs and funding.</td>
<td>Technical assistance; International consultants; Equipments and material.</td>
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Figure 17: Summary of capacities developed through IDEJEN

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Local stakeholders:</th>
<th>Local stakeholders:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Community based organizations (CBO)</td>
<td>CBOs, INFP, Business sector</td>
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<th>Content:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Organizational capacity (use of Self assessment kit of key element of youth programming) Financial and organizational management) Programmatic capacity building: Training on different IDEJEN program components</td>
<td>Financial sustainability through income generating activities Start up funding Diversified sources of funding Program sustainability: mentorship and accompaniment services for out-of-school youth – Recognition of each youth center as a technical school by the INFP</td>
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<tr>
<th>Equipments:</th>
<th>Equipments:</th>
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<tr>
<td>All CBOs are equipped with a computer and a printer</td>
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<tr>
<th>M&amp;E indicators:</th>
<th>M&amp;E indicators:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of CBOs implementing a program of organizational improvement Percent of CBOs meeting standards in financial management, center management and report writing</td>
<td>% of CBOs implementing income-generating projects % of CBOs that will have diversified 10% or more of the funding needed to train out-of-school youth through an 18 month cycle. Capacity of CBO to raise funds and to generate other types of resources.</td>
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<th>Local stakeholders:</th>
<th>Local stakeholders:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government of Haiti institutions: Ministry of education – Ministry of Youth – INFP</td>
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<th>Content:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance and policy analysis and recommendations Training of personnel Equipments</td>
<td>Technical assistance provided to the Ministry of Education for the development of a policy on non formal basic education.</td>
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<th>M&amp;E indicators:</th>
<th>M&amp;E indicators:</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Policy research and technical assistance provided to the Ministry of Youth for the development of a national youth policy. Assuming sustained political will in formulating a National Youth Policy,</td>
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| | Training and technical assistance provided to the National Vocational Institute (INFP) to adapt curricula to targeted IDEJEN youth population and to improve expertise in quality control and small business development |

Result: **Community-based organizations have improved capacity to address programming needs of out-of-school youth**

Result: **Government of Haiti institutions are strengthened to provide and/or oversee improved services to out-of-school youth**

**Figure 17: Summary of capacities developed through IDEJEN**
Contribution for local ownership- In the course of almost seven years (August 2003 – March 2010), the IDEJEN project provided non-formal basic education, technical training and livelihood opportunities to approximately 13,050 out-of-school youth. The project launched 110 training centers by 2009, including nine écoles ateliers (vocational schools) and established six career centers hosted by regional chambers of commerce to provide career counseling and orientation to youth. The project achieved these results by managing a cumulated USAID funding of US $ 17,155,658 to improve the capacities of 98 community based organizations; the Institute of Vocational Training in the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Civic Action; as well as Haitian non-governmental organizations. Among the 98 community based organizations, 20 started income generating activities, out of those 12 started implementing the IDEJEN program until the January 2010 earthquake. The achievements of IDEJEN with beneficiaries were made possible through the participation of a diversified group of local stakeholders who despite their limited capacity were already committed to the issues of youth education and livelihood; when provided with the relevant capacities, these stakeholders scaled up their activities and contributed to the project. Each group of stakeholders made a unique contribution.

With Community based organizations – The IDEJEN programmatic strategy put community based organizations at the heart of implementation. The
The project was implemented through community-based organizations who contributed in the following ways to the success of the project:

a) Recruitment of youth participants, trainers, and monitors work with community leaders in order to build legitimacy and acceptance in the community. The community-based organizations promoted and supported the integrated flexible learning systems (FLS) approach by combining literacy and numeracy instruction, life skills education, and technical training to better prepare out-of-school youth for livelihood opportunities.

b) Management of youth centers - Many of these community-based organizations opened new IDEJEN centers in their neighborhoods; some of the CBOs managed more than three youth centers. The role of these organizations was also to ensure that these youth centers took ownership of the approach and training and were able to continue improving their mentorship of the youth.

c) Monitoring and evaluation – Community-based organizations also contributed to the monitoring and evaluation of IDEJEN activities in their communities by reviewing the relevant indicators from IDEJEN Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) and developing their own strategy to monitor progress and report on results.

_Haitian Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs)_ – Haitian NGOs were involved in the IDEJEN project as contractors with clear scope of work. The main
criterion for their selection was their competitive capacity to deliver in a cost effective way. Fondation Haïtienne de l'Enseignement Privé (FONHEP), one of the two Haitian NGOs that started working with IDEJEN since the implementation of the project, helped develop a basic education curriculum for out-of-school youth. Additionally, the curriculum was delivered by other locally based organizations. Prior to the completion of the curriculum, FONHEP created an interim curriculum that was used during the first months of the project.

Unlike FONHEP, Fondation l’Avenir,255 which was qualified to receive a sub-grant of US $100 000 from IDEJEN, did not go through the rigorous local partner selection process put in place by EDC/IDEJEN. According to a former IDEJEN staff member interviewed during this research: “Fondation l’Avenir was pushed down our throats by USAID mission.” Fondation l’Avenir was supposed to establish cyber centers in the crime-rigged communities of Port-Au-Prince, particularly in Carrefour Feuilles. Unfortunately, the organization did not deliver on its contractual obligations, despite the efforts put in by IDEJEN to improve their capacities. According to another former IDEJEN staff member:

255 Fondation l’Avenir was launched in September 2003, a locally based Haitian Non Governmental Organization (NGO). Through the partnership with IDEJEN, Fondation l’Avenir was to launch a community Cyber center (C3) project that seeks to mitigate youth participation in violent conflict by offering them basic education, employment and livelihood opportunities that are alternatives to gang membership. In addition, Fondation l’Avenir was to lead an emerging consortium of small- to medium-sized IT companies to work on behalf of disadvantaged youth as a way of broadening the capacity of Haitian society to use computer and Internet technology and to increase the engagement of the Haitian business community and the Haitian Diaspora in activities to benefit Haitian youth.
The failure of Fondation l’Avenir to deliver on its scope of work is in part due to the fact that they did not enjoy the credibility and the experience of working with youth that other community-based organizations had. Frankly, the promoter was a businessman, who was not committed to the goals of the project.

Many former IDEJEN staff as well as some informants at USAID expressed these feelings.

The Fondation l’Avenir case is not an isolated one in development aid. Many authors have written about “elite capture” of development aid, a phenomenon where well-connected elite will use their relations to capture or channel development resources for their private gains. In the case of Fondation l’Avenir, the funding mechanisms put in place by IDEJEN which were supported by technical and financial control procedures to ensure compliance to USAID regulations helped avoid any misuse of funds. According to former IDEJEN staff interviewed, the IDEJEN team had to carry some activities and cancel others that were initially under the responsibilities of Fondation l’Avenir.

Youth participants - From the beginning of the project through the end, youth were more than beneficiaries, as they were active in the implementation of the project. At the beginning, some of them played an important role in gathering and analyzing community data through the Community Youth Mapping activity. During the accompaniment phase, they designed and manufactured products to be sold either in the youth centers or the market place.

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256 Platteau and Gaspart, *Disciplining Local Leaders in Community-based Development*; Wedel, *Collision and collusion*; Dumas, Wedel, and Callman, *Confronting corruption, building accountability*. 

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The government of Haiti – The government of Haiti contributed to the IDEJEN project through the Institute of Vocational Training; the Agency for Non Formal Education under the Ministry of Education; and the State Secretary for Youth, Sports, and Civic Action.

The State Secretary for Youth and Sports (SEJSEC) – The SEJSEC initially expressed an interest in the key elements for youth programming. The SEJSEC played an active role in the design of these elements and their promotion. However, implementation remained problematic—not due to a lack of political will but of a coherent and effective implementation strategy. This gap resulted in part from the abrupt suspension of the IDEJEN project and the destruction of government buildings and infrastructure in Port-au-Prince during the earthquake.

The Ministry of Education, through two of its main branches:

The Vocational Training Institute (Institut de Formation Professionnelle, or INFP) - The INFP was a key champion of IDEJEN within the Government of Haiti, working closely with IDEJEN, training the monitors of CBOs and collaborating with IDEJEN toward the certification of the IDEJEN curricula. One of the INFP senior staff summarized the contributions of the agency:

Developing training work skills curriculum based on the needs of youth IDEJEN was serving, training youth monitors who will then train youth in centers, and evaluating youth and certifying their training. Overall, we supported the program in the work skills development component. At the beginning, IDEJEN put a greater emphasis on education of out-of-school youth and drop-outs and less so on work skills development. However, the successes of the latter helped support the project and increase the retention rate compared to when it was only focused on the basic education.
The Ministry of Education’s non formal education branch started important work on the elaboration of the national policy on non-formal education by providing institutional credibility and national expertise on the subject. The agency also helped mobilize certain policymakers and lawmakers around the proposed policy proposal. Several meetings were organized and held at the Ministry of Education on the policy.257

In addition to working specifically with the two agencies of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry also provided access to the Centre d’Education Familiales (CEF), which are evening education programs run by the Ministry of Education. These CEF hosted IDEJEN youth centers and benefited from capacity development of CBOs while contributing to IDEJEN services with youth.

Haitian businesses – IDEJEN worked with a variety of stakeholders including the business sector, which served as a key player in the reinsertion of youth and providing them with employment and job opportunities. However, the business sector was not as responsive as expected, which can be explained by the lack of adequate skills, but also the stigma attached to out-of-school youth in Haiti. It is important to note that most companies that recruited IDEJEN youth were involved in other aspects of the program as well. These actors were not just simply interested in a trained workforce; they also embraced the mission and the

257 These research was enriched by the information I gained by attending all five meetings as the translator of the US based international consultant Dr. David Rosen, who was hired by EDC/IDEJEN to advise the agency on the policy proposal as well as discussions with the participants (private sector, Parliament and executive branch of the Haitian government).
vision of the project. Companies such as Valeo Carnez,\textsuperscript{258} which recruited IDEJEN youth, also implemented a career center in the Western region of Haiti, as well as helped organize a trade fair for IDEJEN youth. CordAid,\textsuperscript{259} another NGO / business, provided youth job opportunities in the construction sector. Members of CordAid embraced the mission of IDEJEN in promoting sustainable youth development. As one of the CordAid managers reflected on the mission:

\begin{quote}
I think it is an idea whose time has come…It has impacted the youth unemployment. IDEJEN provides an education and also respect. Education and respect are crucial! IDEJEN also creates a space and opportunities for youth development. This space is key to success.
\end{quote}

Experiences from other USAID projects show that vocational training projects are more likely to convince companies and business organizations to recruit trained youth when the business sector is approached not only as a customer of “products” of vocational training programs, that is a trained youth workforce, but more as a partner involved in the cycle of the three ‘C’s: commitment, capacity and contribution. In other words, these partners demonstrated their commitment to the mission and aims, and they benefited from capacity development which led in turn to their contribution to the project and sustainability.

\textsuperscript{258} Valeo Carnez is a business group with more than 300 employees in Haiti. Valeo Carnez volunteered to host a career center in one of their premises and also recruited 6 IDEJEN youth to work in the factory.

\textsuperscript{259} Cordaid is an international NGO and her field office in Haiti is in partnership with IDEJEN. They hire IDEJEN youth in post-earthquake construction project. Cordaid has construction contracts in St Marie, Villarosa. Cordaid has hired so far between 18-25 IDEJEN young beneficiaries aged between 15 and 25 years.
Processes that facilitated local ownership

One of the theoretical assumptions made in this research is that local ownership is facilitated though participation and negotiation. These are processes that help mitigate externalities caused by power asymmetry as well as empowering all stakeholders to influence decision-making processes and take initiative at various levels of the project. These processes were used in various ways throughout the design and implementation of IDEJEN.

Institutional learning as a facilitator of participation - Institutional learning as the institution’s ability to systematically gather information on activities, procedures and context to be used for changes and improvements was at the core of IDEJEN. The IDEJEN project has undergone several extensions. Each extension added a new component or set of activities to the project and in some cases altered certain assumptions the project was based on.

Each phase was sanctioned by an evaluation of the project. A study of the various phases shows that the conclusions of the evaluation that pertain to activities constituted the ground for the next extension (See Figure 7: IDEJEN timeline). This constant evolution based on the findings and lessons from previous phase created a climate where all stakeholders felt that their voices were heard and they were co-creating a shared meaning to the project. These changes influenced by learning did not only improve the resiliency of the project shown by
its adaptability and continuity during various periods of instability and challenges, but it also built a sense of confidence among various local stakeholders.

Learning within the IDEJEN project was facilitated at all levels of the USAID mission in Haiti and EDC.

 USAGE mission – The project was funded using the EQUIP 3 program, which operates with USAID under the Leader with Associates (LWA) cooperative agreement. This agreement is a flexible mechanism that allows the mission to quickly and easily access technical support from U.S. based contractors—in this case a consortium led by EDC. Beside the flexibility and ease of action offered by the LWA cooperative agreement, the program also had two main components that facilitated learning: a) the leader award’s activities, which focus essentially on project design, research and development and dissemination of best practices; b) the associate awards, which are projects funded by the USAID mission targeting out-of-school youth. The award provided IDEJEN with resources and time to essentially study the context in Haiti and improve the understanding of the mission on the opportunities, assets, needs, stakeholders that supported youth livelihoods and basic education. Using the study as the entry point for the project, the award created a programmatic context that favored learning and helped avoid patronizing attitudes observed in other externally funded projects. As eloquently put by one of the USAID Agreement Officer’s
Technical Representative (AOTR) in Haiti: “The right people came together at the right time and were willing to learn.”

The EQUIP 3 program provided the mechanism, by focusing on research and design; the award created the institutional framework for learning to occur. This combined dynamic built a strong foundation for integrating findings and lessons learned through the life of the project.

EDC / IDEJEN – Learning from past experiences, IDEJEN and USAID changed approaches and added different components throughout the life of the project. After an initial study by USAID and EDC, EDC added a technical training and income generating component to the program of IDEJEN. Furthermore a health and nutrition training was integrated into the project’s curricula to address the needs of youth, particularly those in poor and extremely vulnerable neighborhoods. In fact, EDC and IDEJEN learned that it was necessary to adopt a more holistic approach to youth development if they were to succeed in providing their young beneficiaries with the skills and livelihood opportunities that they needed.

These lessons learned were not only reflected in programmatic changes, but also in management processes. Tracking and implementing lessons learned was made possible through the development of a two pronged strategy that used:

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260 From an Interview conducted at USAID mission in Haiti during the month of June 2011.
a) a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan that included lessons learned; and b) a series of activities that promoted and encouraged learning.

**Monitoring and Evaluation** – After the pilot phase, it appeared that there was a need to make greater efforts and commit resources to ensure all lessons learned through the pilot phase were documented appropriately. While the project initially focused more on assessing the capacity building of local community based organizations as well as opportunities for basic education and youth livelihoods, the M&E framework was revised to also measure the learning achievements of the participating youth in literacy and livelihood skills as well as lessons that could improve the overall success for improved services to youth.

A full time local staff in charge of implementing the monitoring and evaluation framework was hired in order to collect data on a regular basis and to document the learning process. Monitoring and evaluation became a core element of the capacity building package of each local organization partnering with IDEJEN, which was welcomed by all participants.

The monitoring and evaluation was designed not only to support learning, but also to track the implementation of lessons learned. In the case of IDEJEN, particularly during the pilot phase and the extension of 2006 to 2008, lessons learned were part of the monitoring and evaluation’s sets of indicators. They were operationalized as follows:
“Objective: Apply lessons learned from starter activities to a long term strategy for serving out of school youth so they can earn a livelihood and improve their economic conditions

Expected result: USAID-Haiti uses strategy drafted on the basis of the result of this project to develop “state of the art” projects to address the needs of the out-of-school youth.

Indicators: Number of Congressional Presentation (CP) project descriptions that are new, related to out-of-school youth, and that reflect lessons learned from the pilot activity.

Data collection: Review of congressional Presentation (CP) submission
Analysis and reporting: Focus of analysis will be on how new projects vary from projects presented on earlier years”.

**IDEJEN** was among the few USAID projects in Haiti where lessons learned were systematically part of the monitoring and evaluation plan.

**Activities** – In order to encourage learning and implementation of lessons learned, a series of activities was organized to promote the exchange of practices, experiences and reflections. These activities included a retreat involving community based organizations, **IDEJEN** staff, private sector organizations and government agencies; and peer learning workshops among youth centers.\(^{261}\) Additionally, **IDEJEN** produced monthly bulletins that informed stakeholders on the progress made by the project. Efforts and resources were increased to regularly monitor and assess the progress and lessons learned from the project.

**Partnership with committed local stakeholders to achieve results** - A stakeholder analysis (See Fig: Stakeholders network) of **IDEJEN** shows that in addition to international partners from the EQUIP 3 consortium, the project relied on a dense network of local stakeholders—particularly community based

\(^{261}\) These activities provided a mechanism for posing and responding to inquiries among peers and sharing good practice ideas, thus fostering an environment of learning.
organizations—to achieve results. Each community based organization operated three youth centers as well as a number of *Centres d’Education Familiales* (CEFs), which were evening education programs run by the Ministry of Education. The analysis of local stakeholders reveals two key factors of the strength of the local network: a) a selection process that favored credibility and legitimacy over capacity; and b) changing power dynamics toward partnerships through increased participation.

By the end of the project, *IDEJEN* worked with 98 community based organizations running 118 youth centers nation-wide, including nine training centers, or *écoles ateliers*, and six careers centers hosted by regional chambers of commerce. In addition to working with community based organizations, *IDEJEN* also worked with government institutions. This dense network of local stakeholders provided the project a visible footprint as well as strong connections with the communities and the beneficiaries. This strong local connection allowed *IDEJEN* to survive despite the instability and crime rigged context that followed the forced exile of former President Aristide, particularly during the summer of 2005.

A selection criteria that favored commitment, legitimacy and outreach over capacity—EDC/IDEJEN worked exclusively with local community based organizations as opposed to non-governmental organizations, which were supposed to be more structured and staffed to deliver the types of services youth
needed. “The decision was motivated by the desire to have communities involved and ensure local ownership by communities, families and community leaders.” The selection criteria applied supported this strategic choice. Certain key criteria were applied to select “local awardees:” good knowledge of the community and its out-of-school youth population; five years of experience with children and youth; existing physical infrastructures to run the project; and an existing staff who managed the project.

To mitigate the lack of management capacity after selection, the community based organizations participated in an additional pre-training on the elaboration of a work plan and financial management in general to administer USAID funding. Throughout the course of the project, community based organizations underwent a series of capacity strengthening workshops and coaching from field agents.

This set of criteria meant that community organizations were already operational and known in the communities. Some of these organizations included

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262 It appears from discussions with senior staff on similar projects focusing on youth livelihood that in some countries service oriented NGOs are favored over community based NGOs. Several reasons are used to explain that preference: more US contractors prefer “cost reimbursement”, when local partners pay for expenses and are reimbursed based on receipts, unlike “advance and reconciliation” whereby the US contractor disburses grant money and the local partners have to reconcile and justify the use of money. The latter presents financial risks for the US contractor, while the first approach requires the local partner to be financial capable, a requirement many community based organizations do not have. There is also pressure from USAID mission to achieve quick results with limited or no budget for capacity building.

263 Interview with a former EDC staff. June 11, in Washington, DC.

264 Physical infrastructure included a classroom or a space where training could take place. This infrastructure was part of the contribution required from the community based organization (CBO).
church groups and youth associations. Most of them were identified during the Community Youth Mapping implemented by youth in their communities. The participative process of youth mapping meant that some of the community based organizations were recommended by community members who recognized them as legitimate conduits for youth services.

**Increased participation changed power dynamics towards partnership** – The initial focus of the IDEJEN project toward study and learning set the stage for involving local partners. As stated in the project and confirmed by observations and discussions with different stakeholders, the implementation of IDEJEN depended mostly on local stakeholders, particularly community based organizations and youth, who translated their knowledge and willingness into activities:

A crucial first step in the implementation process is the mobilization of the communities IDEJEN operates in. The process of community’s mobilization is articulated around the following steps:

- Inventory of youth organizations in new areas of intervention done by IDEJEN staff
- Meetings with youth organization leaders organized by IDEJEN staff
- Creation of a Local Advisory Group that regroups all the Youth Community Organizations identified to support project implementation. The advisory committee provides guidance and logistical supports to the Youth Centers.
- Recruitment of Field Agents under recommendations of the Community Leaders.265

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265 Excerpts from Haitian Out-of-School Youth Livelihood Initiative EQUIP3 / Youth Trust Associate Award Application Amendment. September 17, 2003
While the implementation of the project heavily relied on local stakeholders, it was only the second stage of the project. EDC designed the overall framework of the project. EDC/IDEJEN project team selected community based organizations based on a set of criteria that overall favored experience, knowledge of the youth segment, credibility and community outreach, as well as providing capacity. One can safely argue that power balance was in favor of EDC. However, as the project evolved and activities were implemented, the EDC/IDEJEN project relied heavily on the community based organizations and other local stakeholders to achieve the core results of the project. The performing community based organizations decided on the options or types of vocational training to be offered to youth. In other words, they had shared influence on what was taught and to whom it was taught, as they were also the ones selecting youth beneficiaries. As recognized by one of the CBO leaders during a focus group discussion:

There were a back and forth discussions with IDEJEN staff and we would finally agree on the training options. Youth were not part of the conversation. However, they will not be forced into an option. They choose from what was available. We will choose some monitors and then send their CVs to IDEJEN. The selected monitors will then be trained by INFP [National Institute for Vocational Training] and on other methods of non formal basic education.

EDC/IDEJEN decided which community based organizations would partner with the project. Following the selection of partner institutions, the organizations were responsible for recruiting beneficiaries and ensuring the quality of services to be delivered to youth. Community based organizations that
formed a long partnership with IDEJEN realized they had major influences in shaping procedures. The IDEJEN project benefited from these changes in power relations, as they enabled open and honest discussions that enriched the learning process and improved the project. Over time, negotiations and interdependence tended to mitigate the frustrations of the original power asymmetry.

“Now they [EDC/headquarters] can’t just impose on us anything.” This observation, made by a senior staff of the project during an interview conducted toward the end of the project, echoed a feeling also shared by some of the other performing community based organizations towards the IDEJEN project.

During the initial design of the project, local stakeholders were involved as informants. The implementation phase required local knowledge that only Haitians could have provided.
Partnerships: exchange of information and resources and mutual agreement on programmatic issues

One-way contribution (e.g.: service providers)

Figure 18: IDEJEN's stakeholders’ network
Sustainability process: IDEJEN model and strategy of sustainability - Since its pilot phase, IDEJEN has placed youth livelihoods and literacy at the core of its operations. To achieve the overarching goal of providing youth with opportunities of life skills and livelihood, the project worked with all categories of stakeholders to provide beneficiaries with vocational training and job opportunities. Learning from activities and experiences from other organizations, IDEJEN developed an evolving and flexible model that addressed the changing and diverse needs of youth and reinforced the capacity of local organizations and government institutions.

Each community based organization within the IDEJEN network was required to submit a sustainability plan for the youth center along with its proposal for funding. The core strategy for ensuring sustainability of the IDEJEN project rested on three main pillars: a) income generating activities and hands-on experiences; b) applying lessons learned for program sustainability; and c) working with local stakeholders including youth themselves (See Figure 8: The IDEJEN Stakeholders’ Network).

Income generating activities and hands-on experiences - The financial sustainability strategy revolved around an income generating activity, which also provided a learning opportunity for the youth, as they were the main “managers” of that activity. The income generating activity provided them with both the opportunity to practice their entrepreneurial and management skills and also to gain some revenue from the sale of the products that they manufactured. The
IDEJEN project provided the startup capital, which was generally taken from the learning practicum fund, and it also helped with the market assessment and definition of products, activities, and market segment. For some youth centers such as CREDEV in Port-au-Prince, these income generating activities quickly became micro-enterprises, generating important revenues for the centers through high quality products such as paintings and handicrafts. These activities also provided youth who were not able to enroll in vocational training with hands-on experiences in a specific trade. Generally, most vocational training programs delivered classes in craft making, not the trade (skills to run the business); by introducing income generating activities in the youth centers, IDEJEN provided the techniques to build things and guided youth on the trade, as well as ensuring the financial sustainability of the centers. However, quoting from a presentation note of USAID final evaluation during the Chief of Party Summit, the IDEJEN program director highlighted the fact:

That the project did not have as one of its objectives ‘to create financially autonomous organizations’. It is highly likely that the project’s interventions offer the necessary conditions to lead organizations toward financial autonomy. However, this does not seem to be a sufficient condition. CBO [community based organizations] leaders lobbied to be included in future IDEJEN [the new local organization] interventions. But in the future, IDEJEN will continue to choose carefully those to be included in its programs.

Applying lessons learned - The evolution of the project shows that each extension phase incorporated new aspects revealed by previous assessments or

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266 Presentation of EDC Program Director, Cornelia Hanke at the Education Development Center (EDC) CoP summit in July 20, 2011 in Boston.
evaluations. In other words, each extension of IDEJEN was pushed by the need to expand or add new services to address a need observed (See figure 18).

While the project resulted from a study of youth livelihood opportunities and basic education in Haiti, it was implemented through working with local organizations and government institutions. Most community based organizations provided basic education, employability and life skill training; they also had the responsibility of livelihood accompaniment activities. Meanwhile, the government agencies and ministries—especially the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Civic Action—provided an important policy framework and trained staff to monitor and reinforce the work being done by the implementing Haitian partners. All these local partners also received capacity development opportunities from IDEJEN in terms of training, additional resources and equipment.

*From working with local partners to establishing the local NGO as a strategy of sustainability* – From the initial study that prompted the project, it became clear that it was important to involve youth not only as passive beneficiaries but as active participants through Community Youth Mapping, which was entirely implemented by the youth themselves. The transformation from a U.S. international non-governmental organization designed and implemented project to a local non-governmental organization both led and managed by Haitians was not in the original design of the project, nor was it a critical outcome sought by USAID. While the decision by USAID to end the
project early created a sense of urgency at EDC headquarters and among the IDEJEN project team, the idea to transform the project into a local non-governmental organization was an idea that was constantly in the minds of the Haitian staff of the project.267 The early suspension created the sense of necessity, EDC headquarters provided the institutional support, and the January earthquake offered programmatic and funding opportunities that could be seized by a well-connected local staff—particularly the Chief of Party—to launch the new local NGO.

The creation of a local organization was “forced”268 on EDC by circumstances and some key people related to the project. This new entity is to continue some aspects of the work started by IDEJEN as a reward to the invested by USAID. EDC, the local IDEJEN team and consultants continued to be involved and work with local partners and beneficiaries. The local non-governmental organization that was set up in June 2010 kept the same strategic goal of improving youth livelihood, yet it achieved its goal through a different approach by building on a diverse pool of donors, unlike EDC, which was relying mostly on USAID funding.

267 As recognized by many local staff during interviews and previous conversations throughout the life of the project. These conversations took place between 2007 and 2008, when I was living in Haiti and consulting for different development agencies and local civil society organizations.
268 Interview with a key personnel of the newly created local NGO, June 2011.
Unanticipated Findings: Importance of Time and Organizational Dynamics of Local Stakeholders.

Most of the findings of the case support the assumptions made at the beginning of the research as described in chapter two. However, other unanticipated findings emerged, and two of them are worth mentioning in this case: the importance and impact of time and the organizational dynamics of local stakeholders.

Importance of time - The time factor intervened at two levels: the duration of the project and the length of posting for USAID staff (mainly the Agreement Officer’s Technical representative) and U.S. contractors’ key personnel on the project.

In the case of IDEJEN, the project lasted seven years as a USAID funded project, which is not common among USAID funded projects. Of course, the project went through several extensions and modifications. These extensions were based on a continuous learning process from the project itself rather than a favorable budget environment. In fact, funding for these extensions was never a given fact, but instead a result of countless hours of negotiations between EDC and the USAID Mission in Haiti on one hand; and between the agreement officer’s technical representative in the USAID mission and other USAID programs sources of funding, such as Economic Growth (EGAT), Health (with PEPFAR), and Basic Education.
The duration of *IDEJEN* also allowed the project to grow with some of the local stakeholders, reinforcing the commitment and their attachment to the mission and the vision of the project. “. . . Most of our CBOs . . . stayed with us throughout the project. . . ” The project survived social and political instability, earthquake and hurricanes, to become an essential part of the social fabric in communities where it was implemented. “*More than an acronym of a project, IDEJEN has become a positive concept attached to youth services* . . . We are hearing words such as: “*IDEJEN youth,*” “*IDEJEN partners.*” It comes as no surprise that at the end of the USAID funding in March 2010, one of the biggest assets of the local NGO that emerged from the project was a single name: *IDEJEN*. *IDEJEN* as a concept seemed to have survived the suspension of USAID funding.

At the USAID mission level, one of the criticisms leveled against USAID field staff management has been the quick turnaround of the personnel. Some argue that the quick turnaround did not allow one to know the context of the job and achieved results. As one USAID mission staff put it during an interview for this research:

> Generally it takes you six months to get your personal shipment in the country; during that time, you learn to navigate the maze of stakeholders you will work with and the files and projects you have to decide on. By the time you begin to figure out how things make sense, you realize that you don’t have enough time left to make your own mark, create your impact . . . Of course you are under pressure to deliver results; but before you see the first results of your actions, you are off for the next posting.

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269 Remarks by a former staff of the *IDEJEN* project, in explaining the place of *IDEJEN* in the communities in Haiti.
This testimony reflects the phenomenon that mission staffs responsible of programs tend to stay in the country for less time, and have fewer or no professional interactions with local stakeholders of the implementing programs (this task is left to U.S. contractors implementing the program). As a result, mission staffs lack the local knowledge to fully grasp the opportunities, challenges and impact of program funded. In the case of IDEJEN however, the opposite happened.

The USAID officer supervising IDEJEN worked in Haiti for 18 months prior to the launch of the project and stayed for two years after the launch of the project; and during her stay, she oversaw two phases of extension.

EDC key personnel – The Director of Project, technical advisor and the Chief of Party (Haitian citizen recruited in Haiti without international work experience in her resume)—stayed on the project together as a team from 2003 - 2008. The technical advisor moved from the U.S. to live in Haiti from 2007-2009 to work closely with the Chief of Party. The Director of Project at EDC who oversaw the closing of the project and its transformation to a local NGO worked closely with the IDEJEN team for at least two years prior to the closing and had a good understanding of the project, its context and of different stakeholders. The longevity of key staff responsible of the project IDEJEN whether at USAID, EDC headquarters and at IDEJEN allowed not only a good understanding to the project, the environment of the project but also brought stability to the project,
facilitated learning and implementation of the lessons learned since the same people who were learning had the time to implement them.

Organizational dynamics of local stakeholders – These reflect the organization, the capacity and the relationships between people inside the local entity. These elements determined the effectiveness, efficiency and the performance of the local entity. In the case of IDEJEN for example, the national non-formal basic education policy despite the demonstrated commitment of the director of non-formal education at the Ministry of education and his team to develop a policy; these efforts never led to concrete results.

IDEJEN sponsored a trip to the Philippines for a team of cadres of the Ministry of Education to be inspired and learn from the successful example of a similar work readiness project. Additionally, EDC recruited an international consultant to support members from the Ministry to develop a policy for non-formal education; but the lack of leadership from the Minister Cabinet and a clear government policy on education due in part to the constant changes of Prime Ministers and also internal conflicts within the Ministry of the Education thwarted any chances to develop a policy of non-formal basic education for youth. During a high level meeting, one of the participants said:

We are doing this work [on the policy document]; but it is frustrating to know that the Secretary of Education may be the one chosen to be responsible for implementing this. And really this is a big concern. You know how this government is….”

270 One of the high level meetings between the Task force at the Direction of Vocational Training at the Ministry of Education and the International consultant. I was serving as the translator for the International consultant.
These concerns were never materialized because the policy never took off and the country slid down in a spiral of riots as a result of elections and the January 12, 2010 earthquake.

The organizational dynamics were also revealed to be an obstacle to the performance and the lack of commitment to the vision of the project in the case of the Fondation Avenir. Despite being endorsed by the USAID Mission in Haiti, in line with the mission strategy to support local non-governmental organizations, Fondation Avenir could not deliver contractual obligations with the IDEJEN project. Part of the reasons was that Fondation Avenir was mainly a one person organization, certainly with a well connected leader. However, the type of results expected required more than just connections but also the community connections and organizational capacity and the commitment to the mission. These characteristics were not present at Fondation Avenir, which was moving from one type of project to another (from building cyber centers for youth to training community leaders on rule of law). USAID mandated that IDEJEN strengthen Fondation Avenir capacities and provided support as well as funding. Despite all the investments and efforts, results did not follow nor more activities been sustained.

Whether it is the national policy on non-formal education or the case of Fondation Avenir, these situations show that ownership and sustainability cannot be obtained without considering the structure and the motivation of local
stakeholders. It raises the question of ownership capacity of local stakeholders; which implies that some local stakeholders may own the project, that is get involved and take advantage of the project to sustain the impact of the project and its activities beyond the support of the international contractors and funding agency. And other stakeholders will not be able to own the project or any of its components. In the case of IDEJEN, it clearly appears that the Ministry of Education could not own the policy of non-formal education; and Fondation Avenir could not sustain the activities and deliver the expected results.

* * *

IDEJEN started as a USAID-funded project designed and implemented by EDC and its international partners from EQUIP 3 as a cooperative agreement. Seven years after its launch, the project has morphed into a local non-governmental organization both led and managed by Haitians. Currently, multiple international development institutions and agencies including USAID are funding the organization. As a local non-governmental organization, IDEJEN has kept the focus on youth livelihoods (not only out-of-school youth) and aims at achieving the same outcome and mission as before.

Since its pilot phase, IDEJEN has put youth livelihoods and literacy at the core of its operations. To achieve the overarching goal of providing out-of-school youth with opportunities of education, life skills and livelihood, the project
worked with all categories of stakeholders to provide youth with technical training and job opportunities. During the initial design of the overall project, local stakeholders were involved as informants. However, the role of local stakeholders became crucial during the implementation phase as it required local knowledge and supportive personal networking with various local stakeholders that only Haitians could have provided to implement all project activities. The achievements of IDEJEN were made possible through the participation of a diversified group of local stakeholders who despite their limited capacity were already committed to youth development. When provided with the relevant capacities, these stakeholders scaled up their activities and contributed to the project. Each group of stakeholders made a unique contribution. However, the most visible evidence of local ownership in this case has been the emergence of a new local non-governmental organization that has kept the same name as the project “IDEJEN.”

IDEJEN as a local non-governmental organization has continued to work with the majority of community based organizations in the former project’s network. The organization has also re-organized its international partnership structure to be able to receive funding from other development agencies beside USAID. IDEJEN is more than just a local organization registered in Haiti; it is in fact the institutionalization of the impact of the EDC implemented project funded by USAID during a period of seven years from 2003 to 2010. In other words, the local IDEJEN inherited program frameworks and templates, systems, reputation
and credibility built by the project IDEJEN under EDC. As recognized by the current Director of the local IDEJEN, who was also the Director of IDEJEN under EDC for seven years: “That is the reason why we kept the name IDEJEN, to create the impression of continuity...”

The analysis presented in this chapter shows that at the heart of this transformation from an internationally funded project to a local non-governmental organization were the results achieved by the project. These results were made possible because of the involvement of a capacitated number of local stakeholders, mainly community based organizations and government agencies, who were committed to the goals of the project and have used their increased capacity to contribute to achieve results. A stakeholder analysis reveals two key factors of the strength of the local network: a) a selection process that favors credibility and legitimacy over capacity; and b) changing power dynamics toward partnerships through increased participation and learning.

The strong emphasis on capacity development and strengthening of local stakeholders was the consequence of the strategic choice made by EDC and USAID to prioritize commitment over capacity alone. Working with local community based organizations that enjoyed proximity to youth and their communities, and demonstrated credibility and experience with youth, but lacked the capacity in terms of program management; finance and evaluation meant that a comprehensive and customized capacity strengthening and development
strategy had to be implemented. The focus of capacity development was on the delivery of services to youth and organizational management.

However not such effort was made to work with a core group of local stakeholders, in this case the business sector; this resulted in less job placement. But the earthquake that struck the Western region of Haiti provided important job opportunities for youth in that particular area. Experiences from other USAID projects show that vocational training projects are more likely to influence the decision of companies and business organizations to recruit trained youth when the business sector is approached not only as customers of “products” of vocational training programs, but more as partners who demonstrate their commitment to a project’s mission and aims. As a result, these companies benefit from capacity development that leads in turn to their contribution to the project and sustainability.

The core strategy for ensuring sustainability of the IDEJEN project has rested on three main pillars: a) income generating activities and hands-on experiences; b) applying lessons learned for program sustainability; and c) working with local stakeholders including youth themselves (See Fig: The IDEJEN network). While the findings of this research highlights evidence of sustainability in the forms of continuing activities in some community based organizations; financial autonomy of these organizations remains a challenge, due in part to a bad macroeconomic environment and lack of funds. Most community based organizations still rely on the support of IDEJEN or other sources of
external funding. Little progress has also been made by government agencies at the Ministry of Education, which was entirely destroyed by the earthquake. Even prior to the earthquake, the Ministry of Education showed little signs to move ahead with the non-formal education policy which was a key policy result to be achieved by the project.

In addition to the role of local stakeholders, the project has also benefited from factors such as relative long project duration and a commitment from USAID. This commitment from USAID was sustained by an Agreement Officer’s Technical Representative (AOTR) who was patient and facilitated learning among EDC, USAID and local partners. Furthermore, the AOTR was creative in looking for new sources of funding within USAID. EDC headquarters was also committed to see the project continue and did not hesitate to support the process of registration and institutionalization of the local NGO when USAID abruptly stopped funding of the project.

These positive factors helped the project mitigate the risks associated with the unstable political and social context, elite capture in the case of Fondation Avenir and the bureaucratic obstacles and limitations of USAID.
IV. BUILDING FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY IN CASAMANCE, SENEGAL

This chapter looks at the USAID funded project “Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance,” a project implemented by World Education in Senegal between June 2001 to June 2004. “Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance” represents one of the many ways USAID funds and implements different development projects around the world. The “Peace and Prosperity in Casamance” project was opened to United States based organizations (private voluntary organizations and companies) for competition.

A thorough understanding of this case is facilitated by the analysis of the conflict in Casamance. The project was funded under the USAID comprehensive approach to address problems created by the Casamance conflict and to support the peace process. This comprehensive approach included a series of initiatives under the USAID/Senegal Special Objective 02, formerly known as the Casamance Recovery Development program.271

271 The Casamance Conflict Resolution Program, USAID/Senegal Special Objective 02, formerly Casamance Recovery Development Program, seeks to improve conditions for peace and reconciliation in the Casamance region via economic, social and political development. There are three key intermediate results envisioned in the program, namely 1) improved standards of living for the affected population, 2) increased self-reliance for local development actors, and 3) improved conditions for local level conflict resolution. The program is based on a multisectoral approach which emphasizes 1) income generation
The chapter begins with an analysis of the conflict in Casamance; the analysis is followed by an examination of the contribution from USAID to address the conflict in the region of Casamance. The examination sets the background for an analysis of the project with a focus on local ownership.

**OVERVIEW OF SENEGAL AND THE CASAMANCE REGION**

Situated in the coast of West Africa, Senegal is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the West, the country of Mauritania to the East, Mali to the North, and the countries of Guinea and Guinea-Bissau to the South. The border of the smaller nation of the Gambia bisects the interior of Senegal. Senegal has a vibrant civil society and relatively long tradition of democratic institutions compared to its neighbors. Senegal is home to approximately 13.7 million people, out of those 60 percent of the rural population and 45 percent of the urban population live on less than $1 per day. The adult literacy rate is about 40 percent, while the primary school completion rate is almost 70 percent. Infant and maternal mortality have decreased over the years but remain relatively high. Life expectancy at birth hovers at about 56 years, up from 40 years in the early 1970s.

A former French colony, Senegal won its independence on April 4, 1960. The official language is French; however, the majority of the population speaks Wolof. Its ethnic makeup is diverse with about 6 main ethnic groups (Wolof, Pular, Serer, Diola, including micro finance and training, 2) promotion of cash crops, 3) capacity building for local non-governmental organizations, 4) peace and reconciliation efforts, and 5) infrastructure and rehabilitation. USAID/Senegal’s 2002 Annual Report showed that the program has had important effects in the region and the Mission met its performance targets (USAID Office of the Inspector General, 2003).
Mandinka, and Soninke); the Wolof group constitutes the majority of the population with 43.5 percent.\textsuperscript{272} The majority of Senegalese are Muslim (about 94 percent), with Christian representing about 5 percent of the total population. Muslims in Senegal belong to various Islamic brotherhoods; these brotherhoods are active religious institutions with important political and economic influence. The most popular are the Mourides and the Tijanyyah.\textsuperscript{273}

A major constraint to development in Senegal has been the protracted struggle occurring in the southern region of Casamance—specifically, three decades of conflict between the Government of Senegal and rebels belonging to the \textit{Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance (MFDC)}.

\textbf{The region of Casamance}

The Casamance is potentially one of the richest regions in Senegal, comprising 28,300 square kilometers, which is about 14.4 percent of Senegal’s total surface area. It shares a border in the North with the Republic of Gambia and in the South with the Republic of Guinea Bissau. Due to its higher rates of rainfall, access to waterways and fishing resources, and location as a crossroads for trade with other countries, the region of

\textsuperscript{272} Central Intelligence Agency’s World Factbook: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/

\textsuperscript{273} There are about four Muslims brotherhoods: the Mourides, the most active of all, founded by Marabout Sheikh Amadou Bamba (1850–1927) in Senegal; the Tijaniyyah founded in Fez, Morocco spread to Senegal in mid-19\textsuperscript{th} Century; the Xaadir, the oldest, originally founded in Baghdad in the 12th Century and spread to Senegal in the 18th Century; and the Layene is relatively small and limited to Dakar, the capital city.
Casamance was once a major tourist destination. The protracted conflict, however, has greatly diminished the region’s agricultural, trading, and tourism activities.

Casamance is ethnically dominated by the Diola ethnic group, which occupies the majority of the western territories of Casamance. Most members of the Diola people are attached to traditional beliefs grounded in sacred rituals linked to the forest; however, Christianity and Islam have made some headway. The Diola people constitute more than 60 percent of the population of Casamance (which represents about 5.5 percent of the Senegalese population), a fact that has misled some observers to frame the conflict in Casamance in ethnic terms and particularly as a Diola conflict.²⁷⁴ The Pulaar people represent the other major ethnic group in Casamance: they occupy the Eastern part of the region. The Pulaar are in their majority herders and Muslims. Other ethnic groups in the region include the Madinka and the Serer. The ethnic makeup has been changing since the past decades due to the gradual movement of Wolof from the North. These demographic changes are part of the root causes to the conflict plaguing the region.

Casamance does not only share borders with neighboring Gambia and Guinea Bissau, but the region also shares the same ethnic groups with both countries; a reality that places Casamance at the heart of a complex web of transnational ethnic relations and kinship that runs between Senegal, Gambia, and Guinea Bissau.

The conflict in Casamance is one of the Africa’s longest running civil wars. Although not as lethal as some of the intractable conflicts on the continent, this low-

²⁷⁴ Diaw and Diouf, “Ethnic Group Versus Nation: Identity Discourses.”
intensity conflict (sporadic fighting and attacks using light weapons and land mines) has nonetheless cost the lives of approximately 3,000 – 5,000 people between 1982 and 2010. Since 2010, sporadic ambushes have claimed the lives of dozens of soldiers and rebels. The conflict resulted in over 50,000 internally displaced persons and refugees who have fled to neighboring countries such as Guinea-Bissau and the Gambia; and wrought humanitarian, economic, political, and psychological havoc on the Casamance region. The conflict has led to the decrease of the agricultural sector. In addition, the tourism industry has been devastated tremendously by the conflict. The social fabric of different communities in the Casamance, especially in the Ziguinchor region, has also been greatly weakened.

THE CONFLICT IN CASAMANCE REGION OF SENEGAL

The Root Causes of the Conflict in Casamance

The internal conflicts in the Casamance are driven by both economic and cultural grievances. The economic obstacles of the region include a sense of abandonment by the central government in Dakar and the lack of infrastructure such as roads, hospitals and schools. Furthermore, the central government’s attempts to modify rice output by favoring the development of industrial rice farming that has excluded and deprived small farmers of their only source of livelihoods without providing any viable alternatives. This sense of economic deprivation and exclusion is exacerbated by cultural grievances.
The expropriation of land by both the State and mostly Muslim migrants from Northern Senegal has sown resentment amongst the Diola ethnic group. While nominally divided into Muslims and Catholics, members of the Diola group share a strong common religious tradition that emphasizes unity with the land—specifically the forest, which the Diola feel was plundered by the Muslim migrants with the complicity of authorities.

On December 26, 1982, the tension in Casamance erupted in a pro-independence demonstration, which was staged in the regional capital, Ziguinchor; the demonstration led to the arrest of several leaders of the Casamance separatist movement, known as the MFDC (Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance), such as Father Diamacoune Senghor, Mamadou Nkrumah Sané, Simon Malou, Sanoune Bodian, and Mamadou Sadio. Subsequent government response triggered an ongoing armed conflict. Further clashes continued throughout the mid-1980s.

**Parties and Stakeholders to the Conflict**

The mapping of stakeholders in a conflict is always a dynamic exercise; it is difficult to come with an exhaustive list of stakeholders. This current analysis identifies key parties and stakeholders who are influencing or directly impacting the conflict. The analysis attempts to capture the ever changing nature of the rebel. However, this analysis does not assume that each of the stakeholders is homogenous or their strategies are consistent within the entire group or institution.

*Mouvement des Force Démocratiques de la Casamance* (Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance) – MFDC
The Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance (MFDC), which includes political factions, military factions, and part of the Senegalese Diaspora, was founded in 1947 and was absorbed into the single party state after Senegal’s independence in 1960 under President Leopold Senghor. After the 1982 riots, the MFDC created an armed wing known as Attika (warrior in Diola) in 1985; most of its training activities remained secretive and hidden in the dense forests of the lower Casamance region. After the failure of the first cease fire between the MFDC and the Government of Senegal (GoS) signed on May 31, 1991, in Cacheu, Guinea Bissau, Attika experienced a split in the military command in early 1992.

Under the leadership of veteran commanders with war experience with the French army (from Algeria and Indochina), the Northern Front of Attika constituted a greater threat to the Senegalese military. However, under the leadership of Sidi Badji and Kamougue Diatta adopted a more gradualist approach, favoring a steady move to regional autonomy. The Southern Front, on the other hand, committed itself to the cause of complete independence won by force of arms. But since the death of the Abbé Diamacoune Senghor on January 17, 2007, the emblematic leader and Secretary General of the Movement and several military offenses by the Senegal army, the MFDC experienced several setbacks and divisions.

**Government of Senegal (GoS)**

The Government of Senegal includes senior officials, regional authorities, and locally elected officials such as mayors, rural community presidents, and the Senegal
defense forces. There has not been a coordinated strategy from the various actors within the GoS. Successive Senegalese presidents have used the issue of the peace in Casamance as an electoral promise that unfortunately has not been met. Former President Abdou Diouf launched his 1993 campaign from Casamance, promising peace and economic development in the region. In 2000, President Abdoulaye Wade promised to end the Casamance conflict after 100 days in office (a promise that was not fulfilled).

The Government of Senegal has always avoided giving the conflict in Casamance a national or an international stature. The Government wanted to contain the conflict and frame it as a small insurgency, while secretly working to resolve the fighting. There was and still is an informal council working as a unit on the Casamance conflict within the Government. Unfortunately, since this council is only informal and has a limited amount of financial resources, it has become a focal point of internal battles of influence and personal interests. One of the key strategies to address the conflict under President Abdoulaye Wade has been the use of emissaries that reported to him directly. These individuals were also called “Monsieur Casamance” by the general public and were supposed to conduct pre-negotiation talks with various factions of the MFDC. They were given important financial resources with no clear scope of work or obligation to justify their use of funds. The use of emissaries has raised a lot of concerns due to high risks of corruption and embezzlement of this strategy. Some of these emissaries included: Latif Aidara who became Special advisor to the President, members of the Collectif des Cadres Casamançais (Association of Elites of Casamance), Comité des Sages de la Casamance
(Committee of Wise Men of Casamance), Late Dino Aidara, who was made Special Envoy, Mbaye Jacques Diop then president of Social and Economic Council, and Farba Senghor who has held several ministerial positions in the Wade Government.

The lack of coordination between different government units in charge of the peace process, the politicization of the peace process, and the absence of clear delegation of power have stymied any genuine government efforts for peace in the region. In addition to the two primary actors in the conflict, several actors have been involved and are influencing the conflict. These actors include the two neighboring countries of Guinea-Bissau and Gambia, local and international development organizations and institutions.

**Neighboring countries: Guinea Bissau and Gambia**

Two neighboring countries—Guinea-Bissau to the South of Casamance and the Gambia to the North of Casamance—have both been crucial to the rebel factions (MFDC) and the Government of Senegal. At times, these countries served as rear bases to different military factions of the rebellion while also facilitating various cease fires and the peace process. The behavior of the two countries is influenced by a complex mix of shared ethnic heritage, internal political and economic dynamics based on the regimes in power, and their relations with the central government in Senegal at any given moment.

In fact, in 1990, the political relations between Senegal and its two neighbors were tense. With Gambia, the issue was the dissolution of the Senegambia
confederation when Gambia refused to join a new form of union perceived to be comparatively advantageous to Senegal. This led to the closing of borders and suspension of diplomatic ties between the two countries. Given the important level of commercial exchange and movements of people between the two countries, the tense political environment surrounding both countries caused instability in the region, frustration and anger among the populations on both sides of the river.

With Guinea Bissau, it is the dispute over maritime borders which at the time were thought to have important oil reserves. MFDC combatants would seize opportunities on both of these situations to strengthen their relationships with regimes in Gambia and Guinea Bissau. During that same period in the 90s, there were even talks of creating a unified territory that stretched from Gambia through the Casamance region to Guinea Bissau; also called the “Axis Banjul-Bignona-Bissau” or the “Three Bs”.

Fortunately the governments of these countries worked diligently to suppress tensions and avoided a regional conflict. This appeasement also created a favorable climate for cooperation toward peace in the Casamance region.

275 The Senegambia Confederation was a loose confederation between Senegal and the Gambia, formed on February 1st 1982 to promote economic and socio-cultural cooperation between the two countries who share a river (Senegambia) and ethnic groups. The Senegambia confederation was dissolved on 30 September 1989.
276 Banjul is the capital city of Gambia, Bissau is the capital city of Guinea-Bissau and Bignona is one of the bedrock departments of the rebellion in the region of Casamance.
277 From discussions and email exchange with Mr. Aliou Demba Kebe, former Director of the local NGO “Afrique Enjeux” and currently Program Manager and responsible of the component “Casamance Peace process” at PGP-Senegal, a USAID funded project implemented by FHI 360. Exchange between June and December 2011.
Given the ambiguous role played by these two countries and the fragility of their respective states, one can consider the Casamance conflict as part of a conflict system that stretches from Gambia to Guinea Bissau with its epicenter in the Casamance region. A variety of factors have created a volatile situation that threatens the peace of all three countries: the political instability in both Gambia and Guinea-Bissau; the narco-trafficking in Guinea-Bissau, which has become an international platform for narcotics traffic; the porous nature of the borders with Senegal; and the shared ethnic heritage of inhabitants of the region.

Local constituencies for peace

There is an important local constituency for peace. Traditional leaders and healers, religious leaders, and prominent civil society leaders have voiced their intentions for peace and have taken some initiatives to bringing stability in the region.

Civil Society - There are numerous local non-governmental organizations and religious groups that have been working on issues of peace, economic development, and refugee resettlement in the region of Casamance. In addition to organized groups, resource persons such as spiritual, religious and traditional leaders have facilitated local meetings, rituals and events to support peace in the region. Despite the presence of a relatively vibrant civil society, the lack of coordination, resources and combined efforts to advocate for peace or hold political leaders accountable to their promises have weakened the call for peace and stability from communities and local populations.
International stakeholders

Despite efforts from the Government of Senegal to keep the Casamance conflict off the radar of the international community, several Western countries through their development agencies and other multilateral institutions are working to support peace and development in the region. Most of these organizations and institutions focus on local conflicts and development.

In the 1990s, France through its diplomatic representation played a facilitating (but secretive) role in bringing the various factions of the MFDC together and to support a dialogue with the Government of Senegal. These efforts, however, were limited in their scope and in time. While the United States is not officially involved in the peace process, USAID remains among the most active development agencies in the region of Casamance, particularly with the Casamance peace process and the development of the region. Even though France has been by far the biggest donor country to Senegal (see figure 19), the United States through USAID has sustained funding in the region, specifically toward the resolution of the conflict showing USAID commitment to peace in this region of Senegal.

Despite the regional threats that the Casamance conflict represents, there is no sustained and collaborative effort by the international community to support a peace process in Casamance.
Attempts to Achieve Peace

Since 1982, there have been multiple attempts to bring about peace in the Casamance. Furthermore, there have been multiple cease fires since 1991. Gambia and Guinea Bissau facilitated some of the cease fires. The first cease fire was signed on May 31, 1991, between the commander of the Attika’s northern front, Sidi Badji, and the Defense Minister of Senegal, Medoune Fall, in Cacheu, Guinea Bissau. However, the Southern Front never accepted the cease fire agreement. This partial cease-fire was held until 1993 after the assassination of a Casamance MP triggered a wave of violence.

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This first cease fire carried the hallmark of future cease fires until the last peace accord was signed on December 30, 2004. This partial cease fire was signed only by one faction of the MFDC, and short lived. The 2004 accord has not brought peace or a solution to the conflict. However, it resulted from a momentum toward peace, created by several factors, namely: the war fatigue among the population, sustained informal meetings between various parties organized by neighboring countries, the changing political landscape in Senegal with the election of President Wade, a long time opposition leader, who has promised to bring this conflict to an end; and the return of some international development agencies. On this last point, it is worth mentioning that most development agencies had left the region during the 1990s with the exception of USAID, who continued to support the peace initiative and development projects in the region.

Given the fractionalization of the MFDC, most of these peace initiatives never received the support of the entire movement, thus defeating the purpose of each of the agreements or initiatives. The MFDC is not the only player at fault, as the Government of Senegal has also failed to support viable paths to peace because of the lack of coordination and follow-up of political and economic commitments.

The current situation in Casamance (in 2011) remains that of “no war, no peace” tainted by sporadic but deadly attacks from both the government and some rebels

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280 Since the 1991 cease fire, there have been several cease-fires and peace agreements notably: July 8, 1993, cease-fire signed in Ziguinchor; January 22, 1999, peace talks between President Abdou Diouf and father Diamacoune Senghor; December 26, 1999, 3rd cease fire signed in Banjul, Gambia; March 16, 2001 first peace accord signed between GoS and the MFDC; December 30, 2004, a Comprehensive peace accords is signed between the GoS and the MFDC; this particular accord will lead to implementation summits of Foundiougne I (February 2005) and Foundiougne II (February 22, 2006).
factions. This situation has stymied development in the region, created a fertile ground for banditry, localized communal conflicts and illegal trafficking of all kind of products. There is an economy of war based on drug trafficking, illicit trade of timber, small arms and other commodities; furthermore, this economy of war is stimulated by the instability in Guinea Bissau, which has become an international platform for narco-trafficking. The local population is trapped in a conflict and instability system that engulfs Senegal, Gambia, and Guinea Bissau.

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*                                *
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While the state of Senegal does not experience instability at the same level as countries such as Haiti or Somalia, its incapacity to maintain peace, implement public policies and services in the region of Casamance has contributed to a weakened state authority and legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens; thus increasing its overall fragility. According to the Center of Systemic Peace, since the 1990s there have been a steady decline on the state fragility index of Senegal and the conflict in Casamance has been one of the leading causes.\textsuperscript{281} The instability in Casamance has driven away development and reconstruction projects by international actors. Finding local stakeholders genuinely committed and with the sufficient capacity to design and implement conflict resolution

\textsuperscript{281} Center for systemic peace, State fragility Index and Matrix; http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/inscr.htm
and peacebuilding has been made difficult. Consequently, the few international actors that have maintained their funding have been facing security issues and obstacles, such as fear within the population, lack of trust towards government institutions, skepticism to sustain the impact of their interventions.

This gloomy picture has always been contrasted by calls for peace from different stakeholders, who have also supported concrete conflict resolution and peace building projects. It is therefore with the lofty goal of exploiting these opportunities for peace that USAID funded projects and initiatives under the “Special Objective Program in Casamance” from 2000-2005. The project to be examined in this research gives an important insight onto the strategies used by USAID to positively influence the conflict in Casamance and also contribute to better understanding USAID’s challenge to facilitate local ownership in unstable and conflict contexts.
Figure 20: Senegal's situation of fragility
USAID CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE IN THE CASAMANCE REGION

Senegal has been the recipient of the United States Government (USG) foreign assistance for many years. Several USG agencies are providing economic assistance to Senegal, but USAID is by far the leading funding and implementing USG agency of foreign assistance in Senegal (See Figure 21). Established in 1964, the USAID mission in Senegal has contributed significantly in helping Senegal to address issues of economic development, peace and security, improved access to education and healthcare, and the institutionalization of democracy.

USAID projects and programs in Senegal currently aim to:

- Encourage economic growth by making it easier to start and operate a business and generate trade, particularly for non-traditional agricultural and natural products;
- Expand HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment and improve the health of women and children, particularly through reduction in malaria and other infectious diseases;
- Seek to increase the number of children, especially girls, who complete middle school;
- Support community-led peace initiatives in the Casamance region to help resolve the long-running conflict, which is the focus of this research.

USAID’s Support for Peace in Casamance

Between 2001 and 2009 alone, USAID disbursed a total of approximately U.S. $350,500,000 to support development and peace in Senegal (See figure 21). While funding of the peace process support in Casamance has not been prioritized as much as other sectors, the Casamance region has benefited from USAID support in areas such as education, health, natural resource management, school buildings, and agriculture.

USAID’s support for the peace process has been steady over time, even when most international development agencies had left the region during the escalation of the Casamance conflict in the 1990s; USAID continued to support projects on a limited basis. Even though some projects were disrupted and USAID’s commitment was scaled back in 1997, this sustained presence of USAID has earned the respect of local population and stakeholders. As one of the local key informants to the research explained, “The fact that they [USAID] never left us helped save lives and we are grateful for that.”

USAID directly supports peace in the Casamance region through activities and projects that encourage individuals and groups to maintain ongoing dialogue and advocate for peace and conflict resolution. In addition to supporting dialogue at all levels between different stakeholders such as the government of Senegal (both at central and local levels) in Casamance, different factions of the MFDC.

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and civil society, USAID also addresses issues related to physical reconstruction of villages, economic livelihoods, health, and environmental protection. Past USAID activities in Casamance were done under the Casamance Special Objective (SpO2).

![Graph showing USAID funding over years.](http://gbk.eads.usaidallnet.gov/)

**Figure 21: U.S economic assistance to Senegal FY 2001 - 2009**

**USAID Casamance Special Objective 2 (SpO2)**

As previously discussed, the escalation of the conflict in 1997 stymied USAID commitment in the region because of the ongoing violence and instability.

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However, the improved political relations between the MFDC leadership and the Government of Senegal led by President Diouf as the result of the January 22, 1999 peace talks and then the appeal for funding for peace in the region of Casamance by the Government of Senegal encouraged USAID and other donors to resume work in the region. Following that appeal and encouraged by the return of a relative stability, USAID developed the Casamance Recovery Program Strategy, which included the Casamance Special Objective (SpO2).285

The stated objective of the Casamance program was to create: “Improved enabling conditions for peace via economic, social, and political development in support of the peace process” with key intermediate results:

- Improved Standards of Living for Affected Population
- Increased Self-Reliance for Local Development Actors
- Improved Conditions for Local Level Conflict Resolution.

**Working to implement SpO2**

Over 60 percent of the USAID staff is Senegalese. They work with counterparts in government, civil society, and private sector actors to develop a range of different projects.286 As a general approach, the USAID mission in Dakar consults with the Government of Senegal, non-governmental organizations, the

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285 For detailed information on the USAID Casamance Special Objective 2, read USAID, *Evaluation of the USAID peace-building Program in Casamance and Sub region*, June 2006.

private sector, and other stakeholders in Senegal and the United States to develop an assistance plan. Once the plan is approved, the USAID mission in Senegal is fully empowered to make all decisions in Senegal – from project design through completion.

This autonomy of the mission is an important factor in implementing activities in a timely fashion. Local autonomy is not an advantage given to all missions—evident in the case of countries such as Haiti or of countries that only have a USAID point of contact (e.g., Chad and Niger) or without full a mission (e.g., Rwanda and Burundi). In these countries, the decision-making and implementation phase of activities are marred by bureaucratic constraints and officials in Washington, D.C. Thus, implementing partners and project contractors in host countries encounter numerous interferences that slow the pace of activities and increase frustrations in local mission.

It is also worth noting that while local stakeholders in Senegal such as the government, civil society, and the business sector played more of a consultative role, they were not part of the decision making process. The same dynamic apply to the presence of local staff despite their majority at USAID, they were not in a position to make strategic decisions. As one American staff from USAID in Senegal put it during an interview for this research:

Even though there are local staff working in the mission, decisions at mission level are taken by Americans; who unfortunately rotate. So there is no institutional memory and relationships with locals stakeholders.
This is not to say that there is no local ownership of decision at USAID.\textsuperscript{287}

In order to implement the SpO\textsubscript{2}, the USAID Mission in Dakar carried out an analysis of the development needs, so as to learn how best to implement the project in a conflict sensitive manner. The architectural principles of the programs were the following:\textsuperscript{288}

1. To emphasize rapid execution and public visibility
2. To rely on experienced implementing partners to allocate high impact but small scale resources at the community level, while retaining good technical oversight
3. To intervene in a variety of sectors identified by the population and institutional stakeholders as important

These principles created the foundational base for the selection of implementing partners and the determination of desired results and implementation of activities.

\textit{Instruments used in selecting partners and activities}

Given the fluidity and volatility of the situation in Casamance despite the return of calm, USAID opted for more flexible instruments to select implementing partners both on a local and international level. The USAID mission opted for three main instruments namely:

\textsuperscript{287} Interview conducted on May 12, 2010, Dakar Senegal.
\textsuperscript{288} USAID/Senegal, Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 1998-2006.
• The Annual Program Statement (APS) \textsuperscript{289} - Through an APS, USAID sent out a statement requesting proposals for activities that would accomplish specific results desired by the USAID mission.

• The Request for Application (RFA) – In general, the RFA allows the mission to identify specific areas of priority that are not addressed completely or to the satisfaction of the mission. The RFA was used to address some of the activities gaps that proposals received from the APS did not address. This mechanism was used in the following cases: World Education second project, ASACASE, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) second project.

• Unsolicited proposals were also funded using different sources of funding, including the U.S. embassy in Senegal.

After receiving funding whether through APS, RFA or through other instruments, implementing partners relied on a number of local NGOs and grassroots organizations to implement different activities proposed in the projects submitted to USAID. In this model, USAID provided funding to the implementing partners per agreement; then each implementing partner in alignment with USAID policies provided sub-grants to selected local partners for

\textsuperscript{289} The Annual Program Statement (APS) is a channel through which USAID solicits potential partners to propose creative activities for achieving defined USAID objectives (instead of relying on unsolicited proposals). An APS can have either open-ended response or a closing date of at least six months after issuance. Among other things, the APS includes the objectives to be achieved, a description of how application will be evaluated, and a background of the problem and the available funds.
activities. Implementing partners reported directly to USAID; and local NGOs, grassroots organizations or community based organizations reported to the implementing partners. However, there were informal channels of communication for feedback between the local communities’ beneficiaries and the implementing partners (See graphic below). This process meant that some local NGOs and grassroots organizations found themselves implementing activities for different international organizations (USAID implementing partners) and in some cases competing with international organizations in their communities.
Table 9: Activities funded under SpO2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Implementing partners</th>
<th>Contract Amounts in US$</th>
<th>Type of organization: Local or int'l</th>
<th>Instrument used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>51 000</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Unsolicited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>APRAN</td>
<td>760 000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alimentation and Infrastructure Rehabilitation for Returnees</td>
<td>APRAN</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Unsolicited /Embassy commitment</td>
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<td>CRS</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>International</td>
<td>RFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Capacity Building/Income Generation</td>
<td>ASACASE</td>
<td>560 700</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>RFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace and Reconciliation</td>
<td>PADCO</td>
<td>700 000</td>
<td>International</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 065 000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 22: USAID funding to implementing partners of SpO2 in Casamance\textsuperscript{291}

Figure 23: USAID funding of SpO2 by type of partners\textsuperscript{292}

\textsuperscript{291} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{292} Ibid.
USAID’s Approach: Opportunities and Shortcomings

The programming of the Special Objective Program 2 (SpO2) in Casamance was informed by several assessments and consultations conducted by USAID. These instruments allowed for greater flexibility and for content designed by the NGOs themselves, thus making the program responsive to the perceived needs of the local populations. However, the framework of the funding instruments used by USAID, which emphasized results to be achieved rather than problems to be solved or issues to be addressed, confined NGOs to a framework predefined by USAID. This approach also favored certain NGOs that could implement the desired activities over those NGOs that may have had a better understanding of the conflict and development issues of the region and creative approaches to address them.

Given the urge for rapid and demonstrable results, the focus on the monitoring and evaluation focused on outputs (activities) than results that is, change of state of things, mindsets and behaviors, which in fact were the intermediate results defined by the USAID mission.

Though the Special Objective Program 2 may have been influenced by the local needs, the main focus was on providing rapid benefits to the local population—some sort of peace dividends to create momentum for peace—rather than on sustainability and local ownership. The key imperative was to respond to local needs with the assumption that local stakeholders would buy into the projects. “There was no conscious decision or
strategy to facilitate local ownership”,\(^{293}\) says one USAID staff member. This assumption also influenced the selection of partners to implement the activities with criteria that included efficiency, experience working on issues and the capacity to deliver rapid and demonstrable results. These criteria favored international organizations over local ones, as shown in figure 23. As one on the respondent from a local NGO put it:

> We are really frustrated by some strategies put in place by USAID, which favor international organizations over local. Meanwhile, the locals are the ones running activities. Also USAID does not focus on the relationships between these international organizations and their local counterparts. These relationships sometimes resemble slavery.\(^{294}\)

While the necessity for rapid execution and activities may have been imposed by the need to build momentum for peace and to win over fear and skepticism born from violence and instability, some of the activities funded, particularly those related to peace and conflict resolution (see table 9), required additional time for demonstrable impact. This urge for rapid results made some actors in the field wonder whether USAID was suffering from the “pushing money through the door syndrome”\(^{295}\) – a situation that does not take into account among other things the absorptive capacity of local stakeholders.

According to interviews with observers in Casamance, this “pushing money through the door syndrome” was the case for some local NGOs that received funding without the capacity to deliver or to manage the funds. In addition to the problem of lack of absorptive capacity, this urge for rapid results ran the risks of funding the wrong priorities or choosing project options that were costly, irrelevant, or could not be owned

\(^{293}\) During an interview with a USAID staff conducted on May 12, 2010 in Dakar, Senegal.

\(^{294}\) Interview with a manager of a local NGO in Ziguinchor, Casamance region on May 30, 2010

\(^{295}\) Expression used by one local NGO manager and a USAID staff during separate interviews.
by the beneficiaries or communities. However, it is difficult to exclusively associate any of these risks with the shortcomings of some of the projects funded.

The implementation arrangements put in place required USAID to contract with implementing partners who in turn relied on local and grassroots organizations to implement some of the activities. This arrangement created some frustrations and raised expectations that eventually led to tensions between various stakeholders. The line of communication, scope of work and expectations were relatively clear between USAID and its implementing partners; the same, however, could not be said of the implementing partners and their local partners. Some international partners directly implemented their projects in local communities, thus creating high expectations in local communities that could not be met or matched by local NGOs; other international partners directly competed with local NGOs in local communities. In order to learn directly from the ground and control the implementation of activities, USAID staff conducted field visits. However, it became evident during interviews with international implementing partners and local NGOs that these two groups of stakeholders had different expectations of the USAID field visits. For international implementing partners, the visits were an opportunity to show the work they were doing (particularly the outputs and activities).

    USAID people will better understand the challenges and reality we [implementing partners] are facing in achieving results deliverables. Hopefully this will inform their decision and improve working relations. 296

Meanwhile, local NGOs and grassroots organizations were frustrated:

296 Interview with a World Education staff member
Because USAID does not care about the relationships between these international organizations and their local counterparts. These relationships sometimes resemble slavery.²⁹⁷

Some of these local organizations expected to have a space for direct dialogue with USAID without going through the filter of the USAID implementing partners.

The Special Objective Program 2 created a comprehensive framework for a variety of activities that require collaboration and partnerships with international, local and grassroots organizations. While most of outputs were delivered and activities implemented according to various audits and evaluation reports,²⁹⁸ the sustainability and ownership of the results has not been studied, nor were the nature of relations and processes among the various groups of stakeholders.

The study of World Education project, Building for Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance, provides an entry point to understanding the dynamics of implementation of activities under Special Objective Program 2 as well as processes and evidence—if any—of local ownership in the USAID intervention in Casamance peace efforts.

BUILDING FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY IN CASAMANCE REGION OF SENEGAL

The World Education project was launched as a three year project from July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2004, as part of a set of activities under USAID Special Objective 2, following the signing of the Banjul Peace Accord in March 16, 2001, between the MFDC

²⁹⁷ Previously cited.
and the Government of Senegal. Under the cooperative agreement No. 685 –A-00-01-00137-00 signed with USAID, World Education committed to implement according to agreed principles and timeline the project *Building for Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance* region of Senegal.

The World Education project has been the subject of many evaluations both from USAID and World Education itself, but none has looked specifically to the issue of local ownership. Meanwhile, local ownership, while not clearly stated nor specified in USAID’s RFA documents was at the heart of the proposal submitted by World Education. Therefore analyzing how World Education addressed the issue of local ownership in this project may inform practitioners and researchers alike.

The analysis of the World Education project provides a brief description of the project, followed by strategies used by World Education. This study also highlights different factors that may have facilitated or stymied local ownership in this case.

**The Project Description: Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance**

The project was funded in support of the USAID/Senegal Special Objective for “improved conditions for economic and political development in the Casamance.” The objectives of the World Education project were as follows:

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299 There were mandated evaluations and reporting per agreement with USAID; the project final report; A case study research funded by World Education and realized by Carrol Otto and Jonathan Otto: "Building for Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance Region of Senegal: A Case study," June 2004. The USAID General Inspector Audit report of the SpO2

300 The language used in the Cooperative agreement between USAID and World Education (Cooperative agreement No. 685-A-00-01-00137-00.)
1. Put in place structures, mechanisms and techniques for conflict resolution and long-term collaboration in mitigating the cultural, social and economic causes of conflict.

2. Revitalize the associative life necessary for pro-active local development.

3. Activate existing and new resources to contribute to economic progress and provision of social services.

In order to help World Education achieve these objectives, USAID committed a total amount of $1,688,100 on a three-year time span. World Education, for its part, designed and executed the project using a technical approach based on local partnership and participation, capacity building for local ownership and sustainability. The targeted geographic areas were local communities in the departments of Ziguinchor, Oussoye, Sedhiou (west) and Kolda.

The project was designed as a conflict resolution and peacebuilding project in the sense that the core objective was to mitigate the causes of the conflict in Casamance and prevent local community conflicts. In addition to addressing the causes of conflict, World Education and its local partners worked with all the warring parties, that is the Government of Senegal (central and local authorities), militants, combatants and the leadership of the MFDC and the local population. It is an understatement to say that the parties did not trust each other and were not willing to collaborate. The context of the implementation of the project was also dominated by the lack of trust among different stakeholders, thereby making it more difficult to achieve results.
World Education decided to base the project main office in Ziguinchor to effectively manage and control the implementation of program activities. It was a strategic choice to place the management of the project at the heart of the conflict zone, in order to build the proximity and relationship with local stakeholders.

In order to achieve each objective, World Education and its local partners designed and implemented a series of activities. The following main activities were implemented according to the expected results:

a) *Cultural week-ends:*

First launched by APRAN (local NGO), *Cultural week-ends* were a series of meetings, cultural events and dialogues which took place during a given week-end in a chosen community. They brought together community leaders, religious leaders (Christian and Muslims), and combatants from the MFDC, local and Central authorities and all the segments of the population.

Drawing from the Diola culture of conflict resolution through traditional rituals and activities, *cultural week-ends* offered members of the community the opportunity to identify sources of conflicts and begin to work in resolving them or mitigating their effects. During these two days, high-ranking members of the administration, the MFDC and community leaders made declarations in favor of peace. Such declarations in addition to multi-stakeholder dialogues created the basis for a process of conflict resolution.

During the course of the project, ten cultural week-end activities were organized in the regions of Kolda and Ziguinchor, and eight week-end activities were held in rural
communities in three departments of Sedhiou, Ziguinchor and Oussouye. A total of more than 140 villages participated in cultural week-ends; it is estimated that more than 15,000 people were involved in these activities. It has been difficult for World Education and observers to assess completely the impact of the cultural week-ends; however, it appears that they allowed different actors of the Casamance conflict to work in partnership, particularly at the community level, empowered communities to work towards peace and helped them break the cycle of resignation and alienation. Most importantly, cultural week-ends paved the way for new community projects by giving the opportunity to community members to identify causes of conflict and development needs. This innovative activity also allowed stakeholders to explore together ways to address their priority needs.

b) Peacebuilding micro-projects

These projects were to follow up and strengthen the momentum of peace collaboration built during cultural week-ends. They were built around opinion leaders (traditional, religious, youth, and women) and elected officials. The strategy used traditional channels and tools to stimulate community dialogue and broadcasted the message of peace. All the commitment and ideas generated during cultural week-ends were implemented through peacebuilding projects. Unlike livelihoods projects that promote income generation for the community, peacebuilding projects designed by World Education and its local partners, provided further opportunities for dialogue and created a forum where people could design and implement activities and rituals of
reconciliation and forgiveness. The need for reconciliation and forgiveness developed from the multiplicity of many intercommunity conflicts.

Following the three year mark of the project, 21 peace building projects were executed with various opinion leaders including traditional leaders and the celebrated king of Oussouye, Queen of Essaout, and guards of the sacred forests who accepted to use their power to strengthen the peace process. Guards used traditional channels to convince the population to forgive one another; thereby creating a climate favorable to the return of refugees and internally displaced people. Numerous religious leaders such as Imams and Priests, used churches, mosques, and highly organized religious incantations, to hold conferences on the return of peace. These actors preached for forgiveness and reconciliation.

The role of these leaders in the success of our program is incontestable. It would certainly have been impossible to implement conflict resolution activities without the implication of these opinion leaders. Not only do they have enormous influence over their respective communities, but their role as leaders pushes them to the forefront of peace building activities in their zones. We cannot overlook the important role that these opinion leaders played in our program that contributed to the management of the conflict in the Casamance.

\textit{c) Supporting the MFDC in their interaction with the government.}

Very early on into the project, World Education decided to support factions of the MFDC that were willing to engage in the peace process. It was a challenging decision for the project given the suspicion and the mistrust that existed between the MFDC and the government. World Education had to make sure that the support it had offered to MFDC did

\footnote{Project ‘final Report by World Education.}
not negatively influence the perception of stakeholders about its impartiality. The approach was based on transparency and a channel of communication between the MFDC and the government of Senegal. The support was mainly logistical and technical assistance on matters related to the peace process. The support to MFDC helped World Education win the trust of the leadership of the MFDC and contributed to the decision of the MFDC to commit to the peace process and negotiations with the Government. Many positive developments resulted from World Education involvement, such as the reconciliation movement of September 2002 between the two leaders Abbé Augustin Diamacoune Senghor and Sidy Badji. There was also the important meeting between President of the Republic Abdoulaye Wade and Abbé Augustin Diamacoune on May 2003, which was a key milestone in the peace process.

d) *Capacity development activities.*

The other types of activities focused on capacity building of local stakeholders and community development projects. Capacity building activities happened at two levels. First World Education worked to develop the capacity of intermediary organizations; then those of community based organizations.

**Capacity building of intermediary organizations or NGOs** - Organizations such as AJAEDO, AJAC, OFAD, and KORASE\(^{302}\) were local partners World Education relied on to implement program activities. In addition, World Education partnered with two local consulting firms, ACA and TOSTAN, to develop the capacity of these intermediary organizations.

\(^{302}\) All acronyms are defined in the list of abbreviations.
organizations. The focus of the capacity building strategy was on: Institutional capacity with emphasis on governance and management of the organization, as well as technical capacities to deliver and sustain activities.

By training and strengthening the capacity of local partners, World Education ensured the delivery of activities and also promoted the sustainability of some of the results achieved by the project. Each of the partners had a specific contribution to make in various activities of the project.

Institutional capacity building of community based organizations - The capacity building of community based organizations was one of the core activities to ensure that communities were able to run activities in a sustainable way. The focus of the capacity was on:

- The acquisition of organizational capacities and management competencies for management committee. The focus was on needs identification, opportunities for activities, elaboration of projects and action plans, project management, as well as monitoring and evaluation of projects;
- Training sessions focused on building the technical capacity of millers, canoe drivers, shopkeepers, midwives and community health agents;
- Techniques and approaches for peaceful resolution of conflict, conflict prevention, human rights, stress and trauma management.

Capacity building of community based organizations was achieved through numerous training sessions conducted by intermediary NGOs partners of World
Education. While the first two parts focused specifically on the management committees and the people in charge of assuring the technical aspects of the projects, the third part reached a large number of the members of community based organizations.

\( e \) Community micro-projects

Two decades of conflict have had devastating effects on the economy of Casamance and particularly on the livelihoods of the population. While the focus of the project was on conflict resolution, World Education realized that any approach to address the root causes of conflict had to be supported by activities that addressed the priority needs of the community. Community projects had the double role of addressing priority needs of the population, but also to provide the community the opportunity to work together and practice the competencies and skills acquired during capacity development workshops.

By enabling communities to define their priority needs, deliberate on solutions and design micro-projects, World Education empowered communities to move from victims to proactive actors in their own development. Micro-projects focused on re-equipping and rehabilitating community socio-economic structures and infrastructure; and develop income generating activities that helped alleviate poverty in the communities, hence the name of the program \textit{Building for Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance}. For a project to be funded by World Education, it had to demonstrate the double aim of reducing extreme poverty and contributing to strengthen dialogue and peace in the community. After approval of the project by World Education, the emphasis
was placed on strengthening the capacity of the management committee and the structure of governance to ensure sustainability of the project.

A total of 104 socio-economic micro-projects and 18 peace building projects were financed throughout the duration of the program. Some of the micro-projects included: Community stores (10), flour mills and rice huskers (14), health huts (33), canoes to reconnect isolated communities (11), market gardens (23), and animal husbandry projects (4). All the projects funded were sustained by the communities after the initial funding by World Education.

Nearly ten years after the end of the project, some of the community micro-projects are still active and activities such as cultural week-ends have become hallmark activities of community reconciliation and conflict resolution processes in Casamance. World Education still operates on different conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and media activities in Casamance. The organization is at times perceived as a local NGO by local development actors and local stakeholders in the conflict due in part to its staff which is entirely composed of Senegalese including its long term country Director.303 The technical model of the project (see figure 24) has not been replicated in its entirety, however, different stakeholders have sustained different activities of the project model.

By USAID accounts and interviews of beneficiaries of the project Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance; despite the challenges due to a conflict ridden context and

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303 Since the launch of the project in 2001, the World Education’ director in Senegal is Mr. Abou Sarr. He is Senegalese from Casamance and have been working in the region for more than three decades.
a short timeline given by USAID, World Education and its local partners have succeeded to achieve most if not all the deliverables defined in the cooperative agreement.
Figure 24: Design of Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance

Program Approach

World Education
Provides Subcontract to Tostan

World Education
Provides Subcontract to ACA

World Education
Provides Subgrants to CSOs

World Education
Provides Capacity Building and Training Grants

World Education
Technical Assistance

Building for Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance

Cultural Weekend

Create "Buy-In"

Human Rights Training

Commissions Develop Action Plans

Community Planning Process

CSOs prioritize needs and mobilize

CSO selects improvement project

CSO Training and Association Building with Training Support from ACA

CSOs implement projects

CSOs complete projects

Evaluation and Community Multi-Year Planning

Sectoral Federation Development for CSOs

Local Government

Facilitation and training support from Tostan (using AJAC trainers)

Figure 24: Design of Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance
LEARNING FROM THE PROJECT BUILDING FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY IN CASAMANCE

Local ownership and sustainability among stakeholders was a clear focus for World Education’s proposal to USAID. In the proposal, the strategy to facilitate local ownership was articulated as follow:

World Education's approach promotes local ownership at two levels. Firstly, everyone in the target communities will have a voice in articulating needs, and will have an opportunity to take part in developing plans and carrying out actions. At a second level, World Education will implement this program with and through its local partners. Already, our partners have actively contributed their knowledge and insights during program design. This is an important first step to promoting a strong sense of local ownership that we will continue to foster during program implementation.304

Local stakeholders’ contribution and involvement appeared to be important elements in facilitating local ownership in the project.

According to interview with USAID staff with insights into the award process, the focus on local ownership added value to World Education proposal. When asked: Why did you decide to fund Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance? The answer from the USAID staff was:

World Education was in Senegal for sometime. The activities they were proposing were very much grounded on local realities and rely on local stakeholders. There was the language of local ownership in their proposal.

In what follows, we will analyze how local ownership was facilitated or stymied in the project *Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance*.

**Local participation varied based on stage of the project and activities**

The participation of local stakeholders was crucial in achieving the expected results of the project. However, various forms of participation were used depending on the activity and the stage of the project.

**Design of the project** - During the design phase of the project, World Education worked with local partners which were also considered technical partners. These local institutions ACA (*L’Association Conseil pour l’Action*), AJAC/Ziguinchor (*Association des Jeunes Agriculteurs de Casamance*), and Tostan were intermediary NGOs that helped to design the project. World Education selected each of these organizations during the assessment and design phase of the project based on the different activities listed on their proposal. However, the final decision and the cohesion of the technical proposal were decided by World Education at their Headquarters. It can be argued that the level and type of participation of technical partners was between “consultation” and “collaboration during implementation,” meaning that the technical partners were informed about the initiative and assigned a specific role in the implementation. They had no influence on key decisions affecting the design. This is closer to local contracting mechanisms with terms of reference defined by outsiders (donors and or international contractors).
Conflict resolution and peacebuilding activities including cultural week-ends - The nature of conflict resolution and peacebuilding activities facilitated partnership among World Education, local partners in the communities. Whether it was cultural week-ends, support to MFDC or community dialogue, most of these activities promoted the participation and collaboration between different local stakeholders, particularly among the MFDC, the government and opinion leaders. World Education and its partners were in this case, playing the role of third party with some level of influence on the process through funding and organization assistance but with limited influence on the outcomes. The outcomes of activities such as cultural week-ends, community dialogue or peacebuilding projects depended in a large part on local actors and communities. The level of local involvement in this case amounted to local stakeholders sharing the initiative and the decision-making. In other words, locals participated in designing the project; then support and training was provided so that locals could work side by side with outsiders to implement activities. In addition, local government and communities were involved in developing some funding mechanisms, either for initial contribution or long-term maintenance.

Community micro-projects - In the case of the community micro-projects, local communities identified priority needs, and worked with intermediary NGOs and World Education to design the project. While World Education provided the initial funding, these projects sustained themselves without external funding and
influence on the decision making. Community development committees were solely responsible for the management of these projects in the long run.

Capacity building activities – Unlike conflict resolution and community economic development activities which require the participation of local stakeholders in the design, capacity development activities were structured differently. While World Education and its local technical partners designed and delivered the training, community based organizations and intermediary NGOs benefiting from training were only active beneficiaries. In other words, they only influenced the direction and the execution of the activities because they were the targets of these activities; therefore their needs shaped the content of the trainings and technical assistance. In this case, the nature of participation amounted more to “collaboration during implementation.”

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*  
*  

Local participation varied throughout the project. During the design phase, local partners were passive, it amounted to consultations; but it changed during the implementation of the project to become a more active. Overall, most forms of participation were those in which local stakeholders shared the initiative and decision making with World Education (see figure 25) and for some activities such as community micro-projects, community based organizations and other local partners took control of all aspects of the project and owned it over time.
Figure 25: Assessment of local participation in Casamance
Local Ownership Through the Triptych: Commitment, Capacity and Contribution

From World Education’s perspective, the focus on local ownership was to ensure the sustainability of the project. World Education’s strategy to facilitate local ownership by beneficiaries, who in this case were intermediary organizations and community based organizations, was built around the notions of commitment, contribution and capacity.

While the focus for local ownership was on intermediary organizations or local NGOs involved in the project and community based organizations, World Education relied on a diverse group of local stakeholders to achieve the results expected from the project. Six main groups of stakeholders were considered: Technical partners, intermediary organizations, community based organizations, the MFDC, the Government of Senegal (central and local) and other development organizations. (See figure 26: Stakeholders map of the project Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance).

An analysis of the role of each of the stakeholder helps to better understand how and if the strategy of facilitating local ownership was implemented and to what effect. The stakeholder analysis focuses on the following elements: the level and nature of commitment of the local stakeholders; capacity for the project and contribution for stakeholders.

Technical partners – Technical partners are local or international organizations who strengthen the proposal to be submitted to the funder because they bring to the project a recognized expertise and reputation. They signed an agreement with the recipient of the USAID award to deliver on certain activities or components of the
project. In the case of this project, World Education opted to partner with local organizations with a recognized expertise on specific aspects of the project. The distribution of power, hence the nature of the relationships, varies from one project to the other. In some cases (generally when the technical partners are international organizations) activities can be independently executed by the technical partners. In this project, however, World Education oversaw the activities implemented by the technical partners and was very much involved in design and implementation phases. World Education selected the following organizations: ACA, TOSTAN, APRAN, Afrique Aide Afrique, and the Collectif des Cadres de la Casamance.

Association Conseil pour l’Action (ACA) - ACA emerged from a former USAID project “Sahel Regional Financial Management Project.” ACA with its Headquarters in Dakar, was registered on July 1992. The organization worked with numerous USAID projects to provide management technical assistance. According to the organization’s mission, ACA works: “To develop and popularize the best practices of management both in the private and public sectors in Senegal and in the West African sub-region.”

In Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance, ACA was responsible for completing the organizational assessments of intermediary organizations. These assessments were followed by capacity building trainings focusing on project management and institutional governance.

305 For more information on Association Conseil pour l’Action (ACA) see: http://aca.sn/index.php?lang=en
TOSTAN - Tostan, which means "breakthrough" in Wolof, is a non-governmental organization based in Thiès. Tostan is mostly known for its work on literacy and advocacy against female genital mutilation, but they have also developed a series of modules focusing on human rights. On its website, Tostan defines itself as:

A US 501(c) (3) non-governmental organization. Based in Senegal, West Africa, Tostan is dedicated to educating and empowering Africans who have had little or no access to formal schooling. We work primarily in rural regions to provide basic education and increase community engagement in projects related to health and hygiene, child welfare, human rights and democracy, the environment, and economic development.306

Tostan was responsible for the human rights training modules at the community level. During the first year of the program, Tostan organized human rights trainings with some community based organizations in the departments of Kolda and Sedhiou. Unfortunately, World Education ended the partnership with Tostan before the end of the project. Officially the reasons were “poor communication and a lack of reporting on the evolution of program activities.”307 However through interviews, it also appeared that the expectations on the type of work relations between Tostan and World Education were unparallel. Tostan viewed itself as an international competent and trustworthy organization and expected to be treated as such that is, an equal partner not only in the implementation of activities but also in the management of resources. After the suspension of the working relations between Tostan and World Education, the human

306 For more information on Tostan see: http://www.tostan.org/web/page/556/sectionid/556/pagelevel/1/interior.asp
307 As mentioned in the Final report of the project.
rights trainings were taken over by a local NGO named OFAD (*Organisation de Formation et d'Appui au Développement*).

Association APRAN (Association pour la Promotion Durable de l’Arrondissement de Nyassia) – APRAN was at the time of the project a local organization credited for being the first organizers of *cultural week-ends*. Their contribution to the project was limited to the organization of the four cultural week-ends in the department of Ouassouye.³⁰⁸

Later on, World Education was asked by USAID to help APRAN developed its institutional and organizational capacity. In other words, APRAN benefited from the capacity building activity implemented by ACA under an agreement with World Education. APRAN received funding from USAID to implement a reconstruction project in the districts of Nyaguis and Nyassia.

Afrique Aide l’Afrique (AAA) – Headed by Ambassador Latif Gueye, AAA worked in the areas of conflict prevention and resolution. AAA was an important player in the search for peace in the Casamance. Ambassador Latif Gueye offered World Education access in the government that they could not otherwise get. As confirmed by World Education in the final report of the project:

> There is no question that the close ties between the Ambassador Latif Gueye and the President of Senegal served as an advantage for the situation in the Casamance. AAA contributed immensely to World Education’s program and his Excellence was instrumental in the reconciliation between Abbe Diamacoune Senghor and Sidy Badjji, as well as, the preparation of the Casamancos-Casamancais meetings.

³⁰⁸ APRAN was also among the few local NGO who received direct funding from USAID to implement infrastructure reconstruction projects.
The support of AAA was a one man support which actually ended after the arrest of Ambassador Latif Gueye.\footnote{Ambassador Latif Gueye was imprisoned from June 2003 to August 2004, then set free from prison after been cleaned of any wrong doing in a case of embezzlement of antiretroviral medicine. }

The Collective of High Ranking Professionals from the Casamance (Collectif des cadre Casamancais) – The Collective is a civil society organization of the elite from Casamance most of whom lived in Dakar but occupy high responsibilities and influential positions in Senegal. Some of their members had the trust of the government and even of President Wade, as it was the case of the President of the Collective, Mr. Goudiaby Atepa. The Collective provided World Education with access to the government as well as to some members of the MFDC leadership.

These five technical partners were selected based on their expertise and resources they could mobilize on particular activities and services provided. Some were service providers (ACA, TOSTAN, OFAD, APRAN) while others provided connections and legitimacy in the eyes of the parties in the Casamance conflict (AAA, Collective). To the exception of APRAN and to some extent OFAD, which was brought in to fill the gap left by the departure of TOSTAN, these organizations all shared in common the fact that they were all based outside Casamance and their involvement with the project was limited in time and scope. Their contribution to the results of the project, particularly in developing the capacity of intermediary organizations to enable them in turn to support community based organizations in implementing micro projects was proven and crucial. However,
this involvement in the project did not continue beyond the length of their contract with World Education.

In addition to the mission, the motivation to work with the project was also based on incentives such as finances, the credibility and image in their particular sector of activities. The project was also perceived as a market development opportunity and their contribution ended with their contractual commitment. They were asked to provide a service, which they delivered to the best of their capacity and to the satisfaction of World Education.

**Intermediary organizations or activities partners** – These were local NGOs which partnered with World Education to implement a variety of activities in local communities. World Education worked with OFAD NAFOORE and KORASE in the region of Kolda; AJAC (Association of Young Farmers of Casamance) and AJAEDO (Association of Young Farmers of Herders of Oussoye) in the region of Ziguinchor.

**OFAD NAFOORE (Organisation de Formation et d'Appui au Développement)** – OFAD (Development training organization) founded in 1998, the stated mission of OFAD is:

> To build social bonds between populations in order to contribute to their social well-being; and improve their living standard. Develop the organizational capacities of community based organizations, promote women initiatives.

Since 1998, OFAD has been implementing activities in communities in the regions of Kolda, Sedhiou, and Ziguinchor; some of these activities include human rights training, capacity building of community based organizations, vocational training for
women, etc. When OFAD joined the project, their capacity to deliver training was sufficient; however management and institutional governance were limited.

KORASE- KORASE is a local NGO, with a focus on development of the department of Kolda in Casamance region. KORASE works to promote community development and social well-being of different populations in communities of Kolda.

AJAC- Association of Young Farmers of Casamance (AJAC) was created in 1974 by young people who were committed to help and alleviate the suffering of the local populations. Many organizations rapidly formed partnerships with the association. AJAC became a network of organizations with 6 union groups, 121 community based organizations totaling in 2001, with a total of 7,609 individual members. AJAC was present in the departments of Bignona and Ziguinchor. The stated mission of AJAC is “to contribute to the development farmers and herders initiatives and economic and social autonomy.” AJAC outreach grew rapidly to exceed its management capacities. According to the diagnostic reported by ACA (Technical partner), AJAC’s organizational capacity was modest but insufficient giving the scale of their operation; the organization had talented staff, but one of their weaknesses was a human resources management system.

AJAEDO (Association of Young Farmers and Herders of Oussoye) in the region of Ziguinchor was established in 1983. The association provides training and support to 21 community-based member groups, particularly in the area of rural development.

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310 Association Conseil pour l’Action (ACA), *Rapport De Diagnostic Pour L’amelioration Des Performances Institutionnelles De l’Association Des Jeunes Agriculteurs De Casamance (AJAC).*
project management, and income-generating activities; 75 percent of AJEDO’s members are women. AJAEDO participates in national and regional networks to promote collaboration between organizations working on similar issues. It brings together rural women from other parts of Casamance to share their experience in areas such as peace-building, income-generation, and the search for partners.311

These four organizations were selected less on their organizational capacity which was very low but on their outreach in the communities, their knowledge of communities and their credibility with local stakeholders. They provided the project with the opportunity to reach out to community members to get involved in way that an international organization could not have done. They worked with community based organizations to implement micro-projects; as well as played an important role in monitoring these projects.

Given their low capacity, these four organizations received capacity development assistance from the technical partners, notably from ACA and Tostan. The capacity development activities resulted to improved management systems, governance and skills development for their personnel. This increased capacity allowed local NGOs to contribute substantially to the project by working with more community based organizations in a sustainable way; as explained by a staff member from AJAC:

We were just a small organization that relied on membership fees to function. World Education and its partners helped us develop our capacity to perform well, increase our work with communities and even to be able to attract and work with new donors.

These four organizations had in common the fact they were all based in the communities where activities were taking place. Despite the fact they were considered NGOs rather than informal community based organizations (not registered with the local administration) their membership was activity based (farmers and herders) thus giving a substantial community knowledge and legitimacy. The role of these organizations grew beyond the initial agreements; as the micro-projects developed, these organizations found themselves doing more than expected:

**We continue our work with communities even after World Education funding...Because of the results achieved during the project with World Education, new funding and development agencies such as PROCAS (GTZ), New Field Foundation, etc...are supporting our work in communities.” – Staff member of AJAEDO**

**Community based organizations (CBO) –** These were organizations organized in village associations, rural communities, neighborhood associations, sports and leisure associations, as well as, federation groups in the zones of intervention. CBOs benefited not only on strengthening their capacity but also on enhancing the work of micro-projects to address the needs of their villages. They had the responsibility to manage their own designed projects. In order to better manage the projects, some technical guidance and monitoring were provided by intermediary organizations. Micro-projects did not only help communities address specific needs, they also provided a space for community dialogue and were source of community empowerment and practices of transparent and democratic decision-making at community level. While communities received funding
for micro-projects, each beneficiary community had to come up with a 25 percent cost-share of the micro-project, a contribution that increased their participation in the management of the micro-project. However, they were some exceptions to the cost-sharing rule for communities hard hit by the conflict.

From interviews and observations, some of the micro projects survived beyond World Education initial funding. Some projects evolved beyond their initial purpose, such as the case of canoes, initially used to connect remote villages to the rest of the region; they are now used occasionally as ambulances, or to transport tourists across villages; some of the health huts have been integrated by the Ministry of Health in the network of health centers. The few projects that had stopped were due in most cases to the resumption of violence, and lack of funding or poor governance (focus on one or few individuals) as it was the case in the village of Niabina. The community in Niabina focused on the production and exploitation of peanuts, unfortunately with time, the decision-making process became dominated by one individual who improperly managed the funds, and the project is until now experiencing numerous organizational problems.

The MFDC leadership – The MFDC leadership, as a major party to the conflict in Casamance, was an important stakeholder. Its participation into the peace efforts was indispensable to move the peace process forward. As said by a member of the Groupe de

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312 I was not able to visit all the 104 micro projects. We visited 10 projects (Ziguinchor, Oussoye, Djibilor and Caramankounda); however from discussions with people in Ziguinchor and Oussoye, as well as World Education staff, it appears most of the micro projects were still running in 2011.

313 This situation was reported by a member of the community of Niabina; however, it is worth noting that the interview took place in June 2010, seven years after the official closing of the World Education project. This means that the micro project has survived long after “Peace and Prosperity in Casamance”.

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contact, who was then active in the political wing, “we trusted World Education and we appreciated their support,”
this trust and support facilitated MFDC supporting peacebuilding activities and the peace process. The contribution of MFDC was more in the process, as they accepted to make compromises and evolved in some of their positions and attitudes. This contribution to the process led to major developments in the peace process. While the strategy of unifying and providing technical advice to the leadership was laudable and did provide results like the reconciliation between Abbé Augustin Diamacoune and Sady Badji, meetings between different factions; the fractionalization of the group made it difficult to fully embrace peace initiatives. In addition to the fractionalization of the Movement, World Education also complained about the time. The project duration of three years was too short to make substantive results on the peace process: “these things take time…you can’t expect to get the adhesion of warring parties, reinforce their capacity to negotiate peace and achieve sustainable peace in such a short period,” reported a World Education staff.

While there is still commitment to the peace process from factions of the MFDC, this commitment has been weakened by internal divisions, violent incidents with government forces and arrest warrant on some leaders of the MFDC.

The Government of Senegal- The Government of Senegal has been a major stakeholder of the project, as well as in different capacities. The participation of the central Government was critical to the advancement of the peace process. President

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314 Interview with a member of the “Groupe de contact” June 2010.
Abdoulaye Wade provided much needed credibility to the peace process, this credibility translated in the involvement of Ministries, particularly the Ministry of Interior and the Army. The participation of the government led to breakthrough in the peace process, such as the historic meeting between President Wade and Abbé Augustin Diamacoune. In addition to providing credibility and support to the peace process, the involvement of local authorities at the regional, district and communal level was crucial to the implementation of micro-projects and peacebuilding activities, including cultural weekends. The contribution of the local authorities was more to facilitate administrative procedures (permits, land, etc.) and provide a government seal of approval, which were very important for the sustainability of the projects. At the peace front, there is an ongoing commitment from the central government to engage with the MFDC; however many violent incidents and unmet promises, as well as the use of government emissaries locally called “Monsieur Casamance” who were perceived to be corrupted have stymied this commitment and jeopardize the achievements of the World Education project. At the community level, local authorities were involved in addressing community conflicts such as land disputes, tensions between displaced persons and residents; these community-based conflicts were the consequences of the larger Casamance conflict.

Other development organizations and NGOs – In addition to the main stakeholders of the project and the beneficiaries who were also implementing partners (intermediaries

315 “Monsieur Casamance” (Mister Casamance) as they were commonly called by the population and media were Government appointed emissaries tasked by the government of Senegal to facilitate negotiations with the MFDC. “Monsieur Casamance” quickly became a pejorative term. These emissaries were accused by the MFDC and local populations to pursue their own personal gains rather than facilitating the peace or negotiations with MFDC.
NGOs and CBOs); there were other organizations whose own work contributed to the project. In fact, World Education approaches included leveraging on the work of other organizations in the region. There was no official working relationship with other NGOs such Catholic Relief Services (CRS), APRAN, ASACASE, and UN agencies such as UNICEF. However there was an exchange of information and mutual support to build on each other’s achievements.
Working relations based on exchange of information and resources (Funding, information)

One-way working relations – transfer of capacities

Working relations based on exchange of information

Figure 26: Stakeholders map of the project Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance
Other Factors to Consider in the Analysis of Local Ownership: Context, Time and Internal Dynamics and Relations Between Stakeholders

Context: The presence of a local NGOs and associational life – Despite the destruction and insecurity caused by conflict, in 2001, Casamance experienced a reduction in violence. Thus, there was a change that allowed the return of development organizations and a precarious sense to normalcy in many communities. However, tensions were still high and the fear palpable: local organizations whether local NGOs, village associations, women associations, and youth associations (community based organizations) were already active in the entire Casamance, even in hard hit departments such as Bignona, Ziguinchor, and Oussoye. Unlike many countries in conflict, Senegal has a dynamic civil society and the vibrancy of this associational life and the social capital that it brought were not completely depleted by the conflict. The presence particularly of active local organizations that have been operating in the region for a long time provided World Education with the opportunity to tap on a pool of committed and knowledgeable local organizations. It is worth noting that even though these organizations were lacking management, organizational capacity, systems and skilled personnel; they had the “home advantage,”⁴¹⁶ which was composed of community trust, legitimacy and deeper understanding of issues and community social dynamics; assets that an international organization like World Education did not possess at the time.

⁴¹⁶ As described by a USAID staff member during an interview for this research.
Therefore, despite the challenges posed by the precarious peace observed in Casamance at the beginning of 2001, World Education had the opportunity to work with committed and locally trusted NGOs and community based organizations that could engage with local communities, government and other stakeholders to implement activities and achieve some results.

The time pressure - The project was designed for three years to reconstruct broken communities, facilitate a peace process in a conflict that has been going on for more than two decades and in which internal dynamics of each party to the conflict are pulling them away from any peaceful solution. While there was some level of calm in certain parts of the Casamance region and return of development actors both local and international, the duration of the project was too short to observe the realization of the expected key intermediate results:

Key Intermediate Result 1: Improved Standards of Living for Affected Populations

Key Intermediate Result 2: Increased Self-sufficiency in Local Development

Key Intermediate Result 3: Improved Conditions for Local Level Conflict Resolution

This time constraint pushed World Education on one hand to be creative and relied more on local stakeholders, thus promoting more local stakeholders involvement; while on the other hand, to focus on tracking activities than the impact of these activities, which required more time to be noticeable.
Internal dynamics and relationships between local stakeholders - A project such as Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance brings together different actors with different and diverse interests. While the strategies of stakeholders involved were guided by their individual interests, their actions were influenced and even shaped by actions of other stakeholders as well. This web of interactions, in addition to the internal dynamics of each stakeholder, made it nearly impossible for one actor alone to facilitate commitment, capacity and contribution essential to ensuring local ownership and eventually sustainability of activities and results of a given project.

The fractionalization of MFDC, the lack of coordination and a clear strategy from the Government of Senegal illustrate the difficulties that World Education had in ensuring the sustainability of the peace process. Despite noticeable efforts and a desire by World Education and its partners to strengthen the peace process and achieve sustainable results, internal dynamics and decisions by each party remained insurmountable obstacles. The same could be said to some extent of the community of Niabina for example, where the training and support received could not mitigate the risk of seeing the project overtaken by a small group of individuals. These situations bring to the fore the fact that facilitating local ownership is not and cannot be the responsibility of one party or actor alone. The nature of relationships between the local stakeholders, the internal dynamics (leadership, organization, governance, etc.) could weaken commitment, minimize capacity and derail the contribution; thus jeopardizing ownership and sustainability of the project and its results. In the case of Building for Peace and
Prosperity in Casamance, the fractionalization of the MFDC created a climate of distrust within the movement that constituted a major obstacle to a full commitment to the peace process; for the Government of Senegal, lack of coordination and a poorly designed strategy also weakened its commitment and casted a doubt of suspicion on their contribution to the peace process. As a result of these internal dynamics and nature of relationships among the parties, most achievements realized during the project fell apart during or shortly after the project ended.

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*                                    *

World Education’s strategy to promote local ownership rested on three major components: capacity building, local contribution, and participation, as articulated in their proposal to USAID:

World Education's experience underscores the link between a strong sense of local ownership and the ability of our partners to continue activities after our own involvement comes to an end. Communities are encouraged to invest their own resources, often as a prerequisite to accessing external funding. This builds a sense of community pride and discourages dependence on donors. The program will develop the organizing skills of community members and NGO partners that are a vital ingredient in building civil society, and we hope that the benefits of this investment will contribute to the peace and prosperity of the region long after the life of USAID's Special Objective.

The analysis of this strategy revealed that not all partners were equally involved in the project of Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance; and not all activities could be sustained by the partners. As summarized in the table below, activities aimed at
building the capacities of MFDC and strengthening the peace process while relevant could not be sustained due in part by the short duration of the projects and the lack of a shared vision and trust between the MFDC and the Government of Senegal.

Capacity building activities also saw differences between stakeholders in the levels of participation. If the technical partner delivered the training and capacity strengthening activities expected from them, their involvement with the project beyond their contractual obligations was limited to their relationship with World Education.

Intermediary NGOs and community based organizations (CBOs) that were the final beneficiaries of the project Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance and also considered by World Education as implementing partners contributed, benefited and took advantage of the project to scale up and sustain their activities beyond the funding of USAID / World Education.

The relatively short duration of the project and the requirement by USAID to obtain quick visible results were not compatible with the issues the project had to address particularly the peace process. In addition to the time constraints, relationships between stakeholders, as well as internal dynamics (power difference, mistrust, lack of coherence strategy, etc) contributed in some cases to stymied local ownership.
Table 10: Summary of the triptych: commitment, capacity and contribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of stakeholders</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
<th>Source of commitment</th>
<th>Capacity acquired</th>
<th>Contribution</th>
<th>Involvement with the project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical partners</td>
<td>ACA, TOSTAN, APRAN, AAA, Collective</td>
<td>Previous experiences</td>
<td>No new capacity was acquired (they were brought in to develop capacity of local NGOs and help facilitate the peace process)</td>
<td>Capacity development of other stakeholders and help facilitate the peace process. Limited to contractual agreement</td>
<td>Design phase: consultations and collaboration Implementation: collaboration After funding: No or less involvement but kept the relationship with WE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The government</td>
<td>Local and central</td>
<td>Promises made by President Wade to bring peace Responsibilities of local authorities to facilitate community development</td>
<td>No new capacity</td>
<td>Credibility and visibility to the peace process Credibility and legality to local micro-projects</td>
<td>Design phase: Consultations Implementation: Initiated but failed to sustain the peace process Local authorities were consulted in micro-projects. But were less involved if at all in sustaining the projects after the initial launch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of stakeholders</td>
<td>Organizations</td>
<td>Source of commitment</td>
<td>Capacity acquired</td>
<td>Contribution</td>
<td>Involvement with the project</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFDC (Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pressure of some factions within the MFDC to negotiate with the government</td>
<td>Increased capacity and skills to negotiate Organizational capacities</td>
<td>Credibility and visibility to the peace process</td>
<td>Design phase: Consultations Implementation: Initiated but failed to sustain the peace process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing partners and beneficiaries</td>
<td>Intermediary NGOs</td>
<td>Previous experiences, membership</td>
<td>Increased organizational capacity; Improved governance and management systems</td>
<td>Legitimacy community knowledge and outreach; monitoring and support to CBO</td>
<td>Design phase: Consultations Implementation: Sustained beyond the contractual duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Based Organizations (CBO)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Necessity to address priority needs of the community</td>
<td>Increased organization capacity and decision making; Designed of governance for the micro projects</td>
<td>25% of funding needed for micro-projects; Initiative and management of community micro projects sustainability</td>
<td>Design phase: Consultations Implementation: Sustained involvement and management of the micro projects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The peace Accord of March 16, 2001, in Banjul, Gambia between the MFDC and the Government of Senegal provided the donor community and development institutions a window of opportunity to intervene in Casamance. An opportunity that USAID seized to fund activities under the Strategic Program Objective 2 (SpO2), which was a comprehensive program designed to support the peace process, peacebuilding and community economic development in Casamance. It is under this program that on June 2001, USAID and World Education signed a cooperative agreement for the implementation of the project “Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance.”

The project Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance presented several advantages for the research on local ownership. Despite the relative small amount of money invested (1.6 million USD) it comprised a complex set of activities, notably capacity building, peacebuilding activities, support to peace process and small-scale community development projects. World Education, implementer of this project, worked exclusively with local organizations in a desire to facilitate local ownership and sustainability. The assumption guiding World Education’ overall strategy was that local involvement and contribution ensure ownership and sustainability.

The analysis conducted during this research showed that participation was not monolithic and that ownership and sustainability were not equally achieved
for all activities and by all stakeholders involved in the project. The relative short
duration of the project, internal dynamics and relationships between stakeholders
were all factors that, in some cases stymied local ownership and sustainability of
the project.

In fact while there was a desire on the part of World Education to see
greater local involvement, the level of this involvement was different in various
phases of the project (design, implementation and evaluation) and for various
stakeholders involved. Also, not all the stakeholders were interested to be
involved in all aspects of the project. Local stakeholders were more interested to
get involved in activities that impacted them directly either through increased
capacity or/and improvement of their living standard through development
projects or peacebuilding. Local stakeholders in general accepted the fact that
they played an informative role during the design of the project *Building for
Peace and Prosperity in Casamance*:

> We were consulted by people of World Education when the call for
proposals came out. I can see some of the things we told them in the
project…It is OK to be consulted even if we don’t decide how the final
project will look like, but it is important that they [US implementer] take
into account what we say – A staff member of AJAEDO in Oussoye.

However, activities that showed increased level of involvement and
contribution by local stakeholders were sustained long after the project ended and
so were their impact; this included capacity development activities and
community micro-projects. In other words, when local stakeholders took the
initiative and had some control over the decision-making process, for example where and how to affect resources, they tended to contribute more and leverage on the initial contribution by World Education to sustain these activities and their impact. In these situations, local stakeholders were empowered through a virtual circle, where their initial commitment led to their involvement in the form of their contribution (ideas, resources, legitimacy, etc.), which in turn helped them take advantage of the activities in the form of capacity and resources to scale up activities and sustain its impact. World Education depending on the activities or stakeholder, would then facilitate the process of local ownership from any segment of that circle.

The project *Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance* has also brought to the fore some elements of project that if not well managed could derail strategies to facilitate local ownership.

*Demand by USAID for quick results* - Though the Strategic Program Objective 2 under which the project Building for *Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance* was funded, may have been influenced by the local needs, the main focus was on providing rapid benefits to the local population—some sort of peace dividends to create momentum for peace—rather than on sustainability and local ownership. The key imperative was to respond to local needs with the assumption that local stakeholders would buy into the projects. Even though local ownership and sustainability were desirable, as recognized during interviews with USAID staff, the urge for rapid results favored an approach that focused more on visible
outputs (highly visible activities) rather than activities that bring about social transformation and meaningful changes and could be supported by local stakeholders, since these results needed time to take root and be visible. This assumption also influenced the selection of partners to implement the activities; the selection gave priority to efficiency, experience working on issues and the capacity to deliver rapid and demonstrable results. The focus on organizational capacity ran the risk of excluding local organizations and stakeholders that offered additional types of crucial resources (knowledge, legitimacy, outreach, etc.) but lacked the organizational capacity to deliver rapid results in a short span of time.

Duration of the project - While the necessity for rapid execution and results may have been imposed by the need to build momentum for peace and to win over fear and skepticism born from violence and instability, some of the activities funded, particularly those related to peace and conflict resolution, required more time for demonstrable impact than the three years of the project Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance. This imperative for rapid results made some actors in the field wonder whether USAID was suffering from the “pushing money through the door” syndrome \(^{317}\)– a situation that does not take into account among other things the absorptive capacity of local stakeholders.

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\(^{317}\) Expression used by one local NGO manager and a USAID staff during separate interviews.
Internal dynamics and relationships between stakeholders – The fractionalization of the MFDC, the lack of community cohesion in the community of Niabina or the lack of strategic vision for peace on the part of the Government of Senegal have all threatened the results achieved by the project.

Therefore despite the challenges posed by the precarious peace observed in Casamance at the beginning of 2001, World Education had the opportunity to work with committed and locally trusted NGOs and community based organizations that could easily engage local communities, government and other stakeholders to implement activities and achieve some results that were owned and sustained by local stakeholders, particularly local NGOs and community based organizations targeted by the project Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance.

Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance was not sustained in its entirety; however key activities, notably small scale community development projects, community based organizations capacity building and peacebuilding projects, such as cultural week-ends were sustained by different local stakeholders including local NGOs and CBOs that were involved in the initial project. Local ownership in this case meant that, local stakeholders, some more than others took the initiative and had some control over the decision-making process, which resulted to them contributing more and leveraging on the initial contribution by World Education to sustain activities and the impact of these activities long after USAID funding and World Education contribution ended.
V. COMPARING AND CONTRASTING THE CASES: LEARNING THEMES AND KEY FINDINGS

IDEJEN and Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance, two USAID funded projects designed by U.S. based organizations were developed under USAID’s Country Strategic Plan. The programs of IDEJEN and Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance were not designed by local stakeholders, instead by international organizations responding to a call for proposals by USAID; a call for proposal itself based on USAID’s own priorities (even though these priorities were informed somehow by USAID interpretation of national priorities). The projects were implemented in unstable societies riddled by conflicts and natural disasters. The implementation of these two projects at the local and community level offered an opportunity to learn more about factors that can promote and obstruct the attainment local ownership and project sustainability in unstable societies. In addition, they offer an understanding of local ownership that goes beyond the design of plans and policies.

Several important findings emerged in comparing and contrasting IDEJEN and Building Peace and Prosperity. These findings are classified under four main
learning themes: a) framing of local ownership; b) strategies that support the emergence of local ownership; c) risk factors that stymied local ownership; and d) factors with a nuanced influence over the emergence or not of local ownership.

FRAMING AND DEFINITION OF LOCAL OWNERSHIP

There were no interviews or documents in either project that provided a comprehensive definition of local ownership. In order to elicit the views on local ownership among U.S. based project implementers, beneficiaries and staff of USAID (See Appendices A, B and C). The following questions were asked:

To the beneficiaries: “Would you say that your organization and the beneficiaries “own” this project or parts of it? Why?”

To USAID staff and U.S. based implementing organizations (EDC and World Education): “How do you define “local ownership” of this project? Was local ownership a criterion?

The following answers illustrate how different stakeholders of the project perceived local ownership.

For most beneficiaries of both projects, local ownership amounted to having been involved in the implementation of the project and benefiting from that involvement in a way that helped them address the problems or issues they were facing and already addressing.

318 The concept of “learning theme” is used here to emphasize the fact that this research focused on learning from the cases; and also to explore the practical implication of this learning in the field of interventions in post-conflict reconstruction and war torn societies.
These are the issues we were already working on and were happy to see that USAID was willing to support us” – Local NGO, AJAEDO in Casamance

We were already concerned by this issue [youth livelihood] but not targeting out of school youth. IDEJEN raised the awareness and gave us the opportunity to work on this target groups. We will keep working.
- Technical adviser at INFP (Government agency) in Haiti

For U.S. based implementing organizations, local ownership was defined as having local stakeholders “buy-in” for the project and contributing to it because they saw the value-added of the project.

I don’t mean that every single element of the project stays in place…But some elements are carried by local stakeholders … When there is enough traction for the project; the locals value it and use it in their own ways…Financial piece is only one piece of it…”
– Senior Staff at EDC expressing her views on local ownership of the IDEJEN project

For USAID,
When people talk about local ownership in the office, they look at different angles:
Participation; “Buy-in” from the beneficiary (“they want the program, this is a great program”). The “buy-in” is informed by the assessment…The philosophy and practice are evolving in USAID; it is not just fostering the participation of citizens in the project. There is a need to involve people not only as beneficiaries but also as actors. We are moving from people as victims to people as solutions.
- USAID program officer in Washington DC.

Local ownership leads to what USAID aspires all the time, which is sustainability. The assumption is that local ownership leads to sustainability, which leads to development. That is why USAID has been moving away from capital assistance to the promotion of human capital; as opposed to physical assets.
- USAID mission staff in Senegal

The three groups of stakeholders did not provide incompatible but rather complementary views on local ownership of externally funded projects. The
beneficiaries recognized implicitly that the money was coming from an “outside” source probably with an agenda; but what they valued the most was the fact that they got involved in implementing the projects by addressing key issues some of the local actors were already working on. The emphasis was put not on the fact that the idea and funding came from “outside,” but on the fact that it addressed a relevant local issue; the approach may have been new, but the framing of the issue relevant to the local context. The relevancy of the project to the local context seemed to be a critical aspect of ownership as viewed by local stakeholders. In other words, for local stakeholders, ownership amounted to involvement in a relevant project that addresses local issues.

USAID and its U.S. based implementing partners viewed local ownership from the prism of sustainability and to some extent of capacity to sustain a project with recorded results; hence the shift from physical assets to human capital and capacity building of local stakeholders has been adopted by USAID in recent years.

From these various definitions of local ownership by international and local stakeholders, the following four findings emerged as evidence for local ownership:
**Finding 1: Local commitment to the project is driven by experience working on areas or issues tackled by the project**

Commitment boiled down to the fact that local stakeholders expressed the need to address the issue(s) or are already working on the issues with their own means. In Haiti, stakeholders worked to provide livelihood and educational opportunities to out-of-school youth. In Casamance, development agents aimed at contributing to peace and improving the social and economic well-being of communities.

In both cases, the U.S. implementers identified and worked with local stakeholders already working on these issues. As a member of a local NGO in Casamance puts it:

> You see, we would have done it [support the CBOs to run peacebuilding and economic development projects] anyway, even without their [USAID] help. However, I have to admit that, they [USAID, World Education] helped us do it better and on a larger scale.  

In Casamance, World Education found local stakeholders committed in all activities related to the project. However, in Haiti, Education Development Center (EDC) worked with other U.S. based organizations to provide capacity building services and other technical assistance activities to stakeholders. The “outsourcing” of some critical activities to international organization had

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319 Interview with a member of AJAC in Ziguinchor, Casamance, June 15, 2010
consequences for the sustainability of the project after the departure of EDC; one of them being the continuous dependence on foreign expertise and resources.

*Finding 2: Increased capacity is seen by locals who are committed as a value adding benefit*

From the beneficiaries’ perspective, the value-added of the project was a crucial factor in consolidating their continuous involvement with the project. It was the yardstick used to know if the project addressed or helped address the identified issues.

In Haiti and in Casamance, the focus of the bulk of benefits was on capacity to implement youth livelihood and peace and community socio-economic well-being activities respectively. For Casamance, in addition to the capacity to implement the project *Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance*, there were also community benefits in the forms of micro-community development projects. The perceived relationship between the benefits provided by the project in Casamance and the commitment and contribution of local stakeholders, suggests that stakeholders got involved and sustained what they value most. Then the question becomes what was there in each of the project studied that could be owned and who could own it?

Donors and practitioners of development used different organizational tools to disaggregate elements of their projects. These tools highlight a set of relations between inputs (funding, information and knowledge), outputs (products
and services such as school building, health centers, etc.), and outcomes or expected results, which is the change of state the project wants to produce (i.e. skilled and educated youth, increased child survival rate, etc.). For that matter, De Valk and his colleagues argue:

A working definition of ownership therefore requires that some distinctions are made to facilitate its use: ownership of material inputs and outputs (i.e. objects), of non-material inputs and outputs (particularly, in the case of technical assistance projects, technical knowledge), and ownership of objectives and of processes. Ownership has different meaning in each of these references.\(^\text{320}\)

While most stakeholders embraced the overall outcomes of the projects; they were nonetheless motivated by different aspects of the project. The two projects discussed in this research are not exempt from this variability of interests.

In the Casamance project for example, technical partners (ACA, Trostan, and APRAN) discontinued their involvement with the project after their contract to strengthen the capacity of local NGOs expired. Their reward of being involved with the project was financial resources to increase their reputation and visibility, rather than promoting capacity building among stakeholders. Meanwhile, local NGOs or intermediary organizations continued working with CBOs long after their official contract ended. It can be safely argued that local NGOs in Casamance, unlike the local technical partners, expressed interest not only in the increased benefits, which in their case was increased capacity they received from

the technical partners, but also on the results at the level of community. Also, the capacity development they gained from the project enabled them to be relevant to the issues they set out to work on; hence reinforcing their commitment to the project. In other words, unlike technical partners, the benefits non-governmental organizations received from the project in the form of capacity made them more relevant and capable to fulfill their organizational mission in a more efficient and effective way.

In Haiti, government agencies were more involved and interested in the change of policy. For instance, the National Vocational Agency and the Office of the Director of Basic Education in the Ministry of Education benefited from the project in the form of equipment, technical assistance, and study tours\(^{321}\) (notably in the Philippines). Local community based organizations were involved and contributed to the training of youth. These community based organizations benefited from capacity development and technical support from other U.S. based organizations in part of the EQUIP 3 consortium. Meanwhile, the business sector was interested in recruiting trained youth with a specific skills set. For the business sector, what was more attractive was whether the youth had the adequate skills to add-value to their companies. As a result of this lack of engagement, the project faced numerous challenges in placing youth in economic opportunities.

\(^{321}\) A delegation from the Haitian Ministry of Education spent a week in 2007 meeting with official in Manila, Philippines to learn more about their Non formal education policies and projects; and the way these policies were designed, adopted and implemented.
New and increased benefits, particularly increased capacity make the project relevant for local stakeholders, and are also important elements in the strategy for ensuring local involvement and to some extent contribution.

**Finding 3: Local contribution is both a result as well as a means**

All stakeholders mentioned local contribution as key component for achieving the intended goals of the project. As a local stakeholder’s contribution grew so was its leverage in the decision-making process. However, it was important for local stakeholders to be aware of their contribution in the process. During interviews and focus groups, some stakeholders were not aware or could not articulate their contribution. These stakeholders perceived themselves as passive beneficiaries without leverage. Meanwhile, those who could articulate their contribution and more importantly recognize the uniqueness of their contribution had more leverage in the decision-making process.

However, local contribution was ensured in many ways. In some instances, local contribution was a result of local “buy-in”; and in other instances, it resulted from a sense of urgency to address the needs and local issues that affected their targeted communities.

These differences led to two different strategies of facilitating the contribution of local stakeholders. There was what could be considered an incentive based or “buy-in” approach, that puts forward the types of activities, results to be achieved as well as offered benefits for local stakeholders. There was
equally what could be considered an “issue-based” approach, through this approach, local stakeholders were encouraged to identify and frame issues on their own terms. Rather than being “bought in” to contribute, local stakeholders in this situation were supported to participate in the project.

In the projects Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance and IDEJEN, both “buy-in” and “issue-based” approaches were used to facilitate local contribution. In Casamance, the “buy-in” approach was mostly used at the level of technical partners; this approach strengthened the technical proposal and increased the chances for World Education to win the project bid in Casamance. Incentives were negotiated and agreed upon between each technical partners and World Education. Meanwhile at the level of intermediary NGO and community based organizations, World Education opted for the “issue-based” approach, through which local stakeholders contributed by framing in their own terms their needs and designing projects relevant to addressing these needs. The capacity development that local NGOs received helped them supervise and support community based organizations. The capacity and the support these community based organizations received helped officials designed, managed and sustained the peace building and development micro-projects.

In the IDEJEN project, the incentive-based approach was mostly used at the level of government agencies. The incentives put forward represented resources (systems, infrastructures, and finances), skills staff and exposure. For
example, a delegation from the Ministry of Education (non basic education) traveled to the Philippines to learn more about the implementation of non-formal education policy. At the community level however, the benefits in the form of capacity and financial resources were given to enable community based organizations to serve youth better; a mission community workers carried out in different scale.

![Figure 27: Approaches used to promote local contribution](image)

It is difficult to draw a general conclusion as to whether local stakeholders who contributed after having been “bought in” were less committed than those who contributed out of a sense of urgency and needs. However, in Casamance, local stakeholders who were encouraged to design and frame issues and activities in their own terms and who acted more from a sense of urgency served as the ones who sustained the project even after USAID’s involvement. This observation does not diminish the contribution of other stakeholders; however it does raise
questions regarding their continuous involvement with the project, particularly after the support of USAID.

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Both case studies suggest that local ownership is a dynamic process that occurs when committed local stakeholders participate to the design and take advantage of a project or policy to contribute to its implementation in a sustainable way even beyond donor’s involvement. This learning suggests that local ownership is not a fixed outcome or a dual concept (present/absence) linked to a particular point in time and for an entire project. Instead, it is a process that requires the combination of three important concepts: local commitment – increased benefits, capacity in particular – and local contribution. The way these notions are manifested varied from one project to the other; different elements and stages (design, implementation, and evaluation) of a given project; and from one stakeholder to the other.

It also means that local stakeholders do not express the same level of commitment for all phases and parts of the project. Some are more committed during the design of the overall project, as they take advantage of the resources available (financial and reputation), which could be the case of U.S. based implementers. During the design phase for example, particular sets of organizational capacity and knowledge are needed. For example, organizations
must have a good understanding of USAID procedures and language. As shown in the two cases, local stakeholders’ level of participation during these phases amounted to information; even though in Haiti, locals did have an important influence in the evolving design of the project. This level of participation did not result in local stakeholders owning the final project proposal; even in Casamance where World Education worked with local technical partners, the latter did not decide on the final proposal that was sent to USAID. At the implementation phase, local stakeholders became involved and contributed to different aspects of the project; hence the variability of local ownership according to each stakeholder and each activity of the project. In Casamance, the project did not result into one local NGO facilitating the entire project; instead, different local stakeholders adapted various activities and currently are sustaining them according to their means.

Even in Haiti where *IDEJEN* has become a local NGO; beyond the local organization known as *IDEJEN*, the outputs or products of the project (curriculum, systems, strategies, trained monitors, centers), as well as the outcomes (well trained youth workforce, trained youth serving community based organizations) are sustained and strengthened by a network of different local stakeholders.
FACTORS THAT FAVORED THE EMERGENCE OF LOCAL OWNERSHIP

The analysis of these two case studies also revealed that the emergence of local ownership as perceived by stakeholders of the projects was enabled by some key processes and strategies.

Finding 1: Participation is not an end to itself but a necessary means to achieve results

Both IDEJEN and Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance focused and used participation in different forms in achieving different outcomes. The contribution of local stakeholders was crucial to both projects and so was stakeholders’ participation. In these two cases, participation was not an end in itself; it served as a means to achieving results; however different forms of participation were observed at various stages of these projects.

Design of the USAID solicitation - The participation of local stakeholders in the USAID decision to fund these projects was nonexistent. In other words, both projects derived from USAID mission’s priorities for the countries. The USAID mission’s priorities are defined in the USAID Country Strategic Plan (CSP) but informed by a series of assessment that identify national and local priorities as expressed by all segments of the populations. In countries where the state does not necessarily reach out to all segments of the population to design national priorities, either because the state does not have the means for a
participative and inclusive planning process or cannot reach out to some “ungoverned” spaces and territories,\(^{322}\) it can also be due to the nature of the regime (autocratic, centralized, predatory). In such situations, USAID identified areas and sectors (cluster of needs) where intervention may be far more relevant at the local levels than government priorities if they do exist. However, it is worth noting that while relevancy of any given donor’s strategy is necessary to achieve the desired results, the legitimacy conferred by local stakeholders including the government is a critical factor. Therefore in both countries (Haiti and Senegal), while local stakeholders did not directly intervene in the USAID planning process, the results of this planning in the form of country strategic plan (CSP) reflected national priorities, thus ensuring some level of relevancy to countries needs and alignment of national and local governments.

At the project level, both IDEJEN and Building Peace and Prosperity experienced various forms of local participation. However, there were differences between the two projects.

**Design of the overall project** - The design of IDEJEN focused on learning practices, therefore local stakeholders whether youth, through Community Youth Mapping (CYM), and government agencies such as INFP, and community leaders

\(^{322}\) “Ungoverned spaces” is a term used by USAID and the Department of Defense to designed territories within countries, which have a weak presence or no state institutions and agencies. These territories are found in vast countries with weak central government, such as Chad, Niger, and Mali. In January 2010, I was involved in evaluating a USAID funded project called “PEDERS” in Chad, Niger and Mauritania, which made great use of the notion of “ungoverned spaces” to design counter violent extremism activities in Zinder (Niger), Bar-El Ghazal and Faya-Largeau (Chad).
contributed directly to designing the overall project with the exception of the project’s finances. Staff personnel from USAID as well as EDC never communicated the entire project’s budget with local stakeholders during the entire duration of the project. The responsible staff from EDC as well as USAID shared financial information on a “need to know basis.”

In the case for Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance, World Education entirely designed the overall project proposal with the participation of local stakeholders amounting to informants.

It can be argued that the main consequence of this difference is that the overall project framework of IDEJEN was clearly understood and embraced by a group of local stakeholders, particularly the Haitian Director of the project, individuals in the INFP (government agency), and some community leaders. The holistic approach facilitated the continuation of the project as a whole. Meanwhile in the case of Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance, local stakeholders did not have a holistic understanding of the project, leading to each of them focusing on its special activities after the support of USAID and World Education.

Implementation of activities – In both projects, local stakeholders managed the implementation of activities; however, this research discovered differences between the two projects. In IDEJEN, EDC co-shared the design of activities even at the community level. The capacity development aspect was
entirely driven by U.S. based organizations and the INFP (Haitian government agency) who trained local trainers and co-designed curriculum.

Meanwhile the nature of activities in the project *Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance* required that local stakeholders take the leadership in the design and the implementation and for World Education to act as a third party with a facilitating role. For example, local stakeholders designed capacity development activities, unlike in Haiti where U.S. based organizations trained local actors. It is worth noting that it was difficult for EDC to find intermediary organizations with the experience necessary to develop the capacity of youth serving local stakeholders. This constraint was not present in Senegal, where World Education partnered with many actors that had the necessary competencies to deliver capacity development services.

These differences resulted in the fact that in Haiti, even though the IDEJEN project has survived in the form of a local NGO, it is still very dependent on international organizations for capacity development and sustainability of activities. The initiative of the project is driven by Haitians but its sustainability is still fragile and depends on international actors. In Casamance, all the resources to sustain activities were provided by locals - a situation that explains why community based activities implemented during the project could be sustained even 10 years after the support of World Education and USAID. The overall architecture of the project *Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance* was
designed by World Education, but activities were sustained by local stakeholders who planned and implemented them.

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Local participation was essential in both projects to not only ensure local contribution, but also to elicit local stakeholders’ ideas and commitment to the project. Participation was not monolithic, it varied from one project to the other and more importantly, within each project it varied from one phase (design and implementation) to the other; from one activity to the other. These variations of participation across and within projects resulted in different ways projects and activities were ultimately owned and sustained by locals. In addition, these different variations of participation between phases and activities provide enough information for U.S. based implementers and local stakeholders to anticipate and plan the type and level of contribution of a project after USAID funding.

Finding 2: The initial power asymmetry that may exist between the international actors and the local stakeholders is diluted through negotiation during the implementation of the project

The term negotiation does not appear in any of the documents or interviews conducted during this research; however, it is a major theme that best
describes the evolution of relationships between stakeholders of both projects and the changing nature of power.

These two projects have shown that the relationships between local stakeholders and the U.S. based implementing organizations was that of interdependence; in which the first needed the resources of the latter; and the latter the knowledge, legitimacy and labor of the first. The sole focus on resources (financial and technical) misled many observers and critics to view the relationship between local stakeholders and U.S. based implementing organizations as an asymmetric one; and this perception was also shared by local stakeholders until they realized their increased leverage during the implementation of the projects. The two quotes below illustrate the change in the perception of the relations by local stakeholders.

We are really frustrated by some strategies put in place by USAID, which favor international organizations over local [organizations]. Meanwhile, the locals are the ones running the activities. Also USAID does not focus on the relationships between these international organizations and their local counterparts. These relationships sometimes resemble slavery.323

But as noted by a senior staff at IDEJEN towards the end of the project, “Now they [EDC/headquarters] can’t just impose on us anything.” This observation echoed a feeling also shared by some community based organizations towards IDEJEN. This reveals the increased awareness of the relative power of local stakeholders.

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323 Interview with a manager of a local NGO in Ziguinchor, Casamance region on May 30, 2010.
During the initial design of both projects, local stakeholders were involved as informants to the U.S. based implementer who was responsible of the design. The implementation phase required local knowledge and supportive personal networks with various audiences that only local stakeholders could provide.

During the implementation, EDC and World Education depended on local stakeholders to run activities and achieve the expected results; from such, these two international organizations strengthened their reputation vis-à-vis USAID. As local stakeholders got more involved in the project, they also understood the dynamics of relations and became more aware of the role they played and the relative power they had in achieving the results of the project; and the opportunity they had to “push back” on ideas suggested by international actors. Power in IDEJEN and Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance relied on formed relationships as well as resources. For instance, the concept of power was displayed in the form of resources (financial, technical, knowledge) and relationships as the level of trust and perceived credibility and legitimacy from other stakeholders, including USAID. The concept of power went beyond that of “power over” as defined by Dahl, to reflect more the relational dimension of “power with.” This conceptualization of power stresses that the concept of power is based on the interdependence that exist in social relationships, as well as on the ability to develop mutually empowering relationship with others.324 Both cases

324 Deutsch, “Conflicts: Productive and Destructive.”
show that power derived from the social relationship, strengthened by shared
goals, consent and to some extent shared or agreed norms of behaviors; rather
than only on the personal quality or possession of each stakeholder. In both of
these projects, stakeholders were locked in an interdependent relationship that
grew with time as stakeholders became more aware of their power and increased
their level of participation and contribution.

Finding 3: Institutional learning is a way to move toward sustainability
and ownership

Institutional learning was the driven force behind IDEJEN in Haiti. The
project and all the key stakeholders involved, particularly USAID and EDC were
committed to adapt and integrate learning in their future activities. The IDEJEN
project experienced several extensions. Each extension was built on the lessons
learned from the previous phases of the project. However, Building for Prosperity
and Peace in Casamance did not exhibit a similar level of institutional learning.

Learning in IDEJEN allowed improvement of project activities; it also
affected management processes and evaluation. To facilitate the management of
the project, a series of activities were organized to promote the exchange of
practices, experiences and reflections between local stakeholders (CBOs,
government agencies, and business sector) and with EDC staff (both from
headquarters and the field office); peer learning workshops among youth
centers; and a monthly bulletin produced by IDEJEN staff that informed on the progress made by the project.

Local stakeholders were encouraged and supported to participate in assessing project performance at their level of operations. The evaluation framework was designed not only to track learning but also to monitor the application of lessons learned from previous phases. This approach to evaluation encouraged all stakeholders to invest resources in documenting the learning, monitor changes and integrate them into their respective activities. Therefore, they reinforced the resiliency of the project during the various situations of fragility Haiti had experienced. In addition to strengthening the adaptability of the project, the focus on learning built a sense of confidence among stakeholders - both local and international. This focus on learning also empowered local stakeholders to contribute more to the project, thus reinforcing their ownership of the project.

Finding 4: Exit/entry strategies matter; they must be discussed during the design and the implementation of the project

An entry strategy focuses on the design, launch and implementation of a project. In contrast, an exit strategy is commonly used in development and reconstruction projects, as a way to describe approaches and processes for closing a project. It is also a way to signal that outsiders are not in to stay permanently.

325 These activities provided a mechanism for posing and responding to inquiries among peers and sharing good practice ideas, thus fostering an environment of learning.
An exit strategy is also used with the notion of sustainability. In the context of USAID, the notions of exit and entry strategies have programmatic and administrative aspects. The programmatic aspect includes all elements related to the content of the project or activities in achieving the expected results, as well as relationships and networks that support the project. The administrative aspects include elements related to contracting mechanisms, financial and legal procedures. In practice, the focus on USAID funded projects has been put more on an exit strategy framed as a sustainable model. The comparison of these two cases provides insight into the importance of entry and exit strategies used by U.S. implementers of reconstruction and development projects. While USAID plays an important role in setting the tone and the pace of entry and exit strategies, U.S. implementers are the ones designing and implementing these strategies at the project level. In both cases, the USAID mission behaved differently both during the entry and exit strategies set in place by the implementing organizations; particularly at the programmatic level. While the general focus on the integrity of startup procedures, which is the administrative aspects of the entry and exit strategies, was the same in both cases, the programmatic aspects were different in both projects.

In Haiti, IDEJEN entry strategy was dominated by the desire to learn from local experiences and project results. EDC launched the project as a pilot program to learn about issues and approaches that serve out-of-school youth to
improve their livelihoods. There was no guarantee of additional funding to implement a full-fledged project. As such, sustainability was less a priority than understanding the challenges faced by out-of-school youth and how to address these issues.

As the project evolved, the priorities shifted on the capacities of community-based organizations to deliver services to youth and the Haitian government to create an environment with appropriate policy that could provide education and livelihood opportunities to out-of-school youth. The continuous funding of the project, which was extended three times, failed to consider an exit strategy as a priority. The discussion on sustainability and an exit strategy was a gradual one if at all existent. USAID’s decision to discontinue all project’ activities abruptly took all stakeholders off guard. The transformation from an international funded project to a local NGO was not planned, it occurred as a result of a strong commitment from key Haitian personnel of the team, particularly the Director of IDEJEN with the support from EDC Headquarters as well as influential stakeholders, and members from the Haitian government. As put by a staff at USAID: “the right people came together at the right time.”

A key group of employees with the support of USAID and EDC, the local NGO (IDEJEN) took advantage of the positive results achieved so far, the network of community-based organizations created and the connections with the

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326 Interview at USAID mission in Haiti, June 9, 2011.
government to continue the project, almost at the same scale as the previously U.S. funded version.

Even though a sustainability plan and an exit strategy were not sufficiently in the lifetime of the project, an entry strategy driven by learning points and participation helped empower local stakeholders, build their capacity and offered an understanding of the issues to be addressed. As a result, local stakeholders designed an institution that sustained and scaled-up key activities and offered results for the original USAID funded project.

In the Casamance project, stakeholders planned for an entry and exit strategy; there was a level of predictability in terms of the project calendar. Similar in Haiti, USAID ensured that the administrative procedures were respected and their integrity preserved. At the program level, World Education’s project proposal stood out (according to USAID staff familiar with the selection process) in part because of the focus on program sustainability and local ownership.

The first six months of the project were devoted to assessment of needs and the development of plans at the community level and organizational capacities assessment at the level of local NGOs. Grants were given to local technical partners (ACA, Trostan and AJAC) to facilitate this process. These activities were more than information gathering but also a way to create a “buy-in” for technical partners and empower local NGOs and community based
organizations to frame their issues and design solutions in their own terms; therefore co-leading with World Education the implementation of these solutions.

Unlike IDEJEN, which was one issue-led project centered on youth livelihood, Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance focused on three main issues: peace process, peacebuilding activities, and community economic development. As a consequence, no local stakeholders had a holistic understanding of the project. These resulted in local stakeholders focusing more on activities that addressed their issues and benefited them directly. But whether it is on capacity development activities with local NGOs, community development projects with CBOs or peace process between the combatants from the MFDC and the government of Senegal, local stakeholders framed the issues and designed solutions. These actions empowered local stakeholders to implement activities and sustain them.

At the end of the project, World Education received additional funding for activities in the Casamance not under the component of Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance. However, World Education kept some working relations with local NGOs and some CBOs. As argued by the director of the project Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance:

> It is sad how some international projects are forced to stop abruptly; this is a common practice in peacebuilding funded projects. Generally the relationships and commitment stakeholders make survive the project’s official duration. Sometimes it is when you are closing the project that you begin to see the impact: How to leave is a crucial issue.
Fortunately for World Education, the answer to that crucial question on how to leave was embedded in the way the project was designed and implemented. That is, while the overall project framework was formed by World Education with input from local technical partners (ACA, AJAC and Tostan), the individual activities under each component of the project were designed and implemented in partnership with each group of stakeholders involved, allowing for a better understanding and control by local stakeholders. The working relations between World Education, which was the only international and U.S.-based organization in the project facilitated the type of partnerships that enabled local stakeholders, particularly CBOs and local NGOs, to sustain activities and results beyond project duration. None of the local stakeholders could sustain the entire project like IDEJEN did in Haiti, but key activities of the project *Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance* survived long after USAID stopped funding the project; only activities related to the peace process between MFDC and the Government of Senegal failed to survive.

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Both projects started and ended differently from a programmatic standpoint. In Haiti, IDEJEN functioned as a learning project. Towards the end of the project, IDEJEN morphed into a local entity and currently maintains the same
project objective. In addition, the project scaled up the same activities and results as the former USAID funded projects, and sought out new donors. In Casamance, *Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance* started out with the implementation of a predicted number of different activities and ended with some of these activities being taken over by different local stakeholders. Some of these activities survived more than 10 years after the closing of the project.

The differences between these two projects highlight an important lesson related to an exit and entry strategy and the concept of local ownership. In the case of *IDEJEN*, the emphasis was put on learning and understanding which help empower local stakeholders, particularly the Haitian team to take over the project and sustain its activities and results, despite the abrupt decision to end the project. In Casamance, the initial focus on local participation and sustainability through working exclusively with local stakeholders and allowing them to frame issues and solutions in their own terms, favored a context where local stakeholders developed the capacity and the propensity to find and implement their own activities to address issues they were facing. These capacity and propensity to look for solutions stayed long after the project ended.

In Casamance, an exit strategy and sustainability plan were part of the conversation in the design and the implementation phase of the project. For *IDEJEN*, an exit strategy and sustainability plan by local stakeholders was not part of the startup discussions. However, the learning approach helped sustain the
project despite important reliance on outside funding and technical assistance. These two cases therefore suggest that sustainability, and an exit strategy must be discussed during the design and the implementation of the project in a way that favor learning by all actors.

**RISK FACTORS**

Some elements inherent to the structure or procedures and strategies adapted by stakeholders posed certain risks to the achievement of expected results but more precisely on obtaining local ownership in these two cases.

*Finding 1: Relationships within and between local stakeholders have an impact on project ownership*

Internal dynamics and relationships among people and institutions are important elements of any project; it is an obvious fact. But the benefit of looking at the way the dynamics and the relationships between stakeholders of a given project relied less on the nature as on their impact on the project and on the behaviors of all stakeholders. The impact on the project and on the behaviors of other stakeholders differed from one project to the other. *IDEJEN* and *Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance* did not escape that fact.

With *IDEJEN*, the issue manifested itself with community based organizations and government agencies. *IDEJEN* started the pilot project with the assumption that community based organizations had the capacities to deliver
youth services. That assumption turned out to be false; therefore, the project team had to adjust. The reality according to EDC’s internal evaluations was that faith-based CBOs and youth associations performed better compared to other community based organizations (mixed demographics, not affiliated to a church). One of the things that explained this difference in performance was the fact that faith-based CBOs and youth CBOs were well organized and led; they all had a good sense of direction and plans. Fortunately, the project was able to take corrective measures and focus more on capacity building of CBOs in order to mitigate the adverse effects of these gaps on the project.

At the level of government agencies, particularly with the Ministry of Education and Youth, the challenge was the lack of a coherent government youth policy and responsibility. Even though there was a level of political will and commitment particularly at the level of directors, the lack of a policy clarity and responsibilities contributed among other things (such as political instability) to the failure of adopting a non-formal education policy. In the project Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance, given the nature of the conflict, it was obvious that the relations between the government and the MFDC were clouded by mistrust. Mistrust is a common feature of relations between parties in conflict, but in this case it was a major obstacle to dialogue that could lead to peace. In addition to the poor quality of the relations between the government and the MFDC, there were dysfunctions within each of the parties. MFDC was marred by
fractionalization, with factions distrusting each other and not agreeing on whether to negotiate with the government. The government lacked a coherent strategy and vision for peace in the region and therefore sent out mixed messages that fed the existing mistrust and confusion.

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As previously discussed in chapters four and five, the internal organization of local stakeholders and work relations among them has had some effect on the process of local ownership in each of the projects studied. In Haiti, the weak capacity and lack of leadership of some community based organizations and to some extent the Ministry of Education required some adjustment of priorities in order to reach the expected results and local ownership in the case of CBOs. On the other hand, at the level of the Ministry of Education the lack of leadership hindered the full development and adaption of the non-formal education policy. In addition to internal dynamics in Senegal, particularly the fractionalization within the MFDC and the lack of coherent peace strategy from the government, the poor quality of the relations between the MFDC and the government of Senegal made it almost impossible to sustain the peace process in Casamance.

Finding 2: Elite capture – It is important to be aware of the difference between the most connected local actors and those who are committed to the project
Both projects introduced relatively important amounts of resources (finance, infrastructures and access to international donors, i.e. USAID) in environments of resource scarcity. Generally the imperative to work with local stakeholders exposed donors and international development organizations to the risk of seeing these resources being distracted from their intended purposes by local stakeholders with power, connections and knowledge of donor procedures and requirements. This phenomenon is generally called elite capture. While IDEJEN and Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance did not experience widespread elite capture, few instances of elite capture were present in both projects. The case of Fondation Avenir in Haiti and the cases of the community of Niabina in Casamance as well as the role played by some members of the Collective des Cadres Casamancais in the peace process, have been mentioned in chapters three and four respectively.

While the adverse consequences of “elite capture” were marginal and even mitigated in the case of IDEJEN, the way it was addressed is a key learning point. For instance, in the case of IDEJEN, EDC developed specifically a sub-granting mechanism based on advances and reconciliation of funds to over 100 local community based organizations. These organizations, while at the core of the success of the model, would not have been able to start any activities without EDC advancing funds. On the other hand, EDC was obliged to set up technical and financial control and regular reconciliation mechanisms in Haiti to ensure
compliance to USAID regulations and appropriate use of funding. This mechanism helped prevent earlier on Fondation Avenir from further taking advantage of the resources of the project without performing satisfactorily. However, Fondation Avenir would not have been able to be part of the pool of grantees had it been subjected to the competitive and inquisitive selection process designed by EDC. EDC put in place a selection process based on the NGO track record of working within the targeted community or similar target groups and accountability mechanisms (both financial and decision making).

In Casamance, the risk of elite capture was present in all types of activities. For community economic development activities, World Education and the local NGOs overlooked the distribution of power within some communities. At least in the community of Niabina, local elite, not the population, took over the process, which created tensions among local groups and alienated the majority of the population. Activities related to the peace process were implemented in a context of mistrust and secrecy, which exposed them to the risk of elite capture. For World Education to have access to the leadership of parties in conflict, it relied on the most connected people. The project had to tread carefully between relying on the most connected people (therefore more likely to be associated to one group in conflict) and demonstrating impartiality. Given the secrecy that surrounded peace talks, once brought into the process, these intermediaries were not accountable and in some cases would advance their personal agenda.
However, very little evidence of elites pushing their parochial interests was discovered during the project. In recent years though (since 2010), the corruption surrounding the actions of government emissaries in Casamance, also known as “Monsieur Casamance” (Mister Casamance) has brought to light the risks of corruption and distraction due to the reliance on connected elite whose actions were unchecked.

**Finding 3: USAID’s imperative for quick results was an obstacle to local ownership**

Most donor development agencies received money from their government based in part on the perceptions their leaders have with project results achieved on the ground. Generally the funding cycle does not necessarily match the project cycle; therefore donors are chasing results to justify their funding. This constant chase creates an urge for quick demonstrable results. The pressure for quick demonstrable results can also come from the context in which the project is implemented. For example, in peacebuilding and conflict resolution projects, the general understanding is that fast results may reinforce the perception of normalcy and the momentum toward reconstruction both physical and social. The quicker the parties in conflict and population receive peace dividends the more committed they may be to the cause of peace. In this case, there is an external push toward overnight results. It is to address this imperative of results that notions and practices such as “quick impact” projects have emerged. However, not all
peacebuilding and conflict resolution are designed to be a “quick impact” and not all issues lend themselves to quick results, i.e., reconciliation activities, reintegration of ex-combatants and peace negotiations. These types of activities constituted the bulk of peacebuilding and conflict resolution activities of the project Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance. The urge for speedy results was a lesser problem for IDEJEN where USAID started under the premise to learn first and act later; therefore showing more patience than it would have otherwise shown.

In Casamance however, the overall Strategic program Objective 2 (SpO2) through which the project Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance was designed and implemented, was driven by the need to provide quick demonstrable results. This overall approach influenced the selection of organizations implementing activities under this SpO2 the majority of whom were international organizations. This approach left local organizations fighting for the sub-grants distributed by international NGOs and implementing agencies (UNICEF) and feeling excluded, as reflected by the leader of a local NGO:

We are really frustrated by some strategies put in place by USAID, which favor international organizations over local. Meanwhile, the local are the ones running activities. Also USAID does not focus on the relationships between these international organizations and their local counterparts. These relationships sometimes resemble slavery.\(^\text{327}\)

\(^{327}\) Interview with a manager of a local NGO in Ziguinchor, Casamance region on May 30, 2010
As far as the project *Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance* was concerned, the repercussions of the USAID’s urge for quick results was more felt on activities related to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The immediate consequence was the focus on the activities rather than their impact; this focus is exemplified by the indicators used in the project’s monitoring and evaluation plan, for example: the indicator of *cultural week-ends* was the attendance that is, the number of people attending the event; implying that the attendance will automatically affect the change of behavior toward reconciliation. While cultural week-ends were highly publicized events with supposed positive outcomes, their interest from USAID’s perspective was on the media aspect than the potential impact on peace. The same can be said of peace talks between the MFDC and the government of Senegal.

The urge for quick results can lead to donors prioritizing stakeholders with capacity rather than commitment to the project and its results. This risks favoring “outsiders” over local stakeholders. This order of preference may create frustration and alienate the same entities donors have to work with to achieve results. Also, it may lead to prioritizing activities that may draw attention but not necessarily contribute to achieving the overall goal of the project.
FACTORS WITH AMBIVALENT INFLUENCE

The analysis and comparison of the two cases of the research also reveal some common elements to all international projects that have an influence on local ownership; however the nature of the influence depends on the strategies used by stakeholders of the project.

Finding 1: The political, institutional and social realities influence the nature of ownership as well as the stakeholders able to own the project

The context in terms of political, cultural and socio-political realities shape the ways reconstruction and stabilization policies, programs and projects are designed. In looking at the context of each case, the focus was on the drivers of instability and how these drivers of instability affected local ownership. From this perspective, Haiti and Senegal presented some sharp differences that have influenced the way the projects were designed and ultimately local ownership of some activities and results.

The Casamance conflict has had a destructive economic and social impact in the region of Casamance but less so in the rest of the country. The government of Senegal succeeded to contain and limit the impact of the conflict to Casamance. One of the results of this strategy has been the fact that the political and administrative institutions of Senegal have not been weakened even in Casamance. The Casamance conflict is one of the few conflicts, if not the only
separatist conflict\textsuperscript{328} where the central authority and administrative units (local government) representing the central authority are not attacked nor challenged in the separatist region. This unique situation allows the central government to exercise its authority and provide minimum services, thus remaining a key stakeholder in the reconstruction and development process at the local level. The presence of a functioning government at all levels (central and local), the long tradition of a vibrant civil society with a diversity of local NGOs and community based organizations offered World Education more opportunities to work with local stakeholders than it would have in other type of secessionist conflicts.

In Haiti, the instability has been fed by multiple phenomena including political violence, diseases, crime and natural disasters. This combination of widespread adverse factors has left the country political and social institutions weakened. Decades of Duvalier dictatorship and years of political instability have constrained the development of a local civil society and diminished the credibility of central public and political institutions. Despite this adverse macro environment, there were local forms of community organizing through faith-based organizations, youth, women and peasants associations that contributed to the resiliency of some communities. While these factors of resiliency were localized and dispersed, they offered entry points to the U.S. implementer. This situation

\textsuperscript{328}In comparison to the conflict between Eritrean People’s Liberation Front in Eritrea and the government of Ethiopia; Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) in South Sudan and the Government of Sudan; National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad in Northern Mali and the Government of Mali, the Polisario Front and the Kingdom of Morocco.
explained in part the learning approach and the focus on community based organization with a reliance on U.S. based organizations for capacity development activities.

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In both of these cases, the context provided constraints and opportunities and shaped the nature of the project and the entry and implementation strategies while determining the way the projected ended. Senegal offered the opportunity to work directly with local technical partners, NGOs, to both build local capacities and implement activities. The increased capacity of local stakeholders at all levels allowed them to sustain different activities long after the project ended. Haiti presented a more fragile and unstable environment making it difficult to identify capable local civil society partners. There was a gap at the intermediary level of the civil society, where most service providers, NGOs, and technical partners were found. This particular constraint forced EDC to work more with international organizations to support local capacity. Relying on community based organizations allowed EDC to invest more on capacity development but also to support the creation of an intermediary NGO to sustain the project. Fortunately, this last option was realized not necessarily as the consequence of a strategic plan but more as a positive result of the level of ownership expressed by the team of Haitian staff and the good reputation the project has built through its results.
Finding 2: Duration of the project - The process of determining the duration of a project is as important as the duration itself

The difference in the duration of both projects offered IDEJEN an important opportunity that Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance did not have. IDEJEN was funded for seven years (2004-2010) at incremental pace; while the program for Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance received funding for three years (2001-2003). But for both projects, more than the number of years, it was how the duration of the project was determined that matters the most.

In the case of IDEJEN, the duration was the result of a process of learning and permanent negotiation between USAID mission in Haiti, EDC, and local stakeholders in Haiti. In other words, the duration of the project was the result of seven years of relationship building and shared learning experiences. It is worth mentioning that this gradual increase of the duration was not planned, but the desire to learn expressed at the inception of the project helped the extensions to happen.

In the case of Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance, the duration of the project was determined in advance, there was no room for negotiation. As discussed in chapter four, the short duration of the project given the nature of issues to be addressed was not helpful in achieving the results expected neither from the project nor in building the types of relationships and shared
understanding necessary to the success of some activities, particularly those related to peacebuilding and the peace process. In other words, time in the case of *Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance* was a limiting factor, a constraint rather than the results of a negotiation and learning process as it was the case for *IDEJEN*.

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The study of local ownership of the projects *IDEJEN* and *Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance* yields some insights relevant to the theoretical discussions as well as to the practices of intervention and reconstruction in fragile and unstable societies. This chapter highlights findings from both cases and further highlight differences and similarities between the two projects.

Four categories of findings or learning themes emerged from the comparison: a) Framing and definition of local ownership; b) strategies that support the emergence of local ownership; c) risks factors that stymied local ownership; and d) factors with an ambivalent influence in the sense that, they may obstruct or facilitate local ownership depending on the strategies used by the stakeholders.
On the framing of local ownership, the cases suggest that while local stakeholders and U.S. based implementers may have different perceptions of local ownership, these perceptions are not incompatible. While local stakeholders perceived local involvement and project relevancy to be the core of local ownership, U.S. actors viewed local involvement through increased capacity, benefits, and sustainability. From the analysis of both cases, it is safe to argue that local ownership is a dynamic process that occurs as committed local stakeholders participate in the design and take advantage of a project or policy to contribute to its implementation in a sustainable way even beyond donor involvement.

On the emergence of local ownership, both cases suggest that it is important to recognize that stakeholders were locked in an interdependent relationship that grew with time as local stakeholders became more aware of their leverages, increased the level of participation and contribution; thus facilitating ownership of activities by local stakeholders. The emergence of ownership took different paths in both projects. For IDEJEN, local participation was a necessary process of emergence combined to share learning mainly by USAID and EDC, and constant negotiation of roles and resources. As for Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance, local leadership in design and implementation of activities were at the core of the project.
The differences between *IDEJEN* and *Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance* also highlight an important lesson for organizations to demonstrate a sustainable model for an exit strategy. In the case of *IDEJEN*, the fact that emphasis was put on learning and understanding at the beginning of the project helped empower local stakeholders, particularly the Haitian team of the project to take over the project and sustain its activities and results, despite USAID’s abrupt decision to end the project. In Casamance, the initial focus on local leadership in design and implementation facilitated a context where local stakeholders developed the capacity and the propensity to find and implement their own activities to address issues they were facing.

There are many factors that could stymie the emergence of local ownership. Elite capture posed the risk of seeing the resources of the projects being distracted from their intended purposes by well connected and influential local stakeholders who did not necessarily have community or project impact as their priorities. There were also the dynamics of relations between and within local stakeholders; this particular factor was noted in both projects. In addition to factors related to the environment of the project and the local stakeholders, USAID’s pressure for results had some adverse effects on local stakeholders’ commitment and contribution to the project, this was observed particularly in the Casamance project.
Some factors were not exclusively favorable or discouraging to the emergence of local ownership; they in fact set the operational parameters within which stakeholders had to work. They were the duration of the project and the institutional and socio-political context of the project. For instance, project duration was a positive factor for IDEJEN and was perceived more as a constraint in Casamance. But more than the length of USAID funding (7 years in Haiti and almost 3 years in Casamance), it was the way the duration of the project was determined that mattered. In Haiti, the project started without an end date, the duration resulted from a negotiation process between local staff of IDEJEN, EDC Headquarters and USAID mission. The negotiation process allowed stakeholders of the project both local and U.S. based organizations to build on shared goals for the project and a consensus around its results, thus enabling a shared commitment to the project. In Casamance, the length of USAID involvement in the project was set in advance; it was a constraint all the stakeholders had to work with. Given the nature of the activities and results to achieve, three years time period was very limited.

If the length of the project was not favorable in Casamance, the context of Senegal offered opportunities that could not be found in Haiti; notably, a functioning central government, vibrant and relatively capable civil society and the presence of local organizations that could support the project. All these opportunities were in short supply in Haiti, forcing the U.S. implementer and
USAID to work with international consultants and organizations to support the project.
CONCLUSION

This conclusion brings key findings from the research and compares them to initial assumptions and hypotheses. This section continues by making recommendations that facilitate local ownership of internationally funded projects in situations of fragility and instability.

RESEARCH QUESTION, INITIAL ASSUMPTION AND HYPOTHESES

This research aimed at answering the following question: How is local ownership attained in U.S.-funded projects in societies facing instability or violent conflicts?

The USAID-funded projects, IDEJEN in Haiti and Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance, Senegal, served as case studies for addressing the research question. The research was based on the assumption that local ownership is expressed differently by local stakeholders involved in the project, and is more likely to emerge when both donors’ and local stakeholders’ goals and priorities are aligned regardless of who initiates and funds the project. From this main assumption the following hypotheses were constructed:
**H1:** Alignment of organizational goals and priorities with those of the project facilitates local ownership better than technical capacity alone.

**H2:** Donor’s institutional arrangements and implementation mechanisms can facilitate or stymie local ownership.

**H3:** The power asymmetry in favor of international actors (donors and contractors) obliges local stakeholders to submit to expectations and contractors’ views on the project.

**H4:** The local and national contexts affect the level of local ownership expressed for a given aid project.

The methodology of the research focused on learning from the case studies through findings. It is based on this learning that policy recommendations have been suggested.

**SUMMARY OF LEARNING THEMES AND KEY FINDINGS**

Twelve key findings emerged from the study, through a process of comparing and contrasting the two cases. These findings are classified under four main learning themes: a) framing of local ownership; b) strategies that support the emergence of local ownership; c) risk factors that stymied local ownership; and d) factors with a nuanced influence over the emergence, or not, of local ownership.

**Learning Theme 1: Framing and Defining Local Ownership** - Both case studies suggest that local ownership is a dynamic process that occurs when
committed local stakeholders participate in the design of a project or policy, contribute to its implementation in a sustainable way and envision their involvement beyond donor’s intervention.

Local ownership is therefore not a binary concept, where one can simply answer with a “yes” or “no”; it is a layered concept best understood as a process in a continuum. The layers can be defined around project elements such as inputs, outputs and outcomes following a logical framework or results framework. Layers of ownership can also be conceived around project milestones that are design (pre-design assessment, proposal writing and planning), implementation/management and monitoring/evaluation. It is worth noting that these milestones can be sequential or concurrent. Local ownership can also be seen through a spatial prism of a center and a periphery. More than just geographic locations, center (headquarters) and periphery (field offices) are loci of decision making and areas of resource control related to different aspects (inputs, outputs and outcomes) and phases (design, implementation and evaluation) of the project.

The interplay of these various dimensions where local ownership can be analyzed suggests that local ownership is best expressed through a combination of three notions: a) local commitment; b) increased benefits, capacity in particular; c) Logical framework (Logframe) and result-oriented framework are all tools used by USAID and its contractors to monitor and evaluate project performance and results.
and c) local contribution. These notions are further discussed through the following findings:

*Finding 1: Local commitment to the project is driven by experience working on areas or issues tackled by the project.*

While commitment is difficult to measure, track record, mission statement and core work provide indications as to whether a particular stakeholder is committed to the goals, outcomes and issues to be addressed by the project. In both projects studied, the U.S. implementers were able to identify and work with local stakeholders who were already engaged in the issues the project sought to address.

*Finding 2: Increased capacity is seen by locals who are committed to the project, as a value adding benefit*

For stakeholders, the value-added of the project comes in the form of relevant capacity, a crucial factor in consolidating their continuous involvement with the project. Relevant capacity is the capacity that stakeholders can use to deliver results and to sustain results and operations while advocating and working with local government to establish/reinforce an enabling policy environment relevant to the issues addressed by the project. The development of these capacities increases stakeholders’ leverage in negotiations as well as potential contributions, ergo local ownership of the relevant aspects of the projects.
Quite often, the debate over capacity is dominated by the reasoning that only local stakeholders need to build their capacities. Indeed capacity building has a transformative effect; that is, the development of new capacities raises expectations of all stakeholders. Local stakeholders expect increased access to and control of resources, inputs and decisions, as expressed by a senior staff member of IDEJEN: “Now EDC has to realize that, we have to be treated as a partner.

Although U.S. contractors implementing the project expect more contribution and commitment from the local stakeholder, they, in collaboration with USAID, also need to develop the capacity to learn (integrate feedback and change based on new knowledge and learning), facilitate more local participation and develop patience in the form of processes and procedures based on realistic timeframes. This also requires sometimes for U.S.-based contractors to build their own capacity in developing new and/or adapting existing managerial mechanisms to be more responsive to the local realities and capacities, such as limited financial management and data collection capacity of locally based organizations.

Finding 3: Local contribution is both a result as well as a means.

All stakeholders mentioned local contribution as a key component for achieving the intended goals of the project. However, interpretation of ways to obtain local contribution was not shared by all actors; thus, the views of stakeholders were scattered (local, U.S. implementers, USAID staff). For some,
local contribution was a result of local “buy-in:” for others it resulted from a sense of urgency to address the needs and local issues that affected their targeted communities.

**Learning Theme 2: Factors that Favored the Emergence of Local Ownership**

The study of the cases shows that some strategies were implemented in both of the projects, which supported the emergence of local ownership. Two findings revealed these strategies:

*Finding 1: Participation is not an end in itself but a necessary means to achieve results*

Local participation was essential in both projects to not only ensure local contribution, but also to elicit local stakeholders’ ideas and commitment to the project. Participation was not monolithic, it varied from one project to the other and more importantly, within each project it varied from one phase (design and implementation) to the other and from one activity to the next. These variations of participation across and within projects resulted in different ways that projects and activities were ultimately owned and sustained by locals. In addition, these different variations of participation between phases and activities provided enough information for U.S.-based implementers and local stakeholders to anticipate and plan the type and level of contribution as well as the future of the project post USAID funding.
Finding 2: The initial power asymmetry that may exist between the international actors and the local stakeholders is diluted through negotiation during the implementation of the project.

Both cases show that power emerged from the nature of the relationship and was strengthened by shared goals. In both of these projects, the relationships between stakeholders evolved with time as stakeholders became more aware of their tangible assets (finance, materials) and intangible assets (local knowledge, connections, legitimacy, and reputation) and increased their level of participation and contribution. This reality made negotiation a critical process of the decision making process, as well as an equalizing force between local and international stakeholders.

Finding 3: Institutional learning is a way to move toward sustainability and ownership

The project IDEJEN in Haiti underwent several extensions. While these extensions resulted from a negotiated process, each extension built on the lessons learned from previous phases. More than just adding new activities, some assumptions were questioned and approaches improved or abandoned all together. In this case, learning led to more profound corrections and changes. More than just affecting project activities and processes, institutional learning also
influenced the behavior and the commitment of stakeholders of the project. Local stakeholders were empowered to participate and contribute to discussions over improvement of the project, knowing that their feedback would lead to changes, thus reinforcing their ownership of the project.

Finding 4: Entry and exit strategies matter.

The differences between these two projects highlight an important lesson related to the entry and exit strategies and the concept of local ownership. The way both projects started and ended, different as they were, helped sustain their impact. In the case of IDEJEN, the emphasis was put on learning and understanding that helped empower local stakeholders, particularly the Haitian team who took over the project and sustained its activities, despite the abrupt decision by USAID to end the project. In Casamance, the initial focus on local participation and sustainability through working exclusively with local stakeholders and allowing them to frame issues and solutions on their own terms, favored a context where local stakeholders could sustain some activities.

Learning Theme 3: Risks Factors - Some elements inherent to the structure or procedures and strategies adopted by stakeholders posed certain risks to the achievement of local ownership in the two cases.

Finding 1: Relationships within and between local stakeholders have an impact on project ownership
The internal organization of local stakeholders and relations among them has had some effects on the process of local ownership in each of the projects studied. In Haiti, the weak capacity and lack of leadership of some community based organizations and to some extent the Ministry of Education, required some adjustment of priorities in order to reach the expected results and local ownership in the case of CBOs; while at the level of the Ministry of Education, the lack of leadership hindered the full development and adoption of the non-formal education policy. In addition to internal dynamics in Senegal particularly, the fractionalization within the MFDC and the lack of coherent peace strategy from the government, the poor quality of the relations between the MFDC and the Government of Senegal made it almost impossible to sustain the peace process in Casamance.

Finding 2: Elite capture – It is important to make the distinction between the most connected local actors and those who are committed to the project

Given the amount of resources injected through both of these projects, whether in Casamance or in Haiti, the risk of elite capture was constantly present. In Haiti, the partial support provided to Fondation Avenir was an illustration of how well-connected elite could have access to international resources. The case of the community of Niabina in Casamance speaks to this risk. However, the lessons from both cases is that putting in place mechanisms that ensure transparency and
accountability, as well as focus on targeting committed stakeholders, could help mitigate the risk posed by elite capture.

Finding 3: USAID’s imperative for quick results can be an obstacle to local ownership

Generally the funding cycle does not necessarily match the project cycle; therefore donors chase results to justify their funding. This constant chase creates an urge for quick demonstrable results. The pressure for quick demonstrable results can also come from the context in which the project is implemented. For example, in peacebuilding and conflict resolution projects, the general understanding is that quick results may reinforce the perception of normalcy and the momentum toward reconstruction, both physical and social. While the issue was not prevalent in the case of IDEJEN in Haiti, it was constantly present in Casamance, where USAID and World Education wanted to demonstrate quick results; even though most peacebuilding and conflict resolution activities do not generally yield quick results. These activities which mainly aim to heal relationships and improve social cohesion require more time than the contractual duration of the project. The imperative for quick results pushes USAID and their international implementers, on one hand, to work with stakeholders that are immediately capable of delivering some outputs but may not be necessarily legitimate or committed to the impact of the project. And on the other hand, it pushes them to prioritize activities that may draw the attention of the general
public and media but not necessarily contribute to achieving the overall goal of the project.

**Learning Theme 4: Factors with an Ambivalent Influence** - These factors are common elements of all international projects; however, the nature of the influence depends on the strategies used by the stakeholders of the project. They are expressed through the following learning themes:

**Finding 1: The political, institutional and social realities influence the nature of ownership as well as the stakeholders able to own the project**

In both of these cases, the context provided constraints and opportunities and shaped the nature of the project, the entry and implementation strategies, while determining the way the project ended. Senegal offered the opportunity to work directly with local technical partners that both build local capacities and implement activities. The increased capacity of local stakeholders at all levels allowed them to sustain different activities long after the project ended. Haiti presented a more fragile and unstable environment making it difficult to identify capable local civil society partners. The instability of the Haitian context, as well as the absence of capable local partners, forced EDC to work with more international organizations to support local capacity than World Education in Senegal. For IDEJEN, reliance on community-based organizations meant EDC had to invest more in capacity development but also support the creation of an intermediary NGO to sustain the project.
Finding 2: Duration of the project: The process of determining the
duration of a project is as important as the duration itself

The difference in the duration of both projects offered IDEJEN an
important opportunity that Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance did
not have. IDEJEN was funded during seven years (2004-2010) at an incremental
pace; while Building Peace in Casamance was funded for almost three years
(2001-2003). But more than number of years, it was how the duration of the
project was determined that mattered the most. In the case of IDEJEN the
duration of the project was the result of a process of learning and permanent
negotiation between USAID’s mission in Haiti, EDC and local stakeholders in
Haiti. However, in Casamance the duration of the project was decided and set by
USAID alone and did not change despite the evidence that peacebuilding and
reconciliation activities needed more time to yield noticeable impact.

The case of IDEJEN suggests that project longevity reinforces
interdependency, increases capacity and leads to a process of joint learning and
shared goals if the right people and adequate resources are present.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning themes</th>
<th>Findings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Framing and defining of local ownership</strong></td>
<td><em>Local commitment to the project is driven by experience working on areas or issues tackled by the project.</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Increased capacity is seen by locals who are committed to the project, as a value adding benefit.</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Local contribution is both a result as well as a means.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Factors that favored the emergence of local ownership</strong></td>
<td><em>Participation is not an end in itself but a necessary means to achieve results.</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>The initial power asymmetry that may exist between the “powerful” international actors and the local stakeholders is diluted through negotiation during the implementation of the project.</em></td>
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<td><em>Institutional learning is a way to move toward sustainability and ownership.</em></td>
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<td><em>Elite capture – It is important to make the distinction between the most connected local actors and those who are committed to the project.</em></td>
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<tr>
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These findings confirm some of the hypotheses and show the ambivalence of others, while highlighting some unanticipated factors that affect the emergence of local ownership. These findings also inform the recommendations suggested by the research. To better understand the link between the hypotheses and the learning themes in the following lines, each hypothesis will be analyzed through the related learning themes.

**Research Hypotheses Versus Learning Themes and Findings**

Four main hypotheses were developed to serve as guideposts to the study of local ownership in the two case studies used for the research. Analyzing these hypotheses through the prism of the learning themes improved the understanding of the cases and helped make some recommendations worth exploring in other interventions in situations of fragility.

**H1: Alignment of organizational goals and priorities with those of the project facilitates local ownership better than technical capacity alone.**

In both cases, local stakeholders who continued activities after the funding ceased were those who were already committed to the issues addressed by the project and were working on these issues prior to project inception. In fact in both cases, local partners needed capacity development to be able to perform to the level required by the projects. In the Casamance project for example, technical partners (ACA, Trostan, and APRAN) stopped their involvement with the project after their contract to strengthen the capacity of local NGOs ended. Meanwhile,
local NGOs or intermediary organizations continued to work with community-based organizations long after their official contract ended. It can be safely argued that local NGOs in Casamance, unlike the local technical partners, expressed interest not only in the increased benefits, which in their case was increased capacity received from technical partners, but also in the results at the community level. In Haiti, for instance, working with local CBOs who leveraged proximity to youth and their communities, and demonstrated credibility and experience with youth, but lacked capacity meant that a comprehensive and customized capacity strengthening and development strategy had to be implemented.

In both projects, the strong emphasis on capacity development and strengthening of local stakeholders was the consequence of the strategic choice to prioritize commitment over capacity alone. However, the focus of capacity development was mostly on the delivery of services in implementing activities, but less on the sustainability of operations, advocacy and working with the government at policy levels, which was needed for both projects.

\textit{H2: Donor’s institutional arrangements and implementation mechanisms can facilitate or stymie local ownership.}

The type of the implementation mechanisms, such as contracts or grants, creates structures within which the U.S. contractor and the local stakeholders operate; however, these structures are modified and reframed in the course of the interactions. Those structures that are resistant or inflexible are abandoned or
become less used, particularly in an unpredictable environment such as Casamance and Haiti.

More than the implementation mechanisms, what was more challenging for both projects were USAID’s two problematic imperatives: A) the imperative for local participation for the sake of participation, which exposed the projects to the risk of seeing resources being distracted from their intended purposes by local stakeholders with power, connections and knowledge of donor procedures and requirements; and B) the imperative for quick results, on one hand this led USAID in Senegal to prefer stakeholders with capacity than those with commitment to the project and its results. This order of priority created some frustrations and alienated the same entities USAID contractors had to work with to achieve results. On the other hand, it created the pressure to “push money out of the door” with the hope that by so doing it would generate results.

The lack or limited local capacity in terms of human resources and systems combined with the imperative of quick results through “pushing the money out of the door” while following strict procurement procedures, creates both management and financial constraints that could choke off the program and alienate stakeholders.

**H3: The power asymmetry in favor of international actors (donors and contractors) obliges local stakeholders to submit to expectations and contractors’ views on the project.**
Both cases suggest that the relationship between local stakeholders and the U.S.-based implementing organizations is that of interdependence. The interdependent nature of the relationships between local and international actors made negotiation a crucial process for facilitating local ownership.

At the beginning of the project, the U.S. implementers had the power to select the local stakeholders, even though some were imposed on them by the design of the project and local administrative realities (e.g., line ministries or government agencies). When this initial selection and launch of the project phase was completed, what ensued once the relationships were established was more complex.

While the local stakeholders may be selected by the contractor on a competitive basis, during the implementation of the project, both the USAID contractor and local stakeholders are locked in a working relationship where constant dialogue and negotiations become inevitable. This learning also suggests that power in the case of internationally funded projects is relational and situational, meaning that it changes with the nature of relationships. For example, as local stakeholders build their capacities, increase their contribution and get to understand institutional procedures, they also change the dynamics of power and relationships between them and the international implementers. The same changes happen with international implementers, who throughout the implementation of the project, understand better the context and the constraints, which in turn
changes their initial assumptions and eventually their practices. This change or evolution of the relationships is not always a smooth process. There may be resistance and tensions and sometimes conflicts. Therefore, rather than deriving from a fixed and presumably objective standpoint, the outcomes of the interactions result from the parties’ perception of their power, how parties relate to each other and or the structure within which they operate.

*H4: The local and national contexts affect the level of local ownership expressed for a given aid project.*

The local and national contexts can work towards or against the emergence of local ownership. In both of the cases, the context justified the relevancy of the project, provided constraints and opportunities and shaped the nature of the project as well as entry and implementation strategies while determining the way the projected ended.

Senegal offered the opportunity to work directly with local technical partners to both build local capacities and implement activities. The increased capacity of local stakeholders at all levels allowed them to sustain different activities long after the project ended.

Haiti presented a more challenging environment with a low capacity and low skilled workforce. There was a gap at the intermediary level of the civil society, where most service providers NGOs and technical partners are found. This particular constraint forced EDC to rely on partners of the EQUIP Consortium
and other international organizations to support local capacity. Relying on community based organizations meant EDC had to invest more on capacity development but also had to support the creation of an intermediary NGO to sustain the project.

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*IDEJEN* and *Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance* have exhibited evidence of local ownership at various stages of the project and with different local stakeholders. A project may not be locally owned in its entirety, but some of its elements can be owned, such as initial resources or inputs, products or short-term activities, and impact (the long term changes). Local stakeholders could also actively participate and control different phases of the project, such as the design, the implementation and evaluation. One of the key things that set these two projects apart is the fact that while there was evidence of local ownership, each followed a different path to sustainability. The learning from both cases also makes relevant some policy suggestions that could help attain local ownership of international interventions in situations of fragility and instability.
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings already provide pointers to numerous strategies and approaches to help facilitate local ownership of international funder projects in situations of fragility and instability. The following recommendations are suggested based on the findings that have emerged from the study of the two cases.

1- **A wider agency discussion on indicators of local ownership** – The learning from this research suggests that local ownership is expressed when committed local stakeholders make use of acquired or increased capacity to contribute to the project even beyond donors’ support, through the combination of commitment, capacity and contribution, or the “3Cs.” The research suggests a series of indicators around the three notions of: Commitment, Capacity and Contribution, called “3Cs” (see table 12 below). While this offers an initial base to conceptualize and discuss local ownership, there is a need for wider dialogue within USAID and private volunteer organizations on ways to best assess and monitor local ownership of development projects, particularly in situations of fragility and instability. There have been several policy discussions in the past focusing more on USAID’s role in U.S. foreign aid architecture and USAID’s relationship with its U.S. international implementers (PVOs and
The latest policy and organizational transformation known as USAID Forward is more comprehensive, as it focuses not only on organizational features and processes but also on USAID project effectiveness in recipient countries. While USAID Forward presents an opportunity for ongoing conversations, applications and assessments of local ownership and sustainability, it could also create the appropriate platform for discussing, designing and testing indicators of local ownership and monitoring and evaluation frameworks that support local ownership at the level of individual projects.


Table 12: 3C: Indicators of local ownership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to the international funded project</td>
<td>Project or policy funded reflects or is reflected through these elements:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Experience working on the issue and targeted constituencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mission and vision statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strategic priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to the international funded project</td>
<td>Finances, in-kind, intangible such as information, knowledge, legitimacy, contacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity acquired and relevant</td>
<td>Managerial: planning, reporting, financial management, governance, fundraising, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process oriented: participation, bottom-up and accountability mechanisms, adaptability and learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technical or project related</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2- Facilitate participation and learning by all stakeholders of the project

Both cases show that when local ownership was attained, learning and participation were important. It is therefore important to promote learning and participation by all stakeholders. One way of doing that is to integrate indicators of learning and participation into the monitoring and evaluation framework of a project. Some indicators of learning and participation are suggested in this research, but it will be important and meaningful if USAID, international
implementers and local stakeholders agree on indicators of learning and participation for each project.

3- **Necessity for an M&E system that recognizes learning** – Building on the analysis surrounding indicators of local ownership, changes have to be made in Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks of USAID-funded projects. Evaluations of both projects were focused mainly on activities, products and results achieved. The M&E frameworks of both projects did not emphasize indicators of local ownership nor processes to promote local ownership, particularly learning in the form of how feedback is collected and integrated into activities for improved results. The focus on learning is particularly relevant for conflict sensitive monitoring and evaluation because of the interaction between programs and the conflict-affected context. It is a well-proven fact that projects in war torn or unstable contexts influence and are influenced by war dynamics or other war termination processes (e.g., peace discussions, demobilization, and reintegration). It is, therefore, important for a monitoring and evaluation framework be in place to capture not only how well a project is meeting a given set of objectives and outcomes, but also how the program has been affected by changes and events happening in the wider context, as well as how it has incorporated these changes.
IDEJEN provided a template for accounting for learning and how feedback was incorporated. Some of the indicators of learning used by IDEJEN could be a starting point in incorporating learning indicators into USAID’s M&E plans.

4- Aligning priorities and expected results of the project with the host country priorities.

Generally, USAID funded projects derive from USAID Country Strategic Plans (CSP) which reflect U.S. interests and priorities for a particular country, as well as U.S. understanding of that particular country’s priorities. In some cases, USAID priorities for the country are aligned with the way the country defined priorities, in some cases not, at least not with the way the national government framed its priorities. In a May 1996 OECD report, the basic recommendation for international intervention was:

Locally-owned country development strategies should emerge from an open and collaborative dialogue by local authorities with civil society and with external partners. Donors’ activities would then operate within this framework in ways that encourage strong local commitment, participation, capacity development, and ownership.333

USAID priority setting and consequent projects should be informed primarily by the long-term strategy of the host country, as this approach lays the foundation for engendering local ownership.

However, the reality in situations of fragility or unstable societies may present some difficulties: fragile states may not have the political or socio-

333 Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation, 14.
economic wherewithal or legitimacy to process and produce a long-term national strategy. This conundrum leaves international donors, such as USAID with a paucity of information and strategic direction to support national development. In these cases USAID may benchmark strategic investment priorities against other international donors (e.g., United Nations, European Commission, etc), investing where gaps exist.

5- Re-engineer request for proposal or solicitation processes to allow International Non Governmental Organizations (INGOs) and Private Volunteer Organizations (PVOs) an opportunity to engage local stakeholders in project, M&E system and exit strategy design.

International donors in general and USAID in particular through the solicitation process determine the direction and the overall framework of activities. It is therefore a vehicle for changing the paradigm in favor of local ownership. Such a process could follow the sequencing below:

Step 1: Call for concept papers: Initially applicants have a small window (2-4 weeks) to propose a concept which responds to USAID expected results. Guidelines for the concept note should include programmatic approaches and solutions that address strategic priorities, also strategies on how to engage and involve local stakeholders. This stage should focus on concepts and limit emphasis on types of activities to be implemented. By submitting programmatic solutions and strategies to engage local stakeholders, applicants are encouraged to
be creative and engage local stakeholders in solution design. The concept notes are assessed and those which respond best to strategic priorities are invited to develop full proposals which contextualize further the concept and include activities.

Step 2: Proposal design: Applicants are given sufficient time (1-3 months) to engage local stakeholders in the design of a project. For local stakeholders to be engaged in an issue, it has to be framed in a way that reflects and responds to their interests. During this stage, local implementing counterparts may be identified, alignment with relevant government institutions and agencies may be solidified, and other local stakeholders must be engaged in the project design (processes, deliverables, indicator formation, monitoring system, feedback loop design, etc) and assumptions for an exit strategy should be developed. Thus, USAID may request evidence of local stakeholder involvement as part of their application process. The most competitive applicants will present sustainability and exit strategies that have been designed in ways that favor learning by all actors. At the end of this stage, applicants submit proposals which are adequately informed by the local context; moreover applicants have empowered local stakeholders by engaging them in the project’s design, establishing a favorable environment for local ownership.
6- Adopt funding and programming mechanisms that reflect the changing context and the need to adjust activities and procedures based on learning and feedbacks.

Unstable and conflict torn societies are complex and constantly changing which presents a challenge for projects. It is therefore critical for the project to be flexible and responsive to such a dynamic environment by integrating new learning and evolving contextual realities periodically during the implementation phase.

The EQUIP 3 program through which IDEJEN was funded and implemented provides a concrete illustration of this approach. By focusing on research and design, the award created the institutional framework for learning to occur. The priority given to research and design built a strong foundation for integrating findings and lessons learned throughout the life of the project.

The flexibility of the mechanism allowed the USAID mission in Haiti to quickly and easily access technical support from U.S.-based contractors. In addition to the flexibility and ease of action offered, the mechanisms also had one main component that facilitated learning: focus on project design, research and development and dissemination of best practices targeting out-of-school youth. The mechanism and its learning component provided IDEJEN with resources and time to essentially study the context in Haiti and improve the understanding of the mission about the opportunities, assets, and needs of the youth of Haiti. Using
results from the research phase of the study as the entry point for the project, the mechanism created a programmatic context that favored adaptability and learning.

7- **Recognize the risk of elite capture and take preventive measures** - In their discussion of elite capture, Platteau and Gaspart argue the following:

In the presence of a potential “elite capture” problem, participatory development is more likely to be successfully implemented—in the sense of reaching the poor more effectively—if it is carried out by donor agencies which are patient, endowed with a good amount of skills and experience in project monitoring, and not subject to intense competition from rival agencies on the ground.\(^{334}\)

**IDEJEN** designed a selection process based on the potential sub-grantee’s track record of working within the targeted communities or similar target groups and strength of accountability mechanisms (both financial and managerial). Constant performance monitoring and the incorporation of feedback also prevented the project from falling victim to elite capture. In addition to a transparent selection process based on track records, **IDEJEN** and **Building for Peace and Prosperity in Casamance** relied on different mechanisms to ensure that relevant local stakeholders were involved in the project. In the case of **Building Peace and Prosperity in Casamance**, the USAID’s sub-grant mechanism of “cost reimbursement,” was used to preclude local grantees from receiving cash advances. It is worth cautioning that this mechanism should be used carefully, as it may eliminate committed local actors who may not necessarily have the

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financial capacity to run activities and be reimbursed later. In the case of *IDEJEN*, EDC developed specifically a sub-granting mechanism based on advances and reconciliation of funds. The beneficiaries of these funds were community based organizations who could not have been able to start any activities without EDC advancing funds. On the other hand, EDC was obliged to set up a technical and financial control, as well as regular reconciliation mechanisms from Haiti and its Home Offices in the U.S. to ensure compliance to USAID regulations and appropriate use of funding.

**8- Focus on relevant capacity of committed stakeholders** – The cases suggest that the notion of relevancy is a determining factor in local stakeholders’ commitment to a given project. One way of facilitating local ownership is through strengthening the capacities of committed local stakeholders; that is those who have demonstrated their knowledge of the issue, willingness to address the issue with or without the external support and enjoy legitimacy from the beneficiaries or impacted stakeholders. Meanwhile relevant capacity is the capacity that enables local stakeholders to deliver results, sustain their operations and advocate for a favorable policy environment for the issues addressed by the project. This form of capacity strengthening entails both the development of skills and systems. It is an approach to capacity strengthening that promotes local appropriation of skills, processes and tools.
By strengthening the capacities of local stakeholders from this perspective, based on relevance and ownership, the project also increases its leverage in negotiating with other partners and donors, as well as other local stakeholders whose contribution is needed to sustain the results of the project.

**FUTURE AREAS OF RESEARCH**

Local ownership, like project *accountability* and *transparency*, are development aid concepts that can potentially contribute to aid effectiveness. However, unlike the concepts of accountability and transparency, local ownership has not received the same scholarly attention or policy traction from international actors. The conceptual ambiguities and operational challenges it presents explain this dearth of scholarly and policy work.

The learning themes and the findings of the present research lay the groundwork for more research on the issues surrounding and affecting local ownership of development aid projects in general and in situations of fragility and instability in particular. Some of the issues this research raised could benefit from further research, notably:

a) *Local ownership in projects initiated by the host government (central government) and funded by international donors*- It is worth mentioning that projects covered in this research were initiated and managed by international donors and their contractors. When projects are initiated by recipients or host
countries, the issue of local ownership presents different dynamics worth exploring. In situations of fragility or post-war reconstruction for instance, projects initiated by the central government may reflect relationships of power emerging directly from the war termination agreement in that country or peace process, e.g., Gacaca\(^{335}\) in Rwanda or reconstruction projects in South Sudan. What can facilitate the ownership of these types of central government initiated projects at the periphery or local level? While recognizing the importance of local ownership in these instances, this study did not focus on the dynamics surrounding these contexts.

b) \textit{Cost benefits analysis of attaining local ownership} – There is a general agreement on the desirability of local ownership of internationally funded projects; however, there have been very few or no systematic studies on the costs related to achieving it. Some of the policy suggestions made in this dissertation will require some organizational changes and the fine-tuning of funding mechanisms. These changes will imply investments in terms of finances and human capital, and in some cases political capital. Comparing the costs of running a program through U.S. implementers versus local stakeholders or partnership between both actors, analyzing the nature and the amount of investment required to achieve local ownership is certainly relevant and needed.

\(^{335}\) Traditional tribunal set up in Rwanda to judge suspects of the 1994 Genocide of the Tutsis and the massacres of moderate Hutus.
This research has brought forward the complexity of the concept of local ownership and some of the dilemmas it poses in practice, notably on the relationships between donors, international contractors and local recipients, on power distribution and decision-making. The case studies show that project ownership by local stakeholders of international funded projects when it is realized entails local actors taking responsibility of programs and projects and investing resources and will towards achieving its expected outcomes. If organizational commitment, capacity and contribution are critical factors for achieving local ownership, processes such as participation, learning and negotiation are critical in ensuring that power relations and interactions between different actors lead to outcomes that are mutually beneficial and relevant to local issues. The framework of analysis of local ownership and the indicators developed in this study provided insights into the cases studied; but more importantly they constitute a seminal contribution to a more complex but necessary endeavor that is, the movement from policy recommendations to concrete actions to attaining local ownership at the level of individual projects.
APPENDIX A: Interview protocol for USAID missions
Interview protocol for former or current USAID employees

Target: Program specialists, CTO and contract officers.

Time of interview:
Date:
Place:
Interviewer:
Interviewee and position:

Summary of the project: The United States professes local ownership as a key principle of its international assistance policy, but developing strategies to facilitate local ownership remains a complex challenge. Using embedded case study research method, this study aims at: 1) identifying factors and incentives conducive to local ownership of stabilization and peacebuilding projects; and 2) exploring strategies of working with local civil society in ways that facilitate local ownership. The research will focus on three main cases of U.S. initiated and funded projects: “IDEJEN” (youth development project) in Haiti and two projects in Casamance region of Senegal.

Questions:

1. Please could you describe the role if any, played by local stakeholders (individual, civil society, business, government) in the bid design, selection of the contractors/implementing partners for the implementation of the project?

2. Why was the bid or RFA or Call for proposal only opened to international contractors?

3. Was local ownership a criterion? If yes, how did the U.S agency make sure that it was facilitated, monitored and assessed?

4. Who were the local stakeholders (civil society, local governments, business) targeted and what was their role in the design, implementation and evaluation of the project?

5. Was the U.S agency satisfied with the contribution and the role played by locals? Why?

6. Where there any expected direct gains (financial, capacity, skills, legitimacy, influence, etc) for each local stakeholders of the project?
7. Do you think that the project or some aspects of the project will be continued by local stakeholders even after U.S funding? Why?

8. According to your analysis, was local ownership achieved? Why?

9. Are there lessons that your agency has learned in terms of local ownership through this project? What does local ownership of this project mean?

10. Would the management of the program from the agency side be different had the project been under a cooperative agreement or a contract? How so?

Supporting documents (Publicly available):

1. List of the competing organizations for that particular bid or RFA
2. Assessment reports
3. Copy of the RFA or the call for proposals as well as the proposal evaluation criteria
4. U.S agency evaluation and assessment reports of the project.
APPENDIX B: Interview protocol for international contractors
Interview protocol for International contractors / implementers of U.S funded Peacebuilding Programs

**Target:** Current or former Chief of party and Program specialists and directors involved in the assessment and proposal writing (World Education, Educational Development Center)

**Time of interview:**
- Date:
- Place:
- Interviewer:
- Interviewee and position:

**Summary of the project:** The United States professes local ownership as a key principle of its international assistance policy, but developing strategies to facilitate local ownership remains a complex challenge. Using embedded case study research method, this study aims at: 1) identifying factors and incentives conducive to local ownership of stabilization and peacebuilding projects; and 2) exploring strategies of working with local civil society in ways that facilitate local ownership. The research will focus on three main cases of USAID initiated and funded projects: “IDEJEN” (youth development project) in Haiti and two projects in Casamance region of Senegal.

**Questions:**

1. Looking back at the design and implementation of the project, what you would say have been the main contributions of local stakeholders (local civil society, state, business, local communities, etc…)?

2. What things were you looking for in selecting sub-grantees?

3. How do you define “local ownership” of this project?

4. What local stakeholders did bring that your organization could not bring in the program?

5. Do you think there is something the U.S funding agency did that, encouraged local stakeholders to contribute in the program? What was that or what did you wish they would have done?

6. For those local stakeholders who contributed to the program, what do you think made their contribution possible?
7. Are there instances where local stakeholders did not respect their commitment? If yes why?

8. Thinking in terms of “inputs, outputs, and impact”, where do you think local stakeholders had more control over? Why?

9. Is there evidence of spin-off activities carried out by local stakeholders without your support? Do you think some aspects of the project will continue through local stakeholders without your or U.S agency support?

10. What have local stakeholders gained through this project? What is the evidence of those gains?

11. Do you have any strategy to ensure that the project continues even after U.S funding?

12. Would you have implemented the project differently had it been a contract or a cooperative agreement? Why?

13. What have you learned from this project in terms of local ownership that will improve your future projects?

**Supporting Documents (Publicly available):**
1. Application for sub-grant
2. Criteria for sub-grant
3. List of local competing organizations
4. Evaluation reports
ANNEX C: Interview protocol for local stakeholders
Interview protocol for local stakeholders

Target: Leaders and program specialist of local civil society organizations registered and nonregistered, local government agencies, government officials, community leaders.

Time of interview:
Date:
Place:
Interviewer:
Interviewee and position:

Summary of the project: The United States professes local ownership as a key principle of its international assistance policy, but developing strategies to facilitate local ownership remains a complex challenge. Using embedded case study research method, this study aims at: 1) identifying factors and incentives conducive to local ownership of stabilization and peacebuilding projects; and 2) exploring strategies of working with local civil society in ways that facilitate local ownership. The research will focus on three main cases of USAID initiated and funded projects: “IDEJEN” (youth development project) in Haiti and two projects in Casamance region of Senegal.

Questions:

1. How would you describe your organization?

2. How was or is your organization/agency/community related to the project?

3. When did people in your organization/agency/community learn about the project? What do you know now about the project?

4. Can you describe what has been or is your organization/agency/community’s role/contribution in the project (ideas, financial, human resources, infrastructures, procedural, etc.)?

5. What has made that contribution possible (internal factors and/or external factors)?

6. Is there something the U.S agency or the international contractors have done that facilitated or stymied your commitment to the project? Please provide details.
7. What really motivated your organization/institution/community to become part of the project?

8. What would you say your organization/institution/community has gained from the project?

9. Would you say that “your organization owns this project or parts of it”? Why?

10. How would you continue this project or some parts of it when U.S funding stops?
11. Are there other organizations/agencies/communities who will gain and/or contribute to the project but who are not involved? Some names.

**Supporting documents (publicly available):**
1. Mission statement
2. Year plan (before and after the project year)
3. Application for the sub-grant (for sub-grantee)
ANNEX D: List of people interviewed and / or who attended focus groups in Haiti, Senegal and The United States of America
### People interviewed in Haiti

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles Jean Robert</td>
<td>Fondation Immaculée Conception – Tomassin, Fermat</td>
<td>Community-based organization (CBO) related to IDEJEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tercier Daniel</td>
<td>Centre d’Appui Psychologique et de Loisir (CAPL)</td>
<td>CBO related to IDEJEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makenzy</td>
<td>An Change Figu Lakay (ACHFLA) – Martissant</td>
<td>CBO related to IDEJEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michel Ronald</td>
<td>Comité d’Union de la Jeunesse de Furcy</td>
<td>CBO related to IDEJEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorvillier –</td>
<td>Ligue des Femmes de Cité Soleil – Cité Soleil</td>
<td>CBO related to IDEJEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reynald Belcombe</td>
<td>AUJECAD</td>
<td>CBO related to IDEJEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michaeelle St Auguste</td>
<td>General Manager, Valerioz Carnez</td>
<td>Private sector partner to IDEJEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson Ulysse</td>
<td>Cordaid</td>
<td>Private sector partner to IDEJEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guerda Previlon</td>
<td>Chief of Party, IDEJEN</td>
<td>Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean Thomas Giraud</td>
<td>Deputy CoP IDEJEN</td>
<td>Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julee Allen</td>
<td>USAID AOTR, Basic Education</td>
<td>Donor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mesguerre Saint Pierre</td>
<td>Inspector in the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Civic action</td>
<td>Government partner to IDEJEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yves Vilfranche</td>
<td>Supervisor of Training at INFP</td>
<td>Government partner to IDEJEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jules kirby</td>
<td>Program officer</td>
<td>Management IDEJEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesly Jules</td>
<td>IDEJEN, Local consultant</td>
<td>Consultant with IDEJEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melanie Beauvy</td>
<td>Technical advisor IDEJEN</td>
<td>Management IDEJEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandler Meridien</td>
<td>Youth coordinator, Gressier center, IDEJEN</td>
<td>Activities IDEJEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketty Luzincourt</td>
<td>Director, Haitian Institute of Peace</td>
<td>Civil society specialist (Haiti)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karl Jean Louis</td>
<td>Chief of Party, CAP Haiti</td>
<td>Civil society specialist (Haiti)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frantz Jean</td>
<td>Young graduate from IDEJEN (2009-2010)</td>
<td>IDEJEN beneficiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regis Peterson</td>
<td>Young graduate from IDEJEN (2008-2009)</td>
<td>IDEJEN beneficiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menez Edner</td>
<td>Young graduate from IDEJEN (2008 – 2009)</td>
<td>IDEJEN beneficiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean Saint-Vil</td>
<td>Cabinet Member, Ministry of Interior and local collectivities, Haiti</td>
<td>IDEJEN beneficiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baron Clifford</td>
<td>SANCO enterprises</td>
<td>Business owner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jorgue Maguina Component Leader Capacity Building, CAP Haiti Civil society specialist (Haiti)

Renold Telfort Director of Education, Ministry of Education Government partner to IDEJEN

Frémont France Youth trainer, Gressier center Activity

Marly Youth trainer, Gressier center Activity

Estherlie Istamar Youth trainer, Gressier Center Activity

**Youth Involved in focus groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position and organization</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Datitus</td>
<td>Youth beneficiary</td>
<td>Masonry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francoise</td>
<td>Youth beneficiary</td>
<td>Carpentry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louis Keva</td>
<td>Youth beneficiary</td>
<td>Carpentry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carisime</td>
<td>Youth beneficiary</td>
<td>Carpentry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omeys Yverson</td>
<td>Youth beneficiary</td>
<td>Tiling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisomée</td>
<td>Youth beneficiary</td>
<td>Electricity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josephine</td>
<td>Youth beneficiary</td>
<td>student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeudi Junette</td>
<td>Youth beneficiary</td>
<td>Tiling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salomon</td>
<td>Youth beneficiary</td>
<td>Tiling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salomone</td>
<td>Youth beneficiary</td>
<td>Tiling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ystama (</td>
<td>Youth beneficiary</td>
<td>Tiling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alesy</td>
<td>Youth beneficiary</td>
<td>Electricity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frimont</td>
<td>Youth beneficiary</td>
<td>Electricity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**People interviewed in Senegal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Position and organization</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ousmane Mathieu</td>
<td>Coordonnateur AJACLUCAAL</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organization (NGO) related to the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camara</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eugène Badji</td>
<td>Member AJACLUCAAL</td>
<td>NGO related to the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alimou Diallo</td>
<td>President AJAEDO</td>
<td>NGO related to the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badji</td>
<td>Village Leader of Ntam</td>
<td>Beneficiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demba Keita</td>
<td>General Secretary of APRAN/SDP</td>
<td>NGO related to the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vincent Diagne</td>
<td>President of the rural Council Nlomp</td>
<td>Resource person - Beneficiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 village women</td>
<td>Farmers cooperative of ISRA funded by AJACLUCAAL</td>
<td>These women were interviewed individually and then a separate focus group was organized with some women of the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moustapha Mane</td>
<td>Former President of the rural council of Oukout</td>
<td>President of the Rural council of Oukout during the cultural week-end in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Names</td>
<td>Position and organization</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katryn Lane</td>
<td>Program officer for Casamance, USAID</td>
<td>Donor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole Tresch</td>
<td>Governance Officer, USAID</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oulymata Diagne</td>
<td>Program support, World Education</td>
<td>Project staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylla Mamadou</td>
<td>Technical Advisor AJAEBO</td>
<td>Project staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abou Saar</td>
<td>Chief of Party, World Education</td>
<td>Project staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sene</td>
<td>World Education</td>
<td>Project staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demba</td>
<td>World Education</td>
<td>Project staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyang</td>
<td>World Education</td>
<td>Project staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aliou Demba Kebe</td>
<td>Afrique Enjeux / AFEX</td>
<td>NGO – sub-grantee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samba Barry</td>
<td>Program Officer, UNHCR</td>
<td>Civil society expert in Senegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ababacar Seck</td>
<td>Financial Director of Money Express</td>
<td>Private sector in Senegal – resource person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibrahim Yade</td>
<td>President, Association Conceil pour l’Action (ACA)</td>
<td>Capacity building provider in the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanya Southerland Narcel</td>
<td>Resident Country Director, Senegal Millennium Challenge Corporation</td>
<td>U.S donor in Senegal not related to the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 women</td>
<td>GIE Djiyito Dimaleguene Lyndiane Ziguinchor</td>
<td>Women working on transformation of agricultural product and production of artisanal soap. Women were individually and in group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdoulaye Camara</td>
<td>Director of National School of Administration</td>
<td>Informant not related to the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landjing Badji</td>
<td>ANRAC - Par</td>
<td>Partner in Casamance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emmanuel Seyni Ndione</td>
<td>Executive Secretary, ENDA Graf</td>
<td>International aid expert in Senegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thibault Van De Velde</td>
<td>Technical advisor, AECID</td>
<td>Resource person related to the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seydina Issa Ndiaye</td>
<td>Former mayor of Yoff</td>
<td>International aid expert with knowledge of the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francois Diatta</td>
<td>Project coordinator, AFEX</td>
<td>NGO sub-grantee of the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ba Demba Danso</td>
<td>Traditional healer, Ziguinchor, Casamance</td>
<td>Community beneficiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Mame Less Camara</td>
<td>University professor of Journalism – media Expert-BBC</td>
<td>International aid expert in Senegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moussa Baye</td>
<td>Enda Dialogue Politiques</td>
<td>International aid expert</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Names, Position and Organization, Remarks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Position and organization</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saliou Nguye Ngoye</td>
<td>ENDA Graf, consultant</td>
<td>International aid expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louis Tendeng</td>
<td>Coordonateur, Groupe de Contact - MFDC</td>
<td>Partner and beneficiary of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 displaced women</td>
<td>Village of Bissine</td>
<td>Group meeting during project site visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliasse Liedhou</td>
<td>Executive secretary, Groupe de contact MFDC</td>
<td>Partner and beneficiary of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youssouf Coly</td>
<td>Member of Groupe de contact, MFDC</td>
<td>Partner and beneficiary of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucien Gomis</td>
<td>President of the rural community of Boutouffa, Camacouna/ Niaguiss</td>
<td>Beneficiary of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alioune Thin</td>
<td>President, RADDHO Senegal</td>
<td>International aid expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Amadou Moctar Ngaye</td>
<td>Office of local collectivities in the Ministry of decentralization</td>
<td>Government partner to the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mouhamadou Mboj</td>
<td>Coordinator of Forum Civil, Senegal</td>
<td>Transparency and accountability specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diop Maalick</td>
<td>Treasurer, Acteurs Non Etatiques</td>
<td>International aid expert with knowledge of the project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Resource persons interviewed in The United States of America

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Day</td>
<td>Senegal Desk Officer, USAID Washington, D.C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellie Burk</td>
<td>Research Analyst, Africa Bureau, USAID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clare Ignatowski</td>
<td>EGAT/USAID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornelia Janke</td>
<td>Program Director, Education Development Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Salinas</td>
<td>Program officer, Academy for Educational Development (EQUIP 3 partner)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suzanne Kratzig</td>
<td>Researcher, Education Development Center</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES


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William, Carrol, K. “Social Movements and Counter-hegemony: Canadian Contexts and Social Theories.” In *Organizing Dissent: Contemporary


CURRICULUM VITAE

Joseph Sany holds a Master of Science (MS) in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from the School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution (SCAR) at George Mason University.

Joseph Sany is currently a consultant in the fields of post-conflict reconstruction, civil society development and youth development. As consultant, Sany worked in more than 25 countries around the world particularly in Africa, evaluating peacebuilding programs, designing and conducting training programs and advising international organizations and agencies, including: the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) on issues related to peacekeeping, social and economic reintegration in post-conflict contexts, civil society development in post-war, youth entrepreneurship and leadership.