

# Annual Report 2019

Inclusive Decisions at the Local Level (IDEAL 2017-2021)







# List of Acronyms

<b>ABELO</b>	Burundian Association of Local Representatives (Association Burundaise des Elus Locaux)
<b>AC</b>	Advisory Committee
<b>ACCM</b>	Association des Cercles et Collectivités du Mali
<b>ACE</b>	ACE Europe – Advice and Consultancy (Belgium)
<b>ALGASL</b>	Association of Local Government Authorities of Somaliland
<b>AMM</b>	Association of Municipalities of Mali (Association des Municipalités du Mali)
<b>APLA</b>	Association of Palestinian Local Authorities
<b>ARC</b>	Addressing Root Causes
<b>ARM</b>	Association des Regions du Mali
<b>BOD</b>	Board of Directors
<b>CCDCs</b>	Local Common Development Committees
<b>CDI</b>	Community Driven Initiatives
<b>CIVICUS</b>	CIVICUS Monitor - Global Civil Society Alliance
<b>CLE's</b>	Local Water Committees
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil Society Organisations
<b>DDF</b>	District Development Framework
<b>DNH</b>	National Directorate of Water
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of the Congo
<b>ED</b>	Executive Directors
<b>GFPs</b>	Gender Focal Points
<b>GIRE</b>	La Gestion Intégrée des Ressources en Eau
<b>GIZ</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
<b>HLIs</b>	Higher Learning Institutions
<b>IDEAL</b>	Inclusive Decisions at Local Level
<b>INGOs</b>	International non-governmental organisation
<b>IWRM</b>	Integrated Water Resource Management
<b>JADAF</b>	Joint Action Development Forums
<b>JADFs</b>	Joint Action Development Forums
<b>KIT</b>	Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen
<b>LED</b>	Local Economic Development
<b>LGA</b>	Local Government Association
<b>LGCP</b>	Local Government Capacity Programme (predecessor of the IDEAL programme)
<b>LGI</b>	Local Government Institute
<b>LGs</b>	Local Governments
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MDLF</b>	Municipal Development and Lending Fund
<b>MTE</b>	Mid-Term Evaluation
<b>MTR</b>	Mid-Term Review
<b>NAGAAD</b>	Women Network Umbrella Organization
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NIRAS</b>	NIRAS International Consulting (Denmark)

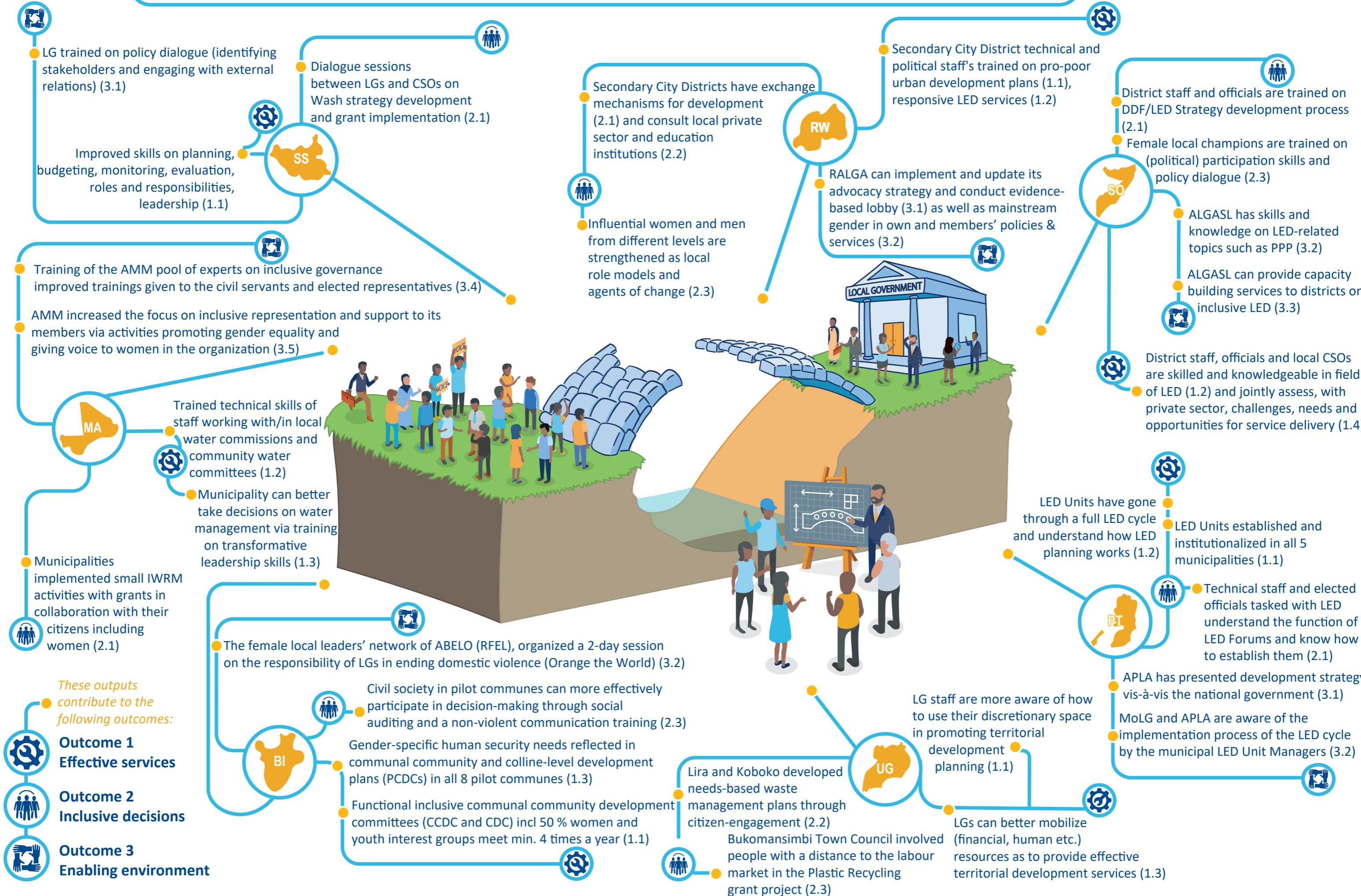
<b>NLUMP</b>	National Land Use Master Plan
<b>OSC</b>	One Stop Centre
<b>OSR</b>	Own Source Revenue
<b>PCA-GIRE</b>	IWRM Programme Niger river (Programme Conjoint d'Appui à la Gestion Intégrée des Ressources en Eau)
<b>PCDC</b>	Plan Communal de Développement Communautaire
<b>PDIA</b>	Problem Driven Iterative Adaptation
<b>PDSECs</b>	Local Economic, Social and Cultural Development Plans
<b>PEA</b>	Political Economy Analysis
<b>PPPs</b>	Public Private Partnerships
<b>PSF</b>	Private Sector Federation
<b>RALGA</b>	Rwandese Association of Local Government Authorities
<b>RPM</b>	Resident Programme Manager
<b>RPO</b>	Resident Programme Officer
<b>SGs</b>	Secretary-Generals
<b>TAC</b>	Transformative Agents of Change
<b>ToCs</b>	Theories of Change
<b>TSU</b>	Technical Support Units
<b>UAAU</b>	Urban Authority Association of Uganda
<b>ULGA</b>	Ugandan Local Government Association
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNJPLG</b>	UN Joint Programme on Local Governance
<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>WEES</b>	Water for Eastern Equatoria State programme (NIRAS)
<b>WYM</b>	Women Youth and Marginalized

# Training courses and workshops under IDEAL in 2019

-  number of training courses
-  % of men who participated
-  % of women who participated
-  total number of participants
- ★ persons between the ages of 15 and 24



IDEAL achieved the following outputs in 2019



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# 1 Overall Programme Level

## 1.1 Overall update

The IDEAL programme made significant progress over 2019. It marked the third year (over halfway), and accordingly we have started to see how the programme is impacting local governments and communities in the 7 target countries. It was also a year in which there was a major monitoring exercise (incl. surveys among the public) as well as an external evaluation. We have summarized the results below, with more specifics in each country section.

## 1.2 Programme Results based on the Theory of Change

We employed *Outcome Harvesting*<sup>1</sup> to map a total of 18 outcomes stories in order to assess and demonstrate progress for the year at the programme level. The visual on the next page represents the different stories and how they correspond to IDEAL's 3 outcomes across the Theory of Change (ToC). While these are not exhaustive of all outcomes that may have happened in the programme in 2019, we believe it provides a comprehensive snapshot of types of changes being observed at the country level.

**18** 18 outcome stories demonstrating the tangible outcomes of IDEAL in all 7 countries. The stories touch upon all three outcomes defined in the Theory of Change.



**OUTPUT LEGITIMACY**  
*Service delivery is in line with the needs of citizens*



**INPUT LEGITIMACY**  
*Citizens are a part of municipal decision-making*



**ENABLING ENVIRONMENT**  
*Improved conditions for policy making and institutions*



**Output Legitimacy key results & analysis:** For output legitimacy, we see clearest progress in terms of **responsiveness**. We found various examples of *improved needs identification* which is a pre-requisite for increased responsiveness (Palestine, Burundi and Uganda). A number of countries (Mali, South Sudan, Uganda, and Palestine) recognised that a key impediment to improved service delivery was a lack of financial resources and thus focused efforts on mobilising resources. With regards **effectiveness**, the harvest found some evidence that *local leaders had improved their understanding of service delivery responsibilities* and are better informed by different stakeholders in targeted policy areas (Somalia, Uganda and South Sudan).



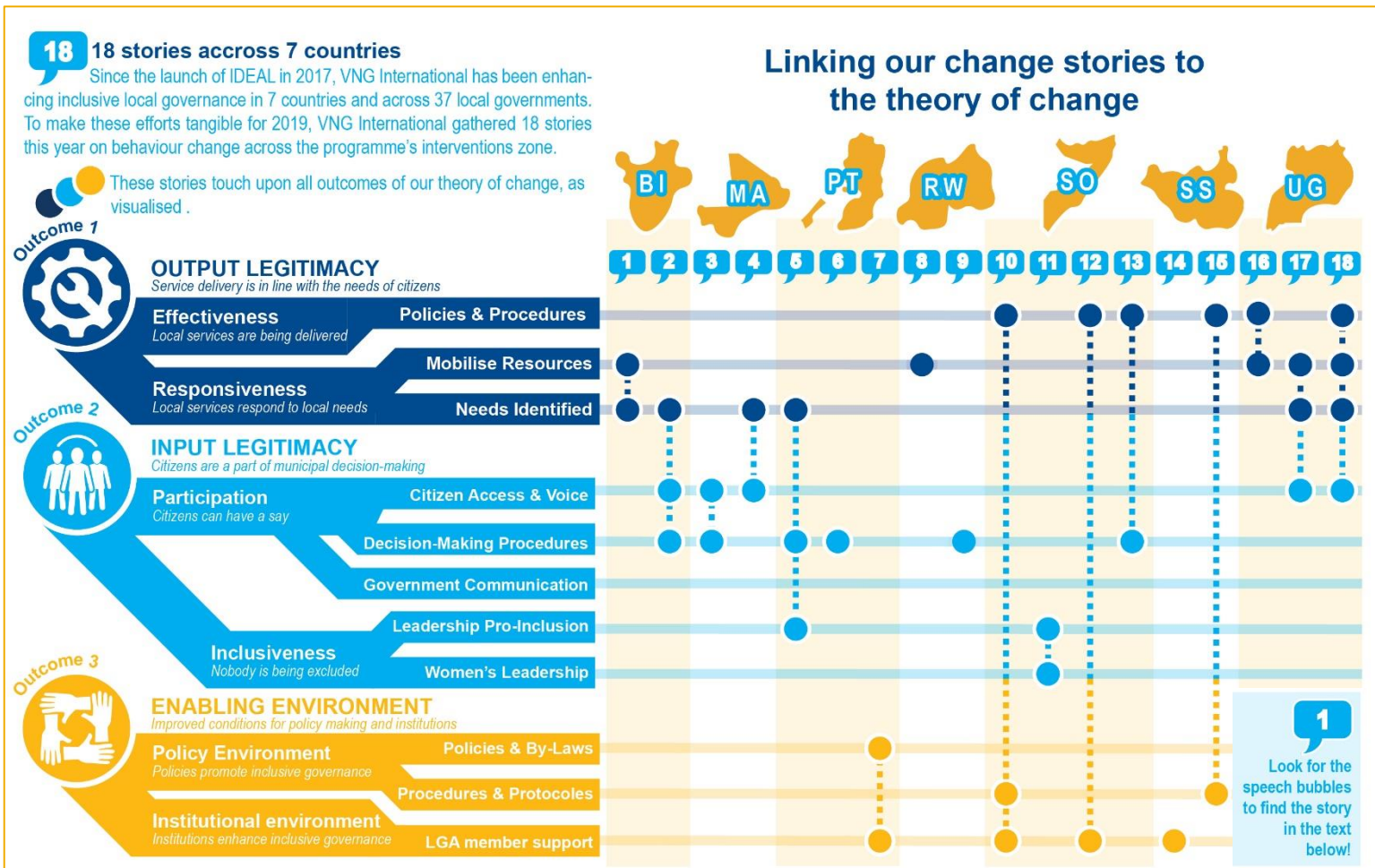
**Input Legitimacy key results & analysis:** From the outcome harvest, we also found a number of changes in this domain. One key area was *ensuring that local government obtains the inputs of citizens* and other relevant stakeholders when making decisions. This includes the establishment Local Economic Development (LED) forums in **Palestine** and increased inclusiveness of Joint Action Development Forums (JADFs) in **Rwanda**, both of which enhanced the participation of private sector stakeholders. In various cases, we found that *citizens know how they can participate in local government decisions and local government processes*. This has resulted in increased community input into Local Economic, Social and Cultural Development Plans (PCDCs) and the recent establishment of Community Score Cards to increase citizen feedback in **Burundi**. In **Uganda**, this was demonstrated through local level participatory feedback

<sup>1</sup> More info on Outcome Harvesting: [https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/outcome\\_harvesting](https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/outcome_harvesting)

meetings and consultation processes, leading to successful collective local government and community action on health and waste management initiatives. Alongside this, in both **Burundi** and **Somalia** there has been incremental progress in terms of gender mainstreaming within ALGASL at both member and board level and through established Gender Focal Points, and perhaps more significantly, the increased representation of women in PDSEC's in Burundi.



**Policy and Institutional Environment key results & analysis:** For the policy and institutional environment, while all country teams have made efforts to strengthen the capability of partner organisations, only **Somalia** has made significant strides this year. We found some evidence of local and central governments' increasing their awareness of the role of local government associations and their services and actually soliciting these services from ALGASL. This has improved the institutional legitimacy of ALGASL as a credible actor for locally led development.



**Progress made at the Output Level**

The “Bridge” visual on the first page of this report highlights all outputs achieved in 2019. Seeing as we are over half-way through the programme period, we also made an evaluation of the progress made so far at the Output Level per country, which indicates that 55% of planned outputs have been achieved after 3 years:

	Burundi				Mali				Palestine				Rwanda				Somalia				South Sudan				Uganda				Total
	OC1	OC2	OC3	Total	OC1	OC2	OC3	Total	OC1	OC2	OC3	Total	OC1	OC2	OC3	Total	OC1	OC2	OC3	Total	OC1	OC2	OC3	Total	OC1	OC2	OC3	Total	
High- level Outputs Planned	3	3	3	9	3	3	5	11	3	2	3	8	3	3	2	8	3	2	5	10	4	5	3	12	4	4	1	9	67
Outputs Achieved 2017-2019	2	1	1	4	2	1	2	5	2	1	2	5	2	2	2	6	2	2	2	6	3	3	1	7	2	2	0	4	37
% Outputs Achieved 2017-2019	67%	33%	33%	44%	67%	33%	40%	45%	67%	50%	67%	63%	67%	67%	100%	75%	67%	100%	40%	60%	75%	60%	33%	58%	50%	50%	0%	44%	55%

### 1.3 Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL)

Two key MEL events took place in 2019, roughly at the same time: (1) a programme-wide monitoring exercise to review the progress made in each country vis-à-vis the baseline measurement by Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen (KIT); and (2) external evaluation was undertaken by ACE Europe. Both events will be outlined below, followed by a short section on how we used the lessons learned to improve our M&E procedures and methodology.

#### 1.3.1 Mid-line Measurement on IDEAL Progress on Outcomes

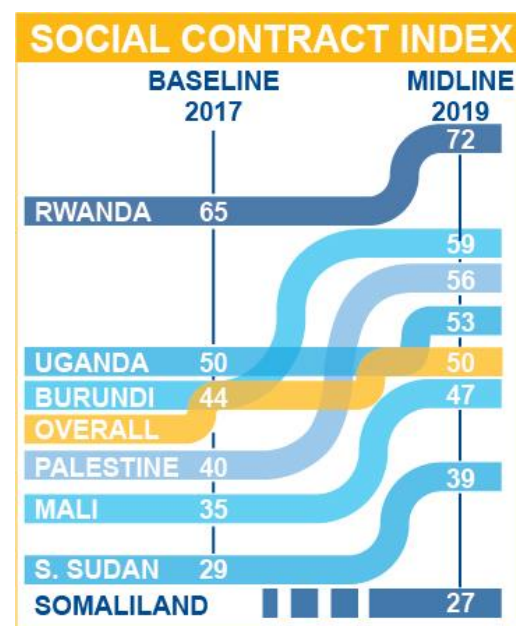
As mentioned above, we implemented a large-scale monitoring exercise together with the KIT. The main conclusions were:

- **Overall:** There was an overall strengthening of the social contract between citizens and LGs

The programme's impact ("improved social contract") is measured by an index, ranging from 0 to 100, where 100 indicates the best possible case. A more detailed report of the findings is attached as Annex A.

- **Per country:** Increase of social contract between citizens and LGs across all countries

At the same time, scores were not uniform across countries, nor across partner LGs within countries, reflecting the diversity of context specific issues and capacities of the seven IDEAL countries, and their districts (in terms of LG type, size, capacities, and region and focus areas).



#### 1.3.2 Mid-term Evaluation Recommendations and Lessons Learned

We sent an official response on the mid-term evaluation to the Ministry in October 2019 (see Annex B), which includes a copy of the detailed evaluation report, as well as VNG International's response to it. A summary of the recommendations can be found below, including an update on the progress made so far.

Recommendations MTE	VNGI's Response and Progress Made
1 - Conduct a mid-term review of the country ToCs with the IDEAL teams and co-implementing organization.	Following the MTR, we developed greater disaggregation of levels of change at the level of outcomes. This way we created another level between the high-level outcomes and the outputs. There was a piece of the story missing, which we now have labelled mid-level outcomes. We also introduced more linkages between outcomes, in order to demonstrate that each outcome does not exist in a vacuum. All countries undertook the same exercise. The overall programme's revised theory of change diagram is attached as Annex C. <sup>2</sup>
2 – Better define the niche of IDEAL/VNGI	Better communicating about IDEAL's added value (incl. vlogs), better incorporation into the TOCs, and being able to demonstrate through monitoring this added value will be an added focus for the remainder of the programme.
3 – Elaborate a more systematic conflict-sensitive programming, with a specific focus on Doing No Harm	Here we will focus on combining the efforts of all countries and combining them into one common gender and conflict vision, with a set of "messy tools" for each team to easily use in their day-to-day project implementation. This should result in even more explicit stories on how the programme operates in different conflict areas. In addition, during the revision of the ToCs, more explicit assumptions were made related to elite capture.

<sup>2</sup> The revised country ToCs can be visited online on Kumu: [ToC Burundi](#), [ToC Mali](#), [ToC Palestine](#), [ToC Rwanda](#), [ToC Somaliland](#), [ToC South Sudan](#) and [ToC Uganda](#).

4 – Experiment with PDIA	1) We will have a discussion with the Ministry on the desirability of PDIA, especially regarding the impact on long-term programme deliverables, and 2) We will experiment with PDIA on small-scale (making “small bets”), e.g. through microgrants, which are already applied in some IDEAL countries. For learning reasons, we are interested to incorporate this recommendation and will organise a team workshop on PDIA late 2020.
5 – Create more space for ‘messy’ tools to support implementation and learning	We have started doing this in the field of M&E. Existing manuals and guidelines (e.g. Gender and Conflict Sensitivity Guidelines) will be assessed to see how they can be used by field staff more effectively (practical tools rather than theoretical guides).
6 - Strengthen donor-VNGI dialogue	We remain in good contact with the Ministry.
7 & 8 - Strengthen the IDEAL way of working	We will continue to develop programmes like the Transformative Agents of Change programme (TAC) in Rwanda and assess to what extent it offers opportunities for applying similar interventions in other countries. PEA/Conflict Analysis/Gender Analysis will be conducted again next year.
9 –Improve documentation of informal monitoring	In response to the MTR recommendations on improving capacity to track & report outcomes, as well as recognising a need to build more MEL capacity within the IDEAL team, we contracted two MEL experts to support the team in 2020.
10 - Continue to apply the on-the-job-coaching or support by proximity	This recommendation had more urgency due to the COVID-19 crisis. International and local travel has been very limited for the past months. There are more opportunities at the local level, so there has been an increase in supporting by proximity by the RPMs and local coaches.
11 - Strengthen appropriateness of monitoring by introducing more specific focus on change processes	The M&E experts’ support includes the revision of ToCs; designing and facilitating outcome harvesting and analysis exercises; coaching teams on MEL practices; and delivering a series of webinar-based training sessions on topics of relevance for identifying, evidencing and analysing outcomes. The aim is to establish a practical monitoring system that the team can execute independently to routinely harvest outcomes across the ToC which can feed into the final evaluation and inform the design of the next phase of IDEAL.
12 – Accept to work with structures that have no or limited capacity	One thing we have decided to do here is to develop a learning publication which will draw together the most successful inclusive governance approaches implemented across the seven IDEAL country programmes. The final product will be a practical set of guidance and tools for those working in countries within fragile formal structures. Another important step in assuring the sustainability of our programme is by sharing lessons learned in pilot communities nation-wide, through our partner Local Government Associations.

## 1.4 Gender and Conflict Sensitivity

We have been training our project staff and partner organizations on gender and conflict sensitivity since 2017, and are seeing concrete results and changes in behaviour both directly through our activities and interventions as well as indirectly through the coaching and peer-to-peer knowledge exchange by our Regional Programme Managers (RPMs) in the field. For example, the **Palestine team**, stemming from their power structures analysis, has developed a guide on how to mainstream gender within their meetings, which includes best practices such as *“during breaks or after sessions, participating women tell you what specific obstacles they encounter to voice their questions, comments or concerns”* (as a safe space for some female participants who may not feel comfortable doing so in front of their peers). It also recommended, in order to better understand issues of access, *“ask[ing] potential participating women what are potential gender-specific obstacles to attend, especially as they relate to their safety. For instance: are the times and the place of an event a hindrance? Is it safe to travel?”* as well as developing various tools for local government.

In **Mali**, women were frequently excluded from meetings and even if they were invited, often did not have the right to speak. IDEAL has made an important contribution to this change in behaviour by providing training on transformative and inclusive leadership skills to elected representatives as well as training



RPM workshop in Sept 2019 in the Hague. Photo above: workshop on working with CSOs. Photo below: VR-tour at the Economic Board Nijmegen-Arnhem, a Triple Helix collaboration among government, knowledge institutes and business community.



women and youth groups separately in how to keep their municipality accountable. In **Burundi**, we promoted the awareness of risks to conflict, by facilitating an exchange visit between local administrators with Congolese counterparts, a nearby region, but with a higher prevalence of violent conflict. In both areas participants in the exchange were piloting systems of participatory budgeting, which offers significant potential for transforming relationships between citizens and local governments. The RPMs had benefited from training on this topic and was able to apply general concepts of how to facilitate these exchanges.

## 1.5 Communication

The country videos of 2019 are the most substantial product we have developed for communication purposes. Each video clarifies the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of the individual country programmes by demonstrating the fragility risks and the inclusive approaches taken to tackle those. Last year was even more important for the collection of results achieved so far and communicating about milestones. For this reason, we have designed visuals that highlight our biggest results thus far. Links to the 7 visuals and videos can be found on our website: <https://www.vng-international.nl/ideal-inclusive-decisions-local-level>. For more updates on activities and events that took place in 2019, please visit us on AKVO RSR: [The IDEAL programme](#).<sup>3</sup>



IDEAL Impact Visuals	IDEAL country videos
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">The IDEAL Impact in Mali</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The IDEAL Impact in Palestinian Territories</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The IDEAL Impact in Burundi</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The IDEAL Impact in Rwanda</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The IDEAL Impact in South Sudan</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The IDEAL Impact in Uganda</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The IDEAL Impact in Somaliland</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">What does IDEAL do in Mali</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">What does IDEAL do in Palestinian Territories</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">What does IDEAL do in Burundi</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">What does IDEAL do in Rwanda</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">What does IDEAL do in South Sudan</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">What does IDEAL do in Uganda</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">What does IDEAL do on Somaliland</a></li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Or the individual country pages: [Burundi](#), [Mali](#), [Palestine](#), [Rwanda](#), [Somaliland](#), [South Sudan](#) and [Uganda](#).

## 2 Burundi

### 2.1 Overview

In 2019, the restricted public space for peaceful political negotiations and the ability of civil society actors to be publicly active has continued to increase. VNG International registered this year as an international NGO and was thus more confronted with the impact of this increasingly smaller space. The IDEAL programme has been able to face these dynamics, by introducing tools and activities to CSOs and local government actors to provide a space for civic dialogue. Further efforts were made to raise awareness on non-violent communication in preparation for the electoral cycle of 2020 as well as commissioning a study to gain a better insight into the functioning of civil society. Dealing with these societal risks is crucial for the IDEAL programme, as *“an organised civil society needs to take up their role in order to strengthen the social contract between local governments and the population through more inclusive and participatory decision-making”* (ACE Evaluation, 2019).



### 2.2 Significant outcomes achieved in 2019

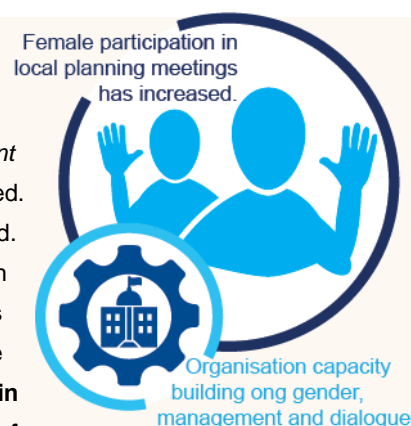
In 2019, we have made significant efforts under outcome 2 regarding participation, especially participation of marginalized groups such as women and ethnic minorities and have seen our efforts bear fruits: the PCDCs of all eight pilot communities, an important focus of the IDEAL programme in Burundi, were approved. Also, in other fields, such as budgeting and dialogue between citizens and their government, we have emphasized participation and inclusion of all groups in society on the local level.

1

#### **Outcome Story: More gender-inclusive Communal Development Plans (PCDC) and processes**

In 2019, the PCDC (*Plan Communal de Développement Communautaire*) in all eight pilot communities were successfully adopted. While PCDCs establish a 30% gender quota, but this is not well enforced. Partly as a result of IDEAL's efforts, the Inclusive Committees on Communal Development have seen a doubling of women's participation from 25% to 44% and increasing their potential to influence the formulation of the PCDCs. **The inclusion of women's concerns in the PCDCs which resulted from this is significant, as women before**

**had very limited influence in government structures and decision-making.** The fact that two out of 8 commune administrators were female, definitely contributed to this. Moreover, due to the influence of the IDEAL programme, a fifth axe was added to the PCDC structure, which focuses specifically on gender, local justice and security, and good local governance. This change is a major steppingstone towards a deeper change of ensuring these issues are adequately reflected in Annual Investment Plans and Communal Budgets, which in turn, will help ensure that specific initiatives which women asked for are implemented by





Woman participating in local planning meetings at the General Assembly at *colline* level, [Commune de Gitanaa. Colline Kazeba]

municipalities. Issues raised by women during the consultation sessions that are now included in the plans are for example: Combatting Gender-Based Violence (Bururi, Matana, Mugamba, Vyanda), protecting children's rights (Gitanga, Bururi), enforcing female autonomy (Matana, Mugamba, Rutovu, Songa) and financial independence (Bukemba, Vyanda), ensuring transparency in communal resource management (all) and organizing encounters and communal activities between citizens and the police (Mugamba). As the PCDCs are 5-year plans, there is a high potential for sustainability well after the end of the IDEAL programme.

**IDEAL's contribution to these outcomes is considered medium to high.** The programme has assisted the pilot communities

throughout this process – training and accompanying the communities on important issues in inclusive decision-making such as gender-mainstreaming, planning and cycle management, communal finance management and dialogue between citizens and their government, for example by supporting the development and capacity of the Inclusive Committees on Communal Development (CCDCs), which represents the interests of women and youth groups. While other donors and organizations have been active in this field as well, and we cannot claim all credit for increased participation of women in local government processes, our programme is recognized for being successful in inclusive development-planning, and other actors unfortunately have retreated (most notably GIZ).

2

### **Outcome Story: Introduction of tools for improved local government accountability: Community Score Cards in 8 communes increase citizen participation and oversight of public services**

According to the external midterm report, '*IDEAL in Burundi is a good example of VNGIs willingness to invest in good contextual analysis.*' In 2019, IDEAL has introduced various new tools in the eight communities to improve accountability of local governments to their citizens. Among these tools is the Community Score Card, which allows for the development of a joint plan between local governments and citizens' representative groups on service delivery through dialogue, which increases the quality of service delivery in the field of

human security. This year the first round of the scorecard was administered. The dialogue, plan and feedback sessions that come with it **allow for citizens and civil society to express their (dis)content with the communal services such as the provision of certificates or land administration, thereby increasing transparency and accountability. This is important, as the space for citizens to express themselves in Burundi is decreasing.** The first sessions, where citizens could give grades to various basic services provided by their municipalities, were held in November 2019. In the commune of Rutovu for example, citizens noted that in the registration of marriages and births was a slow and difficult process. In the sessions, action plans were drafted, where administrators committed themselves to for example increasing the staff in these departments and reducing queues for services by working with a registration





For the Administrator in Rutovu, the experience has been revolutionary:

*"I have always wanted to involve the citizens in the management of our commune, but never had the chance to talk to the community and receive their feedback in an honest and open way. Now, because of the Score Card, I work together with my team to achieve the highest possible score from our citizens, which has awakened the desire to improve our services to citizens."*

system. Also more structural and conflict-sensitive issues were raised, such as that the Batwa (minority ethnic group) were not taken into account enough in various civil-registration processes; as a result, the village chief and the Administrator, together with representatives from the Batwa ethnic group, have committed to employing more ethnically diverse staff in the civil registration office. The programme will track the materialization of these commitments over the next few quarters.

**IDEAL Burundi has made a high contribution to this outcome.** While there are other development programmes that work on communal development planning, the IDEAL programme is unique in terms of focussing on the governance structures, whilst including civil society actors and community representatives, and train all involved groups to both express their concerns *and* listen to others' inputs in a meaningful way in the targeted eight communes, as the testimony from the Administrator of Rutovu suggests. In addition, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Decentralisation, who attended the facilitation sessions, has applauded

IDEAL on its approach and has suggested to extend IDEAL's approach to all 119 communes in Burundi. Through building on existing governance structures, the programme contributes to a long-term, sustainable approach, where successes at a local level can be replicated at higher levels of government or in different localities. ABELO as the association of local governments and the sister organisation of VNG, plays a crucial role in this.

## 2.3 Lessons Learned

**Externally – scaling-up the lessons learned from the IDEAL programme in Burundi:** Although our programme is recognized for being successful in inclusive development-planning, it is very hard to scale up. This is cost-intensive and other partners (notably GIZ) have retreated. IDEAL currently works in pilot communes, but we continue to seek a larger impact through collaborations with new partners. In 2020, we will build on the sustainability and effectiveness of ABELO to share the best practices from the IDEAL-pilot communes on a national level (thereby reinforcing their mandate as lobby and advocacy organization for the needs of the communes) as well as in all 119 communes of Burundi.

**Internally – since becoming active in Burundi in 2008, VNG International has been dependent on its local partner ABELO** in implementing activities and programmes in the country. Since 2019, we are a registered independent international NGO, which will help us to attract additional funding to scale up the impact of our work in IDEAL outside of ABELO. In addition, becoming a separate entity as VNG International in Burundi forces ABELO to



The exchange between DRC (ARC programme) and Burundi has resulted in exchanges on local economic development in fragile contexts as well as citizen participation. Most notably, the participants mentioned the visit to ABELO, where they *"learned about how Congolese municipalities can influence politics on a national level as well."*

also become more independent, attract other financial means and resources, and thereby be more sustainable as an organization.

## 2.4 Challenges and Mitigation

**The operating space for international NGO's was further restricted** by the Burundian government over the course of 2019, through administrative requirements on staffing and ethnic quota. As we applied for registration this year, this made our operations challenging, but we did not face a direct impact. In addition, in 2019, a communication session on non-violent communication was held in order for both local government and Civil Society actors, to face the electoral cycle of 2020 peacefully.

**Deteriorated relations between Rwanda and Burundi** meant that an exchange visit from Burundian councillors to the DRC became logistically impossible (no safe road passage to Bukavu is possible through eastern DRC). An exchange visit from the DRC to Burundi did take place in May 2019, where the two teams shared their best practices in the level of participation of civilians into their local governments: Where in Burundi, the population is represented by local councils that have the power to discharge local administrators, in DRC the population has a higher level of participation concerning the local government's budget and yearly plans. The visit to DRC was meant to capitalize on these lessons learned, on how to better involve your citizens in decision-making (key to IDEAL in 2019 and further) and how to work in ever-changing security contexts, thereby both strengthening the knowledge and functioning of ABELO as a platform for Burundian communes where they can exchange practices in the field of human security and (outcome 3). The visit to DRC is now scheduled for later 2020/2021, as the termination of Nkurunziza as president of Burundi will allow for improved relations between Rwanda and Burundi.

## 3 Mali

### 3.1 Overview

Overall, IDEAL Mali has made significant progress on our outcomes in 2019 with regard to improving local revenues, delivering more efficient IWRM services and building capacity on participatory and inclusive governance. We have furthermore worked on improving our collaboration with other development partners to strengthen ties and jointly undertake programme activities in the nexus of governance and water. This was also noted by the external midterm evaluation: *“Aware of its comparative advantage (and its limitations with regards to the financial means), VNGI/IDEAL is making considerable efforts to look for collaboration, synergy and complementarity with other development players. In Mali, this has led to concrete collaboration and synergy, with the integrations of training in the programmes of Join for Water”.*



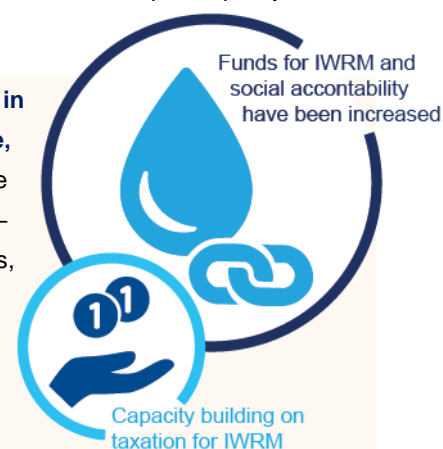
During the year, structural issues in Mali remained unchanged, if not worsened: there is no national plan for unity, porosity of national borders, radicalisation of certain religious groups and presence of violent or terrorist groups in the north and centre has increased. This affects the functioning of AMM, but also has a direct (security) impact in the communes we are active in: people are less inclined to speak their mind.

### 3.2 Significant outcomes achieved in 2019

In order to support our pilot communes in planning, prioritizing and monitoring the provision of IWRM service delivery, we have increased cross-organizational learning on IWRM with Join for Water (previously Protos), put focus on mobilising local resources (taxes) and issued grants as an instrument to foster trust and build capacity on the concept of GIRE (outcome 1). Furthermore, we created public space for dialogue and making joint action plans at the local level (e.g. input and feedback sessions) with relevant stakeholders including women and youth, thereby making these processes both more inclusive and participatory (outcome 2). Finally, together with AMM and the pilot communes, we lobbied at state level to improve policy and institutional environment in the IWRM sector (outcome 3).

3

**Outcome story: Raising additional tax revenue from fishermen in Méguétan municipality and establishment of a fishermen's collective, to improve IWRM service delivery** Three (out of five) municipalities in the IDEAL intervention zone have successfully convinced their citizens – fishermen in particular – to pay municipal taxes (one related to fishing permits, another related to embarkation tax). This should reduce illegal fishing (one needs a permit) on the one hand, and protect against riverbank erosion on the other, since the collected taxes are used for activities around riverbank protection. Municipalities have invited citizens and important stakeholders, such as fisherman collectives and women's groups, to contribute to decision-making on (water-related) service delivery. While the collection of local taxes is enshrined in law, many municipalities did not know of the opportunity to levy local taxes within their community or were not yet able



to convince their citizens to pay these. In 2017, the IDEAL municipalities were raising only 0%-15% of local water-related taxes. Yet, the lack of income is a major impediment on the functioning of the municipalities, and these local taxes can be levied and spent by the municipality directly. **This is a significant outcome**, not only due to the **funding increase that will enable improved IWRM services to the citizens**, rather than being dependent on national (usually absent) funding, but also because of its impact on the environment and ensuring the sustainability of the programme.

**The IDEAL programme has had a significant impact on the collection of taxes in these municipalities** by increasing the municipalities' understanding of legal texts related to IWRM, the issues that result from insufficient IWRM management, and accompanying municipalities around restructuring financial flows in the communes (output 1.1). After the first phase of thematic problem identification (e.g. gold mining, agriculture, fishing) per municipality, a second phase of training provided assistance to the local governments in redefining the current tax bases of municipalities by providing tailor-made training on (opportunities for) taxation and accounting modalities. Phase 3 (implementation) is expected as from mid-2020. Moreover, we have (re-)dynamized traditional decision-making structures in such a way that these function in a more transparent, participatory and inclusive way when levying tax (output 1.1 and 1.2).



*"The grants awarded by IDEAL gave us the opportunity to establish a convention with all relevant stakeholders on the management of the Bagoé river. It allows us to protect the river, and other sources of water, from exploitation. Moreover, it brings together citizens and government in one common goal." - Rokiatou DIALLO, Councillor in charge of water affairs for Niena Municipality*

The first initiatives to raise municipal taxes and ensure the correct management of financial resources are not a goal in itself. **In return for paying taxes, citizens are increasingly included in decision-making on the management of water resources in their respective communities.** In order to effectively contribute to decision-making at the local level, fishermen in Niena, for instance, have organized themselves in a collective which works closely together with the municipality to improve service delivery. This is significant, as before the IDEAL intervention, **there was no space for dialogue between the fishermen and the local government.** Using their IDEAL grant, the municipality of Niena has set up a convention, inviting all relevant stakeholders, to establish this type of collaboration between the government and fishermen groups, women's groups and more representatives from society. The contribution of the IDEAL programme to this result is significant, as we have supported these developments on the one hand with grants and on the other by providing continuous trainings to civil society organizations on gender and conflict-sensitive inclusive governance. This enabled CSO in the municipalities, especially women and youth, to better understand the causes and consequences of social exclusion and their own role to play in the fight against social exclusion. As was shown in the mid-term evaluation, only by including both sides of the social contract can we create truly inclusive decision-making.

4

**Outcome story: Increased leadership of communities through Local Economic, Social and Cultural Development Plans (PDSECs) in two municipalities (Méguetan & Niena)** After receiving various trainings and coaching sessions on inclusive local governance, the municipality of Méguetan took it upon themselves to re-organise the formulation of their



five-year Local Economic, Social and Cultural Development Plans (PDSECs). These PDSECs were put in place in 2012 as an important component of the decentralization law. For the first time, rather than hiring an external consultant to draft the texts, **the municipality managed this process themselves in close collaboration with the citizens, by collecting needs and information from village to village and afterwards organizing a restitution session with citizen representatives.** This trend was also observed in Niéna municipality. IDEAL has trained the communes to **increase awareness and openness of municipal staff to priorities in their respective communes.** This way, PCDCs more participatory and inclusive, as they reflect the needs of citizens – including women and youth, who previously were less able to express their concerns and contribute to formal decision-making processes. **This is an important contribution to longer-term effects, as the PDSECs are 5-year plans.** As such there is potential for sustainability well after the end of IDEAL.

The IDEAL programme has made **continuous efforts with regards to building the capacity of elected representatives, women and youth groups, and citizens on participatory and inclusive governance.** We have provided training to officials on the municipal board level, enhancing their understanding of the implementation of strategies to involve marginalized groups in planning for local development. While it is not impossible that the LG would have initiated this feedback meetings without receiving IDEAL's support, it had not happened previously. At the same time, the IDEAL programme has trained women and youth groups on citizenship and inclusive governance (awareness of the use of existing accountability mechanisms, by law) for CSOs, thereby clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders. Taken together, the IDEAL programme has had a medium-high **influence on increasing the level of participation in the communities,** reinforcing the levels of trust between the government and the population.



*"Before the IDEAL programme, water-related issues were only discussed amongst men – traditional chiefs, local government officials and technical staff. Our women were excluded from all meetings, and even if they were able to participate, they often did not have the right to speak ... Now, the real change is that the women participate in reunions on water management." – Hawa DOUMBIA, 3<sup>rd</sup> Adjoint Mayor of Tagandougou.*

*"IDEAL has allowed us to understand that forgetting or excluding important groups in decision-making will have a negative impact, and could potentially be dangerous, when creating a development plan." – Amadou KONE, Secretary General of Kouoro*

### 3.3 Lessons Learned

**Internally – Relationship with AMM:** Internally, we have changed our approach to partnership with AMM. The aim is to be more responsive to their own initiatives. Through continuous dialogue, we allow them to implement their own activities related to more effective inclusive local governance. For example in 2019, to increase its influence, AMM has started to collaborate with ARM (Association des Régions du Mali) and ACCM (Association des Cercles et Collectivités du Mali), to improve its joint capability to influence national policies in favour of decentralized (water) management and an adequate transfer of competencies and resources (output 3.3).

**Externally –** A lesson learned is that the targeted CLE's (Comité de L'Eau), or local water committees are important institutional bodies, yet have no mandate, no (financial) resources nor the capacity to properly function. It is based on volunteerism as well, making it difficult to take these institutions as a point of entry for structural change. This has led us to focus more on the local authorities/municipalities on the one hand

and civil society actors of the communes on the other hand (instead of taking a basin approach and targeting the CLE's). In this, the collaboration with DNH (Result 3.1) is fruitful and as a result the offices of the Local Water Committees (CLE) of four communes of the programme have been renewed by PCA-GIRE. This also explains our revised Theory of Change.

### 3.4 Challenges and Mitigation

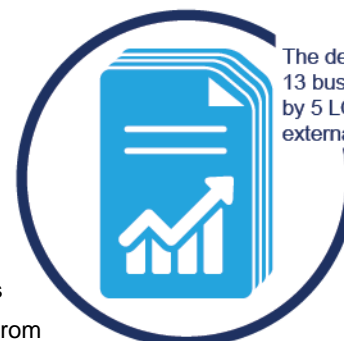
**At local level, municipal elections have still not taken place in the North**, due to security concerns. While these delays were foreseen to a certain extent, this continues to have an impact on the AMM Board of Directors, as reported last year. As elections did not take place in all the regions, some members of the AMM still refuse to hold internal elections on the premise that they would not fully represent the electoral base. This legitimacy crisis continues to affect power and leadership dynamics, decision-making, and lobby and advocacy activities at AMM.

**Increased collaboration with CSOs in the field of conflict transformation:** While IDEAL is already active in training CSOs on citizenship and inclusive governance, in 2019 we planned to continue to work more closely with civil society organisations in conflict mediation and transformation. However, due to limited local absorption capacity, these activities have been delayed and are set to take place in 2020 (contingent on the evolving Covid-19 situation), complementing awareness raising campaigns led by the municipal boards.

# 4 Palestinian Territories

## 4.1 Overview

The past year revolved around reflection and acceleration. The mid-term evaluation and measurement gave ample opportunity for a thorough reflection and update of the programme's ToC and intervention strategy, based concretely on the evaluation's recommendations. At the same time, we finally saw after many efforts from the programme team an acceleration of the implementation of the first Community Driven Initiatives (CDI) cycle with the municipalities. Our major achievement, without doubt, were the design and completion of 13 Business Cases by 5 municipalities based on pre-selected CDIs (see below for more).



The development of 13 business cases by 5 LGs to attract external finance

*“Two years ago, there was no awareness of LED [Local Economic Development] or an integrated vision in the municipality. With the help of VNG International, there is an LED unit and a strategy that works on all areas. There is now an exchange of ideas between municipalities and there is development of technical expertise through the help of international experts” – Samar Tamimi, LED Unit Manager at Jericho Municipality*

Two major concerns remained, however. First, only by October we reached an agreement with the Municipal Development and Lending Fund (MDLF) for a solution to resolve the continuous delays in the disbursement of grants. The solution for IDEAL is to provide an expert who discusses and clarifies the needs from the municipalities and the limitations/requirements of the MDLF procurement system between both sides, as we found that lack of communication and understanding was the major reason behind the delays. While we are confident that this is solution will work, we do have a considerable

backlog of procurement which will continue to drive our efforts to catch-up well into 2020.

Second, trust in the usage of the LED Forum as a tool of involving a cross-section of the community in the identification of LED initiatives, remains fragile. This is especially the case for the elected officials, who continue to see the LED Forum as an extension of or as an obstacle to their own economic priority projects. This has become an almost united drawback of the first successes of our approach, because since the Business Cases took off and took form, the expectations from LED projects also grew, thus increasing the stakes to control them.

## 4.2 Significant Outcomes Achieved in 2019

In 2019, the programme made progress towards all 3 outcomes. Under outcome 1, capacity building, through workshops, coaching and direct guidance in performing analyses and formulating assessments led to the design and formulation of a total of 13 Business Cases by the 5 pilot municipalities. With the development of the business cases, the municipalities are well on the way of attracting external finance. For outcome 2, work remains to be done, but with improving the process of including citizens themselves, municipalities completed their first full LED cycle, which is a prerequisite of integrating an inclusive approach into sustainable policies. For outcome 3, APLA published its multi-annual Development Strategy and organized its first Technical Support Units, that will deliver technical services to municipalities, including on LED.

5

**Outcome story: Development of business cases for local economic development (LED) in five municipalities based on financial and socio-economic data**

In 2019 and 2020, every LED Unit Manager and their team of the 5 pilot municipalities within our project developed 2 to 3 business cases over the course of the project.

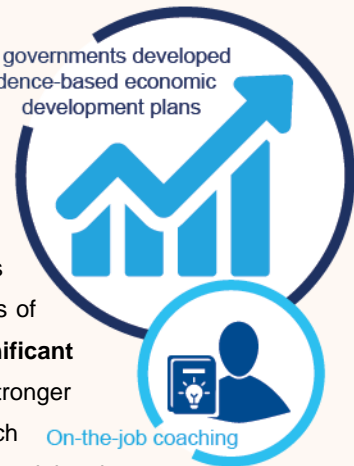
For the first time, they used financial and socio-economic data and analyses to guide their effort in drafting LED projects

instead of basing these on the priorities and interests of the political leadership of the municipality. **This significant change in IDEAL’s intervention areas**, provides a stronger

foundation for the private sector to invest, with which better conditions for economic growth will be created by the municipality itself.

**IDEAL’s contribution to this outcome is considered high**, as the internal process and practice changes can be directly linked to IDEAL’s trainings and on-the-job coaching for the pilot municipalities. With our methodology of the business canvas and an extensive training programme, municipalities experienced how to coordinate better with other

technical departments within the municipality and to obtain data and perform analyses so that decisions are more evidence based.



Work conference - Amman, Jordan

6

**Outcome story: Establishment of structured and transparent LED forums in 5 pilot municipalities for more inclusive consultation on investment policy and planning, comprised of community stakeholders,**

**including marginalized groups** In 2018, with our support, the 5 pilot municipalities within our project established an LED

Forum in which 15 to 20 representatives of stakeholder groups within the community participate<sup>4</sup> (including marginalized groups that were otherwise not organized). The IDEAL programme stimulated the municipalities to consult the community on a structural and transparent basis through one body (the LED Forum) on economic development and to determine policy priorities. **This is a significant behaviour change.** Before IDEAL’s intervention, the municipalities used to select their



“Two years ago, the LED Forum was not as competent as the current one is. Currently, the LED Forum brought in new ideas and concepts. Over the last year, there has been an improvement in infrastructure, waste management, and cleanliness of the streets, electricity and renewable energy. There is a general improvement in the quality of the services delivered such as computerizing bills and development of Qalqilya’s waiting area.” - **Women’s group representative, Qalqilya**

“VNG plays important role in creating a comprehensive understanding of LED within the municipality. Example: when streets needed to be rehabilitated we thought about pedestrian space, space for women to sell goods, energy-efficient lighting, etc. The perspective on street planning has become more inclusive with more attention to citizen well-being, whereas before it was just seen as a technical/engineering matter. Employees /local civil servants have become more aware of this. VNG has helped to create this awareness” - **Qalqilya municipal employee**

<sup>4</sup> Among others: the private sector, associations of various industries (e.g. agriculture, crafts, tourism and travel, banks, etc.), Ministry of National Economy, Ministry of Agriculture, Chamber of Commerce, hospitality industry, youth centres, cultural centres, tourism sector, banking sector, Directorate of Labour, investors and business owners, students, centre of rehabilitation, Business Women Forum, Palestinian Contractor’s Union, Real Estate Development Union and Palestinian Society for Consumer Protection.

economic projects based on the political priorities of the local decision-makers. Consultation was not done consistently, at least not beyond a select group of local businessmen (rarely women) with close economic, friendship or family ties to decision-makers. By instituting the LED Forum, a structural consultation process to inform decision-making may emerge. The systematic approach embeds recurrent consultation as common practice within the LED cycle. LED Unit Managers feel more support to consult the community in a more structured and transparent (every community group that is interested can join) manner to determine priority fields and discuss policy development. And they do so. Furthermore, the municipality has now an easier way to reach out to the community, and vice versa: The community has easier access to the municipality than before.



Work conference – Amman, Jordan

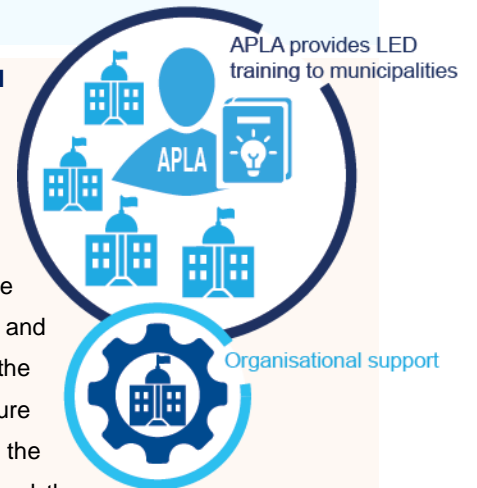
**IDEAL’s contribution to this outcome is considered medium.** As a condition for receiving grant financing from us, the municipalities needed to establish a LED Forum. We drafted the requirements that these Fora had to comply with. Immediately after we shared these prerequisites the municipalities established these Fora. During the first LED cycle we referred back to these prerequisites a couple of times. When the Business Cases had to be evaluated on feasibility, the involvement of the LED Fora was used as an assessment factor. If the Fora was consulted in the Business Case phase, the feasibility of the Business Case increased, hence a bigger portion of the grant could be dedicated to this Business Case. By conditioning these prerequisites, we stimulate the municipalities in

consulting the LED Fora on a structural basis. At the same time, pressure from CSO’s to influence public policy is likely also to have contributed, as well as the capacity (or lack thereof) of community groups to voice and articulate their concerns and needs.

7

**Outcome story: APLA improved the LED legal and political environment through its development strategy and the establishment of Technical Support Units (TSU) on priority thematic fields**

The main developments under this outcome were achieved by APLA, mainly in the field of improving the political environment. As an organization, APLA, published its Development Strategy in a public session attended by the Minister of Local Government, the Prime Minister, many mayors and representatives from the national and international community. Thus, with the Development Strategy, APLA not only provided itself with a guide of its future activities, it also allowed it to further cement its position publicly as the representative of municipal interests. At the end of 2019, APLA organized the establishment of Technical Support Units (TSU) on priority thematic fields, including one on LED. This will lead to a significant behaviour change as the LED TSU members will be specifically tasked with developing knowledge and provide expertise to municipalities on LED.



**IDEAL’s contribution to this outcome is medium.** APLA remains highly dependent on outside donor support, centrally that supplied via IDEAL. For instance, the Development Strategy was drafted by experts supplied by IDEAL. At the same time its leadership as well as those of other influential municipalities remain most important for organizing and establishing APLA as a credible representative and counterpart to the central level.

### 4.3 Lessons Learned

**Internal lesson learned** – Based on the mid-term evaluation, we observed the importance of further localizing our power structures analysis. The key to achieving truly *inclusive* decision making at each of our beneficiary municipalities might be different, because power structures differ. For instance, we learned that the personal influence and willingness to use that influence of the mayor to steer the inclusivity process is far greater in the one municipality than in the other where there is more dependency on established procedural structures. This is despite the fact that formal structures are equal in all municipalities. In order to guarantee that communities are heard in all municipalities, we have carried out localized PEA's by the end of 2019 and will follow-up in 2020 to use this PEA to provide better contextualized advice and coaching to both elected officials and LED Unit Managers.

**External lesson learned** - The lack of full legitimacy of the LED unit in the municipality translating into minimal or lagging cooperation by mayors and municipal staff which, in turn, delays VNG assignments. These delays are manifested when there is a need for the LED manager to ask VNG to address the mayors through formal documents to facilitate the simplest of tasks such as putting together a technical team for specific assignments. To counter these delays in planning, a stronger position for the LED Unit is necessary. Our capacity building activities and our discussions/negotiations with municipal decision makers will focus on the empowerment, visibility, and trust of the LED Units within their municipal organizations.

### 4.4 Challenge and Mitigation

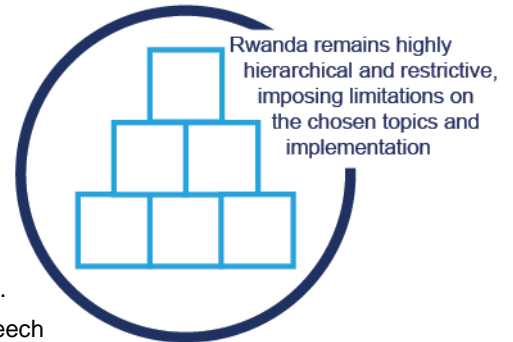
Our own observations during field visits this year, as well as the evaluation by ACE, showed that the platform to guarantee an inclusive consultation process on LED, the so-called LED forum, is not yet working as intended. Despite our earlier efforts to create awareness on the importance of a diverse group of participants and despite the coaching of our RPM and LED experts, the membership of the LED Forum is still too often connected to the "*old boys*" network and where it is not, it is insufficiently clear *how* its inputs have translated into LED Initiatives.

As mentioned with the lessons learned, we have begun to address this issue by getting a better understanding of the local power dynamics. In the second half of 2020, we will discuss with the group of 5 pilot municipalities' mayors directly in what manner they would be convinced not only to support an inclusive consultation structure on LED in their municipality, but to support it *actively* and wield their formal and informal influence to strengthen the forums.

# 5 Rwanda

## 5.1 Overview

Rwanda's political environment has not changed substantially in the last year. Rwanda's political settlement is dominant and hierarchical, which enables support through top-down planning and commitments. However, civic space remains constrained, with freedom of speech limitations still noted by CIVICUS monitor (CIVICUS, 2019). Clearance procedures have also become more challenging for VNG. Given this context, the Rwanda programme has focused efforts on improving the inclusiveness of the Joint Action Development Forums (JADAF) as well as seeking to maximise the potential of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in order to stimulate local investment and economic development.



The midline evaluation and measurement (Summer 2019) note that significant progress is being made, with 5 out of 8 outputs already achieved. The table demonstrates an increase in the scores for outcome 2 (input legitimacy) and 3 (enabling environment) implying improvement in the inclusion of citizens in decision making processes and an improvement of the policy and institutional environment for local government. A slight decrease in the score for outcome 1 (output legitimacy) appears to be the side effect of successful citizen participation, increasing citizens awareness and expectations to see their needs being met in effective and responsive policies. The slight decrease can thus be explained from the sequence of affairs, whereby inclusive participation has taken place, but the translation into policies and effective services follows after. In the remaining two years, notable attention will continue to go out to raise awareness and communicate on urbanisation policies and related strategies that are adopted in response to citizens' expressed needs.

Furthermore, we have adopted the recommendation to lay more emphasis on the active participation of CSOs and youth. An assessment on active engagement of youth in local urban governance has been commissioned in 2019 still and its results shall guide youth centred interventions in 2020 and 2021.



*"The study visit has been positive, in highlighting the importance of integration of our community in master plan development and in other planning in general. The capacity building through trainings makes us feel stronger to deliver in our daily services in the district. "– Rubavu District technician reflecting on study visit to the Netherlands." - Rubavu District Technician reflecting on Study visit to the Netherlands*

## 5.2 Significant outcomes achieved in 2019

In Rwanda, IDEAL is making tangible and significant progress to achieve higher level outcomes. We have chosen two examples of outcome stories that to us as a team signify the difference the programme is setting in motion to the benefit of citizens in the secondary city districts of Rwanda. A first example concerns the construction of a modern market via a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in the framework of outcome 1, and the second example relates to outcome 2 focusing on the improvement of private sector engagement in local development.

8

**Outcome story: Increased capacity of district officials to implement Public-Private Partnership (PPP) across target areas, including the mobilisation of PPP resources to build a modern market in Munanga target district**

Before the implementation of the Local Government Capacity Programme (LGCP) and the IDEAL programme, knowledge of the various constructions of PPPs was limited in Rwanda's Secondary City Districts and concrete large-scale initiatives had not yet taken place. However, there was a clear need for the districts to work together with the private sector in order to advance local economic development, and the district officials took part in a variety of activities within the LGCP and IDEAL programmes to further their understanding of the benefits of these types of cooperation and how to implement these. This led to the implementation of PPPs in various districts, and the construction of the modern market in Muhanga is an example of this.

Secondary Districts have been strengthened to implement PPP constructions, thereby leveraging existing development funds



**The IDEAL programme had a strong contribution to the realisation of this outcome.** The capacity building activities that contributed to the construction of this modern market were part of both the LGCP and IDEAL programmes. Firstly, as part of LGCP capacity building in land management skills was implemented for staff of the One-Stop Centres for business development and for Sector Land Managers. Simultaneously, documents and training manuals on land management were developed and distributed through the Local Government Institute (LGI). This was followed by a training on spatial data collection and a retreat in Karongi on the development of PPPs. The IDEAL programme provided continuation with one-on-one coaching of OSC staff on the development of PPPs in their District. In Muhanga, this led to the development of a modern market. To do this, the Private Sector Federation and Muhanga District were inspired by the example of a similar market realised in Musanze that was part of the coaching programme.

The modern market provides facilities that cater for both the population in the urban centre of Muhanga as well as people from the periphery. The facilities provide for a higher capacity of traders and better hygiene conditions in comparison to the old market. Through the application of PPP financing arrangements, the District of Muhanga has been able to realise services for its citizens that would not have been available otherwise. The link between the capacity building activities and the construction of the modern market is established based on testimonies of District and PSF staff as well as coaching plans and feedback from the PPP coaches. Besides VNG International and the IDEAL experts, other influential stakeholders in the process were the Private Sector Federation and the District staff.

9

**Outcome story: Higher stakeholder engagement in Joint Action Development Forums (JADFs) in six city districts, which are also now more inclusive of the private sector and higher learning institutions**

Throughout the course of 2018 and 2019, the Joint Action Development Forums (JADFs) in all 6 secondary city districts of Rwanda, have continued to develop their skills to improve the manner in which they include the private sector and Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) into the JADF, especially when dealing with local urban development programmes. JADF is a home-grown mechanism established under the coordination of the Rwanda Governance Board, that



brings together stakeholders at the local level to foster accountable governance and stakeholder engagement in local development. Stakeholders (JADF members) include the district administration, national/international NGOs, religious based organisations, and public and private institutions operating within the district. At the start of the programme, VNG International involved Brainport Eindhoven into the IDEAL Programme to share their experiences as the pioneers on the triple helix cooperation for regional development (government, business and educational sector). Brainport therefore supported the capacity building initiatives in support of JADF, with firstly the development of a toolkit on *Effective engagement of private sector and higher learning institutions in local urban development programme through JADF*.

The toolkit was developed in 2018 (after an expressed need for it in 2017) following interviews with district officials, JADF members, private sector representatives and HLIs and was designed to address the lack of tools they have in mobilizing and engaging with the private sector and HLIs among other things. The toolkit development process was followed by training in 2019 where district officials were shown how to use the tools using their district specific cases. An example of such a tool, is a step by step guide on how hold meetings, explain the functioning of JADFS and allow for possible JADF members to propose their role in JADF based on their own interests and expertise. The participants at the trainings acknowledge the benefits of the trainings and recommended that for them to adopt the strategies and tools, the training should be expanded to larger group members of the JADF and that the toolkit is translated into Kinyarwanda to increase its reach to more JADF members and local leaders. The toolkit was translated in 2019 and the training will be expanded in 2020.



*Training session of JADF in Nyagatare District*

**The IDEAL programme is considered to have had a medium contribution to improving the member engagement processes** within JADFs in the 6 districts, cooperating with the Rwanda Governance Board on the development of the toolkit and training material and the translation of the toolkit into Kinyarwanda.

### 5.3 Lessons Learned

**Externally – Efforts to mitigate delays in our planning:** In learning from previous unforeseen events, the IDEAL team made several efforts to anticipate and manage delays. However, in 2019 the Government of Rwanda has further increased the stringent measures to gain approval for activities requiring district staff to travel out of their districts, impacting both the timeline and duration of trainings (requesting trainings take less than 3 days). This has affected the implementation of the Agents of Change programme in particular, where trainings were delayed and shortened. For 2020, we expand our strategy to focus on district, sector and cell level support and on the job coaching. Please learn more about the mitigation strategy below.

**Internally – More focus on youth and CSO engagement:** The midline evaluation highlighted areas that will need attention in 2020, specifically improving the level of engagement that citizens have with the information provided to them as well as the involvement of youth and civil society organisations. Attention to these issues shall in turn enhance the effectiveness and inclusion of their participation. An assessment on

youth civic engagement and participation in local urban governance processes has already been commissioned in 2019. The results will guide youth centred interventions in 2020 and 2021.

## 5.4 Challenges and Mitigation

**Internal: Clearance process for project activities:** the measures for clearance are becoming more and more stringent. In turn, IDEAL activities are “competing” with other RALGA activities for clearance. For 2020 we expand our mitigation strategy to organise activities more locally, focusing not only on the districts, but also cascading down the ladder of governance to sector and cell level. In addition, IDEAL shall provide on the job coaching to accompany the practical application of the different tools developed. The use of video conferencing will also be considered.

**External: Land subdivision plan:** The activity on land subdivision plans was once again postponed awaiting the finalisation of the National Land Use Master Plan (NLUMP) and the district master plan revision process. Within IDEAL we are reliant on both plans to ensure that the land sub-division plans do not contradict the nationally and district-led plans. The nationally led plans will be finalised in early 2020. All in all, this has surmounted to a 1.5-year delay to this particular activity. To facilitate the learning process to allow other districts to also take these experiences home, a study visit will be organised in 2020.

# 6 Somalia

## 6.1 Overview

Overall, IDEAL Somaliland made tangible and significant progress in 2019 across Theory of Change domains, particularly at the institutional level. We are seeing a return on the investment from activities directly supporting ALGASL to the current situation where ALGASL is a legitimate entity that is proactively driving change forward by coordinating actors and delivering services. The external midterm evaluators also reinforced this in their key findings as follows: *“The relevance of the IDEAL program for LGAs should not be underestimated. Especially in countries where the LGA is a co-implementor, the IDEAL program[me] is relevant to strengthen the capacity, the visibility of the organisation and its credibility, for e.g. in Somaliland where the LGA is the face of the program[me] and gradually takes over a number of interventions.”* This observed progress is especially positive, given various contextual challenges (see ‘Challenges and Mitigation’).



## 6.2 Significant outcomes achieved in 2019

The programme is making progress towards reaching higher level outcomes. The institutional results achieved under outcome 3 have a trickle-down effect to outcomes 1 (service delivery) and 2 (inclusiveness and participation) via outreach by ALGASL.

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**Outcome story: Improved effectiveness of ALGASL’s internal management and protocols, leading to the successful expansion of ALGASL from 10 to all 23 Somaliland districts;** Since the start of the IDEAL programme in 2017, the ALGASL Secretariat and Board of Directors (BOD) have consistently demonstrated progress in improved cooperation and individual task orientation, through establishing effective internal management processes, for example holding regular staff meetings, revising job profiles, communication mechanisms and strategy documents. However, this has now contributed to a higher-level outcome



as in 2019, ALGASL succeeded in expanding its membership to all 23 districts of Somaliland including the fragile eastern regions of Sool, Sanaag and Buhoodle (from 10 district members before). These represent **significant changes in IDEAL’s intervention areas in Somaliland and beyond**. Economic development in Somaliland districts depends on effective intergovernmental cooperation and conducive policy frameworks. ALGASL has an important role to play in promoting LED as a bridge between local and national government institutions and should therefore have effective internal operations between the Secretariat and BOD and a wide geographic scope. This also means that ALGASL is regarded as legitimate representative of Somaliland districts.



Membership expansion of ALGASL – Lasanod

ALGASL's increase of its operational capacity and maximum membership is also unprecedented since its creation in 2006 (supported by the UN).

Previously, ALGASL was regarded as only a UN arm implementation actor, rather than leading representative of district LGs. It also lacked internal organisational processes such as formalized staff and BOD meetings and job profiles and task management; and updated strategic documents such as the constitution and strategic plan.

**IDEAL's contribution to these outcomes were high.** The internal process and practice changes can be directly linked to IDEAL's trainings and on-the-job coaching provided to the ALGASL Secretariat and BOD on organisational development, knowledge management, personal leadership as well as support on the revision of the constitution, strategic plan and job profiles. IDEAL also worked with ALGASL in its lobby process for membership expansion. Furthermore, to our knowledge, ALGASL did not receive institutional capacity support from other organisations, thereby indicating high confidence in IDEAL's important role.

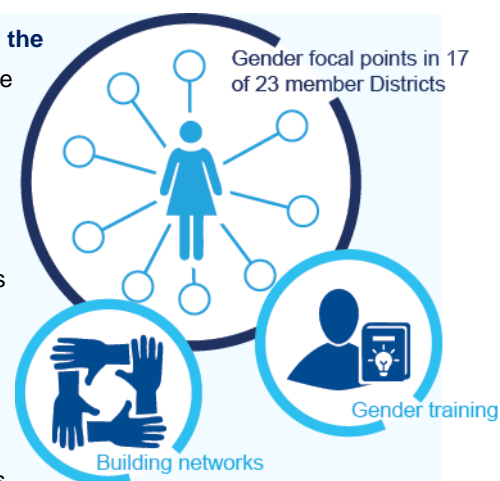
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**Outcome story: Progress on Gender Inclusion through the established ALGASL and district Gender Focal Points:**

Since 2017, IDEAL has been making progress on gender inclusion, as demonstrated by the increased awareness and commitment on the part of the ALGASL Secretariat and BOD. This first began on paper when ALGASL incorporated a gender component into its amended constitution and five-year strategic plan. However, in 2018, there was more meaningful progress with a revised secretariat staff structure and a designated ALGASL Gender Focal Point (GFP) with key gender-related tasks (e.g. outreach to districts, coordinate gender activities) which has been replicated at the district-level. As of 2019, there are GFPs in 17 of ALGASL's 23 member districts. While there is

some variation across districts, the GFPs are active in discussing gender-related topics and performing follow-up on specific gender assignments in their districts. While travel to meet in person as a group is not often feasible, the group initiated a WhatsApp group to coordinate and communicate. The GFPs are still in its nascent form in terms of achieving its own results, yet **this outcome is significant, especially in the Somaliland LG context.** While many NGOs work on gender, this practice is uncommon at the LG level given that the national gender policy has not yet been effectively decentralized and development players tend to focus on communities. This initiative led by ALGASL and LGs can serve as a participatory and consultative platform to raise awareness; influence women-youth-marginalized (WYM) groups' participation in politics; and also work to lobby at higher levels of government around inclusive service delivery based on WYM needs.

**IDEAL's contribution is also high for this outcome,** as an instrumental actor in building ALGASL's knowledge and shaping attitudes around gender and through active engagement with the reputable Women Network Umbrella Organization (NAGAAD) who already works with all districts in Somaliland. Through joint activities, such as IDEAL gender trainings, the two entities worked together to establish the GFPs and the WhatsApp coordination mechanism.



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**Outcome story:** Increased ownership and independence of ALGASL in delivering its mandate, by taking the lead in key service delivery activities for its members (conducting community District Development Frameworks and provision of training): In 2019, the programme also observed that ALGASL staff in pilot districts of IDEAL in Somaliland assumed a leadership role in conducting community District Development Framework (DDF) consultations and providing trainings on topics of concern (Inclusive Governance and Citizen Participation and LED). In previous years, VNG International or contracted experts would deliver such



trainings with the support of ALGASL. This is linked to an increased level of performance by the ALGASL secretariat in which the staff are proving able to work together effectively together and independently. Staff members themselves have now delivered several trainings and services to districts.



*"I have contacted local government staff to have a meeting and to collect data in the district without any support of ALGASL. This is a very big achievement since I managed to reach districts and to conduct interviews alone, while before I needed to wait for the guidance of the ED" - Abdirahman Ali Said, ALGASL staff, Harqeisa*

This **outcome is significant because this is a first** for ALGASL. The room for manoeuvre, especially for staff within a relatively small LGA, is limited. The fact that staff can independently deliver trainings/services to members with the trust of the ED to represent the organisation, is also uncommon in Somaliland. As IDEAL moves into its final two years of programming, it is promising to see a shift in ALGASL taking the lead on key service delivery activities to be a sustainable entity in its own right.

The IDEAL programme has made a **high contribution to this outcome**. In addition to the internal capacity building support provided to the Secretariat and BOD, the IDEAL programme trained ALGASL staff on multiple occasions and provided Training of Trainers on issues of concern (economic development, inclusive decision-making, gender-sensitivity). This content was reflected in the training delivered in 2019 by ALGASL to its members, showing a clear link between the two.

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**Outcome story:** Enhanced ALGASL legitimacy and credibility at all levels demonstrated via the increased positive perceptions and engagement requests by key stakeholders towards ALGASL): Key stakeholders at both national level (central government, Mol, Champion's Office, UNJPLG, etc.) and local level in Somaliland increasingly regard ALGASL as a reliable and valuable partner. This is demonstrated by their active engagement with ALGASL and specific requests to provide services and activities to the districts. For example, UNJPLG requested ALGASL to conduct



a study on financial management capacity in districts, and also to provide trainings to districts on financial management. Furthermore, as a result of ALGASL's improved reputation at the national level and with Parliament, ALGASL was also invited to participate in the consultation process for the proposed revision of the Local Government Law (Law No. 23). This outcome is **significant** because it indicates that the effort and results regarding ALGASL's capacity, membership and ownership is having an impact on the perception of key stakeholders whose engagement is also required for achieving IDEAL's long-term outcomes. Although ALGASL was formally in contact with many of them previously, this is the first time that ALGASL is frequently and continuously engaged by institutional stakeholders and represents a pivotal shift in ALGASL's profile as

an actor that others regard as having both credibility and legitimacy to influence local governance in Somaliland.

**IDEAL made a high contribution to this outcome** through the ongoing organisational capacity building outlined above as well as direct support to raise ALGASL's exposure and visibility by helping ALGASL to showcase its important role as the representative voice and platform representing local authorities, towards national stakeholders.

### 6.3 Lessons Learned

**Externally - Board of Directors engagement:** Although ALGASL strengthened ties within its Board of Directors, further effort is required to institutionalise progress. Payment of membership fees and the level of attendance of BOD members during activities remain a challenge. The way we have addressed this is through direct confrontations on the individual and BOD level whereby we have stipulated that the LGA cannot be successful if the Board of Directors lack commitment and leadership.

**Internally – Participation and follow-up:** Although we normally set the basic requirements for participants in consultation with the experts involved (e.g. which profile is required to achieve your goal), external pressure has often led to a different outcome (elite capture and clan affiliations). One way we are addressing this is to conduct a pre-selection via motivation letters and CVs. '*Appui d'proximité*' was recommended by the external evaluator of the programme to ensure proper follow-up of activities. From 2020 onwards, we will therefore recruit local coaches for the pilot districts.

### 6.4 Challenges and Mitigation

**A difficult process of developing and revising the DDFs in Zeila, Lasanod and Baligubadle:** Unclear and overlapping mandates at the central level as well as coordination difficulties with the UN JPLG programme made and still make it difficult to finalize the DDF process.<sup>5</sup> Our mitigation strategy lies in clear and regular communication with the different key stakeholders (e.g. consultation meetings with the VP Office and relevant Ministries prior to and during implementation of the DDF activities).

**Continuous delays of the Somaliland local government elections:** While these delays were foreseen to a certain extent, they were demotivating for many of the local political women candidates trained by the IDEAL programme through the Women, Youth and Marginalised Groups (WYM) Political Participation trajectory in collaboration with NAGAAD. Back home action plans should therefore consider different scenarios and provide for short- and long-term steps for participants.

**Internal changes in the leadership of ALGASL:** The interim Executive Director and BOD were occupied with the recruitment process for a successor. Therefore, ALGASL staff missed guidance and certain new activities could not be effectively coordinated. The newly elected ED subsequently needed time for induction and to settle into his new role. We tried as much as possible to support ALGASL staff via our local IDEAL team on the ground.

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<sup>5</sup> Despite the continuous efforts of collaboration on the side of VNG International that were highlighted as a 'good practice of strategic partnering' in the external evaluation.

# 7 South Sudan

## 7.1 Overview

In 2019 IDEAL South Sudan has made valuable progress. Across Theory of Change domains, the programme shifted its focus from the development of basic skills and knowledge on the roles and responsibilities of county staff towards more inclusive process development. We have noted an increase in engagement, capacity and ownership from counties to leverage the skills and knowledge obtained through IDEAL South Sudan. This has been most visible in the improvement of interdepartmental and inter-county communication (which is indicated to be as a result of IDEAL's policy and dialogue trainings and the advisory committee meetings), and the first-time implementation of a full grant cycle on the provision of WASH services in all three counties. The successful implementation of the first grant cycle was a testimony to the successful utilisation of previous inclusive budgeting, planning, and policy dialogue trainings, as well as the ownership of inclusive decision-making by the three counties. These developments are all the more positive when taking into account the volatile security situation in Kapoeta, and changes within the local governments which have had a significant impact on our initial planning (see 'Challenges and Mitigation'). Moreover, the team has observed the recognition and commitment to the IDEAL programme by the Executive Directors (ED) of the three counties. Particularly during the exchange visits to Wau and Addis Ababa, EDs showed more willingness and trust during the discussions about the challenges they faced in the inclusive decision-making processes of their respective counties. This increase in trust – both towards the programme and other government programme participants – allows for the EDs to now share politically and socially sensitive challenges, which they were reluctant to communicate earlier on in the programme.



## 7.2 Significant outcomes achieved in 2019

While the conflict and state building process is continually in flux, IDEAL South Sudan is making progress towards reaching outcomes on the country level ToC, with examples across the three domains. We have observed that IDEAL is contributing to important changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours, reflecting a critical foundation for higher level outcomes and impact, as reflected in the two examples of outcome stories herein.

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**Outcome story: More effective and participatory budgeting, planning and execution of WASH services, via small grants for WASH services** As resources in South Sudan are a key barrier for service delivery, IDEAL provided seed grants and training for three counties and they executed the first full-grant cycle in 2019. Applying learning gained from the IDEAL trainings on inclusive planning and budgeting and on policy dialogue (July and August 2019), there is evidence of improvement in Kapoeta South County in the ways county



officials are designing and budgeting WASH service delivery activities and consulting with other stakeholders in the process (community chiefs, local opinion leaders and the head of the WASH department). Before the trainings, the ED had limited knowledge on planning and budgeting while he never considered inclusivity as an important aspect of these processes.

The represents an important shift, as the ED learned about these important elements of service delivery (increasing knowledge), recognize the importance of them (demonstrating an attitudinal shift), and applied them in practice through the grant cycle (culminating in a behavioural change). As an additional outcome, Kapoeta South County also expanded the lessons learned to outside the IDEAL programme by convening a meeting with other INGOs on repairing the roof and rehabilitating a water source Primary Health Care Centre in Nachukut Payam (not an IDEAL activity), raising the same topics of inclusive budgeting, planning and design to ensure a more coordinated and inclusive process. This demonstrates how changes developed through IDEAL can influence other actions of our key target stakeholders and amplify impact.

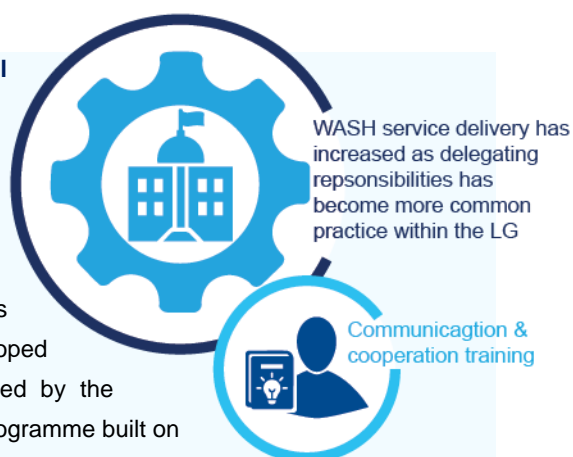
**This outcome is significant** as previously, planning and budgeting of service delivery at the county level was done irregularly and non-transparently, thereby facilitating corruption and favouritism, and preventing effective and inclusive WASH services provision. For example, the rehabilitation of boreholes often be allotted based on the connections between a community and senior local government officials, rather than the highest needs. The increased inclusion, combined with improved planning and budgeting skills, enabled the ED to execute a well-formulated proposal and budget, in line with the multi-annual strategic plan, thus enhancing output legitimacy through improved effectiveness in service delivery as well as input legitimacy through increased participation.

**IDEAL South Sudan made a high contribution to this change** as other WASH related programmes focus solely on lower tiers of government and technical issues, while IDEAL is the only programme in Kapoeta focusing on improved skills for inclusive financial management and planning at the ED level. The topics of training correspond specifically with the improvements observed, while the grants enabled counties to put their newfound knowledge into practice. The ED himself also attributes the change to his involvement in IDEAL.

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**Outcome story: Improved leadership and internal processes at the county level via capacity building of EDs and their increased delegation practices:**

Starting in June 2018, with further developments observed in 2019, Richard Mele, Executive Director of Kapoeta East County, improved on delegation of roles and responsibilities to his subordinates in the administrative system in Kapoeta East County. This demonstrates the application of skills and knowledge developed through a communication and cooperation training conducted by the IDEAL program in South Sudan in May 2018, and which the programme built on in 2019. This is an example of an immediate outcome under the Country-level ToC domain 1 of output legitimacy linked to improve effectiveness of target counties in delivery of WASH services as well as domain 3 of institutional environment, through improvements in protocols internal to the local government.





*“Due to the management and leadership training, provided for by the IDEAL programme, I am able to better coordinate and structure my team. In the end this helped us to work more effectively and in a more structured way than we would have done before.”*

**Mr. Richard Mele, Acting Executive Director of Kapoeta East County**

**This outcome is very significant**, as previously the county EDs did not delegate key roles and responsibilities to other staff. This lack of delegation resulted in negative impacts as it slowed down the provision of all basic services (including WASH) to the communities, especially when the EDs were absent. IDEAL has evidence demonstrating consistent practice of delegation, enabling other officials to progress on service delivery. This also helps in building better working relationships and cooperation between the ED and other heads of department and subordinates.

Such practice also provides capacity building to prepare subordinates for future role and responsibilities of an ED.

There is more continuity in the functioning of the county government apparatus when EDs change over time, which is especially relevant in the South Sudan context of constant flux due to the ongoing peace process.

**The contribution of the IDEAL programme to this change is high**, as the change could not have happened without the communication and cooperation training conducted by the IDEAL program for the EDs. In addition, there are no other programmes working on this theme in the target areas, as other interventions in Kapoeta State are geared towards lower levels of government and focus predominantly on technical issues.. The leadership and management training (July 2018) covered topics of cooperation and delegation skills, linking directly to the actions taken by the ED in his leadership and the delegation of tasks. In 2019, these skills and knowledge were further developed and put into practice when EDs planned, budgeted and implemented their grants.

### 7.3 Lessons Learned

**Externally - independent engagement by counties:** Although the county staff were not outwards oriented before the IDEAL programme, as NGOs and CSOs always approached them, they have learnt how to approach and engage with other counties and stakeholders independently. This also translates into a more active attitude towards the IDEAL programme as EDs are now actively approaching IDEAL when they run into challenges and provide updates. For example, they regularly visit our office (even without tour request) to discuss the programme and its activities. The IDEAL programme will continue its efforts in enabling the county governments to create dialogue with external actors in an increasingly effective manner.

**Internally – building commitment to the programme:** Despite the fact the IDEAL programme strives to create an environment in which county staff feel free to share political and social sensitive challenges, the ‘pressure’ of being physically present in their respective counties (the feeling of being ‘kept an eye on’) often leads to restraint in sharing challenges faced. Taking the EDs and secretaries general out of their daily professional environment (during various exchange visits) was highly conducive to building trust, commitment to the programme and creating a platform in which the different government participants were able to discuss political and social sensitive challenges, faced by LGs.

## 7.4 Challenges and Mitigation

**Changes within the local governments have had an impact on our initial planning.** Due to the splitting up of counties, the scarce human resources available in Kapoeta State needed to be reallocated over an increased number of administrations. This redeployment of the county staff has interrupted the implementation of grants, consequently leading to the cancellation of one grant cycle in the second half of 2019. However, despite the delay, the team managed fully implement one of the grant cycles. In addition, as the EDs had indicated that such a shift was likely to take place, this allowed us to anticipate the cancellation of the second grant cycle. Consequently, we used these funds to intensify our efforts on outcome 3. Throughout the transitional period we will remain in close touch with our stakeholders in order to be aware of additional administrative reallocations in the future.

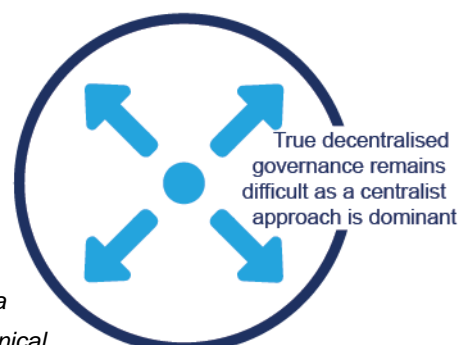
**In 2019 the environment in which the programme is carried out has become more volatile.** This pertains mostly to the physical, social, financial and political insecurity in South Sudan generally, and in the greater Kapoeta area, more specifically. The perilous situation has resulted in a less conducive activity implementation environment. Nevertheless, because our team has been closely monitoring the security situation, we were able to mitigate some of the risks. Responding to the increase in criminal activity along the road leading from Kapoeta to Narus (towards the Kenyan border), we have decided that our staff will no longer travel to one of the target counties (Kapoeta East County). Stakeholders from this county do still participate in trainings, however, as it is easier for them to arrange for armed transports enabling them to travel to Kapoeta. Lastly, the termination of the WEES programme, implemented by NIRAS, has put concerns about complementarity of the IDEAL programme on the agenda for 2020. As the WEES and IDEAL programmes were complementary to one another, the termination of NIRAS left a gap in the WASH sector (in the provision of technical assistance in particular). Combining the advice from the ACE external review - about a stronger involvement of civil society in the IDEAL programme - with the upcoming termination of the WEES programme, VNG decided to involve a number of CSOs on technical assistance in the IDEAL programme to increase potential for sustainability and coverage. They will be provided with capacity building trainings and a small grant scheme, enabling them to provide technical support to, and in consultation with, the county governments.

**The above notwithstanding, key operational issues that previously hampering the implementation of IDEAL South Sudan, were resolved in 2019.** First of all, the telecommunication infrastructure in the whole of Kapoeta has seen great improvements from the 2018 situation, in turn ensuring less communication complications within Kapoeta and between the Kapoeta office and The Hague. After the government exiled Vivacell from South Sudan, the network completely collapsed creating weak connections and often no connections. This resulted in delays in the communication that added up into delays in project implementation. Additionally, we managed to ensure a steady and reliable line of financial transfers from the VNG International head office in The Hague to the field office by employing TIAM Company. This solved the issue of relatively small cash money transfers by staff as Kapoeta does not have a bank. Cooperating with TIAM allows the project to transfer larger amounts of money, thereby taking away a potential bottle neck which could cause delays in project implementation.

# 8 Uganda

## 8.1 Overview

The midline monitoring and mid-term evaluation found that while some municipalities actively seek out their discretionary space vis-à-vis the national government, others find it more difficult to take up this role and remain passive: *“It remains challenging to go beyond a technocratic approach in which local governments are seen as technical implementers of central administration and extended service delivery arm. IDEAL has the (implicit) ambition to focus on local governments as development players in their own right, with a political mandate vis-à-vis the population ... Currently, Uganda is likely to experiment most towards a more ‘political power’ approach.”* In 2019 and beyond, the Uganda programme is aiming to tackle this challenge head-first.



## 8.2 Significant outcomes achieved in 2019

The programme achieved some tangible outcomes in the domains of the Theory of Change, especially under outcome domain 1- output legitimacy (effectiveness and responsiveness in LG service delivery) and under outcome domain 2- input legitimacy (participation and inclusiveness of citizens).

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**Outcome story: Targeted Ugandan LGs take action to increase local property tax revenue resources in order to increase the use of their discretionary space and provide effective development services based on locally identified needs:**

The Ugandan local governments of Kalangala TC, Kasese MC and Bushenyi- Ishaka MC took a unique decision to increase the income raised from property tax, by updating the registers and deciding to enforce taxation for all property owners. As the increase in tax is already approved and included in the 2020-2021 budgets, it is expected that the actual tax collection will begin in 2020 and that this additional revenue will be used for local priorities and needs. In turn this will help LGs to increase their discretionary space vis-à-vis the national government to independently deliver on local priorities, and not only act as an implementing agent of the national government. Prior to this, these LGs were only collecting a small part of their potential legal taxes. By expanding their focus on property tax, these LGs will have a significantly higher amount of local funds at their disposal, which are projected to be between 40% (in Kasese) and 500% higher tax revenue (in Kalangala).<sup>6</sup> **This is a significant outcome**, not only due to the potential **stark funding increase that will enable more use of discretionary space and improved services**, but also in terms of **change in**



<sup>6</sup> Estimates made by the UG LGs 2019



*“You do not ask people to pay money to the LG out of the little they earn, if you want to be re-elected”- Mayor of Bushenyi- Ishaka MC*

**political will.** Historically there has been high political resistance to enforce (property) taxation, as it could harm potential re-election. Moreover, in most LGs the largest property owners are elected government officials who would be required to pay more money. It was therefore a challenge for the technical staff to promote (property) tax revenue collection and enforcement prior to the IDEAL programme interventions.

**IDEAL’s contribution to this outcome was medium-high.** IDEAL started with drafting status quo reports, trained LG staff on public finance and the benefits of increased local taxes, as well as on how to improve dialogue between technical and political staff. Through this process, the LGs now appreciate that the increased tax revenue can be used for locally determined priorities, reducing their dependence on the national government. The programme also supports this demand side of inclusive governance by providing grants and training for LGs to proactively engage with communities on their needs and priorities. Although there is increased focus for OSR within Uganda in general, it is unlikely that these three LGs would have made the decision to update registers and enforce payments without IDEAL’s support. While

there are some other development actors active in these LGs, they focus on other types of programming. Therefore, **the combination of both soft and hard skills provided by VNG International and the peer-to-peer collaboration between Dutch and Ugandan LGs, facilitated significant progress** in this regard.

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**Outcome story: Collective action for improved awareness and practices of solid waste management by LGs and citizens:**

In Koboko and Lira, communities self-organized waste management initiatives and initiated campaigns for the improved collection of waste in their respective areas. This followed LGs officials’ engagement in a process of identifying citizens’ service needs and priorities, facilitated through the IDEAL programme and the small grants provided to start-up these activities. As a result of these positive

collective community actions, citizens are widely benefiting from improved environmental sanitation and conservation.

This **outcome is significant**, as it shows **unique voluntary collaboration between**

**government and citizens** while it also demonstrates a **change in behaviour by communities on their waste management practices**, through their active efforts to

keep their areas clean and raise awareness about the importance of environmental sanitation, which was not previously understood or well-prioritized. For example, in Lira, the LG and its citizens established four Local Environment Committees, and trained 39 members on roles and responsibilities and topics of types of waste, methods of sorting waste, community mobilisation, consequences of poor waste disposal, need for environmental conservation and sustainable natural resources

management. In Koboko, roadside dumping practices have decreased, with more citizens now collecting waste and delivering it to specified points. Additionally, several people are volunteering their time to sensitise



*“The tricycles have greatly eased mobility and timely collection of garbage. Also, they have been very useful as a medium for community sensitisation and dissemination of information. This is a great contribution to the promotion of hygiene and sanitation in Lira city.” – Otika Leonard, Municipal Environment Officer in Lira.*

fellow community members on the importance of a clean environment and to mobilise their communities to ensure that solid waste is properly collected and disposed.

**IDEAL's contribution to this outcome is high** due to its support across several areas that enabled efforts to start and then develop more independently. Firstly, the programme funded grants for both LGs to implement the initial waste management activities (tricycles, waste management policies and plans, campaigns, etc.) and also supported LGs with inclusive governance trainings on participatory decision-making, community engagement and outreach. Veldhoven and Valkenswaard, the Dutch partner municipalities, supported these LGs with their waste management communications strategy and business planning, that will enable sustainability of these initiatives as they are community-supported, and the LGs can now charge fees for these services. Lastly, the cross-sharing of experiences between Lira and Koboko facilitated through IDEAL, also created a positive influencing and learning effect.

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**Outcome story: Proactive establishment of participatory and inclusive feedback mechanisms by a target LG, leading to successful joint government-community action to resource a community Health Centre:**

LG officials in Koboko took the initiative to proactively organize participatory 'Cell feedback meetings', thereby helping to ensure that citizen concerns and priorities are considered for inclusion into the LG annual plans and budgets. As a result of these feedback meetings held with host communities and refugees, stakeholders agreed on a clear need for a new Health Centre. However, funding constraints meant that more collective actions were required. To resolve this resource barrier, community members offered to donate 8 acres of land on the condition that the LG lobbied the Ministry of Health for the necessary funds to construct the Health Centre. The Ministry of Health was very impressed with the community offer and provided the necessary funds.

Construction is currently ongoing, however upon completion, the Centre will provide essential health services such as outpatient, inpatient and pre- and post-natal care services. **This is outcome is significant** and unique since it represents the first-time communities were actively consulted in Koboko. Prior to IDEAL, the LG did not focus on inclusive governance nor had any feedback mechanisms in place; officials only interacted with communities to obtain information, rather than consult and ensure a meaningful feedback loop. This created a gap in identification of community needs as well as community discontent with LG officials. Furthermore, the feedback processes produced a tangible positive result of the Health Centre, demonstrating to the LG and community members alike, the strong potential of inclusive governance efforts to progress local priorities and successfully advocate at higher levels of government to support their development needs.

**IDEAL's contribution to this outcome is medium to high.** While it is not impossible that the LG would have initiated this feedback meetings without receiving IDEAL's support, it had not happened previously. IDEAL provided trainings to municipal staff on relevant issues that supported this outcome, such as discretionary space, inclusive decision-making, community sensitization and awareness creation. Moreover, IDEAL engaged in discussions with and showcased examples for LGs whereby collective action was taken and solutions were sought. Furthermore, while there are other donors active in Koboko due to the high ratio



Cell feedback meeting, Koboko

of refugees in the municipality, IDEAL is the only programme working directly with the LG on inclusive governance. This **outcome also represents the high potential for downstream outcomes through the IDEAL programme**; here we can observe a strong causal pathway between the IDEAL intervention fostering proactive government action for inclusive governance, which facilitated community engagement to work on a common goal collectively, and then resulted in tangible benefits for citizens in terms of local services.

### 8.3 Lessons Learned

**Internally**– Whilst inclusion in terms of participation and LG decision making processes of the community has grown, the team noted, that when not explicitly stipulated, internal LG procedures often select only (senior) men to join study visits and gatherings. Partially this is because there are only few women in high ranking positions within the LGs, however it seems that little action is undertaken to support the younger, more junior (often female) staff. A stronger involvement of women and other disenfranchised groups therefore requires additional attention during activity implementation and activity follow-up. Consequently, the team decided to hire an in-country support staff, whose sole focus is to support gender and inclusivity.

**Externally**– The programme noted that despite the topic at hand, local government plans often look very similar. LGs seem to be using blueprints, regardless of its contents, reducing all creativity and leading to ineffective solutions. Consequently, the programme believes that activity planning requires more attention, creativity and innovative solutions, as well as a strong learning platform in which the target LGs can reflect and provide input.

### 8.4 Challenges and Mitigation

**Changes in the country team led to implementation delays.** IDEAL Uganda has seen some changes in terms of staffing in the Hague, as well as a completely new team in-country. While these changes brought new energy and different approaches on how to implement the programme, it was inevitable that some delay in programme implementation would occur. In addition, it was noted that the LGs needed more support in the development of their micro-grant plans. Coaching from both the Hague team and the RPM was crucial. In order to improve and speed up the implementation in 2020, capacity was strengthened by adding a Resident Programme Officer to the country team.

**Continuous delays of the international money transfers to the Ugandan Local Governments.** A new financial policy passed in 2019, requires LGs to declare and remit any funds they receive from development partners. These funds have to be channeled first to the central treasury from where they will be disbursed to the LG, adding a significant delay to the implementation of the grant scheme.

**Finally, the programme had to adapt to limited capacity within both LGAs, which delayed implementation.** The Ugandan Local Government Association (ULGA) and the Urban Authority Association of Uganda (UAAU) have been in a transitional period, whereby a new board was “elected”, both SGs were (to be) replaced (SG of UAAU was replaced after a corruption scandal, SG of ULGA in the end remained upon request of the President) and high staff turnover. The latter was linked to the fact that the income from membership fees reduced significantly, which made it challenging for the LGAs to implement their normal activities. All this including the insecurity involved (replacement of SGs, lack of focal persons) led to a delay in terms of the implementation of IDEAL activities.

# 9 Finances

## 9.1 Overview: Total program expenditure 2019

IDEAL budget final - Nov 2018		New Budget	Realisation	Balance	%
<b>me activity (submitted with annual p</b>		<b>€ 4.220.090</b>	<b>€ 3.531.667</b>	<b>€ 688.423</b>	
Country	Project number				
<b>Burundi</b>		<b>€ 675.032</b>	<b>€ 598.989</b>	<b>€ 76.042</b>	<b>89%</b>
	IDEAL19.BI.VNG	€ 115.863	€ 104.042	€ 11.821	90%
	IDEAL19.BI.RPM	€ 61.183	€ 60.994	€ 189	100%
	IDEAL19.BI.ORG	€ 70.025	€ 78.617	-€ 8.592	112%
	IDEAL19.BI.GE	€ 80.480	€ 32.461	€ 48.019	40%
	IDEAL19.BI.01	€ 61.236	€ 45.087	€ 16.149	74%
	IDEAL19.BI.02	€ 202.442	€ 224.238	-€ 21.796	111%
	IDEAL19.BI.03	€ 83.802	€ 53.550	€ 30.253	64%
<b>Mali</b>		<b>€ 478.466</b>	<b>€ 415.487</b>	<b>€ 62.979</b>	<b>87%</b>
	IDEAL19.ML.VNG	€ 94.746	€ 82.489	€ 12.257	87%
	IDEAL19.ML.RPM	€ 34.000	€ 25.828	€ 8.172	76%
	IDEAL19.ML.GE	€ 15.000	€ 18.979	-€ 3.979	127%
	IDEAL19.ML.01	€ 137.425	€ 127.131	€ 10.294	93%
	IDEAL19.ML.02	€ 94.295	€ 73.267	€ 21.028	78%
	IDEAL19.ML.03	€ 103.000	€ 87.793	€ 15.207	85%
<b>Palestinian Territory</b>		<b>€ 900.244</b>	<b>€ 532.317</b>	<b>€ 367.927</b>	<b>59%</b>
	IDEAL19.PS.VNG	€ 93.630	€ 114.158	-€ 20.528	122%
	IDEAL19.PS.RPM	€ 101.750	€ 78.603	€ 23.147	77%
	IDEAL19.PS.GE	€ 37.080	€ 9.873	€ 27.207	27%
	IDEAL19.PS.01	€ 503.630	€ 171.338	€ 332.292	34%
	IDEAL19.PS.02	€ 86.773	€ 67.816	€ 18.957	78%
	IDEAL19.PS.03	€ 77.381	€ 90.531	-€ 13.150	117%
<b>Rwanda</b>		<b>€ 463.140</b>	<b>€ 450.311</b>	<b>€ 12.829</b>	<b>97%</b>
	IDEAL19.RW.VNG	€ 82.301	€ 90.420	-€ 8.119	110%
	IDEAL19.RW.RPM	€ 62.561	€ 49.283	€ 13.278	79%
	IDEAL19.RW.ORG	€ 27.229	€ 22.612	€ 4.617	83%
	IDEAL19.RW.GE	€ 39.804	€ 49.320	-€ 9.516	124%
	IDEAL19.RW.01	€ 153.933	€ 122.765	€ 31.169	80%
	IDEAL19.RW.02	€ 78.452	€ 93.939	-€ 15.486	120%
	IDEAL19.RW.03	€ 18.859	€ 21.973	-€ 3.114	117%
<b>Somalia</b>		<b>€ 495.002</b>	<b>€ 392.283</b>	<b>€ 102.719</b>	<b>79%</b>
	IDEAL19.SO.VNG	€ 109.428	€ 116.483	-€ 7.055	106%
	IDEAL19.SO.RPM	€ 75.700	€ 51.511	€ 24.189	68%
	IDEAL19.SO.ORG	€ 18.156	€ 18.386	-€ 230	101%
	IDEAL19.SO.GE	€ 57.491	€ 49.670	€ 7.821	86%
	IDEAL19.SO.01	€ 61.771	€ 30.173	€ 31.598	49%
	IDEAL19.SO.02	€ 53.543	€ 19.767	€ 33.776	37%
	IDEAL19.SO.03	€ 118.913	€ 106.293	€ 12.620	89%

<b>South Sudan</b>		<b>€ 478.589</b>	<b>€ 450.072</b>	<b>€ 28.517</b>	<b>94%</b>
	IDEAL19.SS.VNG	€ 93.759	€ 78.032	€ 15.727	83%
	IDEAL19.SS.RPM	€ 109.747	€ 96.733	€ 13.014	88%
	IDEAL19.SS.GE	€ 21.250	€ 3.316	€ 17.934	16%
	IDEAL19.SS.01	€ 96.287	€ 55.994	€ 40.292	58%
	IDEAL19.SS.02	€ 70.381	€ 83.396	-€ 13.015	118%
	IDEAL19.SS.03	€ 87.166	€ 132.601	-€ 45.435	152%
<b>Uganda</b>		<b>€ 549.618</b>	<b>€ 500.146</b>	<b>€ 49.473</b>	<b>91%</b>
	IDEAL19.UG.VNG	€ 99.304	€ 95.236	€ 4.068	96%
	IDEAL19.UG.RPM	€ 69.949	€ 56.624	€ 13.325	81%
	IDEAL19.UG.GE	€ 35.084	€ 41.635	-€ 6.551	119%
	IDEAL19.UG.01	€ 105.841	€ 95.016	€ 10.825	90%
	IDEAL19.UG.02	€ 185.549	€ 177.563	€ 7.985	96%
	IDEAL19.UG.03	€ 53.892	€ 34.072	€ 19.820	63%
<b>Programme Wide Activities</b>					
	IDEAL19.PWA	€ 180.000	€ 192.062	-€ 12.062	107%
<b>Programme management</b>		<b>€ 251.015</b>	<b>€ 246.037</b>	<b>€ 4.978</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Management</b>					
	IDEAL19.02.VNG	€ 148.169	€ 152.249	-€ 4.080	103%
	IDEAL19.02.PSC	€ 11.586	€ 9.803	€ 1.784	85%
	IDEAL19.02.LEARN	€ 74.340	€ 70.826	€ 3.514	95%
	IDEAL19.02.GENDER	€ 16.920	€ 13.160	€ 3.760	78%
<b>External audits</b>		<b>€ 105.000</b>	<b>€ 91.434</b>	<b>€ 13.566</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>Evaluation</b>	IDEAL19.02.EVA	€ 85.000	€ 74.768	€ 10.232	88%
<b>Audit</b>	IDEAL19.03	€ 20.000	€ 16.666	€ 3.334	83%
<b>Contingencies</b>		<b>€ 0</b>	<b>€ 0</b>	<b>€ 0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Contingencies</b>		€ 0			
<b>Grand total (2019)</b>		<b>€ 4.576.105</b>	<b>€ 3.869.139</b>	<b>€ 706.967</b>	<b>85%</b>

## 9.2 Deviations and Justifications of 2019 Budget

Overall 84% of the allocated annual budget was spent in 2019. There are some deviations per country, which are explained below. All deviations of more than 25% within a country budget.

IDEAL budget 2019	F	%	Explanation of Deviations (more than 25% per budget line)
<b>Burundi</b>		<b>89%</b>	
		40%	Training 2 for the CLBG could not take place with external facilitator due to visa and travel issues. It was replaced by a local training of trainers, with only some modules developed abroad. Outbound study visit to DRC was cancelled due to political situation.
IDEAL19.BI.GE			
IDEAL19.BI.01		74%	Training 1 for local officials costed less than foreseen.
IDEAL19.BI.03		64%	Journée de communes (which is a week of activities) costed less than foreseen. Association capacity building with external facilitator could not take place due to visa and travel issues.
<b>Mali</b>		<b>87%</b>	
IDEAL19.ML.GE		127%	In 2019 more attention was given to gender, focusing on the capacities of our network to implement gender sensitive activities. This is why we have trained, via the services of The Hague Academy for Local Governance, a selected experts from the AMM pool of consultants on local inclusive and gender sensitive governance (July 2019). In the 2019 annual plan it was planned for a training targeting AMM and its closest collaborators' network, but this was not budgeted for specifically under gender. Also, AMM conducted a research on land access for women farmers and elaborated a related lobby strategy to enhance their results in the field and better represent the interests of populations through the local governments it represents.
<b>Palestinian Territory</b>		<b>59%</b>	
		77%	Underspending here is explained by slight modifications in the management set-up and the change of RPM-staff over the summer, which caused a temporary transfer of responsibilities (and input) of local staff to the Project Managers in The Hague. Note that this is also reflected by the higher .VNG costs last year.
IDEAL19.PS.RPM			
IDEAL19.PS.GE		27%	Some inclusion activities, that encompassed gender mainstreaming activities, have been reported under Outcome 2. Most notably this is the case of the Gender Expert's assignment on a localized and updated PEA.
IDEAL19.PS.01		34%	Underspending here is solely due to the fact that we cannot yet report on the disbursement of grants. The length of delays in the disbursement of grants by MDLF have been steadily decreasing since the second half of last year due to our efforts. However, the full disbursement of grants – while currently ongoing in Palestine – has not yet been officially reported by MDLF in its semi-annual reports and thus remain unreported here as well.
<b>Somalia</b>		<b>79%</b>	
IDEAL19.SO.RPM		68%	Expenses of the RPM were partially administered under Outcome 3, because the RPM not only facilitated the country management of the programme, but also provide technical assistance to ALGASL. The underexpenditures under .RPM are consequently compensated under Outcome 3. Furthermore, expenses for a security assessment that were originally budgeted under .RPM have been administered under Outcome 1, 2 and 3 to reflect the relation of the assessment with the interventions under the 3 Outcomes, thus contributing to the underexpenditure of .RPM.
IDEAL19.SO.01		49%	In view of building the capacity of ALGASL on promoting local ownership, more activities than foreseen were conducted by ALGASL staff (instead of international experts), while originally budget was foreseen for international experts. In addition, The Executive Director of ALGASL was fired in August 2019, which caused a delay in activities that could not fully be compensated in 2019. Delay of local elections in Somaliland had an effect on activities related to political participation of women/youth.
IDEAL19.SO.02		37%	The KIT mid-term measurement that was foreseen to be conducted separately from the mid-term evaluation by ACE ultimately took place together with the ACE mid-term evaluation. This combined measurement/evaluation resulted in much extra effort by the local team (RPM, RPO and ALGASL) to organise field visits, etc., which had an effect on activity implementation. Additionally, the mid-term measurement was foreseen as the baseline and needs assessment for the activities in the pilot districts.
<b>South Sudan</b>		<b>94%</b>	
IDEAL19.SS.GE		16%	The underutilisation of the gender component provides a skewed picture of what happened in reality on this subject in 2019. Based on the recommendations from the Gender and Conflict Sensitivity Analysis the IDEAL SS management choose to move away from stand-alone gender trainings and, instead, focus more on incorporating the gender component in outcomes 1 and 2. An important step in this process is the involvement of CSO's into the grant cycles and capacitating them to strengthen the Women's Associations, for example. Although these CSO grant cycles started in 2020, the groundwork was laid in 2019.
IDEAL19.SS.01		58%	The underutilisation of Outcome 1 stems from the fact the IDEAL SS management overestimated the capacity of the target counties to implement the grant cycles. Preparing and coaching the target county staff on grant implementation took more time than expected due to which the implementation of a second grant cycle wasn't possible.
IDEAL19.SS.03		152%	The overutilization on component 3 is a combination of advice provided in the Advisory Committee (AC) and the underutilisation at point 2. During the AC the target counties indicated the way they would like to move forward with component 3, which required an additional effort from our side (and therefore higher expenditures on that component). This additional effort was made possible because we foresaw that we wouldn't be implementing a second grant cycle in 2019.
<b>Uganda</b>		<b>91%</b>	
IDEAL19.UG.03		63%	Both associations, the Ugandan Local Government Association (ULGA) and the Urban Authority Association of Uganda (UAAU) have been in a transitional phase in 2019, whereby a new board was "elected", both SGs were (to be) replaced (SG of UAAU was replaced after a corruption scandal, SG of ULGA in the end remained upon request of the President) and a lot of turnover of staff. The latter was linked to the fact that the income from membership fees reduced significantly, which made it challenging for the LGAs to implement their normal activities. All this and the insecurity involved around these developments (replacement of SGs, lack of focal persons), also led to a delay in terms of the implementation of IDEAL activities for 2019.

### 9.3 Overview: Updated Budget 2020

Although this is an annual report covering 2019, seeing as the COVID-19 has had such an impact on the world, including our programme, we felt it was necessary to update our Annual Budget for 2020.

			Updated June 2020		
Programme activity (submitted with annual plan 2020)			€ 4.460.163	€ 3.768.822	Deviation
Country	Project number	Outcome			%
<b>Burundi</b>			<b>€ 617.544</b>	<b>€ 471.384</b>	<b>24%</b>
	IDEAL20.BI.VNG	VNG staff salaries and costs	€ 101.467	€ 96.209	5%
	IDEAL20.BI.RPM	RPM staff salaries and costs	€ 79.511	€ 66.581	16%
	IDEAL20.BI.ORG	PARTNER staff salaries and costs	€ 76.402	€ 78.180	-2%
	IDEAL20.BI.GE	Gender	€ 17.150	€ 19.712	-15%
	IDEAL20.BI.01	Outcome 1	€ 57.149	€ 65.300	-14%
	IDEAL20.BI.02	Outcome 2	€ 140.587	€ 109.689	22%
	IDEAL20.BI.03	Outcome 3	€ 145.279	€ 35.714	75%
<b>Mali</b>			<b>€ 458.522</b>	<b>€ 408.522</b>	<b>11%</b>
	IDEAL20.ML.VNG	VNG staff salaries and costs	€ 89.100	€ 89.100	0%
	IDEAL20.ML.RPM	RPM staff salaries and costs	€ 31.000	€ 31.000	0%
	IDEAL20.ML.GE	Gender	€ 10.000	€ 10.000	0%
	IDEAL20.ML.01	Outcome 1	€ 198.047	€ 148.047	25%
	IDEAL20.ML.02	Outcome 2	€ 70.558	€ 70.558	0%
	IDEAL20.ML.03	Outcome 3	€ 59.818	€ 59.818	0%
<b>Palestinian Territory</b>			<b>€ 889.727</b>	<b>€ 742.357</b>	<b>17%</b>
	IDEAL20.PS.VNG	VNG staff salaries and costs	€ 88.415	€ 88.415	0%
	IDEAL20.PS.RPM	RPM staff salaries and costs	€ 90.835	€ 90.835	0%
	IDEAL20.PS.GE	Gender	€ 19.453	€ 19.310	1%
	IDEAL20.PS.01	Outcome 1	€ 568.176	€ 454.922	20%
	IDEAL20.PS.02	Outcome 2	€ 78.226	€ 45.390	42%
	IDEAL20.PS.03	Outcome 3	€ 44.623	€ 43.485	3%
<b>Rwanda</b>			<b>€ 658.060</b>	<b>€ 605.007</b>	<b>8%</b>
	IDEAL20.RW.VNG	VNG staff salaries and costs	€ 98.656	€ 98.656	0%
	IDEAL20.RW.RPM	RPM staff salaries and costs	€ 58.256	€ 58.256	0%
	IDEAL20.RW.ORG	PARTNER staff salaries and costs	€ 26.114	€ 26.114	0%
	IDEAL20.RW.GE	Gender	€ 41.266	€ 41.266	0%
	IDEAL20.RW.01	Outcome 1	€ 224.162	€ 175.150	22%
	IDEAL20.RW.02	Outcome 2	€ 156.341	€ 152.300	3%
	IDEAL20.RW.03	Outcome 3	€ 53.264	€ 53.264	0%
<b>Somalia</b>			<b>€ 579.123</b>	<b>€ 493.329</b>	<b>15%</b>
	IDEAL20.SO.VNG	VNG staff salaries and costs	€ 122.125	€ 112.081	8%
	IDEAL20.SO.RPM	RPM staff salaries and costs	€ 87.662	€ 87.632	0%
	IDEAL20.SO.ORG	PARTNER staff salaries and costs	€ 19.224	€ 19.224	0%
	IDEAL20.SO.GE	Gender	€ 54.172	€ 52.672	3%
	IDEAL20.SO.01	Outcome 1	€ 89.470	€ 61.360	31%
	IDEAL20.SO.02	Outcome 2	€ 96.970	€ 81.110	16%
	IDEAL20.SO.03	Outcome 3	€ 109.500	€ 79.250	28%

<b>South Sudan</b>			€ 487.180	€ 447.180	8%
	IDEAL20.SS.VNG	VNG staff salaries and costs	€ 94.729	€ 94.729	0%
	IDEAL20.SS.RPM	RPM staff salaries and costs	€ 104.331	€ 104.331	0%
	IDEAL20.SS.GE	Gender	€ 9.000	€ 9.000	0%
	IDEAL20.SS.01	Outcome 1	€ 80.460	€ 60.460	25%
	IDEAL20.SS.02	Outcome 2	€ 119.474	€ 139.475	-17%
	IDEAL20.SS.03	Outcome 3	€ 79.185	€ 39.185	51%
<b>Uganda</b>			€ 620.007	€ 451.043	27%
	IDEAL20.UG.VNG	VNG staff salaries and costs	€ 100.905	€ 90.000	11%
	IDEAL20.UG.RPM	RPM staff salaries and costs	€ 73.195	€ 73.195	0%
	IDEAL20.UG.GE	Gender	€ 84.371	€ 44.371	47%
	IDEAL20.UG.01	Outcome 1	€ 74.060	€ 40.000	46%
	IDEAL20.UG.02	Outcome 2	€ 230.642	€ 146.642	36%
	IDEAL20.UG.03	Outcome 3	€ 56.836	€ 56.836	0%
<b>Programme Wide Activities</b>					
	IDEAL20.PWA	Programme Wide Activities	€ 150.000	€ 150.000	0%
	<b>Programme management</b>		<b>€ 251.017</b>	<b>€ 256.136</b>	<b>-2%</b>
<b>Management</b>			<b>€ 251.017</b>	<b>€ 256.136</b>	<b>-2%</b>
	IDEAL20.02.VNG	Management (VNG staff time)	€ 152.129	€ 139.741	8%
	IDEAL20.02.PSC	Steering Committee	€ 12.053	€ 9.575	21%
	IDEAL20.02.LEARN	Monitoring and learning	€ 69.501	€ 87.550	-26%
	IDEAL20.02.GENDER	Gender and conflict sensitivity	€ 17.335	€ 19.270	-11%
	<b>External audits</b>		<b>€ 20.000</b>	<b>€ 20.000</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Audit</b>	IDEAL20.03		€ 20.000	€ 20.000	0%
<b>Evaluator</b>	IDEAL20.02.EVA		€ 0	€ 0	0%
	<b>Contingencies</b>		<b>€ 0</b>	<b>€ 0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Contingencies</b>			€ 0	€ 0	0%
<b>Grand total (2019)</b>			<b>€ 4.731.180</b>	<b>€ 4.044.958</b>	<b>14,5%</b>

## 9.4 Deviations and Justifications of the Updated Budget 2020

We have sent the Ministry an update on how we believe the Coronavirus crisis will impact the IDEAL programme. It is impossible to know what the full impact will be, given the fact that the situation changes on a daily basis. From a content point of view, we have decided to keep our focus on our Theories of Change as they stand, seeing as good governance and the social contract remain key elements for local communities to come out of the crisis. There are however some budgetary implications, due to travel restrictions and ability to gather in groups. As a result, we have updated our budget for 2020, which was originally submitted with the Annual Plan in November 2019. The total budget for 2020 has therefore decreased by 14,5%. This budget decrease is compensated by an increased budget for 2021 (see Chapter 9.5).

## 9.5 Overview: Multi-Annual Budget Updated

Now that we have the real expenditure for 2019 and an updated budget for 2020, the multi-annual budget can be updated. We have made updated projections for 2021 as well. This leads to the following overview:

		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL			
Activity	Total 2017-2021 (Original)	2017 Audited	2018 Audited	2019 Audited	2020 (based on updated Annual Plan)	2021 (estimation)	Total 2017-2021 (Adjusted)	% difference	Balance (based on actual figures)	Agreed budget transfer (Jan '19)
<b>Total</b>	€ 17.500.000	€ 2.624.971	€ 3.070.449	€ 3.869.139	€ 4.044.958	€ 3.890.483	€ 17.500.000	0%	0	
<b>1. Programme activities</b>	€ 15.850.000	€ 2.353.390	€ 2.818.487	€ 3.531.667	€ 3.768.822	€ 3.463.483	€ 15.935.849	1%	-85.849	
Burundi	€ 2.400.000	€ 419.759	€ 450.216	€ 598.989	€ 471.384	€ 340.000	€ 2.280.349	-5%	119.651	
Mali	€ 2.049.214	€ 297.435	€ 360.854	€ 415.487	€ 408.522	€ 400.000	€ 1.882.298	-8%	166.916	
Palestinian Territory	€ 2.724.918	€ 309.952	€ 429.357	€ 532.317	€ 742.357	€ 782.000	€ 2.795.983	3%	-71.065	
Rwanda	€ 1.970.868	€ 301.145	€ 283.781	€ 450.311	€ 605.007	€ 411.483	€ 2.051.727	4%	-80.859	
Somalia	€ 1.500.000	€ 291.873	€ 395.790	€ 392.283	€ 493.329	€ 450.000	€ 2.023.275	35%	-523.275	300000
South Sudan	€ 2.380.000	€ 278.033	€ 301.183	€ 450.072	€ 447.180	€ 480.000	€ 1.956.467	-18%	423.533	-300000
Uganda	€ 2.000.000	€ 311.728	€ 448.825	€ 500.146	€ 451.043	€ 450.000	€ 2.161.743	8%	-161.743	
Programme wide activities	€ 825.000	€ 143.466	€ 148.480	€ 192.062	€ 150.000	€ 150.000	€ 784.008	-5%	40.992	
<b>2. Programme management</b>	€ 1.475.000	€ 255.081	€ 237.400	€ 320.805	€ 256.136	€ 407.000	€ 1.476.423	0%	-1.423	
Management (VNG staff time)	€ 755.115	€ 152.966	€ 154.310	€ 152.249	€ 139.741	€ 152.000	€ 751.265	-1%	3.850	
Steering Committee	€ 35.000	€ 7.001	€ 5.150	€ 9.803	€ 9.575	€ 9.500	€ 41.028	17%	-6.028	
Monitoring and learning	€ 349.171	€ 70.934	€ 56.098	€ 70.826	€ 87.550	€ 80.000	€ 365.408	5%	-16.237	
Gender and conflict sensitivity	€ 124.192	€ 24.180	€ 21.842	€ 13.160	€ 19.270	€ 23.500	€ 101.952	-18%	22.240	
Evaluation	€ 211.522	€ -	€ -	€ 74.768	€ -	€ 142.000	€ 216.768	2%	-5.246	
<b>3. External financial audits</b>	€ 175.000	€ 16.500	€ 14.562	€ 16.666	€ 20.000	€ 20.000	€ 87.728	-50%	87.272	
External audit	€ 175.000	€ 16.500	€ 14.562	€ 16.666	€ 20.000	€ 20.000	€ 87.728	-50%	87.272	
<b>4. Contingencies</b>	€ -	€ -	€ -	€ -	€ -	€ -			-	

## 9.6 Deviations and Justifications of Multi-Annual Budget

Some of the deviations have been mentioned before (such as the fact that the audits are cheaper than originally budgeted). Below are the ones that are new or stand out:

- More budget will need to be transferred from South Sudan to Somalia.

In January 2019, we had received permission to transfer €300.000 from the budget for the South Sudan programme to the Somalia programme. **This transfer will probably need to be increased to €400.000.**

- We can see now how approx. € 2mln is needed per country programme.

Some countries are a little over, some are a little under. However, in order to achieve a country's defined IDEAL outcomes, that is about the budget needed. The only exception is the Palestinian Territories, which employs a large grant program used by all major donors there.

- Audit costs are lower than originally budgeted

We had already reported this last year. The Multi-Annual budget shows that in total we will save 50% on audit costs. **We propose to transfer these savings to 1. Programme Activities (€ 85.849) and 2. Programme Management (€1.423).**

## Annex A: Summary IDEAL Midline Results

# Summary Midline Results IDEAL

## Annex A



## About this summary

This document summarises the midterm measurements results of the IDEAL programme for its Advisory Board. The study – performed by The Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) upon request by VNG International – was to collect, analyse and report on the inclusive decisions at local level (IDEAL) programmes' impact, outcomes and outputs at a country level and at a programme level. The midline report measures and reports on the progress of the social contract within local governments (LGs) in seven countries: Burundi, Mali, Palestinian Territories, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda.

The report provides midline values for all the indicators of the IDEAL M&E framework as well as a comparative overview with baseline values across the three dimensions that contribute to strengthening the social contract between local governments (LG) and citizens. In line with the baseline study conducted in 2017, these three dimensions have been conceptualised into six components: responsiveness and effectiveness of service delivery (*output legitimacy*), the inclusiveness and level of civic participation in the policy making process (*input legitimacy*) as well as the policy and institutional environments that allow local governments to act on their mandates (*enabling environment*).

A mixed methods approach was deployed, combining a quantitative short opinion survey with standardized qualitative focus group discussions (FGDs) to capture these social contract dimensions.

**Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten**  
**VNG International**

Nassaulaan 12  
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October 2019

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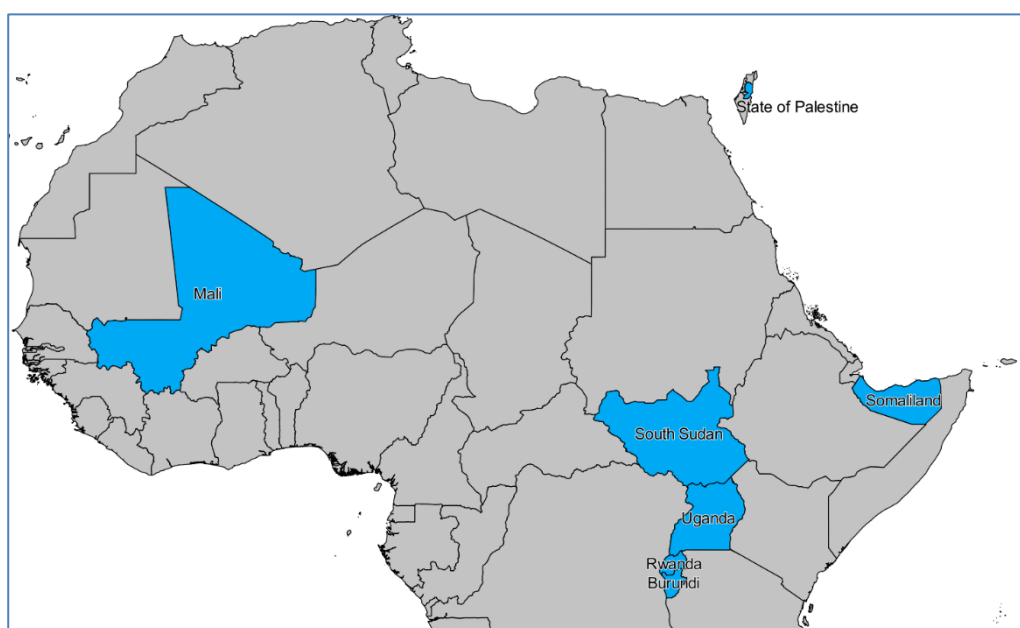
# 1. Introduction

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KIT (Royal Tropical Institute) was requested to conduct the midline assessment of the Inclusive Decisions At Local Level (IDEAL) programme in the seven target countries simultaneously as a follow up to the baseline produced in 2017, at the beginning of the programme.

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The IDEAL programme started in January 2017 in Burundi, Mali, Palestinian Territories, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda. The aim of IDEAL is to strengthen local government (LG) capacity to deal with fragility risks. For each country a specific policy domain has been identified as entry point. At programme level, a comprehensive Theory of Change (ToC) has been developed for the programme as a whole which is accompanied by a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework.



*Figure 1 IDEAL programme locations*

The midterm measurement specifically answered the need of the IDEAL programme to collect, analyse and report about the programmes' impact, outcomes and outputs at a country level and at a programme level by providing midline values for all the indicators of the M&E framework as well as a comparative overview with baseline values. As a result, the common mixed-method methodology developed for the baseline was reworked to reflect the experiences of the first two years of the programme, yet ensuring comparability of the results across the 7 countries of the IDEAL programme irrespective of the differences in policy domains. This report provides a summary of the methodology and detailed information for all seven focus countries. It does not focus on the specificities of the Theories of Change developed at country level, but rather on comparability of results across countries.

### IDEAL Theory of Change

An improvement in Local Government capacities is considered to positively influence the capacity (output level) of the Local Governments and their association to address fragility risks. IDEAL's ToC argues that such ability to address fragility risks relies on a solid social contract which in itself emerges from a perceived legitimacy of the LG by the citizens. The social contract is built on three components: output legitimacy, input legitimacy and the enabling environment.

The 5 Capabilities Methodology, originally designed by European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) to assess progress in capacity development programmes was adapted and abridged to 3 core capabilities for the purpose of the programme. These 3 capabilities are outputs to the programme and translate into the programme outcomes. These outcomes are divided in two levels (I & II). Outcomes Level I capture changes in the delivery of services, the policy-making process and the institutional and policy environment. They are divided in 6 components: Responsiveness, Effectiveness, Participation, Inclusiveness, Policy Environment and Institutional environment, each of which has 5 perception and 5 objective indicators. Perception indicators are used to measure citizens stakeholders' perceptions on changes at the outcome level while Objective indicators assess the core characteristics of each level I outcome. Each indicator is related to a capability of the abridged framework. Outcomes Level II reflect how perception and objective indicators of level I outcomes come together to prove output legitimacy, input legitimacy and the enabling environment. Altogether, outputs and outcomes translate in the social contract. To measure change an index of the various components was created which is represented by the social contract.

The rationale goes as follows: improvements in the capability to generate development results, contributes to responsive and efficient policy outcomes (outcome level I). Subsequently, improvements in the capability to self-organize and act, contributes to inclusive and participatory policy processes (outcome level I). Finally, improvements in the capability to establish supportive relations, contributes to improving the policy and institutional environment in which local governments function (outcome level I). The combination of the output, input legitimacy as well as the institutional environment (outcome level II) all contribute to the strengthening of the social contract (impact level) between the LG and its citizens. Figure 2 demonstrates the relations between outputs, outcomes and impact levels of the Theory of Change.

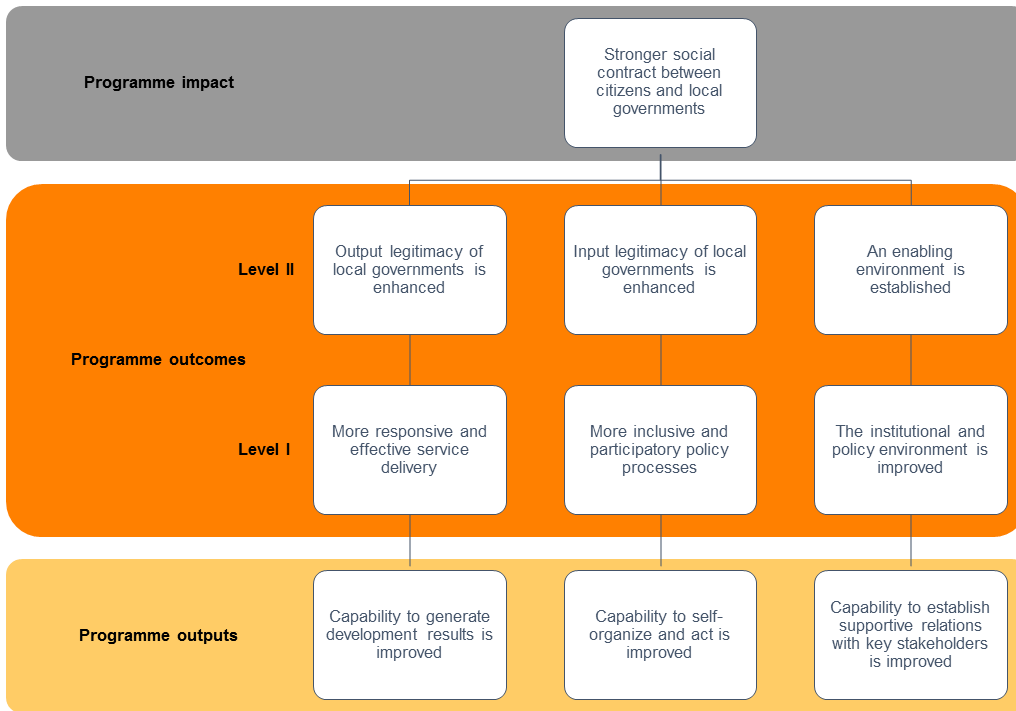


Figure 2 Theory of Change (adapted from IDEAL M&E framework)

The following report is divided according to the components of the Theory of Change. Starting from the Impact level, data is provided for the Output Legitimacy level, Input Legitimacy and Enabling Environment Outcome level II. Subsequently, Output level II are broken down in Output level I components for which data is provided for each perception and objective indicators. All the data is disaggregated per gender and age group as well as by informant type. The data is aggregated at country level.

# 2. Methodology

A mixed-methods methodology was developed to collect comparable data across the 7 countries of the programme for the baseline assessment. In a nutshell, the methodology design combines a quantitative short opinion survey with a standardised qualitative focus group discussions (FGD) to inform the perception and objective indicators of the M&E framework.

## 2.1 Index construction and baseline computations

The programme's impact and outcomes are measured by indices, on the range of 0 to 100, where 100 indicates the best possible case. The *Social Contract Index* combines the three level II outcome indices: *Output Legitimacy Index*, *Input Legitimacy Index* and *Enabling Environment Index*.

Each level II outcome index combines two level I outcome indices, which have each an objective and a perception component. For example, the *Output Legitimacy Index* is composed of *Responsiveness index, Objective*; *Responsiveness index, Perception*; *Effectiveness index, Objective*; *Effectiveness index, Perception*.

Finally, each level I outcome index is composed of five *Indicators*. The perception indicators of Responsiveness, Effectiveness, Inclusiveness and Policy Environment contained one sub-indicator about effects on women and on youth. These two sub-indicators were combined into one single indicator.

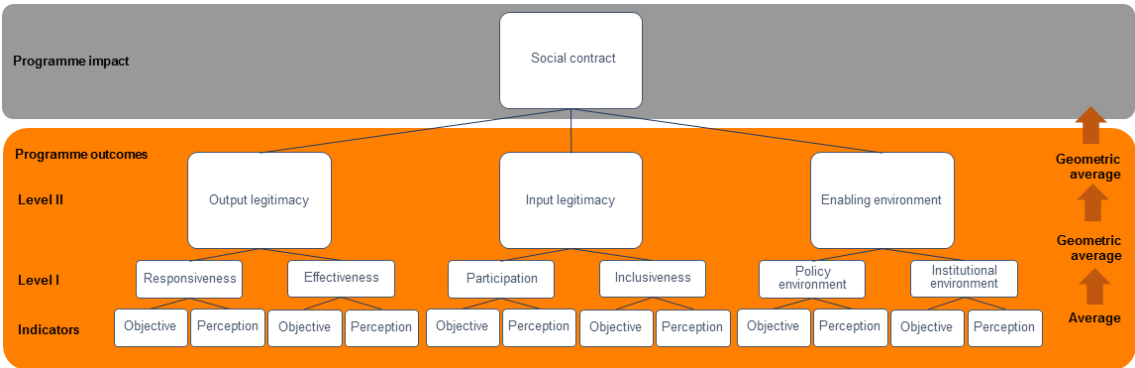


Figure 3 Index construction according to Theory of Change (adapted from IDEAL M&E framework)

## 2.2 Data collection

The mixed-methods methodology for data collection proposed targeted multiple respondents and use triangulation methods (multiple methods, multiple respondents). A combination of the following tools led the design of the methodology for the assignment.

- Small-scale quantitative survey on Local Government performance and functioning (citizens and LG)
- Qualitative focus group (FGDs) discussions with LG staff
- Qualitative focus group discussions with stakeholders who are engaged/collaborate with the LGs

### Qualitative tool for objective indicators

A structured qualitative focus group discussion tool was developed as a mean to obtain information on the objective indicators of the M&E framework. By making use of the collective and institutional knowledge of the key informants at the local government level, the data collection team was able to collect relevant information and triangulate this knowledge with key stakeholders to assess the level of capability of the local governments. Questions and discussion themes were developed specifically to answer each of the 16 objective indicators. Key determinants of capability level were also developed to ensure comparable scoring across locations and countries. This scoring is necessary to compute the social contract index.

Five thematic areas were identified from the objective indicators. These thematic areas: policies, services, actions, data and relations to the local government associations framed the discussions during the FGD. It also helped to select participants to the FGD.

### Quantitative tool

The perception indicators of the index were translated into a short survey. The survey was conducted at two levels: first, it provided an overview of the citizens' views on their local government regarding output and input legitimacy, second, the same short survey was used as a self-assessment at the LG level to gather perceptions on the performance of the LG, with added question on the enabling environment. The short survey was designed to gather efficiently the opinion of a large numbers of citizens in a short amount of time by drafting questions directly related to the indicators to be answered on a four point Likert scale.

## 2.3 Most significant change stories

A training on Most Significant Change stories has been provided to IDEAL teams, but implementation and reporting has been unequal among countries. There was a desire to make use of the methodology to communicate experiences of the programme and for reporting purposes. SPROCKLER is a Dutch service which allows to collect, design and visualise the data of MSC and was agreed upon as a tool for data collection.

The MSC data collection was aimed at LG staff and stakeholders. Because the respondents are the same as for the enabling environment perception indicators, the two aspects of data collection were combined in one single tool. Questions on perception indicators were followed by specific questions on the MSC. Two to three stories per FGD were collected.

All most significant change stories are available at:

<https://visualizer.sprockler.com/en/open/IDEAL/password>

[https://visualizer.sprockler.com/en/open/IDEAL\\_Mali/password](https://visualizer.sprockler.com/en/open/IDEAL_Mali/password)

[https://visualizer.sprockler.com/en/open/IDEAL\\_Palestine/password](https://visualizer.sprockler.com/en/open/IDEAL_Palestine/password)

[https://visualizer.sprockler.com/en/open/IDEAL\\_SouthSudan/password](https://visualizer.sprockler.com/en/open/IDEAL_SouthSudan/password)

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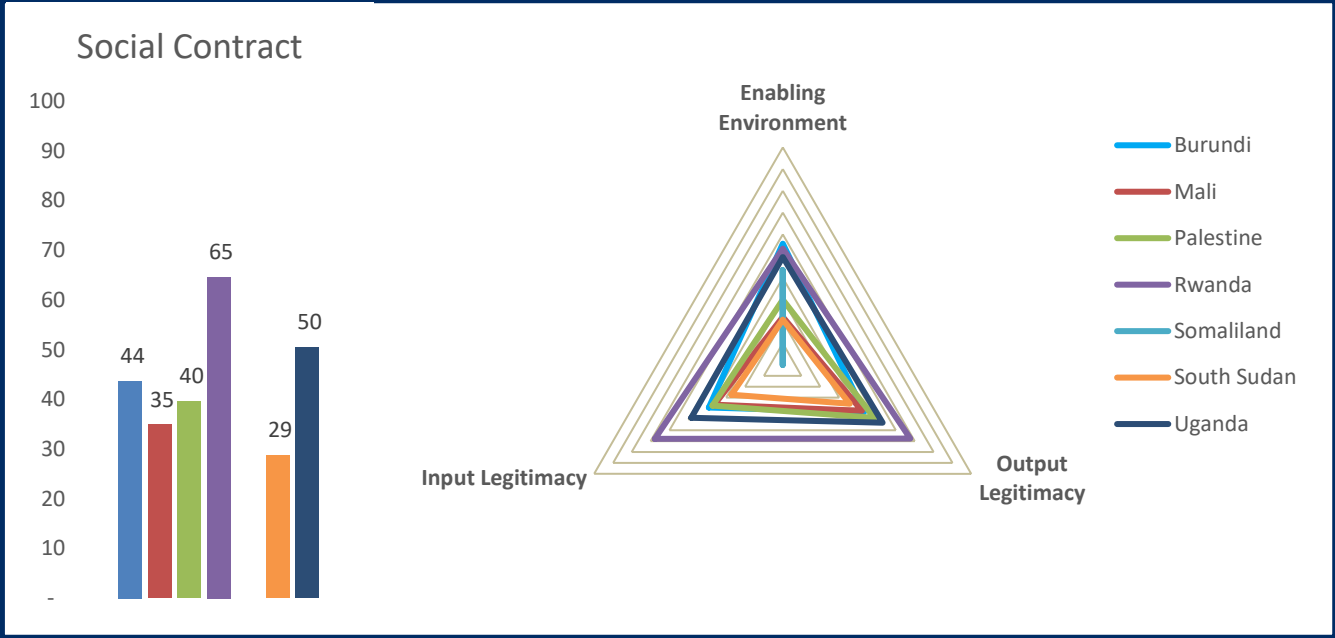
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# 3. Results Theory of Change (per country)

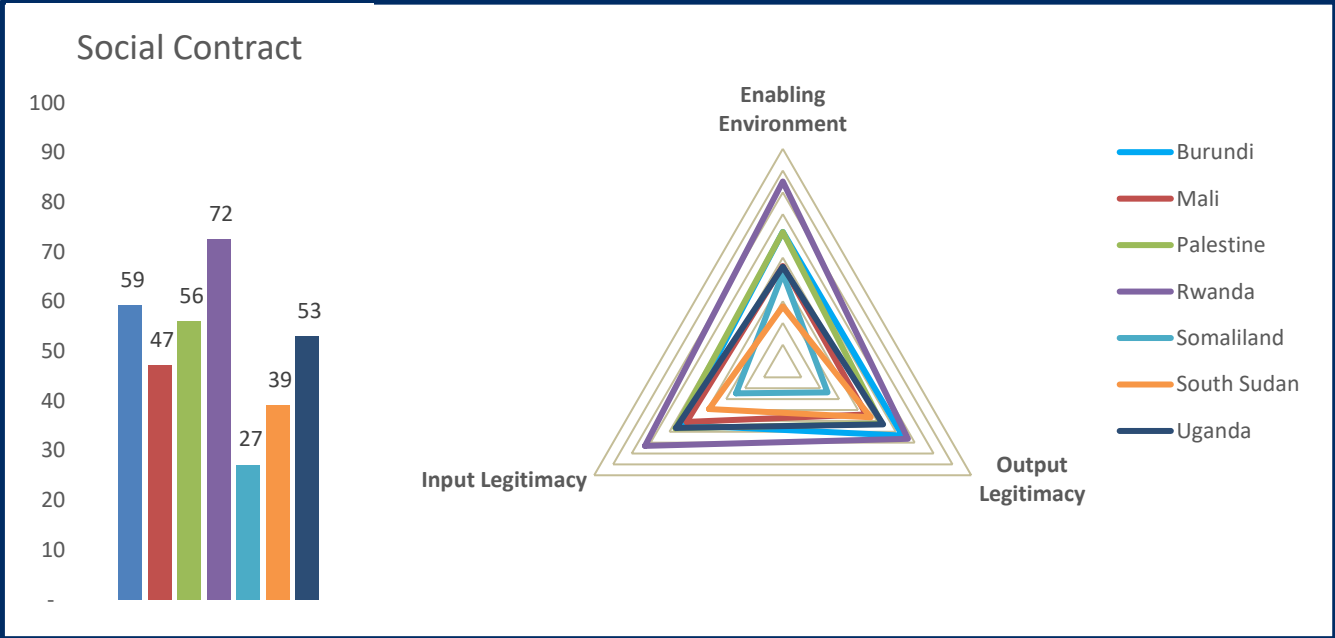
## 3.1. Impact level results – Social Contract

	Burundi	Mali	Palestine	Rwanda	Somaliland	South Sudan	Uganda
Social Contract (Baseline 2017)	44	35	40	65	-	29	50
Social Contract (Midline 2019)	59	47	56	72	27	39	53

### Baseline (2017)



### Midline (2019)



## Conclusions (overarching)

The midline study indicates an overall strengthening of the social contract between citizens and LGs, with an aggregated average from 44 (baseline) to 50 (midline), and no negative change over time in any of the countries. At the same time scores were not uniform across countries, nor across partner LGs within countries, reflecting the diversity of context specific issues and capacities of the seven IDEAL countries, and their districts (in terms of LG type, size, capacities, and region and focus areas).

Enabling environment and input legitimacy are the stronger dimensions of the social contract, and have also seen most positive change. Little change has been observed in output legitimacy – and in some instances the change was even slightly negative (e.g. Rwanda).

On average, men and non-youth show only negligible higher values for the social contract indicators than women and youth. This warrants close attention in the light of economic disempowerment among these groups.

### *Enabling environment*

- **Enabling environment, together with input legitimacy, are the stronger dimensions of the social contract, and have also seen most positive change**

The results suggest that the enabling environment for municipal governance is generally relatively strong, and significant improvements have been noted by both citizens and political actors.

### *Input legitimacy*

- **Input legitimacy, together with enabling environment, are the stronger dimensions of the social contract, and have also seen most positive change**

The input legitimacy for municipal governance has been determined moderately strong. Interestingly, on the issue of inclusiveness, in many countries stark differences between perception and objective indicators was recorded. It seems reasonable to conclude that political actors at the level of the LGs are likely to have more first-hand insight into the inclusiveness of policy-making, leading to this notable difference in perception and objective indicator scorings.

### *Output Legitimacy*

- **A lower aggregate score and little change could be observed around output legitimacy.** In general this pertains to the observation that positive change has mainly been observed around inclusive, responsive and participatory policymaking, but that this has not yet widely translated into practice.
  - The only exceptions are Burundi and South-Sudan, where output legitimacy is actually the strongest component of the social contract (though this may be due to the lack of distinction between achievements of the LGs and NGO community).

## 4. Conclusions (per country)

**This chapter will highlight the conclusions of the midline report per country; it includes a summary of findings and entry points.**

### 4.1. Palestine

#### Summary of findings

Findings from the surveys and FGDs show a mixed picture of the social contract between citizens and municipalities in Palestine. The results suggest that the enabling environment and input legitimacy are the stronger dimensions of the social contract, and have also seen most positive change. A lower aggregate score and little change could be observed around output legitimacy. In general this pertains to the observation that positive change has mainly been observed around inclusive, responsive and participatory policymaking, but that this has not yet widely translated into practice. Citizens' perceptions were generally less positive than results from the FGDs suggest.

The output legitimacy results suggest that municipal responsiveness is stronger than effectiveness, broadly indicating that municipal policy intentions pertain to higher legitimacy than its actions. This difference is not noticed by citizens who have given the two dimensions equal appreciation, but is pronounced among the decision-makers and stakeholders combined. The slightly positive change in the aggregate score for output legitimacy is wholly driven by a significantly higher responsiveness objective indicator score, reflecting the recent development of municipal strategies on local economic development.

In terms of input legitimacy it can be concluded that (awareness of) opportunities for citizen participation beyond elections are increasing in the Palestinian municipalities, although citizen perception or awareness of this is still relatively low. Inclusiveness can be considered to be slightly stronger due to examples of stakeholder engagement. Youth and gender-sensitive policymaking remains an area of attention. A general awareness of its need was noted among political actors but this has not translated into practice much.

The results suggest that the enabling environment for municipal governance in Palestine is generally relatively strong, and significant improvements have been noted by both citizens and political actors. This particularly rings true for the policy environment. Regular dissemination of key policy and service delivery documents, and an openness to using ideas from elsewhere to improve are strong points. The positive score and change from the objective indicators' scores on the institutions dimension can however mostly be attributed to the functioning of local economic development forums.

Apart from the general trends and patterns described differences between municipalities suggest varying dynamics have contributed to the different scores. In disaggregating scores between men and women, and youth and non-youth, remarkably little to negligible variation can be observed across all indicators, which warrants close attention in the light of economic disempowerment among these groups.

## Entry points

### *Output legitimacy*

- All municipalities have defined a local economic development strategy. This is a good starting point for further operationalisation and implementation of local economic development plans with a strategic, coherent vision.
- A further delineation of tasks and productive collaboration between those responsible for local economic development could help in the operationalisation of the local economic development strategy

### *Input legitimacy*

- Citizen involvement initiatives, such as town hall meetings or consultation rounds, and regular dissemination of policy documents and news from the municipality have been instituted widely but a sustained effort is needed to effectively reach the wider citizenry, allow for dissenting voices and contribute to a more broadly shared sense of participation. Social media and other interactive, online platforms, which are already widely used could help with that.
- Local economic development forums, with a diverse representation, are instituted and active in all municipalities. An effort could be made to check if all relevant groups, including politically well-established groups, are represented in these forums as the process of its formation was not inclusive in itself.
- Gender and youth-sensitive policymaking and service-delivery remains underexplored. Although an awareness for its need has been observed among political actors, more could be done to translate this into practice, and make policymaking and service delivery more inclusive.

### *Enabling environment*

- An openness to using insights and experiences from elsewhere to improve policymaking and service delivery are strong points, but more effort is needed to conceptualise concrete ways of putting this into practice. Municipalities can take a more active responsibility in this, including in a facilitative or supporting role vis-à-vis stakeholders.
- An awareness of gender and youth sensitive programming at government level is recognised among citizens. This goodwill should be harnessed by translating this capacity into action.
- Although the local government association is functioning and some municipalities are contributing to it, its potential is still underexploited. Technical assistance to the role of the association in representing and supporting municipalities is advised.

## 4.2. Mali

### Summary of findings

The midline study indicates an overall strengthening of the social contract between citizens and LGs (*communes*) from 35 (baseline) to 47 (midline). This improvement is particularly due to an improved enabling environment (22 to 46) and input legitimacy (36 to 51), and to a lesser extent to output legitimacy (42 to 44). Men (49) and non-youth (48) show slightly higher values for the social contract indicators than women (46) and youth (46).

The indicator values for responsiveness are higher than those for effectiveness are at midline. As for gender (men and women) and age (youth and non-youth), men and non-youth gave slightly higher scores than women or youth. However, the midline indicator values for responsiveness and effectiveness show a decrease.

This institutionalized participatory bottom-up approach for local development planning, which is may explain the relatively high value for the responsiveness indicator. Households (survey) appear to experience the use of the participatory bottom-up approach as less participatory and inclusive. Incomplete decentralization in the water sector combined with limited local government resources are the main constraints for local governments to provide water services to citizens in general and targeting specific groups. This may explain the lower values for effectiveness indicators, and the slight decrease of effectiveness observed at midline.

The indicator values for participation are higher than those for inclusiveness are at midline. The values disaggregated according to gender (men and women) and age (youth and non-youth) show higher values for men respectively non-youth than for women respectively youth. The midline indicator values for both participation and inclusiveness indicate considerable progress. The use of a standardized, participatory and bottom-up approach for elaborating local development plans may again explain the improvement in participation; although households still perceive it less. Also mentioned above, local governments have trouble delivering inclusive services in the water sector. They do not fully exploit the information collected during the elaboration of the local development plans. Furthermore, it may be questioned too what extent decision-making processes during the implementation of the four-year local development plans (annual planning and budgeting) are participatory and inclusive.

At midline, the indicator values for policy are higher than those for (local) institutions are; specifically for perception indicators, which is notable. The midline indicator values for policy and (local) institutions show considerable progress.

According to the FGDs, the progress made in policy is mainly attributed to the efforts made by local governments to disseminate information on local policies, budgets and activities, and the (training) services provided by AMM (gender, IWRM).

From an IWRM perspective, consultation and coordination with user groups other than drinking water users is rather ad hoc based; e.g. in case of technical problems or conflicts about access and use. Hence, the relatively low value of the indicator on (local) institutions. Two local institutions are currently actively involved in water sector management at local level: (i) the LG technical

committee, which ensures general coordination of WASH activities, and (ii) the AUEP, which is responsible for the management of drinking water facilities such as pumps and fountains.

### Entry points

There is an overall conducive policy environment and local governments have experience with appropriate methods for participatory local policy development but still have limited capacity (resources, skills and tools) to implement genuine IWRM policies and deliver impact-oriented and inclusive services in the water sector. The MSC change stories showed a large degree of appreciation of VNG-I's technical expertise.

Possible strategic interventions for the IDEAL programme:

- Support lobby by AMM for enhanced decentralization of the water sector (e.g. full transfer of resources from central to local level).
- Facilitate and support collaboration between AMM and the ministry in charge of IWRM (DNH) to develop such a IWRM framework and support local government in applying the framework through developing and testing the appropriate tools.
- Evaluate the local governments' capacities (human resources, tools, etc.) to maintain and improve the participatory and inclusive character of annual exercises, such planning, budgeting and accountability (various methods of information sharing and feedback targeting different social groups).

### 4.3. Rwanda

#### Summary of findings

The aim of the IDEAL programme is to strengthen the LGs' capacity to deal with fragility risks. In the case of Rwanda, urbanisation has been identified as an entry point. In order to address fragility risks according to the IDEAL programme, the LGs require a strong social contract, which is reflected by citizens' perceived legitimacy of their LGs. The midline total country score for Rwanda's social contract is 72, which according to the IDEAL M&E framework can be defined as "high". The baseline total country score was 65 ("medium"). Two of the individual scores have moved from medium to high, these are input legitimacy (68 to 73) and enabling environment (53 to 84). The output legitimacy score remained "medium" and was slightly lower from 68 to 66. These results suggest that citizens still perceive their LG as legitimate actors in terms of developing urbanisation related policies and being responsible and effective in service delivery. Since the baseline the local government has improved in establishing more inclusive and participatory policies but especially the enabling environment has become more conducive for the LGs' work.

In Rwanda, a research visa issued by the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NIRS) is required to conduct surveys and focus group discussions. The visa was approved the same day that fieldwork started in Nyagatare District. The lesson is to start at least two months in advance to acquire the research visa from NISR, to inform districts in time. In general, one should avoid June and July for surveys as there is Imihigo /district planning in these months and implement the end line survey in late April or May 2021.

The data presented in this report was gathered for a baseline study carried out in six districts in Rwanda: Huye, Muhanga, Musanze, Nyagatare, Rubavu and Rusizi. The perception indicators are based on citizens' opinions of the output (responsiveness and effectiveness) and input (participation and inclusiveness) legitimacy indices. The objective indicators were translated into questions that were posed during FGDs in order to capture the political actors' views. The level I outcome aimed to capture opinions of the delivery of services, the policy making process and the institutional and policy environment in which LGs and their associations operate. This was illustrated through the perception indicator (surveys) and objective indicator (FGDs), which provided useful insights on the general differences between citizens' opinion and those of political actors.

In terms of output legitimacy citizens score responsiveness and effectiveness less high in the midline survey than in the baseline survey. But, these perception indicators still remain "high" in the midline measurement: Citizens estimate policies adequately address their concerns and policies are effective, with clearly defined roles of actors. The objective indicators for responsiveness have remained almost the same from the baseline (50) to the midline (47), but are still at a relatively low level, and to be improved. It means policies targeting citizen concerns still need special attention from policy actors although citizen themselves rate these policies much higher. As for effectiveness objective scores went up from the baseline to the midline indicating that policy actors assess the LG being much more effective in addressing citizen needs and in defining roles of actors. With this positive trend policy actors now score this indicator almost equally as citizens do.

Regarding input legitimacy and comparing baseline performance scores to midline scores, citizens score participation slightly higher in the midline survey than in the baseline survey. But for inclusiveness the score is less high in the midline compared to the baseline. Both perception scores are “high” in the midline survey, citizens are still satisfied with the ability of LGs to facilitate citizens’ engagement in decision making processes, and to ensure inclusiveness and representation of all groups and their interests in decision making processes related to urbanisation policies. But, there is a huge increase in inclusiveness scores for objective indicators, indicating that policy actors assess their LGs now being much more capable of ensuring inclusiveness and representation of all groups and their interests in decision making processes related to urbanisation policies. But, even with this huge increase, the score for inclusiveness is at a “medium” level so improvements are still needed. Participation indicators indicate sufficient levels during the midline measurement, during the baseline LG policy makers scored participation as “medium”, citizens and LG policy makers are now both satisfied with the ability of LGs to facilitate citizens’ engagement in decision making processes.

The perception indicator level for the policy and institutional environment has remained more or less the same but the objective indicators show remarkable change. Policy actors scores are higher in the midline measurement compared to the baseline. It means they are now much more satisfied with the LGs policy enabling environment and especially with the institutional environment of the local government.

For input and output legitimacy overall, there are no statistically significant differences in perception scores between men and women, and between the youth and non-youth.

### Entry points

Proposed entry points of the midline study include:

#### *Output legitimacy:*

- The somewhat negative trends in perception indicator scoring of citizens from baseline to midline for responsiveness and effectiveness are also a small wake-up call for LG to continue to address citizen needs in policies and keeping their policies effective. The low score of objective indicators on responsiveness from policy makers (47) already shows their awareness on this issue.
- A huge variety of policy documents that also address citizen needs is available, generally known by LG staff but not always known by stakeholders. Continuous efforts are needed from the LG to include citizens and stakeholders concerns in policies. LG staff indicated themselves that policies targeting citizen concerns still need additional attention. During the baseline, facilitation of knowledge-sharing events among LG staff was mentioned in order to raise awareness of urbanisation policies and related strategies, this is still needed.

*Input legitimacy:*

- There is a, although small, negative trend in perception scores for inclusiveness, therefore LG should intensify efforts in addressing inclusiveness and representation of all groups and their interests in decision making processes related to urbanisation policies.
- Inclusiveness scores for objective indicators increased, indicating that policy actors assess their LG now being much more capable of ensuring inclusiveness and representation of all groups and their interests in decision making processes related to urbanisation policies. But, even with this increase, the score for inclusiveness is at a “medium” level so improvements are still needed.
- Information sharing is well planned and regular but sometimes considered too unilateral from district to citizens, continuous efforts are needed to ensure information effectiveness for all citizens and structurally gather feedback from citizens. The level of engagement with the information needs to be improved, explaining to citizens what they can do with the information they are provided with which will then lead to true participation and inclusion.
- The baseline results advocated for facilitation of a needs assessment to understand and identify the barriers different demographics face in accessing decision making processes, specifically in regards to women and the youth. Although during the midline measurement women stakeholders indicate having a voice at district level, women representatives indicated that not all women are heard, especially at the lower level, they struggle to understand or articulate their needs to the district. Additional efforts are needed to address gender more effectively for all women, at all levels in society. The same applies to youth, the district needs to continue and improve their efforts understanding and addressing their specific needs.

*Enabling environment:*

- Not all women and youth needs across all levels in society are yet sufficiently understood and addressed, IDEAL needs to continue to build capacity to further promote gender sensitive services of the LG urbanisation policies.
- Stakeholders and citizens understand that the LG cannot be everywhere, that funding for LG is limited to address every citizen’s need and that strategic choices have to be made but this is where RALGA’s advocacy and capacity building becomes necessary, and should be strengthened. For instance in ensuring that policy meetings, planning and addressing real citizen needs are interlinked, better matching national level and local level policy making.

## 4.4. Somaliland

### Summary of findings

The results of the midline measurement reflect a weak social contract between LGs and their citizens in Somaliland. Overall, participative policy making on LED is largely absent in the target districts, key services are insufficient or inequitably organised and the enabling environment needs to be strengthened in order to facilitate the strengthening of the social contract.

Looking specifically at output legitimacy, both responsiveness and effectiveness of LGs remains limited. Policies specific to LED policies are not in place in the districts, with only Zeila showing some evidence of LED topics being included in broader frameworks. Due to insufficient resources and limited staff capacity, services are insufficiently available and do not always address the needs of all groups in society. Alarming, in Las Anod exclusion of communities with IDPs and other political affiliations is commonplace and may further entrench existing hostilities if not addressed.

Input legitimacy remains equally weak in the Somaliland setting. Participative policy making on LED is not institutionalised in the covered districts, with only Zeila showing some evidence of experience with rudimentary local policy development. Participation of citizens is mostly ad hoc, and does not normally include participation at the various stages of policy development. In terms of inclusiveness, consultations and policy development mechanisms do not necessarily promote all citizens to participate (effectively favouring an in-crowd of clan elders, former LG staff and certain CSOs). Women and youth do not seem adequately represented, and their needs are not reflected in either policies or resulting services. Clan based identity politics and allegiances complicate LGs mandates and legitimacy – and in the case of Las Anod risk promoting politics of exclusion.

With regards to the enabling environment, gains have been made by the LGA but many facilitating mechanisms remain absent or insufficient. Overall, there are some clear indications that ALGASL has been able to reach out to a larger group of LGs and has expanded its capacity to offer services. However these gains have not been fully institutionalised and need to be further expanded in order to address the (significant) technical assistance and lobby needs of LGs in the country.

The results of the midline offer plenty of points of entry to strengthen the three districts. Given the fact that local policy making is essentially non-existent in both Baaligubadle and Las Anod, a clear entry point would be for VNGI to support the development and implementation of a LED policy in these districts, paying special attention to creating participatory mechanism which can serve as a standard for policy making in the districts. Examples of good practice could be captured and shared by ALGASL to stimulate other member districts to adapt participatory mechanism.

## Entry points

Despite the difficulties local governments face in the Somaliland context, there are clear points of entry for VNGI and other actors to support the strengthening of local authorities:

- Participatory policy development: in the absence of any experience with policy elaboration at local level in both Baaligubadle and Las Anod, a comprehensive trajectory can be co-created with the LGs to work on LED policies – placing special emphasis on inclusivity in both the process and resulting final policy
- Focus on social accountability mechanisms: When working on policy development, it would be good to engage CSO actors from the beginning and help organise social accountability mechanisms.
- Selecting CSO stakeholders: the CSOs involved in the midline did not necessarily represent all groups in society, and care should be given to include a variety of stakeholders (women, (sub-) clans, youth, disabled, IDPs, professions etc.). This is important both for contexts where former LG staff and clan-elders (Zeila and Baaligubadle) remain active, as well as in Las Anod where political allegiances differ.
- Gender inclusiveness: though ALGASL has made strides in addressing issues of gender through the provision of trainings to their member district, the translation into policies and service delivery remains almost entirely absent. Where measures have been implemented, they seem to focus on the addition of women to teams but seem to fall short of addressing structural barriers faced by women in the community. VNGI has an opportunity to include gender in all policies as they support institutionalisation of policy elaboration mechanisms.
- Conflict sensitive approaches in Las Anod: marginalising communities through unequitable service provision and lack of representation risks undermining the legitimacy and long term outcomes for the LG. If left unresolved, marginalisation of communities through (expanded) unequal service delivery could exacerbate existing intercommunal tensions.
- Consultation vs communication: In the various staff talks about community consultation this seemingly seems too often constitute awareness raising activities rather than moments for input.
- Further specifying LED: in the context of Somaliland, it would be good to specify how VNGI can specifically support LED interventions. One common denominator of all districts is their positioning on or near borders and function as trade nodes, which may be a potential entry point.

## 4.5. Uganda

### Summary of findings

The midline measurement for the IDEAL programme in Uganda indicates moderate scores on all the components of the social contract. This reflects an overall situation where policies, services and participatory mechanisms are generally in place – yet quality, inclusiveness and participation are still major points for improvement.

The overall social contract score for the midline measurement is 53, a slight increase from 50 recorded at the baseline measurement. Whereas the scores for the input legitimacy increased compared to the baseline (from 48 to 57), the score for output legitimacy remained stable at 53 and the enabling environment reported a small decrease (from 50 to 46). Scores were not uniform across the LGs, reflecting the diversity of context specific issues and capacities of the seven IDEAL districts (in terms of LC type, size, capacities, and region and focus areas). Despite these differences, a number of clear trends can be observed on the various components.

Within output legitimacy, the capacity of LGs to address specific needs of their citizens remains somewhat limited. However, almost all LGs have policies in place on WM and/or LED, the extent to which these are implemented and translated into effective service delivery varies considerably. In districts like Koboko and Lira, services on WM are present and somewhat effective, though do not yet fully capture the entire WM spectrum and limited financial resources in the face of ever expanding urban populations put pressure on service delivery. In districts focussing on LED and OSR, there are some key issues both with collection of revenue. Moreover, there is a general lack of transparency on how local taxes are allocated, and it is largely unclear how this translates into services tackling key issues in the community. Out of all LGs, Kamuli seems to be having the greatest issues on output legitimacy, lacking both policy documents on waste management and any effective services (the latter having collapsed in the last couple of years).

Input legitimacy is the strongest component of the social contract in Uganda, though scores still fall within the medium range. Participatory mechanisms seem to be present and operational (though not regular) in most LGs. However, they are often only implemented to the extent that they are required by the national level – resulting in meetings that ‘tick the box’ rather than proactively seek the input from constituents. In many cases, the input from citizens is gathered, but often not translated into policies due to lack of resources and competing political interests. The regularity of meetings is often defined, but lack of resources and prioritisation by LG staff mean consultations remain largely ad-hoc. Moreover, citizen participation is nominally sought at either the beginning or end of policy processes, but LGs generally do not structurally involve citizens at other stages of the policy making cycle (strategy selection and decision-making). Notable exceptions to this seems to be Koboko and Bukomansimbi, who have tried to more actively engage with their citizens – though neither seem to have fully institutionalised this practice either. Notably, LG staff in the districts seem to have different interpretations on the mandate and decision making space available to them, possibly restricting the extent to which LGs are likely to proactively seek to draft legislation.

The capacity of LGs to include different groups and visions in the policy making process remains somewhat limited, though some encouraging examples were found: Koboko was lauded by the national government for their efforts to address the needs of PWD in public services and planning

processes and Kalangala is experimenting with specific affirmative action interventions to help marginalised women to access markets. To some extent, the structure of Uganda's LCs (which ought to have representatives representing women, youth and people with disabilities) ensures some checks and balances in the LG. Nevertheless, little if any service delivery is differentiated and gender inclusiveness remains more like an afterthought rather than a prescriptive lens in policymaking and service delivery.

The enabling environment component represents the only score that has fallen since the baseline. Moreover it is also the outcome level II that shows the largest discrepancy in scores between the objective and perception indicators; LG staff tend to rate both the policy and institutional environment far more positively than the objective indicators taken from the FGDs would suggest. Concerning the policy environment, publication and circulation of documents scores particularly low for all LGs: though it seems that legislation may be published, difficulty in accessing documents by CSOs and a lack of active circulation effectively limit transparency (and potential for social accountability) throughout the target LGs. On the other hand, exchange on best practices (through twinning either with international municipalities or within Uganda) seems to have resulted in a number of positive improvements in the way LGs work. With regard to the institutional environment, policy coordination mechanisms are increasingly utilised, with Kasese and Kalangala reporting to have recently set up new mechanisms (MDF and business forum, respectively). Nevertheless, these mechanisms remain somewhat new and further focus on fostering active and open participation is needed to ensure institutionalisation. Most LGs are member of UAAU and seem to be reasonably content with the services and lobbying work they provide. However, there is still quite a bit of room for improvement, especially also when it comes to gender inclusive service delivery. ULGA proved difficult to contact for this measurement, which is unfortunate given their importance for rural LGs like Bukomansimbi.

The overall results provide some interesting opportunities for the VNGI programme in the country, and some entry points have been included in the next section. Overall, there is an opportunity for VNGI to build on the gains made in recent years by the various LGs, especially when it comes to ensuring nascent participatory mechanisms are implemented in a more regular, participative and inclusive manner.

## Entry points

Provide examples of entry points for intervention and reasons.

- Supporting participatory policy consultation processes: though formally in place, many current mechanisms seemingly do not guarantee active participation.
- Gender inclusive service delivery: Although gender is addressed by most LGs in their policies and even finds its way in a number of services, gender largely remains an afterthought rather than a purposely applied lens. UAAU indicated to be interested in starting up gender trainings again, which may be an entry point.
- Focus on publication, circulation and record keeping: there is a clear discrepancy between what LGs say is communicated (be it legislation, minutes or otherwise), and what CSOs indicated has actually happened.
- CSO engagement: during certain FGDs, it became clear that CSOs are not always aware of VNGI support to LGs and activities remained largely centred on the council and technical staff. Engaging CSOs directly may help further strengthen interventions and help monitor implementation. One avenue may be to focus on how to improve coordination mechanisms/forums.
- Clear communication on allocation of OSR: in some districts where OSR is the focus it remains unclear how collected revenue is allocated. Focus on openness of information and proper filing of public records can help reinforce accountability mechanism in LGs, and encourage citizens to pay as they are sensitised on the benefits (i.e. increased services that are enabled through their contributions).
- Support on scaling up existing interventions: some LGs, like Lira and Kalangala, reported to be growing quickly without necessarily having the means to sustain services for the increased population. Additional resources may not always be available despite acknowledgement by the central government, meaning LGs may have to be supported on how to optimise processes and allocation to do more with existing resources.
- Re-establishing working relationships with both LGA's: at the time of writing, VNGI was only able to work with UAAU; ULGA was difficult to engage.
- Structural engagement 5 year plan Kamuli: seemingly, this district is facing the most serious challenges on policy development and service delivery, and is no longer supported by Goes municipality. Engagement with the development of their new policies could be an opportunity to try and guide them through an inclusive process to address the most urgent issues.
- Clarifying opportunities in decision-making space of LGs: some LG staff like those interviewed in Lira seem to narrowly interpret their mandate as implementing national level policies. VNGI could potentially compile and present evidence of best practices of districts that have sought to more proactively set their own legislative priorities.

## 4.6. Burundi

### Summary of findings

The midline report reports on progress and changes over time on the social contract in eight LGs across two provinces in Burundi: Vyanda, Songa, Bururi, Matana, Rutovu, Gitanga, Bukemba and Mugamba. For the purpose of the midline report, social contract was conceptualised as output legitimacy (responsiveness and effectiveness), input legitimacy (participation and inclusiveness) and enabling environment (policy environment and institutional environment), as per the IDEAL M&E framework.

Data was collected by means of citizens' surveys (n=100 per LG), surveys and Most Significant Change exercises with political actors (n=4-8 per LG), as well as two FGDs per LG, held separately with LG staff/members of the *Comités Mixtes de Sécurité Humaine* and with representatives of civil society organisations.

Burundi achieved an overall score of 59 for its social contract, up from 43 in the baseline research. This falls into the range defined as "medium" in terms of the quality of the social contract as per the IDEAL M&E framework. Compared to the baseline study, all three components of the social contract have increased: output legitimacy (from 43 to 64 points), input legitimacy (from 39 to 54 points), and enabling environment (from 56 to 62). Input legitimacy continues to be the weakest component of the social contract, relatively speaking, whereas output legitimacy is now the strongest part of the social contract, having overtaken the dimension of enabling environment.

All areas of data coverage reveal that differences in perception indicators between male and female respondents are negligible. Somewhat more pronounced differences can be found between youth and non-youth respondents, with youth exhibiting a more sceptical or pessimistic outlook on the LGs' output and input legitimacy. Yet, it should be noted that many of these differences are not statistically significant.

With regard to *output legitimacy*, the midline reveals that citizens' perceptions on the LGs' performance are more positive than the evidence of political actors collected through FGDs. It is also interesting to observe that perception indicators rate responsiveness higher than effectiveness, whereas objective indicators exhibit the opposite: effectiveness scores higher than responsiveness. Specifically, shortcomings seem to persist in the ability of LGs to provide differentiated policies and services for different population groups.

Concerning *input legitimacy*, citizens were, once again, more positive on the LGs' performance compared to political actors. On the issue of inclusiveness, a difference of 21 points between perception and objective indicators was even recorded. It seems reasonable to conclude that political actors at the level of the LGs are likely to have more first-hand insight into the inclusiveness of policy-making, leading to this stark difference in perception and objective indicator scorings. While a number of LGs seem to have functional participation mechanisms in policy-making in place, a relatively common concern seems to be differentiated policy-making to meet the needs of vulnerable groups and the transparent inclusion of specific stakeholder groups in policy-making.

The pattern of perception indicators attributing higher scores than objective indicators is repeated when it comes to the *enabling environment*. Here, the difference is even more striking, despite the fact that for this dimension of the social contract, the respondents are largely the same – namely, political actors. According to perception indicators, the policy environment can be characterised as “very good” and receives nearly the maximum score attainable. Also the institutional environment receives a high score. Objective indicators are significantly lower and give “medium” scores for both.

Ultimately, the data collection brought both strong and weak points to the fore. On the upside, LGs have institutionalised information-sharing mechanisms in place to pass on information, e.g. on legislative changes, to citizens; ABELO’s services to LGs were frequently praised by LG staff and its advocacy role was highly appreciated. On the downside, concrete knowledge of recent examples of ABELO’s lobby and advocacy function was largely absent; civil society representatives were hardly, if at all, aware of ABELO’s role; and policy-making at the LGs seems to be insufficiently informed by best practices; and coordination with stakeholders is often weak.

Finally, the overall positive scoring of the social contract in Burundi (59), the large increase since the baseline study two years ago (up by 15 points), and the often pronounced difference between perception indicator scores (based on the citizen survey for output and input legitimacy) and objective indicator scores (based on FGDs with political actors) warrant a note of caution. As was already highlighted in the fieldwork limitations (section **Fout! Verwijzingsbron niet gevonden.**) and throughout the results section, the findings of this midline study should be read and interpreted against the background of the current political climate in Burundi. Self-censorship, social desirability bias and distorted answers are likely implications of such a climate.

## Entry points

Based on the results of this midline study, the following elements have been identified as points of entry to improve the problem-solving capacities of LGs, promote active and inclusive engagement of citizens, and enhance the external conditions that impact on the capacity of LGs:

- The *responsiveness* of the LGs can be improved by further promoting a differentiated approach to service delivery, suited to different societal groups. It is recommendable to start with building a better understanding of why a differentiated approach to service delivery is necessary, i.e. why different societal groups may have different service needs and how current service delivery does not (sufficiently) serve the needs of different vulnerable groups of society.
- The *effectiveness* of the LGs can be enhanced by conducting a service mapping exercise jointly with local governments, to identify the level and quality of existing services provided, which issues these services address and which service gaps remain. This serves the purpose of creating an understanding of LG staff of how to match community needs and challenges with targeted services. Creating such an understanding of the match (or mismatch) between community needs/challenges and LG services seems critical to further develop targeted strategies of how to solve citizen needs through concrete LG interventions.
- The capacity of LGs to accommodate meaningful *participation* of citizens or groups in policy-making can be improved by clearly identifying the barriers to active and institutionalised involvement of civil society groups in policy-making. This can serve to develop guidelines for civil society participation, to be used by LGs (also beyond the IDEAL programme). Experiences from well-performing LGs can be used to guide this process and share lessons learned.
- The *inclusiveness* of LG policy-making processes can be enhanced by developing inclusiveness guidelines for local governments, both for transparency reasons (who is/was invited and who participated in policy-making) and to ensure equal opportunities for stakeholders. Particular attention may need to be paid to developing targeted strategies to increase the participation of vulnerable actors.
- The *policy environment* can be positively influenced by strengthening the interaction between ABELO and its constituent LGs in order to raise awareness among LG staff and local civil society of the roles and functions of ABELO, increase demand and needs channelling from local to national level and build local support for ABELO's advocacy at national level.
- On the *institutional environment*, gains can be made by working on policy coordination mechanisms between LGs and stakeholders, which are currently relatively weak across the visited LGs. Promoting formal and institutionalised coordination mechanisms should be understood as a two-way process, demanding equal commitment from LGs as well as stakeholders.

## 4.7. South Sudan

### Summary of findings

For the midline, only two locations were surveyed, Kapoeta North and Kapoeta South – resulting in 200 households interviews on peoples' perceptions and four FGDs. The midline used a narrow definition of WASH, which essentially focused on access to water, as other components of WASH (sanitation and hygiene) have not been the target of many activities so far. The baseline found that Kapoeta East had the lowest social contract score, was the most remote locations with less NGO support, while hygiene and sanitation were and remain very poor. As a result, these two methodological adaptations may give a false sense of important improvements since 2017.

Focus Group Discussions with county staff and with stakeholders (NGOs, Women's groups, youths' groups) were held. Discussions were characterised by different level of engagement by stakeholders, but were generally diverse. However, they yielded limited concrete evidences.

Hence, the midline study concludes of a mild improvement of the social contract that is mostly driven by positive perceptions of the citizens on the output and input legitimacy components. At the time of the midline, water was generally but not widely accessible through boreholes – pressure remained high on existing resources. Activities focused on borehole maintenance and repairs as opposed to sustainable management, governance or tackling issues of insecurity and violence related to access to water. Most of the major activities on WASH, including access to water continued to be carried out by NGOs – as it was the case during the baseline due to major shortfalls in counties budget.

On *responsiveness*, perceptions and objective indicators to point out to a relative understanding by the county staff of citizens' priorities and needs. While no significant differences were found between men and women, youth respondents expressed a more negative dispersion of answers when prompted on the counties taking sufficient actions to tackle the needs to the population, and especially those of youths and women.

On *effectiveness*, citizens appear to think that the counties are providing services of relative quality when it comes to access to water. Again, women and men answered did not reveal difference in opinions; however, the youth again raised some negative feelings towards the county having relevant expertise and skills and the ability of the county to effectively improve the needs of youth and women.

The scores on output legitimacy – the strongest component of the social contract may partly be influenced by the lack of distinction between achievements of the county and achievements of the NGO community. Communities may only assess the final output of access to water as opposed to reflecting on who is the service provider who enabled access to services. The structures are in place for the county to fulfil its role, but the funds and actions are absent.

Input legitimacy as also shown an improvement between the baseline and midline measurements, again because of positive perceptions of the people interviewed. A large discrepancy is observed between perception and objective indicators.

*Participation* mechanisms have objectively not changed or improved since the baseline study. Communication between *bomas*, *payams*, and the counties remain reactive to problems as opposed to proactively oriented. While communication comes from the ground up, it respects traditional and

hierarchical processes and does not include feedback mechanism. The youth perceived that all groups can participate in meetings at boma level – however they tend to disagree in greater numbers that the leaders value their opinion as a group. To a certain extent counties' staff avoid direct interface with communities, as they do not have budget to follow up on needs.

*Inclusion* remains inadequate and focused on women and not on other groups in the communities. Women expressed a significantly more negative trend in their answers when prompted on their ability to disagree in public without fear of reprisals. There is insufficient buy-in of processes, decisions and activities made by the county and NGOs on WASH activities in the communities that contributes to further alienation of the communities and the counties.

Training provided by VNG as resulted in awareness of county staff and small steps are taken towards more inclusive processes.

The *enabling environment* is poor. On *policy level*, respondents mostly think positively of the existing national framework and definition of roles. However, there is little place for learning from the ground and from the international community. At *institutional level*, the local government board does not provide services and or support to the counties and therefore hinders the performance of the institutions. The lack of budget transferred to the counties to take up their activities is an important factor contributing to the poor environment with clear consequences on output and input legitimacy.

The main take away of the midline is that improved coordination among stakeholders would not only something be that the county could be capacitated in as part of IDEAL, but would be an entry point which could have positive repercussions on output and input legitimacy. Because the funding situation is unlikely to change before 2021, coordination and facilitation could challenge the current ways and ensure that communities are more involved in defining needs, decision making for improved access to water. As from what was appreciated with the collaboration with VNG, the stories clearly indicated the convening and connecting people power. It would therefore be optimal to capitalise on such value addition to foster sector coordination.

## Entry points

- It is unlikely that in the duration of the project the counties get more financial resources to undertake activities planned in the strategic plans. Therefore, it is fundamental that coordination between the NGOs, the counties and the state is improved in order to improve the effectiveness, responsiveness but also acceptability and accountability of activities undertaken. The small grants approach could be helpful to foster such coordination by providing resources to county to facilitate such coordination and increase the effectiveness and responsiveness of the sector as a whole.
- Community needs assessment should be something that is coordinated between NGOs, counties and communities to get better insights on priorities, create awareness and generate buy-in in decisions made. With NGO support, the county could facilitate such processes and the outcomes could better informed priority settings of all actors. For examples, in communities where water table is low, host participatory meetings where different ideas and options can be discussed in the community and create a common agreement which will yield buy-in from communities. In the end, it is about finding adapted solutions to the needs of the people.
- Reducing the 'gap' between communities and counties by fostering interaction and improving communication and understanding. Develop simple communication mechanism.
- As focus continues to be on access to water, it will be important to address immaterial needs such as governance, management and safety around access to water. The LG should continue to received capacity building on the matter and interact with communities and water management committees on the matter.
- Support the county to develop mechanisms to share information with the communities other than via traditional means and create feedback loops where communities can freely expressed their concerns or positive feedback.
- Build on the positive reactions on the gender training and continue to fostering better understanding of inclusiveness with notions of gender based violence and conflict mitigation and take further action to translate this new knowledge into concrete activities and ways of doing. Broaden the notion of inclusiveness to different groups, including ethnic groups.
- Use the small grants to support the development of locally available spare parts alternatives.
- Use the small grants to improve planning and budgeting skills of LG staff.
- Continue collaboration with NIRAS to improved complementarity between interventions (i.e. water management committees and counties capacities)

## Annex B: Management Response to MTE by VNG International

# MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO IDEAL MID-TERM EVALUATION (Oct 2019)

This is the VNG International management response to the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the Inclusive Decisions at Local Level (IDEAL) programme conducted by ACE Europe.

On behalf of all country teams, and especially of those of Mali, Palestinian Territories, and Somaliland which were visited by the ACE Europe evaluators, we would like to thank and compliment ACE Europe for its consultation process. Throughout their research, all partners were included and consulted. This created a common understanding of the process and findings, even when we disagreed on specific conclusions or recommendations.

The MTE contains a wealth of information and will greatly contribute to the readjustments for the second half of the programme. Of course, as can be expected with a detailed evaluation of this size, there are also conclusions with which we disagree, as well as a few statements that in our view misrepresent particular details. These are, however, the exceptions and this management response would rather focus its responses on the conclusions and recommendations that have a considerable impact on the direction of the programme.

We would like to structure our response into the following categories:

## 1. Ambition / scope / pathway of change

*“The overall ToC is based on a comprehensive and elaborated understanding of the social contract concept and on relevant literature. The country ToCs are aligned with the overall program ToC and are coherent with the country specific analysis executed during the inception phase.” (See par. 125).*

A key observation from the evaluators is that the IDEAL Theories of Change are too ambitious given the volatile and challenging programme environments, where achieving changes might take longer than the programme lifespan, and that the TOCs insufficiently capture the pathways of change. As TOCs are meant to be fluid and continuously adapted to the changing environment, this suggestion falls in line with our planned intention to review and revise the TOCs:

**ACTION:** On the basis of two years of execution the country teams can now define a more detailed picture of the desired and feasible pathways of change, and can therefore revise the TOCs by including: intermediary outcomes, linkages between outcomes, more concrete assumptions (including between input and output), as well as more specified outputs (where required) per country. During this exercise we will pay particular attention to what is within our span of control versus span of influence, as well as the role of civil society (see next point).

## 2. Relation local government v. civil society / community

*“VNGI/IDEAL is making considerable efforts to look for collaboration, synergy and complementarity with other development players” (p. 7).*

IDEAL's point of departure as a “local government programme” creates risks of unintentionally paying insufficient attention to the ‘claiming capacity’ of CSOs, communities and other stakeholders in fostering a social contract. It is the ultimate ambition of IDEAL to strengthen the social contract and therefore have impact on communities including its marginalized groups. As the Evaluator points out, the social contract requires not only a constructive government, but also “claiming capacity” on the side of civil society and communities.

While IDEAL is not a capacity building programme for CSOs, in particular circumstances where it is relatively cost- and labour-efficient and does no harm we do involve CSOs in our capacity building interventions. In the majority of cases, we look to our role as a network organization that engages and connects relevant CSOs to LGs, as well as train, advise and support LGs to involve CSOs in their dialogue processes with civil society. We also connect with other initiatives implemented in our target countries that are focused more on civil society and engage them to contribute to specific elements of the IDEAL country programmes.

**ACTION:** We will be more specific about this aspect of our interventions in the planning of and reporting on IDEAL activities.

### **3. Elite capture / social exclusion / conflict sensitivity**

*“IDEAL program makes great efforts to adapt to the fragile contexts in which it works, and thus displays a conflict-sensitive approach in practice.” (p. 7).*

The Evaluator considers elite capture a risk. The MTE states that they have “not seen examples of pro-active targeted approaches by local governments in IDEAL’s target countries to identify specific marginalised groups as they tend to work with the known representatives of the various sectors in society” (See par. 76). At the same time, the Evaluator confirms that the risk of elite capture is inherent to working with government and civil society in fragile settings and not easily tackled. It is therefore not likely to eliminate elite capture fully within the IDEAL programme.

**ACTION:** Still, we can make the ToCs more explicit about assumptions related to elite capture, as well as be more explicit about it in our monitoring mechanisms (see section below on M&E&L),.

### **4. Gender sensitivity**

*“The evaluators found evidence of continuous efforts to maintain and ensure gender sensitivity. (p. 7-8)*

We were happy to read this. We also take on board the observations from the evaluators that although promising steps are taken on gender sensitivity, related interventions could sometimes be better linked to pathways of change with more focus on follow-up.

**ACTION:** We will continue with the TAC in Rwanda and assess to what extent it offers opportunities for applying similar interventions in other countries. PEA/Conflict Analysis/Gender Analysis will be conducted again next year.

### **5. Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA)**

The Evaluators remark that the programme design might require “more flexibility”, stating that especially in fragile settings “it is important to initiate long-term change through a rapid cycle of short-term quick win projects that are problem-driven”. The Evaluator proposes to experiment with Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation. However, the Evaluators also state that the experience of members of the IDEAL Advisory Board is “that the application of PDIA is incredibly difficult on the ground” and it would “require a complete change of mindset (also with the donor)”.

**ACTION:** 1) We will have a discussion with the Ministry on the desirability of PDIA, especially regarding the impact on long-term programme deliverables, and 2) We will experiment with PDIA on small-scale, e.g. through microgrants, which are already applied in some IDEAL countries. For learning reasons, we are interested to incorporate this recommendation and will organise a team workshop on PDIA early 2020.

## 6. Monitoring & Evaluation & Learning

*“In most of the countries (if not all), IDEAL is the only program that is well equipped to address typical capacity challenges of LGs and this should appear clearer from the ToC and the execution of the program.” (See par. 133) ‘.*

The Evaluators observe that the M&E system, though of a decent quality, focuses too much on the Outcome level and not enough on the relation to changes that are realised at the Output level and the effectiveness of interventions at input level. Closer monitoring at these levels would also allow for more effective learning. Further, the Evaluators recommend that we “improve documentation of informal monitoring” (recommendation 9).

**ACTION:** We will therefore review our M&E methodology and Learning Strategy to make them more practical and to allow for better capturing of pathways of change. In doing so, we will assign an external specialist and seek consultation with DSH’s M&E staff and IOB to ensure alignment with the Ministry’s M&E&L system and formats. Similarly, we will explore options for easy updating of Political Economy Analyses in monthly RPM reports to allow for continuous monitoring of the programme environment (do not harm, conflict sensitivity). Existing manuals and guidelines (e.g. Gender and Conflict Sensitivity Guidelines) will be assessed to see how they can be used by field staff more effectively (practical tools rather than theoretical guides).

## 7. Proximity of support

*“Due to their [VNG International’s] proximity to the field and their embeddedness (because of their partnerships with the LGAs) the local teams are capable of ‘reading’ the political situation.” (Par. 135)*

The Evaluators stress the importance of “proximity of support” and “capacity on the ground” (e.g. on-the-job coaching, local presence, especially in fragile settings, and recognises that the we have made progress in this regard compared to our previous LGCP programme. The Evaluators emphasize a good practice in Mali where additional HR support was hired dedicated to close-up monitoring of the impact of the activities on the ground. This type of monitoring was considered “necessary to be able to monitor in a systematic what, if and how the learned skills and practices were taken up” (p. 54). We are happy with this observation, but we also take on board the observation that “systematic documentation of the execution and contribution to change is not sufficiently ensured”.

**ACTION:** We will follow the recommendation to assess per country which type of support by proximity is needed. The Hague Academy for Local Governance has recently conducted a review of training modalities for local governments in fragile settings. We will use this to inform our assessment on the most appropriate type of support and definition of tools for our local teams. In addition, we will consider to expand our local teams with M&E experts on the ground.

## 8. Relevance

*“In most of the countries (if not all), IDEAL is the only program that is well equipped to address typical capacity challenges of LGs and this should appear clearer from the ToC and the execution of the program.” (See par. 133) ‘.*

The relevance of the IDEAL programme and of VNG International as implementing agency is confirmed in the MTE, especially in relation to IDEAL’s potential to address political change processes, with which most development programmes have difficulty. We welcome this confirmation of IDEAL’s relevance, because strengthening governance and social contract – especially in fragile settings – is inherently political.

However, the evaluators also find that IDEAL’s comparative advantage is not sufficiently capitalised, possibly because political processes are volatile and less within scope of control, causing indicators to be prone to being overly ambitious. VNG International should ‘better define the niche of IDEAL/VNGI’.

**ACTION:** Better communicating about IDEAL's added value, better incorporation into the TOCs, and being able to demonstrate through monitoring this added value will be an added focus for the remainder of the programme. Since dealing with political processes is in VNG International's DNA



**IDEAL** ●  
INCLUSIVE DECISIONS  
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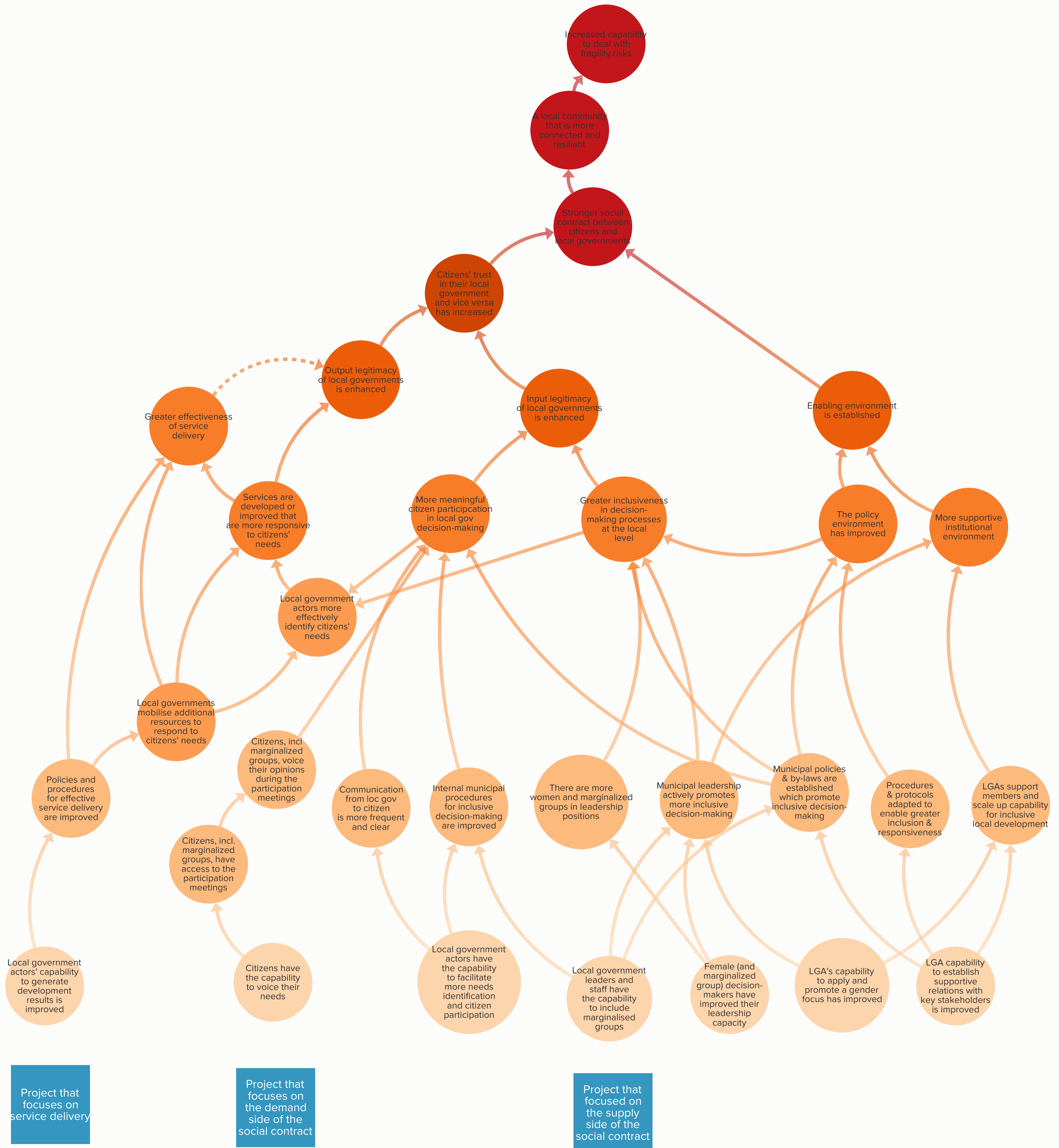
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## Annex C: IDEAL's Overall Theory of Change

# The IDEAL Programme

Overall Theory of Change





Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**IDEAL** ●  
INCLUSIVE DECISIONS  
AT LOCAL LEVEL

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