Initiative for

SOCIAL PERFORMANCE IN RENEWABLE ENERGY

BUILDING LEADERSHIP FOR A PEOPLE-CENTERED JUST TRANSITION

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COMMUNITY SHAREHOLDING IN SA'S REIPPPP

POLICY AND PRACTICE INSIGHTS

Shared Prosperity Online Workshop • 18 November 2025

By Holle Wlokas, holle@inspire-excellence.net

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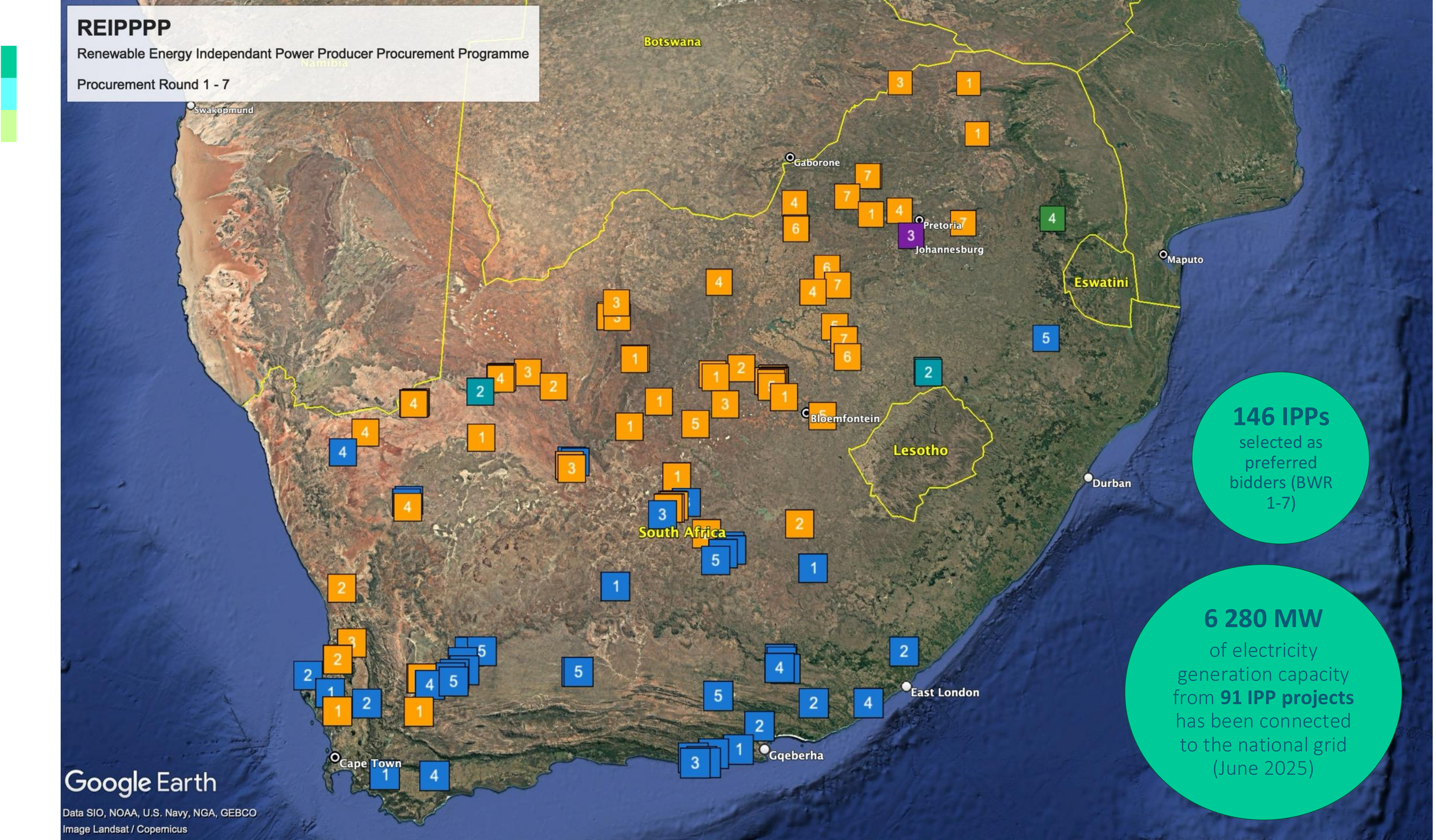
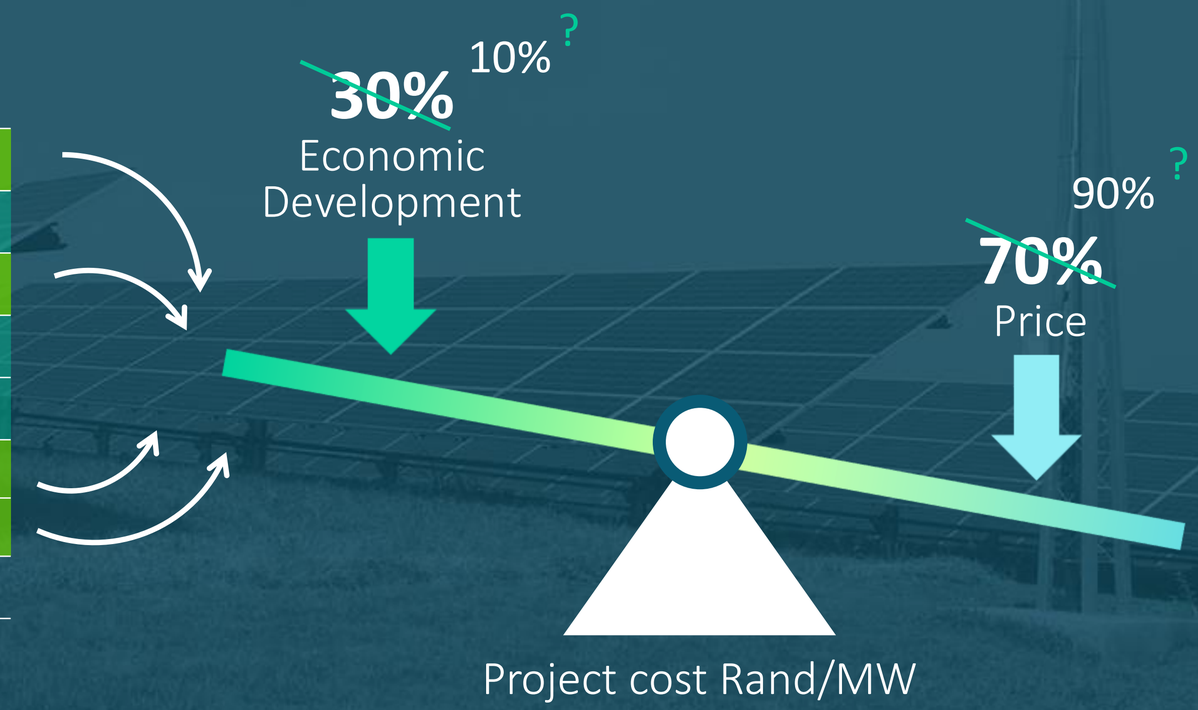

REIPPPP
Renewable Energy Independant Power Producer Procurement Programme
Procurement Round 1 - 7
Botswana
Namibia
Swakopmund
Gaborone
Pretoria
Johannesburg
Maputo
Eswatini
Lesotho
Bloemfontein
Durban
South Africa
East London
Gqeberha
Cape Town
146 IPPs
selected as preferred bidders (BWR 1-7)
6 280 MW
of electricity generation capacity from 91 IPP projects has been connected to the national grid (June 2025)
Google Earth
Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO
Image Landsat / Copernicus

REIPPPP's ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENTS

Example: Bid window round 1 (launched 2011)

7 Economic Development Elements	Weighting
Job Creation	25%
Local Content	25%
Ownership	15%
Management Control	5%
Preferential Procurement	10%
Enterprise Development	5%
Socio-Economic Development	15%
Total	100%
Total points	30 points



Source: *South African Department of Energy 2011*

In the early rounds of REIPPPP, project applications were assessed to 70% against these seven economic development commitments they made, and 30% against the electricity price they offered. These requirements changed over the various procurement rounds but remain an important feature of REIPPPP projects.

PHASES AND TIMING OF COMMUNITY BENEFITS

PROJECT TIMELINE

CONSTRUCTION (6-18 MONTHS) | PLUG INTO ESKOM | OPERATION (20 YEARS)

COMMUNITY LIAISON

Project construction provides employment opportunities for various types of work and skills levels. The temporary influx of people during that time also impacts the local economy through increased demand on service and retail industries.

JOB CREATION LOCALLY

SED AND ED FUNDING

OWNERSHIP DIVIDENDS

Image: *Wlokas, Local Community Benefits brochure, 2015*

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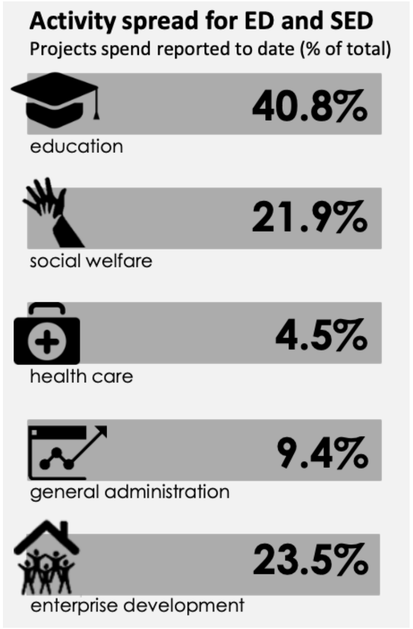
LEARNING | KNOWLEDGE | PARTNERSHIPS | INNOVATION

In the **absence of guidance from government** on how to engage with communities and govern and invest these funds, the practices employed, and impact achieved depend on the companies.

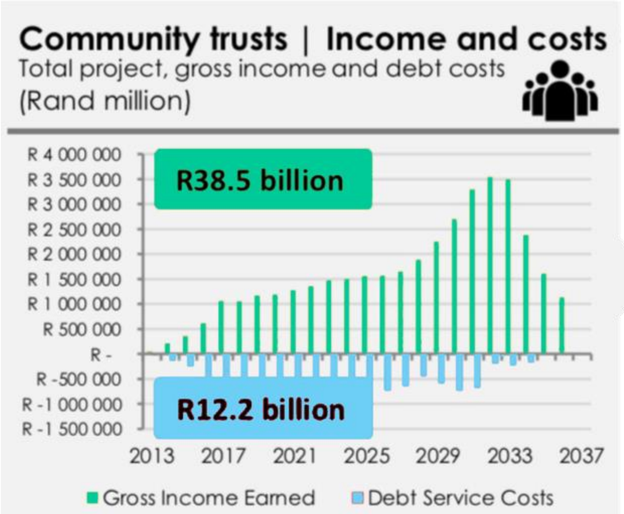
QUANTITATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS

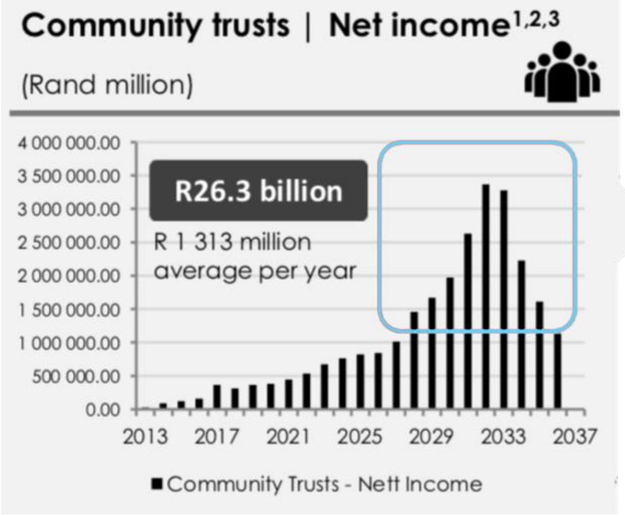
Source: IPPO Report 2025

R1bil equals about USD54mil



Source: IPPO Report 2021





Source: IFC, Discussion Paper, 2019 | IPPO Overview Report, 2021 www.ipp-projects.co.za

Key challenges

- **Uncertainty on appropriate institutional arrangements** for effective governance of and decision making on community benefit investments.
- **Insufficient REIPPP monitoring requirements**, heavily focused on quarterly input/output data but not enough information on socioeconomic development impact.
- **Lack of leadership** in coordinating corporate community investments in cases where there are many renewable energy projects in close proximity.

Key learnings

Opportunities or **alternative vehicles to be investigated** that will enable a more even distribution of community trust, cash flow and realizing community benefits sooner.

PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITY

To contribute to decarbonization, energy security and economic development

Contribute to the National Development Plan and goals

Transfer skills and provide work experience in local communities

Develop shared visions for local economic development

New perspectives for rural development

TRUST MATTERS

2023 - 2027

An initiative exploring the full spirit of community ownership.

We aim to empower community trusts in REIPPPP, mobilise community leadership and drive developmental impact.

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climateworks FOUNDATION

IDC
Industrial Development Corporation

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

To build trust and network strength, explore challenges, co-develop a framework for change.

2024

Kimberly • 24 Participants

Gqeberha • 23 Participants

Cape Town • 20 Participants

2025

Cape Town • 37 Participants

Kimberley • 18 Participants

Gqeberha • 16 Participants

NATIONAL LEARNING EVENT

11-12th February 2025

This is a very important learning platform which allows all of us to learn and stretch our capabilities as institutions.

Thanks again for inviting me to the INSPIRE learning event. I learnt so much and made some really good contacts with people. It was great getting a sense of the INSPIRE team too - what a team!

And thanks again for the invite – we continue to glean from events like this and helps us to achieve our goal of excellence.

WEBINARS

Engaging the wider community ownership eco-system in progressive conversations.

Measuring Trust Maturity: Leveraging Trust Matters Findings to Strengthen REIPPPP Community Trusts

30 views • 4 months ago

Collaboration to Unlock Financial Capacity of RE Community Trusts

148 views • 2 months ago

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INSIGHTS FROM THE ECOSYSTEM

Common challenges experienced by community shareholding trusts in realizing their full impact potential.

Governance	Capacity	Vision & Strategy	Impactful Delivery
Lack of community representation	Trust, Project and Organisational Management	**Long term vision and strategy rather than 1-3 year project plans**	How do we move towards and develop local administrators and implementors?
Ltd or no trustee engagement with IPP boards	**Inter and Intrapersonal Skills – practical and emotional support**	Inclusive strategy – with community and development partner inputs	**Performance indicators that are determined by community perceptions of success**
No standardised governance tools & regulatory processes	Financial, fund and project budget management	A strategy that takes in account the full Trust Maturity Framework	Cost effective and efficient to get the most out of limited community trust resources

HOW TRAUMA SHOWS UP IN REIPPPP COMMUNITIES

Desperation:

Trauma often surfaces in moments of desperation, where communities feel powerless or marginalised.

Intersecting Traumas:

Trauma from past development projects, such as mining, resurfacing and compounding existing wounds.

Lack of Informed Governance:

Deep-seated trauma may lead to a lack of trust in governance structures and policies, especially when community input is disregarded.

Conflict Resolution and Communication:

Conflicts arise during project meetings due to competing interests and may cause lack of community buy-in and delays in project implementation.

Communities are overlooked and invisible:

When communities are overlooked in decision-making processes, the sense of insignificance is a result of historical marginalisation and perpetuates feelings of inadequacy or resentment.

Reactive behaviours due to historical trauma:

Historical trauma results in reactive behaviours from communities, such as aggression or resistance, particularly when faced with perceived threats or injustices.

Mismatch between Policy and Reality:

Communities experience trauma when policies or governance structures do not align with their lived experiences or needs.

SUPPORT NEEDED BY TRUSTEES, THE TRUST, AND COMMUNITIES IN REIPPPP

SUPPORT NEEDED for You

- **Capacity Building in IPP Regulation- training and resources to better understand how IPPs are regulated.**
- **Support network to lean on during difficult times.**
- Business/Life Coach to navigate personal and professional challenges.
- Tools for Processing Trauma- Access to therapy sessions or tools for processing personal trauma.
- Opportunities to reflect, reset, and recharge to maintain well-being.
- Time to engage with other experts in your field for knowledge sharing and collaboration.
- Networking Opportunities to expand professional connections.
- Active Involvement with INSPIRE

SUPPORT NEEDED for the Trust

- **Training and capacitation for trustees to improve their skills and effectiveness.**
- **Assistance in developing successful community engagement strategies.**
- Support in formulating a successful trust structure aligned with community needs.
- Context and coaching on effective leadership, sincerity, and trustee roles.
- Employment of professionals to support trust operations.
- Provision of workspace for trust operations.

SUPPORT NEEDED for the Community

- **Training and induction on trauma-informed approaches for all involved parties.**
- **Workshops to clarify trust issues, trust deeds, and beneficiary selection processes.**
- Initiatives to remind the community of their role as equal partners in development.
- Development of effective stakeholder engagement strategies, possibly through case studies.
- Creation of platforms for constructive community engagement and healing.
- Initiatives to raise awareness of available programs and funds for community development.

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY TRUSTS FOR OPTIMAL DELIVERY

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TRUST MATURITY FRAMEWORK

Trust Support Ecosystem

The Trust | Trustees | The Community | Trust Administrators/ Administration | IPPs/ ED Managers | Founders | Financiers | IPP Office

1 Governance

The core structure and structuring of the trust that determines its purpose

- Founding documents
- Mandate
- Independence of Trust
- Operations & processes

2 Vision & Strategy

The practice of inclusviely crafting the vision and delivery plan to impact optimally

- Strategy development
- Collaboration with other stakeholders
- Community engagement, agency and empowerment

3 Impactful Delivery

Strategic, robust, ambitious, cost effective and iterative programme conceptualisation with high localisation quota

- Conceptualisation
- Programme structuring
- M&E and improvement
- Cost effective, efficient
- Localisation
- Sharing learnings

4 Capacity

The knowledge, skills, financial, and other resources that enable the trust to perform.

- Financial strength & viability
- Knowledge & experience
- Inter/Intra-personal challenges & skills
- DEI & belonging

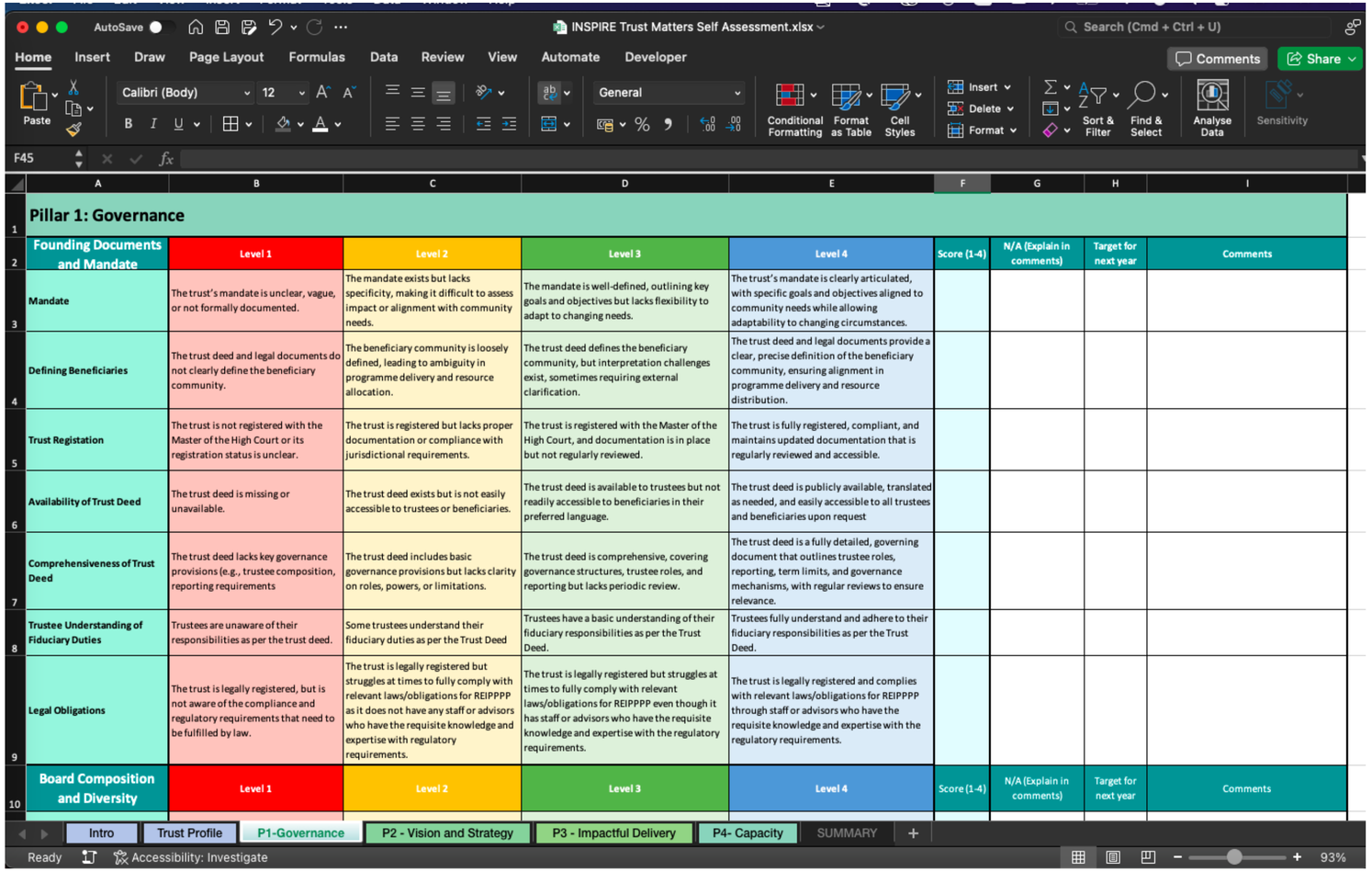
What is the Self-Assessment Tool?

A structured tool designed to help community trusts assess governance, financial sustainability, stakeholder engagement, and operational effectiveness.

Seven sheets:

1. Intro Sheet
2. Trust Profile
3. Governance
4. Vision & Strategy
5. Impactful Delivery
6. Capacity
7. Summary Sheet

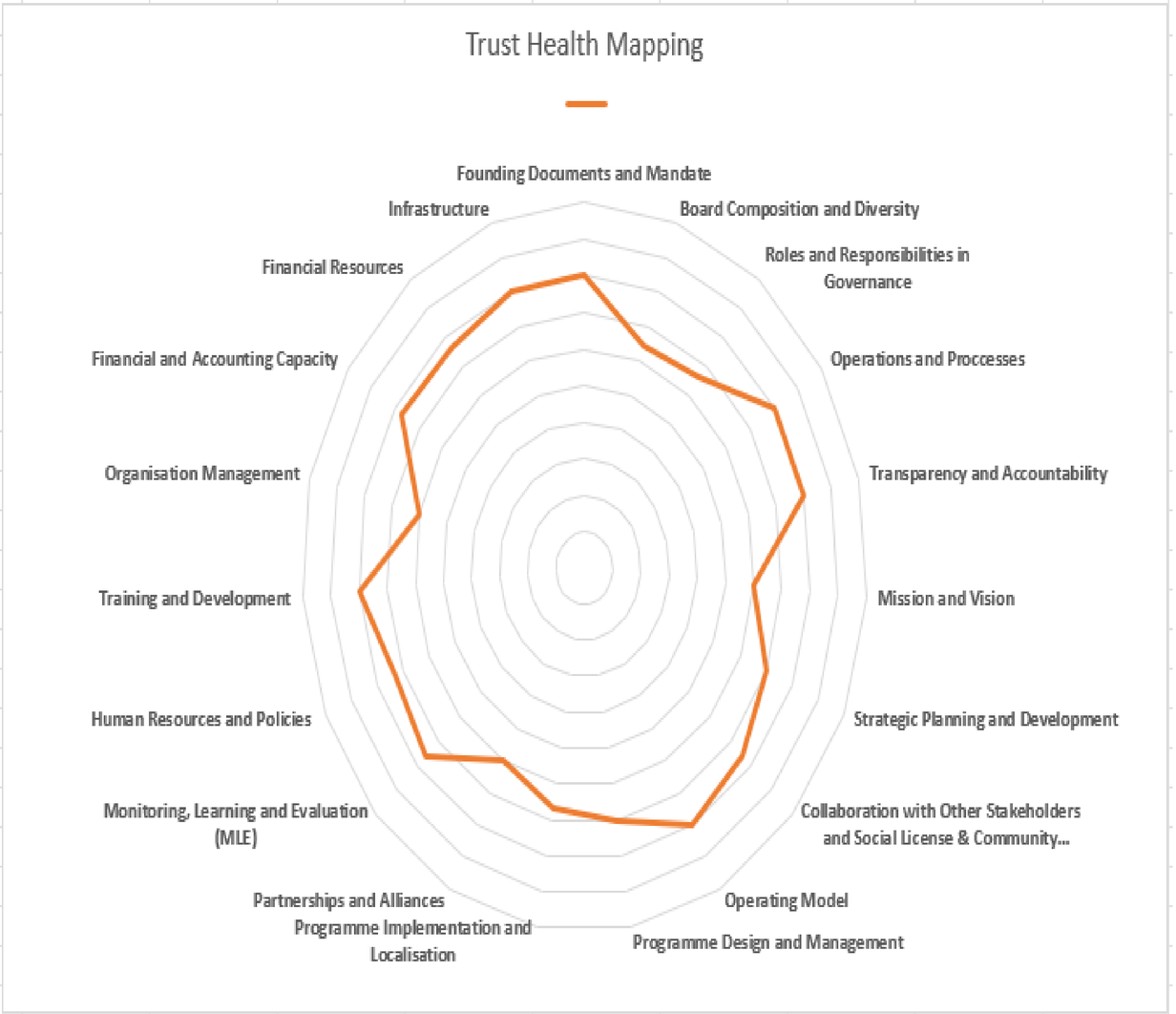
- Level-based scoring (1–4) with descriptions for each level.
- Includes space for comments, targets, and NA (Not Applicable) options.



Pillar 1: Governance								
Founding Documents and Mandate	**Level 1**	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**	**Score (1-4)**	**N/A (Explain in comments)**	**Target for next year**	**Comments**
Mandate	The trust's mandate is unclear, vague, or not formally documented.	The mandate exists but lacks specificity, making it difficult to assess impact or alignment with community needs.	The mandate is well-defined, outlining key goals and objectives but lacks flexibility to adapt to changing needs.	The trust's mandate is clearly articulated, with specific goals and objectives aligned to community needs while allowing adaptability to changing circumstances.				
Defining Beneficiaries	The trust deed and legal documents do not clearly define the beneficiary community.	The beneficiary community is loosely defined, leading to ambiguity in programme delivery and resource allocation.	The trust deed defines the beneficiary community, but interpretation challenges exist, sometimes requiring external clarification.	The trust deed and legal documents provide a clear, precise definition of the beneficiary community, ensuring alignment in programme delivery and resource distribution.				
Trust Registation	The trust is not registered with the Master of the High Court or its registration status is unclear.	The trust is registered but lacks proper documentation or compliance with jurisdictional requirements.	The trust is registered with the Master of the High Court, and documentation is in place but not regularly reviewed.	The trust is fully registered, compliant, and maintains updated documentation that is regularly reviewed and accessible.				
Availability of Trust Deed	The trust deed is missing or unavailable.	The trust deed exists but is not easily accessible to trustees or beneficiaries.	The trust deed is available to trustees but not readily accessible to beneficiaries in their preferred language.	The trust deed is publicly available, translated as needed, and easily accessible to all trustees and beneficiaries upon request				
Comprehensiveness of Trust Deed	The trust deed lacks key governance provisions (e.g., trustee composition, reporting requirements	The trust deed includes basic governance provisions but lacks clarity on roles, powers, or limitations.	The trust deed is comprehensive, covering governance structures, trustee roles, and reporting but lacks periodic review.	The trust deed is a fully detailed, governing document that outlines trustee roles, reporting, term limits, and governance mechanisms, with regular reviews to ensure relevance.				
Trustee Understanding of Fiduciary Duties	Trustees are unaware of their responsibilities as per the trust deed.	Some trustees understand their fiduciary duties as per the Trust Deed	Trustees have a basic understanding of their fiduciary responsibilities as per the Trust Deed.	Trustees fully understand and adhere to their fiduciary responsibilities as per the Trust Deed.				
Legal Obligations	The trust is legally registered, but is not aware of the compliance and regulatory requirements that need to be fulfilled by law.	The trust is legally registered but struggles at times to fully comply with relevant laws/obligations for REIPPPP as it does not have any staff or advisors who have the requisite knowledge and expertise with regulatory requirements.	The trust is legally registered but struggles at times to fully comply with relevant laws/obligations for REIPPPP even though it has staff or advisors who have the requisite knowledge and expertise with the regulatory requirements.	The trust is legally registered and complies with relevant laws/obligations for REIPPPP through staff or advisors who have the requisite knowledge and expertise with the regulatory requirements.				
Board Composition and Diversity	**Level 1**	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**	**Score (1-4)**	**N/A (Explain in comments)**	**Target for next year**	**Comments**

Detailed scores per pillar and per sub-category

SELF-ASSESSMENT SCORES	
PILLAR 1 GOVERNANCE	3.70
Founding Documents and Mandate	4.00
Board Composition and Diversity	3.22
Roles and Responsibilities in Governance	3.30
Operations and Proccesses	4.00
Transparency and Accountability	4.00
PILLAR 2 VISION AND STRATEGY	3.43
Mission and Vision	3.00
Strategic Planning and Development	3.50
Collaboration with Other Stakeholders and Social License & Commu	3.80
PILLAR 3 IMPACTFUL DELIVERY	3.53
Operating Model	4.00
Programme Design and Management	3.50
Programme Implementation and Localisation	3.33
Partnerships and Alliances	3.00
Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation (MLE)	3.82
PILLAR 4 CAPACITY	3.73
Human Resources and Policies	3.67
Training and Development	4.00
Organisation Management	3.00
Financial and Accounting Capacity	3.86
Financial Resources	3.83
Infrastructure	4.00
Overall Average	3.60



TRUST SUPPORT MATRIX

Governance

- Trust Matters Video- long & short version
- Trust Deed template
- Basic policy & standard operating procedures templates
- NFR Manual- Candice & Just Energy Association of Lawyers

Capacity

- Generic Trust Induction Videos
- An intro to trauma-informed leadership 20min Video
- Webinar recording on refinancing
- Explanation of trust income stream in more detail- from Video
- Video explaining the different types of trust fund investment

Vision and Strategy

- Videos on trust strategy template
- Video: value of LT strategy that includes many development partners & community
- ToC & Strategy 1 pager
- Video of detailed Trust Maturity Framework

Impactful Delivery

- 1 pager on M&E Framework

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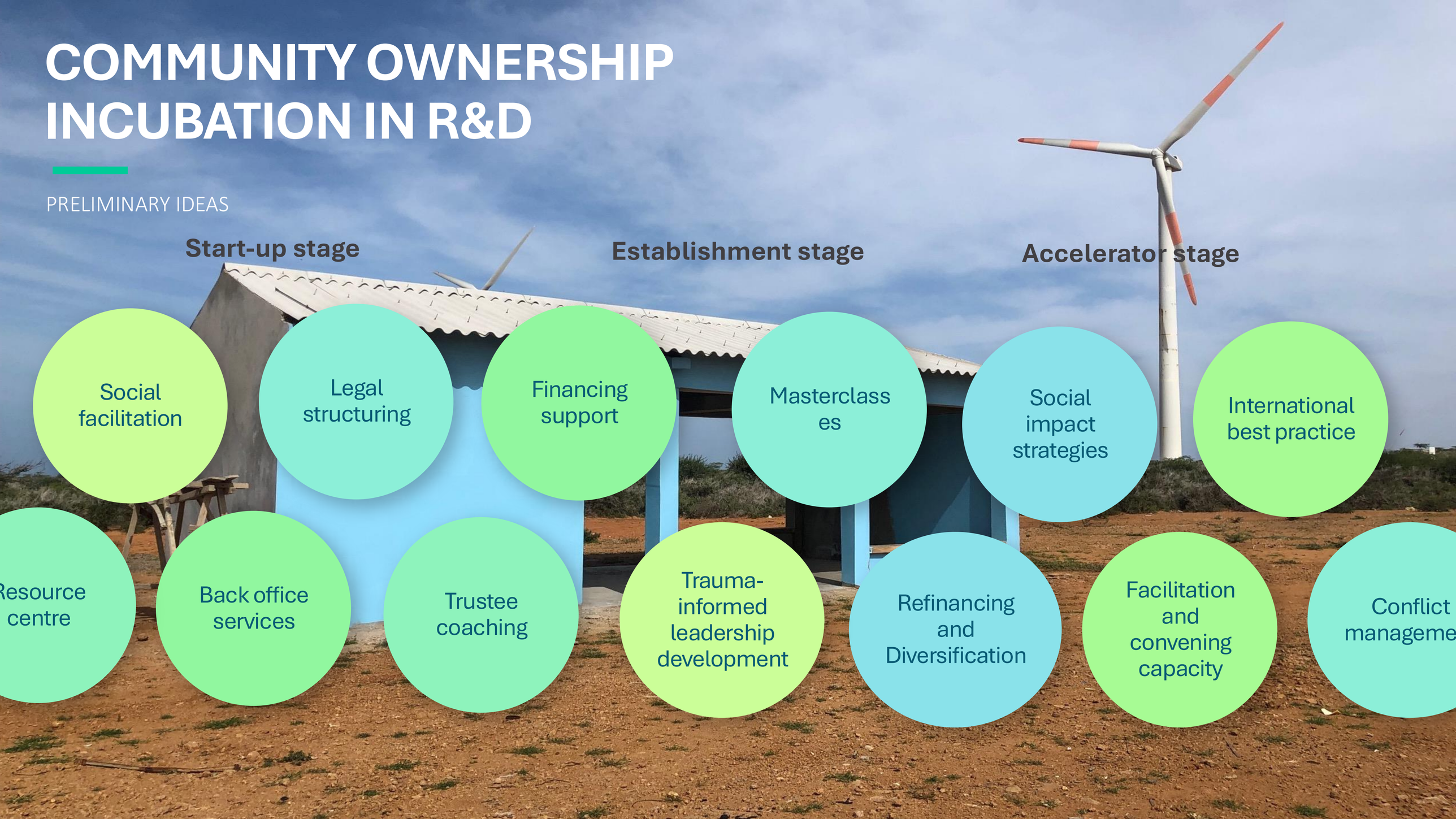
COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP INCUBATION IN R&D

PRELIMINARY IDEAS