



# **Adaptive programming in practice: shared lessons from the DFID-funded LASER and SAVI programmes**

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The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the UK government's official policies.

Readers are encouraged to quote and reproduce material from this paper in their own publications. The authors request due acknowledgement and quotes to be referenced as above.

## Acronyms

CSO	Civil society organisation
DFID	UK Department for International Development
ECP	Engaged Citizens Pillar (SAVI successor programme – one component of PERL)
IMEP	Independent Monitoring and Evaluation Project
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
INTRAC	International NGO Training and Research Centre
LASER	Legal Assistance for Economic Reform
LCSDDP	Lagos Civil Society Disability Policy Partnership
LDP	The Law & Development Partnership
LEAP	Learning, Evidence and Advocacy Partnership
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
OCA	Organisational Capacity Assessment (SAVI)
PBR	Payment by results
PCA	Partnership Capacity Assessment (SAVI)
PERL	Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (new DFID-funded governance reform programme in Nigeria)
PWD	Persons with disability
SAVI	State Accountability and Voice Initiative
SRO	Senior Responsible Owner
SHoA	State House of Assembly
TGM	Technical Group Meeting
TLT	Technical Leadership Team
ToR	Terms of Reference
USAID	US Department for International Development
VFM	Value for money

## Executive Summary

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Influenced by a wealth of research and emerging international consensus, key donors including UK Department for International Development (DFID), USAID and the World Bank are encouraging the increased use of adaptive programme approaches to address complex development challenges such as institutional reform and work in fragile and conflict affected states, in an attempt to increase impact. Donors and service providers are however grappling with the complex practicalities of how to design, implement and monitor adaptive programmes – a challenge compounded by the recognised lack of practical case study material to draw on.

This paper has been produced jointly by two DFID-funded programmes – LASER (Legal Assistance for Economic Reform) and SAVI (State Accountability and Voice Initiative, Nigeria). Both programmes have been taking an adaptive approach to delivering development support for some time, and are achieving results. Although LASER and SAVI are very different – including in size of budget, sector, location, and aid modality – both deal with significant issues of institutional change in complex environments. It is striking that despite programmatic differences, key aspects of their respective approaches to adaptive programming, as well as many lessons and challenges, are similar. As a contribution to current thinking and practice, this joint paper provides an overview of LASER and SAVI's practical experience as suppliers and practitioners in designing, contracting, managing, implementing and monitoring flexible, adaptive programmes – complementing the more widely available perspective of academics and think tanks.

**LASER** is £4.3 million investment climate reform programme implemented by KPMG and The Law & Development Partnership. It started in 2014, operates in eight countries and is managed by DFID London. It provides technical assistance to government ministries, agencies and judiciaries, serving as a facilitator, helping developing countries to identify needs, obtain support (including pro bono advice) and effectively engage with and leverage other donor support and investment.

**SAVI** is a £34.7 million demand-side governance programme managed by Palladium in partnership with Itad. It started in 2008, works in ten Nigerian States, and is managed by DFID Nigeria. SAVI facilitates multi-stakeholder issue-based partnerships – brokering working relationships, and providing mentoring, capacity building and seed funding support. SAVI partners influence and support their state governments to make better use of their own resources to deliver better services to their citizens.

## Approaches and lessons

Experience from LASER and SAVI suggests that adaptive programming is effective in achieving institutional reform results in complex environments. However, designing, contracting and implementing programmes which work in adaptive ways is time consuming and challenging – often involving swimming against the tide of conventional practice.

The key practical challenge of adaptive programming is reconciling the need for flexible plans which respond to complex and changing contexts on the one hand, with the need for strong accountability for donor funds on the other. This constitutes a technical and an operational challenge.

Strong technical leadership is needed for a programme to adapt appropriately in the light of changes in context, and of on-going discovery and understanding about problems and solutions to address them. Adaptive programmes require staff willing and able to facilitate and provide support behind the scenes, as well as systems to build staff and partners' confidence and skills to work in an adaptive manner. Systems are also needed to undertake on-going contextual analysis and to enable staff to think and work politically, to encourage on-going learning and reflection informed by robust evidence, and to scale activities up or down in response.

Many of the current operational systems in place in donor organisations and suppliers (as well as supplier incentives) have been established to ensure accountability, compliance and value for money. These systems rely on pinning down details of work plans, budgets and personnel inputs up front and delivering against these, and this approach inherently closes down the space and flexibility required for adaptive planning. In contrast to this, adaptive programmes need to develop operational management systems that continue to deliver accountability to the donor, while at the same time supporting rather than undermining the programme's ability to be adaptive. Both LASER and SAVI have tried to do this, and key lessons are:

### Design, procurement and contracting

- **Programme design:** Initial results frameworks should set the direction of the programme and its level of ambition, whilst allowing flexibility and adaptation in the definition of results, activities and spend. This means stipulating level of impact and ambition, but not predicting in advance exactly what will be achieved or how. LASER has achieved this through the use of nested logframes, stories of change, and 'menus' of output level results; SAVI through regular revisions to the results framework, outcome mapping, and stories of change linking output and outcome level results.
- **Procurement:** Procurement processes need to promote and incentivise adaptation. Donors should be looking for adaptive approaches rather than solutions at the procurement stage. Evaluation criteria for supplier selection should focus on suppliers' systems and the ability of staff to work in adaptive ways.
- **Technical and operational management:** Technical leadership and operations management need to be integrated and mutually compatible from the outset. Suppliers need to demonstrate that they have the systems and processes in place which support strategic and technical leadership, rather than being driven by the operational management of finances, human resources and milestones.
- **Staffing:** Donors and suppliers need to ensure that programme staff have competencies, attitudes and behaviour appropriate to adaptive planning, rather than simply technical skills. For suppliers this can mean a significant change in the profiles of staff recruited and deployed, and for donors a recognition of the importance of assessing competencies rather than focussing solely on the depth and breadth of technical experience.
- **Commercial interests:** The inherent uncertainty and risks in adaptive programmes can complicate supplier arrangements. Pre-set roles and inputs agreed between supplier consortium members can undermine the ability to adapt. Instead consortium partners should have cross cutting strategic roles, and governance and commercial arrangements between consortium partners should foster collaboration.

- **Financial arrangements:** Financial arrangements between the donor and supplier need to incentivise adaptive planning, and should recognise the greater risk to suppliers. Innovative applications of payment by results include, for example, hybrid contracts with only a portion tied to achievement of milestones, annual breaks in contracts allowing for re-negotiation of terms and conditions and different categories of milestone with different risk profiles.

## **Implementation, management and monitoring**

- **Contextual analysis:** Formal mechanisms need to be put in place for on-going analysis of the changing context, supporting staff and partners to analyse and respond to changing opportunities, momentum and constraints.
- **Learning by doing and adaptation:** From inception, programme design needs to incorporate space, time and funds for on-going reflection and learning by doing – from failure as well as success. Staff (and partners) need space and support to identify problems, develop and test solutions, and revise approaches in the light of experience and evidence. This involves removing the roadblocks that can prevent creative thinking such as delivery against top-down pre-set results, pre-determined budgets and fixed technical or financial inputs. It also requires investing in skills and systems for structured reflection, learning and adaptation.
- **Taking time:** Adaptive management approaches, capacities and relationships take time to evolve, and should not be undermined by pressure for quick wins.
- **Management:** Adaptive programming requires more sophisticated management, more management time, and more investment in management. Higher management costs need to be seen as, and demonstrated to be, investment in achieving greater impact rather than poor value for money.
- **Financial management:** Financial forecasting and management processes need to facilitate adaptive planning – allowing financial resources to be moved around and used in a flexible way – whilst still meeting donor requirements for accurate financial projections and value for money. Systems need to aim for accountability, flexibility and transparency in the management of funds, but not necessarily complete predictability. This includes regular budget review and continuous re-forecast.
- **Monitoring:** Monitoring is key to adaptive programming – essential for internal learning and adaptation, rather than merely as an accountability tool. Monitoring and reflection should be built into the way a programme operates, and systems should be in place which allow adaptation as a result of learning at all levels of the programme.
- **Relationship with donor:** A good relationship between the programme and supplier management staff and the donor – on both technical and operational matters – is critical. To work well, this relationship requires mutual respect, give and take and a willingness from both sides to negotiate, understand each others' viewpoint, and make decisions quickly.

## 1. Introduction

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Over the past few years much has been written about why donors and development programmes should operate in more flexible, adaptive and context specific ways.<sup>1</sup> On the basis of research which concludes that traditional approaches to public sector transformation and institutional reform have not had the desired impact,<sup>2</sup> an adaptive approach to development is becoming increasingly mainstream. Adaptive programming<sup>3</sup> stresses the importance of designing and implementing development support through processes of learning by doing, continually testing and adapting programme approaches and delivery. Donors including the UK Department for International Development (DFID), USAID and the World Bank are actively exploring how more flexible, politically smart, adaptive programmes which emphasise outcomes over outputs, can form part of their programme portfolios.<sup>4</sup> At the same time many service providers<sup>5</sup> are grappling with the complex practicalities of how – technically and operationally – to design and implement adaptive programmes, and monitor their success.

This paper has been produced jointly by two DFID-funded programmes – LASER (Legal Assistance for Economic Reform)<sup>6</sup> and SAVI (State Accountability and Voice Initiative, Nigeria).<sup>7</sup> Both programmes have been taking an adaptive approach to delivering development support for some time, and are achieving results.<sup>8</sup> This joint paper provides their practitioner viewpoint on adaptive programming – complementing the more widely available perspective of academics and think tanks.<sup>9</sup>

LASER and SAVI are very different programmes – including in size of budget, sector, location, and aid modality. But both deal with significant issues of institutional change in complex environments. It is striking that despite significant programmatic differences, key aspects of their respective approaches to adaptive programming, as well as many lessons and challenges, are similar. This paper sets out some of these shared lessons and challenges to stimulate and contribute to thinking – amongst suppliers, practitioners and donors – on the ways in which flexible, adaptive programmes are designed, contracted, delivered and monitored.

The paper starts with a brief overview of current developments related to adaptive programming. It then provides an overview of the LASER and SAVI programmes, drawing out differences and parallels. The main body of the paper highlights similarities in approaches, lessons and challenges. This is divided into two sections: design, contracting and procurement; and implementation, management and monitoring. The paper ends with reflections for donor organisations and suppliers.

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1 Isser, D., et al, 2014); Ramalingam, B., 2013; Valters, C., et al, 2016; Frej, W., & Ramalingam, B., 2011; Maclay, C., 2015.

2 Cox, M., 2008; Aboal, D, et al, 2012; Pellini, A., 2015; Yanguas, P., 2015.

3 In this paper we use the term “adaptive programming” to refer to a variety of strands of analysis that come together to influence an approach to development that is more flexible and adaptive e.g. Doing Development Differently (DDD), Problem Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA), Politically Smart and Locally Led development

4 Verbal contributions from DFID, USAID and the World Bank at the IRC/Mercy Corps ADAPT event (22 Apr 2016 at SOAS, London), ongoing discussions with the DFID Better Delivery Unit, round table discussion discussing World Bank thinking on adaptive programming (14 Apr 2016 at ODI, London)

5 Evident from supplier discussions at forums such as DFID PBR Supplier event (3 Feb 2016), IRC and Mercy Corps facilitated ADAPT workshop (21 April 2016), ODI / Palladium joint Learning at the Centre event (25 Feb 2016 at ODI, London) and requests for sharing of lessons directly from suppliers

6 [www.laserdev.org](http://www.laserdev.org)

7 <http://savi-nigeria.org/>

8 In March 2016 LASER was awarded an A+ in its second annual review by DFID. SAVI was awarded an A+ in its Project Completion Review in May 2016. More details on results are available on the LASER and SAVI websites

9 Further information is available on both programmes, including Think Pieces, Approach Papers and tools. These are listed in Annex 1.

## 2. The thinking behind adaptive programming

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There is a wealth of literature that recognises that the potential impact of a development programme is contingent on its understanding of context. In programmes concerned with institutional reform or those operating in fragile and conflict affected environments, this context is by definition complex, unpredictable and rapidly changing<sup>10</sup> – and this complexity means that success will be determined by a programme’s ability to adapt and react appropriately. Acknowledgement within donor communities and amongst development practitioners that aid interventions take place ‘on the edge of chaos’<sup>11</sup> has led to what has been termed a ‘quiet revolution on complexity thinking’<sup>12</sup> towards adaptive programming. Being adaptive is designed to allow programmes to respond to change in their complex environments.<sup>13</sup> Solutions and results are not ‘locked in’ during the analysis and design phase. Instead they are based on on-going, strategic political economy and context analysis,<sup>14</sup> a focus on locally defined problems, and adaptive planning processes throughout the life of the programme, informed by processes of learning by doing.<sup>15</sup>

The impact of this thinking is evident in donor agencies. DFID first published its bi-annually updated Smart Rules in 2014, providing the operating framework for all DFID programmes. These encourage programmers to focus more on the what and how of delivery, and less on the why and rationale. They aim to enable programmes to escape the constraints of traditional programme delivery where this is necessary to achieve impact, without sacrificing oversight and accountability. Similarly USAID is reviewing internal policies and processes to enable a more flexible approach to programme delivery, making the case for lesson learning and adaptation within programmes, and supporting missions and programmes to work in a more adaptive manner.<sup>16</sup> DFID and USAID have formed a partnership to understand and implement adaptive management approaches to delivering aid.<sup>17</sup> The World Bank too, is starting to consider how its own systems can enable more flexible and adaptive working, informed by lessons learned in the Nigerian context<sup>18</sup>. They are encouraging learning and sharing across programmes as part of the Global Delivery Initiative, in part focussing on enabling programmes to be more adaptive.<sup>19</sup>

*How* development agencies and suppliers should bring a more adaptive and flexible approach to programming is now the subject of debate but often at a conceptual level.<sup>20</sup> There is a recognised lack of case studies on the practicalities of implementation,<sup>21</sup> and a gap in knowledge on what implementation entails.<sup>22</sup> By sharing experiences from LASER and SAVI we hope to contribute to thinking and knowledge on adaptive programming in practice.

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10 Ramalingam, B., 2013; Valters, C., et al, 2016; Frej, W., & Ramalingam, B., 2011; Maclay, C., 2015.

11 Ramalingam, B., 2013.

12 Frej, W., & Ramalingam, B., 2011.

13 Booth, D., & Unsworth, S., 2014; Allana 2014.

14 Manuel, C., 2016.

15 Faustino, J., & Booth, D., 2014

16 See USAID Learning Lab, CLA, LEARN and MERLIN initiatives <https://usaidlearninglab.org/> <https://www.usaid.gov/GlobalDevLab/about/monitoring-evaluation-research-and-learning-innovations-program>

17 Joint DFID USAID Global Learning for Adaptive Management (GLAM) programme announced in July 2016, focused on monitoring, evaluating and learning from adaptive programmes.

18 Presentation on adaptive programming by Kathy Bains, World Bank (14 Apr 2016 at ODI, London)

19 <http://www.worldbank.org/reference/GDI/>

20 Denney, L., 2015

21 Denney, L., 2015; Ramalingam, B., 2015 [<https://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/the-adaptation-gap-and-how-to-deal-with-it/>],

22 M Woolcock in a plenary discussion at Mercy Corps IRC / ADAPT event, London April 2016, internal discussions with DFID Better Delivery Unit July 2016



### 3. Introducing LASER and SAVI

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LASER<sup>23</sup> is an investment climate reform programme implemented by KPMG and The Law & Development Partnership (LDP). SAVI is a demand-side governance programme managed by Palladium in partnership with Itad. Both programmes are funded by DFID. The boxes on pages 9 and 10 provide brief details of each programme and examples of the results they are achieving. Both programmes have written papers on aspects of their innovative technical approaches and these further sources of information are listed in Annex 1.<sup>24</sup>

Apart from the centrality of adaptive programming to the approach of each programme, LASER and SAVI are very different in almost all respects. The table below provides a comparison of their key characteristics.

Despite their fundamental differences, many aspects of the approaches LASER and SAVI have taken to adaptive programming are similar, as are their lessons and challenges. This suggests that these will have broad applicability to other programmes seeking to work in adaptive ways. The following two sections explore these approaches, lessons and challenges in detail.

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<sup>23</sup> Previously the Commercial Law and Justice Programme

<sup>24</sup> See Annex 1 for a list of other sources of information on LASER and SAVI

**Table 1: Brief overview of LASER and SAVI**

	<b>Legal Assistance for Economic Reform (LASER)</b>	<b>State Accountability and Voice Initiative (SAVI)</b>
<b>Budget</b>	£4.3 million	£34.7 million
<b>Country (ies)</b>	Eight countries with a focus on fragile and conflict affected contexts Five in-depth: Kenya, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somaliland, Uganda Three light touch: Bangladesh, Burma, Tanzania	Ten states in Nigeria (including fragile and conflict affected states)
<b>Dates</b>	2014 – 2017	2008 – 2016
<b>Sector</b>	Investment climate reform	Citizen engagement in governance reform
<b>Supplier</b>	KPMG as prime, with all technical inputs and day to day programme management provided by The Law & Development Partnership	Palladium as lead consortium partner with Itad. INTRAC and ActionAid were also consortium partners in the first half of the programme
<b>Key DFID relationship</b>	Experimental HQ programme centrally managed by the Investment Climate Team in the Economic Development Directorate, based in DFID London	Managed by DFID Nigeria
<b>Key relationship</b>	Operating as trusted advisers to government ministries and agencies, and judiciaries	Supporting multi stakeholder partnerships including citizens, civil society groups, media personnel and organisations, State House of Assembly staff and politicians, and government officials
<b>Key support mechanism</b>	Technical assistance, leveraging of other donor and pro bono support, and dissemination of research and information	In-house state teams facilitating locally led change through decentralised adaptive planning, brokering relationships, mentoring, capacity building and seed funding
<b>Staffing</b>	A mix of LDP technical staff, and local and international consultants provide technical inputs. LDP staff provides day-to-day management, with oversight from KPMG staff. Up to 20 LDP staff, 5 KPMG staff and 40 contractors have been involved	120 staff working full time or part time in Nigeria in state based offices, and in the central Abuja based management and technical support team
<b>Approach to adaptive programming</b>	Designed from the onset to be flexible and adaptive, with a mandate to test different approaches	The SAVI technical team promoted a politically smart, locally led, adaptive approach from the start of the programme in 2008, building on their learning from previous programmes in Nigeria
<b>Contract structure</b>	Tendered as a design and deliver contract, with two break points build in	Openly tendered as a six-year contract, with later contract extensions
<b>Payment mechanism</b>	Combined payments by results and non-payment by result elements	Hybrid model including performance based milestones as well as non-payment by results elements.

## An overview of LASER

LASER works in eight countries\* to strengthen investment climates through providing technical advice and support, with a focus on fragile and conflict affected environments. LASER also serves as a facilitator, helping developing countries to identify needs, obtain support (including pro bono advice) and effectively engage with and leverage other donors' support. Operating in a demand led manner has meant that LASER has provided different models of support in each of the countries where the programme works e.g. embedding a long term resident advisor in Sierra Leone; delivering part time support through a local expert to the Judiciary in Kenya; and periodic engagement from an international expert in Uganda. Adaptive programming has enabled LASER to provide support in technical areas anticipated at the outset (such as competition regulation in Rwanda or dispute resolution in Kenya) and also in areas *not* envisioned when the programme started, such as support to develop capacity for trade negotiations and help to understand problems affecting energy regulations in Somaliland. LASER's adaptive and flexible approach has resulted in a number of key successes in its first two years of operation, summarised below.

### Examples of LASER's results

In Kenya, LASER provided practical recommendations for the restructure of a \$120 million World Bank programme the Judicial Performance Improvement Project (JPIP), which enabled the Judiciary to access funds to invest in commercial justice that were at risk of cancellation by the World Bank. LASER assistance also contributed to progress in the Judiciary on introducing court annexed mediation, reducing time and cost to businesses and backlog in the courts. In Somaliland, LASER supported the Government to put a trade policy framework in place which supported more effective involvement in international trade negotiations and the signing of a bilateral transit agreement with Ethiopia for the utilisation of the Berbera Port. In Sierra Leone, LASER helped to raise the profile of commercial law and justice reform as a priority area for improving the business environment, resulting in new government policy and national level indicators. In Rwanda, LASER supported the Ministry of Justice to develop practical tools to negotiate and manage the government's commercial contracts more effectively and efficiently. These tools were operationalised by line ministries and district governments. In Uganda, LASER supported the Judiciary to strengthen the planned roll-out of its Small Claims Procedure pilot, to help increase access to the courts for small businesses with commercial disputes. In addition to direct support, in its first two years of operation, LASER has also helped government partners leverage a market value of over £800,000 of pro bono services, and has actively engaged with and influenced donor and supplier thinking on investment climate reform, the delivery of technical assistance for commercial law and justice reform, and adaptive programming.

\* Bangladesh, Burma, Kenya, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somaliland, Tanzania, Uganda.

## An overview of SAVI

SAVI operates in ten states in Nigeria (including fragile and conflict affected states), and supports civil society groups, media personnel and organisations, and State House of Assembly (SHoA) staff and politicians to represent citizens' interests and promote their voice and concerns. By effectively championing citizens' interests, SAVI partners are playing their part in supporting more responsive, inclusive and accountable state governments, helping them to deliver better services for their citizens.

Building on learning from previous DFID-funded programmes in Nigeria, as well as from successful homegrown development, SAVI has taken an innovative approach to supporting partners. Instead of providing grant funds to CSOs (the usual way of supporting demand-side governance), SAVI works through in-house state teams who facilitate locally led change in their own states. They support partners to think and work politically, work adaptively and learn by doing – through brokering working relationships, and providing behind-the-scenes mentoring, capacity building and seed funding support.

In May 2016, SAVI transitioned to a new programme, the Engaged Citizens Pillar (ECP) of a new DFID-funded governance reform programme, the Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL). ECP is managed by the same service provider as SAVI, Palladium, and has the same core management and technical team. It is designed to build on the successful SAVI approach, and to lock in and scale up results and impact.

### Examples of SAVI's results

In **Yobe State**: Partly in response to evidence and demand from citizens for improved health services triggered by SAVI support, the Yobe SHoA Committee on Health raised the health allocation of the overall state budget from 8 per cent in 2012 to 10.7 per cent in 2013 – providing an extra almost two billion Naira (almost £8 million) for health service delivery across this fragile and conflict affected state. Spurred on by this, citizens have now established constituency-based platforms for directly engaging with state politicians and government ministries on state budget issues. 14 of the 34 issues citizens raised for the 2014 budget were successfully implemented by government. Yobe State Government has since institutionalised the involvement of CSOs and community leaders into the annual budget proposals across government ministries.

In **Lagos State**: Constructive engagement and advocacy by the SAVI-supported Lagos Civil Society Disability Policy Partnership (LCSDPP) resulted in the State Governor signing landmark legislation protecting the rights of people living with disabilities (PWD) into law in 2012. A working relationship between LCSDPP and the new Lagos State Office of Disability Affairs was established, as was a regular operational budget. Learning from this result, and building on their effectiveness and credibility, LCSDPP has been providing practical and mentoring support to other citizen groups seeking to engage with the Lagos SHoA and state government, as well as to groups of disabled people in four neighbouring states, lobbying for similar reforms. In 2015, LCSDPP worked with the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), in compliance with the provision of the Lagos State Special People's Law, to establish a 'checklist' to ensure the election process was fully accessible to PWDs. This was adopted by INEC's national office for the national election and rolled out across the country.\*

\* See the Results page of the SAVI website for more examples <http://savi-nigeria.org/results>

## 4. Designing and procuring an adaptive programme

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In conventional programmes, most aspects of programme design are planned and agreed up front. In adaptive programming, design is an extended and continuing process. The programme planning framework and details of outputs, results and timelines continue to be formulated and revised throughout the programme lifecycle. These processes span the creation of the initial business case, the development of the proposal by the service provider, wider consultation and re-design during the inception phase, and review and adjustments at key points during implementation. Key design challenges are how to enable this level of flexibility whilst at the same time ensuring accountability to the donor, managing risk, and maintaining commercial viability in the face of a high level of uncertainty.

### 4.1 Building flexibility into programme design

**Initial results frameworks should set the direction of the programme and level of ambition, whilst building flexibility into the definition of results, activities and spending**

Both LASER and SAVI have results frameworks that stipulate impact and level of ambition without restricting flexibility by predicting in advance exactly what results will be achieved or how.

**LASER** has a high level *overarching logframe*, underpinned by *nested logframes* for each developing country where the programme operates, with nested logframe outcomes linked to the overarching programme logframe. Nested logframes allow LASER to set country level outputs which relate to the specific needs of each country. Key indicators in the overarching logframe include *stories of change* (at outcome level) and ‘major’ and ‘moderate’ results from a pre-defined *menu of results at output level*. By agreeing up front the achievement of a set number of *stories of change* and *major and moderate results*, according to agreed definitions, LASER has been able to assure DFID of a certain level of achievement, without restricting the programme’s ability to deliver results that reflect evolving needs and priorities. LASER amended its overarching logframe twice in its first two years. The five nested logframes were amended 11 times in the same period of the programme as developing country needs became clearer, as the programme’s understanding of the context evolved, and clarity was gained about the avenues of support which were gaining traction and were likely to achieve impact.

**SAVI** was extracted as a programme in its own right (from a larger supply-side governance reform programme) late in the design process, and consequently at inception in 2008, had a very basic, under-designed logframe. Adaptive programming in SAVI was championed from the outset by the core technical team, drawing on their previous field-based experience in Nigeria. Their involvement in fleshing out the logframe throughout the inception period set a precedent for staff involvement and ownership. The results framework has been regularly reviewed and revised internally, particularly in the context of Annual Review processes and contract amendments, and by the end of the programme, was in its 14th official iteration. With expert guidance and support from SAVI and DFID advisers, as well as from IMEP –

the annual review team<sup>25</sup> – SAVI staff have played a central role in shaping the levels of intervention, choosing sensible indicators and means of measurement, and building flexibility into milestones and targets. For purposes of continuity some bedrock impact level indicators have stayed constant throughout. Others have flexed and changed as the programme has evolved, extending the principle of adaption to the M&E system itself. An ‘Outcome Harvesting’ approach to results has allowed SAVI to set targets and milestones for the aggregate number of results to be achieved, giving DFID confidence that real things will happen without predicting in advance exactly what they will be, or where.<sup>26</sup>

## 4.2 Promoting adaption through procurement processes

**Donors need to look for adaptive approaches rather than solutions at the procurement stage, and suppliers need to demonstrate their ability to work in adaptive ways.**

Since outputs, results and timelines are not fully pinned down at the start of an adaptive programme, work plans, budgets and personnel inputs also cannot be fully specified at the procurement and proposal stage. This has implications for suppliers and donors.

Lack of specificity (and long-term commitment) at the outset affects how suppliers evaluate an opportunity, calculate risk and financial return, and make decisions on consortia make-up and roles. Donor Terms of Reference (ToR) should require suppliers to demonstrate their ability to plan and work adaptively on the basis of intelligence generated and lessons learned. This includes how they will ensure that the programme is demand led and how engagement with developing country partners will take place. Donors need to find appropriate and transparent ways of engaging with suppliers during the design phase to really understand suppliers’ experience of adaptive programming, and evaluation criteria need to assess suppliers’ ability to deliver the programme in an adaptive way.

**LASER** was tendered as a six month design programme, with a clear expectation that this was the first step in a longer programme of engagement. Following an initial meeting with suppliers to discuss high level programme concepts, the brief ToR released by DFID were notable for their broad aim and light touch in specifying programme activities. Instead, a large volume of background documents were circulated to potential suppliers. Although in retrospect very suitable for an adaptive programme, it seems likely that the resulting uncertainty about ‘what DFID wanted’ contributed to the low level of interest from suppliers in bidding.

**SAVI** was not contracted as an adaptive programme, but SAVI’s successor programme, ECP, was, through a ‘negotiated contracting’ process which resulted in the identification of a preferred supplier. Prior to this process, DFID Nigeria ensured that the ECP design took full advantage of the extensive institutional memory of governance programme work in Nigeria. The design

25 IMEP (the Independent Monitoring and Evaluation project) has, since 2011, taken responsibility for the annual reviews of DFID’s State Level Programmes, including SAVI. As a result, SAVI annual reviews and mid term reviews since 2011 have been conducted by the same team, providing invaluable continuity in analysis and learning.

26 For more information on SAVI’s flexible approach to M&E see Derbyshire, H., Barr, J., Fraser, S. and Mwamba, W. (2016) Moving Targets, Widening Nets: monitoring incremental and adaptive change in an empowerment and accountability programme. DFID Nigeria Briefing Paper. <http://savi-nigeria.org/resource/moving-targets-widening-nets-monitoring-incremental-adaptive-change-empowerment-accountability-programme/> For information on Outcome Harvesting see: [www.outcomemapping.ca/resource/outcome-harvesting](http://www.outcomemapping.ca/resource/outcome-harvesting) and [www.betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/outcome\\_harvesting](http://www.betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/outcome_harvesting)

team consulted widely, within DFID, with other programmes and external stakeholders, as well as with the incumbent programme staff. The completed Business Case stipulated an adaptive approach to programming. DFID assessed bids from service providers on the quality of the team they put together and their approach to setting-up an adaptive programme. They were looking for core teams with the skills, experience and qualities to shape and make decisions about an adaptive, locally led, politically smart programme during inception, including their approach to the composition and quality of delivery teams. Contracting mechanisms to promote adaptation include an initial contract for the Inception phase only, followed by annual plans allowing revisions to milestones.

### 4.3 Integrating technical leadership and administrative management

**Suppliers need to demonstrate *technical leadership* as well as *administrative management* competencies, ensuring that administrative management (of finances, human resources and milestones) supports, rather than drives, technical considerations.**

In a conventional programme, where plans, targets, budgets and personnel inputs are planned and agreed up front, the programme management is responsible for ensuring effective delivery – on time, within budget and according to agreed milestones. This *administrative management* task drives the programme forward. In an adaptive programme, as discussed above, the overall level of ambition is agreed, but details of activities, budgets and personnel requirements evolve and are amended over time. In this situation *technical leadership* is critical. Strategic technical leadership is needed to support staff and partners to have the knowledge, skills and confidence to work in adaptive ways and learn by doing. It is needed to ensure a strong overarching vision and guard against an unfocused series of interventions. It is also needed to create an enabling environment within the programme for adaptive planning by shaping systems and processes to this end. Technical leadership needs to shape the *administrative management* of finances, human resources, incentives and milestones. If as in a conventional programme, administrative management drives the programme to adhere to pre-set and top-down targets, the programme loses its ability to be nimble and responsive, and adaptive programming is not possible.

Potential suppliers need to demonstrate not only that their proposed teams have managerial expertise and strategic technical direction and expertise, but also that their structures and systems enable these two strands to work effectively together and complement each other. This starts with the way suppliers design their offer at the procurement stage, ensuring effective alignment between commercial and technical proposals.

**SAVI** has transitioned from, at the outset, management roles, processes and systems associated with conventional ‘blueprint’ programming, to management roles, processes and systems better designed to facilitate a locally-led, politically smart, problem-driven, iterative and adaptive approach. This took several years to accomplish and was facilitated by stable SAVI and Palladium teams committed to SAVI’s technical approach, continuity in the external review team, and DFID advisers willing to negotiate, take risks and push boundaries. The transition has principally been characterised by a changing relationship between *administrative management* and *technical leadership*. Both aspects continue to be centrally important. The shift has been from administrative management as the driver, to technical management as the driver with administrative management enabling and accommodating adaptive planning.

Learning from this has been a key driver in how Palladium developed its proposal for ECP, with programme management systems being designed to facilitate and enable the technical strategy, and ensure sufficient accountability and transparency to DFID.

**LASER's** strategic and technical inputs are handled by LDP, together with day-to-day programme and financial management, with KPMG providing high level oversight and management of contractual relationships. The programme director, technical team leader and programme manager are all in-house LDP staff with both technical and programme management experience, and work extremely closely together on a day-to-day basis. Programme and financial management are viewed as an *enabler* for technical deliver, and does not drive technical decisions or programme delivery, but rather allow appropriate technical responses. Programme management also helps to ensure transparency in the way the programme evolves, and enables appropriate accountability to DFID. As well as close on-going engagement and informal coordination, formal structures such as the monthly Technical Leadership Team and Financial Team meetings ensure that the programme management function (budgets and staff allocation) is highly responsive to LASER's strategic and technical requirements.

#### **4.4 Staffing an adaptive programme**

**Donors and suppliers need to ensure that programme staff have competencies, attitudes and behaviour appropriate to adaptive planning, rather than simply technical skills.**

Adaptive programming requires staff with particular personal competencies, attitudes and behaviour. It is critical to take time right from the start of the programme to identify staff who are willing and able to work adaptively. This includes people with a strong commitment to reform, able to facilitate rather than direct (often from behind-the-scenes), work as part of a team, and develop relationships of trust with partners and counterparts. From the supplier perspective, these considerations can mean a significant change in the profiles of staff recruited and deployed, the way CVs are presented and the training and support provided to staff. From the donor perspective, it means putting in place a procurement process that includes assessing teams and individual staff for their ability to work in adaptive ways, rather than focussing solely on the depth and breadth of technical experience.

**SAVI** worked through in-house state teams comprising four to eight staff who facilitated locally led adaptive change, and ECP will use the same approach. SAVI's experience is that the effectiveness of this approach depends critically on getting the right staff – and that this has implications for staff recruitment, development, management and performance appraisal. SAVI aimed to recruit staff who had the commitment, aptitude and motivation to play a hands-on role supporting local actors behind the scenes and invested heavily in building staff confidence, ability and accountability to play this role effectively. State team staff were recruited from the state where they were working, meaning that team members had a direct personal stake in reform. State team staff represented through their previous experience the different stakeholder groups SAVI was seeking to bring together. For all posts, Nigerians were recruited in preference to international staff, and any international support to the programme built the skills of Nigerian staff. Learning lessons from some unsuccessful experiences, from mid term, all SAVI staff were recruited on the basis of agreed core values and associated behaviours, after screening for technical skills and previous experience. This has been critical to effectiveness.



The **LASER** team had envisioned a traditional approach to programme resourcing, and put in place a large pool of technical specialists which could be drawn on to deliver inputs as activities became clearer. Instead, LASER assistance to counterparts was provided predominantly by a small, close team of mainly in-house LDP staff complemented by a few longer-term technical associates, many of whom had strong pre-existing relationships of trust with key counterparts. LASER found that the deployment of a large number of short-term experts was not conducive to the generation of relationships, or the need to develop an in-depth and longer-term view of needs and local developments. Instead, use of a core group of in-house staff and associates enabled the programme to respond to counterparts' requests for technical support by engaging with local partners, developing solid working relationships, identifying needs, thinking laterally about solutions, facilitating discussions, and co-ordinating the implementation of solutions. LDP in-house staff working on LASER are invested in the long-term programme outcomes, and through LDP's staff performance management systems are accountable for the delivery of quality inputs and the outcome of decisions.

#### **4.5 Aligning commercial interests and incentives with adaptive planning**

**The commercial interests and incentives of consortium members need to be considered in the procurement process to ensure commercial interests don't undermine the ability to be adaptive.**

In conventional programming, agreements can be made between consortium partners at the contracting stage for the involvement of particular individuals, specified inputs and set numbers of days. In adaptive programming, without detail on the skills needed, timelines, work plans and budgets available upfront, arrangements between consortium members become more challenging. If too much is pinned down, there is a danger that commercial interests will undermine adaptive planning. On the other hand, if too little is pinned down, the kind of specialist knowledge and skills programmes will need may not be available. Donors and suppliers need to ensure that commercial interests support rather than undermine adaptive programming.

Donors should acknowledge that decisions on programme design impact on consortium relationships, governance and commercial agreements – which in turn will enable or hinder the delivery of adaptive programmes. It is necessary that programmes enable and incentives suppliers to work in an adaptive manner. Conversely, suppliers need to ensure that consortium relationships are set up to support an adaptive approach and reduce potential tensions. It is necessary that programmes enable and incentives suppliers to work in an adaptive manner. Conversely, suppliers need to ensure that consortium relationships are set up to support an adaptive approach and reduce potential tensions. Options can include: ensuring that core consortium partners have cross-cutting strategic roles and responsibilities rather than siloed technical inputs; putting in place governance arrangements that foster collaboration rather than competition; and aligning consortium members' incentives behind a broad technical approach rather than narrow commercial considerations. A high level of trust, alignment of incentives and close collaboration are pre-requisites for consortium partners bidding for and delivering an adaptive programme.

**SAVI** was managed by a consortium of four service providers led by Palladium. Flexibility in programming was facilitated by all consortium partners working across all outputs of the programme, rather than, as some had initially assumed, parcelling up outputs or particular

state programmes to be managed by particular consortium partners. ECP is following the same trend. There are four core consortium partners, with Palladium taking the lead. Partners bring cross-cutting technical expertise in broad programmatic areas of work such as monitoring, evaluation and learning, public sector management and political economy analysis. As in SAVI, they play a cross-cutting role across all states and outputs. Consortium partners' expectations were managed from the outset, as the consortium was being formed at the proposal stage. Agreements with all partners made clear that this would be an adaptive and flexible programme and inputs could not be guaranteed until plans for the implementation phase were firmed up during inception. Break clauses in the head contract mean that even during implementation consortium partners' involvement can be modified as the programme evolves. Governance arrangements have been put in place to ensure consortium partners take strategic decisions about the programme together and are accountable to the programme management team, as well as to an overall programme steering committee chaired by DFID.

**LASER** is day-to-day implemented and managed by LDP, with KPMG providing high-level oversight and management of contractual relationships. Key aspects of the success of the relationship have been an intrinsic lack of competition for inputs – both due to the financial agreement between the parties and the clear differences in skillset and expertise; the willingness of both parties to adapt to what the programme requires; and the pragmatic approach taken by both parties and the ability to develop innovative solutions jointly. The payment structure of the programme with DFID includes a large payment by results component (two thirds of the contract value) – supporting the alignment of the commercial incentives of the firms.

## **4.6 Financial arrangements for adaptive programming**

### **Financial arrangements between the donor and supplier need to incentivise adaptive planning.**

Traditional procurement processes require suppliers to provide detailed financial information at the bidding and contracting stage, to which they are, to a greater or lesser extent, bound for the life of the programme. This can be done because most details of the programme are designed and agreed up front. Because adaptive programmes evolve over time, this is not possible in the same way. Flexibility within budgets – across years, programme components and types of expenditure – needs to be retained as far as possible. This requires alternative arrangements from donors such as setting minimum and maximum budgets, or allocating funds per phase of the programme, agreed as the programme unfolds.

Adaptive planning is inherently more commercially risky for a supplier than conventional planning, because of the lack of clarity on inputs, type and level of expertise required, timeframes and deliverables up front. At the bidding stage, limited information is available on perceived problems and context, and the nature and scope of the intervention is unclear. This can make these opportunities less attractive for suppliers, and suppliers' commercial offers will reflect the greater risk entailed.

There are particular challenges for smaller or specialist technical suppliers. As the exact nature and level of expertise needed will not be clear up front, smaller and specialist firms may find it more difficult to negotiate inclusion in consortiums, adequate involvement in delivery, and/or acceptable financial terms. This situation is compounded by the shift to payment by results (PBR), when suppliers have to wait longer to get reimbursed for up-front spending. This favours

larger companies with better cash flow, greater credit-worthiness with banks for loan repayment, or better risk management potential with more programmes across which to spread the risk.

From a donor perspective PBR is helpful in incentivising suppliers to achieve ambitious targets. However, there is a danger that this can reduce the incentive for suppliers to take the kind of risk that is essential to adaptive programming, including learning by doing – sometimes through failure. Innovative applications of PBR to incentivise adaptation whilst minimising risk include hybrid contracts with only a portion tied to achievement of milestones; annual breaks in contracts allowing for re-negotiation of terms and conditions; different categories of milestone with different categories of risk; and moving a bigger percentage of the contract to PBR in later stages of the programme.

**LASER** operates under a hybrid contract, with two thirds of the total contract price tied to achievement of milestones, and one third paid on an input basis. By tying a portion of the total contract value to the achievement of milestones, DFID is able to hold LASER accountable for delivering results. Simultaneously, by guaranteeing the supplier a portion of income, LASER is incentivised to be ambitious in its aims, take risks, try out new approaches and react to opportunities as they arise. Payment milestones are set on a rolling six monthly basis to enable milestones to reflect programme developments (rather than drive technical decisions). Flexibility is retained through tying nested logframes to milestones, and retaining the ability to amend both nested logframes and payment milestones if required. This enables LASER to maintain ambition while allowing a response to emerging needs and change in context. It is however a time consuming process for both LASER and DFID. It requires contract amendments every six months, increasing programme management costs and potentially undermining perceptions of value for money (VFM).

**SAVI** included some milestone payments from 2014 onwards, but on discrete activities only. In ECP, 'payment by results' milestones fall into four categories. The lowest are for delivery of discrete activities within Palladium's control, for which 100 per cent of fees are put at risk. The highest are for delivering on agreed outcome targets in ECP's results framework, achievement of which is required later in the programme cycle. These will rely on the performance of local partners and will be influenced by external factors out of the control of the programme. The milestones incentivise Palladium to target the delivery of outcomes rather than activities. Putting this system into practice is still at the trial stage and there is considerable flexibility to work closely with DFID to adapt the wording and timing of milestones as circumstances change.

## 4.7 Building in reflection and learning

### Room for reflection and learning should be programmed in at the initial design stage.

Consideration should also be given to the extent to which the programme may generate learning which is more widely applicable to other development programmes and to international audiences – and ways in which the programme can benefit from wider learning and communities of practice.

**SAVI** was designed to demonstrate a sustainable and replicable approach to citizen engagement in governance. The programme team added an output during inception to ensure lessons learnt were shared with other development partners in Nigeria to facilitate scale-up

through wider replication. As SAVI struggled to achieve significant uptake due to the more conventional approaches being taken by most other programmes, the focus of this output turned to influencing DFID. SAVI actively shared approaches and learning in policy debates within DFID and more widely, to seek to influence a more adaptive approach to development programming.<sup>27</sup> A direct outcome of this work is the adaptive design of PERL, the new suite of DFID-funded programmes in which ECP, SAVI's successor programme, now sits. DFID has designed the entire PERL programme around the concept of 'learning and adaptive management', and included an output in the Learning, Evidence and Advocacy Partnership (LEAP) component dedicated to 'policy influencing'. This aims to ensure that learning from PERL, its predecessors and other initiatives working on public sector reform in Nigeria and further afield, assists DFID programme staff, donor organisations and suppliers, but is also shared with and if possible 'housed' in Nigerian organisations (government bodies especially) that can make wide and long-term use of it.

**LASER** was designed with an output focused on lesson learning and influencing. By embedding the learning process as a programme deliverable, LASER can focus time and resources on reflecting on approaches that have worked and those that haven't. 35 per cent of LASER's budget is assigned to a lesson learning and influencing output. To this end, LASER develops case studies, synthesis papers (such as this one), practical guidance, and research papers – and shares them widely through a targeted dissemination strategy, as well as on the programme website.<sup>28</sup> The requirement to produce and disseminate these products has been a key driver for the LASER team to stand back, think strategically about what the programme is doing and how it is being done. Critically, it links activity on the ground with broader thinking and contributes to filling evidence gaps, including for example on the linkage between investment climate reform and growth.

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27 SAVI has written a series of Think Pieces linked to debates on Doing Development Differently, Thinking and Working Politically and Locally Led, Politically Smart development – and participated in associated workshops and events. See resources page of the SAVI website <http://savi-nigeria.org/>

28 [www.laserdev.org](http://www.laserdev.org)

## 5. Implementing, managing and monitoring an adaptive programme

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The changing context, an increased understanding of partner needs, programme experiences and learning by doing all inform continuous processes of adaptive planning during implementation. Both SAVI and LASER explore different avenues for achieving objectives, informed by the changing context and learning from experience. Management of people, finances and milestones all aim to create an enabling environment for this adaption to take place.

### 5.1 Analysing the changing context

**Formal mechanisms need to be put in place to analyse the changing context and support staff and partners to analyse and respond to changing opportunities, momentum and constraints.**

Both SAVI and LASER put a high premium on the development of on-the-ground relationships, and the ability of programme staff to interpret and react appropriately to emerging needs and changing contexts. Both programmes have developed formal frameworks to assist with contextual analysis and strategic decision-making about programme direction.

**LASER** undertook an internal country level scoping study which included the use of a traffic light scoring mechanism to evaluate potential problems the programme could address. This included (i) technical analysis (including looking at the problem with a gender lens); (ii) political economy analysis; (iii) the potential for an external actor (in LASER's case, DFID) to make a difference; and (iv) VFM analysis. In some cases a more extensive formal political economy analysis was also undertaken. LASER additionally put in place mechanisms for structured reviews during the life of the programme. Oversight mechanisms include monthly Technical Leadership Team meetings for all country engagement directors, output leads and LASER's programme manager, monthly Programme Oversight Committee meetings between KPMG and the LASER director where LASER's risk register is used as an active management tool and formally reviewed, and formal quarterly review meetings involving LASER and DFID.

In addition to making use of similar mechanisms, **SAVI** aimed to make thinking and acting politically central to decisions taken by front line staff and partners. Rather than contracting political scientists to conduct studies of the political and economic context, SAVI staff and partners were supported to conduct their own political economy analysis, mentored by political scientists. Staff and partners analysed the power relations that shaped change in their state, regularly updated this knowledge formally and informally, and used it to inform their decision-making. This included decisions made by SAVI state teams relating to the issues and processes they engaged with, and the alliances and partnerships they helped to facilitate. It also included decisions made by SAVI civil society, media and SHoA partners on ways to advance government responsiveness on their issues and processes of concern. This applied approach to political economy analysis gave rise to some challenges in terms of quality and depth of analysis, as well as in the usage of this information by state teams. A key lesson is that striking a balance between quality of information and ownership/application is essential – quality is not always the most important objective. ECP will build on SAVI's experience – with

the continued aim of politically smart thinking becoming normal and central to the day to day planning and action of staff and partners.<sup>29</sup>

## 5.2 Facilitating learning by doing

### Systems and processes need to support staff to learn by doing, and create an enabling environment for adaptive programming

Learning lessons as the programme progresses and adapting accordingly is core to adaptive programming. From inception, programme design needs to incorporate space, time and funds for on-going reflection and learning by doing. Staff (and partners) need space and flexibility to identify problems, develop and test hypotheses and solutions, ‘make small bets<sup>30</sup>’ and revise approaches in the light of experience and evidence.

Achieving this involves removing the roadblocks that can prevent creative thinking, such as delivery against top-down pre-set results, pre-determined budgets and fixed technical or financial inputs. It requires creating and investing in space for structured reflection and learning, helping staff and partners to stand back from their day to day work, consider the bigger picture, and think creatively – and use lessons to inform planning and strategic direction. It means allowing freedom to fail – halting initiatives that seem unlikely to succeed, and scaling up others where strategic impact is more likely. Failure is not a ‘waste of money’ as long as staff and programmes learn and adapt, and decisions are evidence-based.

Decision making in **SAVI** is decentralised to state teams. Drawing on political economy analysis of their context, state teams make the decisions on which partners to support and how – informed by an overall Theory of Change which applies to all state programmes. State team decisions are shaped by processes of learning by doing, and supported by a central technical team, whose members mentor state teams, provide behind-the-scenes support and play a quality assurance role. Staff and partners are encouraged to start their ambitions and activities small and go to scale gradually. Over time and through experience, they build their confidence, credibility and networks, raise their ambitions and increase their impact. Staff are encouraged to reflect and report on a continuous basis. Strategic planning, M&E, and results analysis frameworks enable staff to record their actions, learning and ideas as they progress – and to update or adjust their strategies, workplans and budgets as often as they can. Quarterly and annual review processes are used not simply to package SAVI results for DFID requirements but as an opportunity for structured reflection. Staff from all state teams meet together for quarterly Technical Group Meetings (TGMs). These are used both to shape aspects of the evolving programme collectively, and to learn, reflect and re-strategise, building collective understanding of complex governance reform processes and learn from each other. Learning from success and failure is essential – but both are challenging. Learning from success can easily lead to grandstanding – and replication of ‘magic bullet’ solutions rather than the processes which brought about change. It is hard for staff and partners to admit to and recognise failure and considerable effort is needed to create an enabling organisational culture

29 See SAVI Approach Paper 4 Thinking and Working Politically <http://savi-nigeria.org/approach/thinking-and-working-politically/>

30 Faustino, J. and Booth, D. (2014) Development Entrepreneurship: How donors and leaders can foster institutional change, Working Politically in Practice Series: Case Study No. 2 <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9384.pdf>

where this becomes possible and valued. In ECP, this learning by doing approach will be taken to another level. Decision making will continue to be decentralised to staff and partners. New systems will complement this by facilitating a quicker turnaround in management decision making on scaling-up or scaling-down programme activities in each state based on evidenced, performance-based learning.

In **LASER**, three internal processes facilitate learning by doing:

- **Strategy reviews:** Strategy reviews take place at three to six month intervals, presenting an opportunity for the larger LASER team to reflect on the programme approach and decisions that have been made. These reviews involve critical review of what has been learned, challenge to decisions and adaptations, and testing of inbuilt biases.
- **Regular country engagement team meetings:** Country and output teams meet regularly (every one to two weeks) to consider the political economy and risks and assumptions underlying the intervention. They discuss how activities are progressing, identify lessons, re-evaluate for VFM and consider whether the either overall approach, or logframe, require amendment. Feedback from partners and data from the regular monitoring processes inform the teams discussion on questions such as: *What change has occurred and why? What does this mean for the programme?* A record is kept of the discussion and any resulting decisions to change logframes and approaches. These are key to responding and adapting the programme on an on-going basis as well as providing accountability for decision making.
- **Problem diaries:** Country teams track problems and programme responses to these through problem diaries. Usually kept by resident advisers (LASER staff based long term in country), they record how a problem was identified, progress in resolving it and changes in behaviours and positions of key stakeholders. The teams discuss problem diaries on a regular basis to explore the resident advisers' assumptions about the context and enable them to step back from the day-to-day detail and consider what is working and what is not. The diaries are a means to identify opportunities that could be built on and cross-cutting themes, as well as a record of 'failure' or what hasn't worked and how change occurs. The format of problem diaries itself was revised during the programme, based on lessons from the field, to ensure it was suitable for use by different advisors operating in different contexts.

### 5.3 Taking time to develop adaptive systems and capacities, and demonstrate results

**Adaptive management approaches, capacities and relationships take time to evolve, and should not be undermined by pressure for quick wins.**

Adaptive management processes and procedures take time to evolve as programmes take shape. Both SAVI and LASER benefitted from time and space to develop relationships and traction, without undue pressure to achieve quick wins. There *is* pressure on ECP, SAVI's successor programme, to demonstrate results more quickly – but this reflects the fact that ECP is building on the approach, relationships and results achieved by SAVI – and tasked with building on these to deliver transformational change.

**LASER** was designed as a design and deliver programme, with two break clauses (after the design phase, and after the initial inception phase). Following the three-month programme

design phase, another three months were spent seeking to agree with DFID how adaptive programming would work operationally. But it became clear that to move the programme forward, a 'leap of faith' was required by all programme parties. It was not possible to detail all aspects of an adaptive programme up front, and in the end the close involvement of the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) throughout the first 12-18 months of the programme was crucial in getting approval to move ahead. It was not until the first annual review nine months into the programme that detailed VFM metrics were designed and put in place, and detailed financial reporting mechanisms agreed. From a technical perspective, LASER did not attempt to achieve demonstrable impact early on in the programme. Instead, time was spent developing relationships, analysing the context and exploring the viability of work in a large number of areas. Following this phase of 'placing small bets', a 'hook' or entry point was selected to engage more fully, and this then offered the opportunity to collaborate with partners, and in turn broaden engagement.

**SAVI** started in 2008, as one of a suite of four DFID-funded State Level Programmes designed to impact collectively on governance reform and service delivery. SAVI was the only new programme in the suite (i.e. with no direct predecessor programme) and it was considerably smaller than the others. These factors in conjunction with DFID's requirement for the programmes to work together, gave SAVI time, space and a degree of cover to develop the programme approach and partnerships. Key staff in DFID, including the Head of Office, understood that SAVI was trying to work 'under the radar' in locally led, politically smart ways, and that this would take time to embed. There was therefore little initial pressure from DFID for high-level results and programme visibility. Two to three years into the programme, DFID was beginning to see signs of effective processes of citizen engagement supported by SAVI that had the potential to be sustainable without continuing donor support. SAVI started reporting results systematically after the mid-term review. From that point, annual reviews began to demand better reporting and evidencing of results, and DFID began to scrutinise performance on impact and outcome measures and VFM.

## **5.4 Managing an adaptive programme**

**Adaptive programming requires more sophisticated management, more management time, and more investment in management.**

It takes more time – and costs more – to manage an adaptive programme than a conventional programme. Greater input is needed from the programme management team, from technical leadership staff and from donor counterparts throughout the programme in planning, relationship building, staff support, analyses, review, and day-to-day decisions and revisions. Responding to unplanned twists and turns requires time and effort, as does obtaining approvals as the corporate implications are far greater for suppliers. These processes typically involve 'two steps forward, one step back' with occasional leaps and bounds and major setbacks. Effective management is integral to effective adaptive programming – and careful thought needs to be given to management staffing and systems, as well as to costs. Higher management costs need to be seen as, and demonstrated to be, investment in achieving greater impact, rather than poor VFM.

Investment in more effective management has been critical to **SAVI**. Over the years, Palladium has dedicated more time and resources to management of the programme in Nigeria, and



to the challenges of 'change management' - managing expansion and growth. Personnel management is particularly important, as staff are constantly challenged to work in innovative ways, outside their comfort zone, contrary to expectations and using their own initiative. This requires considerable allocation of management time – both formally and informally supporting and responding to concerns. Considerable time and effort has also been invested in ensuring that administrative management (of finances, systems and human resources) facilitates technical management – locally led, politically smart, adaptive processes of change. This includes ensuring effective communications between technical and administrative staff. All staff are encouraged and supported to know and understand each others' role. All, including administrative staff, are part of discussions of SAVI's approach and learning, and understand and are rewarded for the part they play in achieving overall objectives.

In calculating VFM, DFID distinguishes programme delivery from programme administration, and stipulates that administration should be no more than 15 per cent of programme budgets. In SAVI all staff complete monthly timesheets, and record whatever they do against activity categories. Staff with administrative responsibilities spend much of their time supporting technical delivery and these aspects of their work are formally recognised as programme delivery. In the past, the input of these staff would have been calculated entirely as an administrative cost.

As the **LASER** programme unfolded, it became clear that technical leadership and programme management was intertwined; technical decisions as a result of learning and adapting resulted in adjustments to internal workplans, budgets and resourcing, as well as consortium and donor facing contracts and reporting. This required on-going internal co-ordination as well as increased co-ordination between consortium partners and continuous external engagement with DFID, and was labour intensive. As a result, LASER centrally established a core management team consisting of the programme director, technical lead and a programme manager, supported by appropriate financial resources. Programme managers were also appointed at country and output level, to support technical staff to appropriately manage budgets and workplans, and meet reporting and accountability requirements. This however is not without cost, and it was necessary to consider how budget allocation and VFM indicators would be affected. However, instead of offering poor VFM, more appropriate programme management has resulted in better impact; through some additional expenses in managing an adaptive programme, a better return on investment was delivered.

## 5.5 Financial management

**Aim for accountability, flexibility and transparency in management of funds, but not necessarily complete predictability.**

Financial forecasting and management processes need to facilitate adaptive planning – allowing financial resources to be moved around and used in a flexible way – whilst still meeting donor requirements for predictable financial flows and value for money.

If financial management systems are too rigid, they will drive rather than facilitate decisions on activities, and undermine adaptive planning. Conversely, if they are too flexible, it can be difficult to track financial data against changing assumptions, and to provide the financial transparency necessary to demonstrate value for money. Facilitating adaptive programming

whilst delivering predictable financial flows is an art form requiring high levels of experience, willingness to learn and excellent communications with DFID.

It has taken significant time and effort to match **LASER's** adaptive nature with traditional VFM and expenditure reporting requirements. Under LASER's payment by results mechanism, by agreeing *payment milestones* every six months, and only for two quarters in advance, LASER has the flexibility to agree the most appropriate deliverables informed by changing needs. It also has the ability to agree replacement milestones part way through a cycle, and, although time consuming, this further enhances adaptability. At the same time, DFID is assured that progress is being made, that specific deliverables are achieved and evidenced, and that rigorous financial reporting is in place. *Regular budget review and continuous reforecast* enables LASER to adapt to the evolving technical environment and ultimately ensure impact. One of LASER's significant work streams, a rigorous impact evaluation, was halted after it became apparent that it was not progressing satisfactorily and that the funds would achieve more impact if re-allocated to other work streams and outputs. Similarly at the end of year one, it became apparent that moving funds forward from year three into year two would enable the programme to take better advantage of traction gained to achieve results. The ability to re-allocate funds across the programme is critical to LASER's ability to forecast spend accurately. LASER has a 10 per cent programme-wide forecasting accuracy metric, but achieved 98 per cent accuracy by the end of year two, as a direct result of being able to reallocate funds within the quarterly reporting period depending on programme need. Clear VFM metrics are in place. By tracking progress against VFM, LASER is held accountable for ensuring most appropriate and effective use of financial resources.

However, challenges do remain. The requirement for a granular record of all spend on a quarterly basis – per output, per country, per milestone, and per resource type – is a very significant administrative task. This is the case not least because standard project and financial accounting packages don't cater for capturing such a number of multiple data points. Secondly, quarterly input based financial reporting is not always the most useful way of demonstrating that funds have been well spent. There is often not a direct linear relationship *in a particular quarter* between inputs expended and results achieved. Considerable time can be spent creating accompanying narratives to explain seemingly anomalous results which derive from a complex chain of relationship building and trust gained over the full lifecycle of the programme.

In **SAVI**, the portion of the programme budget which needs to be managed most flexibly relates to direct support to partners in states. There are two levels at which flexibility is built in to the financial management systems. Firstly, SAVI operates in ten States. Monthly spending forecasts are submitted to DFID – but, inevitably, these are subject to considerable change, as activities are cancelled, new opportunities arise and costs change. In their monthly reconciliation to DFID, the central SAVI operations team accommodate this variance by balancing underspends in some states with overspends in others – aiming for 2 per cent variance overall. The second level is DFID Nigeria. DFID Nigeria manages numerous programmes and funding mechanisms. Quarterly, in their reporting to London, they also balance underspends in some programmes with overspends in others. Towards the year end, DFID gives clear directions to programmes about underspends and overspends – with the aim of achieving 0 per cent annual variance overall.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> See SAVI Approach Paper 11 on Managing finances – forthcoming 2016 <http://savi-nigeria.org/approach/>

SAVI has established its own framework for assessing VFM in annual performance – in relation to expenditure, economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity. Routine tracking and analysis of expenditure and economy ensure that inputs are supplied and services delivered to partners in line with SAVI's core values, whilst also meeting DFID requirements and competing effectively within the development sector. Analysis of efficiency and effectiveness compares results, and associated costs, between outputs, across states and over time, through retrospective outcome mapping and analysis of selected results. These measures have served SAVI well. Internally, they assist in making critical management decisions relating to programme, team and staff performance. Externally, they provide evidence of the 'value' of SAVI's 'alternative' approach, and form an important part of communicating SAVI results to wider audiences of development practitioners and policymakers.<sup>32</sup>

## 5.6 Monitoring for learning and adaptation, as well as for accountability

### Monitoring and lesson learning need to be incorporated into programme management and adaptive planning.

In conventional programmes M&E is largely an accountability mechanism. In adaptive programmes, monitoring for internal learning and adaptive planning is critically important. M&E is not an 'add on' activity, but a way of understanding what is working and what is not, providing a basis for adaption. Donors and suppliers need to ensure that monitoring for accountability purposes does not undermine the space for adaption. On the other hand, if monitoring is focussed wholly on learning, accountability can be compromised and the programme may not deliver results which satisfy the donor, or the tax-paying public.

Both LASER and SAVI have responded to this challenge by making donor monitoring systems and requirements their own, and ensuring that data gathered for reporting to donors also facilitates internal learning.

In **SAVI**, all monitoring and reporting to DFID is done by SAVI staff. Civil society, media and SHoA partners receive no accountable grants from SAVI, and so have no monitoring or reporting requirements. This is a deliberate strategy, leaving partners free to respond to shifting momentum and opportunity in their own context, and learn by doing – rather than shaping themselves to donor requirements.

All SAVI monitoring tools – developed internally – serve a dual function, delivering accountability to DFID at the same time as facilitating internal learning. For example, progress against output indicators (which focus on the effectiveness of partners as agents of citizen voice) is measured on basis of *Partnership and Organisational Capacity self-Assessments*. For SAVI partners these are tools for capacity building and planning, aiding their own processes of internal reflection and learning. At the same time, aggregated and moderated scores from these self-assessment exercises satisfy DFID's requirement for monitoring progress against output indicators and targets. State teams use *Results Evidence Sheets*<sup>33</sup> to capture the structured and evidenced 'back story' to outcome level results (defined as state government action in response to citizen demand with evidence of attribution/contribution from SAVI partners). This back story situates

<sup>32</sup> See SAVI Approach Paper 14 on Value for Money – forthcoming 2016 <http://savi-nigeria.org/approach/>

<sup>33</sup> See Monitoring section of the Resources page of SAVI website for Results Evidence Sheet, Organisational Capacity Assessment (OCA) and Partnership Capacity Assessment (PCA) tools. <http://savi-nigeria.org/resources/>

the result in its political economy context, sets out the actions of SAVI partners, as well as those of other players, and analyses significance. From an accountability point of view, this process links outcome level change in government responsiveness to output level changes in the effectiveness of partner organisations. From a learning point of view, it provides a critical opportunity for partners and SAVI state teams to stand back, analyse and reflect. Comparison of results, and trends of results across states, provides further food for thought and adaptation – and a basis for assessing VFM efficiency and effectiveness.

Although **LASER** drew on external specialist M&E advice at the onset, subsequently a core in-house technical M&E expert took over responsibility for advising country engagement teams on M&E on an on-going basis. Having M&E expertise within the central team was more suitable to getting LASER staff working across countries and outputs to think about learning as integral to their work, and not an additional activity. It also meant that support and advice to country teams were always on hand. All monitoring and reporting is done by LASER staff, most of whom are in-house LDP staff working across countries and outputs. Decentralised monitoring and technical decision making means that country teams are able to adapt operations to changing needs and contexts, and emerging information. In addition to formal processes for review and learning the programme and LDP at its core had a *culture* of teamwork, learning and sharing encouraging on-going dialogue. By involving all staff in M&E, it was also possible to more easily share lessons across countries and outputs.

## **5.7 Relationship with donor**

### **A good working relationship with the donor is critical.**

In the experience of SAVI and LASER, it would not have been possible to sustain the required level of flexibility without regular access to DFID. The DFID SRO, responsible for technical oversight, needs to be hands-on and engaged to a far greater extent than in conventional programmes and this approach is supported by DFID's smarter planning rules. The SRO needs to be an active party in decision making processes to review changes requested, interrogate the rationale and evidence, and sign off. There needs to be clarity on processes for agreeing changes to results frameworks, budgets and milestones. To work well, this relationship requires mutual respect, give and take and a willingness from both sides to negotiate, understand each other's viewpoint, and make decisions quickly. There also needs to be an excellent relationship between the programme, the SRO and the DFID Programme Manager, responsible for day-to-day oversight of operations/administrative management of finances.

Too much DFID management carries the danger of micro management and non-strategic decision making; too little, and critical decisions can be misunderstood, delayed or undermined.

**SAVI** has a very good working relationship with the DFID Nigeria SRO and this has been fundamental to SAVI's progress in recent years. The SRO meets regularly with SAVI management, and with SAVI state teams. He has been pro-actively involved in sharing learning from SAVI and instrumental in shaping the SAVI successor programme. In the successor programme, the SRO is requiring all components, including ECP, to produce approach papers to agree systems and processes for how decisions will be made, as well as a memorandum of understanding between them and with DFID – creating a 'governance' framework for strategic engagement by the SRO and guarding against micro management.

**LASER** communication with the SRO takes place several times a week. There was significantly greater interaction in year one as the approach and systems were developed and refined, and a relationship of trust established. In year two there was a conscious effort to streamline communication by reducing the number of formal meetings (from once a month to once a quarter), developing a supplementary note that records in detail the agreed interpretation of the logframe, and limiting the decisions for which formal DFID sign off was required to priority issues of accountability only. These include: amendments to nested logframes, additions to moderate and major results, and new or revised payment milestones. Informal communication remains regular and collaborative. It is worth noting that three SROs have overseen the LASER programme to date; although healthy working relationships between individuals are important, the success of adaptive programmes depends on clear agreement on the role of the SRO and having appropriate protocols which enables regular engagement in place.

## 5.8 Accountability in adaptive programming

### Changes to programme milestones and targets need to be properly interrogated and documented.

Adaptive programmes need to put in place robust processes to enable them to be held accountable for the decisions made through adaptive programming, and the manner in which funds have been spent. For SAVI and LASER this has involved developing operating protocols which emphasise the sharing of information with DFID on an on-going basis, transparency in decision making process, and documentation of the rationale for changes.

**LASER** uses a number of mechanisms to document change, to enable DFID to hold the programme to account, whilst ensuring the level of ambition is not compromised. Under LASER's payment by results mechanism *payment milestones* are set and agreed every six months for the next two quarters, linking payments to specified deliverables. This gives DFID an opportunity to interrogate the on-going level of ambition of the programme. Under LASER's menu of results mechanism (see section 4.1) LASER is required to submit requests for additions that are discussed with DFID before final agreement. The review of LASER's overarching logframe has occurred only twice, in response to annual review recommendations. Amendment of the country-level nested logframes, on the other hand, is relatively frequent, in response to changes on the ground and carried out in accordance with an efficient evidencing and consultation process agreed up front with DFID.

**SAVI** started before the era of 'milestone payments'. Consequently the principle mechanism for accountability has been annual reviews – looking at VFM as well as indicators. Results framework output statements, targets and indicators are reviewed annually, in consultation between SAVI management, external reviewers and DFID. Each review makes a set of recommendations on which progress is reported quarterly in the following year, and assessed at the following annual review. Quarterly reports to DFID include information on the changing context for reform in each state, as well as progress on partnerships and activities, using a traffic light system. Senior SAVI staff meet monthly with the DFID SRO – giving a regular opportunity to discuss progress as well as emerging challenges and concerns.

## 5.9 Reporting an adaptive programme

### Innovative mechanisms may be most appropriate for effective reporting.

Adaptive programmes can require innovative mechanisms for reporting on results. The conventional approach of monthly or quarterly narrative reports setting out progress against logframe targets carries the danger of pushing programmes and staff into short term thinking – and failing to adequately convey either the process an adaptive programme has taken, or the results it is achieving. Both LASER and SAVI have brought in reporting methods that encourage bigger picture thinking and analysis – supporting staff to reflect and think more strategically – and better reflecting change processes to DFID.

**LASER** uses *stories of change* to report on outcome-level changes in a qualitative manner as well as to provide a mechanism to learn from programme implementation. These evidence LASER's contribution to significant changes in policy, practice and capacity, and are used for reporting against the logframe. Information is identified and collected by LASER country teams and verified by independent evaluators as part of formal programme reviews.

One of LASER's output indicators measures the programme's success in helping developing country partners solve problems and make progress on reforms. Targets are expressed in terms of the number of major and moderate results the programme achieves - but leave the programme uncommitted as to *what* those results will be and in which country they will be achieved. The level of ambition is, however, agreed in advance through a 'menu' of indicative major and moderate results that the country teams have identified as potentially achievable, and that both DFID and LASER agree qualify as moderate and major results. To qualify, each result should show a credible attribution to LASER inputs, but the level of ambition and what meets the criteria is quite heavily dependent on context. What is a major result in a more 'difficult' context may be only be a moderate result an 'easier' one. Amendment to the table is possible only by addition or deletion of results and each change must be agreed with DFID. For a result to 'count' against the logframe target, it must be pre-agreed and on the menu. LASER is also experimenting with opportunities for partners to feed in to learning, evidence and reporting. Programme partners have for example taken part in Strategic Advisory Board meetings. The programme also produced a 'talking heads' video, giving country partners the opportunity to communicate their experience of LASER, and of involvement in a flexible, adaptive programme. The aim is to give partners a voice in reporting to DFID as well as in the on-going dialogue on adaptive programming.

In **SAVI**, one particular outcome indicator – measuring tangible examples of state government action in response to citizen demand influenced by SAVI partners – has become *the key indicator* of programme effectiveness. These outcome level results are documented through Results Evidence Sheets, as described in Section 5.6. These in turn form the basis of results case studies – and recently also video shorts – which are used for external communications purposes. SAVI harvests and packages these results in the form of stand-alone case studies, or summary case studies. These are posted on the SAVI website, used in Approach Papers describing how SAVI works, and in think pieces sharing learning from SAVI with wider research and policy audiences.

The main aim in these external communications has been to contribute to influencing a paradigm shift in donor funded programmes – towards creating a more conducive enabling

environment for development programme staff and partners to work in more sustainable and replicable, locally led, problem driven, politically smart ways. Results communications for SAVI is about sharing and learning with communities of practice grappling with similar challenges, and striving to support more effective development.

## 6. Conclusion

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Experience from LASER and SAVI suggests that adaptive programming is effective in achieving institutional reform results in complex environments. However, designing, contracting and implementing programmes to work in adaptive ways is time consuming and challenging – involving swimming against the tide of conventional practice in numerous ways.

In conventional programming, most aspects of programme design are pinned down up front. To a large extent *strategic* technical expertise is focused on design and on reviews. outputs, results and timelines are agreed at the procurement and proposal stage – and on this basis work plans, budgets and personnel inputs are specified. In implementation, the programme management is responsible for ensuring effective delivery – on time, within budget and according to pre-agreed milestones. This operations/administrative management task drives the programme forward – delivering accountability and compliance to the donor. As the extensive literature questioning this blueprint approach points out, the risk is that accountability is delivered at the cost of impact.

Adaptive programming, in contrast, is about designing and implementing programmes through processes of learning by doing, continually testing and adapting programme approaches throughout programme delivery, allowing local partners and stakeholders to identify problems and work together on developing solutions. This constitutes a major *technical* challenge. It is also a major *operational* challenge. If as in a conventional programme, operations/administrative management continues to drive the programme on the basis of pre-set and top-down targets and rigid commercial interests, the programme loses its ability to be nimble and responsive, and adaptation is not possible.

A key difference between adaptive and conventional programming is that strategic technical leadership *throughout the programme* becomes critical. This is needed to ensure technical vision and coherence, shape appropriate responses to learning and change, and guard against a series of unfocused interventions. It is needed to help identify staff with competencies and behaviour suited to adaptive facilitative working, and to help build their knowledge, skills and confidence to work in adaptive ways. It is further needed to create an enabling environment within the programme for adaptive planning by shaping systems and processes to this end. Technical leadership needs to shape the operational/administrative management of finances, human resources, incentives and milestones.

For adaptive programming to be successful, DFID and suppliers need to invest in technical leadership, and take time from the start of programmes to identify staff who are willing and able to work adaptively. They need to re-examine operations/administrative management and systems across the board – financial management systems, the definition and measurement of milestones and targets, the definition and measurement of VFM, systems for delivering accountability and compliance and for securing commercial interests and incentives – and find

ways of ensuring these support and incentivise rather than undermine the flexibility needed for adaptation.

Experience from LASER and SAVI demonstrates that this is possible. Both programmes have managed to navigate many tensions involved in achieving the technical flexibility required for adaptive programming, whilst at the same accommodating the corporate and commercial needs of suppliers and delivering accountability to DFID. But this is also a constantly shifting context – requiring continual innovation and ingenuity in the face of new donor and supplier systems and requirements. Both programmes have found that the quality of the relationship between programme management, technical leadership, supplier management and DFID staff has been critical to progress. All need to understand and embrace adaptive programming principles. All need to have the confidence to push the boundaries with each other as well as in their own context, and challenge the comfort zone of traditional, linear programming. Overall this human element is critical to effectiveness. Adaptive programmes need management, staff and advisers – in the programme itself, in suppliers and in donors – who are committed to developing and implementing effective programmes, have the capacity to listen and learn, the confidence to manage unpredictability and the willingness to challenge and change of conventional thinking and practice.



## Annex 1: Further information on LASER and SAVI

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### LASER

#### **LASER Synthesis papers**

Manuel, C. (2015) *Investment climate reform: doing it differently*, LASER Synthesis Paper, London: LASER <http://laserdev.org/media/1117/laser-first-synthesis-paper-investment-climate-reform-doing-it-differently.pdf>

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*The voice of local partners in LASER* – video forthcoming September 2016

*The effective use of technical assistance for institutional reform (lessons from LASER)* – forthcoming late 2016

#### **LASER Guidance and tools**

1. LASER (2016) *Politically smart approaches to donor investment climate programming*, LASER Guidance Note, London: LASER <http://laserdev.org/media/1160/laser-pea-guidance-note-final-15-feb-2016.pdf>
2. LASER (2016) *Monday morning in Kigali: what do you do when you get off the plane? Practical guidance for PDIA practitioners*, London: LASER <http://laserdev.org/media/1151/monday-morning-in-kigali-updated-january-2016.pdf>
3. LASER (2015) *Making the most of international pro bono assistance: A handbook for legal pro bono providers and their developing country clients*, London: LASER <http://laserdev.org/media/1155/making-the-most-of-international-pb-assistance-final-december-2015.pdf>
4. LASER (2015) *The why, what and how of monitoring and evaluation: guidance to providers of international pro bono legal assistance*, LASER Guidance Note 1, London: LASER <http://laserdev.org/media/1083/guidance-note-1-me-guidance-for-the-pro-bono-community.pdf>
5. LASER (2016) *Learning lessons from LASER's use of pro bono legal expertise: how legal pro bono assistance can add value to development programming*, London: LASER <http://laserdev.org/media/1167/guidance-note-how-legal-pb-assistance-can-add-value-to-development-programming-final.pdf>
6. LASER (2015) *M&E for the pro bono community*, <http://laserdev.org/media/1083/guidance-note-1-me-guidance-for-the-pro-bono-community.pdf>
7. *Guidance on investment climate reform in Fragile and Conflict Affected States* – forthcoming late 2016

8. *Measuring the value of Commercial Law and Justice reform: guidance for developing country partners* – forthcoming late 2016

### **LASER Case studies**

1. LASER (2015) *Rwanda Pilot Case Study: PDIA in practice during the LASER pilot – Domestic Resources*, London, LASER <http://laserdev.org/media/1152/rwanda-pilot-case-study-domestic-resources-april-2015-f.pdf>
2. LASER (2015) *Rwanda Pilot Case Study: PDIA in practice during the LASER pilot – Foreign Direct Investment*, London, LASER <http://laserdev.org/media/1154/rwanda-pilot-case-study-foreign-direct-investment-april-2015-f.pdf>
3. LASER (2016) *Rwanda Pilot Case Study: PDIA in practice during the LASER pilot – Strengthening Contract Management*, London, LASER <http://laserdev.org/media/1153/rwanda-enhancing-govt-contract-mgmt-processes-jan-2016-f.pdf>
4. LASER (2016) *Somaliland Case Study: Adopting a PDIA approach in FCAS – Enhancing donor programming in Somaliland*, London: LASER <http://laserdev.org/media/1147/somaliland-adopting-a-pdia-approach-in-fcas-jan-2016.pdf>
5. LASER (2015) *Uganda Case Study: Designing an Institutional Reform Programme at Scale*, London: LASER <http://laserdev.org/media/1150/uganda-designing-an-institutional-reform-program-at-scale-jan-2016.pdf>
6. LASER (2015) *Kenya Case Study: Exploring how to use a problem-driven iterative adaptation approach in restructuring pre-existing institutional reform programmes*, London: LASER [http://laserdev.org/media/1157/q6\\_laser-kenya-case-study-final-november-2015.pdf](http://laserdev.org/media/1157/q6_laser-kenya-case-study-final-november-2015.pdf)
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9. LASER (2016) *Somaliland electricity sector regulation: a case study on pro bono assistance*: London: LASER <http://laserdev.org/media/1168/somaliland-pro-bono-case-study-final.pdf>
10. *Sustainability and exit strategies* – forthcoming late 2016
11. *Sierra Leone case study (FCAS focus)* – forthcoming late 2016
12. *Rwanda case study (Small Claims Procedure focus)* – forthcoming late 2016

### **Research papers**

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*The value of investing in Commercial Law and Justice Reform* – forthcoming late 2016

*Investment Climate Reform in Fragile and Conflict Affected States* – forthcoming late 2016

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Booth, D. and Chambers, V. (2014) *The SAVI programme in Nigeria: towards politically smart, locally led development*. ODI discussion paper, London: ODI

[www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9203.pdf](http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9203.pdf)

### **SAVI Results**

SAVI Case studies <http://savi-nigeria.org/results/>

### **SAVI Think pieces**

Derbyshire, H., Barr, J., Fraser, S. and Mwamba, W. (2016) *Moving Targets, Widening Nets: monitoring incremental and adaptive change in an empowerment and accountability programme*, Abuja: DFID Nigeria <http://savi-nigeria.org/resource/moving-targets-widening-nets-monitoring-incremental-adaptive-change-empowerment-accountability-programme/>

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### **SAVI Approach Papers**

1. Core Values [http://savi-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SAVI\\_ApproachPaper1\\_2015\\_FINAL.pdf](http://savi-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SAVI_ApproachPaper1_2015_FINAL.pdf)
2. Programme design [http://savi-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SAVI\\_ApproachPaper2\\_2015\\_FINAL.pdf](http://savi-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SAVI_ApproachPaper2_2015_FINAL.pdf)
3. Theory of Change [http://savi-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SAVI\\_ApproachPaper3\\_2015\\_FINAL.pdf](http://savi-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SAVI_ApproachPaper3_2015_FINAL.pdf)
4. Thinking and Working Politically [http://savi-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SAVI\\_ApproachPaper4\\_2015\\_FINAL.pdf](http://savi-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SAVI_ApproachPaper4_2015_FINAL.pdf)
5. Defining and monitoring results [http://savi-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SAVI\\_ApproachPaper5\\_2015\\_FINAL.pdf](http://savi-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SAVI_ApproachPaper5_2015_FINAL.pdf)
6. Engaging civil society [http://savi-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SAVI\\_ApproachPaper6\\_2015\\_FINAL.pdf](http://savi-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SAVI_ApproachPaper6_2015_FINAL.pdf)

7. Gender and social inclusion [http://savi-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SAVI\\_ApproachPaper7\\_2015\\_FINAL.pdf](http://savi-nigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/SAVI_ApproachPaper7_2015_FINAL.pdf)
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11. Managing an adaptive programme (forthcoming – late 2016)
12. Financial management (forthcoming – late 2016)
13. Staffing an adaptive programme (forthcoming – late 2016)
14. Value for Money (forthcoming – late 2016)
15. Knowledge management and communications (forthcoming – late 2016)

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