

# DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION PILOT BUREAU FOR FOOD SECURITY

Final Report December 2019

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## ACRONYMS

AAD	Activity Approval Document
Agency and USAID	United States Agency for International Development
ALG and Center	Agriculture-led Economic Growth Center
ARP	Agriculture, Research, and Planning
Bureau and BFS	Bureau for Food Security
CIO	Chief Information Officer
CO	Country Officer
COR	Contracting Officer Representative
CSI	Country Strategy and Implementation
CST	Country Support Team
CSTT	Country Support Transition Team
DDL	Development Data Library
DE	Developmental Evaluation
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
DEPA-MERL	Developmental Evaluation Pilot Activity
EIA	Office of Evaluation and Impact Assessment
FO	Front Office
FTF	Feed the Future
GFSS	Global Food Security Strategy
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
KDLT	Knowledge, Data, Learning, and Training
KM	Knowledge Management
KS	Knowledge Sharing
KII	Key Informant Interviews
Lab	Global Development Lab
LOE	Level of Effort
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MERLIN	Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Learning Innovations
MPI	Markets, Partnerships, and Innovation
OCS	Office of Country Support
PAD	Program Approval Document
RFS	Bureau for Resilience and Food Security
SI	Social Impact, Inc.
SOW	Scope of Work
TA	Technical Assistance
TDY	Temporary Duty Yonder
TT	Transition Team
USA	United States of America
USG	United States Government

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since its inception, the Bureau for Food Security (“the Bureau” or BFS) has provided the leadership and vision for the United States Agency for International Development (“the Agency” or USAID)’s international agricultural development practice, focusing on initiatives to combat hunger and poverty as well as increase the resilience of communities. As the Bureau and Agency as a whole were undergoing significant transformation, BFS identified a need to use learning from current practices to inform the Bureau’s future structures and functions. For this purpose, BFS elected to implement a developmental evaluation (DE) to better understand how successful the Bureau’s units were in capturing learning and dealing with challenges related to knowledge management (KM) and knowledge sharing (KS).

Beginning in December 2019, the BFS developmental evaluation (DE) pilot worked with five different teams to support the development of KM/KS practices. The effort also sought to capture learning within and across teams, and also provide pathways for better KM at the Bureau level.

The pilot faced several challenges that necessarily limited the application of the DE approach, including the longest shutdown in the history of the United States Government (USG) and significant staff and leadership turnover in the Bureau. There were several iterations of DE scopes of work (SOWs) and lines of inquiry throughout the nine-month period, based within various teams.

Overall, the DE was unable to fully take off and address the questions posed in the initial SOW. Instead, it provided the Bureau with several products and answers to a limited set of questions stemming from shorter-term involvement with distinct teams. Unfortunately, at the time of DE implementation, and due to factors outside the control of the Developmental Evaluator and some BFS colleagues, it was not possible to create the necessary environment of adaptive learning within the Bureau units to enable a successful DE. The Developmental Evaluator was, however, able to share proposed pathways for future KM application within the future Bureau based on observations, team meetings participation, and key informant interviews (KIIs).

The Developmental Evaluator provided some recommendations at around the DE’s half-way point and closeout stage. The recommended next steps include focusing on a few aspects of KM that would yield quick results, such as resource repository development and refreshing intranet content. Additionally, it is important to incorporate KM efforts into the ongoing strategic and transformation effort, allowing for easier integration and buy-in at multiple levels. Other recommendations are to provide staff tools and training, support adoption of KM processes, and finally, track KM efforts to better understand where there are both successes and challenges in the future.

This report details the process, progress, findings, and recommendations of the DE.

## PART I: WHAT WAS IT?

### OVERVIEW

This section provides a high-level overview of what the Bureau for Food Security DE pilot entailed, including its timeline, participants, and focal areas. It also provides an overview of DE, including an introduction to which aspects of the approach initially made it suitable for the learning needs of BFS's various stakeholders, as well as the aspects that were challenging during its application.

### BACKGROUND

#### THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION PILOT ACTIVITY

Programs in complex settings or with untested theories of change often face a challenge when trying to use traditional mid-term or end-term evaluations to assess their impact. In such programs, traditional evaluations may fail to provide useful information in a timely fashion or capture important outcomes not defined at the outset. To help address this issue, the Office of Evaluation, Impact, and Assessment (EIA) at USAID funded the Developmental Evaluation Pilot Activity (DEPA-MERL) to pilot the use of DE and assess its feasibility and effectiveness in the USAID context. DEPA-MERL is a mechanism under the Lab's Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning Innovations (MERLIN) program and is implemented by Social Impact, Inc. (SI) with partners Search for Common Ground and the William Davidson Institute at the University of Michigan.

DE is an evaluative approach aimed at facilitating continuous adaptation of interventions. It includes having one or more evaluators integrated into the implementation team, usually on a full-time basis. These Developmental Evaluators are embedded within teams to contribute to modifications in program design and targeted outcomes throughout implementation. They participate in team meetings, document decisions, processes, and dynamics, and collect and analyze data – which they feed back to the teams on a regular basis. DEs are methodologically agnostic and utilization focused. They adjust research questions and methodological and analytic techniques as a project changes and deliver contextualized and emergent findings on an ongoing basis.

USAID has a long history of technical leadership in international agricultural development, drawing upon the expertise of U.S. universities, industry, non-governmental and private voluntary organizations, multilateral development partners and its own technical staff. The Bureau for Food Security leads coordination of the U.S. Government Global Food Security Strategy through the U.S. Government's Feed the Future (FTF) initiative to combat hunger, poverty and malnutrition. This initiative leverages the strengths of other U.S. government partners, multilateral institutions, NGOs, the private sector, universities and civil society organizations to support country-driven strategies for boosting food security, resilience and nutrition, and invests in strengthening both public and private institutions that underpin growth in the agricultural sector. The Bureau also houses USAID's Center for Resilience, which provides strategic, programmatic and analytic leadership on USAID's resilience priorities and provides related technical assistance and implementation resources to the Agency.

- USAID (2018)



## THE BUREAU FOR FOOD SECURITY PILOT

In 2018, BFS was interested in better understanding how successful the Bureau's units are in capturing their learning and dealing with challenges around KM practices. The Bureau decided to move forward with a DE to strengthen their KM efforts, especially as the Bureau (and Agency) was undergoing a transition in its structure and function. They had hoped the timing would be favorable to be able to incorporate learning into practice as well as test and implement new approaches in KM. The DE was initiated to support KM practice within two teams: Agriculture, Research, and Planning (ARP) and Markets, Partnerships, and Innovation (MPI) as they restructured to better serve various stakeholders.

## TIMING OF THE BFS PILOT

DEPA-MERL received notice of interest in a DE pilot around August/September of 2018. Given the anticipated closure of the DEPA-MERL contract (and thus provision of DEs to the Agency) in September 2019, BFS decided to forego the traditional scoping and instead held a few discussions with the DEPA-MERL team to better identify users, appropriateness, and a general SOW. The Bureau anticipated a start date of November 2018 with a pilot duration of nine months, given their budgetary parameters. The Developmental Evaluator was hired in mid-December 2018 on a part-time basis and transitioned into working full time in early January 2019. The pilot start-up was delayed due to the USG shutdown from December 22, 2018 to January 25, 2019, as the Developmental Evaluator lacked access to staff (all non-essential USG staff were furloughed), documents, and the facility where teams were located. While the Developmental Evaluator was able to conduct initial reviews and research, the official kick-off of the pilot took place on February 21, 2019 with an Acculturation Workshop. The Developmental Evaluator worked remotely until she received facilities clearance and access during the first week of April 2019. She then continued with the pilot through the end of September 2019.

## PART 2: WHY DID WE DO IT?

### PILOT PROBLEM STATEMENT

Since its founding, BFS has evolved to be a leader in the Agency's international agriculture development. Now more than ever before, there is a greater emphasis on issues of resilience within the international development sector. USAID was embarking on a major organizational restructuring (hereinafter, "Transformation"). Through the Transformation, USAID was working to align "*its framework and foundation to remain dynamic, impactful, and capable of operationalizing Administrator Green's vision to end the need for foreign assistance.*" (USAID, 2018). As the Bureau for Food Security is transitioning into the Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (RFS), they had hoped that this would be an opportune moment for BFS to address its challenges with KM. The premium that DE places on learning from and about processes meant that this DE pilot was well-suited to address this challenge, enabling the Bureau to document and learn from its current practice to better inform its future practice.

### ORIGINAL MOTIVATION FOR PILOT

BFS approached this work to better pivot from where the Bureau's current practice in KM and evidence use to a new and effective framework as it transitions to become RFS. During stakeholder consultations

conducted in the fall of 2018 as part of the Transformation, BFS heard that while Mission staff appreciate the wealth of information that BFS has to offer, they also find it overwhelming. In particular, they wanted to see more structure, vetting, and curation of knowledge flows from BFS and the future RFS to help them process the information. The DE was launched to develop a KM system that would respond to this feedback from Mission staff.

BFS intended to use the DE to inform several high-level decisions, including:

- In order to maximize evidence uptake, determine which KM functions are best suited to meet BFS Front Office (FO) needs versus those OF other entities within the Bureau;
- Improve knowledge sharing pathways between teams, offices, and centers within the future RFS and facilitate development of new Bureau Operating Procedures around KM processes; and
- Inform Activity Approval Document (AAD) and potentially Program Approval Document (PAD) development processes

Since the period of performance for this DE was set at nine months, it was initially slated to focus on one of BFS' new centers, the Agriculture-led Economic Growth Center (ALG or "the Center"). The Center's theory of change states that "agriculture-led growth is the most effective means of reducing extreme poverty; improves nutrition and enhance resilience; catalyzes the Journey to Self-Reliance in low-income countries." The Center's mandate is to, "implement programs, global leadership, which complement and amplify Mission and host country government priorities."<sup>1</sup> Within the Center, the plan was to further focus on an area that bridges work between the current ARP and MPI office portfolios. These areas have many owners that need to coordinate knowledge flows effectively in order to deliver consistent and concise knowledge and learning to those in the field.

## OVERVIEW OF KEY PILOT STAKEHOLDERS

As priorities, structures, and available staff time among different teams shifted, so too did the DE's engagement with different teams, and also its potential evaluation questions. The DE sought to support various units within BFS as follows:

- Sustainable Intensification Team: Between February and April 2019, the Developmental Evaluator worked with the Sustainable Intensification team. Under the restructured bureau, the vision for this team was to take on a leadership role in researching, curating, and recommending successful agricultural practices that maximize yield and utilize resources smartly. The Developmental Evaluator was supposed to be **embed with the team to better track how they worked, who they interacted with within and outside the Bureau, and offer ways to streamline the process and capture the learning.**
- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Team: In April 2019, the Developmental Evaluator **initiated a process to create a simulation** with the IPM team to coordinate bureau responses to pest and pathogen outbreaks. Following the Bureau's experience in creating and coordinating a Fall Army Worm task force, the IPM Hub in the new structure was slated to serve the role of a centralized unit to deal with field requests around preparedness for pests and pathogens. To support this effort, the Developmental Evaluator **proposed a strategy template** for the

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<sup>1</sup> 2019 BFS/RFS Transitional Portfolio Review Ag Led Growth Transition Team, May 7, 2019

creation and management of the IPM Hubs to be used as a model for future hubs within RFS. (see Annex I for the IPM Strategy Template)

- Country Strategy and Implementation (CSI) Team: The CSI team sought the support of the Developmental Evaluator during May and June 2019. The team was transitioning towards a new field engagement model that included creating and coordinating country support teams (CSTs) for the 28 target countries served by the Bureau. The team needed to better understand how to structure the unit and the teams in a manner that could successfully respond to field support requests, building on the vast technical expertise within the Bureau. The Developmental Evaluator **offered three lines of inquiry to better understand the future team's role, structure, and function.**
- ALG Center: In July and August 2019, the Developmental Evaluator supported the future ALG Center as the Transition Team (TT)'s Leadership started early thinking for the Center's KM approaches and strategy. As a first step, the Developmental Evaluator **designed and conducted KIIs on** current staff expertise within the center and identified staff's perspectives on KM needs and practices. The information gathered within the KIIs was to be used to both plan the staffing needs of the ALG Center as well as supporting the CSTs and engaging strategically with the field.

## PART 3: WHAT DID IT LOOK LIKE?

### OVERVIEW

This section outlines the major phases of the pilot, including the motivation, focus, stakeholders, and challenges involved throughout the nine-month period.

### PHASE I

#### HIRING THE DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATOR

DEPA-MERL launched a rigorous recruitment effort for the Developmental Evaluator position. The team vetted and proposed a strong candidate in October 2018. Relevant BFS staff participated in the recruitment process and interviewed potential candidates. One selected candidate was approved by all teams and DEPA-MERL moved forward with her candidacy. However, after extensive negotiations, the candidate accepted another position. In November 2018, DEPA-MERL proposed another candidate for Developmental Evaluator who was then approved by the three teams and accepted the position. She was hired later that month and began work on the DE in December 2018.

#### GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN AND FACILITIES ACCESS

Between December 22, 2018 and January 25, 2019, the United States Federal Government was closed for what was the longest shutdown in U.S. history. This shutdown coincided with the Developmental Evaluator's first week working on the DE. Throughout the shutdown, the Developmental Evaluator did not have access to any BFS staff (who were furloughed), which resulted in significant slow-down of the DE start-up process. In addition, the shutdown halted progress toward granting facilities access for the

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Developmental Evaluator because the clearance process was initiated only after the shutdown ended. The Developmental Evaluator received facilities access during the first week of April, more than three months after she had been hired.

## PHASE 2

### DE FOCUS AND SHIFTS

This section outlines the various shifts in the DE focus and the various lines of inquiry explored within those shifts. Due to the Transformation within the Agency, some of the teams that were interested in the DE had a shift in their availability and interest in conducting a DE. This was due to a multitude of reasons - leadership turnover and transitions<sup>2</sup>, a lack of knowledge regarding timeframes for transition and resulting limitations on decision-making authority, and structural shifts which caused already full-time BFS staff to take on additional responsibilities. At the same time, new teams expressed interest in utilizing the Developmental Evaluator and hosting a DE. These uncertainties and changes resulted in the Developmental Evaluator exploring the potential of a DE with several units.

#### *November & December 2018*

During the initial months of the DE, the focus was on the overall Bureau practices, with emphasis on the ALG Center, namely the Agriculture Research and Policy (ARP) and the Market Partnerships and Innovation teams. The following were the proposed initial lines of inquiry:

1. Landscaping Current KM Practices: How are ARP and MPI within BFS approaching KM and evidence use? What does the information flow currently look like? Are these approaches conducive to facilitating learning and evidence-based decision making?
2. Looking Forward; Internal KM System for RFS: To create efficiencies, improve the development of the AAD, PAD, etc., how has BFS and how can RFS leverage:
  - a. Existing knowledge management flows, structures, and processes?
  - b. The learning and evidence BFS has (and will continue to generate under RFS) through evaluation/assessments/research?
  - c. Lessons learned from the Center for Resilience?
3. Looking Forward; Engaging External & non-BFS Stakeholders in KM: How have various KM functions been distributed among the BFS offices teams? How does this current distribution inform the future distribution within RFS? What will it look like for RFS to become more “field support oriented?” How can RFS engage with other technical centers to exchange and utilize learning/evidence effectively in order to support missions and demonstrate thought leadership? What is the proper mix of field knowledge sharing and global knowledge sharing?

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<sup>2</sup> The two individuals initially responsible for the DE focus both either left the Agency or transitioned to another team. Two additional individuals responsible for engaging on key parts of the DE also left during this timeframe, along with other staff who were more tangential to the DE process.

Following the extended shutdown, the ALG TT and Bureau leadership elected to shift the focus to the Sustainable Intensification team. Sustainable intensification “is defined as a process or system where agricultural yields are increased without adverse environmental impact and without the conversion of additional non-agricultural land. The concept does not articulate or privilege any particular vision or method of agricultural production.”<sup>3</sup> The rationale for this decision was to focus on a smaller unit of analysis to make the DE’s work and the BFS teams’ anticipated adaptations more manageable, given the delay in DE start-up due to the shutdown.

### *February 2019*

To kick off the DE work following the shutdown, staff from the ALG team working on Sustainable Intensification efforts participated in an Acculturation Workshop conducted by the DEPA-MERL consortium (refer to Annex 2 for the Acculturation Workshop Report). During the Workshop, the participants agreed on the following areas of inquiry for the DE:

1. How is Sustainable Intensification within BFS approaching KM and evidence use? What does the information flow currently look like?
  - a. What are the various stages of the KM cycle? (e.g., synthesis/adjudication, communications, utilization, feedback loops, storage/accessibility)? What does each entail? Where do they take place? Who is responsible for the process or a specific stage?
  - b. Who are the various audiences and/or users for each step? How are they using/wish to use evidence from Sustainable Intensification/BFS (what is the demand?) How do they engage with each step of the process?
2. Are these approaches conducive to facilitating learning and evidence-based decision making? Does the process work overall? What are the current strengths and weaknesses each stage of the process?
3. To further the four core functions (KM, thought leadership, program design, and mission-focus), how has the Sustainable Intensification team and how will the Sustainable Intensification Division use:
  - a. Existing KM flows, structures, and processes?
  - b. The learning and evidence generated through evaluation/assessments/research?
  - c. The USAID systems for internal and external storage (Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC), Development Data Library (DDL), Agrilinks, others)

Working with the Sustainable Intensification team did not develop as anticipated, given that the team was still in early formation stages and consisted of a loosely affiliated set of individuals working on areas within the larger umbrella of sustainable intensification. The unit did not come together for collaboration or joint work around a common goal or purpose, and thereby did not function as a team. Rather, the staff operated as a hub-and-spoke unit and rarely interacted amongst themselves. Several factors here made the application of the DE unsuccessful in this instance. Given that the unit did not function as a team (by meeting at a regular basis or collaborating on assignments), the Developmental

<sup>3</sup> <https://academic.oup.com/aob/article/114/8/1571/210078>

Evaluator was not able to be embed in their work. Also, given the unit's loose structure, there was lack of clarity regarding decision-making structure and accountability lines. Additionally, key leaders and team members were not available for continuous involvement with the DE.

As a result, the Developmental Evaluator was then introduced to the CSI team to support the unit's transition and learning process as they become the Office of Country Support (OCS).

### May 2019

The transition of the CSI team to OCS meant that the unit would house functional expertise, namely county officers (COs) and monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) staff, while relying on the Bureau's new centers for technical assistance (TA) and technical expertise. CSI was in the process of figuring out staffing needs and structure to fulfill this new role within the Bureau and, for this purpose, was grappling with the following questions:

1. How is the OCS team approaching staffing and ensuring clarity around roles and responsibilities within the unit?
  - a. What's within the OCS unit's role within the Bureau? (*how do we perceive ourselves?*)
  - b. How do other units view its roles? (*how do others perceive us?*)
  - c. How will the team communicate its role and responsibilities? (*how do we talk about ourselves?*)
2. What possible structure would be most suitable to form a successful OCS unit?
  - a. Investigating a regional, sectoral, and/or topical structure to organizing OCS's MEL TA resources (*options memo with structure descriptions, merits and challenges of each structure proposition*)
  - b. How does Assessment and Learning division connect to the MEL TA resources within OCS?
3. Are information flows within OCS as well as between OCS and other units within BFS/RFS and the agency fit for purpose?
  - a. What are existing knowledge management flows, structures, and processes?
  - b. How is learning and evidence generated, documented, curated, and shared with relevant stakeholders?

In June, following transitions within the OCS/field engagement model leadership staff, the Bureau elected to hire an outside company to support the restructuring of OCS and the configuration of the CSTs, thus shifting their attention and human resources toward that effort and stopping involvement with the DE process.

To complement this work, the team was interested in surveying BFS staff to better understand their perceptions of the CSTs and OCS. The Developmental Evaluator worked on a survey (See Annex 3) that was to be administered electronically; however, later in the summer, the team elected to halt the survey administration based on recommendations from the BFS FO.

### July & August 2019

In July and early August, there was interest in implementing a process within the ALG Center to create a frame and approach towards KM during and beyond the Transition. The following plan was proposed to help the TT define a problem statement that reflects the KM challenges that ALG faced:

1. *Phase I: Assessment and Preparation:* The first step was to conduct a landscape analysis of existing KM practices across the Bureau to arrive at a common understanding and foundation of where the Center currently was with regards to KM. It was also meant to uncover existing processes and assets. Furthermore, it would help identify the gaps or missing pieces in current practice. The phase included a two-pronged approach:
  - a. Uncover the elements of the KM and build a practical framework that was comprised of relevant KM elements for the ALG Center. This exercise would utilize current expertise and personnel who know the Center, its future vision, and initiate the building blocks for a suitable foundation for KM within the Center.
  - b. Document the practical cycle by which information flowed within the center pieces/units.
2. *Phase II: Build Process and KM Journey Mapping:* This step would include working with stakeholders to build a user-centered process that incorporates the KM framework and cycle and integrate it into current and proposed ways of working. The purpose would be to integrate KM into the Center's work processes and have a protocol that builds on current practices. This phase would put in place a KM approach for the Center, specifically tailored to change management needs through the transition and stand-up of 28 country support teams, and document any protocols related to it.
3. *Phase III: Recommendations for Continued Actions, Socialization, and Dissemination:* The work of the ALG Center is highly matrixed to other units within the Bureau. For the KM approach to be successful, it would need to be socialized and disseminated to stakeholders external to the ALG Center (but within the larger Bureau). Given the timeline, stakeholders recognized that this step would have to be undertaken after the DE's September 2019 end date. As such, it would be handed over to the Knowledge, Data, Learning, and Training (KDLT) mechanisms that work with the ALG Center, or to an employee tasked with working on KM.

Assigning the DE support to the ALG Center brought it back to its original purpose and team. However, while there was interest in creating a better-functioning KM practice within the ALG TT, the TT's leadership determined that they did not have the capacity to be involved in a process such as the one outlined above. As a first step for KM within the Center, the leadership team agreed that they needed a mapping of the existing expertise to better determine what needs could arise in the future.

### August & September 2019

In late July and early August, the Developmental Evaluator developed a protocol for KIIs with the ALG TT in coordination with ALG and the Office of Strategic Planning and Performance Management. In conjunction with this process, the DEPA-MERL team created a summary of ALG staff support trips, detailing trip location and purpose among other criteria. The team created a table summarizing the results of this analysis to help get a glimpse into present demands on ALG staff and determine what expertise matches up to these demands. The following activities took place in the DE's remaining weeks:

1. Analysis of Temporary Duty Yonder (TDY) reports (see Annex 4)
2. Development of KII Protocol (see Annex 5)
3. Conducting KIIs
4. Creating Summary of Findings
  - a. ALG Staff Table of Expertise (see Annex 6)
  - b. Summary of Findings PowerPoint (See Annex 7)
  - c. Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS) mapping to expertise (Annex 8)

The Developmental Evaluator worked with the ALG team to craft the products described above and submitted them to the team. The plan was to meet with the ALG TT leadership to present the findings and discuss the implications. The team was not available to meet in September and the Developmental Evaluator proposed several dates in October; however, the team did not respond with any availability, so this event could not occur prior to the DE's end date.

## PART 4: WHAT WERE THE RESULTS?

### OVERVIEW

Due to continuous shifts in DE focus and BFS' needs combined with staff and team leadership turnover at the Bureau, the BFS DE did not generate the desired answers for the above inquiry lines. Instead, the DE completed distinct, smaller tasks for the Bureau units as needed.

### FINDINGS

Over the course of the DE, the Developmental Evaluator shared initial findings and recommendations with relevant BFS stakeholders. Some of the findings include:

- *Positive associations with KM:* Staff overall have a positive association with KM and seem to genuinely want to do it better. Overall, staff are encouraged and positive that an effort to investigate the Bureau's KM is taking place.
- *There is broad interest in KM among BFS staff:* There has been interest in working on this DE and KM approaches, though follow-through and shifts in priorities resulted in little traction due to limited attention from relevant stakeholders.
- *KM-ready infrastructure exists at USAID:* There are already several potential platforms to utilize for KM efforts (e.g. MyUSAID pages, Google platforms, DEC, DDL, etc.)
- *Practice:* As a culture, the Bureau has many KM/KS elements, including sharing findings and regular presentations about outcomes of initiatives and interventions. Generally, the culture is one built on sharing learning. This culture is important as a foundation for solid KM, however, it lacks elements that go beyond the initial sharing between individuals (i.e. documentation, archiving, sharing beyond email). It relies on people-centered approaches and does not build on it to create, document, and share knowledge for the organization; nor are processes in place to facilitate uptake and use of new knowledge.

- *Staff experienced significant time constraints:* Staff are very busy, and even the ones who committed on working on the DE have not been able to prioritize it well - causing disruption in the processes and a loss of momentum. This is understandable given the significant changes that the Bureau (and Agency) are undergoing.
- *DE is coming at a time of too much change & disruption:* The Bureau (as with the whole Agency) is going through significant change during the Transformation. While it may be hard to prioritize DE during this effort, it is unclear, however, if KM-related efforts are not being prioritized or if the reason for the lack of prioritization is that KM will be addressed through a separate activity.
- *There was a lack of common definitions & meaning:* KM does not have a consistent definition or scope within the Bureau (or the Agency more broadly). Different staff seem to attach various meanings to the effort, ranging from technological solutions to learning practices.
- *The environment created a lack of urgency for KM specifically:* While the Bureau's overall drive and culture values KM, there is a sense that KM can wait until after it deals with more urgent items. An important note is that this refers to the general outlook, but not necessarily to everyone's individual leaning.

In addition, within the final presentation provided for ALG (Annex 7), the Developmental Evaluator shared some findings from the staff KIIs as well as some considerations for next steps.

## PRODUCTS

As mentioned earlier, the Developmental Evaluator provided BFS with several products and answers to a limited set of questions stemming from shorter-term involvement with distinct teams. Some of the products were also in response to early findings, as captured and shared in reports submitted in April and May 2019. Below is a list of all products (formal and informal) that the DE produced. Some were mentioned earlier in the report, and all are available in a separate attachment to this report:

1. Acculturation Workshop Report, February 2019 (Annex 2)
2. IPM Strategy Template, March 2019 (Annex 1)
3. BFS DE Overview Report, April 2019 (Annex 10)
4. BFS DE Progress Update, May 2019 (Annex 11)
5. Lines of Inquiry for OCS, May 2019 (Annex 12)
6. BFS Update for May & June, June 2019 (Annex 13)
7. KM Definitions, June 2019 (Annex 14)
8. Proposed KM Framework, June 2019 (Annex 15)
9. ALG Proposed Approach to KM (builds on earlier proposed KM Framework), July 2019 (Annex 16)
10. ALG Interview Protocol, August 2019 (Annex 5)
11. CST Survey, August 2019 (Annex 3)
12. ALG TT Prep for CST Model, August 2019 (Annex 17)
13. Staff Expertise List, September 2019 (Annex 6)
14. TDY reports analysis, August 2019, (Annex 4)
15. GFSS Mapping, September 2019 (Annex 8)
16. ALG Interview Summary Report Out, September 2019 (Annex 7)
17. FO KM Memo, October 2019 (Annex 9)

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## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

In late April 2019, the Developmental Evaluator shared initial recommendations based on observations of and conversations with BFS staff. The recommendations included:

- *Create, organize, and promote a shared resource repository:* Staff already share information across the Bureau, using email for the most part. A Google-based shared folder structure can be put in place to hold reports, shared meeting notes, and other resources. This resource can be unveiled at an all-hands meeting and then promoted and used by leadership. Accountability mechanisms can be put in place so there is regular reporting on the resource usage, with the possibility of adding incentives for the “most frequent uploader” if consistent with Bureau culture.
- *KM guidelines:* Not having clear guidelines regarding what happens to work products may be stopping the progression of KM sharing. Developing simple guidelines that integrate KM into the Bureau’s work processes and protocols within might help alleviate this issue. The guidelines would also include a roles and responsibilities matrix.
- *Content refresh:* Initiate an effort to update BFS content on MyUSAID pages. This would be done via an open call to staff to share highlights of their work since 2015 and update the articles site. In addition, review BFS’ static pages and update them consistent with the new RFS structure.
- *Integrating KM into current strategy efforts:* to ensure buy-in and support at multiple levels and create robust accountability mechanisms, KM can be integrated in current strategy planning and implementation efforts being undertaken for RFS. Leadership would hold ultimate accountability for integrating it into the Bureau, but would also create and ensure cascading accountabilities within the staffing structure.

Additional recommendations and potential next steps were captured and relayed in a memo to the BFS FO (refer to the full memo in Annex 9).

	KM Element	Application in Practice
1	Define KM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FO to lead the process to create a KM working definition with the support of relevant staff, including KM experts within the Bureau</li> <li>- FO to lead on socializing the definition, for example during an all-hands meeting or other Bureau-wide event.</li> <li>- Socialize the definition: The FO continues to encourage use and incorporation of the definition and KM work within the Bureau’s new centers.</li> </ul>
2	Elevate the Importance of KM	FO can include KM strategy elements (e.g. vision or purpose) within the new RFS Strategy document at the next iteration

KM Element	Application in Practice
<p><b>3</b> Integrate KM</p>	<p>Working with transition team leaders, the FO can ensure that the KM vision/strategy is translated into practice within each of the new RFS units. Pathways could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create Google Group templates for Bureau units with a standard look and feel</li> <li>- Create a standardized folder structure across teams</li> <li>- Agree on document naming protocols across the Bureau</li> <li>- Create a list of all email listservs with description and membership overview. Remove any unused listservs. Socialize available listservs so people may elect to join groups of interest (and limit the creation of new listservs)</li> <li>- Consolidate newsletters and updates from transition teams so email traffic is more manageable</li> <li>- Create a master knowledge-sharing schedule across the Bureau and agree on a minimum participation per unit</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b> Define KM Roles, Responsibilities, Accountability, &amp; Decision-Making Authorities</p>	<p>Building on elements 1-3, and as the new Bureau structure is unveiled, FO sets up KM responsibilities and authorities within the new structure. KM roles, responsibilities, accountability, and decision-making authority must be present at various levels within the new Bureau, communicated across the board, tracked and celebrated for achievement, and built upon in coming years.</p>
<p><b>5</b> Provide the Training and Tools</p>	<p>Mandate a KM-relevant training for each transition team for every fiscal year (can be completed at a full team or as individuals) For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff have been utilizing the current Google platform, so could provide training on how it can be maximized to take advantage of what the platform can offer.</li> <li>- Invite the Office of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) to hold a presentation regarding the people profile section of the new intranet. FO can then lead by example by completing the profile section and encouraging Team Leads and staff to do so as well. There can be a competition for the ‘best’ profile from BFS</li> <li>- Work with the communications team to hold training on how to create and socialize blogs (internal to Agency or beyond)</li> </ul>
<p><b>6</b> Track and Adapt KM</p>	<p>Ensure that there’s a team or person tasked with tracking the above processes and practices, gathering feedback from units (including the FO) on application, as well as providing timely suggestions about potential improvements in any of the areas.</p>

## PART 5: WHAT HAPPENED AND WHEN?

### TIMELINE AND DE PROGRESS

Below is a timeline of the major DE processes.

Date	Milestone
January 7, 2019	Developmental Evaluator joins BFS DE full time Government Shutdown enters its third week
January 7-25, 2019	The Developmental Evaluator reviews key documents for BFS, including readouts from consultations conducted in the fall of 2018
January 25, 2019	Government Shutdown ends
February 21, 2019	Developmental Evaluator facilitates Acculturation Workshop
February 22, 2019	Developmental Evaluator participates in IPM Hub meeting, requested to create and share a guiding document template for the hub (Strategy Document Proposed Headings)
March 1, 2019	Developmental Evaluator creates and shares Strategy document template
March 7-12, 2019	Developmental Evaluator holds follow-up meetings with SI (Sustainable Intensification) Team members
March 14, 2019	Developmental Evaluator shares Acculturation Workshop Report with BFS for review and feedback
March 18-25, 2019	Feedback period for stakeholders
March 27, 2019	Developmental Evaluator holds initial meeting with Country Support Transition Team member: discussion on what the DE is, what we are tackling, and potential support with the transition in the country support model.
April 1-5, 2019	Developmental Evaluator holds follow-up meetings with stakeholders connected to SI team to discuss the KM cycle. Five out of the seven meetings requested took place.
April 4, 2019	Clearance process complete, badge process finalized, Developmental Evaluator has access to the building, co-locates with teams, and starts working from BFS daily
April 4, 2019	Developmental Evaluator reaches agreement with the SI team lead to shift focus from the overall SI team to the IPM Hub, given the ways of working for SI as well as the need to guide the IPM hub change process. Agreement to initial work on a 'simulation' exercise. Potential exploration for attendance of the Innovation Lab Director's meeting in May to better coordinate the hub progress.
April 8-12, 2019	Developmental Evaluator circles back to the Country Support Transition Team (CSTT) to discuss potential for the DE to support the process.
April 16, 2019	Developmental Evaluator updates draft BFS Joint Partnership Plan. The purpose of the Joint Partnership Plan is to set the terms and understanding between the EIA and BFS under the Developmental Evaluation Pilot Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Learning (DEPA-MERL) approach, focusing on recruiting, acculturation, and the initial phases of engagement with the Developmental Evaluation.
April 17, 2019	Developmental Evaluator makes progress toward the simulation, creating a suggested process on how the process would run (update) and request for additional information shared with SI team lead (as well as a meeting request).

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April 17, 2019	Developmental Evaluator meets with CSTT point person to better understand the change process taking place at the country support teams and discuss the DE focus and support potential.
April 24, 2019	Developmental Evaluator follows-up regarding the IPM simulation work, with another meeting request.
April 23, 2019	Developmental Evaluator received response from CSTT Co-Lead is that there is skepticism on the utility of the DE in the current process. Co-Lead is not interested in including the DE in the change process at this time.
April 30, 2019	Developmental Evaluator meets with Contracting Officer's Representative, Chief of Party, and Senior KM Advisor of KDLT to explore areas of overlap, gaps, and collaboration potential. KDLT workplan due to be finalized in the next two weeks. Additional meeting will be held at that point to discuss working together for KM at BFS
May 1, 2019	Developmental Evaluator attends Field Support Model lead meeting: Can DE be utilized for the process of figuring out how the new bureau will engage with the field? There is interest in support from the DE for the Field Support Model change process. At the same meeting, the other Co-Lead from the CSTT is present and is also interested in incorporating the DE. A following meeting is scheduled for the next day.
May 2, 2019	CSTT meeting: both Co-Leads and the Developmental Evaluator meet to discuss how to utilize the DE to support the transition within the country support teams. Agreement to include the DE here.
May 22, 2019	Developmental Evaluator drafts and shares lines of inquiry for the OCS
May – June 2019	Developmental Evaluator continued to engage with OCS and Field Support Model. Through attendance of weekly team meetings and feedback on processes in place, the Developmental Evaluator supports the design of a visioning exercise for OCS, provides input into post-TDY reporting, and supports feedback regarding the re-design of CSI.
June 17, 2019	The Bureau investigates contracting Deloitte to support work within the CSI/OCS work as well as the field-engagement model. Due to this shift, the CSI/OCS Transition Team has indicated that the team will not be able to pursue a full DE and work on the above lines of inquiry.
June 24, 2019	Developmental Evaluator and BFS Activity Manager meet with the Chief of Staff (FO) to report on DE's lack of progress and seek support in better placement of the DE. The Chief of Staff indicates that the ALG TT still has KM needs and suggests that the Developmental Evaluator meets with the TT Leads.
June 25, 2019	Developmental Evaluator meets with ALG TT Leads and discusses the KM needs. There's a two-pronged need: overall KM approach for the center as well as KM needs as they relate to setting up the ALG Center's support of the CSTs.
July 3, 2019	Developmental Evaluator develops and shares a proposal to tackle KM within the ALG TT
July 8, 2019	A group meeting of relevant stakeholders takes place, attendees include: DEPA-MERL Contracting Officer Representative (COR), Chief of Staff, ALG TT Leads, DE Activity Manager, SI Project Director, and the Developmental Evaluator. During this meeting, the ALG TT Leads decide that the scope of the proposal for KM within ALG Center is too big and there's no bandwidth to tackle it currently. Instead, the team would prefer to get a mapping/ analysis of the current team's composition and expertise.
July 12, 2019	Developmental Evaluator develops and shares an updated workplan to tackle the expertise mapping of the ALG team.

July 19, 2019	Developmental Evaluator share initial draft of the KII interview protocol. Feedback on the protocol is not finalized until the first week of August.
August 2019	ALG Staff KII sign-ups are scheduled on the following dates: August 12, 13, 14, 19, & 29. Additional one-on-one interviews are also scheduled for staff who did not sign up. These take place in early September.
September 20, 2019	Developmental Evaluator shares top-line results/findings from the KIIs as well as the TDY reporting analysis with ALG representative and DE Activity Manager.
September 23, 2019	Developmental Evaluator shares final documents: staff expertise list; PowerPoint with KII results and considerations; GFSS Mapping with ALG representative and DE Activity Manager.
September 30, 2019	Developmental Evaluator's final day at BFS, seeks feedback on documents shared again and proposes plan to meet with ALG TT Leads to discuss findings and documents.

## PART 6: WHAT DID WE LEARN?

While this DE did not achieve its intended purpose, its application allowed for learning about the approach and its utility. While DE can be successful if applied in a complex and changing environment, BFS' environment was likely experiencing too much change (in structure, personnel, and content) for a DE to be applied successfully. This was seen through the various changes in leadership, lines of inquiry, and focus. Additionally, the DE lacked a "home" and an owner within BFS to help drive it forward. Although the Developmental Evaluator was embedded at BFS, an owner from within BFS was needed to solidify the use of the approach, be accountable for receiving feedback, and make decisions and adapt based on that feedback. Without a clear mandate for the DE from leadership, the DE was not prioritized in a time period where there were many other competing tasks and changes.

It is important to note that the most significant lesson here shows that it is a combination of unfavorable conditions that prevented the DE from being successfully used at BFS.

## **ANNEXES**

All below annexes have been submitted in a separate attachment to this report. The attachment and any individual annex(es) can be made available upon request to Social Impact, Inc. or USAID.

**ANNEX 1: IPM HUB STRATEGY TEMPLATE**

**ANNEX 2: ACCULTURATION WORKSHOP REPORT**

**ANNEX 3: CST SURVEY**

**ANNEX 4: TDY REPORT ANALYSIS**

**ANNEX 5: ALG STAFF INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

**ANNEX 6: ALG STAFF EXPERTISE LIST**

**ANNEX 7: ALG INTERVIEW SUMMARY REPORT OUT**

**ANNEX 8: GFSS MAPPING**

**ANNEX 9: FO MEMO**

**ANNEX 10: BFS DE OVERVIEW REPORT**

**ANNEX 11: BFS DE PROGRESS UPDATE**

**ANNEX 12: LINES OF INQUIRY FOR OCS**

**ANNEX 13: BFS UPDATE FOR MAY AND JUNE 2019**

**ANNEX 14: KM DEFINITIONS**

**ANNEX 15: PROPOSED KM FRAMEWORK**

**ANNEX 16: ALG PROPOSED APPROACH TO KM**

**ANNEX 17: ALG PREP FOR CST MODEL**