



LOCAL CAPACITY- STRENGTHENING

At IntraHealth, we believe development is most effective when it is locally owned and locally led.

Since 1979, we've partnered with ministries of health, local NGOs, and communities to strengthen their ability to finance, plan, and implement their own solutions to public health challenges. In 2021 alone we worked with 7,950 local partners in 42 countries, including government agencies, health facilities, businesses, educational and training institutions, civil society and community groups, religious leaders, youth advocates, and more.

Here's how we deliver results:

- Fostering local government leadership
- Developing local partner capacity
- Partnering with local organizations
- Creating sustainable, locally driven impact.

Our work with local partners centers on the shared goal of reaching more people with high-quality health care through sustainable programs that respond to communities' needs. In doing so, we contribute to a more equitable global health development environment and aim to minimize power imbalances.

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OUR APPROACHES IN ACTION

Fostering Local Government Leadership

In the context of Kenya's devolution of health services to its 47 counties, IntraHealth's USAID-funded health workforce projects helped create a county-led coordination framework that promotes consensus, commitment, and cooperation in decentralized HR management. The framework grouped counties into nine clusters with similar geographic contexts and workforce challenges. With capacity-building support from IntraHealth, counties assumed ownership of inter-county cluster stakeholder coordination forums that meet quarterly to address gaps, share successes and challenges, and track action plans. Successes brought about through the forums include hiring over 20,000 health workers to address shortages, expanding the national HR information system (iHRIS) to all counties, and facilitating county-to-county sharing of specialist providers such as oncologists.

Developing Local Partner Capacity

Since 2019 we've been a key contributor to USAID's efforts to support local partners. As the lead for the [Accelerating Support to Advanced Local Partners \(ASAP\) and ASAP II projects](#) we've worked with 110+ local entities in 18 African countries to enable local HIV/AIDS implementers and government bodies to become direct recipients of USAID and PEPFAR funding.

Through ASAP and ASAP II we are redefining the rules of engagement for local implementing partner capacity development, emphasizing relationship-building, collaborative learning, and cocreation to drive mutual respect and trust. Designed to meet the needs of both local partners and USAID, our approach relies on customizable tools and data-driven platforms, in particular the Non-US Organization Pre-award Survey (NUPAS) Plus assessment tool, which enables local partners to identify and address the root causes of performance gaps across 15 areas.

Using NUPAS results, ASAP has helped more than 70 local implementing partners to improve their financial

management, compliance, and monitoring, evaluation, and learning. Partners also receive capacity-building support in specialized areas of need such as IT, data analysis, and gender inclusivity. ASAP's knowledge-sharing webinars have drawn over 20,000 participants.

All of IntraHealth's approaches and tools are designed to foster local capacity and talent. Our open source [iHRIS health workforce information system](#), in use in 20+ countries, enables local customization without long-term donor support. In Mali, the government uses iHRIS to disaggregate its data on public and private sector health workers by sex, qualification, and funding source to make data-based decisions on planning, recruitment, and deployment at all levels of the health system.

Our projects work to ensure all gains are locally owned. In our [USAID Regional Health Integration to Enhance Services in Eastern Uganda \(RHITES-E\) Activity](#), for example, close collaboration with the Ministry of Health's district-level staff in using performance data to improve service quality and community outreach helped lay the foundation for making transition awards to two local partners that are now carrying on activities that IntraHealth previously led.

“... the engagement of partners that have the know-how to navigate USAID grants, such as ASAP, is important for capacity building because they know what the organization needs to do, and how it needs to be done. And they use local consultants who understand the local trajectory of what's happening, or the local contexts. So that was very helpful.”

—Nkatha Ngeru, CEO, Africa Christian Health Associations Platform

Partnering with Local Organizations

IntraHealth's commitment to building local capacity includes supporting the development of financially independent country-based affiliates that are now winning and leading their own projects from USAID and other donors. Established in 2014, [IntraHealth Namibia \(IHN\)](#) focuses on health workforce strengthening, client-level data systems, and HIV programming. IHN receives capacity-building support from

IntraHealth including through ASAP, which contributed to strengthening its IT systems and board governance. In turn, IHN is assisting smaller Namibian partners to become recipients of USAID funds. [Afya Plus](#), founded in Tanzania in 2019, specializes in integrated, client-centered, and community-based services on projects funded by CDC and USAID. We partner with our affiliates and other local organizations on programs that they lead, manage, and are accountable for.

Creating Sustainable, Locally Driven Impact

For more than ten years, our projects in West Africa have focused on the key roles of local government and civil society in sustaining cost-efficient, locally led family planning and reproductive health activities. Through [The Challenge Initiative](#), funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, cities lead the way to increasing access to family planning in urban areas. In Benin, for example, IntraHealth partnered with three cities—through training, technical and managerial coaching, and challenge grants—to design and implement their own high-impact interventions including special days of free family planning methods, postpartum family planning, and adolescent-responsive contraception services. Within three years, 252 facilities were participating in the program, leading to 28,000+ additional family planning users, a 13% increase in family planning use among adolescents and young people, and local contributions of \$93,000 to continue the programs.

Through the [Strengthening Civil Society Engagement for Family Planning in West Africa \(CS4FP\) project](#), funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Dutch government, IntraHealth supported dynamic civil society coalitions in the nine Ouagadougou Partnership countries that influence family planning policy and hold governments accountable for achieving national and regional commitments. IntraHealth trained coalition members—including 600 youth ambassadors and 300 religious leaders—to galvanize support for family planning using social media and to lower cultural barriers to uptake through advocacy campaigns. This project and other efforts—including our ten-year leadership of the [Ouagadougou Partnership Coordination Unit \(OPCU\)](#)—contributed to adding 3.8 million female users of modern contraception in the region from 2011-2021. And CS4FP-supported civil society coalitions raised five times the amount of the project's funding to continue leading family planning initiatives. In 2021, we transferred leadership of OPCU to a Dakar-based local organization, [Speak Up Africa](#).

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