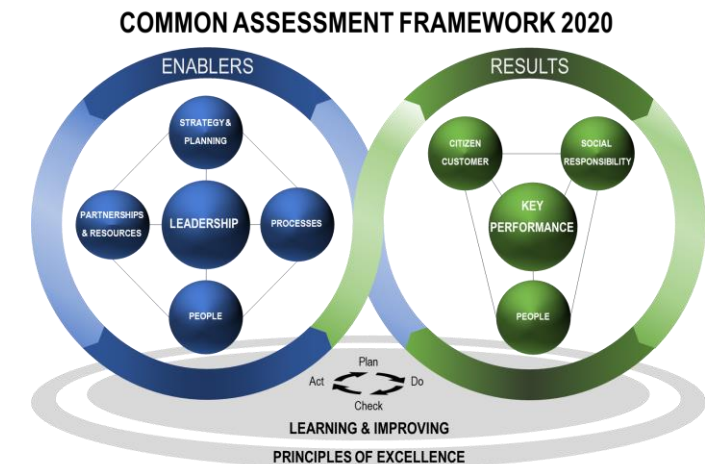


CAF Impact Study 2025

Main Results and Implications for CAF Practitioners

CAF Practitioners Network, 20.01.2025

Alexander Grünwald, Philip Parzer, Thomas Prorok



KDZ – Who we are....



www.kdz.eu



KDZ – CENTRE FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION RESEARCH



KDZ-Centre for Public Administration Research is a non-profit association with its headquarter in Vienna, Austria. Our mission is to enhance good governance by providing applied research, advice and training for the public sector. The main competences of KDZ are Public Management, European Governance and Urban Policy, Public Finance and Federalism. In the year 2000 KDZ has been appointed as CAF-Resource Centre by the Austrian Federal Chancellery. CAF is the European Common Assessment Framework for better quality and governance in public sector organisations.

OVER 50 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

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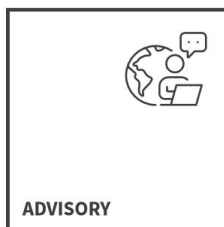
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Tasks of CAF-Centre of KDZ

 Federal Ministry
Republic of Austria
Arts, Culture,
Civil Service and Sport

- defines CAF-strategy
- overall responsibility

CAF-Centre of KDZ



- appointed CAF Resource Centre
- appointed PEF Organiser

Tasks

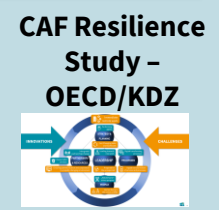
CAF Network

www.caf-centre.eu

CAF Training

Effective CAF User

CAF Implementation



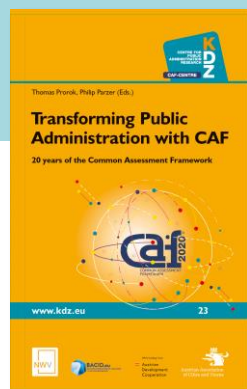
- EFAC Training
- CAF Facilitator
- CAF 2020



- CAF Starter
- CAF Compact
- CAF Plus



***“CAF is the European Guideline for
better Quality and Governance in Public
Administration.”***



What is the Impact of CAF on Quality, Change and Innovation in Public Administrations?

- Open Online-survey – 197 respondents
 - Different Levels of Government
 - Sectoral and organizational Mix
 - Different Roles and Perspectives on CAF implementation
- CAF Case deep-dives
 - Complementary view on statistical data

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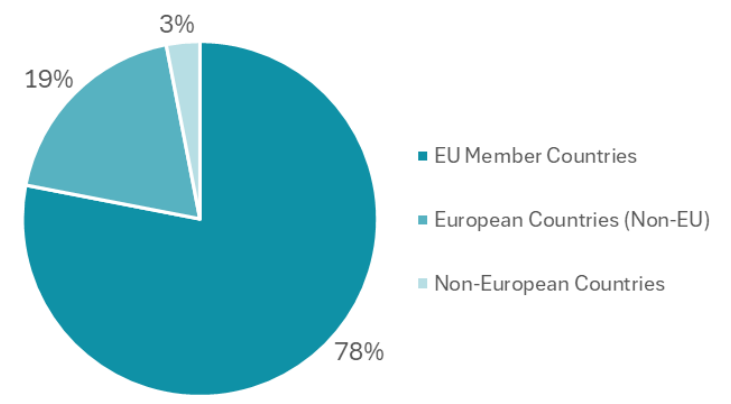
CAF Impact Study 2025

The impact of the Common Assessment Framework on quality, change and innovation in the public sector

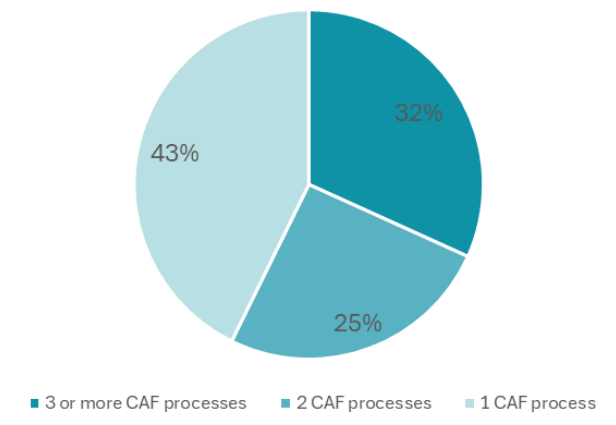
authored by
Alexander Gruenwald, Philip Parzer and Thomas Prorok
with contributions from Igor Markovski

Quick View on Respondents Demographics

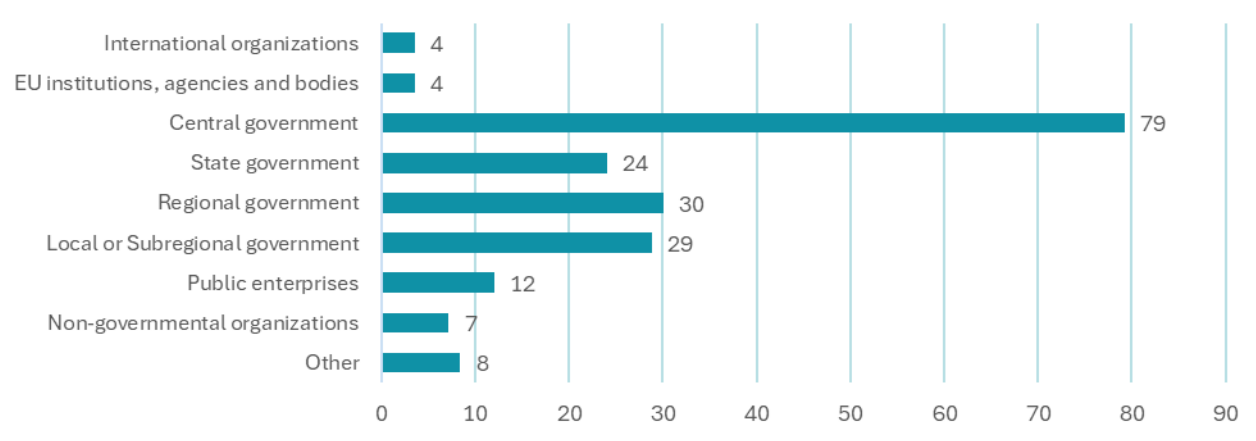
Geographic Distribution



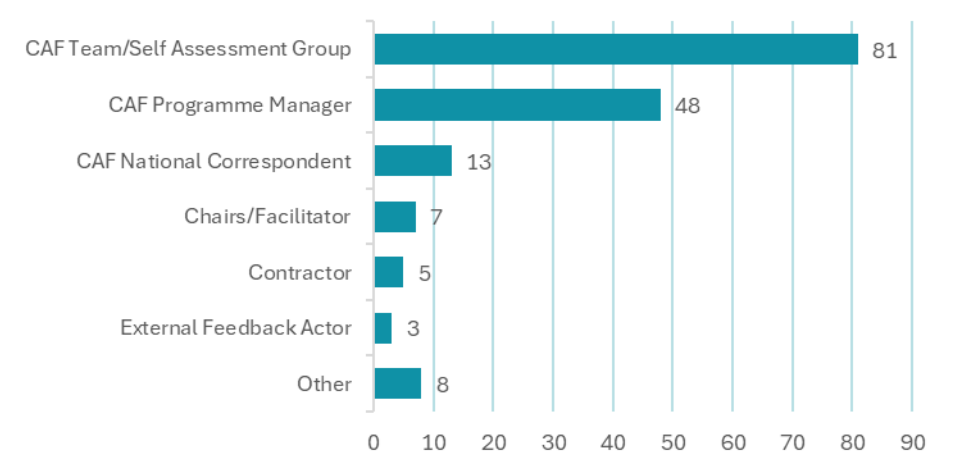
Number of CAF Processes - Organization



Levels of Government



CAF Roles





Main Findings
CAF Impact Study
2025

CAF: Building a foundation for sustained improvement

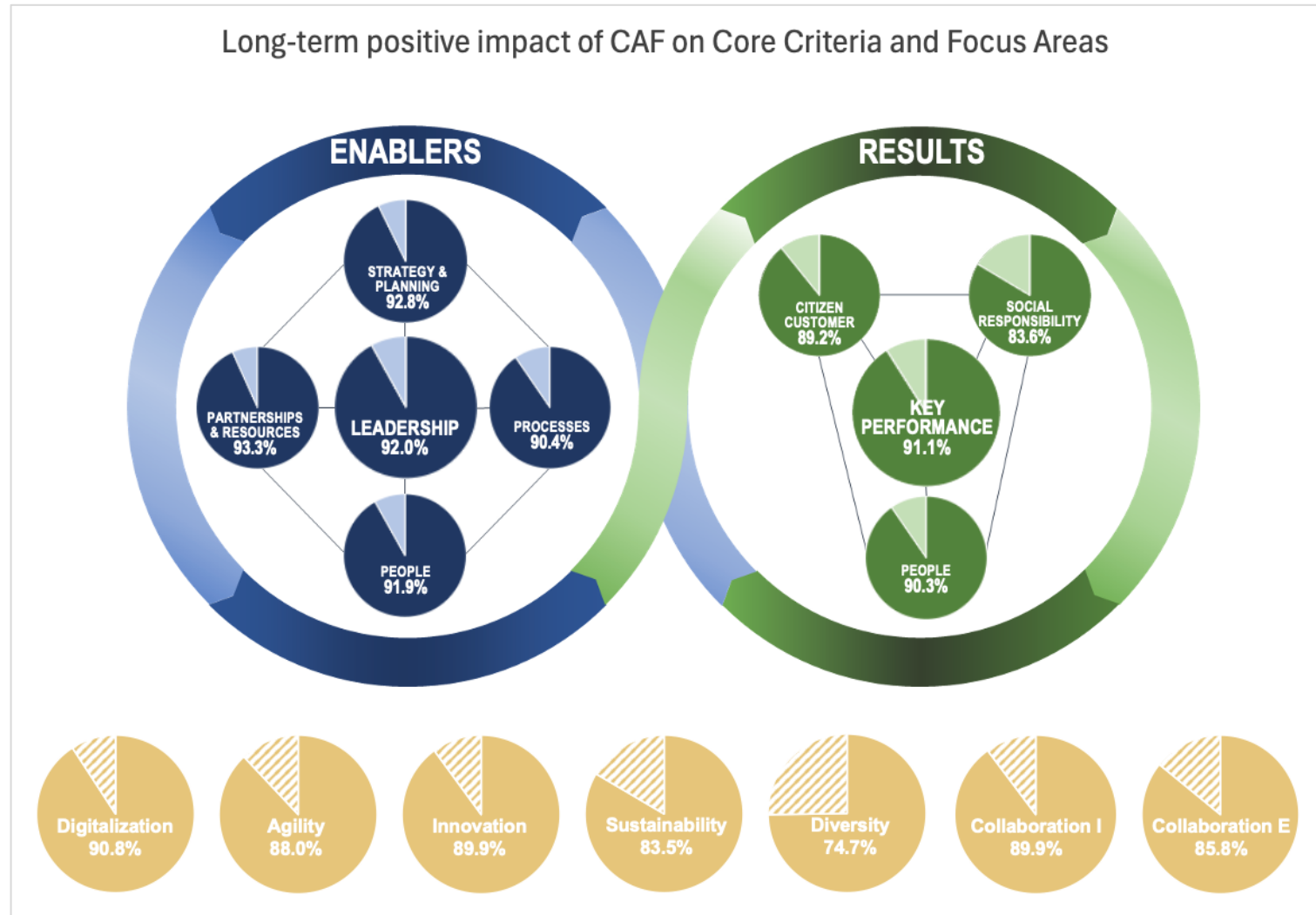


Figure 39: Perceived positive long-term impact on core criteria and focus areas by respondents from organizations with 4+years of experience with CAF
 Note: The data reflect the percentage of respondents from organizations with 4 or more years of CAF experience (N=99-125) indicating a positive impact of CAF implementation on core criteria and focus areas.

CAF's Impact on Enabler Criteria: Key Insights

CAF drives structured improvements across all five Enabler criteria.

- Leadership:** Supports strategic alignment but requires tailored support for embedding improvements
- Strategy & Planning:** Strongest area, helping organizations align operational goals with strategic priorities
- People Enablers:** Enhances workforce engagement but faces challenges in operationalizing workforce strategies
- Partnerships & Resources:** Mixed perceptions due to variability in collaboration maturity and resource availability
- Processes:** Improves efficiency through PDCA cycles, but scaling remains challenging in complex settings

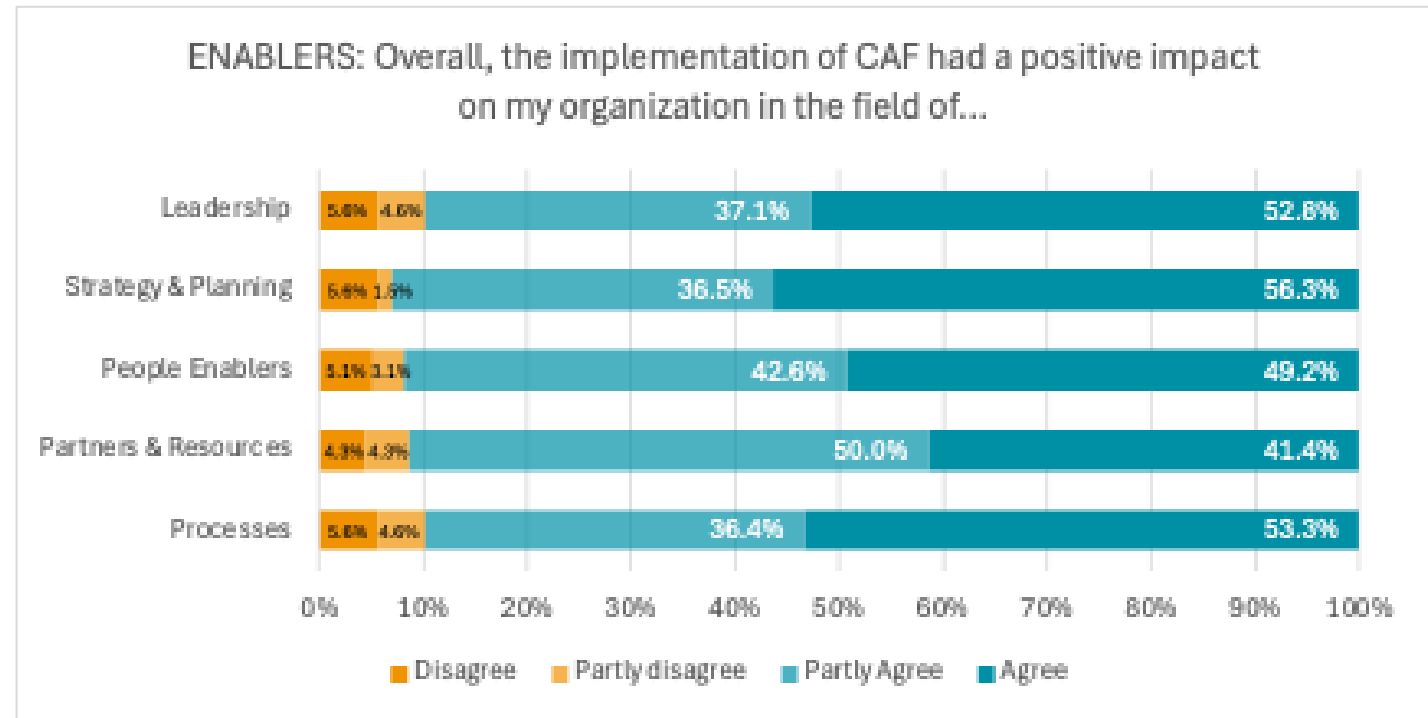
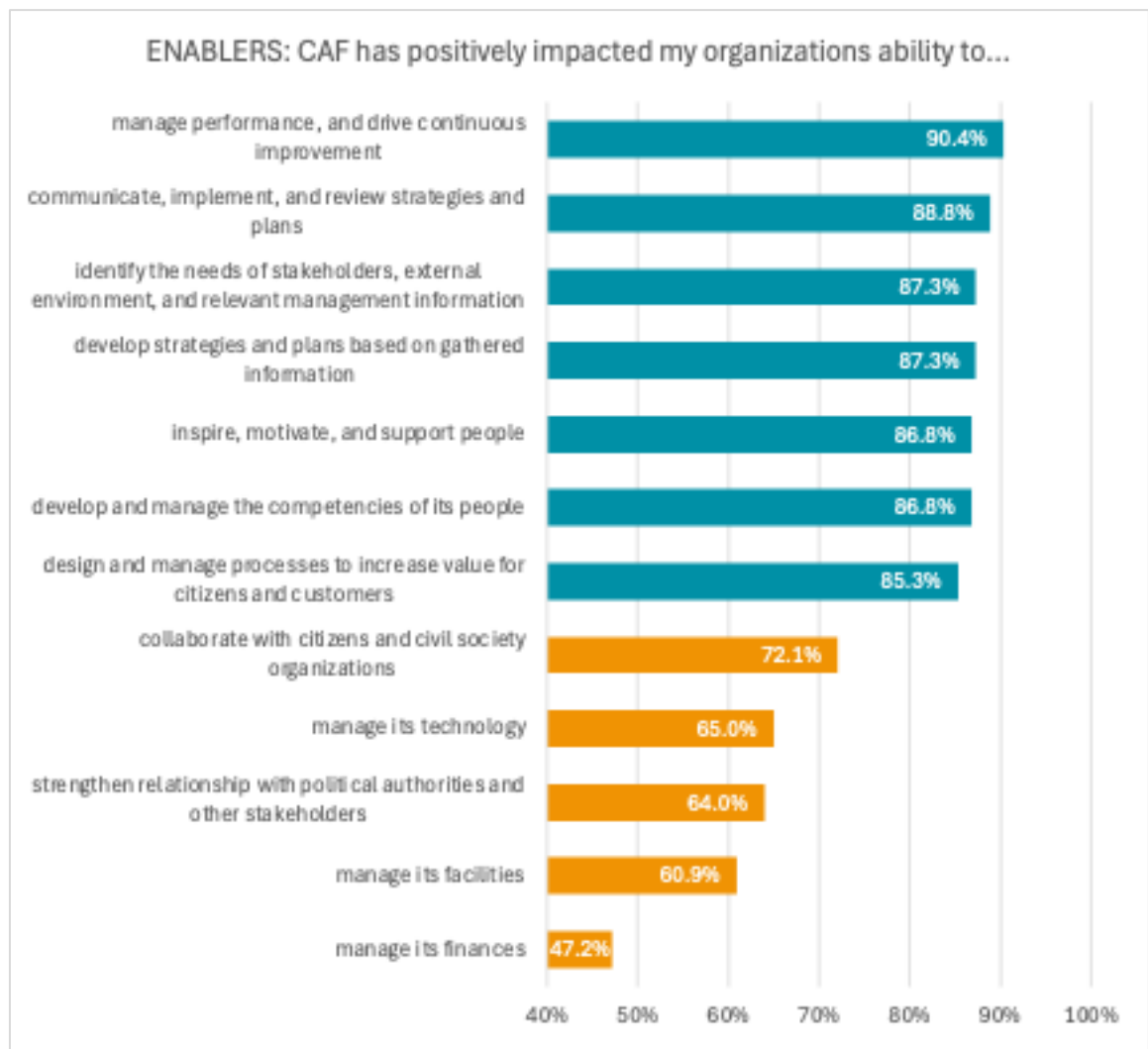


Figure 14: Perceived positive impact of CAF implementation on enabler criteria (N=197)

Enabler Sub-Criteria: Strengths and Challenges



- **Strengths**
 - **Performance management:** Highest positive impact, driving continuous improvement and alignment with strategic goals
 - **Strategy communication and implementation:** Strong tools for planning and execution
 - **People-focused sub-criteria:** Inspires workforce engagement and develops staff competencies

- **Challenges**
 - **Stakeholder engagement:** Lower perceived impact, highlighting the need for tailored approaches to build trust and inclusion with external partners
 - **Financial management:** Lowest perceived impact, as financial systems are often managed using separate, specialized frameworks
 - **Facilities management:** Limited perceived impact, as facilities are typically addressed through operational processes rather than CAF-driven strategies. remain

Figure 29: Enabler areas positively impacted by CAF implementation
 Note: The data reflect the percentage of respondents (N=197) indicating a positive impact of CAF implementation on various organizational capabilities (Enabler). The chart highlights the seven areas with the highest positive responses and the five areas with the lowest positive responses.

CAF's Impact on Results Criteria: Key Insights

CAF delivers strong results in operational performance and workforce engagement.

- Key Performance Results:** Strongest-performing; drives measurable efficiency and productivity
- Citizen/Customer Results:** Aligns services with stakeholder expectations but outcomes vary
- People Results:** Boosts workforce engagement, though outcomes need consistency
- Social Responsibility Results:** Lowest-rated criterion; embedding societal contributions requires deeper integration
- High Partly Agree responses:** Indicates progress but highlights the need for further consistency in implementation

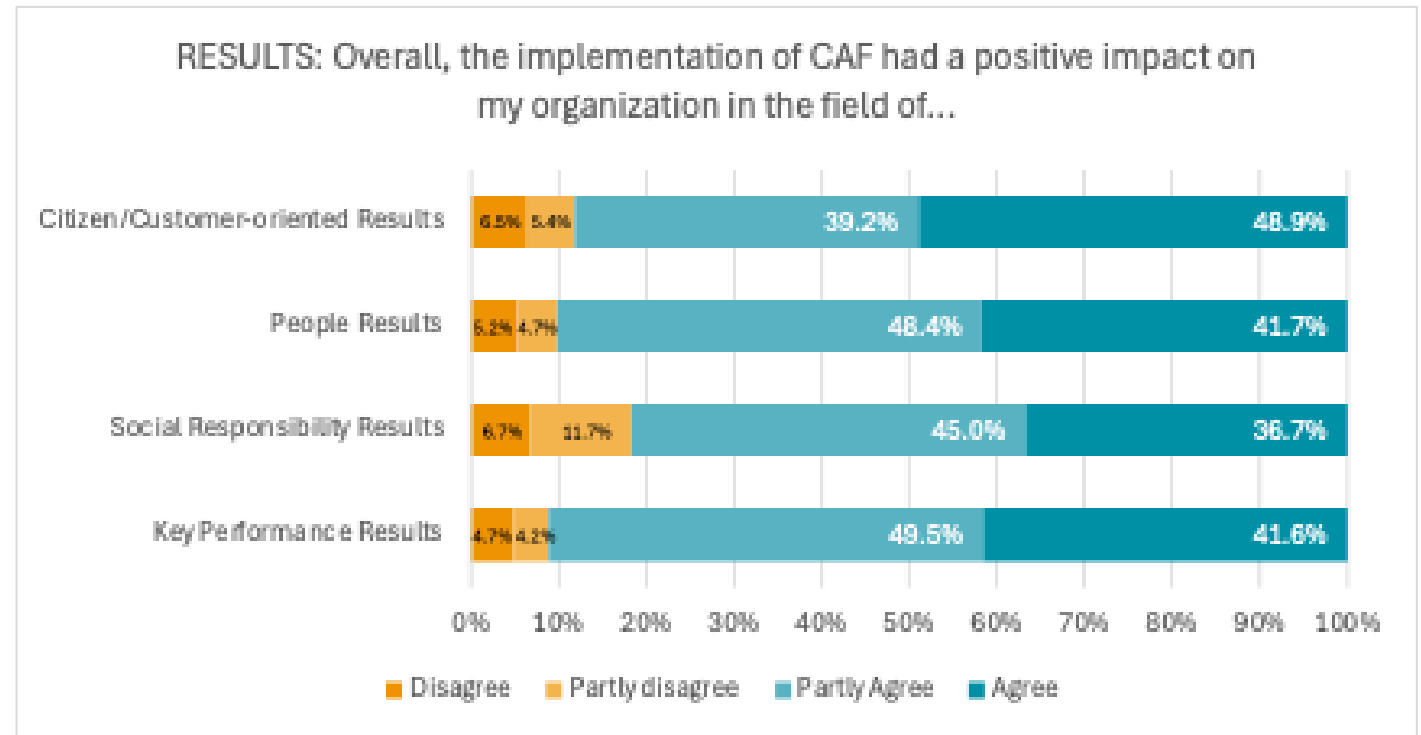


Figure 22: Perceived Positive Impact of CAF Implementation on Results criteria (N=197)

Results Sub-Criteria: Progress and Gaps

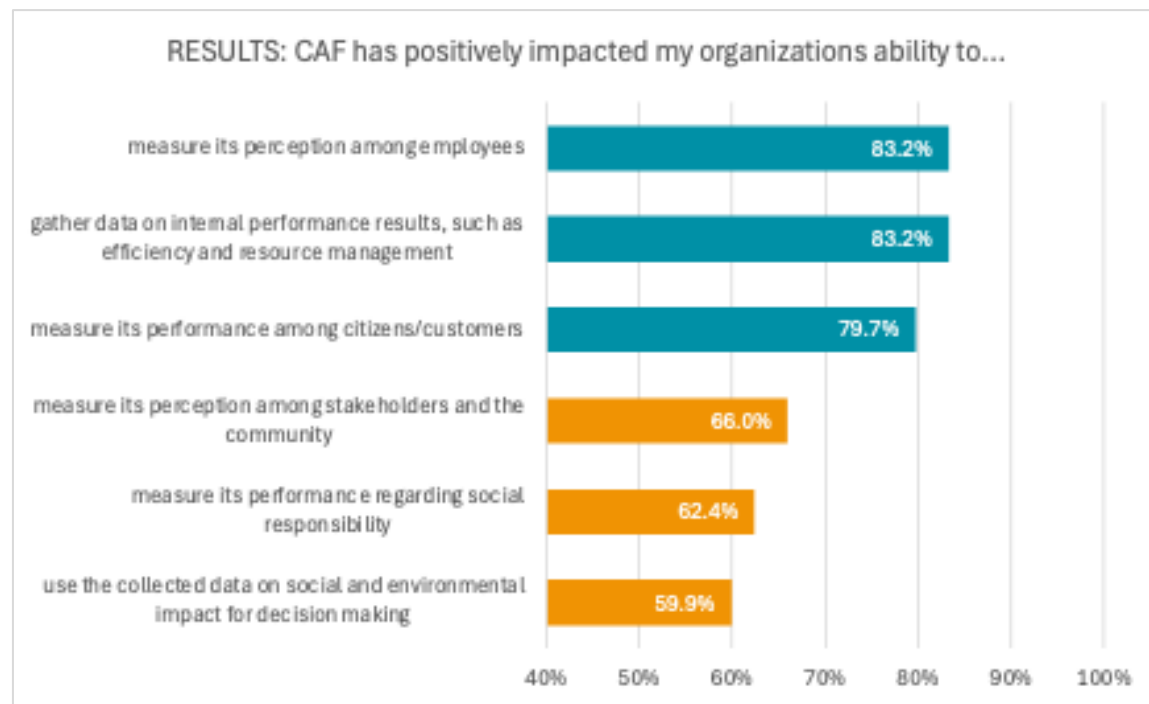


Figure 30: Results areas positively impacted by CAF implementation
 Note: The data reflect the percentage of respondents (N=197) indicating a positive impact of CAF implementation on various organizational capabilities (Results). The chart highlights the five areas with the highest positive responses and the five areas with the lowest positive responses.

- **Strengths**
 - **Employee satisfaction and engagement:** Strong performance in fostering workforce satisfaction and efficiency
 - **Data Collection on internal performance:** High impact on measuring efficiency and resource management
 - **Citizen/customer alignment:** Positive outcomes in aligning services with stakeholder needs

- **Challenges**
 - **Social responsibility:** Requires deeper integration into strategies
 - **Data utilization for decision-making:** A persistent gap exists across all criteria, particularly for social and environmental data
 - **Bridging internal and external outcomes:** Difficulty translating internal improvements into societal impact

CAF's Impact on Focus Areas: Key Insights

Key Strengths:

- **Internal Collaboration, Digitalization, and Innovation:** Strong results in fostering alignment, adaptability, and operational modernization

Growth Potential:

- **External Collaboration:** Shows progress but requires trust-building and structured platforms to improve engagement

Challenges:

- **Sustainability:** Integration into strategies remains limited due to resource and systemic barriers
- **Diversity:** Might face resistance and low prioritization, requiring targeted action to improve inclusivity
- **Scaling:** CAF drives localized improvements, but translating these into organization-wide or societal transformation, such as comprehensive sustainability practices and effective multi-stakeholder collaboration, remains a key gap

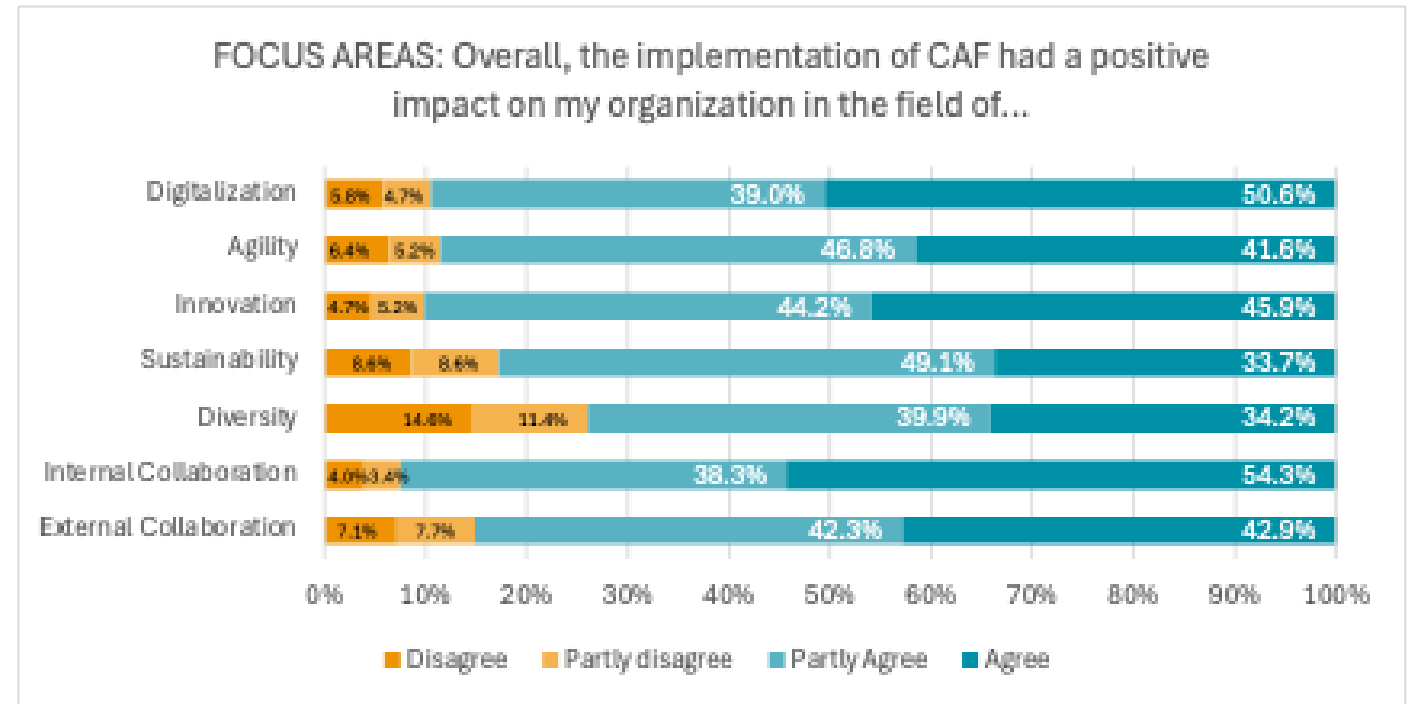


Figure 31: Perceived positive impact of CAF implementation on focus areas (N=158-175)

CAF's Long-Term Impact: Leadership & People Development

Grouping combines core criteria with focus areas to support resilient, adaptable leadership structures

- **Why These Areas?**

- Leadership and People Enablers: Provide the foundation for engaging and developing personnel effectively
- Diversity and Collaboration: Critical for inclusive leadership and fostering trust with stakeholders

- **Key Focus Areas for Improvement**

- External Collaboration: Invest in platforms to strengthen cross-sectoral stakeholder engagement and trust
- Diversity: Close representation gaps and embed inclusivity into leadership pipelines

- **Action points**

- Prioritize diversity and external collaboration when drafting CAF action plans
- Address key challenges in core criteria to sustain long-term leadership improvements

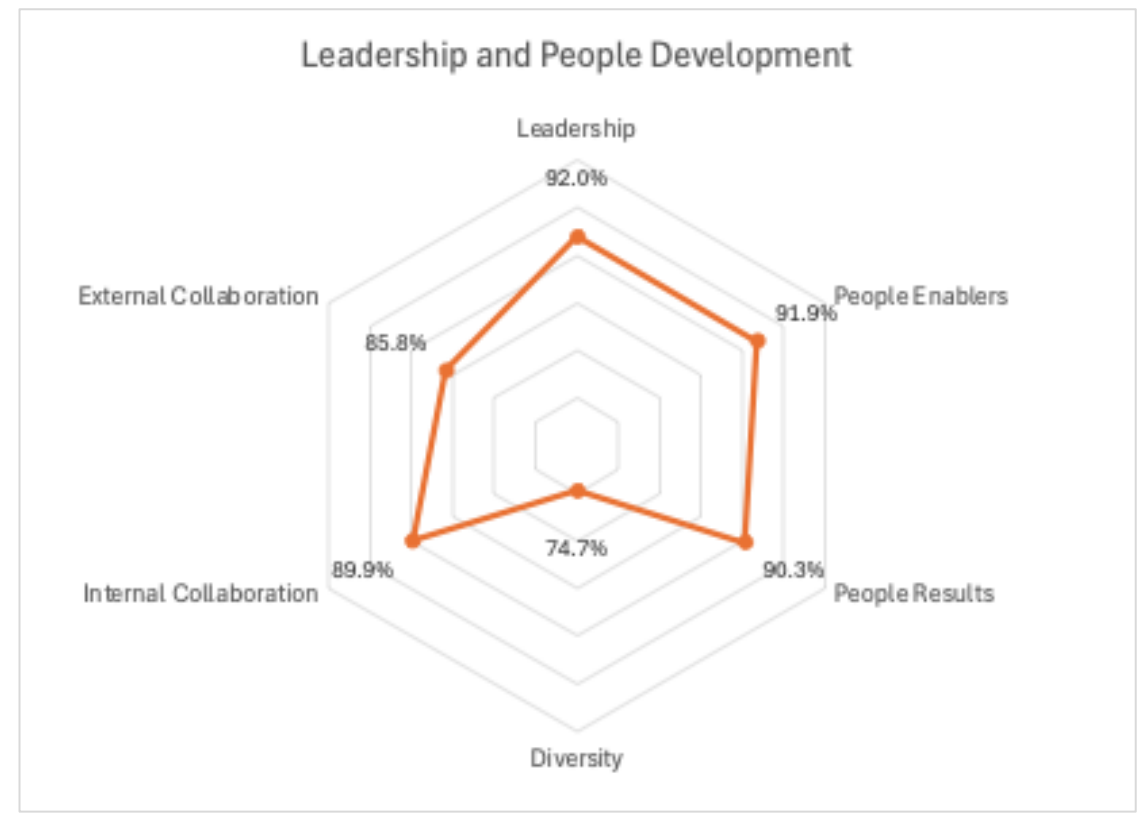


Figure 42: Perceived positive long-term impact on leadership and people development by respondents from organizations with 4 or more years of experience with CAF
 Note: The data reflects the percentage of respondents from organizations with 4 or more years of CAF experience (N=99-125) indicating a positive impact of CAF implementation on core criteria and focus areas. Scale: 70% (centre) to 100%.

CAF cycles and experience: Trends across Results Criteria

- **Early cycles drive rapid improvements by addressing foundational issues.**
- **Later cycles face challenges:**
 - Diminishing Returns: Tackling more complex, nuanced challenges
 - Implementation Fatigue: Reduced enthusiasm over time
 - Unrealized Potential: Strategic goals require sustained effort, leading to slower perceived progress

Figure 24: Perceived positive impact by years of CAF experience (Results)
 Note: The data reflect the percentage of respondents (N=186/192/180/190) indicating a positive impact of CAF implementation on result criteria, categorized by the number of CAF cycles carried out by their organization.

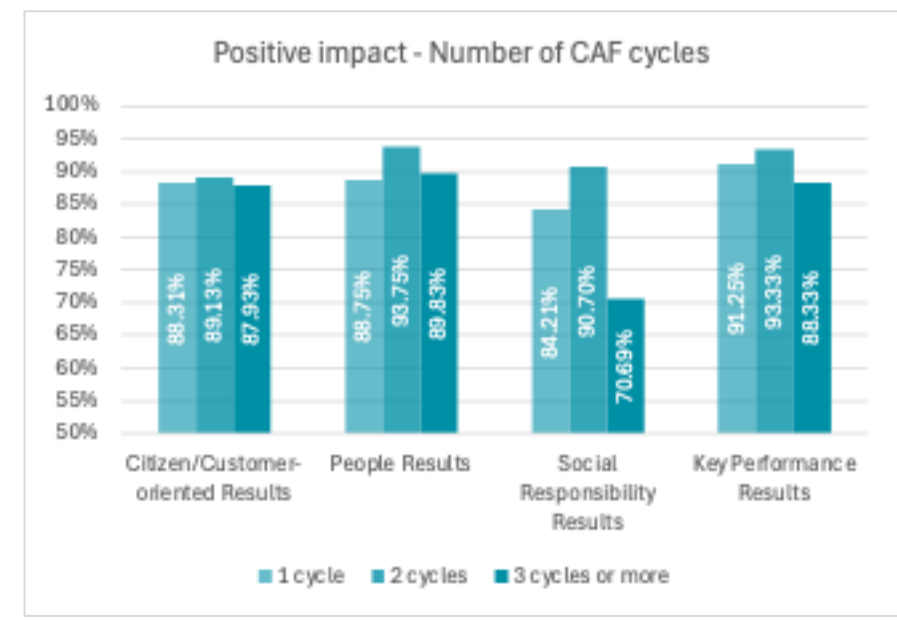
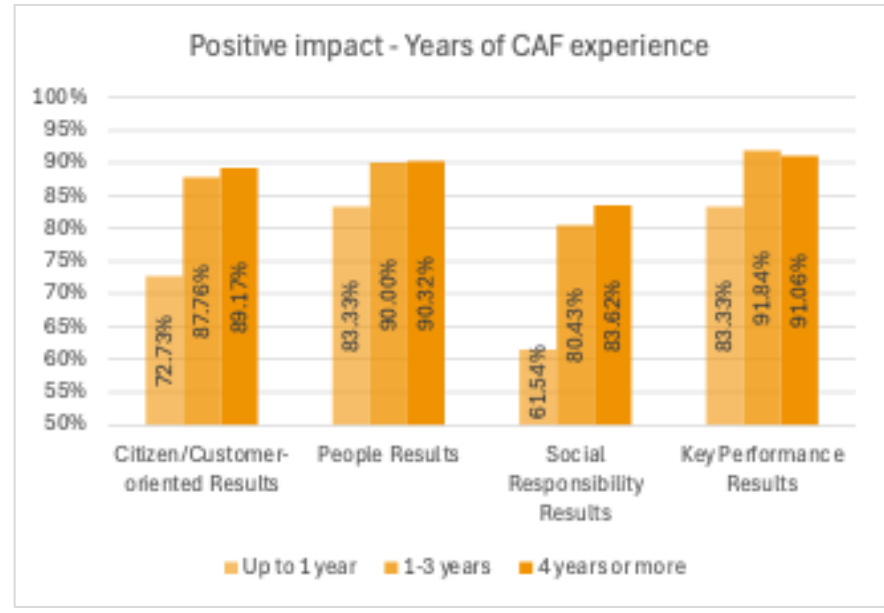


Figure 23: Perceived positive impact by number of CAF cycles (Results)
 Note: The data reflect the percentage of respondents (N=186/192/180/190) indicating a positive impact of CAF implementation on result criteria, categorized by the number of CAF cycles carried out by their organization.

- **Key Performance and People Results:** Stabilize at high levels over time
- **Citizen/Customer Results:** Gradually align with stakeholder needs
- **Social Responsibility Results:** Improve steadily as organizations mature



Implications for CAF Practitioners!

Main Findings

- CAF has the strongest impact after the 2nd CAF cycle!
- CAF shows high impact in processes, strategy, leadership, people and user orientation!
- CAF establishes an improvement culture!
- CAF has lower impact in finances, diversity and social responsibility!



Recommendations

- Take CAF seriously!
- Before starting CAF expected results should be clear!
- Sustaining momentum after CAF is key!

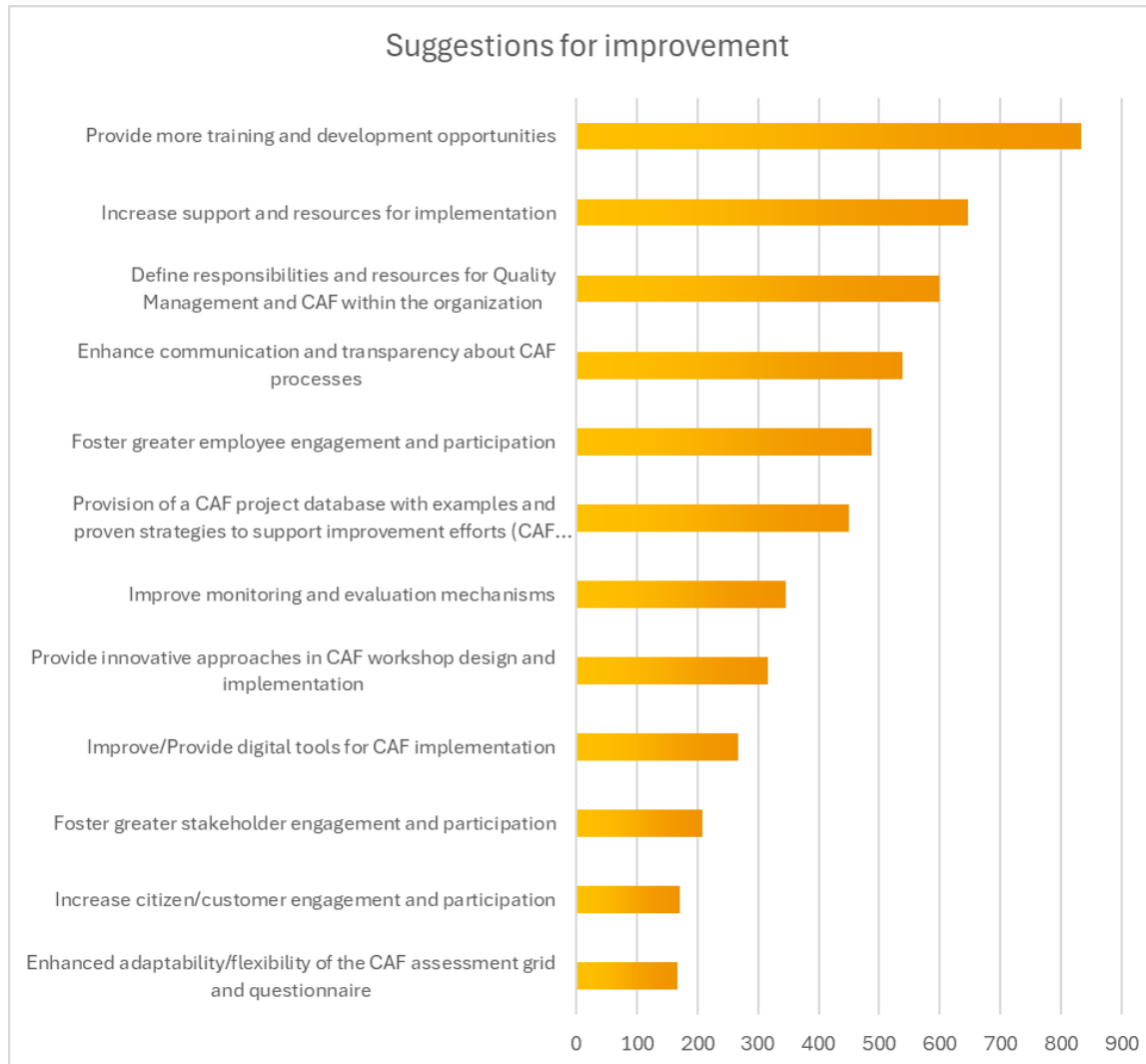


Recommendations

- Make CAF „attractive“!
- Anchor responsibility and ownership for CAF in the organisation!
- Install change ambassadors – CAF Facilitators!



Potentials for further development of CAF



„CAF needs more institutionalisation and capacities!“

CAF develops robust and flexible Public Administrations!

Quality of Public Services

- “CAF's structured approach to assessing and improving service delivery ensures that public services remain responsive, efficient, and aligned with citizen expectations”

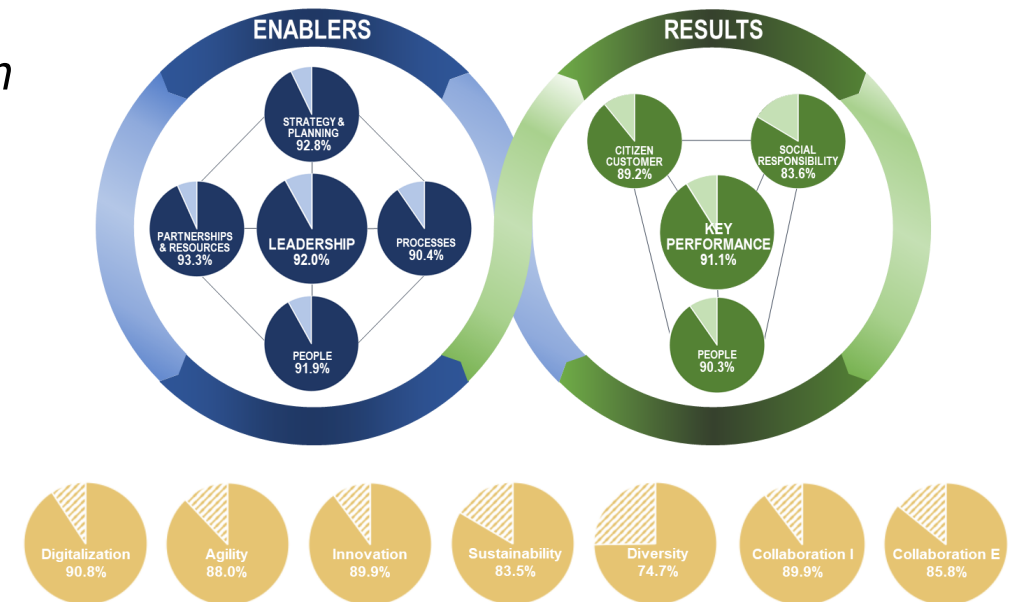
Change & Innovation

- “CAF fosters adaptability, encouraging public sector organizations to embrace change and continuously evolve.”

Leadership & People Development

- “CAF promotes a culture of leadership that is inclusive, transparent, and aligned with organizational goals.”

Long-term positive impact of CAF on Core Criteria and Focus Areas



Want to dive deeper?

- Get your country specific insights
 - Compare your country results with all survey data!
 - Detect potentials for further development of CAF in your country!
- Reach out to us!



Save the Date:



The next CAF Practitioners Meeting will take place on 31 March 2025, 2-3:30 p.m. (CET) - online

**CAF
PRACTITIONERS
NETWORK**



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