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Using the HED Theory of Change to Conduct a Meta-Analysis of Regional Impact Assessment Findings

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Introduction

To determine if the HED Theory of Change is a useful framework for examining partnership success, we conducted a meta-analysis of six regional impact assessments of HED higher education partnerships. The regional impact assessments were conducted between 2006 to 2012 and examined more than 60 partnerships that were funded by USAID through HED from 1998 to 2007. The six regions in which the assessments were conducted include Eastern Europe (4 partnerships), Middle East (12 partnerships), South East Asia (13 partnerships), South Asia (15 partnerships), sub-Saharan Africa (12 partnerships), and Mexico (8 partnerships).

Merriam's (2009) constant comparative method of case study analysis (modified from Glaser & Strauss' (1967) use of constant comparative in grounded theory) shapes the data analysis. This analytic approach was selected to move the analysis from description to interpretation. It reflects a comprehensive analytic process. Although, this analysis is described linearly, the process itself was iterative and overlapping, which is a characteristic common of qualitative data analysis (Creswell, 2008; Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995).

The data was read multiple times for comparative examination. This included reviewing the interview protocols, interview transcripts, and interviewee demographic data files from each of the regional impact assessments. The approach to open coding was both inductive and deductive. Inductive analysis was used to remain open to new and emerging themes in the data (Stake, 1995). During this early stage of analysis, transcripts were openly coded for "data that strike as interesting, potentially relevant, or important" (Merriam, 2009, p. 178). In reading through transcripts, annotations were made at lines in the text that appeared to describe how HED partnerships were developed, maintained, and sustained. A list of open codes was developed from these annotations and corresponding nodes for these codes were created in NVIVO. By identifying sensitizing concepts, a deductive approach was also incorporated (Merriam, 2009). These sensitizing concepts included key terms from the HED Theory of Change. Category codes were connected to three broad categories that comprised recurrent patterns within the data (Merriam, 2009). These three categories are 1) global engagement management, 2) higher education strengthening and, 3) higher education impact, and 4) sustainable human and social development. For reference, the HED theory of change and an overview can be found in Annex 1.

Global Engagement Management

Partnership Planning

Global engagement management is the first level of the Theory of Change framework. This level acts as a foundation, creating strength at all other levels of the framework and partnerships. A common theme at this level across all of the partnerships analyzed was the critical need for partnership planning, specifically the need for intentional planning, learning the host country context, creating common goals between stakeholders, sustainability planning, and flexibility.

A key component of global engagement management related to the intentional time and attention given to planning before partnership implementation. Cited by 90% of partnerships, this was one of the most often given pieces of advice that partners provided in the regional assessment data as it allowed for the development of a solid foundation and provided targeted and realistic partnership goals. Partners conducted this early work through direct observation at host institutions, surveys/needs assessments with host country stakeholders, reviewing extant related research, and engaging in dialogue with stakeholders. Initial planning also allowed partners to make any needed adjustments to the project before committing time and resources to implementation. For example, in Egypt, stakeholders at the University of Connecticut and Ain Shams University originally envisioned a two-year Masters degree, but after a needs assessment, determined that establishing a Masters degree would not be possible due to university regulations such as a required focus on research versus practical application, strict entrance requirements, and a thesis requirement. Due to this early realization, the partners were able to successfully revise the proposed plan and developed a post-graduate Diploma as an effective alternative. Conversely, in a partnership between Montana State University and Al Akhawayn University (Morocco), it was reported,

Both sides made initial assumptions regarding tuition waivers and research budgets that resulted in delays in and changes to the implementation plan. These assumptions also led them to have AUI fully own the PhD degree and bypass the joint MSU-AUI PhD phase. Partners could have done more homework in advance.

In this case, lack of doing “more homework in advance” led to delays in the project. Relationships established between institution partners prior to the HED grant were one way to mitigate this issue. When U.S. and host country partners had established relationships prior to the HED project, this allowed them greater time spent preparing for the partnership and setting a foundation, which was the case in a partnership between the National University of Laos and Case Western Reserve University. In this partnership, U.S. stakeholders explained that they spent seven years working in Laos prior to the HED grant and “eased our way into this program.”

Most partners discussed the importance of learning the host country institutional context and needs as a component of initial partnership engagement. For example, one partner stakeholder from the ITESM-Querétaro in Mexico suggested conducting a skills assessment of students before delivering academic courses and highlighted the importance of tailoring the courses to the local context instead of teaching the same material as in the United States. Host country partners possessed the knowledge related to their local context, but were not always consulted in the development of partnerships or were brought on in late stages of development or early stages of implementation, which was not the most effective. For example, host country partners at the University of Namibia Northern campus explained the HED project was already designed when they became involved and was not tailored to community needs. The Namibian partners expressed that they should have been more involved in program development by their U.S. partners at Pennsylvania State University in order to inform them about the local context and coordinate with them on outreach. Similarly a stakeholder at the Institute of Local Government Studies in Ghana explained that shared ownership was not established between themselves and the University of Delaware and that the University of Delaware was the dominant partner. Referencing a website that was created as part of the project, a Ghanaian stakeholder stated, “it [website] wasn’t managed in Ghana, but was hosted in Delaware. There was a bit of challenge around sustaining it. It wasn’t entirely in our control. We should have been hosting the site throughout the partnership.”

Setting common goals was another major theme in the data related to partnership engagement and management. As aforementioned a number of partnerships (about one-third) had been developed around long-standing previous relationships between individuals at the U.S. and host country institutions, which also made it easier to find common ground between stakeholders. Regarding the partnership between the University of Connecticut and Menoufia University it was noted, “The partnerships’ high level commitment can be attributed to the fact the partnership director built the relationship between the institutions early on prior to the release of the RFP. The initial investment and previous connection provided the base to begin activities.” Likewise a partner stakeholder with a project at Leyte State University in the Philippines explained,

Cornell University [U.S. partner] has had a long relationship working in [the] Philippines and this enabled us to push the boundaries and get to new levels and we had worked with LSU for some time; we hit the ground running, but we moved into new, important areas.

Setting common goals included identifying what needed to be achieved in the short and the long run as well as how goals could be achieved. Some stakeholders recommended that goals be aligned with the host country’s national development plans and priorities. Communicating about partnership goals provided an opportunity to understand expectations. A challenge some partners faced was due to goals being unrealistic, unclear, or not mutually agreed upon as was the case between partners at the University of

Delaware and the Institute of Local Government Studies in Ghana in which the Ghanaian project director explained, “Preliminary talking is necessary because there were a lot of differing expectations early on.” Therefore, acknowledging assumptions about what partners could contribute as well as what the partnership could achieve was crucial. Some challenges with regards to inadequate assumptions included shifts in the priorities and decisions of leadership, universities’ changing strategic priorities, and different interests and motivations between U.S. and host country stakeholders. Additionally, being able to develop feasible goals required both a technical and managerial understanding of what it takes to accomplish the goals in a given context and timeframe. Therefore, although some faculty had high levels of technical/content knowledge and expertise, there were a number of managerial difficulties relating to grant management, performance reporting, and general administration such as visas and shipping.

A major component of partnership planning and goal setting also related to sustainability planning. A number of partnerships suggested they did not pay enough attention to this issue at the onset of partnership development, which became a challenge at later phases of the partnership. For example, a stakeholder reflected on the partnership between Houston Community College Southeast and the University of Delhi in India,

In another such program I would start from the beginning to talk with the partners to set aside some funds for sustainability; think about this at the outset; believe in sustainability myself and would want it built in from the beginning; ask for a post-grant contribution; get commitment up front to carry-on from all partners.

Sustainability was discussed at all levels of the Theory of Change, but will be discussed at length in this report in the “Sustainable Human and Social Development” section.

In addition to sustainability, flexibility in both the planning and implementation of partnerships was discussed in relation to initially engaging a partnership as well as managing it. A number of partners noted that while intentional preparation is critical, there are always unknown issues that arise during the partnership that cannot be planned for initially. This can include changes of staff, policies, leadership, university priorities, and resources. For example, the University of New Mexico and Universidad de Quintana Roo was described,

The story of this partnership’s central objective...has several chapters: an initial stage of great enthusiasm and activity, a middle period of drift and loss of momentum due to changes in university staff and leadership, and the present phase of renewed attention, growth and a reinvigoration of the relationship between UNM and UQROO.

Partners such as this were able to overcome these challenging by remaining flexible as well as being immediately responsive to unforeseen issues or changing circumstances.

A Bottom-Up Approach and Local Ownership

Across partnerships, stakeholders expressed the importance of ensuring equal power dynamics between the U.S. partners and host country partners, while specifically emphasizing the use of a bottom-up approach and local ownership in partnerships. Stakeholders described the importance of building trust, establishing participatory processes, and engaging in a bottom-up approach as being essential in fostering local ownership by host country partners. Additionally, 17 partnerships specifically cited that developing local ownership provided a mechanism for achieving successful and sustainable outcomes. In discussing their relationship with Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, a U.S. stakeholder at the University of Texas, Austin explained,

It is important that the host country partner is the initiator, rather than us; and that the host country partner continues to lead the project... Avoid creating a culture of receiving donor money without investment from the host country partner's side; only then can you build local ownership for the long-haul.

Partners recommended developing a truly reciprocal relationship with benefits for both sides. This included having aligned goals and interests as well as drawing benefits from the partnership in ways that might be different, but still mutual and equally important. This outcome was evident in a partnership between the University of Northern Iowa and the University of Cape Coast in Ghana, when the host country stakeholders explained that, “the partnership played on the strengths of both sides and was of mutual benefit to both institutions in different, but equally important ways” One University of Cape Coast stakeholder expressed, “We cherish these partnerships when they are true partnerships.... We want to position ourselves to play to our strengths.... and that is what these partnerships provide.”

However, establishing reciprocity, mutuality, and local ownership was challenging for a number of reasons. In some cases, host country partners did not perceive themselves to have the capability and capacity to take on leadership for the project. In other cases, the U.S. partners asserted a dominant role in the partnership from the onset. Only five of the partnerships reported having completely unequal partnership dynamics. Yet, patterns across the data suggested that U.S. partners were most often perceived to bring skills and content knowledge to partnerships, while host country partners were most often perceived to bring knowledge of the country/institutional context and of potential stakeholders. The perception of what partners could and could not contribute to the project also relates back to equal or unequal power dynamics between U.S. and host country stakeholders.

A bottom-up approach was consistently described as critical to achieving successful initiatives. For example, with a partnership between Highline Community College and the Polytechnic of Namibia, a Highline Community College partner discussed their approach to the partnership “[We] never see ourselves as having the answer. We just try to be useful, it [input from U.S. partners] has to be based on

the Namibian reality.” Similarly with a partnership between Iowa State University and the University of Agricultural Sciences in India, a U.S. partner explained. “In order to develop trust between partners, treat people the way you want to be treated...We did not try to impose our own [U.S.] values. We empowered them [host country partners] to make this project theirs.” Partners discussed the importance of developing this type of approach from the very beginning of partnership creation and proposal development. At this stage, partners can set the tone for participatory and collaborative processes that can be carried on throughout the life of the partnership.

Some partners specifically expressed that the partnership vision should be initiated from inside the host country and that the host country partners should develop the objectives. For example, with a project between Cornell University and the Universidad Veracruzana in Mexico, one stakeholder explained, “The project should be developed from inside the Mexican institution – should be rooted in the institution, in order to get the full benefit. [It is] important to have the Mexican institutions involved from the beginning of proposal development.” Partners Michigan State University and the Institute of Forestry in Nepal similarly reported,

A need to define partnership objectives at the host-country institution; too often the goals and objectives for host institutions are developed outside of the institution, leading to a mismatch in objectives of the partners and an inability to fully achieve desired outcomes.

Partners emphasized that in order to ensure success, the U.S. institution should not impose their own vision, values, or management principles. A vision and objectives developed outside of the host-institution could lead to mismatch, non-appropriation, and an inability to fully achieve the desired outcomes. For example, some partnerships across regions and sectors found that objectives established in requests for proposals (RFPs) were not the most relevant to the needs of the host country institution. Thus, while RFPs created an initial framing of partnership objectives, it was the partners’ expertise and knowledge of host country institutional/societal context that were ultimately needed to develop a project fit for the host country institution and development needs. Stakeholders, particularly from the host country, knew the unique political, cultural, and economic contexts of the broader society as well as that of the host higher education institution. This knowledge was invaluable in the process of partnership creation, but could go underutilized due to host country partner positioning and partnership dynamics. This occurred with a partnership between the Institute of Local Government Studies in Ghana and the University of Delaware, as explained by a Ghanaian stakeholder,

They [the U.S. partners] had objectives. It was their project...Had the partners set aside the time to plan and communicate together before the beginning of the activities...a better understanding of Ghanaian and U.S. challenges would have emerged, leading to a truly joint partnership.

Some partners described the lack of host country involvement from the onset creating a dependence model in which there was no incentive for the host partners to fully engage, as any failures related to the partnership would not be theirs. Yet, operationalizing a collaborative approach was not easy due to challenges such as inconsistent communication, scheduling/time zone differences, and cross-cultural factors.

To achieve collaboration, clear and consistent communication between key stakeholders was essential. Ninety-two percent of partnerships described ongoing exchanges such as U.S. partners traveling to the host country as one way to engage in quality communication. A bottom-up collaborative approach appeared to lead to many positive outcomes, particularly for the host country institution stakeholders including including increased confidence in engaging in partnership work, increased operational capacity of the host partner institution, and evaluation and reflection on the effectiveness of processes and means to mobilize resources.

Local ownership did not only relate to ownership by the host country institution, but also by local communities in the host country. Partners, Universidad de Quintana Roo in Mexico and the University of New Mexico addressed the importance and challenges of local community ownership,

Locations may be institutions of higher learning, but there needs to be joint participatory relations with local communities and joint oversight. This is difficult due to the influence of social class and the position of formal academic institutions in society, but without it there will be insufficient breadth in supporting constituencies.

Partners of a project between Cornell University and Leyte University in the Philippines described their pursuit of “legitimizing community participation in decision-making; engaging farmers’ associations and watershed associations and changing thinking among government officers and bureaucracies toward listening and taking account of local knowledge and interests.” This partnership as well as five others explicitly described engaging in participatory action research and action research based projects, which centered research on and with local communities. Partners, Worcester Polytechnic Institute and the Polytechnic of Namibia explained,

Participatory action research included community so that [the host institution] can continue [the] project after [U.S. partners] return to the U.S. The projects...succeed and are sustained not only because of the involvement of local students, but also due to local community involvement.

Working with and training the locals allows for the project to continue once the [higher education institution partners] leave.

Developing trust between the institutions and the local community was an important component of a bottom-up approach. Doing so helped to increase the credibility of the partner institutions with the local

community. It also helped in the development of strategic alliances between HED partners and community members, which will be discussed further in the “Higher Education Strengthening” section.

Building Sustainability from the Onset

As aforementioned, partners expressed that planning for sustainability and continuity beyond the life of the grant at the onset of partnership development was important. Regarding a project in India between Houston Community College and the University of Delhi, the host country project director similarly addressed this issue stating,

In another such program I would start from the beginning to talk with the partners to set aside some funds for sustainability; think about this at the outset; believe in sustainability myself and would want it built in from the beginning; ask for a post-grant contribution; get commitment up front to carry-on from all partners.

However, while this is the stakeholder’s perspective in reflection, partners involved in this project did not create plans for sustainability and thus the partnership, “has dwindled because [the U.S. partner director] moved to [a different university] and so many [host country] faculty have moved to other institutions.” Particularly when initiatives addressed complex development issues, having a clear, long-term perspective was critical, but challenging to achieve. This required broader involvement in both scale and scope of the project. For example, one U.S. partner from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University described the importance of,

Trying to establish set procedures and processes that will help sustain their efforts after the partnership concludes. An external advisory board for the [Institute of Forestry, Tribhuvan University] has been established. They are also focusing on assisting Nepali faculty and administrators in fundraising and networking.

This type of planning was critical because without steps for sustainability built into the project from the onset, project momentum could end or wane at the end of the HED funding cycle. Twenty partnerships reported this occurring; and a project between the University of North Carolina and the University of Jordan provides an illustration,

From discussions with the faculty and students there was a desire for continued collaboration, such as faculty and student exchanges, online collaboration, research and cultural programs. The final report suggested that there were many ways they could continue the collaboration, yet three months later there does not appear to be a concrete plan of action for any follow-on activities.

Partners expressed a desire to keep the momentum of the partnership going in order to continue endeavors. Most found that the time length of the grant was not enough to achieve their long-term goals, realize project benefits and refine issues or challenges experienced during early implementation. For

future partnerships, some suggested the development of formal mechanisms for continued project support to target capacity building at the institution as well as outreach/extension work. The expanded partnership time frame could comprise several phases, each defined with specific objectives and with every phase building from the outcomes of the preceding one.

However, partners also recognized that over the life of the formal partnership, there were a number of moving and changing parts that challenged sustainability. With changes in institutional leadership, university priorities, and political/economic dynamics that occurred over time in the partnerships, knowing how to plan for ensured sustainability was a challenge. A partnership between Oregon State University and the University of Botswana faced this issue,

After the partnership began, a change in [Oregon State University's] policy shifted interests and funding away from international programs. Follow up on student and staff exchanges never occurred. [Oregon State University] didn't have provisions for the program despite the memorandum of understanding (MoU) for future programming.

Even when stakeholders wanted to continue the HED project, other responsibilities could act as a barrier. For example,

The University of Natural Sciences in Vietnam say they want to replicate the program throughout the curricula of the university but it takes an incredible amount of staff time, and the staff already feel like they have too many activities for which they are responsible

These examples demonstrate that without sustainability planning at the onset, barriers from the institution level to challenges at the individual level could stall progress.

In order to secure funding for further partnership/project engagement in the long run, partners did reach out to other stakeholders including the host country partner's institution as well as the host country private sector and government. Partners Highline Community College and the Polytechnic of Namibia explained,

There has been a strong relationship between senior leadership since the outset of the program and both institutions have continued to contribute financially to the partnership since the end of the USAID funding. This demonstrated commitment from both institutions has been key to the success of the partnership.

The rationale was to avoid creating a culture of receiving donor money without investment from the host country's side. However, engaging multiple actors also posed challenges. On occasion, partners described other similar development initiatives being implemented at the host country institution, which created competition, diverging or overlapping projects, and redundancies. The University of California and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University partners explained, "Interaction with other U.S.-India programs was unfortunately, more competitive than inclusive. Programs had separate agendas, and therefore worked

separately for the most part.” Thus, these and other partners suggested better coordination of development efforts undertaken by various agencies in the host country and/or within the host country institution.

Overall, data from the regional impact assessments suggest it is critical for stakeholders to engage in intentional planning, create a bottom-up approach and local ownership, and develop sustainability strategies at the onset. These three themes reflect level one of the Theory of Change model – Global Engagement Management, because stakeholders described them as critical for developing a strong foundation that can be sustained throughout a partnership. Findings highlight that this foundation is essential for building capacity at a host country institution (Theory of Change level two – Higher Education Strengthening) and for producing positive outcomes for the host country society (Theory of Change level three – Higher Education Impact). Therefore, organizations invested in supporting global higher education partnerships should emphasize these themes in partnership management, which reflect a focus on building solid partnership processes rather than solely focusing on partnership outcomes.

Higher Education Strengthening

Level one of the Theory of Change model (Global Engagement Management) emphasizes the development of a solid foundation for partnerships that can be sustained throughout the initiative. Once this foundation is created, it provides the groundwork for strengthening the capacity of the host country institution, which is the goal of the second level of the Theory of Change model. Of all the levels of the Theory of Change, stakeholders appeared to emphasize the Higher Education Strengthening level most. The regional assessment data highlight the diverse ways in which higher education strengthening took place, focusing on research, teaching/curriculum, extension/outreach, institutional development, and building strategic alliances.

Research

Forty-four partnerships discussed conducting research during the HED project and 20 partnerships specifically emphasized the improvement of research capacity at the host country institution. For many, this was important as stakeholders discussed the visibility that host country faculty received for their HED partnership-related research. Faculty had opportunities to exhibit and publicize their collaborative research efforts on a local as well as global level through their published academic journal articles, books, textbooks, and guides. In fact, collectively over 350 publications were reported over all of the partnerships reviewed for this report. Additionally, faculty often had the opportunity to present at conferences abroad or give lectures and seminars in the U.S. on their research.

The development of grant writing capacity was another major outcome of research work among the partnerships. A stakeholder at the University of Agricultural Sciences in India described having no

previous experience applying for grants. However, “post-HED project, this university [along with it’s U.S. partner, Iowa State University] jointly applied for Gates Foundation and USAID grants.” The University of Agricultural Sciences project director expressed their “involvement in writing these applications definitely came about as a direct result of their involvement/experience with the HED project.” The building of grant writing skills had a broad impact on the faculty at the Institute of Forestry, Tribhuvan University in Nepal as well,

Twelve Nepali teams (of faculty and students) submitted proposals for research grants and five proposals have been awarded funding. Three of the five teams are currently approved to begin research, and two teams are finalizing their proposals after receiving feedback. While the impact of these grants on faculty development is not fully known, [U.S. institution partners, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University] estimate that between 50-60 Nepali faculty have been involved in faculty development activities to date.

For some of the host country faculty, it was their first opportunity to engage in these types of research-based activities and they received long-term benefits in terms of their professional reputation and job promotion. Pre-tenure faculty from the University Tunis El Manar in Tunisia visited their U.S. partner campus (Southern Methodist University) under the HED partnership. The professors were required to conduct research for a semester at Southern Methodist University and,

As a result of their visit...two assistant professors have been able to advance more quickly at their institutions as a result of the contacts made in the United States. At least one has written two professional papers as a result of her stay.

Research opportunities like this were often discussed through the format of exchanges. Faculty and students from the United States came to host country institutions to engage in research alongside their host country partner (this form of exchange was reported by 12 partnerships). Faculty and students from host country institutions also traveled to the United States to receive research training at their U.S. partner institution (this form of exchange was reported by 23 partnerships).

However, exchanges posed a number of logistical challenges related to visa processing, high costs, language barriers, incongruence of academic credit systems between U.S. and host country institutions, and lack of capitalizing on the skills and knowledge of students and faculty upon their return. Therefore, some stakeholders suggested that trainings, research development programs, and instruction be held in the host country to curb the financial cost of exchange as well as mitigate issues of brain drain and attrition. For example, the project director at the University Tunis El Manar in Tunisia explained that the visits by U.S. partners to Tunisia were more effective than sending Tunisians to the United States because “these visits had a broader impact within Tunisia, as they included seminars and workshops with 50-100 attendees.” A number of student stakeholders who participated in exchanges noted the exchanges to the

United States were too limited in time or did not maximize time. Generally students' experiences abroad were discussed positively; however, some felt they were not utilized enough as leaders upon their return to their home countries and so setting up a support system upon re-entry was recommended.

Faculty exchange also provided opportunities to build individuals' teaching and research capacities. Similar to students, faculty expressed preferring longer-term exchanges and/or the ability to be more immersed at the U.S. institution (e.g. teach courses, rather than just observe courses). Train-the-trainer programs were found to be one of the most effective uses of faculty exchanges, whereby a few faculty visited the U.S. to build research skills and then returned to their home country to train other members at their institution. Still, host country faculty did not necessarily need to travel to the United States to build research capacity as many received training through the partnership at their home institution. At the Institute of Local Government Studies in Ghana, 13 faculty "received training in data collection and surveying" and at the University of Cape Coast, "Through a series of intensive workshops, the partnership trained approximately 150 faculty and students to conduct culturally appropriate needs assessments and data analysis to identify the training needs of students and the health needs of rural communities."

Research projects provided opportunities for partners to engage more deeply with local communities in the host country. Through a partnership with Universidad de Quintana Roo in Mexico, A student who received a master's degree in Natural Resources Planning and Management from the University of New Mexico [U.S. partner institution] joined the Universidad de Quintana Roo faculty after returning to Mexico. She took a group of students to Los Monos, a marginal community in Chetumal to work with leaders of the neighborhood. Students completed a diagnostic study of the environmental issues, urban issues, and energy issues. The project gained the attention of SEDESOL (Secretaria de Desarrollo Social), which appears to have galvanized investments in this community. Now Los Monos has infrastructure and health services. Thus, many of the research-based outcomes of these projects had a direct impact on local communities, which will be discussed in more depth in the Higher Education Impact section.

Teaching

The development and improvement of instruction offerings was one of the most cited factors of sustainability in the HED partnerships. Hundreds of new education programs and curricula were developed across partnerships including degree programs, certificate programs, professional programs, and standalone courses. These programs and curricula were improved through increased student enrollment, revised content, development of programs relevant to industry, curriculum that focused on a global perspective, and diversity of course offerings. Stakeholders discussed host country institution

instructors gaining new pedagogical tools, particularly related to improving student engagement in the classroom, providing more opportunities for applied learning, and incorporating student learning assessment. Various stakeholder comments related to this included “shifted away from traditional hierarchical teaching methods towards more interactive ones;” “faculty learned how to train students to work in communities through supervised fieldwork;” and “partnership helped faculty develop new teaching methodologies centered around problem based learning.” Data from the University of Missouri and Mazoon College for Management and Applied Sciences (Oman) partnership described this in depth,

Institutional capacity building was also clear with the mentorship arrangement between [University of Missouri and Mazoon College] faculty where one professor from [the University of Missouri] taught the first part of the course, with a resident faculty member from [Mazoon College] serving as facilitator. This ensured that the faculty at [Mazoon College] could maintain these teaching practices after the partnership ended.

A number of partnerships also provided seminars, exchanges, and other opportunities that specifically targeted faculty development.

A theory-to-practice pedagogical approach was adopted by a number of partnership programs in order to meet industry needs and needs of local communities. Partners, University of Wisconsin and ITESM-Queretaro, “built a model for undergraduate curriculum to improve students’ ability to analyze and solve complex and real-world problems on issues related to farm management, food, agricultural and environmental sciences, and trade on a global scale.” Similarly, data from the Montana State University and Akhawayn University (Morocco) partnership states,

In response to the needs of industry based on feedback from an industry advisory board created by the partnership to provide guidance on the program design, partners decided to make the doctorate they were creating a professional Ph.D. degree that is more practical than theoretical.

Programs also provided students with field experience and encouraged links between theoretical knowledge and practical application, including courses with case studies, an emphasis on technical areas, and/or career-linked curricula. This type of teaching also created greater connections to the broader host country society as students at both the host country institutions and from the U.S. institutions worked in these local communities. For example, through a partnership between Pennsylvania and Universidad de Guanajuato in Mexico, one academic department created the “establishment of [a] ‘servicio social’ requirement where students have to spend six months working in the field and providing services in rural communities.” Similarly, at the University of Cape Coast in Ghana,

Supervised community service practicum are now required of all final year health education students.... students were able to work in surrounding underserved communities which added a practical, hands-on component to their training... During health education sessions, the student

teams used big puppets, visual aids, 'guerrilla health education,' street-oriented; not like normal health education. The students got academic credit for this innovative, community-focused work. Extension work, executive education programs, and strategic management programs were other ways that community links to the host country university were established or strengthened through teaching and curricula.

It is important to note that curriculum development and teaching were not without challenges. Partners faced constraints related to providing academic credit for experiences and other logistical issues. For example, at Polytechnic of Namibia, partners faced "problems training faculty to write the curriculum [because they] have full course loads." Therefore, processes and structures were not in place to allow the faculty to fully engage in curriculum development. However, some partners were able to overcome these issues. With the Institut de Presse et des Sciences de l'Information in Tunisia,

Since it is necessary to go through the Ministry of Education to create new degree programs and because going through the Ministry is a difficult and time-consuming process, rather than creating a new degree program, the partners are collaboratively building upon the [Institut de Presse et des Sciences de l'Information's] already solid program but are integrating the theme of women, media, [and] democracy throughout the curriculum. Prior to the partnership program, there had not been an organized approach to this theme. As a result of a program restructuring led by the Tunisian Ministry of Education (which cut the four-year program to three years), Bowling Green University [U.S. partner] also is working with the Institut de Presse et des Sciences de l'Information in its efforts to adapt to the shortened coursework requirements.

Another area of teaching discussed by stakeholders included the development and improvement of education and instructional materials such as CDs, videos, instructional guides, and textbooks. A number of stakeholders expressed that materials produced during the life of the partnership were still being used at the host country institution, highlighting a level of sustainability. Instructional support and academic processes were also improved in a number of ways, particularly through the incorporation of technology. This included online courses, videoconferencing, department/program websites, online student registration, computer labs, virtual libraries, and web-based resources. Students and faculty were also provided more instruction regarding the use of technology. For example, the University of Cape Coast in Ghana, "established a requirement that all graduates of the school of education receive training in instructional technology." One stakeholder from this partnership expressed, "we know ourselves that this technology is the future."

Technology also created a number of partnership challenges, particularly in the instructional area. Stakeholders reported deficiencies in computer availability and internet access. At some host country institutions, faculty and students lacked computer skills and knowledge of how to use software.

Additionally, some faculty were resistant to modifying their curricula via technology integration. At Polytechnic of Namibia, one stakeholder expressed “100% success? No - some people are more resistant to new teaching methods, but the partnership continues to make progress.” Each of these challenges had to be addressed in order for partnerships to move forward with instructional goals. Thus, often relating back to the first level of the Theory of Change model, Global Engagement Management as a means to plan for how to address incongruence or challenges in teaching and curricular issues.

Extension and Outreach

While traditional forms of research and teaching were major goals of most HED partnerships, non-formal education, outreach, and community engagement were at the center of many partnership objectives as well. Extension work was often performed through short-term training programs and outreach efforts in the areas of health, teacher education, environmental management, leadership, and management/industry. Thousands of individuals in host country local communities received this type of training across HED partnerships. At the University of Cape Coast,

Community health initiatives took University of Cape Coast students out of the campus and brought them into local schools, villages, and communities. The students conducted preventive health education workshops with large groups outside of the campus. Partners estimate that 10,000+ local community members have benefited from health education workshops conducted by University of Cape Coast faculty and students.

A number of projects specifically targeted less powerful populations in the host country including women, the rural poor, and small business owners. For example, a partnership between the University of Connecticut and Menoufia University in Egypt, “specifically targets local NGOs and women’s councils in rural communities and provides them with much needed support and access to materials and resources.” The project developed by the University of Wisconsin and ITESM-Querretaro in Mexico also focused on a group whose perspectives often go unheard, “providing training opportunities for low-income dairy farmers—they are largely left out of most outreach and university activities.” Due to this impact on broader society, outcomes of this extension work are strongly connected to the next level of the Theory of Change (Higher Education Impact), which will be discussed in the next section.

HED partners found the greatest success when extension work was driven by local contexts and community needs. Just as with the development of partnership goals and objectives being directed by the host country institution rather than U.S. stakeholders, partners discussed the importance of extension work being guided by local communities, rather than by U.S. or host country higher education institutions. This allowed for trusting relationships to be built among all parties, allowing for positive

communication and shared goals. Reflecting on a project in India between Iowa State University and the University of Agricultural Sciences, one stakeholder explained,

ISU went to fulfill UAS' expectations, not the other way around, asked what the University and its surrounding area needed...The villagers have expressed a high level of confidence and trust in [the University of Agricultural Sciences], and have expressed a strong desire to continue to cooperate on extension activities with the university. Faculty learn from the village farmers and the farmers learn from the faculty and students about sustainable agricultural practices.

As stakeholders engaged in host country local communities to assess and understand societal needs, initiatives often evolved and new ones emerged. For example, with the aforementioned project in India, local women were trained on how to grow ornamental fish as a source of income. One stakeholder from that partnership explained,

The ornamental fishery project is now considered a model program by the government of Karnataka State, which would like to see it replicated elsewhere...This activity has instilled confidence in the women. The women started with five varieties of fish, but are now working with over 30, including several high-value varieties.

It is important to note that some host country faculty members were constrained in their extension work due to lack of incentives or processes to engage in extension by their institutions. Therefore, while stakeholders expressed that institutions should be proactive in establishing strong ties with local communities, a structure and system to do so was often lacking within the higher education sector. For example, data from a partnership between Michigan State University and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in India stated, "[Tamil Nadu Agricultural University] already had the technology to be involved in the community, the partnership just helped 're-orient' their mindset in how to work with the farmers and the private sector." It was important for partners to develop relationships with senior leaders of the host country institution in order to highlight the importance of extension work and align university practices and policies with this work in order to make the practice of extension work more acceptable and effective at some host country institutions. Partners, Texas A&M University and the University of Malawi, Bunda College of Agriculture,

Took [the] program to farmers, communities [and] brought in government, NGOs, [and others] into the project and got them into the field; pushed [the University of Malawi] a little bit more into extension and helped them restart their animal technician program that was lost in the agriculture extension system.

Because of the lack of outreach emphasis at some host country institutions, faculty were not always familiar with the processes for pursuing extension and outreach. At the University of Botswana, "staff...increased their awareness of how to develop community support for conservation research,"

highlighting that the HED partnership not only provided host country stakeholders with opportunities for extension work and developing processes to promote this work at the host country institution, but also with skill development in this area for host country institution faculty.

Institutional Development

Broader host country institutional development occurred in a number of ways. One was in the creation of institutes and centers that were reported by 26 partnerships and which generated revenue through external activities, training, and services. Types of centers included English-language learning, entrepreneurial development, environmental research, and instructional technology. For example, at the Polytechnic of Namibia

The [Center for Teaching and Learning] was established to train PON faculty to move from traditional hierarchical teaching methods to interactive approaches that enhance student learning, retention, and critical thinking skills. The CTL piloted a new faculty mentoring initiative to introduce new instructors to PON, to train faculty from industry in pedagogy and classroom management, and to offer ongoing support as they begin teaching.

These centers also spurred additional initiatives at institutions such as the creation of advisory boards, growth of classroom space, procured research materials and resources, and access to research sites. At the University of Cape Coast in Ghana,

An instruction technology center was established on the UCC campus to further enhance the learning and teaching of information technology to faculty and students...this initiative included a modern computer and Internet Center in the main library with over a hundred networked computers and high-speed internet service.

The professional development experienced by host country institution faculty across partnerships also had a culminating impact on the institution through a trickle down process. As faculty in one program began utilizing new techniques in teaching, research, and project management, faculty in other programs/departments also gained exposure. Thus, faculty development often had a more widespread effect across an institution. Additionally, some stakeholders reported staff turnover improving and faculty interest in professional development increasing in part due to partnership engagement.

Partnerships also impacted institutional policies and strategic planning. For example, a number of partnerships had to engage in academic matters and policies in order to ensure their projects and programs became institutionalized and were sustained. In Ghana, as a result of the partnership activities with Kennesaw State University, the University of Cape Coast “established a requirement that all graduates of the school of education receive training in instructional technology.” Partners Colorado State University and Helwan University in Egypt spoke about senior leaderships becoming engaged in their initiative,

Due to the success of the partnership the President of Helwan University has designated the Construction Management program as one of the first programs at the institution that will charge fees to students. Previously, as a public institution supported by the Government of Egypt, all degree/certificate programs were fully funded by the government/institution. With the designation as a “special program” this gives the institution permission to levy fees to decrease the burden on the institution and ensure sustainability.

Institutional prestige building was another major benefit of partnership engagement. Host country institutions became better known for their research capacity, academic programs, reputation of the faculty, and preparation of students. For example, at many institutions, students who graduated from programs affiliated with HED partnerships went on to become leaders in academia, industry, and government. Thus, learning to maximize the skills, knowledge, social capital, and cultural capital of individual students and faculty affiliated with the partnerships was critical to host country institutional development. Additionally, the development of new academic programs and research projects bolstered institutional reputation with many becoming a model to other institutions within the host country as well as abroad. Regarding the partnership between Pennsylvania State University and the Universidad de Guanajuato in Mexico, stakeholders described “the [Universidad de Guanajuato] developed credibility in extension through [the HED] partnership and now is the lead go-to for extension work and outreach in the surrounding communities – UG was really the pioneer of this approach.” Stakeholders expressed the HED partnership between Portland State University and the University of Natural Sciences in Vietnam, “Instilled the belief that at an institution level, the integration of [the HED project] at the [University of Natural Sciences] can be an attribute that sets this institution apart from others in Ho Chi Minh City.” The government in India also recognized the work of an HED partnership between the University of California Davis and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, “The Ministry of Health and Family Affairs asked TNAU faculty to review a draft of the ‘Food Safety and Standards Act of 2006,’ attesting to the federal government’s recognition of the university’s increasing expertise in the field.”

However, as aforementioned it was important for institutions to invest in supporting the sustainability of these projects in order to truly benefit from them. Thus, engaging senior leadership and administration at the institution was key. For example, while many HED partnerships incorporated modern technology into their projects and this often required financial backing and resources to improve the technological infrastructure, purchase hardware and software, and hire or train staff to manage the technology. Similarly, at Menoufia University in Egypt,

The president of Menoufia University has provided space, furniture, equipment and a small operational budget to fund the development of the Women’s Center. They also intend to leverage

funds from sources such as the Government's Social Development Fund, international organizations, NGOs, and the National Women's Council.

Partnerships based solely on individual faculty-to-faculty relationships and research interests were deemed more difficult to sustain. Heavy staff turnover and changing personal interests were a challenge to a number of partnerships due to the need for continual retraining and the loss of momentum. Thus, while some partnerships were primarily formed and maintained through individual, informal friendships, stakeholders suggested that creating formal connections and a strong commitment at the institution level was more desirable for sustainable outcomes at the host country institution. This helped to ensure that long-lived ties and initiatives were nurtured between the partner institutions. It also increased institutional development by creating policies and procedures, mobilizing resources, and engaging in a strategic mission and interests that aligned among partners. Additionally, creating formal mechanisms to remain connected provided further opportunities for institutional development in the long-term. For example, memoranda of understanding (MoUs) were often signed to establish official future collaborative efforts between institutions and provided a mechanism for developing processes that could improve partnership engagement (e.g. creating a process for the transfer of credits between institutions). Partnership initiatives then evolved into a continuation of an on-going, larger program between the partners. These formalized relationships also required the involvement of senior leadership at both institutions, which provided another important layer of stakeholder engagement.

Strategic Alliances

A key component of higher education strengthening involved building strategic alliances and expanding networks. Within the host country institution, support by senior leadership was beneficial to positive project outcomes. At Polytechnic Institute of Namibia, the project director explained,

This is our best international partnership. Ingredients are similar and they are also similar in size. But this one developed a pretty strong institutional partnership and good long-standing relationship with the Rector; they leverage their strengths for things that the Polytechnic Institute of Namibia wants.

It was also helpful for leadership at both the U.S. and host country institutions to engage with each other as described by this partnership in Namibia,

Institutional commitment is essential and is a huge factor of success for this program. The President of Highline Community College and the Rector of Polytechnic Institute of Namibia are directly involved with this partnership. The leaders of both institutions really took an interest (conducted visits, hosted faculty, ran workshops, and encouraged their own faculty and staff to participate) in the program, yielding a much more long-lived and successful partnership.

Support was also important at all staff, department, and student levels in order to maximize partnership results and provide support beyond the duration of the HED grant. For example, having host country faculty from across disciplines involved in the partnership between the University of Connecticut and Menoufia University in Egypt was a positive outcome,

This project has widespread buy-in from faculty and leaders. The university president has allocated space and initial funds for operating costs for the Women's Center. University faculty members from various disciplines (i.e. Social Sciences, Agriculture, Home Economics, Specific Education) serve on the faculty team to implement the project.

Conversely, institutional politics, such as multilayered bureaucracy and staff hierarchy, and cross-department competition were obstructive to higher education strengthening. At Punjab Agricultural University in India there were changes in senior leadership, which led to concern that the partnership with the Ohio State University would no longer be supported by administration. A stakeholder explained it is,

Critical to have the support at the highest level of administration. Initially there was some concern if the new Vice Chancellor would support the [HED project], but [the new Vice Chancellor] is 100% behind the effort and participated in the groundbreaking ceremony for the new facility.

External networks involved a wide array of actors from local to international levels, including other postsecondary institutions, host country governments, USAID missions, multilateral agencies, civil society and industry, and other donors. External stakeholders engaged in partnerships in a variety of ways. Some funded components of the projects such as exchanges or specific resources. The partnership between Highline Community College and Polytechnic Institute of Namibia provide an example, "African Development Bank has collaborated with the Center for Entrepreneurial Development and the Namibian Development Bank to support continuing education, short courses and workshops." Other external stakeholders engaged with partners through extension work such as trainings. Additionally, strategic alliances were built around the development of spin-off projects or replicating the HED initiative. It was important as the networks grew, that efforts and resources were continuously coordinated and goals aligned to strengthen and broaden impact. However, growing networks also created a number of challenges and required a level of synergy and management. Some stakeholders unexpectedly dropped out of the project or came on board during implementation which resulted in delays, lack of communication, strategic misalignment, changing funding priorities, capacity gaps across stakeholders, and lack of donor confidence.

Partners used the experience developed through the HED project to demonstrate their capacity to engage in successful collaborations. U.S. partners often described themselves as helping to facilitate networking for host country partners. The Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University project director explained,

We brought them [Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology] to several U.S. meetings, and put them in touch with others in the earthquake engineering networks. These led to independent relationships. We paid their membership in the International Association for Earthquake Engineering (IAEE) and The Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI). They have picked up on these and pursued them much further, engaging in international research and exchange. Bangladesh is now a full-fledged member in the international networks in the field. Regarding their partnership with Pannasastra University of Cambodia, a stakeholder from California State University Fullerton explained the importance of getting individuals at all levels involved,

Everyone has a stake in the development of their community; our task is to create the table where the stakeholders can come together, identify needs, and plan how to address those needs; [the] table must be absolutely inclusive and everyone at the table is an equal; unpacking what the various needs [are] developing.

Host country institutional partners described being more confident in reaching out to potential external stakeholders for other projects due to the skills and knowledge built during the HED partnership. One stakeholder expressed, “University of Botswana staff expanded their technical knowledge and skills and increased their awareness of how to develop community support for conservation research through alliance building with NGOs and other agencies.” Some of external stakeholders included other U.S. higher education institutions that were interested in building ties or developing additional collaborations based on consortia models. The Polytechnic of Namibia and Worcester Polytechnic Institute partnership is an example of this, with a

Consortium of two to three U.S. colleges now supporting the Polytechnic of Namibia, plus European colleges and universities. Support is substantial and ongoing. Rector is very entrepreneurial, travels often and is developing increasing ties. The success of the partnership encouraged PON to seek other partners; significant number of follow-on grants supporting variety of programs and student exchanges.

Increasing the partnership footprint and extending networks in other countries in turn allowed partnership institutions to pursue a number of opportunities and build strategic alliances.

Overall, this section highlights the diverse ways in which HED partnerships worked to build capacity at host country institutions of higher education. Through research, teaching/curriculum, and extension/outreach work as well as broader institutional development and strategic alliance building, partnerships demonstrated level two of the Theory of Change model – Higher Education Strengthening. In many ways this level overlaps with the next level, Higher Education Impact because institutional strengthening often involved community engagement. However, developing a strong host country institution also helped to mitigate challenges in building capacity outside the walls of academia.

Higher Education Impact

While the second level of the Theory of Change model (Higher Education Strengthening) emphasized improvement at the institution level, the third level of this model, Higher Education Impact, focuses more outwardly to the broader host country society. It is important to note that engaging the first two levels of the Theory of Change are critical to effectively moving to this third level. Thus, building and operationalizing a stronger partnership foundation (level one – Global Engagement Management) and building host country institutional capacity (level two – Higher Education Strengthening) are needed in order to build capacity beyond the walls of the higher education institution.

Shared Knowledge

The sharing of knowledge between HED partners and local communities was often cited as having a strong impact on the host country society. This was a result of the research, teaching/curricular offerings, and extension work developed through the partnerships at the host country institution. For example, partners West Virginia University and Universidad Autonoma Queretaro in Mexico reported,

The greenhouse industry has significantly increased in the region as a direct result [of] the exposure to the research activities in this partnership and direct interaction with WVU-UAQ group through the annual workshops on Greenhouse Technology. Several local entrepreneurs (local small rural producers and large industrial corporations) have realized the potential business benefits that greenhouse operations may bring. Several small business operations have been established and several major industrial operations have also been established to make greenhouse production a new area of opportunity for the region and several other states (Oaxaca, Zacatecas and Guanajuato). Several of these states in Mexico, have established contact with UAQ to develop similar programs and also for greenhouse methods training purposes.

While some partners were able to help build infrastructure in local communities, much of the impact of the higher education partnerships was through shared knowledge. A stakeholder from the University of Northern Iowa and University of Cape Coast partnership in Ghana explained this realization,

When we visited the first community, they thought we were coming to build infrastructure. We stressed that we were there for education and to teach them how to live a better life and that we were not building new infrastructures. When I visited the community a couple years later, I saw that they were building new structures. The people said they wanted to improve the air (mosquitos). It took time to build trust and for the people to understand that we were there to improve their situation—Even if we did not bring something, through education, we can help.

Other examples of shared knowledge included the education and outreach materials created during partnerships that were still widely used in the communities after the formal partnership closed (e.g., posters, brochures, videos, teachers training manuals, and guides in English or local dialects). The regional assessment data from the Kennesaw State University and University of Cape Coast partnership in Ghana states, “The original [instructional technology] manual written by the partners is still in used in educating the primary school teachers.” Direct interventions also appeared to enhance the wellbeing of local populations. Examples of direct interventions in local communities included an annual health fair with free consultations for attendees, the development of fruit farmer federations, and an HIV-focused rural health clinic network.

A number of stakeholders discussed their work in local host country communities, particularly from a standpoint of sustained engagement. These continued ties were most often cited when there were formal links established between the host country institution and the community. Community initiatives that reached out to organized groups were often successful in the long run. For example, federations of farmers, schoolteachers groups, and women self-help groups in rural areas. A partnership between Iowa State University and the University of Agricultural Sciences in India demonstrate this process of shared knowledge,

The partners, in collaboration with the extension arm of the University of Agricultural Sciences campus, have developed training materials and modules used by KVKs (Krishi Vignanda Kendre) – technical, non-degree awarding, district-level training centers funded by the federal/national government. University of Agricultural Sciences faculty have provided three-day trainings at 11 different KVK centers. Some of the women trained in the villages also receive training at the KVKs.

Through these organizations, many individuals who were trained in areas such as health, education, environmental sustainability, and agriculture could subsequently train others in surrounding areas.

Referring back to the Iowa State University and University of Agricultural Sciences partnership,

The most exciting insight was to learn how the women that have successfully raised ornamental fish in the adopted Iowa State University/University of Agricultural Sciences villages were now going to travel to other villages to teach women how to implement this project in their village. This train-the-trainers program will continue to build confidence and leadership skills in these new trainers as well as pass on valuable training to a new group of women.

Thus, through this model shared knowledge was not only developed between HED partners and the local communities, but also between local communities themselves.

It is important to note that shared knowledge was not solely unidirectional. Although a number of stakeholders emphasized the U.S. institution and host country institution providing training, information,

and other resources to local communities, there were also examples of the local communities sharing knowledge with the HED partners. One stakeholder at the College Universitaire Regional de Bambey in Senegal expressed that they “work[ed] to transform the local community [while] the community is transforming the university.” Thus, HED partners benefited from their engagement with local communities by becoming better aware of their needs as well as how to more effectively apply theory and research to practice.

Active Citizenship

HED stakeholders across partnerships also discussed the growth of active citizenship as an outcome of projects. The research, teaching, and extension work that host country faculty, staff, and students engaged in often gave them a direct tie to broader societal issues in the host country. These host country stakeholders also described the HED partnership fostering a greater commitment to using their skills and knowledge to address political, economic, environmental, or other issues. One regional assessment report stated, “[Institute of Forestry, Tribhuvan University] master’s students go on to work in the community and disseminate ideas on natural resource management and community forestry to those outside the institution.” Likewise at Chulalonghorn University in Thailand, the faculty are now, “constantly reexamining how they can be of value to governments, agencies, communities.” Subsequently, these host country students and faculty as well as their institutions also became well known for their expertise in particular areas and were called upon to share it as demonstrated by the Universidad de Guanajuato in Mexico who “developed credibility in extension through [the HED] partnership and now is the lead go-to for extension work and outreach in the surrounding communities.”

HED partnership stakeholders most often discussed the development of active citizenship in students affiliated with the projects. For example,

During our interviews with the students [from the University of Jordan] who are currently in or have recently graduated from the American Studies program [developed through the HED partnership with the University of North Carolina] they showed passion and enthusiasm for addressing misconceptions that many average Jordanians have of Americans and American foreign policy. They want to share their message...and view themselves as potential ambassadors to bridge the communication and cultural gaps that divide the U.S. and Middle East.

In this case, the American Studies program allowed University of Jordan students to communicate with U.S. partner students and see what perceptions some Americans had of Jordan. This helped to foster their personal desire to “bridge the communication and cultural gaps that divide the U.S. and Middle East.”

The president of Pannasastra University of Cambodia also expressed the value of active citizenship being

displayed by students who participated in the HED partnership project (Community Service Learning – CSL),

CSL is here to stay, with or without funding from USAID...all in all, the CSL program is a success story at PUC, and has made impacts in terms of how PUC students see and feel about the need for taking part in the community activities and about volunteerism in general. I am proud of these students! I see a lot of changes in their attitudes, their behaviors and in their lives. As a faculty liaison and implementing professor...CSL has provided me with a unique way of making my students understand difficult subject concepts in Environmental Studies...CSL has created student interest to become worthwhile human beings. After just 20 hours of community service one of my students has initiated an organization of student volunteers...to work with more community components after they finish working with the trafficked children...some of my old time students are still visiting the organizations.

Mirroring this narrative, a Cambodian student who participated in the HED project at Pannasastra University stated, “Participating in [the] CSL program opens up my eyes to a new realm that I have never experienced. It provides me with valuable knowledge of my own community...a precious experience to improve myself...I, as simple citizen, can help with my own ability.”

Host country students who participated in exchange programs to the United States often returned to their home country and helped bring change to their communities as active citizens as well. Many became leaders in industry, government, and other sectors. For example, students who graduated from a postgraduate training program in pediatrics and internal medicine developed by Case Western Reserve University and the National University of Laos, “were happy to return to their home remote areas. In every province there is at least one of these trainees practicing. They return to government centers and hospitals and are recognized as leaders because of their special training.” In some instances, host country institutions also employed these students upon their return as instructors in academic departments and teacher training programs. Students who participated in HED projects also expressed being more inclined to further their education [e.g. to pursue graduate studies] either in the host country or abroad.

Faculty at host country institutions also described becoming more committed to engagement in government and with local communities. For example, a stakeholder from the National University of Laos explained, “Our faculty has become a university, with more responsibility; seeking to affiliate with other teaching hospitals; enhancing the capacity of teaching and research; strengthening regional hospitals.” A number of host country institution stakeholders expressed that prior to the HED partnership, this type of involvement was not encouraged or expected by their institution. However, through the partnerships, many became more inclined to engage in this type of work and host country institution leadership began to see the benefits of working across sectors and in local communities, rather than solely in academic

silos. Therefore, both individual host country faculty as well as their institutions demonstrated the growth of active citizenship.

Competent Workforce

Across the partnerships, thousands of individuals received short-term and long-term training and education through programs such as teacher workshops, environmental management seminars, industry-focused business classes, and leadership. Thus, HED projects directly worked to improve the development of a competent workforce within host countries. This resulted in, for example, local health organizations learning techniques to more effectively feed malnourished children as well as local agriculture productivity increasing through improved irrigation techniques and better veterinary cattle care. Students and local citizens were able to develop skills that not only improved their marketability for jobs, but also were trained in areas of high need in their respective communities. For example,

Morocco is suffering from a lack of Information and Communications Technology Ph.D. graduates. This partnership [between Montana State University and Al Akhawayn University] is creating a program that will help Morocco meet its need for quality Information and Communications Technology graduates, that is appropriate to the Moroccan context, and that meets the particular needs of Moroccan industry.

Regarding the partnership between West Virginia University and the Universidad Autonoma Queretaro in Mexico, “Training of the local producers...is allowing local producers to fill the role that foreign companies have been doing.” Supporting the development of a more competent workforce center outcomes on the strengthening and empowerment of local communities in host countries.

Some partnerships used train the trainer models and thus, building a competent workforce was an outcome that continued on in communities even after the formal partnership ended. For example, students and community members were not only engaged in skill development for themselves, but also engaged in how to teach others in their communities those same skills. A stakeholder from the partnership between Case Western Reserve University and the National University of Laos described, “provincial pediatricians [are] trained as trainers to train others at the provincial level; the 42 [pediatricians] have probably trained a minimum of 10 each or a total of at least 400-500.” Similarly, the regional assessment data from the Clemson University and Universitas Sam Ratulangi partnership in Indonesia reports, “Since the 71 extension agents and small farmers from the three test villages were trained under the funding period, an additional 100 farmers have been trained through a train-the-trainer program.” This type of approach provided the opportunity for workforce development to have a farther reach.

Partnerships directly cited lasting benefits for host country students, specifically related to building the skills necessary to be highly qualified candidates on the job market. HED partnerships

exposed students to research, teaching, leadership skill building, contemporary technology, cross-cultural engagement, and extension work in local communities. This made them marketable for positions both within and outside of academia. As part of the partnership between the Institute for Energy, Law & Enterprise at the University of Houston Law Center and the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Department of Petroleum and Mineral Resources,

[A] New “Energy Economics” course enhances students’ understanding of the energy value chain and the impact of energy policy. The majority of Petroleum and Mineral Resources students are part-time students, full-time professionals. This course has given them an advantage in their careers and allowed them to influence the implementation of effective and efficient national policy.

Likewise as part of the University of Notre Dame and Universidad de Guadalajara partnership in Mexico, “[the Universidad de Guadalajara] also designed a new specialty in entrepreneurship and agribusiness, offered in the College of Business, as well as a new certificate program in this field to prepare Mexican professionals to become managers, consultants, and researchers in the rural sector.” Due to the partnership, a number of academic programs were directly connecting themselves to industry needs and government workforce initiatives. The University of Connecticut and Ain Shams University partnership in Egypt highlights this,

Students enrolled in the program receive an interdisciplinary education that is directly related to the needs of the market. Ain Shams University conducted a market needs analysis through consultations with local and multinational companies and discovered that the combination of computer science, engineering and commercial applications is needed. [The new academic program] addresses an important need in the market for a more integrated skill set [through an] interdisciplinary approach.

Host country students who graduated from these types of programs joined the next generation of government leaders, faculty members, technicians, and researchers, often becoming well known and respected in their respective fields and industries. For example, a host country stakeholder from the Virginia Polytechnic and State University and Malawi Institute of Education, Domasi College of Education partnership reported, “their graduates are highly respected and sought-after across Malawi; we’ve had an impact on the nation’s attitude toward Domasi College of Education and the kind of teacher training it produces.” Similarly a stakeholder from the University of New Mexico and Universidad de Quintana Roo partnership in Mexico expressed, there are now “several alumni who exemplify a new generation of leadership focused on sustainable development for the state.”

Innovation

Partnership projects also had a longer-term impact on host countries due to their innovative features. One way this was described was through project replication. For example, other universities within the host countries often adopted HED innovative experiential education practices such as service learning, community outreach, public-private linkages, and extension concepts. Academic programs were also replicated because they efficiently addressed gaps in education offerings and met industry needs. Examples included energy economics, medical training, IT training, and civic education. At Pannasastra University of Cambodia, “the President of Pannasastra University mentioned that the Prime Minister had visited Pannasastra University recently and said that he would like to see CSL [community service learning] become mandatory across all public higher education institutions in Cambodia.” While successful partnership models were replicated at other institutions in the host countries, there were instances where these models were also adopted in other countries around the world as well. For example, the project developed between Pennsylvania State University and the University of Namibia was replicated in Tanzania and Uganda. In some cases, partners developed guides and best practices to help replication efforts meet the needs and realities of new contexts. This gave both the host country institution as well as broader society greater visibility and credibility in their given sector.

The success of HED partnerships also built momentum for follow-on or spin-off projects beyond the life of the funding. These projects continued improvement of human and institutional capacity building, competitive edge, and reputation. These spin-off projects often included both the original U.S. and host country institution HED partners, although this was not always the case. In some cases only one of the original partners continued the follow-on or spin-off project, often with a new stakeholder developed through the building of strategic alliances (the building of strategic alliances is discussed in greater depth in the section on “Higher Education Strengthening”). The University of Agricultural Sciences in India provides one example. They are,

Leading a new project – an Afghanistan project that is a direct spin-off from our HED project (funded by USDA); 45 students from Afghanistan, now studying at Bangalore; 15-17 new students coming next year. Total 58 getting Masters degrees – plant breeding, soil science, agronomy, horticulture, agriculture, economics, plant pathology, [and] entomology.

The engagement in follow-on and spin-off projects worked to strengthen both the host country institution as well as the broader host country society, highlighting how the levels of the Theory of Change model are interconnected.

Additionally, host country institutions became known as innovators, building a niche for themselves in terms of research, teaching/curriculum, and/or extension. With Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in India, the U.S. project director from Michigan State University explained,

As far as working with business is concerned, we saw big changes in this regard, for example in TNAU's development of bachelor's degree program designed to groom graduates for the private sector, building a private-sector led advisory board that helped guide the direction of the program, and making students undertake some kind of small agribusiness activity as part of their education. These things were unheard of in India previously.

As innovators, host country institutions often attracted more students nationally, but also internationally which helped to develop the reputation of not just the host country institution, but also the reputation of the host country more broadly as an education destination. Additionally, these host country institutions attracted more donors and collaborators, such as at the Universite du Sousse in Tunisia, "Because they are now aware of the program with the University of Arkansas [U.S. institution partner], local actors are increasingly asking to build programs with the Universite du Sousse." Local community stakeholders also internalized HED innovations in their work (e.g. agricultural practices) and daily lives (e.g. health). For example, the regional assessment data from the Clemson University and Universitas Sam Ratulangi partnership in Indonesia states,

During meetings with the farmers in Rurukan and Modounding, they told the HED team that, as a result of the [HED project], they can now differentiate between pests and natural enemies of the pests. Their immediate instinct upon seeing what they initially perceive as a pest is no longer to immediately spray....They mentioned that the [HED project] also bolstered their awareness about the over-application of chemical pesticides and its adverse impact on their health. Many now try to avoid eating any fruits and vegetables which have been sprayed, and they are passing along their concerns to their children...One farmer commented that ever since he reduced the application of pesticides, his health has improved noticeably. The...[HED] projects have thus helped to increase health awareness.

In this way, host country institutions became a greater asset to their local communities and had the capacity to make an impact through innovative practices and products, an outcome that reflects the Higher Education Impact level of the Theory of Change.

Good Governance

Stakeholders discussed their role in helping to shape policy in the host country society. The expertise of faculty in combination with HED project initiatives (e.g. research) could provide host country governments with the information, resources, and evidence needed to strengthen current policies, push policy agendas, and foster new policy goals. For example, a report from the Oregon State University and University of Botswana states, "Research conducted at the University of Botswana laboratory facilities in Maun have been used to inform government policy in the areas of Land and Water Use Management as

well as the use of pesticides.” The research and extension work these and other partners engaged in also helped to build a reputation that caught the interest of government officials in a number of partnership contexts. In India, stakeholders from the Cornell University and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University partnership cited,

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University’s progress has been recognized by the Indian government and is considered a leader in developing the online degrees for state agricultural universities, new curriculum, and for their growing research capacity. Now Tamil Nadu Agricultural University is asked to advise the state government when the government wants technical input or training.

This is one of a number of examples in which host country faculty were called upon to work as consultants with government entities on issues related to HED project initiatives. This included work on health, education, technology, and environmental initiatives. Thus, HED partners were able to have a direct impact on policy-related endeavors and move the work that was being done from their academic institutions to a more macro, societal level.

However, engaging with local government officials was a challenge for a number of partnerships, which made it initially difficult to establish relationships between the two in order to work collaboratively. In some cases, government officials were not approached as part of alliance building, were not responsive when approached, or relationships were not sustained because as one stakeholder expressed from the Universidad de Quintana Roo in Mexico, “Government officials rotate out every [number of] years,” once their term is over. When these issues occurred, potential government stakeholders were then not fully aware of or a part of initiatives and projects being implemented by the HED partners. Additionally, there were times when HED stakeholders clashed with government entities due to policies or practices that were detrimental to partnership goals or because government priorities and the HED initiative were not congruent. This incongruence was the case of the partnership between Bowling Green University and the Institut de Press et Sciences de l’Information,

The Government of Tunisia knows its priorities and does not welcome foreign aid in areas outside of their priorities for their country. Their priorities include: engineering, science, math, research, entrepreneurship, and English language training. The Ministry of Higher Education is adamant that any programs directly funded by MEPI include their input and be consistent with their priorities. For instance, the small grant awarded to IPSI to develop a student newspaper, which was a direct result of the Bowling Green partnership, was not consistent with their priorities.

The Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and University of Dhaka partnership also had a difficult relationship with the government in Bangladesh, “Lots of challenges in working with the Bangladesh government. It is highly politicized, and permeates everything you do.” Yet, due to their

power, negative relationships with local governments could weaken the longevity of HED initiatives. This sector often had the potential to act as future funders for the initiative, add the initiative to a policy agenda as a national priority, and had the power to influence policy, which could also benefit a partnership initiative.

Aligning partnership goals and outcomes with government goals and outcomes was a major way to encourage government relations. Data from the Worcester Polytechnic Institute and the Polytechnic of Namibia highlight,

[The] Minister of Higher Education, now Prime Minister, [is] very supportive of [the HED] program and helping PON obtain equal support from government, which provides more funds to the University of Namibia (with fewer students); PON becomes National University of Science & Technology promoting [a] shift toward practical, employment-focused education with potential of informing government policies including regional transportation, sustainable eco-tourism, HIV/AIDS awareness, testing & prevention.

Additionally, providing training to government officials was another way to showcase the type and quality of work that HED partners could provide. Some HED partnerships were able to develop strong and positive relationships with local governments and 28 partnerships reported having the ability to realize change at the policy level and to contribute to good governance.

Higher Education Impact illustrates the movement of HED partnerships from a focus on the host country higher education institution to a more outward focus on the host country society. As aforementioned, success at this third level of the Theory of Change can be bolstered by a strong foundation at levels one and two of this framework (Global Partnership Management and Higher Education Strengthening). Additionally, by positively engaging local communities in the host country and gaining a strong foothold in these communities, partners could begin to achieve greater sustainability in moving to level four of the Theory of Change – Sustainable Human and Social Development.

Sustainable Human and Social Development

A number of stakeholders discussed the importance of sustainability in their partnerships. As aforementioned in previous sections of this report, sustainability was expressed to be an important consideration at all levels of the partnerships including initial development, planning, and implementation. As a stakeholder of the partnership between the University of Houston and Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology explained, “Funding from USAID or whoever, will be for a limited period of time; without committed, energetic leaders, then modest investments like those from HED will not have long-term sustainable impact.”

Partnerships with solid plans for sustainability appeared to have the most success in making this outcome a reality. Partners Virginia Polytechnic Institute and Tribhuvan University in Nepal expressed at the time they were trying “to establish set procedures and processes that will help sustain their efforts after the partnership concludes. An external advisory board has been established. They are also focusing on assisting Nepali faculty and administrators in fundraising and networking.” In many cases sustainability was discussed as part of the creation of a Memoranda of Understanding or other formal process and collaborative agreements that kept partner institutions connected and projects continuing. For example, thirteen partners reported the creation of an MoU as a result of their partnerships, a theme that was also described in the “Higher Education Strengthening” section of this report. The University of Arkansas and the Universite du Monastir and Universite du Sousse partnership in Tunisia provides one example,

A new MOU was signed in March 2006 to expand and strengthen the collaboration. Under the framework of this new MOU, they [HED partners] will: 1) Establish student competitions for designing the best business plans, of which 4-5 will be selected as a capstone project for funding by local/national businesses. 2) Sponsor an annual conference on joint U.S.-Tunisian business cooperation focusing on technology and culture. 3) Fund additional faculty exchanges for the purpose teaching and advising business management topics. 4) Send twenty UA students to the University of Sousse in January 2007 or the second half of April 2007, in cooperation with the Agency of Promoting the Industry of Sousse and the Regional Business Center of Sousse, to share their experiences with small business creation. 5) Create student investment clubs. 6) Diversify the portfolio of cooperation to include exchanges and research collaboration between the departments of agriculture and medical sciences at USousse with the departments and biotechnology at UA. 7) Promote corporate sponsorship of the business units at USousse and other universities.

Even those partners who did not create a sustainability plan often reflected that this is one aspect that they would change or that they would include in future partnerships.

Twenty partnerships reported either not engaging in follow-up work with their HED partners or not being able to provide evidence that project outcomes lasted beyond the life of the partnership/grant. Some partners expressed that outcomes were not sustained. For example, courses or exchange programs were discontinued after the end of the partnership; a website was terminated; collaborative engagements ceased; or the infrastructure fell apart. Explanations behind the lack of sustainability included funding shortages; ownership and appropriation issues; inadequate local institutional capacity; lack of long-term partnerships; or initiatives based on personal relationships with no broader institutional support. One

example is a project in Namibia between Pennsylvania State University and the University of Namibia, in which the regional assessment data reported,

The partners very successfully handled the research and preliminary groundwork aspects of the partnership well (note that these were the elements of the project that were of interest to the academics involved), but when the grant money was gone neither partner institution stepped up to provide the (quite modest) funding and training necessary to transform the project into something more self-sustaining, and when we visited it was at a complete standstill.

Some partners expressed that when broader project outcomes were not sustained or institution-to-institution level engagement was discontinued, individual relationships were still often maintained between varying partnership stakeholders. Therefore, communication between individuals and/or faculty and student exchanges was continued. However, this does not truly reflect sustainable human and social development as individuals shifted to new positions or different institutions and institutional priorities shifted. A number of stakeholders mentioned that due to lack of resources, time, or changing priorities of individuals that individual-to-individual relationships did not maintain the same level of momentum, strength, or success that occurred when diverse stakeholders were engaged across institutions and the local community. A stakeholder from the Oregon State University and University of Botswana partnership explains this rationale as, “Partnerships based on individual faculty-to-faculty relationships and research interests are more difficult to sustain.” Instead broader level sustainable engagement was the more effective goal as communicated by a stakeholder from the Ohio State University and Makassar State University partnership in Indonesia, “This [grant] primed the pump for a long-term process of educational development among the partners that will continue for the foreseeable future.”

It is also important to note that some partnership stakeholders had a difficult time expressing their definition of sustainability. They were able to articulate outcomes at the institution and societal level that were ongoing, but due to a number of factors were not able to suggest that the outcomes were sustainable in the long run. Additionally, while some partnerships had been completed at the time of the regional assessment data collection, others were still in progress. Therefore, partners were not all at the same time period out from the life of the HED grants, which impacted their ability to describe the level of sustainability the project had regarding the institution and/or host country society.

Culture of Continuous Learning and Innovation

Partners discussed the role that the HED partnership had on instilling continuous learning and innovation, which was sustained after the formal partnerships ended. Host country institutions continued to develop innovative practices such as Punjab Agricultural University in India,

Since the end of the HED award period, without any assistance from [the Ohio State University - U.S. partner], PAU has developed a new Bachelors of Technology (B. Tech) program in Food Technology. PAU would ultimately like to create a new Department of Food Technology. PAU sees this as a growing area and expects to have about 30 students in the program.

Similarly, Chulalongkorn University in Thailand continued to develop the HED project on their own after the partnership, “Chula has strengthened its modeling capacity significantly since the partnership – sometimes via communication and working relationship with [the University of Washington - U.S. partner] personnel, but mostly via own initiative and efforts now.” These examples highlight that host country institutions would continue to foster HED initiatives after the grant and not be reliant on their U.S. partner institution to do so. Instead, these host country institutions were fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation that promoted sustainable projects and initiatives.

A number of host country institutions developed innovative forms of income generation, which also ties back to the Theory of Change level two – Higher Education Strengthening because the income generated helped to strengthen host country institutions. Examples included self-generating revenues such as the practice of charging tuition for academic programs, providing short and long-term workforce trainings and community workshops, and the sale of new products developed at the host country institution (e.g. technological resources). Through their HED partnership, the Polytechnic of Namibia developed a Center for Entrepreneurial Development that “conduct[s] a full range of workforce development training classes for government agencies, businesses, and nongovernmental organizations—including seminars on financial planning, laws governing business start-up, and computer training.” Stakeholders from this partnership expressed that “The Center for Entrepreneurial Development is now a self-sustainable, revenue generating program for PON, that is an interface between businesses in Namibia and PON.” Another example was at the University of Malawi, Bunda College of Agriculture where U.S. stakeholders from Texas A&M University, “helped the University of Malawi, Bunda College of Agriculture institute a system of ‘overheads’ so that they could get a revenue stream from projects.” Many partners promoted their products, practices, and services through marketing campaigns and websites in order to communicate their innovations to stakeholders outside of the institution. The revenue generated was often used to further invest in the initiative.

While a culture of continuous learning and innovation by host country stakeholders encouraged sustainability at the end of a partnership, it also fed back into the levels of Higher Education Strengthening and Higher Education Impact during the partnership (see Theory of Change model). As host country stakeholders sought new processes in teaching, learning and extension, they were able to use their knowledge of the local context to improve the HED partner processes and outcomes at their institutions and in local communities. At the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in India the “partnership

helped the university gain a better sense of how to be responsive to the community/private sector... Connecting the university to society in a demand-responsive way – responding to the needs of the community rather than telling the community what it needs.” Similarly, a partnership between the Thai Ministry of Education and U.S. community colleges reported, “eight new community colleges developed and they are all using the [U.S. partner] model demonstrate[ing] capacity building...[these] community colleges have become very responsive to workforce training needs.” These examples highlight the interconnected nature of the Theory of Change model, which links partnership management, host country institution capacity building, improvements to host country society, and sustainable efforts.

Developing and operationalizing a culture of continuous learning and innovation was something that occurred with time and planning. For example the partnership between Washington University in St. Louis and Tribhuvan University in Nepal reported,

If we are to stabilize development in Nepal, then we must build a social policy legal framework, develop a class of professionals to test the new laws and that will take time; cannot do a 18 month or two-year project to accomplish such objectives; must have a framework for sustainability, bring others, NGOs into the mix...Must have longer-term time perspective, long range involvement, not just short-term interventions...When you gain results, then you should be able to build on these foundations.

Some host country stakeholders were ready at early stages of partnership engagement to pursue institutional and societal change. For those who were initially apprehensive, the data demonstrates that when host country stakeholders felt a sense of ownership in the project and the needs of the local context were met, they appeared more willing and confident in trying new ideas and process. For example, despite initial challenges in the relationship between themselves and the University of Delaware, the project director at the Institute of Local Government Studies in Ghana, “Did feel, however, that having participated in the activities of the partnership gave them an advantage – an ability to move forward with speed and confidence on projects involving course delivery, a track record.” Additionally, when host country stakeholders trusted their U.S. partners and were part of the process of partnership development, they became more open to ideas from their U.S. institution partners as well as innovative concepts developed during the partnership. These factors relate back to the first level of the Theory of Change model, Global Engagement Management, due to the emphasis on building partnership trust and a foundation. Ultimately, this demonstrates a loop between these levels of the model.

Evolution of Cultural and Social Capital

A major component of sustainability included financial sustainability, which allowed for the continued work of partnerships once the HED grant support ended. This required developing strategies

for financial stability at the onset of the partnership and operationalizing those strategies throughout the partnership. Examples included the development of a strategic financial plan and a system of overheads, seeking and securing post-grant revenue, finding ways to reassign unexpended funds left over from the partnership, and assigning grant writing responsibilities. Partners sought external support through new grants, donations, and other types of funding opportunities. These funds were targeted at research projects, centers, academic programs, community engagement programs and extension, scholarships/fellowships, and exchange programs. A number of stakeholders discussed having diversified funding streams, which fostered sustainability.

However, many of these strategies required cultural and social capital that was developed throughout the partnership. For example, the knowledge of grant funding sources and the skills of grant writing were often transferred as cultural capital to host country institution faculty and students during the partnership. Similarly, social capital was developed as host country institutions became more entrepreneurial in networking and developing new relationships to secure sustained funding. Data from a regional assessment state, “The success of the [HED] partnership [between Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Polytechnic Institute of Namibia] encouraged PON to seek other partners [for a] significant number of follow-on grants supporting [a] variety of programs and student exchanges.” Due to the reputation, legitimacy, and expertise garnered as an HED partner, the host country institutions often attracted outside funding sources. Additional funding came from local host country governments as well as from stakeholders abroad including higher education institutions, NGOs, and industry organizations. Tamil Nadu Agricultural University stakeholders in India stated,

As a direct result of the Michigan State University-TNAU partnership, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has given 10.5 million rupees to TNAU to conduct a pilot project with 100 farmers in one district... This is a direct outcome of the HED award that provided TNAU with training on the importance of supply chain management and the value chain. Also improved TNAU’s reputation with the government as a leader in this area.

Host country institutions were also increasingly asked to build programs by local stakeholders, to provide consulting services to businesses or other institutions, and to give policy and training support to the government. The University of Botswana sums up its development of social capital, “The number of partnerships and linkages that developed from this original grant has been surprising; UB has partnered with 20+ academic institutions & 40 wildlife organizations around the world.”

Social capital could also be used to bring stakeholders with differing motivations together under one vision and strategic plan. This was essential for sustainability as projects acting within the silo of one academic program or department were not typically sustainable. Therefore, linking together internal and external stakeholders could bring further cohesion and integration. An example of this was the creation of

an advisory board for HED initiatives, which often included both internal and external stakeholders to the host country institution. At the College Universitaire Regional de Bambey in Senegal, “An advisory council with representatives from the community was formed to foster support for the program.” Similarly at Al Akhawayn University in Morocco, partners “Created an industry advisory board to better link content of [the] professional PhD degree to industry. This is AUI’s first industry advisory board for any program.”

Furthermore, through the cultural capital developed, host country partners often strengthened the knowledge and skills that they needed to ensure future global partnerships were successful. For example, the Institute of Local Government Studies in Ghana,

Is applying lessons learned from this partnership to proposed projects with other higher education institutions and the private sector. They now know to ask certain questions and those questions are being asked in the planning stages of newly proposed projects with State University of New York –Albany Center for Academic and Workforce Development and with the private sector for the Microsoft Academy.

Similarly, stakeholders at the Institute of Forestry, Tribhuvan University in Nepal stated,

The [HED] partnership catalyzed the IOF to start other partnerships... The faculty and administrators of the IOF said that without the Michigan State University training and partnership support, they would not have had the capacity to reach out to begin the other partnerships currently underway. The MSU/IOF partnership has had positive impacts on the image of IOF in Nepal.

These examples highlight that the social and cultural capital, which was strengthened throughout the HED partnership process, served host country institution partners in their continued work and initiatives.

Discussion

Overall, the regional assessment data used to create this report highlight the utility of the Theory of Change framework and the interrelated nature of partnership development, engagement, and sustainability. Additionally, while each of the partnerships in this report had unique characteristics, goals, and outcomes, the Theory of Change illustrates that there are related patterns, themes and areas of emphasis across partnerships. Therefore, this framework provides the flexibility needed to be relevant to the distinctive nature and needs of a partnership, while also acting as an effective guidepost for supporting successful higher education partnerships generally. The HED theory of change can be a useful heuristic tool for retroactively assessing partnerships to document and tell the story of such partnerships. The power of using this theory of change as an evaluative tool enables evaluators and others to ask hard questions about how the change process developed.

Annex 1: HED Theory of Change

HED partnerships further the U.S. foreign assistance goals by directly contributing to the achievement of Goal 2 of the USAID Education Strategy for 2011–2015: Improved ability of tertiary and workforce development programs to produce a workforce with relevant skills to support country development goals by 2015. The current HED Program is based on its theory of change, which posits that higher education institutions are key to economic growth and the advancement of societies. Higher education contributes to creating new bodies of knowledge and bringing innovative solutions to market, engaging active and emergent leadership, and building a competent workforce. By promoting a culture of continuous learning and improvement within and outside the walls of the institutions, these elements can support policy changes and create enabling environments to facilitate development.

The HED Theory of Change emphasizes both process and results and posits that higher education institutions are key to economic growth and the advancement of societies. Attaining sustainable human and social development goals through higher education can only be attained, however, by starting with a solid global engagement management foundation. A strong management foundation takes into consideration and applies best practices in strategic planning and results-based management. With regards to strategic planning a strong foundation reflects having conducted rigorous institutional needs and capacity assessments and appropriately aligning institutional capacity and strengths with pursuits to contribute to solving global development challenges. With regards to results-based management a strong foundation reflects having put into place comprehensive, efficient, and effective project management information system (PMIS); clearly articulated processes that the organization and individuals abide; comprehensive and detailed monitoring and evaluation plans, sustainability planning integrated from project start-up through implementation and post evaluation; and the establishment of collaborative relationships, local ownership and strategies to ensure partnership resiliency.

If a solid global engagement management foundation has been put into place, then activities to support higher education strengthening are more likely to be successful. Higher education strengthening includes enhancing the capacity of research, teaching, and extension; organizational and institutional transformation; and growing strategic alliances with other higher education institutions or consortia, the private sector, local civil society organizations, as well as government. By continually making investments to enhance each of these areas, higher education can contribute in the short-term to creating new and shared bodies of knowledge, active global citizens, and a competent workforce. Together, shared knowledge, active citizenship and a competent workforce can contribute to long-term societal impacts such as bringing innovative solutions to market and good governance. Innovative solutions to global development challenges coupled with good governance can support economic growth for sustainable human and social development. By promoting a culture of continuous learning and improvement within and outside the walls of the institutions, each of these elements can support policy changes and create enabling environments to facilitate development.

THEORY OF CHANGE:

Higher Education Contributions to Development

