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THE DAC NETWORK ON GOVERNANCE (GOVNET)

# Quick Guide to Development Co-operation Innovation for Public Sector Reform

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## Executive Summary

Development co-operation programming in support of governance reform in partner countries has never been easy. Governance as a concept is variously understood, theories of change can be vague, programme implementation is often fraught with political challenge and results have often been disappointing. While there are success stories, in the less successful cases, the reasons were that reforms take time, that the political will of the local actors was too weak or that, due to many interdependent institutions, the endeavour was too complex to succeed in a short time.

This state of affairs suggests the need to search for new approaches to supporting public sector governance reform in developing countries which allow for experimentation and the space to fail and learn. Inevitably, this can appear a high risk strategy which will sit uncomfortably with notions of results-based management, public accountability and value for money. Yet, given the prevailing and persistent consensus that governance is a vital precursor to development, the alternative is worse – including badly managed economies, weak policy implementation, poor service delivery and escalating insecurity and instability.

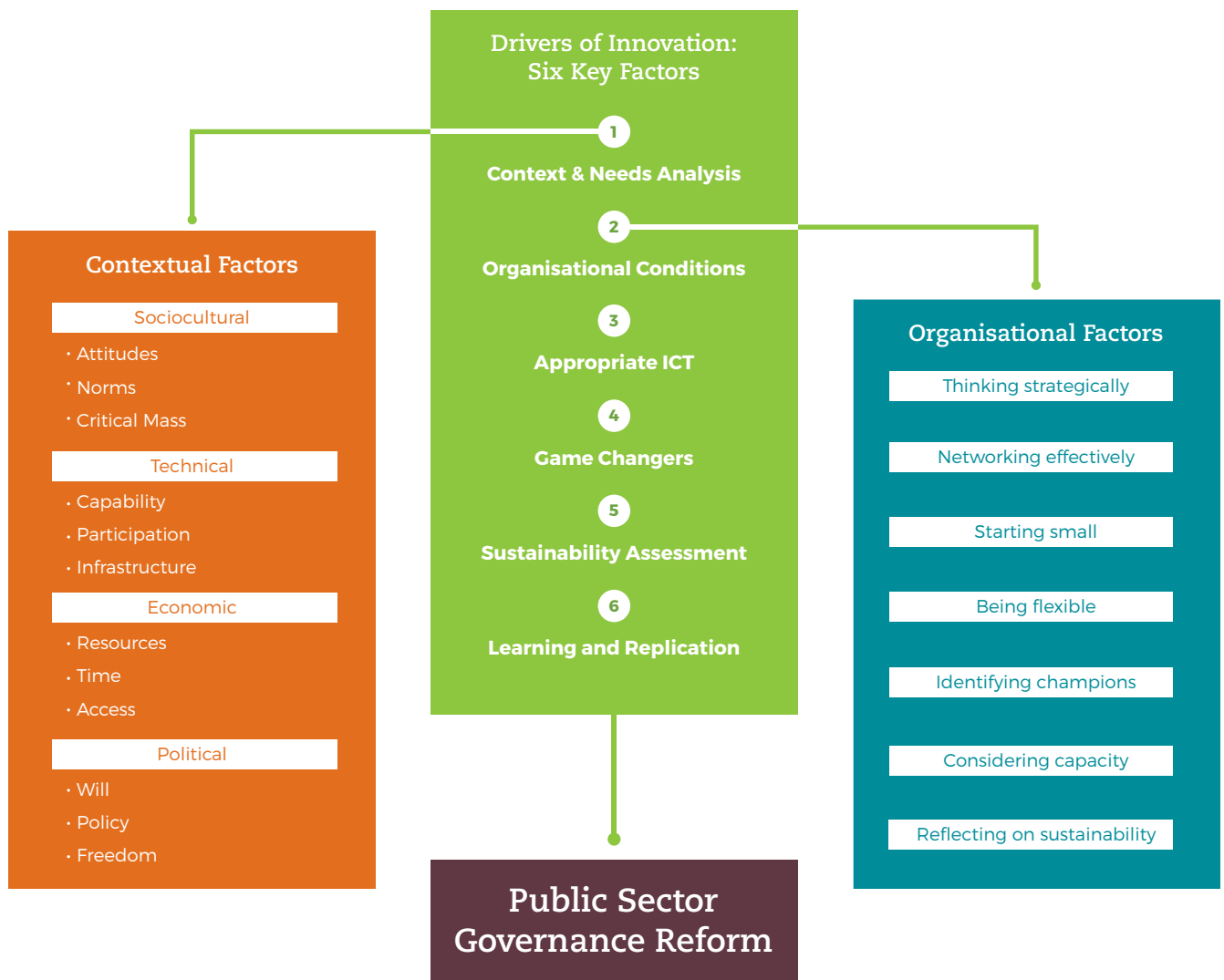
This guide has been developed to encourage new thinking and help build momentum for change. The guide recognizes there is no one-size fits all approach to programming in an innovative manner. However, it does offer some headlines in relation to governance reform programming and raises some useful questions in relation to six factors which appear to be linked to successful reform efforts: understanding context and analysing needs; enabling organisations; application of information communication technologies (ICT) in ways which empower; game changing in action; a focus on sustainability from the outset; and a willingness to learn from failure and invest in information sharing.

Overall, the guide suggests the need for a more flexible and localised approach to support for reform processes from donors, an approach which will require an associated adaptation of performance, management and financing modalities. This will also require some political will and innovative thinking of its own and in this sense the donor community may find itself part of the very context it needs to reform.

If successful, the guide will encourage practitioners, advisers and programme designers to consider what's new in governance reform programming and to reflect on their own programming environment from a number of new perspectives and with innovation in mind. There remain of course many questions to answer and it is further hoped that this guide will help create space for experimentation and learning.

The findings found in this guide are based on an OECD DAC commissioned 2014-2015 Study on Innovation in Public Sector Governance Reform to identify innovative experiences on development cooperation support to governance reform programmes and to explore options for possible replicability. Supporting this brief are 16 innovation experiences identified through the study and two related reports (see Part 3): *Governance Innovation in Action, A Review of Innovative Experiences in Public Sector Governance Reform*, OECD, 2015 and *Vague but Vital: Current Thinking on Innovation in Public Sector Governance Reform Desk Review Report*, OECD, 2014, both Christie, Conroy, Everett & Swan.

# A Framework for Innovative Programming



*This framework for innovative programming suggests factors to consider including the context in which the programme will operate and strategies for working with the organisations involved.*

## Purpose and Audience

### **What this guide is...and what it is not**

This guide provides a selection of programme considerations to take into account when you are designing or implementing public sector governance reform programmes. This guide aims to help improve the effectiveness, sustainability and value for money of aid programmes supporting governance. It is not, however a manual for how to be innovative or a set of rigid implementation guidelines.

### **The intended audience:**

This guide is intended for practitioners, advisers and programme designers working in development co-operation for whom designing and implementing more innovative public sector governance reform programmes is important.

Part 1:

# INTRODUCTION

## Why Innovation in Governance is important

There is a considerable and growing body of literature calling for new approaches to supporting public sector governance reform in developing countries (OECD, 2014. Whaites et al, 2015.). Everybody it seems is looking at innovation in programming in response to a mounting sense that we need to improve programme performance to deliver the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its accompanying goals. Poor governance programme performance remains a cause for concern since development agencies have invested large amounts of money in supporting public sector governance reform despite some frustration with the results of their efforts (Barnett, 2013).

Explanation for why public sector governance reform efforts have failed and which solutions work are not always convincing. The effective functioning of the public sector is vital to enabling the successful management of economies; effective policy implementation; the delivery of citizen services and the maintenance of security and stability. For these reasons, reform attempts have continued despite the challenges. The governance agenda has grown and a multitude of new approaches to governance reforms have been presented over the years. For example, new institutional reform requirements now often extend beyond the public sector to include the strengthening of civil society and the creation of new structures for participation in government. There has also been a move away from thinking about governance in terms of two-sided (supply and demand) arrangements towards thinking about governance as a network of formal and informal institutions (Grindle, 2004. OECD, 2014). Further developments include a focus on good enough approaches which reject the western models of good practice as best fit by design. Critics of reform programmes linked to western models of good practice assert that they invite *isomorphic mimicry* - the promotion and implementation of institutional reforms that mimic the form of “normative” institutions, but display none of the functionality and ultimately slow reform effort (Pritchett, 2002). Innovations rather than technocratic approaches to reform are needed, a closer attention to what works in practice and whether what works in one place offers lessons on what might work elsewhere.

Those seeking to build a good enough reform programme from the range of possible approaches might find themselves poorly supported by guidance on “*what’s essential and what’s not, what should come first and what should follow*” (Grindle, 2004), what can be achieved in the short term and what can only be achieved over the longer term, what is feasible and what is not. New ideas are emerging like Doing Development Differently (for example Wild et al, 2015), and Problem Driven Iterative Adaptation, (Andrews, 2012) which argue that recent governance programme strategies are when they work ‘with the grain’, facilitate collective action and provide an opportunity to solve complex problems through trial and error (Booth and Cammack, 2013).

## Basic Definitions

### What is Governance?

Governance refers to the exercise of political and administrative authority at all levels to manage a country’s affairs. This embraces the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern social interactions among them. Governance is demonstrated by appropriate levels of transparency (access to information), accountability (based on nature and functioning of relationships between supply and demand side actors) and responsiveness (a measure of how supply side actors deliver on their commitments to citizens) (Kaufmann et al, 2010).

### What is Public Sector Reform?

Public sector reform is understood to consist of deliberate changes to the structures (organisation), processes (operation) and capability (capacity) of public sector organisations in order that they perform (deliver) better. The performance of public sector organisations can be measured in different ways - on the basis of cost efficiency; service quality – measured by the accessibility, effectiveness, or reliability; and/or user or employee satisfaction.

## What is innovation?

Innovation is often very broadly defined. In terms of what it is, innovation can be presented as something that comprises concepts, products, processes or technology. In terms of what innovation does, it can be described as incremental, radical or transformational or it can be even more loosely defined as a change which makes a difference in such a way that the actors involved perceive a discontinuity with the past (Osborne and Brown, 2005). For the purposes of this guide innovation is defined as doing something new, or doing it better - not necessarily in an absolute sense but within a context. Innovations may be new to the world, new to the organisation or evolved/adapted. Innovation may lead to incremental changes (doing it better) or radical changes (doing it differently). It is acknowledged that this definition is very loose and leaves several contested issues including for example the level of change required for something to be called an innovation and the extent to which an innovation must deliver improvements for all.

## Existing research on what works

There has been relatively limited information collected or analysis undertaken about innovation in the public sector. This is especially true if compared to research on innovation in the private sector. The Innovation Capacity Index, The European Public Sector Innovation Scoreboard (EPSIS) and the Innobarometers were all developed with a view to improve our ability to benchmark performance in the public sector. As a first step towards learning if not measurement, the UN Innovations in Public Service Awards were introduced to help document and disseminate good ideas; equally the OECD Office of Public

Sector Innovation (OPSI) has been designed to collate and share comprehensive information and encourage innovation across the public sector.

The limitations of these information hubs is that they provide a snapshot view only. Data are not regularly collected to update the database and the quality of information provided varies in terms of whether it has been externally validated or not. There have been some reports undertaken to analyse what drives innovation in the public sector. The World Bank's 2010 study Innovation Policy for the Developing World: Success stories and promising approaches, for example recorded lessons from innovative approaches noting that "to succeed, innovators must be supported by high level central and local government policy makers who have the vision, pragmatism and the ability to work creatively in institutional contexts".

The United Nations' report on Good Practices in Innovations in Public Administration (2013) in turn found that innovation in government is dependent on i) agents of change ii) process and mechanism iii) value systems and normative orders and iv) technology and resources.

## Definitions and Shifts

### Governance

The exercise of political and administrative authority: emphasis on:

- institutions
- voice and partnership mechanisms
- performance of agents in carrying out the wishes of principals

Quality of governance the result of the interaction between government capacity and autonomy.

Characteristics of good governance:

- transparent
- accountable
- responsive
- effective
- equitable

### Public Sector Reform

Deliberate changes to the structure processes and capability of public sector organisations.

Describes the routes to, and results of, efforts to enhance the performance of public sector organisations in relation to mandated functions

Can involve

- Policy formulation
- Regulatory arrangements
- Service delivery

### SHIFTS in the Public Sector Governance Reform Perspectives

1. A shift in focus away from the internal workings of the public sector organisations to one which **embraces civil society participation.**
2. A shift from 'good' to 'good enough' to 'just enough' governance.
3. A shift from supply/demand consideration to one which incorporates the **political dynamics between networked formal and informal institutions.**

# Shifts: What's new in Governance Reform Programming?

Current literature (see Christie et al. 2014) suggests that there have been three major shifts in Public Sector Governance Reform perspectives, *which themselves represent innovations*.

## A Shift from ‘Good Governance’ to ‘Just Enough Governance’

This shift represents a change in attitude in relation to standards; a shift from best practice perspective (Good Governance) to a more realistic best-fit perspective (Good Enough Governance) to a more “step at a time” approach (Just Enough Governance). Here institutional standards are addressed only when local actors identify them as growth blockers.

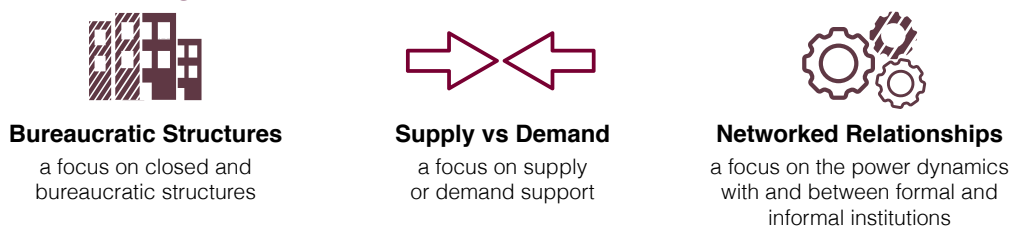
**This is the WHAT of governance reform.**



## A shift from a focus on organisations’ as “Bureaucratic Structures” to a focus on “Institutional or Networked Relationships”

This shift focuses on institutions and the relationships within and across formal and informal boundaries. Reform initiatives are legitimised at all levels and in a number of ‘spaces’ to build momentum towards local ownership and delivering real solutions. This shift encourages a move away from thinking about governance in terms of two-sided (supply and demand) arrangements towards collective action in which the potential dynamic and context specific inter-relationships between formal and informal institutions need to be understood if reform processes are to be supported.

**This is the WHO of governance reform.**



## A shift from “Functional Government” to “Participatory Governance”

The focus of this shift is process and participation. Design and implementation processes are blended through rapid cycles of planning, action, reflection and revision (drawing on local knowledge, feedback and energy), managing risks with “small bets”, to foster learning from both success and failure. This shift is closely linked to the institutional shift referred to above.

**This is the HOW of governance reform.**





Part 2:

**SIX FACTORS  
SUPPORTING  
INNOVATIVE  
PUBLIC SECTOR  
GOVERNANCE  
REFORM**

## This guide explores six factors supporting innovation in public sector reform.

The literature review and case studies upon which this guide is based have revealed three key innovative shifts in governance on programming. In this next section, the guide identifies six factors which can help enable governance practitioners to change their approach to programming in order to better support innovation.



Further information on case studies and wider reading are provided in part 3 at the end of the guide.



## Factor 1: Understanding Context and Needs

### What is context?

Context refers to characteristics of the environment which may explain why innovation does or does not happen – these may be social, technical, economic or political.

Adopting a ‘just good enough governance’ approach or ‘working with the grain’ requires grounding action in the political and contextual realities of each country. It involves accepting a more nuanced understanding of the evolution of institutions and government capabilities; being explicit about trade-offs and priorities in a world in which all good things cannot be pursued at once and learning about what’s working rather than focusing solely on governance gaps (Grindle 2004, 2007, 2010). Critically, what is innovative about such an approach is that it does not prejudge who to support but it requires working with what is already in place.

Whatever the context, donors are increasingly supporting, convening and brokering strategies through more collaborative forms of assistance. There is also an emphasis on the need for broad based agency (collective action) within a system of governance which involves a wide range of actors and institutions (so not only government) connected by information flows and patterns of influence and incentives which drive decision making. Using a systems based approach can help donors to better understand the context in which they need to engage. Assessing the supply, demand and structural considerations of a given country can enable donors to work more with local institutions and reformers - see STEP diagram for examples.

Reformers are getting connected. The Open Government Partnership (OGP) launched in 2011 provides an international platform for domestic reformers committed to making their governments more open, accountable and responsive to citizens. By becoming members of the OGP, countries commit to the four core principles of access to information, civic participation, integrity and access to technology to support openness and accountability.

### A STEP framework for considering context

	<b>Supply (Provider, State)</b>	<b>Demand (Citizen, Community)</b>	<b>Structural (Country wide)</b>
<b>S</b>	• Attitudes and motivations of the reform driver	Relevance to civil society Community norms and traditions	Critical mass of citizen participation
<b>T</b>	Capability including digital literacy	Linkages to participation, collective action and mobilisation	General level of education Literacy Infrastructure Penetration of technology
<b>E</b>	Availability of resources	Poverty levels (time and money)	Access to resources which support participation
<b>P</b>	Broader political economy Degree of political will Level of democratization	Integration into policy cycle (meaningful participatory engagement)	Security and risk of participation Free Media Dynamics of empowerment

S: Sociocultural T: Technological E: Economic P: Political

This diagnostic tool can help external actors to understand the complexity of a situation and the actors and actions that might be required to trigger change. The STEP diagram provides some questions that might be asked in relation to the social, technological, economic and political context in which a governance initiative is to be trialled.



## Doing Development Differently

The 'Doing Development Differently' manifesto suggests a set of common principles that enable development initiatives to succeed across a range of contexts. These include:

- Solving local problems, debated and defined on an ongoing basis
- Working through convenors or brokers, who can mobilise all those with a stake in the reform process to tackle these problems (often with a focus on collective action, reaching across state and non-state actors)
- Blending design and implementation through rapid cycles of planning, action and learning that draws heavily on local knowledge and feedback
- Managing risks, often by making 'small bets' as part of processes of ongoing learning about what works
- Delivering real results – changes in peoples' lives, behaviours and incentives or in how systems function, rather than just in formal rules and processes.

These principles have been signed up to by people in 60 countries around the world, from those working in donor agencies to government ministries to civil society, the private sector, academia and beyond.

A number of donors are now implementing internal reforms in line with these principles too, such as the Better Delivery reforms within DFID that aim to open up the space for learning and adaptation.

To find out more, visit: [www.doingdevelopmentdifferently.com](http://www.doingdevelopmentdifferently.com)

## Analysing needs

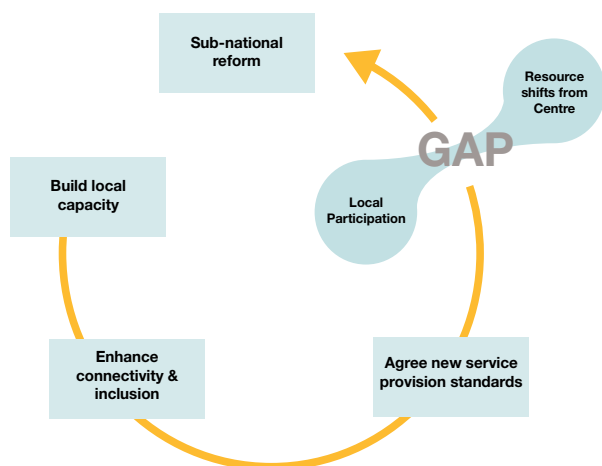
Innovation is a current and trendy term, strongly linked to new information and communication technologies and associated with creativity and the search for fresh and new ideas to old problems. Whilst creative thinking and new ideas and technology can push boundaries they have little value unless implemented or applied. Before embarking on an innovation, consider where there is scope and space for an innovative approach. This requires that the innovation meets a need in relation to what you are trying to change and what you are really trying to achieve. Care needs to be taken to ensure that any proposed reform is based on problems identified by local stakeholders.

## What are you hoping to achieve?

What value are you trying to achieve from your innovation? Think carefully about your expected theory of change; what does success look like? Do you want the innovation to be disruptive, to be radical and challenge perceptions? Do you want the innovation to increase engagement and civil society dialogue? Or do you want to facilitate a long-term transition, a slow burn to improve development effectiveness in the long-term?

## What are the obstacles?

In all initiatives and programmes, sustainability and political and social buy-in are integral to any success story. This is particularly relevant when you are proposing dramatically new ideas and concepts that might challenge the status quo. What are the barriers or gaps that your innovation might need to address? The three examples on the next page describe how efforts towards sub-national reform, accountability and anti-corruption have been thwarted in the past by barriers or 'gaps' in reform.



### Example 1: Sub-national reform

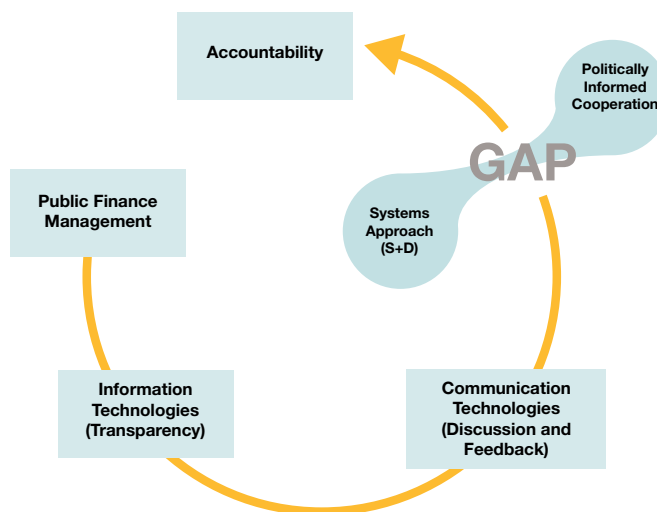
Decentralisation of authority is understood to be a critical governance reform process in many contexts, essential to the delivery of basic services. However, meaningful democratic processes in the shape of local participation to ensure this transformation are often weak and resistance to resource shifts from the centre are strong.

Innovations to plug these ‘gaps’ tend to focus on mobile & IT technologies, performance based grants, and citizen participation mechanisms (see, for example, the ICT4GOV in South Kivu and M4D Nigeria experiences listed in Part 3 of this Guide)

### Example 2: Accountability

Accountability innovations are popular with donors, recipient governments, citizens, civil society and the private sector since they generally aim to ensure aid effectiveness, minimise corruption, promote ‘good governance’ and enhance service delivery.

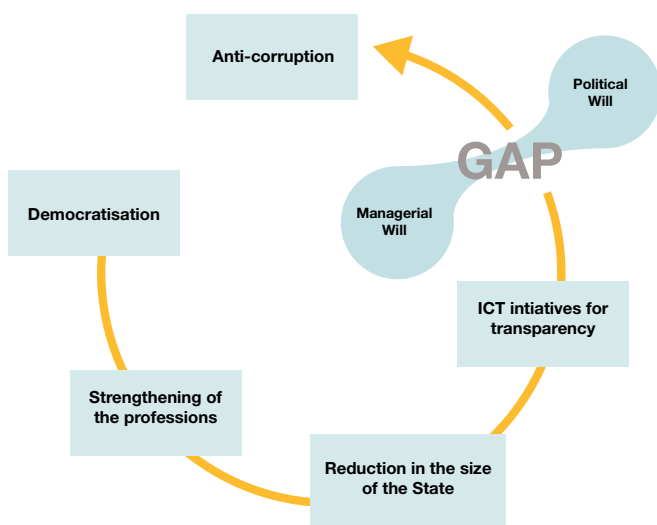
There is emerging agreement on the need for more political informed development cooperation and a greater focus on a systems approach that moves beyond supply versus demand perspectives and instead looks at the linkages between actors and how these can be strengthened (see, for example, the Mwananchi, Pan Africa experience listed in Part 3 of this Guide).



### Example 3: Anti-corruption

In recent years, anti-corruption initiatives have been promoted as a major route to poverty reduction. Most recent approaches have been dominated by a growing field of ICT innovations including, for example, transparency portals, open data portals, and citizen reporting channels.

The rationale for such initiatives include reducing the opportunity cost of bribery, reducing incentives to maintain red tape (since avoiding this is the basis for paying a bribe) and building trust in government officials and departments (see, for example, ICT, capacity building and data sharing – GIZ INFOBRAS and SDC Anti-corruption in Kosovo listed in Part 3). Innovations to address poor management and political will are still needed.





## Programming Considerations

Context-related questions you may ask at major steps in the programming cycle

### Design: “Before”

- Q. Does the proposed intervention take into account the context in which it is going to be implemented, and scaled up?
- Q. Have you thought through the potential challenges and opportunities of the contextual dimensions, for both the state and the citizen?
- Q. Have you assessed the chance, and associated risks, of the context shifting?
- Q. Does the programme framework allow you to react and absorb such changes?
- Q. What is the gap or barrier the innovation is addressing?
- Q. Do you understand how your innovation will achieve change within the context and environment? And how the key actors will respond to the issue?
- Q. Is there evidence from elsewhere that your innovation will be successful?



### Implementation: “During”

- Q. Are you tracking shifts in the context that may affect your project implementation?
- Q. Can the programme be adapted to changes in context?
- Q. Are you implementing an adaptive results framework and do you have a flexible theory of change that can absorb contextual shifts?
- Q. How are you ensuring political and managerial will is sustained?
- Q. What are the ongoing mechanisms for local participation?
- Q. Are you tracking and mitigating potential risks that may prevent the innovation having a positive impact?



### Final Evaluation: “After”

- Q. What can you learn about the impact of the contextual environment on the programme?
- Q. Is there anything you could have done differently to better respond to the context?
- Q. Did you fully understand all elements of the context before implementing?
- Q. Was the innovation necessary or was there another way of achieving the same results more efficiently (i.e. cheaper or quicker)?



## Case Study: State Accountability and Voice Initiative (SAVI) | Nigeria

### *What was the plan?*

SAVI was designed to support responsible, accountable and inclusive State-level governance in Nigeria by encouraging citizen groups, elected State House of Assembly (SHoA) representatives and the media to work together and play their part in promoting more effective use of public resource and acting as effective agents of voice and accountability.

### *What was the process?*

- Encouraging partners to 'get their own house in order' to help organisations improve their own responsiveness, inclusiveness and accountability to citizens
- Breaking down barriers to foster opportunities for partners to work together
- Building constructive working relationships between demand-side players and their state governments to support demand-side partners.
- Replicating and disseminating the first three collective stages – encouraging partners to adopt these approaches to their lobbying work
- Generating a critical mass for change

### *What was achieved?*

- State budgets came under scrutiny
- Government announced it was removing 31 billion naira from a previously over-inflated budget
- State government has properly compensated those affected by government action - for example by building a new road.



## Factor 2: Enabling Organisational Conditions

### Elements of organisational effectiveness

There is little that is certain about the conditions which distinguish organisations which innovate from those which don't, so assessing the characteristics of an organisation involved in a programme to determine its likely response to innovation is a complex task.

It is worth noting that these considerations apply equally to the donor organisations with which programmers find themselves working as to the partner organisations which require reform. Within this document we demonstrate how the innovative potential of an organisation might be realised by understanding the inter-relationship between and working with the seven organisational elements below.

### Elements of innovative effectiveness

Elements of innovative effectiveness have been identified below, as a basis for exploring and realising the ability of an organisation to drive forward an innovation within a programme of reform.

#### Thinking strategically

**Build on what is there**, work with other complementary development programmes, have a strong communications and branding strategy, and understand the potential challenges of compatibility.

#### Networking effectively

**Adopt a cross-organisation approach to reform**, tap into existing networks and stakeholder groups, ensure the organisation has buy in and support from different ministries.

#### Starting small

**Start small and scale up**, ensure hands-on facilitation and knowledge sharing rather than grant-giving and predefined capacity building.

#### Being flexible

**Be flexible and agile**, work “with the grain” of local culture and locally owned change processes, ensure transparent procedures.

#### Identifying champions

**Find a key actor** to champion change, build coalitions of like-minded actors, and ensure a shared vision of feasible change.

#### Considering capacity

**Be realistic about capacity** to manage change, recognise the need for provision of training or mentoring.

#### Reflecting on sustainability

**Access to appropriate resources and technology** and the funding to sustain this are both important.





## Organisational barriers to innovation

Experience to date (UN, 2014) suggests that there are a number of conditions within organisations which might act as serious barriers to innovation:

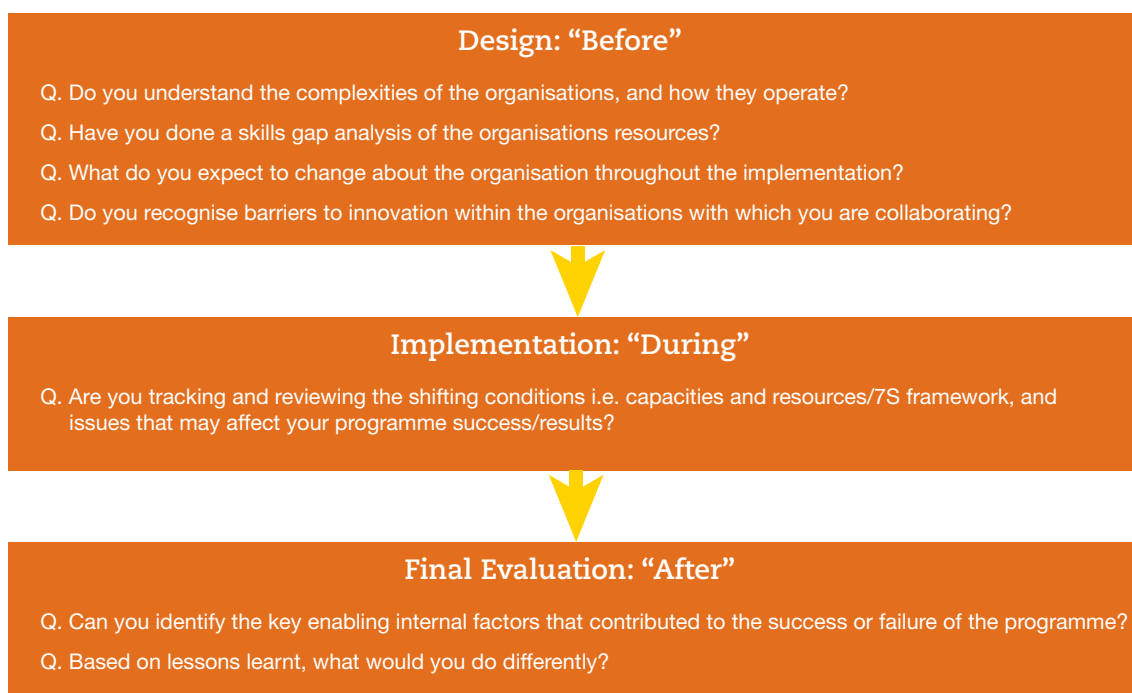
- absence of a key actor who interacts with different organisations
- an inflexible agency blocking innovators with bureaucratic regulation
- introverted organisations resisting win-win perspectives and networked approaches

This is because problems are complex: governance challenges within and across organisations make for what can and has been referred to as ‘wicked problems’ (Bjørger, 2013) in which ‘different interests can turn into paralysing conflicts!’.

As indicated above, donor agencies can reflect on these barriers too, to determine the extent to which they are an enabling organisation for reform.

## Programming Considerations

Organisational conditions questions you may ask at major stages in the programme cycle





## Factor 3: Appropriate Informations and Communications Technology (ICT)

### The ICT Revolution

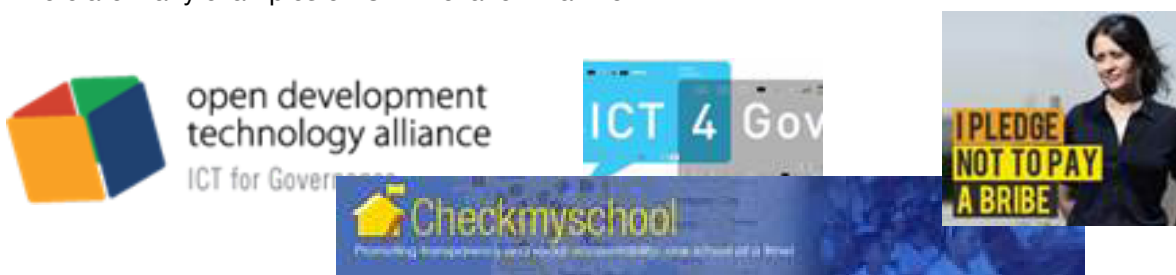
We are living through the greatest era of disruptive innovation and rapid experimentation since the Industrial Revolution and ICT is leading a tide of social and individual empowerment. Whether mobile or not, information technologies are being widely promoted as new ways to progress the transparency and accountability agenda and achieve efficiency gains. Innovative ICT tools change the flow of information between government and citizens; they often automate processes and so restrict the discretion of officials; and they place emphasis on the concept of transparency as a key mechanism to address corruption.

### Not all innovations involve ICT

Not all technology is innovative and not all innovation involves technology. Although it can be a useful tool and programmatic component, ICT is no panacea. ICT only works if utilised properly, if there is the ability and resources to sustain it, and if the structures are in place to receive it. By their very nature technology based programmes are more tangible to evidence and can, if resourced and implemented well, generate results quickly. Whereas those that focus on structural governance reform can often take many years to embed and more tangible results may only become apparent in the later stages of the programme.

### ...but some do

There are many examples of ICT innovation that work.



### When it works:

ICTs have been successfully used for participatory budgeting to enhance citizen, government and civil society engagement as well as provide greater access to information; to provide a platform to publicly record incidences of corruption in order to make visible the depth and scale of the problem; to enable communities to hold governments to account for the quality and responsiveness of service delivery.

### When it doesn't:

A major risk associated with ICT is that citizens without access to ICT can experience worsening marginalisation. There is also a risk that by introducing technology innovations, states can appear to be operating with transparency and accountability even as they evade substantial reform.



## Embedding ICTs

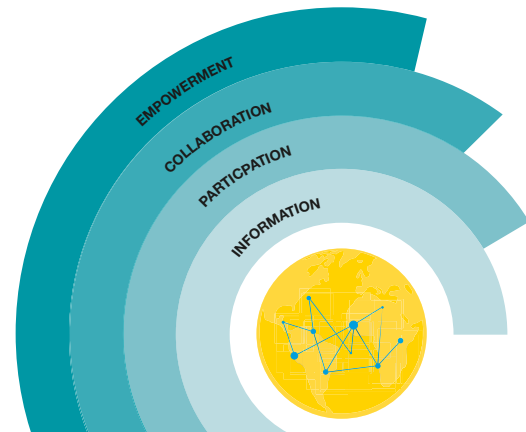
**ICT innovations are utilised in different ways:**

**To empower citizens:** with regular access to information and decision making processes and as a result of ICT to feel more involved in the process of change.

**To enhance collaboration:** CSOs, government and citizens buy-in, engagement and uptake of ideas may be enhanced through ICT collaboration.

**To encourage participation:** stakeholders and actors may increase their sense of understanding and ownership through ICT-driven initiatives.

**To share information:** ICT solutions may increase access to data and information.



## Programming Considerations

Questions to consider in relation to ICT at major stages in the programme cycle

### Design: “Before”

- Q. Why do you think ICT is the best solution for the problem?
- Q. Have you considered the sustainability of the technology?
- Q. Is there scope for private sector investment?
- Q. Is the technology culturally and environmentally appropriate?
- Q. Who will have access and who will not? What barriers to ICT update and usage exist within target stakeholders?

### Implementation: “During”

- Q. Are there adjustments to the ICT that can be made in light of the programme progress?
- Q. What is the mechanism for ensuring the ICT remains current and applicable?
- Q. Have you reviewed the ICT usage and maintenance throughout the programme?

### Final Evaluation: “After”

- Q. On reflection, was the innovation modality (ICT, or not) the best value for money solution?
- Q. Have there been any intended or unintended effects of the ICT innovation?



## Case Study: ICT4Gov | Democratic Republic of Congo

### *What was the plan?*

The World Bank-funded Information and Communication Technology for Governance (ICT4Gov) programme was launched in 2009 in the conflict-affected province of South Kivu in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

ICT4Gov integrates mobile technology into participatory budgeting to enhance citizen, government, and civil society engagement as well as provide greater access to information. While many citizens in South Kivu lack electricity or running water, many have access to mobile phones.

### *What was the process?*

- participatory budgeting to build transparency and accountability in the devolved (local level) budgeting process to enhance citizen, government, and civil society engagement
- greater access to information through telecommunications
- building on in-person consultations and assembly meetings with citizens on budget priorities, the project uses short message service (SMS) messages, word of mouth, and community postings to invite citizens to assemblies, where they vote on community projects in which they would like government to invest.

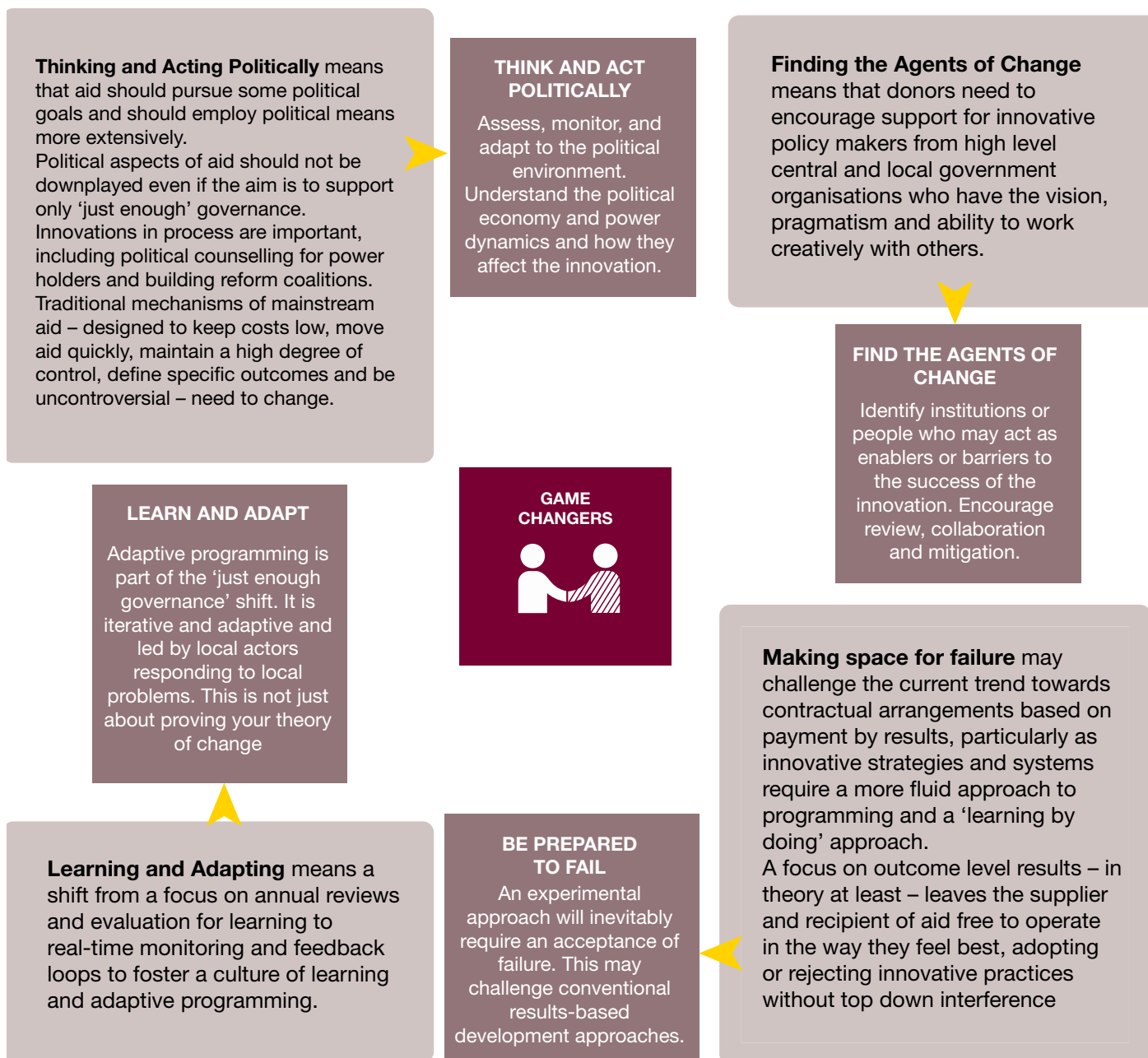
### *What was achieved?*

- Citizens are participating in budgeting assemblies
- Citizens are voting for which community priorities they would like to see addressed
- Voting results and decisions are announced to citizens, making the process more transparent and inclusive
- Citizens are asked about the projects that had been chosen and can offer feedback and monitor the projects
- Over 250,000 text messages have already been sent throughout the different stages of this initiative
- There has also been a reduction in tax evasion at the local level, with citizens more willing to pay taxes as they link government spending to improvement in the delivery of services
- Communities now have more resources to deliver public services to the poor



## Factor 4: Game Changers

In previous sections of this guide we suggest that “Game Changing” governance programmes are those that adopt the most current thinking in governance and public sector reform. They challenge the key ‘gaps’ of current programmes outlined in the section on Understanding Context and Needs. They do not rely wholly on new gadgets and ICT; they are creative, flexible, and forward looking in their approach. They are also the programmes that focus on political power and relationships rather than organisational boundaries and good governance standards; they support collective action and shared decision making rather than supply/demand side stand offs. In this sector, we identify some of the key mechanisms that donors might consider for developing and implementing a ‘Game Changing’ programme.





## Thinking and working politically

Since November 2013, a group of senior officials from major donors, along with leading practitioners and researchers – from academia, think tanks, civil society and the private sector, have been working together to promote thinking and working politically (TWP) in development.

The Thinking and Working Politically Community of Practice focuses on how to translate the evidence that political factors are usually much more important in determining developmental impact than the scale of aid funding or the technical quality of programming. Members work together on innovative solutions that address the organisation and incentive-based barriers to designing and implementing more politically savvy, adaptive approaches to policy and programming.

Membership cuts across sectors and thematic areas, enabling better understanding of what TWP means for design, implementation, management and evaluation of development programmes. Whether the focus is water or women's empowerment, civil service reform or road building, the approaches, ideas, theories of change and modalities that the TWP Community of Practice are developing, discussing and testing address the crucial challenges facing donors and developing countries as we work towards Agenda 2030.

More details – including how to join - can be found here | <http://www.twpcommunity.org>.

## Case Study: Enabling State Programme (ESP) | Nepal

### *What was the plan?*

Nepal's ESP was one of the UK's Department for International Development's longest running governance programmes. Launched in January 2001 during the height of Nepal's conflict ESP's objective was to support the Government of Nepal to strengthen governance systems and facilitate an enabling environment for constructive engagement between the state and civil society. ESP was conceptualised as an umbrella programme that enabled the implementation of a number of short-term 'exploratory activities' to pilot innovative ideas, and also longer term 'satellite projects' to pursue institutional and policy reforms. All ESP activities complimented the government's national development plan and priorities.

### *What was the process?*

- Offering financial and technical support
- Developing CSO and Government linkages and relationships
- Undertaking joint activities
- Improving capability, capacity, voice and accountability
- Improving inclusiveness and accountability of State to its citizens

### *What was achieved?*

- Towards Democracy - over 700 community-based groups, networks and alliances have come together - in about 60 districts; awareness raised of their rights as citizens and helped them to work with local government to address their needs.
- Towards Poverty Reduction – increased income of 4,000 households in Janajati communities
- Towards Peace, Justice and Security – 9,000 students mobilized to promote peace in their communities.



## Programming Considerations

Questions you might ask to determine whether a programme has game changing characteristics:

### Design: “Before”

- Q. Have you undertaken stakeholder mapping and identified threats and opportunities to programme implementation?
- Q. What will be your Game Changers?
- Q. Have you identified incentives for ensuring political buy-in?
- Q. Do you have a champion?
- Q. Have you included any form of results-based arrangements which will work against programme adaptation?



### Implementation: “During”

- Q. Are you monitoring the changing political economy and the impact it might have your innovation?
- Q. Are your identified Game Changers still the same?
- Q. Does the M&E framework capture both success and failure? Are you able to adapt to these lessons learned?
- Q. How frequently do you review findings and adapt the programme?



### Final Evaluation: “After”

- Q. Can you identify what have been the ‘Game Changers’ for your programme?
- Q. How much of the success of the programme would you attribute to the Game Changers that you identified at the start of the programme?



## Factor 5: Sustainability Assessment

### Why sustainability matters

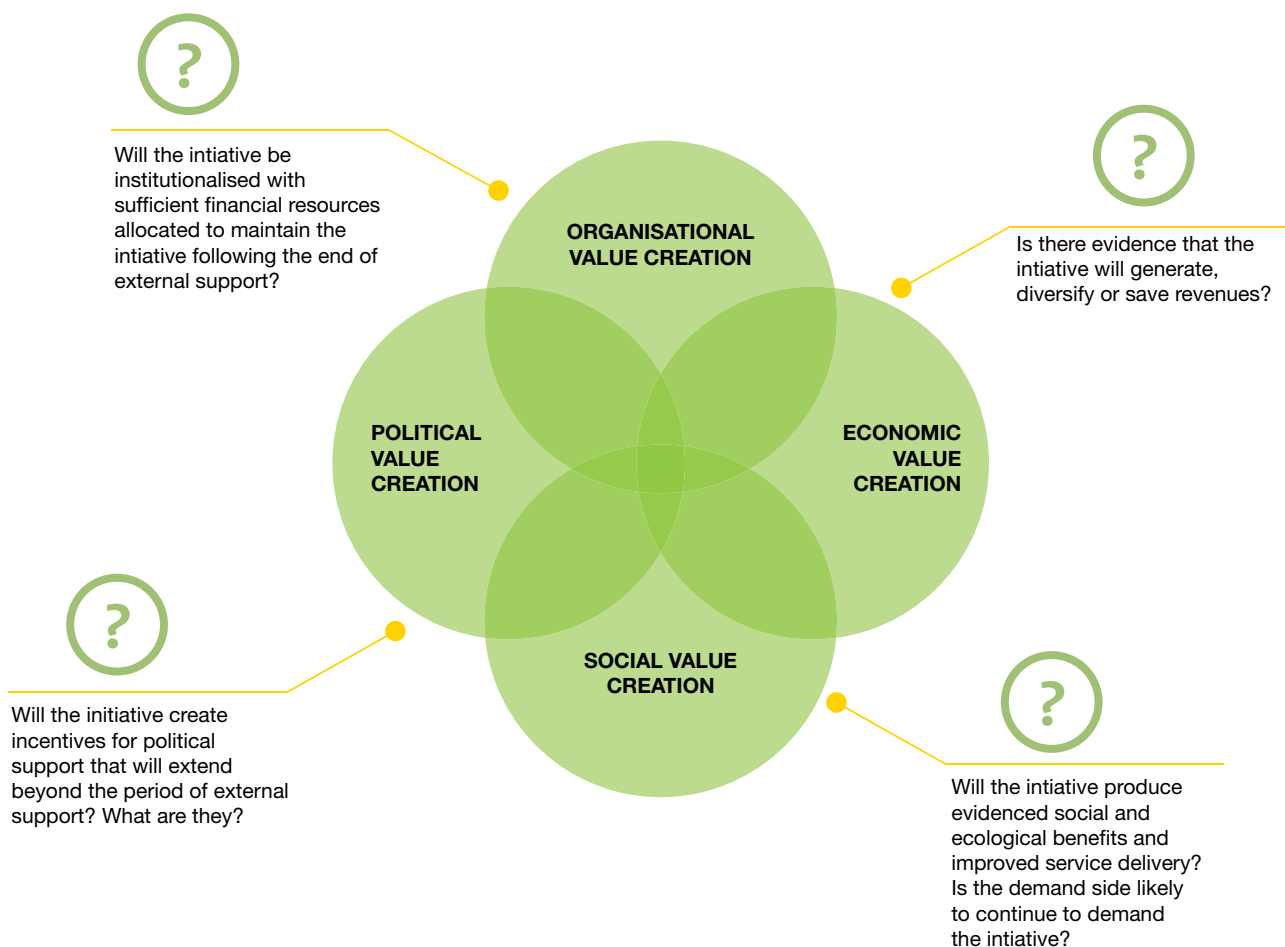
From a programming perspective, sustainability refers to the continuation and resilience of benefits over time. Sustainability can be viewed in terms of both the will to sustain (demand and supply) and the resources to sustain or scale-up an initiative or change. Change does not necessarily last, and a sustainability and exit strategy warrants some careful consideration from the outset. Key to ensuring sustainability in innovation is to understand the drivers and incentives maintaining the longer-term sustainability of a programmes benefits: it's about planning from the beginning and adapting the innovation in context, recognising that sustainability may be the ultimate test of success.

### Considering sustainability

Sustainability considerations should happen at the outset of any support programme and should extend beyond thinking about the resources needed to sustain benefits and include considerations of on-going political will of both demand and supply side actors. Sustainability implications can sometimes be difficult to anticipate for support programmes which are experimental in nature and in these cases the incorporation of sustainability 'testing procedures' can add important value during the trial and error phase.

### Key sustainability drivers

The diagram below provides a framework of critical factors and associated questions to consider in determining the strength of the sustainability factors associated with an innovation







## Programming Considerations

Questions to be considered in relation to sustainability at key stages in the programme cycle.

### Design: “Before”

- Q. Does the innovation have political support?
- Q. Have you thought about the long-term financial resources requirement?
- Q. If necessary, is there scope for private sector engagement?
- Q. Are you planning for sustainability? e.g. are you planning to support increased organisational capacity to meet future needs?
- Q. Have you engaged political game changers to support the longevity of the programme?



### Implementation: “During”

- Q. If your innovation creates economic and/or social value are you capturing evidence of this and disseminating to key stakeholders to develop longer-term buy-in?
- Q. Has there been appropriate budgeting of human and financial resources to sustain the innovation?
- Q. Do you have a strategy in place to ensure continuity in the event of economic or political changes?
- Q. Do wider civil society and media organisations know about the social value created through your project?



### Final Evaluation: “After”

- Q. If sustainability was achieved, do you know why?
- Q. Have your lessons learned been communicated and disseminated to improve the design of other similar programmes?

## Case Study: Mwananchi Governance and Transparency Programme | Africa

### *What was the plan?*

The Mwananchi Programme was designed to bring together key interlocutors of the citizen-state relationship to strengthen citizen participation in governance across six African countries.

### *What was the process?*

- Understanding the “interlocution process” & support actors
- Supporting accountability mechanisms by funding pilot innovations driven by interlocutors
- Increasing the abilities of civil society, media, elected representatives and traditional leaders to enable citizens to hold their government to account through collective action
- Transforming citizen-state relationships
- Understanding that early contextual and political analysis, together with the identification of key actors who would be gamechangers for the programme’s sustainability and success

### *What was achieved?*

- Sierra Leone - alleviated social problems by developing a collaborative relationship between the police, media and motorcycle taxi operators
- Uganda - a culturally rooted justice system (the Bakata Courts) has been established in parts of rural Uganda
- Malawi - the practice of paying to appear in a traditional court, leading to poorer citizens being denied justice has been discontinued in one traditional authority
- Zambia - effective coalitions between media, civil society, private sector and parliament have increased access to education for disabled children.
- Resources – projects in Ghana have received funding to continue their work.



## Factor 6: Lesson Learning and Replication

### What does success look like?

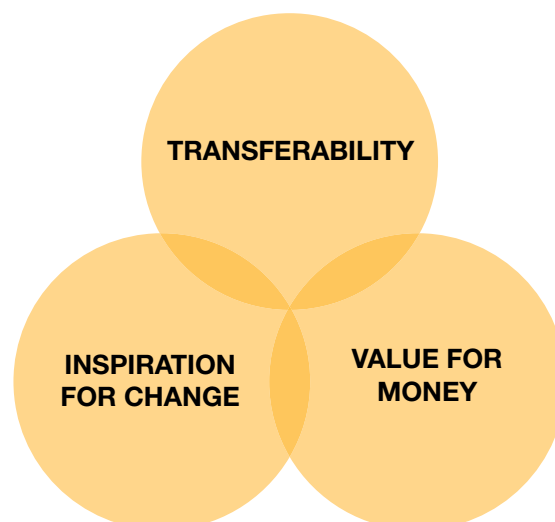
Research supporting this guide suggests that most recent experiments in governance emphasise **relationships rather than standards, strengthen networks**, which cross formal and informal institutional boundaries and do this in a way which enables **collective action** and **shared decision making** but these remain propositions rather than certainties and there is much still to learn.

### Why does learning matter?

While there are broad commitments to more open government, to wider engagement and to the potential of ICT, it is not yet clear what works in which context and under what conditions. Robust evidence of what is working and sustainable is very limited. Knowledge management systems in the public sector, including incentives to communicate and share lessons learned is very weak. A significant part of the problem is that innovations appear to be subject to a considerable amount of self-reporting in which a promotional, rather than analytical, style is adopted. There is a broad consensus that unless more is done to better define, understand, monitor and evaluate innovation in public sector governance it may become yet another concept that joins the 'vital but vague' club.

### What have we learned?

There are currently few systematic mechanisms for capturing, evaluating and disseminating innovation and little coordination between development actors. However, preliminary observations resulting from the OECD led review of innovation in public sector reform suggest that a more flexible and localised approach to support is needed. This may require an associated adaptation to performance management and financing modalities which lend themselves to innovation without losing sight of probity or purpose. Meeting these challenges requires some innovative thinking of its own and in this sense the donor community may find itself part of the very context it needs to consider – a context in which new approaches to participation and engagement will require changes in the rules of the game that are difficult to make and will test political will.



### Factors supporting replication

The OECD Innovation in Action Study (2014) suggested that the most replicable of innovations in public sector governance reform shared the following characteristics:

- can be transferred to a similar area of service delivery
- carries minimal risk in terms of corruption and conflict
- can be communicated relatively easily
- impact is likely to be visible
- benefits will be relatively easy to measure
- cost-benefit analysis in other contexts is likely to be possible
- information could be generated to explain failure.

### Replication considerations

The ability to replicate your innovation to other countries and contexts may, or may not be a goal you primarily seek to achieve. However, examining the potential for replication is a useful process and point for reflection and developing lessons learned. Potential for replication is to some extent a function of three drivers: Transferability, Inspiration for Change and Value for Money. The first, transferability presents a primary consideration, with questions relating to inspiration for change and value for money applicable as secondary sets of questions. The replication consideration boxes below outline some key questions you might ask of your innovation to help rate the replicability of your innovation.

**“I have not failed  
10,000 times.  
I have successfully  
found 10,000 ways  
that will not work”**

- Thomas Edison

**Replication and success  
are not the only possible  
outcomes of your innovation.  
Be prepared for  
unexpected results.  
Failure is not failure when it is  
managed well and lessons  
are learnt.**



## Replication Considerations

Questions to be considered in relation to replication

### Transferability

- Q. Could the innovation be introduced into a common area of service delivery?
- Q. Does it require minimal or reasonable structural change?
- Q. Is it likely to be compatible with political and cultural sensitivities?
- Q. Does it have a reasonably clear theory of change?
- Q. If the innovation is dependent on new or adapted technologies, are they available, affordable, and usable across a range of contexts?
- Q. Does the innovation imply an acceptable level of risk with regard to potential misappropriation of funds and conflict sensitivity?



### Inspiration for Change

- Q. Is there a level of visible impact?
- Q. Is there ease of measuring benefits?
- Q. Is there ease with which innovation can be communicated?
- Q. If the innovation were to fail would there be information to explain why?



### Value for Money

- Q. Does the innovation represent good value for money?
- Q. Is there some evidence that the innovation can be introduced at reasonable levels of economy, efficiency and effectiveness and with due attention to equity?
- Q. Is there some evidence that cost-benefit analysis might be possible as the basis for economic appraisals in other contexts?

## Case Study: Local Governance Support Project | Bangladesh

### *What was the plan?*

The Local Governance Support Project – Learning and Innovation Component (LGSP-LIC) planned to introduce an incentive framework for 388 elected Union Parishads (UPs) – the lowest tier of local government - in rural Bangladesh with the aim of improving local governance and local service delivery.

### *What was the process?*

- Setting local performance framework
- Allocating money and undertaking activities
- Re-setting local performance framework

### *What was achieved?*

- Enabled UPs to deliver more than 10,000 basic infrastructure schemes
- Performance improved faster in the LGSP-LIC UPs than in the “control group”.
- A transferable process replicated across UPs

## Why we need to know more

Although this quick guide is designed to spark reflection which may be helpful in guiding programme thinking, inevitably it may raise as many questions as it answers.

- Do current innovations in governance programming represent a poor substitute for what needs to happen, a reasonable adaptation to the limits of the reform environment or an astute shift from good governance to just enough governance?
- Are we moving away from a model where we recognise that organisational bureaucracies will never work to one where broader horizontal engagement and communication between a wider range of stakeholders can? If so, how would success scale up without a functional administrative practice?
- Does a focus on service delivery at the local level create the stimulus required for new forms of public administration?
- In what contexts do e-governance and m-governance innovations really work?
- Is collective action a reality that can be facilitated through new technologies?
- What vision do development partners have for innovation in public sector reform?
- Is there a role for the private sector?
- Can development partners effectively identify and spread innovation?
- Can new aid modalities assist in a shift towards more flexible development programming?
- What's next in public sector governance reform?

Some of these questions are addressed in a desk review document supporting this guide: *Christie, Conroy, Everett & Swan. Vague but Vital: Current Thinking on Innovation in Public Sector Governance Reform, OECD, 2014*. Some case studies which explore these questions are presented in a separate document: *Christie, Conroy, Everett & Swan. A Review of Innovative Experiences in Public Sector Governance Reform, OECD, 2015*.

Part 3:

# FURTHER INFORMATION

A selection of experiments in public sector governance reform are summarised below. For more information on these and other innovative programmes visit the Office of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI).

<https://www1.oecd.org/governance/observatory-public-sector-innovation/home/>.

## Innovation experiments in Public Sector Governance Reform

Name and Link	What it is	Learning: What Works?	Learning: What Doesn't
<p><b>I Paid a Bribe, India</b>  <a href="http://www.ipaidabribe.com/">www.ipaidabribe.com/</a></p>	<p>Increases awareness of corruption through a public access web platform</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working simultaneously with both government and citizens</li> <li>• Evolving new strategies optimally to create resistance to corruption</li> <li>• Strong communication and branding strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dependency on external funding</li> <li>• Limited internet access and use</li> </ul>
<p><b>Information and Communication Technology for Governance, South Kivu, DRC</b>  <a href="http://blogs.worldbank.org/ic4d/mobile-enhanced-participatory-budgeting-in-the-drc">http://blogs.worldbank.org/ic4d/mobile-enhanced-participatory-budgeting-in-the-drc</a></p>	<p>Integrates mobile technology into participatory budgeting to enhance citizen, government, and civil society engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simple mechanism for discussion and decision-making</li> <li>• Opportunity to change some bureaucratic local government administrative procedures</li> <li>• Voting by mobile phone - which has been extremely popular with citizens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dependency on external funding a key obstacle to scale-up</li> </ul>
<p><b>District Development Facility, Ghana</b>  <a href="http://www.afd.fr/lang/en/home/pays/afrique/geo-afrique/ghana/projets-ghana/projet-de-dotation-des-collectivites-locales">http://www.afd.fr/lang/en/home/pays/afrique/geo-afrique/ghana/projets-ghana/projet-de-dotation-des-collectivites-locales</a></p>	<p>Grants provided to local level authorities - 'earned' as additional financial resources through a performance-based mechanism incentivising good performance of service delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transparency and clear communication</li> <li>• Identifying and filling knowledge gaps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donor design and resourcing</li> <li>• Stand-alone results-based programming by donors</li> </ul>
<p><b>Open Data Initiative, Kenya</b>  <a href="https://opendata.go.ke/">https://opendata.go.ke/</a></p>	<p>An online portal allowing access to government datasets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Agent of Change or Champion to drive forward the idea of open data, working collaboratively with entrepreneurs and the private sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government departments unwilling or unable to publicly share the key documents that the public wants to see</li> <li>• Efforts focused on creation of commercial apps rather than on transparency and accountability goals</li> </ul>
<p><b>Check my School, Philippines</b>  <a href="http://www.checkmyschool.org/">http://www.checkmyschool.org/</a></p>	<p>Improvements in the provision of services in public schools through monitoring the conditions in schools and solving problems collaboratively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data sharing between agencies</li> <li>• Experimentation with different ICT tools</li> <li>• Networking with civil society organisations, youth groups and socially-active individuals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complex project website that creates technical issues</li> </ul>

Name and Link	What it is	Learning: What Works?	Learning: What Doesn't
<p><b>Support to Anti-Corruption Efforts, Kosovo</b>  <a href="http://www.ks.undp.org/content/ksosovo/en/home/operations/projects/democratic_governance/SAEK.html">http://www.ks.undp.org/content/ksosovo/en/home/operations/projects/democratic_governance/SAEK.html</a></p>	<p>Increases awareness of corruption through real-time reporting and seeing public institution results mapped and presented visually on the internet</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-corruption champions</li> <li>• Access to modern communication systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dependency on donors for funding</li> </ul>
<p><b>Budget Inquirer, Cameroon</b>  <a href="http://cameroon.openspending.org/en/">http://cameroon.openspending.org/en/</a></p>	<p>Citizen-centred approach to disseminating simplified budget information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizen engagement</li> <li>• Use of web and social media technologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of budget information without fostering discussion around budget issues</li> </ul>
<p><b>State, Accountability and Voice Initiative, Nigeria</b>  <a href="http://savi-nigeria.org/">http://savi-nigeria.org/</a></p>	<p>A way in which Citizen's can increase their ability to influence and hold their state government to account</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning by doing</li> <li>• Changed aid modality from grant-giving and pre-defined capacity building to hands-on facilitation and knowledge sharing</li> <li>• Working 'with the grain' of local culture</li> <li>• Development entrepreneurship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mechanical forms of donor expenditure planning and output monitoring</li> <li>• A naming and shaming approach to government</li> </ul>
<p><b>Transparency Portal, Peru</b>  <a href="http://sgp.pcm.gob.pe/">http://sgp.pcm.gob.pe/</a>  <a href="http://www.peru.gob.pe/transparencia/pep_transparencia.asp">http://www.peru.gob.pe/transparencia/pep_transparencia.asp</a></p>	<p>Harmonisation of a series of transparency portals into one portal for public bodies to report their activities in a clear and easily accessible manner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic alliances which support and prioritise the project</li> <li>• Resolving resistance to dissemination and information sharing</li> <li>• Ensuring government ownership of the innovation (mandates)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System incompatibility</li> <li>• Capacity and infrastructure constraint</li> <li>• Lack of compliance</li> </ul>
<p><b>INFROBRAS PublicWorks Information System, Peru</b>  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B62n_qAhEEk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B62n_qAhEEk</a>  <a href="https://apps.contraloria.gob.pe/ciudadano/wfm_info_ayuda.aspx">https://apps.contraloria.gob.pe/ciudadano/wfm_info_ayuda.aspx</a></p>	<p>A portal linking public budget, expenditure and procurement systems and implementing online tracking of investment projects, contracts and payments made for the works throughout Peru and covering all stages of works development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involving all stakeholders in the design and construction of the concept</li> <li>• Success of the project led to replication in Chile</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The interoperability between INFOBRAS and the other national systems was a challenge</li> </ul>
<p><b>Support to Local Government Revenue Generation and Land Administration Reforms Project (REGALA), Philippines</b>  <a href="http://www.lgi.com.ph">www.lgi.com.ph</a></p>	<p>Computerizing all land information and real property tax assessment and fast tracking inter-agency collaboration between the national Land Administration Management (LAM) agencies to expand delivery of social and economic services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National roll-out of reforms and good practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dependency on extra funding to support roll-out and staff capacity building</li> </ul>



Name and Link	What it is	Learning: What Works?	Learning: What Doesn't
<p><b>Community-Based Policing Initiative, Afghanistan</b>  <a href="http://www.giz.de/en/downloads/giz2012-en-akzente04-rule-of-law-in-afghanistan.pdf">http://www.giz.de/en/downloads/giz2012-en-akzente04-rule-of-law-in-afghanistan.pdf</a></p>	<p>Creation of a more professional police force to build citizen trust by encouraging citizen voice and engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working closely with government for both planning and implementation, fully considering their needs and priorities in all phases of the project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committees which require third party engagement to be sustained</li> <li>Lack of supporting policy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Local Governance Support Project: Learning &amp; Innovation Component, Bangladesh</b>  <a href="http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/JBD00">http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/JBD00</a></p>	<p>Improving the capacity of Union Parishads for effective, efficient, and accountable delivery of pro-poor infrastructure and services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grants as a motivator for improved performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of decentralisation policy</li> <li>Weak mechanisms for monitoring performance</li> <li>Lack of innovative funding mechanisms for building capacity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Enabling State Programme, Nepal</b>  <a href="http://www.grminternational.com/projects/enabling_state_programme_esp">http://www.grminternational.com/projects/enabling_state_programme_esp</a></p>	<p>A number of short term 'exploratory activities' to pilot innovative ideas and also longer term 'satellite project' to pursue institutional and policy reform</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Longer-term engagement generally yields greater and more sustainable results than shorter-term engagement</li> <li>Pilot partnerships and approaches before scaling-up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexible and fleet approach to programming has sometimes caused a challenge for the programme's overall coherence and its ability to deliver predictable results</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mobilising for Development, Nigeria</b>  <a href="http://www.mobilisingfordevelopment.com/about-m4d/">http://www.mobilisingfordevelopment.com/about-m4d/</a></p>	<p>A local governance programme which enables better-fit approaches to reform including using mobile technology to improve and speed up local governance service requests, reporting and responsiveness at a local level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A step-by-step approach to securing buy-in</li> <li>Connections between formal and informal policy makers</li> <li>Focus on issues of collective interest</li> <li>Quick wins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State control of local government funds</li> <li>Ignoring upward accountability between local and state government</li> <li>Redeployment of staff</li> <li>Technologies which cannot be maintained locally</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mwananchi, Africa</b>  <a href="http://mwananchi-africa.org/">http://mwananchi-africa.org/</a></p>	<p>Brings together key interlocutors of the citizen-state relationship to strengthen citizen participation in governance across six African countries and provide grant funding to develop 'innovative' solutions to good governance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning process approach and outcome-driven tools</li> <li>Local grantees provided space to allow innovations to emerge</li> <li>Cooperation of the government and the relationships built between the team and the government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The programme's approach was sometimes criticised by some local stakeholders as overly elaborate for the amount of grant money available</li> <li>The team/donor was overly ambitious on how much funding the team could distribute in the time scale, whilst remaining rigorous</li> <li>There was not an equal amount of engagement and political will in each country</li> </ul>

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