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Sustainability through Host Country Ownership: Experience from Ghana

Sarah Banashek, USAID/Ghana

2015 Education Summit:
Goal 1: All Children Reading

Overview

- Background on G2G in Education
- Institutional Capacity Building
- Results to date
- Lessons Learned

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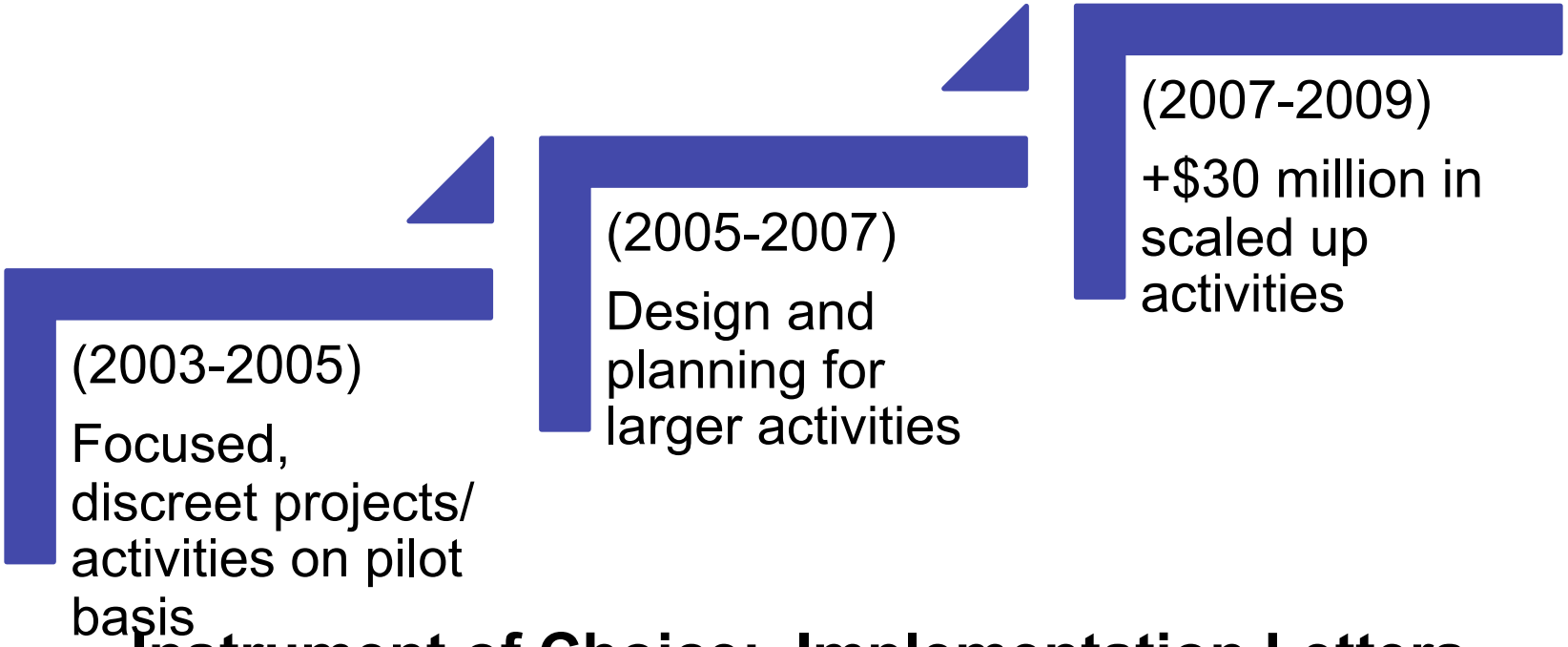
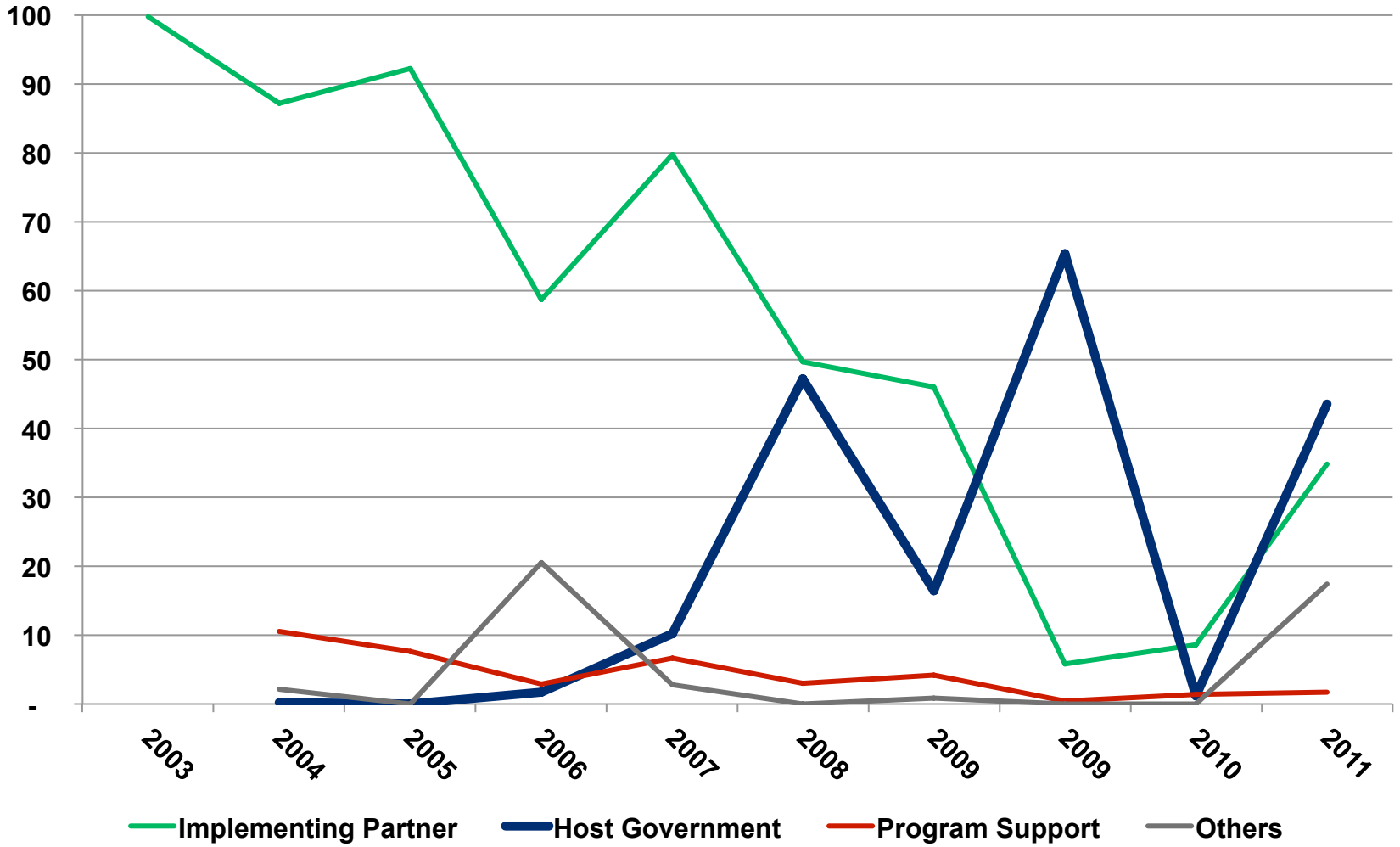
History of G2G in Ghana: A "step by step" process



Instrument of Choice: Implementation Letters

Ghana "G2G" before USAID Forward



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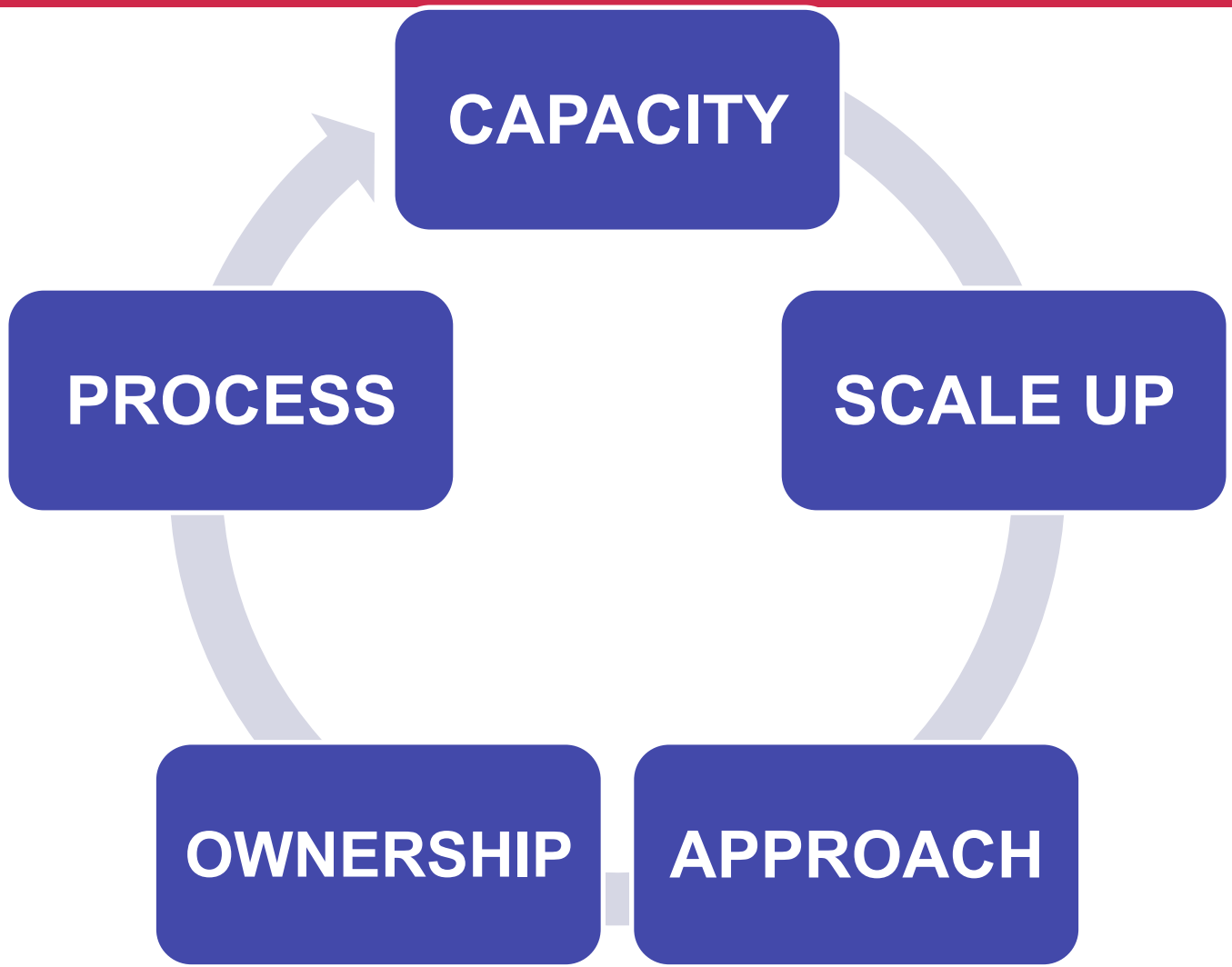
Why implementation letters?



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Institutional Capacity Building: Case Study

Past

Present

Future

National Education Assessment Unit

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National Education Assessment Unit: Past

- Small Unit within the Ghana Education Service (10-12 members)
- Mandated to lead the Ghana Education Service on student assessment at the pre-tertiary level
- Long partnership with USAID
  - Basic Education Comprehensive Assessment System (2005)
  - National Education Assessment (2005-present)
  - Early Grade Reading/Early Grade Math Assessment (EGRA/ EGMA; 2013-present)

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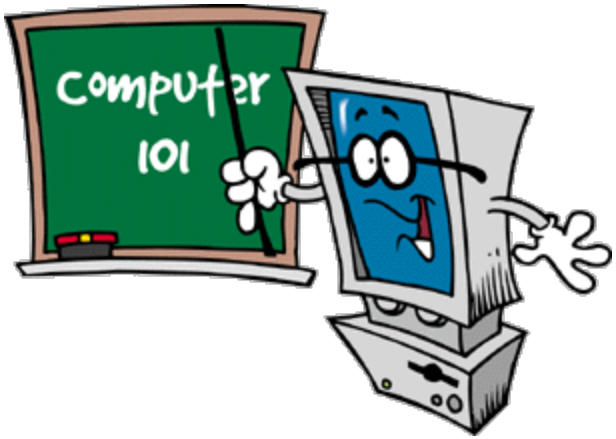
National Education Assessment Unit: Present

- Latest support through USAID/Ghana's Partnership for Education: *Testing* activity (2013-2016)
- Includes:
  - Support for administration and analysis of assessments (NEA, EGRA/EGMA)
  - Support for capacity building for staff such as long term training (via local sub-contractor), international STTA, connection to training and professional development
  - Development of long term assessment models (low-cost, sustainable)

Capacity building: it's not what you think



Push/Pull

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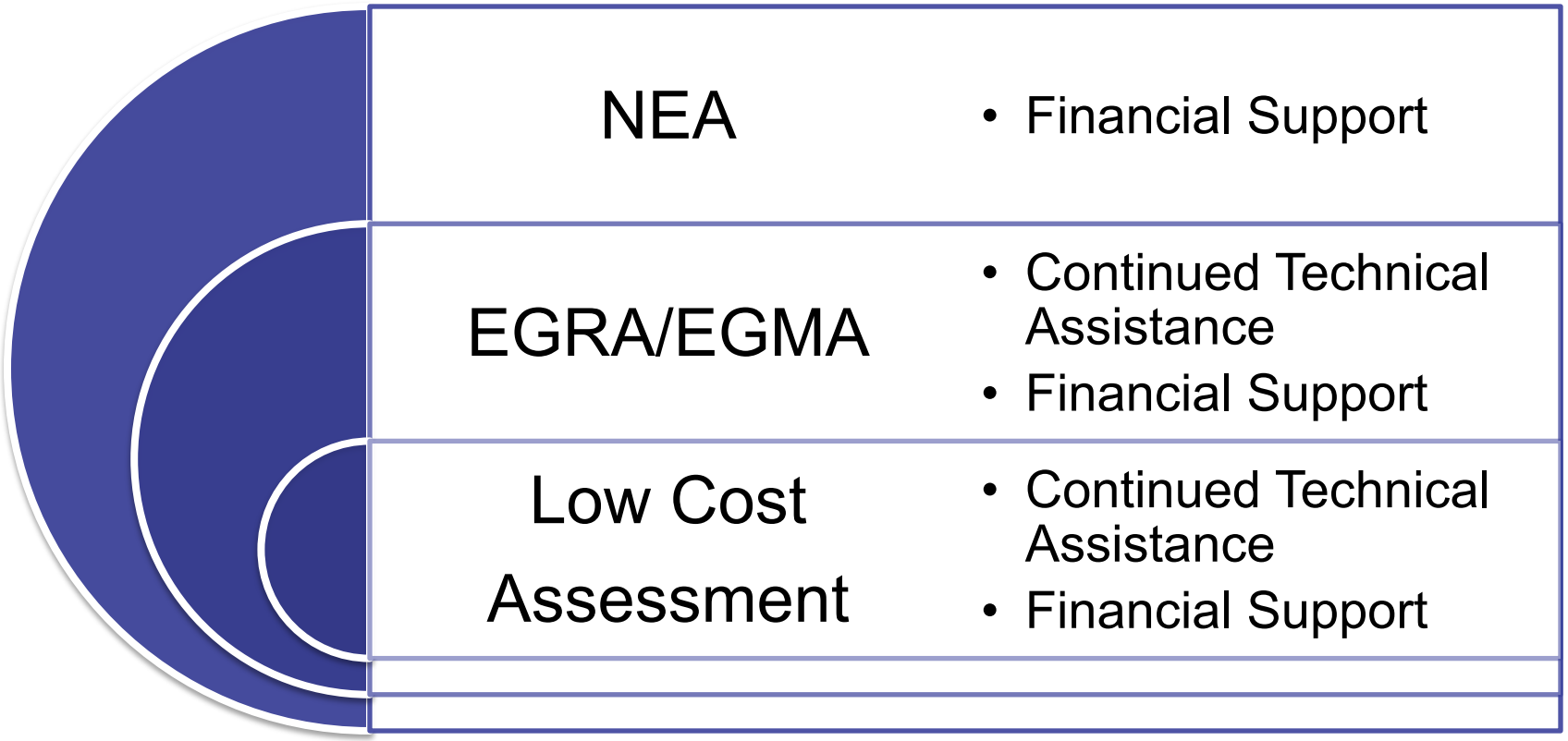
National Education Assessment Unit: Future



Lessons Learned

Moving from this….

….to this

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Lessons Learned: Key Principles

- Identify Champions
- Assign Staff
- Start Small
- Mission Support
- Manage Expectations

Lessons Learned: Key Considerations

Simplify reporting requirements

Streamline finances

Take a hybrid approach

Use embedded advisers

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Thank you for your attention!

Sarah Banashek
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EXTRA SLIDES

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Challenges

- Ghana
  - Slow speed of partner country procurement systems and decision making
  - Ghana's government system weaknesses: fiduciary, regulatory, oversight and compliance requirements
  - Aligned policy, but implementation plans missing
  - Balancing USAID goal (100 million readers), HG goals and 'donor mix'
- USAID & USAID/Ghana
  - Multiple masters vis-à-vis agency policy expectations: Ed Policy, USAID Forward, Evaluation Policy, Youth Policy
  - Changing, transitioning and unclear guidance as the Agency learns more – ADS 220, PPDO, RLA, RAAO, new approval processes
  - Internal USAID capacity, skills and people power
  - Ability to ensure compliance and maintain momentum

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Solutions

- Accompany G2G with capacity building to enable GoG meet USG program management and reporting requirements
- Agree on a dedicated government project manager with sufficient time to dedicate to the project
- Engage an embedded technical advisor (or similar strategy) who knows and understand the HG education system, protocols, sensitivity, leadership, key players and can navigate the dynamics
- Develop clear channel of communication and communicate in a consistent and transparent manner about the program

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Lessons Learned

- Requires additional diplomacy and tact, blending within and between partner government and USAID cultures
- Incorporate wide scale access to and use of EGR data for a variety of purposes
- Sustainability of EGR programs and maximal use of data
- For needed support, dedication and collaboration, may need to remind/orient HG is the project/activity is theirs
- Needs more and increasingly collaborative efforts from the technical and support offices i.e. OFM, EXO, PDO,RLA
- Cumulatively transformational