



# Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment

A JOINT CENTER OF COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL  
AND THE EARTH INSTITUTE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

## Increasing the effectiveness of trainings and capacity building programs

M&E, alumni engagement, and opportunities for  
coordination

Prepared with support from:



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## Introduction

In October 2015, CCSI launched a series of meetings of support providers<sup>1</sup> that provide technical or capacity building support to host governments and other stakeholders in relation to the planning for and preparation, negotiation, implementation, and / or monitoring of large-scale investment projects on a not-for-profit basis. The meetings are intended to create a forum to discuss common challenges and opportunities and to facilitate greater coordination among support provider organizations with the overall objective of improving the availability, accessibility and effectiveness of such assistance and trainings.

The first meeting of support providers focused on the challenges associated with the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the provision of technical assistance and trainings regarding large-scale investment projects. A summary of the challenges discussed can be found at <http://bit.ly/2b54LE1>.

The second meeting, which took place on June 8, 2016, focused on enhancing the delivery and impact of training and capacity development by support providers, potentially through improved coordination, improved alumni engagement, and broader experience sharing on content and M&E.

In advance of the meeting, CCSI prepared a questionnaire to collect information from participating support providers on their training and capacity building practices, including on approaches for monitoring and evaluation, whether and how alumni were engaged, the extent of inter-organizational coordination, and the content and scope of trainings and capacity building programs. Sixteen support providers responded to the questionnaire. Those responses were combined with supplementary interviews, email correspondence, reviews of training lists at <http://www.negotiationsupport.org/trainings> and desk research, and shared with the June 8 workshop participants.

This document combines general findings from the survey with insights from the day-long discussion among support providers on June 8, 2016, at Columbia University.

### Participating support providers

Advocates for International Development ([A4ID](#))

African Legal Support Facility ([ALSF](#))

African Mineral Development Centre ([AMDC](#))

Centre for Energy, Petroleum and Mineral Law and Policy ([CEPMLP](#))

Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment ([CCSI](#))

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<sup>1</sup> Representatives of each of the support providers listed on [www.NegotiationSupport.org](http://www.NegotiationSupport.org) were invited to attend the meeting, though not all were in attendance. As part of its capacity building efforts, IISD also represented the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable development (IGF), for which IISD serves as the Secretariat since October 2015. Comments included in this document should not be attributed to all support providers listed on the Negotiation Support Portal. To be featured on the Portal, a Support Provider must: (1) provide technical assistance to governments – for example, legal, policy, economic, financial modelling, or geological support – related to at least one stage of the investment process set out in the Roadmap; (2) provide support on a not-for-profit basis (either pro-bono or otherwise at a substantially reduced rate to cover its administrative or operational costs); and (3) be reasonably responsive to requests for updates of its entry on the Portal.

Commonwealth Secretariat - Oceans and Natural Resources Advisory Division  
([Commonwealth Secretariat](#))

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, X4D – Extractives for Development ([GIZ](#))

International Institute for Environment and Development ([IIED](#))

International Institute for Sustainable Development - Investment Program ([IISD](#))

International Monetary Fund – Fiscal Affairs Department, Tax Policy ([IMF](#))

International Senior Lawyers Project ([ISLP](#))

Natural Resource Governance Institute ([NRGI](#))

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation – Oil for Development Programme ([Norad](#))

Public Private Infrastructure Advisory Facility ([PPIAF](#))

United Nations Development Programme - Global Initiative on Extractive Industries for Sustainable Development ([UNDP](#))

World Bank – Extractive Industries Technical Advisory Facility ([World Bank](#))

### **Trainings and capacity building programs - Definitions**

For the purposes of the June 8, 2016, meeting, and the summary of the findings in this document, the two types of support provider interventions examined are trainings and capacity building programs.

*Trainings* include short courses or professional development programs designed to impart content-specific knowledge or practical skills to participants in relation to planning, preparing for, negotiating, monitoring, or implementing large-scale investment projects. They can be carried out in person or remotely, and generally involve a cohort or group of participants, who may come from the same or from different countries.

*Capacity building programs*, as reflected in survey responses, encompass a diverse range of activities aimed at building a country or organization’s skills, knowledge, and ability to function effectively in relation to the planning, preparation for, negotiation, implementation, and monitoring of large-scale investments. These include placing experts in public institutions, providing technical assistance in collaboration with an institution’s staff, or creating mentoring or fellowship programs to foster leaders within an institution, country, or region. More information is contained under “Types of capacity building programs,” below.

Trainings and capacity building programs can be implemented in various ways depending on the context and the objectives being pursued by the support provider. Interestingly, various support providers link their trainings with capacity building programs or technical assistance.<sup>2</sup> One support provider<sup>3</sup> noted that combining technical assistance with targeted trainings has the dual benefit of building capacity and immediately resolving issues that impact on the delivery of technical assistance. Combining trainings and technical assistance can also present challenges, such as ensuring that government targets have sufficient time to be trained while also collaborating on technical assistance.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> ALSF, Commonwealth Secretariat, IMF, ISLP.

<sup>3</sup> IMF.

<sup>4</sup> ISLP.

## 1. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices for trainings and capacity building projects: objectives, criteria, feedback

### Notable findings

- Many M&E practices focus on feedback from participants regarding the quality and appropriateness of course content, delivery, and the trainers.
- Other less common approaches seek to measure the training's actual impact on the participants' knowledge of the course content and skills, and whether the training was impactful in relation to participants' professional activities. Some support providers aim to do so by collecting baseline information on participants and their knowledge / skills-level prior to the training course, which can then be used as a benchmark.
- Others are piloting follow-up interviews with participants 6 to 12 months after an intervention, though the effectiveness of this strategy is not yet apparent.
- Interest was expressed in learning more regarding: (i) what strategies exist, other than self-reporting perceived knowledge to ensure self-reporting is as accurate as possible; (ii) the extent to which support providers carry out actual testing of level of knowledge/understanding; and (iii) what methods or strategies exist for capturing increased understanding and ensuring greater implementation of key learnings in the country of the training participant or recipient of capacity building.

### M&E practices

#### *a) Measuring the performance of the intervention*

Support providers seek to measure a variety of criteria and use a variety of different techniques to monitor and evaluate the quality of their trainings and capacity building programs.

In the case of trainings, support providers seek to evaluate:

- The quality of the instructor, including their presentation and teaching style, the adequacy and appropriateness of time spent on each topic, the level of active participation afforded to participants (such as opportunities to offer their insights or ask questions);
- The content of the training, and its appropriateness in terms of relevance, any gaps in issues covered, the level at which the course was pitched, and whether the training content met participants' expectations;
- The quality of training materials provided; and
- The overall satisfaction of the training, including course organization and logistical issues such as room location and refreshments provided.

In the case of capacity building programs, the quality of the assistance and responsiveness of the support provider are usually evaluated.

The majority of support providers evaluate the quality of the training or capacity development program by seeking written feedback from participants through surveys after the intervention has concluded. Among these support providers and others, this feedback is also collected orally. This feedback is also sometimes collected from the 'client' organization for whom the training or program was implemented for feedback on how the training went. Another approach is to monitor external trainers or experts providing the capacity development by evaluating them against the terms of reference of their engagement, or interview them for feedback on how the intervention went.

*b) Measuring impact*

Some support providers have been experimenting with various approaches to measure the short to medium term impact of their trainings. Specifically, support providers have sought to measure:

- Impact / uptake of knowledge by the participants;
- The participants' perceived change of knowledge as a result of the training; and
- The accountability of the training program itself, i.e. whether the intervention was matched to the needs identified by participants in advance (such as whether the training “speak[s] to gender needs”).<sup>5</sup>

Strategies to measure the effectiveness of trainings and capacity building programs can be divided into two types: (i) those conducted in advance of trainings as a way to provide a baseline; and (ii) those conducted after the training as a way to evaluate the effectiveness of the training.

In advance of the intervention, some support providers:

- Use surveys and consultations to allow trainees to articulate their needs, and to determine participants' baseline knowledge so that courses can be pitched at an appropriate level. These can also be aligned with the questions asked in post-course surveys;<sup>6</sup>
- Require prospective trainees to apply for the training with explanations of their motivations, descriptions of current work tasks, and endorsements from the heads of their departments;<sup>7</sup>
- Conduct preliminary testing of capacity levels; and
- Ask whether and, where relevant, how the trainee will use the training in their work.<sup>8</sup>

Post-intervention, some support providers:

- Pursue regular engagement with training alumni / program contacts after the intervention to measure short to medium term effectiveness through:
  - Follow-up questionnaires seeking to measure capacity levels and use of the taught knowledge in professional activities (although one organization found sending a follow-up questionnaire after one year to be ineffective in that only a small sample of individuals tended to respond<sup>9</sup>); and
  - Collecting ‘change stories’ from participants some time after the training, which can include explanations of what the trainee has worked on since the course<sup>10</sup> (although the support provider noted that these are not currently complimented by a standardized impact or change measurement facility, which makes it harder to draw conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the organization's alumni engagement strategies as a whole).<sup>11</sup>
- Determine whether the target of the intervention continues to contact the support provider with additional requests for assistance.<sup>12</sup>
- Use online legal self-assessment tools, and crosscheck the responses of participants' self-reporting with any evidence of implementation (through peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and, where the intervention involves mentoring, through e-mentoring tools,

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<sup>5</sup> NRGI.

<sup>6</sup> NRGI.

<sup>7</sup> ALSF.

<sup>8</sup> IISD.

<sup>9</sup> ISLP.

<sup>10</sup> NRGI.

<sup>11</sup> NRGI.

<sup>12</sup> ISLP.

where the mentor can report on the mentee's level of engagement with the intervention).<sup>13</sup>

- In the case of capacity building programs, measure the quality of any relevant outputs of the target entity or individual.<sup>14</sup>

Despite these various techniques, measuring the effectiveness of interventions remains challenging. Support providers are very much still experimenting with these various techniques and no standout techniques have yet been identified. One challenge noted by support providers is that some individuals' jobs or responsibilities can change based on what trainings they have received, which indicates the need for M&E practices to be deployed strategically months or potentially years after the intervention. Measuring the effectiveness of capacity-building programs may be especially necessary given the extent of the resources often involved.

### Variations in M&E practices

Support providers take differing approaches to determining the M&E approach that will be applied to interventions. Eight respondents to the survey indicated that they do not substantially change their M&E practices depending on the location or subject matter of the training, or the profile of the participants. Five support providers noted, however, that those factors did alter how they framed and implemented their M&E processes. One support provider noted that these factors will especially impact on how they follow up with participants.<sup>15</sup> Other factors causing M&E practices to vary included the extent to which funding and resources were available for M&E activities, the extent to which M&E is required by the donors of a training/capacity building program and, when partnering with another organization, the degree to which the support provider is controlling the program.<sup>16</sup> One respondent to the survey<sup>17</sup> noted that it does not consistently apply the same M&E methodology throughout the organization; because M&E is carried out in that organization by the course manager in question, there is some variation in methodology, the types of data being captured and from whom.

### How M&E data is acted upon

M&E data is used in various ways, depending on the organization. In relation to training courses, eight support providers noted in their survey responses that M&E data provides impetus for, and guidance regarding, how the content, format and delivery of trainings can be improved. Four noted that it can assist with deciding whether to use the same instructors in future programs. The information collected was also noted to inform the overall structure and the price charged for trainings (where applicable), and the follow-up strategies employed by support providers. Various support providers noted that the feedback received on training courses is not always evaluated in an effective manner in order to properly inform subsequent trainings, and that there is an ongoing need for strategies and good practices to make the incorporation of feedback received more systematic within their organizations. One support provider<sup>18</sup> noted that it is generally more difficult to incorporate feedback for ad hoc trainings and those run by partners, as opposed to regular trainings (whose content and structure can be improved with each iteration of the training).

## **2. Alumni engagement**

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<sup>13</sup> A4ID.

<sup>14</sup> PPIAF.

<sup>15</sup> IISD.

<sup>16</sup> A4ID, ISLP.

<sup>17</sup> NRGJ.

<sup>18</sup> A4ID.

### Notable findings

- Most support providers carry out some form of alumni engagement, and of those, all do so using communications technology.
- Alumni engagement objectives vary among support providers. Some objectives mentioned include seeking to solidify a participant's learnings from training programs, and building the support provider's networks for future collaborations, or locating future trainings participants.
- Most support providers viewed their current alumni engagement strategies as a work in progress, having the potential to be improved.

### Prevalence of alumni engagement activities

While 11 survey respondents engage in alumni engagement strategies as described below, only eight actively maintain a list of past alumni of trainings and capacity building programs. Two of the four organizations who do not focus on alumni engagement explain that their focus is on long-term engagement with institutions, more than with individuals.<sup>19</sup> Another two organizations explained that they prefer to have their in-country partners, for example, World Bank country offices, carry out alumni engagement.<sup>20</sup> One representative noted that some alumni do not want to be pursued by institutions who have trained them, and that this preference needs to be respected.<sup>21</sup>

### Alumni engagement objectives and strategies

#### *a) Objectives*

The most commonly stated objectives of alumni engagement were to involve alumni or their institutions in future collaborations with the support provider, to assist with building capacity in the long term, including by following up about the impact of the training as discussed above, and to build a network of trusted in-country contacts. Other objectives noted include:

- To spread learnings (including by training participants to become trainers themselves);
- To alert alumni of future events and trainings for themselves or their contacts; and
- To create opportunities for host government representatives to learn and build confidence in relationships with counterparts in other countries.<sup>22</sup>

#### *b) General strategies*

The most commonly employed alumni engagement strategies involve using communications technology to keep in touch with training participants or capacity development recipients, though the degree of involvement in managing the engagement varies from support provider to support provider. These include:

- Online discussion forums for alumni to discuss topical issues (some of these forums are not exclusive to alumni), which are often moderated by the support provider;
- Social media, including Facebook and WhatsApp, which have high uptake rates, especially by African participants, and LinkedIn, which has proven less effective because of comparatively lower uptake in low-income countries (the degree of involvement by the support provider once the forum is established varies); and
- Maintaining general email listservs, with some of them also sending group emails to alumni, or pursuing individual email follow-up.

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<sup>19</sup> GIZ, NORAD.

<sup>20</sup> ISLP, PPIAF.

<sup>21</sup> CEPMLP.

<sup>22</sup> IISD.

Other strategies employed by survey respondents include:

- Establishing working relationships with alumni on other projects. One representative also mentioned offering employment opportunities to high-performers at select trainings, as discussed further below;<sup>23</sup>
- Training participants to become trainers themselves, including through e-learning modules, as discussed further below;<sup>24</sup>
- International leadership programs, such as the *Emerging Leaders in African Mining* program, which seeks to teach leadership and other operational skills to “young and emerging leaders in mining and development” in Africa, and to encourage alumni to champion the African Mining Vision throughout Africa;<sup>25</sup>
- Face-to-face meetings with individual alumni;<sup>26</sup>
- Annual meetings or conferences with large groups of alumni;
- Providing funding for small-scale alumni initiatives, such as projects that eventuate from training courses;<sup>27</sup> and
- Creating a formal fellowship position that affiliates individuals with the support provider to facilitate capacity building and create a community of leaders in various stakeholder groups, assisting government ministries to hire experts, and facilitating knowledge sharing through online platforms.<sup>28</sup>

### c) *Training the trainers*

Most organizations indicated that their trainings aim to “train the trainers.”<sup>29</sup> Of the four organizations who do not currently “train the trainers,” one has previously attempted this and is interested in trying the strategy again,<sup>30</sup> and another might attempt this strategy in the future.<sup>31</sup> One support provider<sup>32</sup> reported limited success in following up and achieving effective results with such initiatives. Another organization<sup>33</sup> is currently trialing having participants from trainings work with the support provider following the training, so that they can then deliver knowledge acquired during the training to a new cohort of trainees as a way to deepen the learning and incentivize absorption. Apart for the goal of transferring knowledge, another reason for training the trainers was that trainers based in the region or the country may be more convincing or effective in trainings.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> ALSF.

<sup>24</sup> A4ID.

<sup>25</sup> AMDC.

<sup>26</sup> IMF.

<sup>27</sup> NRGI.

<sup>28</sup> AMDC.

<sup>29</sup> This term has different meanings. On the one hand “training the trainers” can refer to courses for consultants or experts who themselves carry out trainings that are aimed at improving their effectiveness as trainers and their knowledge base; on the other, courses can focus on encouraging and supporting participants who work for host governments, or with other stakeholders, to share learnings or otherwise disseminate knowledge acquired with colleagues and contacts in the country in which they work.

<sup>30</sup> CCSI.

<sup>31</sup> GIZ.

<sup>32</sup> ALSF.

<sup>33</sup> A4ID.

<sup>34</sup> IISD.

Another support provider<sup>35</sup> organizes occasional trainings of trainers; the trainers invited to attend include its staff, partner organizations as well as carefully selected independent consultants. Most recently it organized a workshop in response to demands for training and technical assistance on cutting-edge resource governance issues, including on issues where demand for assistance and training largely outweighs the support provider's capacity to provide responsive support. The support provider assessed participants throughout the workshop, identified opportunities to involve the highest performing participant in its future activities or trainings, and established individual mentorship plans as part of efforts to monitor and evaluate their future performance. The support provider sought to help establish, and then train and work with, a global network of practitioners who can deliver trainings to in-country stakeholders in different locations, and who already work with various stakeholders.

When the local trainers are government representatives, one support provider discussed the fact that the issue of whether they should be entitled to payment or an honorarium for their services can be problematic from an integrity perspective.

#### Way forward

Alumni engagement is a work in progress for most of the support providers. Five organizations reported in the survey that they view their alumni engagement strategies as achieving positive results but still needing improvement. One organization has a dedicated staff member, within its capacity development team, who focuses on alumni management.<sup>36</sup>

During the discussion, some support providers considered that it made more sense for each organization to maintain its own alumni engagement program, rather than to attempt to create a shared alumni engagement program.<sup>37</sup> Others suggested that having a shared program could work but would need to be broken down into, for instance, geographical or thematic areas.<sup>38</sup> Such a program could be implemented or convened by a university,<sup>39</sup> a secretariat,<sup>40</sup> or on a well-known platform like GOXI or LinkedIn,<sup>41</sup> provided an institution was allocated resources to convene the program.

### **3. Coordination among support providers on M&E, trainings and capacity building projects**

#### Notable findings

- Many support providers regularly engage in coordination with one or more other support providers around trainings.
- Challenges noted tended to focus on a lack of formal architecture for cross-organizational coordination.
- Ideas for new coordination initiatives mentioned by respondents include developing a database of participants and/or expert consultants, and regularly communicating about what each organization is offering.

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<sup>35</sup> NRGI.

<sup>36</sup> NRGI.

<sup>37</sup> IISD, ISLP,

<sup>38</sup> UNDP.

<sup>39</sup> GIZ X4D.

<sup>40</sup> World Bank.

<sup>41</sup> UNDP, ALSF.

### Existing coordination or knowledge sharing activities

Support providers indicated a strong interest in coordination, with some support providers indicating that coordination activities around trainings and capacity development does already take place, albeit on a bilateral basis, or amongst small sub-groups of support providers. Six organizations also mentioned that some of their trainings are currently offered in collaboration with other support provider organizations or development banks. The most common coordination or knowledge-sharing activity that respondents indicated they have engaged in with other support providers is the ad hoc coordinating and co-convening of trainings or other interventions with partners.<sup>42</sup>

Other coordination activities mentioned include:

- Discussing the performance of, or asking partner organizations for recommendations for, trainers;<sup>43</sup>
- Helping to find pro bono trainers for organizations;<sup>44</sup>
- Checking with partners if the same participants are participating in different organizations' courses;<sup>45</sup>
- Collaborating on projects, such as the African Mining Legislation Atlas ([www.amla.org/](http://www.amla.org/)), [www.ResourceContracts.org](http://www.ResourceContracts.org), and the New Petroleum Producers Discussion Group (<http://bit.ly/2aaPoHH>);<sup>46</sup>
- Sharing materials;<sup>47</sup> and
- Attending regular forums for coordination, such as CCSI's meetings of support providers, the OECD / CONNEX forums on negotiation support, and the World Bank's E4D (Extractives for Development) initiative.<sup>48</sup>

### Objectives

The objectives of cross-organizational coordination mentioned in the survey by respondents include:

- Avoiding duplication in training efforts (mentioned by eight respondents). One support provider did not consider this objective to warrant major concern given the extensive need for training and capacity building, and was of the view that trainees who are exposed to knowledge on a regular basis have a greater likelihood of remembering and applying their learnings in their work, as long as efforts are properly coordinated.<sup>49</sup> Another noted the need to understand whether some trainees require advanced level courses to complement their past participation in trainings.<sup>50</sup> In one example, a program of three intensive trainings over six months with a host country's ministry led to deeper learning, as evidenced by trainees grasping complex concepts and asking more questions about sophisticated aspects of the training topic.<sup>51</sup> Another example saw a support provider attempt to administer repeat courses to the same trainees but was less successful because

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<sup>42</sup> A4ID, ALSF, AMDC, CCSICEPMLP, Commonwealth Secretariat, GIZ, IISD, IMF, ISLP, NRGI, Norad, UNDP.

<sup>43</sup> ALSF, CCSI, NRGI

<sup>44</sup> A4ID, ISLP.

<sup>45</sup> CCSI, NRGI,

<sup>46</sup> ALSF, CCSI, Commonwealth Secretariat, NRGI.

<sup>47</sup> World Bank.

<sup>48</sup> ALSF, AMDC, CCSI, Commonwealth Secretariat, GIZ, World Bank.

<sup>49</sup> IISD

<sup>50</sup> CEPMLP.

<sup>51</sup> IMF.

the second training took place in a different country, and many participants were not able to attend;<sup>52</sup>

- Improving effectiveness of providers through the sharing of training materials and experiences (mentioned by eight respondents);
- Identifying repeat participants to build on trainings they have already received (mentioned by six respondents);
- Identifying which individuals in governments have already received training, and thus could be effective counterparts for advisory projects (mentioned by three respondents),<sup>53</sup> and also used as local trainers;<sup>54</sup> and
- Coordinating efforts and forming strategic partnerships with support providers (mentioned by two respondents).<sup>55</sup>

Consistent with some comments made during the first meeting of support providers in 2015, no respondents mentioned that coordination may also have the objective of encouraging consistency of advice or training content amongst providers.

### Challenges

Most challenges noted by respondents refer to the lack of formalized architecture for cross-organizational coordination. These included a lack of:

- Time and resources to dedicate to coordination;
- A central coordinating organization charged with the responsibility of cross-organizational coordination on trainings; and
- Knowledge of different trainings offered by organizations in a crowded space (although a detailed list of trainings and a calendar of upcoming training sessions are hosted on the Negotiation Support Portal — [www.negotiationsupport.org/trainings](http://www.negotiationsupport.org/trainings)).

### Ideas for additional coordination

Ideas for new coordination initiatives mentioned by respondents include:

- Developing databases of participants and/or expert consultants/trainers, or other means of knowledge sharing regarding the different topics and types of trainings being offered by support providers to leverage collective knowledge, and to see where each organization is offering trainings and capacity building programs, and on which topics (discussed further below);
- Sharing of certain training materials to improve training and capacity building practices. Where organizations prefer not to share actual training content, sharing and coordination regarding the program plan, training structure, and/or impact evaluation may be more realistic;
- Cross-organizational coordination on alumni engagement, as discussed above; and
- Building communities of practice on substantive topics or on training strategies, and including donors and development partners.

#### *a) Expert databases*

Various support providers<sup>56</sup> maintain their own databases of consultants or experts who can be engaged in capacity building or trainings. One organization maintains an expert roster that

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<sup>52</sup> ALSF.

<sup>53</sup> GIZ, NRGI, World Bank.

<sup>54</sup> AMDC.

<sup>55</sup> ISLP, UNDP.

includes assessments of their performance;<sup>57</sup> they expressed interest in the idea of a shared roster of experts and, failing that, at least knowing which support providers maintain databases or rosters so that those support providers can be approached when more ideas about potential trainers are needed.

Others were skeptical that a shared database of experts would be a beneficial coordination activity.<sup>58</sup> One support provider's expert database was originally designed with a field for comments on each consultant's performance or suitability. While this was intended to give users of the database more of a sense of the suitability of potential candidates to engage for interventions, it became problematic in practice, and the organization now maintains the database without this ability for individuals to comment or endorse specific consultants. Another representative also expressed a reluctance to provide feedback in a public setting on frustrations and challenges for specific consultants or lawyers, although such feedback is shared privately with trusted partners.<sup>59</sup> Concern was also expressed that inclusion of an expert on a database would imply a degree of endorsement in itself, which could be misleading.<sup>60</sup>

Some support providers also raised the concern that a shared database would lead to many of the same consultants providing training sessions in programs run by different support providers, which could mean that other potential trainers may not be sufficiently utilized.<sup>61</sup> A shared database could either lead to an exacerbation of this trend,<sup>62</sup> or on the contrary, address this concern.

#### *b) Participant databases*

One support provider<sup>63</sup> has contemplated designing a shared database of participants of trainings in an attempt to ensure that support providers can train the most optimal candidates, leverage the training efforts of other support providers, consider more advanced courses or targeted programs for trained participants, and track how participants proceed following trainings. That support provider also noted that the development and use of such a database would help to show donors that support providers' M&E practices are focusing on the medium to long term.<sup>64</sup> In addition to being a potential tool to coordinate training program offerings, it was also noted that it could be used in non-training settings; for instance, the database could be used to identify collaborators for technical assistance projects or even well-educated targets for advocacy campaigns.<sup>65</sup>

Illustrating the potential for such a database, the support providers discussed how many support providers had provided trainings to one particular host country, which still then exhibited low capacity; while many factors likely contributed to this, insufficient coordination amongst support providers may have been a contributing factor.

Several support providers<sup>66</sup> noted that sharing details of participants would be possible, provided the participants had consented to the disclosure. To facilitate this, an easy to administer system

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<sup>56</sup> ALSF, CCSI, CEPMLP, Commonwealth Secretariat, IMF, ISLP, UNDP, World Bank.

<sup>57</sup> UNDP.

<sup>58</sup> IISD, ISLP, World Bank.

<sup>59</sup> ISLP.

<sup>60</sup> AMDC.

<sup>61</sup> ALSF.

<sup>62</sup> IISD.

<sup>63</sup> ALSF.

<sup>64</sup> ALSF.

<sup>65</sup> NRGI.

<sup>66</sup> A4ID, GIZ X4D, NRGI.

for obtaining each participant’s consent would be needed.<sup>67</sup> Ethical and operational rules would also need to be established to ensure that support providers use the list “properly”.<sup>68</sup> One support provider also mentioned that it was considering developing a certification scheme for participants, with different tiers of qualifications. Such a certification scheme could assist other support providers in understanding the level of competency and experience different trainings participants possess.

One representative noted that rather than a database of experts or of participants, it may be more effective to ensure regular coordination amongst support providers.<sup>69</sup> The lower hanging fruit could be to consistently share information about the topics, countries, and individual participants that an organization has trained or collaborated with. Support providers could then more closely coordinate on an ad hoc basis.<sup>70</sup>

#### **4. Content and Implementation of trainings and capacity development**

##### Notable findings

- Ad hoc / demand-based short trainings were the most common form of intervention mentioned by respondents.
- Countries in Africa and Asia were most commonly mentioned as focus regions for training and capacity building.
- Topics that were under-represented in the survey responses included climate change, gender, and the pre-negotiation stage (feasibility studies, impact assessments, tenders), though the detail of responses varied and such topics may be included under broader headings.
- Most support providers focus on “soft skills” and “training the trainers” in some form.

##### **A. Types of trainings and capacity development**

###### Types of trainings

The majority of trainings covered by the participating support providers are short courses carried out on an ad hoc or irregular basis, often in response to specific requests from host governments. At least five support providers also offer training courses that occur on a regular basis — for instance once or twice a year. University centers that are listed as support providers also offer post-graduate degrees (such as an LLM program on petroleum tax and finance<sup>71</sup>) or graduate classes (such as a course on extractive industries and sustainable development<sup>72</sup>).

###### Types of capacity building programs

Capacity development activities other than short-term training courses tend to be diverse and can be altered or adjusted to respond to changing contexts. Placing an expert in, or having such an expert on call to assist, a local institution was a common activity mentioned; five organizations place or allocate experts on a short-term basis, and eight on a longer-term basis.<sup>73</sup> For one organization, these include placing consultants within ministries on a very limited basis (currently

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<sup>67</sup> NRGI.

<sup>68</sup> World Bank.

<sup>69</sup> IISD.

<sup>70</sup> NRGI.

<sup>71</sup> CEPMLP.

<sup>72</sup> CCSI.

<sup>73</sup> “Short term” and “Long term” were not quantified by respondents.

only fragile states are considered) and seconding private lawyers to ministries for a few weeks in an exchange program.<sup>74</sup> That support provider is also developing a program where private lawyers will be placed inside certain government ministries for three months and where government lawyers will be placed in law firms for a similar time period. One support provider noted ILFA's program (<http://www.ilfa.org.uk/>) for placing African lawyers in London law firms to build their capacity and suggested that this program could be replicated.<sup>75</sup> Such placements come with the condition that the lawyer will return to their country for at least two years. Another support provider<sup>76</sup> has established mentoring programs between lawyers in developing countries and lawyers in international firms, or between in-house company lawyers and in-house NGO lawyers. Both the mentor and the mentee then become sources of data for the effectiveness of the program. Two organizations place pro bono lawyers in ministries.<sup>77</sup>

Four organizations<sup>78</sup> link capacity development activities to their provision of technical assistance. One support provider<sup>79</sup> noted that combining technical assistance with targeted trainings has the dual benefit of building capacity and immediately resolving issues that impact on the delivery of technical assistance. Combining trainings and technical assistance can also present challenges, such as ensuring that government targets have sufficient time to be trained while also collaborating on technical assistance.<sup>80</sup>

As discussed above, five organizations also referred to knowledge sharing with, or peer-to-peer mentoring of, past trainings participants as another means of continuing to build capacity within government departments or other organizations in country.

## **B. Target participants and recipients of capacity building support**

### Participant profiles

The profiles of participants of trainings and recipients of capacity building efforts by those surveyed skew heavily towards representatives from low-income host governments, which are a key focus for all support providers. Specific ministries or public institutions targeted by trainings or capacity building programs include:

- Sector-focused ministries, authorities, and state-owned enterprises, such as line ministries focusing on mining or agriculture, governmental authorities regulating seabed minerals, or national oil companies;
- Ministries and commissions with a more over-arching focus, such as Ministries of Commerce, Justice, Finance, or national investment commissions; and
- In-house attorneys, advisors, and policy makers — for instance attorneys who will negotiate or renegotiate investment contracts on behalf of governments.

Other stakeholders targeted include civil society representatives (targeted by at least three respondents), investors, lawyers, parliamentarians, local private sector representatives, and other stakeholders in the investment process, such as academics, representatives of international organizations, or donors.

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<sup>74</sup> ALSF.

<sup>75</sup> ALSF.

<sup>76</sup> A4ID.

<sup>77</sup> A4ID, ISLP.

<sup>78</sup> ALSF, Commonwealth Secretariat, IMF, ISLP.

<sup>79</sup> IMF.

<sup>80</sup> ISLP.

### Geographic coverage

As set out in Figure 1, below, the geographic coverage featured a strong emphasis on assisting representatives from Africa (all respondents), with two respondents being established solely to assist African countries. Twelve support providers offer programs in Asia, seven in Central Asia/Former USSR, seven in Latin America, six in the Middle East, and five in Eastern Europe. Various other support providers had explicit geographical limitations, based on identified target countries, such as membership in particular organizations like the Commonwealth. Though not mentioned in the questionnaire, government-based funders may also face restrictions on which countries they target based on their government’s foreign policy priorities. Similarly, support providers relying on external funding for their activities will often be influenced by the geographical focuses of external funders.

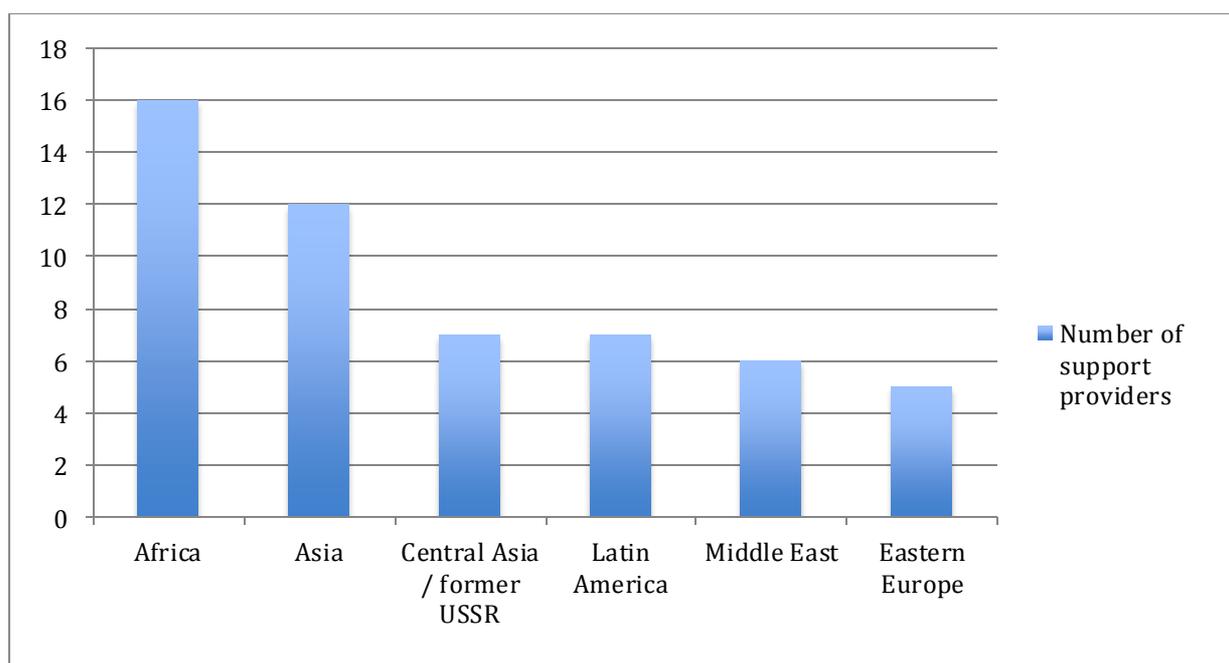


Figure 1. Numbers of support providers focusing on specific geographical regions

### **C. Content of trainings**

Of those organizations that completed the questionnaire, 13 offer trainings on extractive industries. Three offer trainings for agricultural investments, and five on infrastructure. One organization offers programs on fiscal issues that can potentially be applied to all three industries. Other broad subject matters covered in trainings include economic management and fiscal regimes, finance, international investment law and policy, and public procurement.

<b>Trainings sector-focus</b>	<b>Organizations</b>
Extractive industries	A4ID, ALSF, AMDC, CCSI, CEPMLP, Commonwealth Secretariat, Extractives Practice of the World Bank, GIZ, IISD / IGF, ISLP, NRG, Norad, UNDP
Agriculture	CCSI, IIED, IISD
Infrastructure	A4ID, ALSF, CCSI, ISLP, PPIAF
Fiscal issues more broadly	IMF

Figure 2. Sector focuses of trainings offered by support providers

The detail of responses as to content varied, with some support providers mentioning broad topics, such as the general industry they focus on, and others breaking down their answers into

the discrete topics taught in a particular training. Twelve respondents listed trainings on legal issues such as legal frameworks or investment contracts. Those that did not list sub-sessions on legal courses focused on fiscal and economic policy and/or on governance. Eight support providers listed trainings or sub-sessions on financial or fiscal issues, ten noted courses on economics, and six noted courses on governance and the rule of law.

The table below maps all training topics mentioned by respondents against the four stages of the investment process, as featured on the Negotiation Support Portal. Three organizations also stated that their trainings and capacity programs are often driven by the demands or needs of the host country.

Investment Stage	Courses offered
1. <a href="#">Setting the Legal and Policy Framework</a>	The African Mining Vision and Country Mining Vision; agricultural investments; artisanal and small-scale mining; bribery/corruption; bilateral investment agreements; business and human rights; climate change; climate resilience and resistance; commercial law; corporate governance; community rights and expectations in natural resource development; data analysis; designing and implementing a resource-based public investment program; development banks and SWFs; development strategies / history / theory; domestic legal frameworks; employment law; entrepreneurship skills; environmental law; financing development (financial flows, aid and development, corruption, tax); fiscal administration / compliance / issues / regime design / modeling; food security; fundamentals of understanding the extractive industries; gender; global gas flaring reduction; governance / rule of law; inclusive business models; intellectual property; international legal frameworks; investment drivers for energy projects; land rights, governance and tenure security; legal frameworks / issues; local content; long-term planning and upstream and downstream linkages; macroeconomic management, market analysis and investment promotion; mine and quarry management; political economy; project pipelines; project finance; resource revenue management and allocation; sanctions; socio-economic rights; subsidy reform; transparency and accountability; water use; urban services.
2. <a href="#">Pre-Negotiation</a>	Advocacy strategies; business and human rights; community development agreements; community engagement; community rights and expectations in natural resource development; fundamentals of petroleum (law and economics) for governance; geo-data and maps design; global gas flaring reduction; health and safety; impacts of agricultural investments; indigenous peoples, local government and the extractive industry; preparing for contract negotiations, public procurement; social and environmental impacts.
3. <a href="#">Contract Negotiation</a>	Contract drafting / interpretation / negotiation / renegotiation (extractives / public private partnerships / agriculture); examining various countries' contracting practices; fiscal modeling / regimes design; global gas flaring reduction; introduction to negotiation support assistance and tools; local content and shared use infrastructure; mining transactions and agreements; negotiating extractive sector contracts; production sharing agreements; revenue sharing; state owned enterprises; sovereign debt negotiations; transparency and accountability; transportation agreements.
4. <a href="#">Implementation and Monitoring</a>	Alternative dispute resolution; asset recovery; business and human rights; communication; community relations and addressing grievances; conflict and overlapping uses of land; contract content / analysis / monitoring / implementation; international investment arbitration; governance of petroleum resources (resources, revenues, environment, safety, accountability, transparency); managing environmental impacts; managing investment impacts on water; monitoring and evaluation; monitoring and regulation of the upstream petroleum sector; production, management and dissemination of geological and mineral information; tax administration and compliance.

Figure 3. Content of training courses offered by support providers

Key gaps, or topics that were under-represented in the responses included:<sup>81</sup>

- Climate change resilience and adaptation, and the impact of climate change on resource extraction and development;<sup>82</sup>
- Gender;
- Geology and related issues;
- The human rights of affected communities;
- Implementation of contracts; how governments can ensure that investors comply with their obligations; and
- The pre-negotiation [stage](#) (feasibility studies, impact assessments, tenders).

Two support providers<sup>83</sup> are currently contemplating working on a ‘boardroom training’ that will train government officials on corporate governance, including guidance on fiduciary obligations for government representatives sitting on boards of private companies or public private partnerships and management skills such as reading financial statements.

Another topic regarded as currently lacking is up-to-date trainings on capital markets. Some support providers<sup>84</sup> have worked with governments or other stakeholders acting off capital markets information that is often years out of date, and which can thus lead to suboptimal decisions or strategies.

One support provider<sup>85</sup> suggested that government participants could be asked to make presentations, and bring real aspects of their work, such as contracts that have been, or are slated to be, executed, so that the training administered is as practical and applied as possible.

### Soft skills

Most providers also noted that they provide some “soft skills” training: five offer generalist courses on negotiation skills, communication or economic and policy skills; and at least five organizations noted soft skill trainings that are imbedded within their substantive trainings.

One ‘soft skill’ training topic that participants described a great need for is decision-making in times of uncertainty. It was noted that some host government representatives lack the skills needed to evaluate different policy options, which increases the risk that a poor decision will be made. This can mean that during difficult circumstances, governments will often defer making any decision. One support provider has been engaging consultants to assist governments unbundle proposals around megaprojects so that decisions are made in phases, thereby providing time to assess and adjust decision-making according to the outcome of each phase of a mega project and preventing decision-making paralysis. However, no training was identified by the support provider which covers this exact issue.

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<sup>81</sup> While these topics were not explicitly mentioned, this does mean that they are not covered under more general trainings topics. In addition, the degree of detail in which respondents described the trainings offered varied greatly.

<sup>82</sup> A4ID, CCSI, Commonwealth Secretariat, IMF, IISD/IGF, Norad, NREGI and the World Bank are all starting to determine how issues relating to climate change, including climate finance, can be incorporated into their programs.

<sup>83</sup> ALSF, GIZ.

<sup>84</sup> ISLP.

<sup>85</sup> ALSF.

## **D. Implementation of trainings and capacity building programs**

### Location of trainings

The location of trainings and other capacity building efforts can impact on the program's effectiveness, format and other design features, such as which experts will be available to act as instructors. For instance, "in country" trainings have the advantage of being able to assemble representatives from different governmental bodies or other stakeholders in the same room to encourage increased governmental coordination and collaboration. However, in-country trainings may lead to less classroom discussion and active interactions if government representatives are distracted by other work issues, or if they feel constrained from speaking freely (for instance in non-democratic governmental contexts). In-country trainings also miss opportunities for participants to learn from the experiences of their counterparts in other countries, who are often grappling with similar issues.

Thirteen of the 16 respondents offer in-country trainings. Of these, the vast majority also offer trainings at the regional level or at the organization's "headquarters." More generally, five respondents noted that they carry out trainings regionally, and eight organizations carry out trainings in the country of the support provider's headquarters, which tend to be in North America or Western Europe. Five respondents also referred to their online training modules, which can take the form of videos, training exercises, and other forms of online interaction.

### Profile of the trainers

Whom an organization selects to carry out specific trainings can also impact on how the training is implemented, and whether the organization's particular perspective(s) are adequately conveyed to participants.

Fifteen of the 16 respondents indicated they use external experts (either on a paid or pro bono basis) or consultants for at least some sessions of their trainings. This tended to split into two types of uses of external trainers: the majority of respondents (11 of the 16) relied on staff for many courses or sessions, but supplemented this with external trainers to fill gaps in expertise; a second group (the remaining 5 respondents) tended to focus on coordinating the trainings and left the implementation of training courses to external experts.

In addition to internal staff trainers and external experts, two other types of trainers were identified. One support provider<sup>86</sup> uses locally based trainers as a means of building trust with participants, and also as a form of capacity building of local trainers. Another group of "trainers" mentioned by one support provider<sup>87</sup> was the participants themselves; asking them to present updates about their work was seen as an effective form of training and sharing experiences.

As set out in 'Ideas for additional coordination' in Part 3, above, nine support providers keep some form of list or roster of experts to engage. Another three respondents referred to drawing trainers from their networks, including individuals with whom they have collaborated on other projects. Relying on recommendations for experts was rarely mentioned. One organization<sup>88</sup> emphasized that identifying a field's leading experts in advance of a training can help an organization to identify potential trainers. Another organization<sup>89</sup> occasionally publishes calls for experts or consultants to carry out specific trainings.

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<sup>86</sup> GIZ.

<sup>87</sup> ALSF.

<sup>88</sup> ISLP.

<sup>89</sup> UNDP.

## Conclusion and next steps

### *Findings*

The results of the questionnaire and discussions at the second meeting of support providers indicate that many organizations are still experimenting with ways to increase the effectiveness of their interventions, the means they use to monitor and evaluate them, and complementary strategies, such as alumni engagement activities, that can be employed to enhance their impact.

**On monitoring and evaluation:** support providers illustrated a widespread practice of seeking participant feedback. Identifying effective means of measuring the actual impact of the training or capacity building intervention, however, remains a challenge despite the variety of approaches being trialed. Support providers are grappling with issues that include:

- The value of post-training evaluation when the baseline knowledge of the participants was not measured before the training program, and vice versa;
- The value of follow up questionnaires – completed a year or more after a training has taken place – when participants have often changed jobs and responsibilities;
- The effectiveness of peer-to-peer mentoring supported by online tools; and
- The ways to measure the quality of drafted outputs — such as the laws a government enacts or the contracts it negotiates — following a capacity building program.

Many support providers expressed a strong interest in learning more about what methods or strategies exist for deepening trainees’ understanding and ensuring a better uptake of key learnings. Some support providers are currently experimenting with different methods and should be well placed to provide additional insights regarding their results in the coming months and years.

**On alumni engagement:** most support providers viewed their current alumni engagement strategies as a work in progress, having the potential to be improved. Questions that merit further exploration include:

- What social media or communication channels are most effective and appropriate for maintaining the engagement of alumni, and how the geographic location of the participants should impact on which forum is used;
- How to convert a trainer-trainee relationship into a collaborative work relationship with trainees identified as the best performers;
- Whether arranging for formal affiliation with the support providers would better sustain engagement with alumni; and
- How a support provider can leverage their network of alumni with the objective of pursuing a “train the trainers” strategy.

**On coordination among support providers:** there was a general consensus that coordination was a valuable means of enhancing the impact of training and capacity-building efforts. In addition to ad hoc coordination among different subsets of the support provider group, support providers agreed to provide brief updates on the countries they are currently providing trainings or technical support in, which could then provide the basis for further conversations among relevant support providers.

Other avenues for more systematically ensuring cross-organizational coordination, such as creating a database for experts and/or participants require further reflection; this would include weighing the associated challenges of maintaining and updating the database with useful information about each expert/participant against the value that such a database would create. A database of experts could help locate experts more quickly but might be of little use without assessments of individuals’ past performance, and could lead to an overuse of the same experts.

In turn, a database of participants could help support providers to build the knowledge that certain participants may have from previous trainings, lead to better coordination among support providers in terms of the substantive contents of trainings, possibly through a certification scheme, and could help locate points of contact in countries for technical assistance and capacity building interventions. At the same time, such a database risks becoming a long, unwieldy list of names and data that could end up defeating its purpose. Keeping the database updated, especially as individuals change positions or employers, would also pose challenges, as would managing the inputs of all support providers.

Either (or both) databases would also necessitate a body charged with the role of coordinating such an initiative, that would be responsible for that database's administration and maintenance, and the design of operational and ethical rules for its use. Given the resources needed for such an undertaking, the buy-in of the majority of the support providers—and financial support from donors—would be required.

#### *Future meetings of support providers*

Given the number of open questions and need for further research into how to deepen the impact of their interventions, there was a robust consensus among participants at the second meeting that the meetings of support providers should continue. In addition to an annual in-person meeting at Columbia, the group agreed that efforts to stay more regularly in touch, and to leverage other events as opportunities to have briefer meetings would be valuable.

Potential topics for the next meeting of support providers, in addition to having a regular session on updates and possibilities for collaboration amongst support providers, include:

- 'Boardroom trainings' on corporate governance;<sup>90</sup>
- Climate change;<sup>91</sup>
- Strategies to address complex decision-making during uncertain times;
- Recap / check-in on M&E and trainings — in particular regarding assessing the effectiveness of measures being currently trialed to test the short to medium term impact of trainings and capacity building programs;
- M&E of technical assistance;<sup>92</sup>
- Investor-state contract implementation, monitoring and enforcement.<sup>93</sup>
- A focus on support provider activities in one specific country or region;
- How support providers adapt to changes in the sector (such as climate change, low commodity prices, geopolitical events impacting on funding, or the influx of investors from non-traditional countries); and
- Thinking more strategically about how the group of support providers collectively impacts and causes sustainable change in the sector.

CCSI will soon consult with the support providers to determine the topic(s) that will be discussed at the next meeting of support providers.

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<sup>90</sup> ALSF, Commonwealth Secretariat, World Bank.

<sup>91</sup> ALSF.

<sup>92</sup> ALSF.

<sup>93</sup> NRGI.