

Politically smart, locally led development

Main findings from a workshop on 18 February 2014 at the October Gallery, London

1. Objective

The workshop was organised by The Policy Practice and the IDL Group. It brought together a small, informal group of development practitioners and researchers (participants list at annex 2) to address a very practical question: once policymakers accept that development is a political process¹, primarily locally driven, how should this affect the way they work?

2. Six cases

The group examined six cases of apparently successful interventions supported by external donors that achieved positive and potentially significant, lasting impact; and explored the factors that had contributed to their success. The six cases, as follows, were identified on the basis of personal knowledge and networks rather than a more systematic search. The presenters all had personal knowledge of the cases as advisers or external reviewers.

i) The **Western Odisha (India) rural livelihoods programme (WORLP)**: a ten-year DFID-supported project (budget £32.75m) that ended in 2011. It reduced poverty in four of Odisha's poorest districts by improving communities' water resources, agriculture and incomes, and piloted approaches that have been taken up by state government and Government of India. A 2013 ICAI evaluation awarded it a "green" rating.

ii) **The State Accountability and Voice Project (SAVI)** in Nigeria: a DFID-supported project (budget £29m) working since 2008, initially in five and currently in 10 states in Nigeria. It aims to support more responsive state governance and more constructive engagement between government and citizens. It provides no grants, but offers intensive mentoring to help local civil society, media and State House of Assembly partners enhance their knowledge and networks in pursuit of locally identified priorities.

iii) **Pyoe Pin in Myanmar/Burma** was initiated by DFID in 2006 (phase 1 budget £4m, phase 2 £12.8m) to explore ways of supporting nascent civil society groups, using a salient "issue" as an entry point around which a broader range of stakeholders – including influential interest groups – might come together. These coalitions are supported to pursue tangible outcomes (improved rice marketing, legislative changes relating to HIV, improved quality of monastic

¹This draws on the Leftwich definition of politics as "all the activities of conflict, co-operation and negotiation involved in the use, production and distribution of resources, whether material or ideal, whether at local, national or international level, or whether in the private or public domains".

education); but also less tangible outcomes that build social capital, with the longer term aspiration of building political capital and supporting democratic transition.

iv) **Land titling in the Philippines:** the Asia Foundation (with funding from USAID) recruited and supported a team of local “development entrepreneurs” to find technically sound, politically feasible approaches to increasing residential land titling. A small legislative change in 2010 achieved a huge increase in titling, with potential for wider economic and social benefits.

v) **Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration in DRC:** Peace Direct has been supporting an innovative approach to DDR in North Kivu since 2008, led by a local NGO. The approach emphasises reintegration as the basis for sustainable disarmament and demobilisation, and sees DDR as part of wider community development efforts. It is starting to influence international programmes, and to scale up its efforts.

vi) **The Enabling State Programme in Nepal:** a 12 year, DFID-supported programme (budget £33m) that has just ended. It aimed to strengthen relations between the state and its citizens, including poor and excluded groups, and women. It achieved tangible results in terms of influencing key government policies, and providing support for grassroots organisations; less tangible benefits came from increasing the participation of excluded groups in the political process and strengthening the transparency and accountability of government institutions.

There are some significant differences between the cases: they are at different points in the project lifetime; operate in different contexts (ranging from fragile and conflict affected countries to MICs); and tackle different kinds of problem with different levels of ambition. Some (SAVI, ESP Nepal, Pyoe Pin) have an explicit aim of contributing to systemic, transformational change in state-society relations; others are more focused on specific policy changes and tangible livelihood benefits (WORLP, Philippines land titling, DDR), with more indirect impact on governance. Some make use of formal political economy analysis (SAVI, Pyoe Pin); others rely on more implicit analysis, gaining local knowledge primarily by working through politically informed intermediaries (Philippines land titling, DDR in DRC). But all explicitly adopted ways of working that differentiated them from previous donor-supported interventions, and built on learning from earlier, less successful attempts to address similar development problems: this applied even where relatively conventional models were adopted (for example WORLP which shares many features common to other participatory livelihoods programmes, or ESP Nepal which follows some classic “demand-side” approaches).

Main points arising from presentation and discussion of the cases are recorded below: annex 1 provides more detail, case-by-case.

3. Are these successful cases? What constitutes success?

An attempt to answer the first question inevitably prompted further questions and caveats. In judging success, cases were assessed on the basis of whether they had had significant impact in relation to their objectives and resources deployed, with the potential to survive the end of donor supported project interventions. It should be noted that none of the six cases, with the partial exception of WORLP, had adopted a traditional logframe approach with detailed output and outcome indicators set in advance. All entailed substantial processes of learning and experimentation to refine objectives, select partners, and allow design and implementation arrangements to evolve. It should also be noted that only in the case of WORLP do we have an evaluation two years after the end of the project; so judgements about the sustainability of impact in other cases are open to question. However in all cases there has been recent, external review or evaluation (references in annex 1).

More specifically:

- For almost all the cases, there are systems in place to capture qualitative change (eg in perceptions, behaviour, capacity, processes) as well as more quantitative, tangible change (passage of legislation, livelihood benefits).
- All the cases can show tangible, short-medium term impact with benefits or potential benefits for poor people: WORLP (improvements in income, security of livelihoods); SAVI (legislative, policy, and budget implementation changes, signs of improved functioning of government systems); Pyoe Pin (livelihoods, health, education); Philippines (a 1400% increase in residential land titling); DDR in DR Congo (benefits for ex-combatants and the communities to which they returned); ESP Nepal (legislative changes, benefits for 2 million mainly poor people).
- Some cases are having a wider impact (WORLP approaches are being widely replicated by state government and GOI; locally led DDR approaches are influencing international programmes in DRC; ongoing social and economic benefits are expected from Philippines residential land titling; former Pyoe Pin project staff are moving into influential government positions).
- Other cases show potential for more transformative change (SAVI cites evidence of increased functionality of state houses of assembly, greater responsiveness of state government to citizens; ESP Nepal cites greater inclusion of previously marginalised groups in the political process). But evaluating the significance of such changes, and their potential to bring about broader, systemic changes in governance is still problematic.

- In some cases there are good prospects that project benefits can be sustained (ongoing livelihood benefits in Odisha through community groups and GOO support; more secure residential property rights from titling in the Philippines; a less exclusive political system in Nepal). But sustainability and impact still need to be tested through evaluation several years after a project intervention has ended.
- Perhaps the most important reason for judging these cases a success is that they have all been demonstrably more effective than comparable efforts to address similar problems (WORLP compared to previous rain-fed farming and livelihood projects in India; SAVI by comparison with Coalitions for Change in Nigeria and many demand-side projects elsewhere; locally led DDR in DRC in contrast to international DDR programmes costing \$186m over 10 years with limited impact; Philippines land titling as compared with simultaneous efforts under a conventional World Bank / Ausaid project (LAMP)).

4. Key success factors in all cases

The following factors (many of which are linked) appear to have been critical to success in all six cases: i.e. without them the interventions would not have achieved the impact they have done. They are the core building blocks of “politically smart, locally led” development.

i) Local leadership

In all six cases, interventions supported local actors who took the lead in pursuing issues that had local salience. Donors provided an external stimulus for internal change and often had an implicit vision of the kind of change that would be desirable, but deliberately avoided leading or dominating the agenda. This meant pursuing approaches that were technically sound and politically feasible, but which delivered outcomes that were in some ways “second best” (Philippines land titling); or focusing on “tractable” issues that were not necessarily the most important for poverty reduction (Pyoe Pin).

ii) Discovering and brokering common interests

In all cases external actors played an important role in bringing together coalitions, networks, and multi-stakeholder groups around shared or potentially shared interests in addressing a development problem or issue. (Philippines land titling and Pyoe Pin deliberately sought to foster coalitions that brought together new alliances, including those involving links with political elites and business groups; SAVI and ESP supported links between community groups, and with the media, local and state/national government; WORLP supported links between different community level groups and with local and national government; CRC in DRC linked communities with ex-combatants and militia leaders, and also established links with government).

iii) Investing in relationships

Related to i) and ii) above, in all cases project managers invested considerable

time and effort, throughout the life of the intervention, in building and sustaining networks of relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders.

iv) No “rush to spend”

In none of the cases were interventions driven by aid spending or aid conditionality: aid was used flexibly and strategically in support of locally led objectives (in the case of SAVI there was a deliberate decision not to provide grant funding to partners, in contrast to many comparable mechanisms for DFID supported accountability). Project managers successfully avoided pressures to meet donor-driven spending targets, or timetables.

v) Iterative design

In all six cases project managers were able to take time (often several years) to work with local stakeholders, exploring problems, identifying objectives and “tractable” issues, selecting suitable partners, and allowing design and project mechanisms to evolve. They were able to avoid donor pressure to over-design, or to predefine detailed results, and had flexibility to respond to changing circumstances. Where logframes were used they seem to have reflected earlier learning (eg WORLP that was based on DFID’s livelihoods framework) or project staff were able to avoid them unduly constraining practice (Pyoe Pin). It is notable that in all the cases project design and early implementation pre-dated recent moves by DFID and other donors to require more intensive scrutiny and formal scoring of specific results at annual reviews. Some of the programmes (eg. SAVI) are however successfully managing the requirements of this results agenda whilst maintaining their flexible and iterative design.

vi) A learning culture

This included learning from past experience / failures, as well as capacity for ongoing learning with flexibility to adapt and respond to changing circumstances. Linked to this was tolerance of failure, and willingness when necessary to reject failed approaches (this applied in particular to Pyoe Pin, SAVI, Philippines land titling).

vii) Politically smart management

In all cases there was politically informed, politically astute project management. In some cases this was supported by formal political economy analysis (PEA), for example to inform identification of salient issues for SAVI and Pyoe Pin. PEA however was not seen as a 1-off exercise but became embedded in project thinking and contributed to politically smart ways of working. In other cases (Philippines land titling, DDR) the main mechanism was to work through politically informed and well-connected local intermediaries. WORLP and ESP Nepal both undertook some formal analysis, and also worked with politically savvy local partners. In all the cases high quality, carefully selected and trained staff (teams and individuals) were critical to achieving impact.

5. Factors that supported success in some cases

These factors applied across a number of the cases, but there were significant variations between them.

i) A sense of crisis or “critical juncture”. This provided a context in which donors and local partners were more willing to experiment (Naxalites in Odisha, conflict in DRC and Nepal, unrest in Myanmar, huge governance challenges in Nigeria).

ii) Arms length intermediaries

In some cases there were project structures that provided protection against donor pressures to spend, to follow model approaches (eg to support “inclusion”, and “transparency”), and to adopt standard but inappropriate procedures. The Asia Foundation acted as an intermediary for USAID funding, with autonomy to put together reform teams that had considerable freedom in how they worked. CRC in DRC and the SAVI state teams appear to have played a similar role. But in other cases (ESP Nepal, Pyoe Pin) project management had close connections to DFID, which seems largely to have avoided applying inappropriate pressure. Under WORLP DFID funds were channeled through a project unit located within Government of Odisha, with a view to supporting a transition to GOO funding and project management. In addition to resisting unhelpful pressure from donors, intermediary bodies such as the Asia Foundation in the Philippines and CRC in DRC have been able to play a critical role in maintaining the balance between letting local actors take the lead, and supporting objectives of outside funders in pursuing a progressive agenda. In other words, project management teams of this kind can be political actors in their own right while facilitating rather than displacing local leadership.

iii) Long term engagement

This was important in most cases, notably WORLP, SAVI, DDR and Nepal ESP. It helped establish trust and facilitated learning from past experience. In Odisha a ten year DFID commitment at the outset was critical in securing GOO and GOI engagement.

iv) Working below the radar

This was important in some cases: the Philippines reform team selected by the Asia Foundation undertook tacit coalition building; Pyoe Pin necessarily worked under some radars for personal security and political cover. SAVI state teams provide behind-the-scenes support to partners and maintain a very low profile.

v) Continuity of personnel

This was identified as contributing to success in most cases including WORLP, ESP Nepal, SAVI and DDR in DRC. In some cases (the Philippines reform team, WORLP negotiations with government) recently retired local officials played an important role.

vi) Selection of partners

Most cases deliberately avoided a “call for proposals” approach to selecting partners (though ESP did this alongside “scouting” approaches). For Pyoe Pin

new coalitions emerged, or existing coalitions were identified and fostered, around specific issues. Some intermediaries played an important role in selecting partners (the Asia Foundation in choosing members of the reform team for land titling; state teams in finding civil society partners for SAVI). CRC built community level participation around earlier peace committees, and WORLP also built on some existing community structures, while adopting a “let 1000 flowers bloom” approach to selecting - and subsequently weeding out - NGO implementing partners.

vii) Individuals

Individual DFID advisers, Asia Foundation staff, and NGO actors were pivotal in getting interventions started and maintaining momentum. But teams with a mix of skills and diverse membership were also critical to success.

6. Further issues arising from the discussion

i) Direct or indirect approaches to improving governance?

There was debate about whether interventions should aim to support transformative changes in governance - for example by seeking inclusion of marginalised groups in political processes (Nepal), and brokering relations between state and society groups (SAVI, ESP); or whether it is more effective to pursue governance objectives indirectly, finding the “room for manoeuvre” within existing systems, and focusing on achieving tangible results (land titling, DDR, livelihoods) in the expectation that these will have broader social, economic and potentially political impact. In practice, even where interventions aspired to transformational change, more tangible development objectives were pursued as entry points. However two main challenges were identified: how to assess transformational change? And how to scale up very “hands-on” approaches to building the capacity of civil society partners without loss of quality? Underlying this discussion are fundamental questions about how effective, legitimate public institutions are created; and the relationship and sequencing between collective action to achieve tangible results, and the promotion of broader governance reform: which comes first, does one lead to the other, how, in what circumstances and over what time frame?

ii) Qualitative assessment

Some interesting approaches are emerging - notably under Pyoe Pin, SAVI, and DDR - to monitoring qualitative changes in perceptions, behaviour and “functionality” of public institutions as well as more tangible quantitative changes. There is a lot of scope to compare their utility, and share them with other project teams.

iii) Fragility

Many of the gains from these cases are quite fragile, and vulnerable to changes in personnel and donor fashions, as well as to wider political economic forces. In several of the cases individual advisers or project managers played an important role in keeping the space open for politically smart, locally led approaches, and protecting the interventions from premature closure or changes in project design. There are two issues to consider further here: one is the need to design

project approaches with sustainability as an objective from the outset. The other is the need for assessment of results to be informed by politically smart, locally led approaches, and for monitoring arrangements that capture both quantitative and qualitative changes. This could help protect interventions, especially in the early stages, from annual reviews that focus overmuch on short term, tangible results. There might be scope for devising alternative criteria for project reviews that take into account whether a project is adopting the kind of approaches listed under “success factors” above.

Annex 1

1. Western Odisha Rural Livelihoods Project (WORLP)

Why should we judge WORLP a success?

- **In a poor part of a poor State**, it developed approaches involving communities and delivered a package of support that led to improved land and water management and livelihoods. There is reason to think the benefits are sustainable because of (a) changed ways of approaching rural development, not least through stepped-up community involvement, and (b) the project's success in enabling government to engage constructively in a formerly 'ungoverned' area (owing to Naxalites.)
- **Leverage:** It was intentionally designed as a pilot and was highly influential in affecting design and implementation of similar programmes elsewhere in the State and elsewhere in India.
- It delivered what its logframe said, with only one change of logframe.
- Its internal and external M and E generated qualitative and quantitative information that the independent assessment validated, two years after the project's end. The ICAI rated it Green.

Success factors

- There were common interests between GOI, Government of Odisha (GOO) and DFID: in particular GOI and GOO were concerned that Naxalite groups in parts of the state were gaining members from socially / economically excluded people. They therefore welcomed external support to provide services in a problematic area.
- DFID had long involvement in Orissa; and relationships around WORLP between GOI, GOO and DFID were actively nurtured from project inception through to design and implementation, and cemented as the project approach gained credibility (for example retired GOO officials were hired to support design, and senior DFID officials invested time and effort in sustaining good relations). There was generally good co-operation between the three partners: where there were differences, at least two of the three remained aligned and were able to maintain momentum.
- Ownership and sustainability were built into project design: project management was based within GOO's Watershed Development Mission

through which DFID and subsequently GOO funding was channeled. Assets were transferred to communities at the end of the project.

- WORLP build on learning from earlier rain-fed farming watershed management projects in India and elsewhere; and on good political, social and economic analysis of local context.
- Beneficiaries were actively involved at all stages of implementation including setting priorities for funding; local NGOs (selected through “let 1000 flowers bloom” approaches with subsequent weeding) provided ongoing support for community groups organised around different interests. 62% of project funds went directly to beneficiaries as wages or grants and loans for community-based businesses.
- Sustaining local participation and support was helped by high levels of transparency in local financial accounting, which also met DFID sensitivity towards corruption (which seems to have been very low).
- The participatory process contributed to the slow build-up of spending. Start up was in 2001, and four years passed before significant spending began. This requires forbearance on the part of funding agencies. Sustaining political support within DFID needed some footwork: when a change of corporate priorities and a change of DFID Country Director put the project under threat, it was rebranded as addressing resilience in the face of climate change, and gained continued support.
- WORLP was designed as a ten year project: this helped secure commitment from GOI and GOO, and facilitated slow build up and internal learning (though apparently not much basic reorientation was needed). There was consistency and continuity in its leadership.
- There is some question as to whether such a project would be approved today given DFID’s current pressure to spend substantial amounts quickly and show early results. But given that it did spend that may be no insuperable obstacle.

In summary this was good old-fashioned best practice in rural development, that built on decades of earlier experience of much less successful approaches, and prioritised local ownership at all levels.

For the full ICAI report go to <http://icai.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/ICAI-Report-DFIDs-Livelihoods-Work-in-Western-Odisha.pdf>

2. State Accountability and Voice Initiative (SAVI) Nigeria

Why should we judge SAVI a success?

- There are tangible examples of state government action in response to citizen demand (facilitated by SAVI) in all project states. SAVI has 75 stories of securing tangible government action in response to citizen demand – including government investment in consultation processes, legislative and policy change, allocation and release of budgets, and project implementation.
- There is evidence of state governments starting to facilitate citizen involvement in planning and monitoring processes in all project states.
- There is evidence of increased “functionality” of state houses of assembly, civil society groups and media houses as “agents” of citizen voice, in all project states.
- Some evidence that the above processes are beginning to take on a life of their own (ie independently of the SAVI project) in all project states.
- Some evidence that state houses of assembly are actively seeking to work with credible civil society groups and media houses, because of their complementary knowledge, skills and networks in advancing issues of mutual concern.
- SAVI has achieved much better results than comparable “voice and accountability” projects in Nigeria and elsewhere that adopted more conventional approaches (eg providing grant funding, and technical assistance to build demand side capability).

Success factors

- SAVI does not provide grant funds to partners, and there is no system of a “call for proposals”. So partners do not face requirements to comply with results frameworks, targets or external reporting requirements. At most partners receive small, diminishing amounts of seed money to support their activity.

- State teams have autonomy and flexibility in searching for tractable issues and credible partners, through their own participatory political economy processes.
- State teams have high quality, multi-disciplinary local staff who receive intensive training and have good understanding of local context.
- Very good continuity of core staff.
- Partners lead in shaping the agenda; SAVI teams provide mentoring behind the scenes.
- The strength of partnerships derives from the complementary skills, knowledge and networks that partners bring to the table. Their incentive for working together is not financial gain, but what they can achieve collectively on issues of mutual concern. Partners draw on their credibility and value as a resource to others to generate pro-bono and in-kind support, as well as investment from, wherever possible, locally dependable sources.
- SAVI is linked to complementary “supply-side” programmes (for example SPARC) that give partners access to technical support on state government policy making, planning and budgeting processes
- The programme was not over-designed: there has been plenty of scope for incremental learning and adjustments in the light of experience.

Some challenges

A significant portion of the £29 million budget goes on staff salaries

Demonstrating vfm depends on achieving systemic, transformational change in rules of the game, which is challenging to demonstrate and measure. SAVI is working on this.

Scaling up without loss of quality is a challenge but, to date, experience suggests that the model is scalable. Progress and the achievement of results have been quicker in the second batch of 3 states than in the first 5, as they have benefitted from learning in the first 5 states.

For more background see “Thinking and Acting Politically: Supporting citizen engagement in governance: The experience of SAVI in Nigeria”, DFID, October 2013 and from April 2014 the SAVI website www.savi-nigeria.org

3. Pyoe Pin programme in Myanmar / Burma

The Pyoe Pin programme is one of four components of the DFID Burma Civil Society Support

Why should we judge Pyoe Pin a success?

- The Pyoe Pin programme has been able to make headway on a diverse set of tractable issues including monastic education, rice tariffs and supporting civil society engagement in extractive industries.
- It has been able to operate throughout the political transition in Burma/Myanmar, and to make appropriate judgments on which issues to push in a context of constrained (but expanding) political space, sensitivity around foreign interference and an incomplete political settlement (marginalisation of non-Burmese ethnic groups). The programme succeeded in taking advantage of a particular political moment, and was able to operate before the recent huge influx of new donor programmes.
- It has proven to be very cost effective. Total budget £4 million.

Success factors

- The Pyoe Pin programme was provided with suitable political cover to operate in a sensitive environment. It was housed within the British Council, with Embassy protection.
- It has worked strategically and selectively with networks of national elites to gain access to leadership through behind-the-scenes, informal contacts. There is a gradual evolution towards broader multi-stakeholder processes.
- The programme has worked in a strategic and hands on way, eschewing challenge fund or 'letting a thousand flowers bloom' type approaches, and purposefully building relationships with selected networks and key individuals with political influence.
- While being purposeful, it has also worked in a flexible and adaptable way, pursuing multiple opportunities, 'putting feet in the water', and being ready to abandon issues rapidly if political traction is found to be lacking.
- The programme has tried to be non-confrontational and has not challenged government's 'right to rule'. Instead it has sought to promote issues where elite acceptance can be fostered through strategic networking and influencing.
- Programme staff use political economy analysis to understand context, identify opportunities and manage risks. There is a heavy emphasis within programme management on internal reflection and lesson

learning. None of this appears to be well documented, but is part of the team's tacit knowledge.

- Programme monitoring and evaluation has provided sufficient latitude for Pyoe Pin to work in a flexible and adaptive way. The logframe is loosely drafted and not fully consistent with the project's formal "theory of change"
- The team leader of Pyoe Pin has played a critical role in brokering connections and change coalitions, but has not sought a high profile himself.
- Programme staff have been recruited from amongst the change agents that Pyoe Pin interacts with. This is an unconventional and risky approach, but has given the programme access to political intelligence.
- Close support has been provided by the DFID office and key advisors have taken a personal interest in the programme. DFID's management of the programme has been hands-on rather than arms-length.
- DFID has taken a positive approach to risk taking, which has been essential to provide Pyoe Pin with sufficient flexibility to pursue opportunities.

Points of comparison with the Vietnam Empowerment and Accountability Programme (VEAP)

The VEAP is a four year programme (2012-2016) sharing many of the features of Pyoe Pin, and engaging on issues of mining, forestry, land, water and agriculture. It has worked with alliances of interest groups encompassing both grassroots and national elites. The programme has discovered that there is political traction around issues of inequality, which the Communist party views as a threat to its authority. Unlike Pyoe Pin, where the programme has been implemented with substantial in-house support from DFID, VEAP has been managed through more arm's length relationships. Programme results are assessed using a 'Coalition Effectiveness Index' drawing on ODI work (Harry Jones) on the quality and substance of the policy process, policy content and policy implementation.

4. Land Titling Reform in the Philippines

Why should we judge this a success?

As a result of the enactment of the Residential Free Patent Act of March 2010 there was a 1400% increase in residential land titling, with expected benefits in terms of increased household investment in property, an improved residential property market, increased tax revenue, reduced social friction given the potential to subdivide and bequeath property, and reduced vulnerability of those with vulnerable titles (including vulnerability to political cronyism).

Success factors

- The multi-skill team leading the reform effort included technical legal expertise as well as an influential public intellectual Filipino (ie elite co-option). It had live networks within government.
- It was put together by the Asia Foundation, working at arm's length from the donor (USAID), with considerable autonomy about how to use grant funding, and without the normal donor bureaucracy (logframes, output scoring, etc)
- It worked with current incentives and structure of government agencies and did not try to support wholesale reform of institutions (which a parallel AusAid and World Bank intervention (LAMP) tried to support with no success).
- The team worked behind the scenes over four years employing networks of influence and tacit coalition building to navigate an unpretentious two page bill through Congress. (The process was not transparent or inclusive, nor did it build accountability.)
- The team adopted a "learning" approach involving lots of trial and error: this helped them identify a small legislative change that had big impact, and led to narrowing the agenda, excluding agriculture land. So there was limited resistance. The reform didn't involve a power play within government.
- Some small changes can have big effects.

(Despite this success USAID still pursues other, more conventional approaches: control-oriented projects with competitive bidding, Beltway-bandit implementers, output tracking and zero learning.)

For more background see "Development Entrepreneurship: A Model for Transformative Institutional Change", Jaime Faustino, The Asia Foundation, May 2012.

5. Local First: DDR in DR Congo

This DDR programme was conceived, designed and is being carried out by a Congolese NGO, the Centre Resolution Conflicts (CRC).

Why should we judge this a success?

- The approach has a higher success rate in terms of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration than other approaches including that of the UN. Other (much more expensive) approaches in DRC, and in the Kivus in particular, have failed.

- The approach appears to deliver results in terms of reintegration: only 10% of ex-combatants under the CRC programme would consider re-joining a militia. This contrasts with 55% of those in other DDR programmes and 85% of those who had received no support.
- This “local first” approach achieved very high levels of social reintegration of ex-combatants compared to other approaches. It also delivered higher perceived levels of community-level security.
- The programme has had a policy level influence in that the local first approach is influencing approaches to DDR by DFID DRC, the UN and DRC government.

Success factors

- The approach is bottom-up and locally driven. It focuses on locally based legitimate organisations to lead the DDR process. CRC has invested heavily in understanding concerns and perceptions of ex-combatants and the communities to which they will return, and building relationships of trust between militia groups, communities and local government.
- The CRC programme reversed the usual order and focus of DDR campaigns of first disarmament, then demobilisation and then reintegration. Instead the approach prioritises reintegration first and foremost.
- Peace Direct has a long track record of engagement in DRC and in the Kivus. It has worked there for over 10 years. This has built the relationships and trust necessary to deliver results. These relationships are continually invested in by PD staff and their partners.
- They have taken a more comprehensive approach to DDR that links it to a broader community development strategy.
- CRC has used community reintegration of ex-combatants as a means to catalyse broader community development and peace building. It’s seen as an opportunity not just a risk.
- They have taken an iterative approach to developing their theory of change as the complexity of the local context and the challenge of DDR became apparent.

For more background see www.peacedirect.org/coming-home

6. Enabling State Programme Nepal

Why should we judge this a success?

- It reached over 2 million direct beneficiaries.
- It influenced key government policies in a pro-poor direction.
- It promoted the inclusion of excluded groups in social and political life, including the Constituent Assembly, local government and political parties.
- It provided protection for women and girls.
- It strengthened government transparency and accountability.
- It supported democratic processes.
- It reached the hitherto unreached.

Success factors

- Flexible funding, systems and people, with capacity to respond to opportunities.
- Built bridges between different interest groups: nurtured issues-based partnerships; linked local and national actors; linked citizens to local government.
- Invested heavily in building relationships and trust with key counterparts.
- Adopted iterative approaches to piloting, incubating, then scaling up initiatives (eg relating to local public financial management).
- ESP was “hands-on” as appropriate, working directly with partners to develop projects and build capacity (ie it was a managed fund as well as a challenge fund).
- Social and political economy analysis was integral to a politically informed approach to programme design and management.
- Long-term commitment, and continuity of key staff.
- ESP was Nepali led, but not arms-length; it operated inside DFID until 2010, with close working relations with DFID advisers.

Some challenges

ESP was not always sufficiently resourced – especially in terms of people – for its hands-on approach; would have benefited from more investment in core funding of partners, and a more systematic approach early on to political and social analysis; and was sometimes more effective in stimulating demands than in facilitating a government response.

For more background see “Hitting a Moving Target: Delivering accountability, transparency and inclusion in Nepal” DFID December 2013

Annex 2: Workshop participants

David Booth (ODI, external reviewer of land titling, Philippines)
Taylor Brown (the IDL Group, external reviewer of Nepal ESP)
Marcus Cox (Agulhas)
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