



TONY BLAIR
INSTITUTE
FOR GLOBAL
CHANGE



Enabling Change: Peer-to-Peer Approaches to Institutional Development

2018 London Conference Report

1. Introduction

It is widely accepted that effective public sector institutions are vital to delivering long-term inclusive growth. However, donor attempts to build institutional capacity and reform the public sector in developing countries, through the provision of technical assistance, have had a mixed record. Too often, external programmes have either served to substitute for local capacity, or impose foreign solutions which are poorly fitted to a specific country context.

The emergence of different players in international development, and growing recognition of the limitations of technical approaches, has opened a space for new innovative practices to be tested. Building partnerships between institutions in developed and developing countries, based on peer-to-peer relationships and lesson-sharing, is one such approach.

There are a number of features which distinguish peer-to-peer partnerships from more traditional technical assistance. First, they are oriented around a long-term relationship based on mutual trust, including personal relationships between individuals with similar professional backgrounds, rather than a simple task or discrete objective. Second, the activities which drive the partnership are based around sharing lessons learned and joint problem-solving, rather than replacing local implementation of core institutional functions. Third, peer-to-peer learning is inherently iterative, guided by short delivery cycles with reflection points and feedback loops.

While the evidence base to support peer-to-peer learning remains embryonic, many in the international development sector are already highlighting to the potential benefits. Where countries are looking to move out of chronic aid dependency, these partnerships can be used to positively influence policy and behaviour, without relying on direct financial assistance. Developing country institutions can benefit from transfer of knowledge that comes from working with counterparts who have lived experience of addressing similar problems. Peer-to-peer learning may also be better equipped to support some of the 'softer' dimensions of institutional reform, including through advice on topics such as stakeholder management and leadership.

As the value of peer-to-peer partnerships becomes more widely acknowledged, in a diverse array of sectors, those engaged in these activities should be encouraged to share their own learning. For this reason, a conference was held in central London on 7 February 2018, bringing together key players in this field. The London Conference on Peer-to-Peer Learning and Institutional Partnerships was convened by the following three organisations:

- Global Partners Governance (GPG) is a social purpose company established to support effective and representative politics by working with senior politicians, ministers and officials to help them identify and implement their own reforms.
- The Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI) aims to help make globalisation work for the many, not the few, by helping countries, people and their governments address some of the most difficult challenges facing the world today.
- The National School of Government International (NSGI) is a small cross-cutting unit within the UK Government which supports centre of government and civil service reform through provision of 'practitioner-to-practitioner' advice and expertise.

The conference was funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and attended by more than 80 representatives from a range of organisations and institutions delivering or funding peer-to-peer learning activities in developing countries. Opened by the Minister of State for International Development, Harriett Baldwin, the conference considered three key topics:

- Enabling 'sticky' behaviour change through peer-to-peer support (led by GPG)
- Delivering support through relationships with counterparts (led by TBI)
- Understanding the impact of working peer-to-peer (led by NSGI)

This report captures some of the key findings, lessons and ongoing questions for the emerging community of practice on peer-to-peer learning. It is not intended to be a detailed account of the day, but a narrative on the key themes that emerged, with each section drafted by one of the three partner organisations.

Practical examples of peer-to-peer learning

Peer learning occurs at various level – national, city, ministerial and individual level. Some examples of peer-to-peer learning networks are provided below:

- The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), with over 30 member countries, promotes standards in democracy, governance and socio-economic development. The APRM process is based on a self-assessment questionnaire designed to assess countries' compliance with a range of African and international standards and treaties.
- The Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI) is an inter-governmental organisation that provides a platform for peer learning and exchange for African ministries of finance, budget and planning.
- C40 Cities is a network of more than 90 cities (including nine cities in Africa) that connects city administrators and Mayors around the world to enable stronger collective climate action. The organisation offers a platform for cities to showcase their climate action solutions and inspire their city peers.
- The Network of Senior Officials from Centres of Government (CoG) is an OECD peer support forum that seeks to explore issues on how to make the centre of government work more effectively and to develop a deeper understanding of decision making systems in the host country.

Challenges

The challenges of peer learning should not be underestimated and include:

- Identifying the right peers to engage with
- Ensuring peers are effectively matched through initial events
- Managing cultural/organisational differences among peers
- Building trust among peers
- Ensuring peers have a commitment to learn
- Ensuring peers are fully engaged in the process
- Identifying the right mechanism (face to face events, work shadowing, secondments, virtual learning)

2. Enabling change – Peer-to-peer support and strengthening representative politics

Authored by Global Partners Governance (GPG)

President Harry Truman was reported to have said that *'it's amazing what you can achieve provided you don't care who gets the credit'*. His quote aptly captures what is often missing from too many international development projects, and what distinguishes an enabling and peer-to-peer approach to strengthening institutions.

The distinctiveness of peer-to-peer engagement is that it is characterised more by the quality of the relationships with our local counterparts, than it is by the elegance of a theory of change.

A peer-to-peer problem-solving approach should emphasise that it is not the job of external experts to implement anything, but rather to help others implement things for themselves. This means that lasting or 'sticky' change has to emanate from the individuals within an institution. The role of international assistance should be to provide the ideas, advice and support that enables political institutions to manage problems for themselves, increasing their resilience, rather than taking over and trying to do it for them. The credit for any successful change lies with the local partners who make it work in the long-run. It creates a form of programming that fundamentally changes the nature of projects so that they are less about finding fixes, and more about enabling, encouraging and helping to manage a process of change.

Global Partners Governance's particular outlook on political and institutional reform has been developed through more than a decade of experience, working directly with politicians and officials in parliaments, political parties, ministries and local government in some of the world's most complex and sensitive political environments across the Middle East and Africa, including Iraq, Jordan and Libya.

In delivering that work we draw on the insights and know-how of individuals with extensive experience of managing change from the inside of institutions, as senior ministers, civil servants, political or parliamentary officials. Their authority though comes not from their ability to tell other people what to do, but from drawing on their first-hand knowledge to improve the understanding of intractable problems, throwing fresh light into previously dark corners and revealing new potential solutions.

2.1 Getting sticky change: The importance of behaviour over structure

The insight that lasting change is much more likely to emerge from inside an institution than be implemented from the outside might seem obvious. Yet for much of the last half-century international assistance to political institutions has been a decidedly apolitical exercise, characterised by externally driven initiatives focused on structure and process.

At one level, the 'good governance' agenda has been equated with a set of ideals about what a state should look like, and tended to result in a technocratic approach to designing institutional and constitutional architecture. This approach has, in turn, meant a superficial focus on rules and structures rather than deeper-seated change. As Matt Andrews argues in *The Limits to Institutional Reform in Development*¹, it is a relatively easy task to implement new systems, but an entirely different exercise to actually make them work. Using the analogy of the institution as an iceberg, he describes the regulative framework as the tip, which is visible – and which international assistance programmes attempt to 'fix'. Below the waterline, the much larger part of the institutional iceberg is made up of cultural factors which shape how the institution interprets and applies the institutional structure.

In short, good governance programmes have tended to look for technical solutions to what are, ultimately, political and behavioural problems. Governance programmes have largely bypassed the internal political

¹ Andrews, M., (2013), *The Limits to Institutional Reform in Development*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

dynamics within institutions that determine culture, individual behaviour and levels of performance. And, as Acemoglu and Robinson note, attempts by international agencies to improve things have often failed because *'they do not take place in the context of an explanation of why bad policies and institutions are there in first place.'*²

In other words, international programmes may have often successfully changed the institutional architecture, but just as often failed to take the people inside the buildings with them. Individuals frequently carried on doing what they had always done, just in different – and perhaps more efficient – surroundings.

There is though now much wider recognition of the importance of going beyond simply reforming structures, to engage with the incentives and interests of the people whom such reforms are designed to help. It is ultimately behaviour and incentives that will determine whether change is likely to last, or not. Whereas structural reforms deal with the surface, behavioural adaptation will create new and accepted ways of working that go far deeper and lock in change. As John P. Kotter, one of the leading authors on change management puts it:

*'change sticks only when it becomes 'the way we do things around here', when it seeps into the very bloodstream of the work unit or corporate body. Until new behaviours are rooted in social norms and shared values, they are always subject to degradation as soon as the pressures associated with a change effort are removed.'*³

It is exactly this sort of 'sticky' change that international assistance aims to achieve, but which it has always found so elusive. Although many international projects can cite evidence of change, it is the extent to which that change lasts beyond the lifetime of the project that should be the key measure. This is a measure against which far too many projects fail.

2.2 Enabling, not implementing

In the last decade international political assistance has placed increasing emphasis on understanding the interests and incentives that shape institutional performance, behaviour and the prospects for reform. Some form of political analysis is now a prerequisite in most governance programmes, and projects are encouraged to reflect upon, and adapt to, changes in the local political context.

However, translating these increasingly sophisticated insights into a different, and more political, way of working on the ground continues to be a challenge. For example, although the rhetoric of 'local ownership' has been a standard part of this discussion since the turn of the century, the vast majority of programmes still struggle to find ways of working that reflect a genuine collaboration.

In seeking to address such difficulties peer-to-peer assistance starts by building the relationships and buy-in of the people who will need to make those changes stick. Without that buy-in, any changes to structure, process or procedure are likely to be fragile, probably short-lived, and liable not to achieve what was originally intended anyway. For political change to sustain itself, the people who are immediately affected by it have to believe in it and make it work over the long-run. This means that both the strategy, and the logic of change behind it, need to be developed in conjunction with local stakeholders.⁴

² Acemoglu, D, & Robinson, J., (2012), *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*, London: Profile Books, p. 447

³ Kotter, J.P, (1996), *Leading Change*, Harvard Business School Press, p. 14

⁴ For example, the contents of a logframe are usually the subject of private discussions between project implementers and their funders. A better approach is for local partners to help set the indicators in the first place, especially when turning a 'theory of change' into a more detailed implementation plan. If our counterparts feel they own the indicators for progress, they are much more likely to hit them: it shows that they agree with the logic behind them, feel responsibility for meeting them and will drive progress.

Given the complexity and political sensitivity of much institutional reform there are few hard and fast rules. Understanding the theoretical importance of local ownership, dominant incentives and political context will only get you so far. Politics is inherently haphazard and unpredictable, and the ability to engage and work with local partners depends far more on the political astuteness of those seeking to support their counterparts, than it does on the ability to follow a template for doing a political economy analysis.

With these caveats in mind, the discussion at the conference emphasised three factors that are likely at least to create a base from which to work; first, begin by focusing on what matters today; second, get the small things right; and third, seek to build outwards from pockets of good practice.

i) Address what matters today, but have a strategy

The starting point is to understand what the institution looks like through the eyes of those who work inside it. A common trait amongst the people with whom we work, particularly in conflict-affected or fragile states, is that they are all overwhelmed with the amount of work they need to get done. They often spend the vast majority of their time putting out fires, in the knowledge that if they don't, no-one else will, and those fires will inevitably spread.

The problem, as many of them acknowledge, is that in doing so they are often ameliorating symptoms, rather than tackling the root causes, and making their job more difficult in the long-run.

For example, in many parts of the world MPs will tell stories of waking up to find a queue of people outside their door who need help with hospital bills, school fees, funeral costs or simply money for food. Of course, this does not solve the problem, and those they help will invariably need to come back for further assistance in a week or a month. It works as a short-term electoral tactic, as seekers of assistance will also tell their friends how the MP helped them. But as a long-term strategy, this behaviour simply expands demand without the ability to meet it. In the 2012 Global Parliamentary Report MPs spoke of the increasing costs of being a politician, which one described as '*simply feeding the monster*'.⁵

Most recognise these longer-term challenges, but have neither the time nor space to work out how to address them, because of what needs to get done today. This is where peer-to-peer engagement adds value, in working with individuals to find that space for strategic reflection at the same time as improving their ability to cope with immediate priorities.

While more effective institutions, or political reform, or greater accountability might be highly desirable, the individuals responsible for implementing reform will have a limited interest unless they can see an identifiable and tangible benefit. In other words, it is unlikely they will be attracted by your offer to build a shiny new fire station that will be ready in three years' time and will undoubtedly make their life easier at that point, unless it also helps them fighting fires today.

The first task is simply to get the attention of the people you are seeking to work with. Programmes need to engage directly with the problems as perceived by individuals, and offer ways of managing them. They need to be built around practical measures with obvious rewards - by finding ways of helping people do their jobs better, enhancing their career prospects or offering them the sorts of rewards they value. The role of peer-to-peer programmes is thus to align their immediate self-interest with longer-term and strategic institutional reforms.

⁵ Power, G., (2012), *Global Parliamentary Report: The Changing Nature of Parliamentary Representation*, New York/Geneva: UNDP/IPU

ii) Get the small things right

The second factor for peer-to-peer partnerships looking to get 'sticky change' is the need to start small. This logic though stands in contrast to the way that much international assistance is conceived. For many donor agencies the size of a project budget is often the equivalent of a virility test, highlighting the importance and commitment to addressing key political issues.

However, there is little evidence that these projects succeed in achieving such big goals, and can often work against the principles of more politically-astute and adaptive programming. When donor agencies land heavily in political institutions they frequently remove any sense of local control. The arrival of a large programme can either simply maximise political resistance to outside 'experts' telling them what to do, or increase dependency on external support as international implementers end up doing the work themselves. As one Iraqi MP described a big aid agency project with the parliament in Baghdad in 2012, "we feel like we're the ones being implemented".⁶

By engaging primarily with individuals rather than institutions, peer-to-peer assistance will look at problems through the opposite end of the telescope. Instead of aiming solely at the big systemic changes, it works with the building blocks of institutional effectiveness such as job descriptions for staff, internal communication systems, clear lines of accountability and strategic planning. They will not inevitably lead to a qualitative change across the entire system of governance, but equally, it is difficult to see how such wider structural changes can occur if these fundamentals are missing.

The Behavioural Insights Team in the UK, which has sought to apply insights from the fields of behavioural science and psychology to a whole range of policy issues with governments around the world, describes this approach as 'radical incrementalism'. Their Chief Executive, David Halpern, argues that "dramatic improvements can be achieved, and are more likely to be achieved, by systematically testing small variations in everything we do, rather than dramatic leaps in the dark".⁷

This approach reflects a much more realistic understanding of how institutional change occurs. Seismic change as the result of an intense reform effort is exceptionally rare in political institutions. Rather, change tends to happen at walking pace, often as the aggregated effect of many small-scale changes which then ripple through the organisation.

iii) Encourage catalysts: Capture, repeat and replicate pockets of good practice

Third, this sort of self-sustaining change is more likely to come from working closely with smaller groups of individuals to create new ways of working which are then repeated and replicated by others. The idea of creating '*pockets of good practice*' means that innovations are owned by the beneficiaries, who then have the incentive to spread them. The job of international assistance should be to help those initial changes, establishing and embedding new techniques and ways of working with key individuals or groups, often in discrete parts of the institution.

Projects should though be aiming to have a wider effect across the institution, so that new behaviours spread. In many instances more effective working practices will spread across the institution by themselves, as groups of individuals see direct evidence of how new sorts of behaviour are likely to benefit them. Change is then an internally-driven process, rather than one that is seen to be implemented from the outside.

However, there is an important role to be played by the project managers in ensuring that where good practice does start to emerge it is promoted and disseminated across the institution to ensure long-term effect. This

⁶ The identity of the MP, who wanted to remain anonymous, is known to the authors.

⁷ Halpern, D., (2016), *Inside the Nudge Unit: How Small Changes Can Make a Big Difference*, London: WH Allen, p. 291

might mean simply publicising examples of good practice or working with new groups of staff to instill the key lessons. It may also mean seeking to develop wider coalitions for change around those innovations. At the same time, innovations emerging at the lower levels of the institution need to be fed up to people in positions of power, so that they can then, if necessary, be turned into institution-wide guidelines or formalised into new processes.

2.3 Peer-to-peer assistance and Knowledge-Application-Practice-Effect

It is this logic – starting from where our counterparts are, rather than where we would like them to be, getting the small things right and then seeking to replicate success – that underpins the Knowledge-Application-Practice-Effect (KAPE) methodology.

KAPE describes in broad terms the four phases of strategy for each of our projects in supporting and reforming political institutions. It relies less on the training events, publications and grand institutional designs that characterise traditional aid, than it does in providing focused, practical, expert support to our partners in finding new ways managing their daily problems at work. Needless to say, the broader strategic objective is to get a collective impact, so that the parts of an organisation work more effectively to improve the performance of the institution (and other political institutions) as a whole.

The purpose is not just to offer advice (*Knowledge*), but to make sure that knowledge is used, and we work alongside our counterparts to find ways of applying it to the management of daily problems (*Application*). Those new techniques are though only valuable if they can be repeated, and deployed to deal with a variety of problems at different times. In this way they start to evolve into new ways of working (or *Practices*) that shape longer-term behavioural norms. When those pockets of good practice start to emerge the intention then is to replicate them across the institution so that they have a wider impact on the performance and effectiveness of the institution as a whole (*Effect*).

Creating this sort of cultural and behavioural change, is partly about repeating and refining new techniques so that they become standard practice. But it is also about finding ways of creating different forms of institutional memory. Rather than trying to change structures first, it starts by helping people to do their jobs better. This might involve changes to rules and structures, but these are less important than how people see their role, use the tools at their disposal and respond to the behavioural norms inside the institution. By engaging directly with the incentives of the people inside the institution it aims to create new ways of working, which over time become part of the institutional culture. At that point, once everyone is working in that way, it is much easier to formalise the process of change, by changing the rules and structures to reflect – and embed – the new reality.

Fig 1: Knowledge-Application-Practice-Effect methodology



© Global Partners Governance, 2016⁸

⁸ Taken from Power, G., (2016), [All About Behaviour: KAPE, Adaptation and 'Sticky' Institutional Change](#), Global Partners Governance

2.4 More responsibility, less control?

One of the themes repeated throughout this conference session was the importance of humility. Even when drawing on experts with significant experience we should never presume that they already have the answers. Projects are thus an iterative process with our counterparts – discussing, trying, failing and refining.

There also, though, needs to be greater humility on the part of donor agencies about their ability to effect systemic reform in other countries at all. Given the size of the challenges in many countries there may be a case for larger international projects that seek to do many things at once. However, this scale should be tempered by an understanding that the chances of such projects achieving widespread reform are always slight, because political change is contingent on too many variables outside the control of any international programme.

This understanding challenges the traditional idea that the job of aid professionals is to come in and fix things. Instead, the role should be to enable and help manage a process of change, rather than simply implement it. It means taking more responsibility for the quality of support, but ultimately exercising less control over how it is implemented.

Peer-to-peer partnerships are always likely to be a small part of international efforts to strengthen governance. But its size should not underplay the wider significance of discrete and targeted efforts to improve political institutions, nor the added value it brings to other initiatives. What underpins it is a more realistic assessment of the prospects for change, which is directly shaped by the interests and incentives of people working inside those institutions. But, critically, by supporting internally-driven, small-scale efforts, it offers a much more sober assessment of how institutional change actually occurs.

3. How can we build support for impactful peer-to-peer support?

Authored by Tony Blair Institute (TBI)

If the process for getting ‘sticky change’ required engagement with individuals’ behaviour, rather than structural solutions, then building trusted relationships becomes crucial. While the importance of trust might seem straightforward on paper, in practice it is difficult to apply this principle in the day-to-day work or peer-to-peer learning. This is especially the case where there is weak institutional capacity.

First off all, it’s good to set out that there are two types of trust: interpersonal trust, which refers to trust among people, and institutional trust, which refers to society’s trust in organisations (police, judiciary etc.) rules including the (in)formal mechanisms used to enforce them. Both types of trust are equally important and both are relevant to the process of peer to peer learning. Relationships are central to both.

A number of obstacles can get in the way of building trusted relationships. On the part of the donor country, it can be hard to accept that priorities deemed important – such as gender equality, health or education provision – may not be valued in the same way by a recipient government. At the level of those offering peer-to-peer advice and support, it can be difficult to accept that their ideas and advice may not be taken forward, or that recipients see the problem in a different way. Moreover, it is frustrating to witness the slow progress of much-needed change through overly bureaucratic processes.

The Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI) aims to help make globalisation work for the many, not the few. They work towards this goal by helping countries, their people and governments address some of the most difficult challenges in the world today.

Their governance practice works in the centre of government and key line ministries, to help governments and leaders make their vision for development a reality by delivering crucial policies and reforms, and raising standards of living for citizens. Much of this work was formerly undertaken by the Africa Governance Initiative, and their engagement includes activities in Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Sao Tome & Principe.

Counterparts may not be as passionate about an issue as the peer-to-peer support provider, and will bring their own values and principles to the table.

In spite of these challenges, trust is needed to undergird the type of relationships with local counterparts, so that peer-to-peer providers can be relevant to what they are trying to achieve. It means being able to see the political pressures they face, the social realities they live in, the patronage networks they are part of, and the institutional constraints that bind them. It is also about being able to understand why they hold the views they have on what is best for their country, so we can support them to deliver it.

This section tackles the issue of building trust in peer-to-peer support by first laying out a framework for building trusted relationships and then by presenting three perspectives on trust: those of a recipient government, of a peer-to-peer support organisation and of a development partner:

- Gyude Moore, as a recipient of peer-to-peer support and a senior developing country official from Liberia;
- Jonathan Said from the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI), as an organisation whose model is centered around providing peer-to-peer support; and
- Peter Rajadiston from the Department for International Development (DFID), as a development partner with experience in funding peer-to-peer support.

3.1 Braving trust

To understand what trust means in a development context, it is helpful to refer to the BRAVING framework developed by Professor Brene Brown, a researcher and academic at the University of Houston. This framework suggests that trust between people is rooted in seven key factors:

- Boundaries: *respecting each other's office and position*
- Reliability: *we do what we say we will do*
- Accountability: *owning our mistakes, apologising and making amends*
- Vault: *not sharing experiences and information that are not ours to share*
- Integrity: *choosing courage and what's right over comfort and what's easy, fun or fast*
- Non-judgement: *we can talk about how we feel without passing judgement*
- Generosity: *extending the most generous interpretation possible to the intentions, words and actions of others.*

3.2 The perspective of a recipient of peer-to-peer support in the centre of the Government of Liberia – Gyude Moore

Gyude Moore is a former Minister of Public Works, Deputy Chief of Staff to the President and Head of the President's Delivery Unit in the Government of Liberia. Gyude's perspective gained from his experience receiving peer-to-peer support during his time in government (2009-17) from the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI, and formerly the Africa Governance Initiative) is presented here

When an adviser, or a peer from outside joins the government, they have to appreciate the context in which they are working because *'it is impossible to take the politics out of it'*. Gyude gave a number of examples drawn from his time in government to illustrate this point. With the election of President Johnson Sirleaf in 2005, the politics in Liberia changed, removing the threat of violence as a tool to push their agenda. Instead, the President had to convince and cajole political colleagues and stakeholders, resulting in a more transactional form of politics. As she was serving her first term, she needed to be re-elected, alongside many members of the senate and parliament who feared losing their seats. It was in this context that the President had to drive her agenda whilst growing new institutions.

Investing trust in TBI advisers was not without risk. Gyude pointed out that by allowing foreign advisers to join meetings and participate in high-level discussions, the President was exposing herself to criticism. Confidences could be betrayed, and sensitive information disclosed to rivals, or the general public in a 'tell-all' book. However, the President weighed these risks against the value of advice to help drive her agenda.

Obtaining the trust of the leader is an important starting point, and it was critical for TBI to do this in a country like Liberia. Mutual trust enables a leader to be open enough to say that the peer-to-peer support is important to bring in the skills needed to deliver services to the people. In this case, the President placed a lot of trust in TBI and the international community at large.

But trust goes both ways and it needs to extend to allowing leaders to govern. As an example, more than 50 per cent of Liberia's citizens lack access to all-weather roads. The Chinese would offer to build a road in a year, while working with the EU would involve a bureaucratic two to three year process. In Liberia, the rainy season lasts six months so to deliver roads, so you have to move fast and as a Minister this drives you to pick the Chinese option. Often governments make deals not because they are looking for opportunities to be corrupt, but because they have to do what's necessary to deliver services to their people. Trusting local leaders is important to give them the flexibility they need to govern in the best way, given their context.

Trust was also central to the work at the President's Delivery Unit. TBI were embedded within the unit to increase capacity, enabling officers with direct experience and responsibility for particular projects to brief the President directly, important not just for aligning policy purposes but also to remove bottlenecks. It is through actions rather than words that trust is most effectively built – for example, though a TBI advisor passionately pressing the European Investment Bank (EIB) to reduce the interest rate on a loan for the rehabilitation of our only international runway from 1.25 per cent over 25 years to one per cent showed we were all on the same team.

Receiving such peer-to-peer support also brings the risk of dependency and over-reliance on advisers, rather than pushing your own staff to do more. We recognised this in Liberia and developed the Presidents Young Professionals Programme, which recruited local graduates to work together with the team and the TBI advisor. The intent being that the advisor works themselves out of a job. For this type of support to have succeeded, it had to be culturally sensitive and it had to be behind the scenes: TBI advisors could not take credit or give press conferences. Advisors are appreciated as being part of the process, but it is the people from the country that have to lead, deliver and be seen to be delivering.

Trust also extends to the issue of transparency and ownership. If the government is only working on improving transparency because of development partners' requirements, once those partners are no longer needed, it will be ignored. But if it is generated through domestic politics, if there is a demand from the local people, then it will be sustained. The best way to make countries more open and transparent is for demand to be driven from within, not imposed. Local ownership is essential for long-term impact; Africans themselves have to be painted as people of agency.

He summed up by saying that *'having advisors with you who breathe the same air as you, who sees the problem the way you see it and is able to provide competencies that may not be available locally – and receive this support in a way that allows you to build local institutional capacity – was essential for us to take a country like Liberia from having nothing to be where we it is today'*.

3.3 The perspective of an organisation whose approach centres on peer-to-peer support

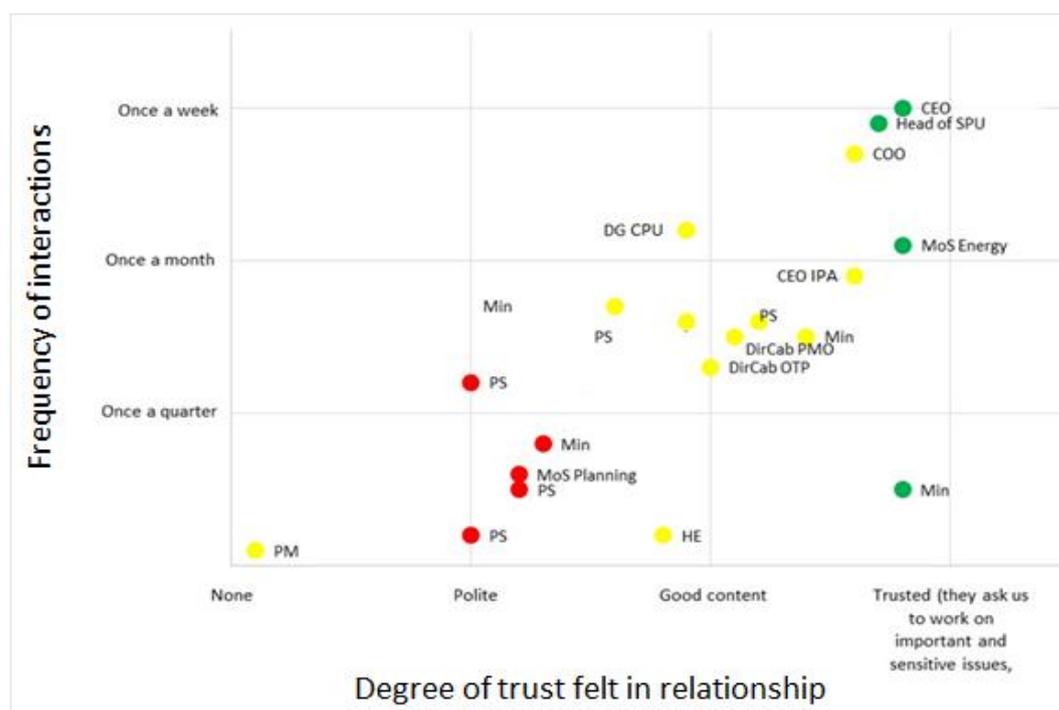
Jonathan Said from TBI used the BRAVING framework to explain how trust is central to their model of peer-to-peer support with long-term embedded advisors to governments across Africa and beyond.

- **Boundaries** – respecting the office of the recipient. Whether they be the President, Ministers, Directors or junior staff, it is their country, they're their development goals and their long-term objectives. It is also their priorities, their sequencing of the priorities, their political pressures, their social realities and their institutional constraints. Respecting their decisions, even when you disagree with them, is essential for trust. In addition, you might be assuming that they have the power to do something you think they should, when actually they might not. Providing challenge to counterparts is important but it must be done in the right and respectful way and at the right time. And providing challenge from a position of trust is much more powerful than through a working relationship that lacks trust.
- **Reliability** – following through. For this, having the flexibility and right time horizon to be able to follow through is essential. As is not over-promising. Although TBI did not supply health experts, its reputation of reliability with the Government of Liberia was important for it to be trusted enough to sit in on sensitive meetings in August 2014 at the President's Office discussing how to handle the escalating Ebola crisis. This allowed TBI to play a central role over the following months in helping the Government to coordinate the international community's response to the crisis through structures such as the Incident Management System and the Presidential Advisory Council on Ebola.
- **Accountability** – owning your mistakes. TBI has often had to make amends with its counterparts, typically for trying to move too fast in pushing actions forward when the political or social context of a situation meant the counterpart could not move that fast.
- **Vault** – not sharing what's not yours to share. This extends from sensitive issues discussed in senior Government meetings to cases where we had to carefully handle sensitive political situations to unblock an obstacle to reform or a perverse and costly incentive for a Government Ministry.
- **Integrity** – doing what's right and not what's easy. TBI's work on agriculture investment reform in Liberia demonstrates what this means in the development context. Agriculture investment was a priority for the President but it was not receiving the right type of attention due to limited management bandwidth. It was essentially a coordination problem that required numerous Government Ministries to work together. Yet the lack of coordination meant that the politics became complex and non-conducive. Many development partners stayed away from it because of its complexity, but TBI used its trusted relationships across these various Ministries as well as the post-Ebola recovery planning process, to find the common ground over a two-year period and help the President launch a Presidential Task Force on Agriculture that got the key people on a more similar page and gave them a clear call-to-action. In turn, the foundational work TBI did to help unlock this problem strengthened the Government's trust in it.
- **Non-judgemental** – being empathetic. Being a leader of a developing country government is not easy. Presidents, Ministers of Finance and others senior Government officials spend around 90 per cent of their work time fire-fighting and keeping the ship afloat. There is only so much they can do in the other ten per cent, so it is important not to get frustrated if a letter we have been waiting on for weeks has not been sent yet. It doesn't necessarily mean a lack of commitment.
- **Generosity** – giving the benefit of the doubt. This is hard to do and the international community rarely does this with developing country leaders. Yet running such countries is a bit like American football. It is so complex that you need hundreds of game plans for the range of different situations you may face as you try to get to touchdown. It is only the Head Coach and his team of coaching staff that can see the whole field and know what's going on in the changing room, not the spectators. And they need the flexibility to deploy the plays that work for particular situations that may not be visible or obvious to the

spectators. Giving leaders the flexibility they need to govern is essential for building trusted relationships.

Given that TBI provide peer-to-peer support through embedded advisors, its recruitment and training process is a core part of the model. They use a competency based system to identify individuals who are able to work in a team, strong at management, strategic, personable and good at relationships. TBI places an emphasis on values such as independence, boldness, political savviness, flexibility, integrity and on being result-oriented and government-led. It then provides a toolkit to advisors – through its induction process and ongoing staff support structures – on how to engage appropriately and effectively as an embedded advisor in a developing country, with regular performance reviews, feedback sessions and learning and development sessions. Advisers use a matrix to track, measure, and maintain their trusted relationships, as per the graph in Fig 2.

Fig 2: Matrix for measuring trusted relationships



3.4 The perspective of a development partner and provider of peer-to-peer support – DFID

The third perspective is that of Peter Rajadiston who highlighted his own personal perspectives as a former provider in Ethiopia for Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs, while also touching on DFID’s position on peer-to-peer support. He acknowledged that peer-to-peer support was by no means a new agenda. Many UK institutions have been making their skills available to overseas organisations for a number of years, but DFID was starting to see the aid modality become increasingly used, both in new DFID programmes and more widely.

Peter set out DFID’s strong commitment to supporting partnership learning. The work of NSGI and others to understand what works better in this area is useful, especially for new entrants adopting peer-to-peer working across a broad range of support activities such as:

- Twinning units
- Deployment of staff
- Peer-to-peer working
- Workshops
- Embedded advisors

- Study visits

The challenge of building trust is central to the aid modality, but although easy to say that it is important, it is much harder to achieve. Engaging with peers from the same profession provides a certain baseline level of trust as there is a degree of common understanding from the onset which gives a good basis to take forward more complex discussions on institutional reform.

All relationships take time to build. It is important to allow relationships to develop naturally on their own pace, with institutional trust built up over time across different embedded advisors. Where such support does not work so well is when an example of something that worked in one place is used to fast-track it into a different context. Long inception periods for projects allow for strong relationships to be built. Starting small and delivering quickly is an essential component in this context. Having organisations that can quickly respond to a demand by a developing country government is important so that windows of opportunity are not missed. It is important not to get bogged down in lengthy procurement processes.

There is debate about what ownership actually means and how to promote it, but the key point is to get behind national development strategies or plans, reform strategies and priorities of individual institutions. It is easy for externals to look at a reform process and think ‘that’s not how I would do it’, but there are often good reasons why certain decisions have been taken or why certain paths have been chosen. These are often the result of very difficult political contestation or collaboration. Through this, trust is built over time. Peter thought that it was only after two or three years of supporting that he was really able to be in the room to have these conversations.

The traditional approach to capacity building may be back to front: flying in expertise to conduct interviews, analysis, write a report and leave. The problem with such cases is that the point of analysis is the UK expert, not the recipient government. In an alternative approach, he explained that they took 30 Ethiopian colleagues to London to learn and decide what approach and models worked best for them. The visit was successful as it allowed them to see how a UK call centre worked, reviewing operating manuals, talking to operational staff – they returned to Ethiopia and worked these lessons into their own strategies to establish a call centre in Addis.

Development partners need to be honest about what it is they are offering. It is important that expertise is sent that can actually add value and as well as acknowledging the reciprocal nature of the engagement. The UK can learn much from recipient countries too, about innovations, new approaches and technology being adopted overseas.

The sweet spot for peer-to-peer support involves sending people who not only have the right technical skills, expertise and experience, but perhaps more importantly, the soft skills of emotional intelligence, contextual analysis, diplomacy and integrity.

4. Understanding the impact of working peer-to-peer within institutional partnerships

Authored by National School of Government International (NSGI)

The growing interest in peer-to-peer institutional partnerships as a modality for supporting public sector management has been accompanied by an awareness of the limitations of traditional approaches to monitoring and evaluating their effectiveness. Tools such as logical frameworks and

The National School of Government International (NSGI) is a discrete cross-cutting UK civil service unit, integrated within the Stabilisation Unit. The NSGI established itself as a centre of excellence providing advice, assistance and practical delivery of civil service and wider public sector reform to international partners. Currently, it is delivering long-term programmes in Kyrgyzstan, Zambia and the Overseas Territories, and other short-term activities across a range of countries including Ukraine, Rwanda, India and the Western Balkans.

The NSGI has developed an approach to capability-building support to civil service and centre of government reform that relies upon senior peer-to-peer relationship building and support by advisers. It also has a mandate to promote lesson learning on peer-to-peer partnerships and to build the wider evidence base that can help to facilitate best-fit approaches.

success indicators can assume predictable straightforward solutions, where the outputs and outcomes can be identified and planned for using a linear pathway. As has already been discussed, the reality in many institutional contexts is that the problems are complex and unclear at the outset, with dynamic and unpredictable factors which can positively or negatively affect results.

However, peer-to-peer partnership providers cannot afford to ignore monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) if this is to be established as an alternative aid modality. Like all development interventions, donors and implementers need to be able to demonstrate whether their activities are gaining traction, and how they link to wider, and more transformational change. Most importantly, it is only through being able to build a stronger evidence base that we can cultivate learning across organisations and countries.

In recent years, flexible and adaptive programming approaches have gained prominence. Key to this thinking is an emphasis on experimentation and learning, with 'feedback loops' between delivery and planning to ensure interventions respond to changes in the political context. Recent literature in the governance field on problem driven iterative adaptation (PDIA) supports this direction of travel and has the potential to transform the way in which partnerships are managed.

In its final session, the conference heard from experts working at the 'front-line' of delivering and evaluating programmes, which are more flexible and adaptive. First, the panel reviewed of the current state of the evidence base on what works in supporting effective institutions in developing countries. Second, the session critically analysed the challenges in applying M&E methods to institutional reform, and review the variety of new approaches which might be applied to building an evidence base. Finally, the conference shared lessons around practical M&E tools which have been trialled, and might be adopted by other peer-to-peer partnerships.

4.1 What does the evidence tell us about what works in peer-to-peer learning?

Richard Burge, Associate Director from Itad (a consultancy that specialises in providing MEL services) outlined some of the key principles of effective peer-to-peer learning, which have been informed by evidence.

First, early research does bear out that peer-to-peer partnerships can facilitate transfer of knowledge for counterparts engaged in complex and highly politicised institutional reform processes⁹. This allows peer-to-peer partnerships to move beyond the 'technical' tasks which usually form the basis of requests for external support, to tackle underlying problems. This might entail working with officials to manage political resistance to reform, supporting 'softer' skills to lead and inspire teams, or using their presence to broker and convene reform coalitions. As has already been noted, peer-to-peer learning which sits outside of the recipient's own reform agenda is unlikely to gain traction.

A second insight from the evidence is that the content and approach of peer-to-peer learning requires some careful thought and preparation, so that learning objectives are explicit at the outset and jointly owned. The very meaning of partnership entails a collaborative endeavour, so that the terms of reference for an intervention have been discussed and agreed with local counterparts. This may take time. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that failure to do so (e.g. *'the PFM strategy was drawn up by external consultants and not owned [by us], and therefore not implemented'*) leads to ineffective programmes.

Third, research seems to support the proposition that genuine and meaningful partnerships are usually only achieved through sustained engagement. The use of 'fly-in and fly-out' consultants delivering short-term inputs in an isolated and ad-hoc manner detract from the 'partnership' nature of the intervention. Moreover, it is difficult for these forms of assistance to build trust with counterparts, which is so clearly evident in examples from the previous session.

⁹ Matt Andrews and Nick Manning (2016), *A Guide to Peer to Peer Learning*, Effective Institutions Platform

Fourth, the imposition of ‘Western’ or ‘off-the-shelf’ models is particularly ineffective. For this very reason, peer-to-peer partnerships which involve other actors from the ‘south’, or even within countries, might be seen as a valuable tool. The State Peer Review Mechanism in Nigeria¹⁰, which brings together state governors to share their experiences and highlight commendable and innovative practices, is one example of a potentially promising approach. In any case, for UK-based peer-to-peer providers it is important to consider how advice and experience can be tailored to their context.

Fifth, the evidence points to the importance of identifying local champions and coalitions to drive change from within. As has already been discussed during the first session, this is particularly critical when engaging with government institutions, and the individuals who will need to role model and advocate for reform among colleagues who will often be reluctant. However, successful programmes have also looked more widely, at how the institutions have engaged with networks of actors in parliament, civil society and the private sector.

While these insights from evidence are useful, the research agenda around what works in peer-to-peer partnerships is still nascent. The key question remains how peer-to-peer learning achieves wider impact within an institution beyond the immediate boundaries of the intervention. However, in order to answer this question, we need to look at more flexible and innovative approaches to measuring outcomes and impact.

4.2 How should peer-to-peer partnerships be monitoring, evaluating and learning?

The challenges for MEL, in the context of peer-to-peer learning partnerships seeking to support long-term institutional reform, are well-documented. Alongside Richard Burge, Elbereth Donovan, Divisional Director for MEL at WYG Consulting, set out some of these challenges and identified some of the options that donors and implementers might consider.

Seeking to measure outcomes and impact, when the effects of an intervention on an institution may not be visible for many years, is especially difficult. Peer-to-peer learning does not take place in isolation, and the ‘spill-over effects’ of a conversation between two or three peers, in terms of others within the organisation, can be hard to track. Moreover, the dynamic and uncertain political environment dictates that delivery of partnership activities cannot be linear, but rather adapt to new information and events.

This makes it all the more important to think about the role and purpose of MEL, before selecting the tools to collect evidence and track progress. One purpose may involve being held accountable by donors, gathering information and reporting on how a programme is ‘performing’ so that a donor or manager can make prudent decisions about whether it should continue or shift direction. Discussion during the session pointed to frustrations with donor demands for MEL reporting which focused on accountability, at the expense of other purposes.

However, it is often more useful for a peer-to-peer partnership (which is non-linear and adaptive) to design a MEL strategy geared to supporting reflection and learning. This includes: (a) understanding and recording what is happening in the wider political context (e.g. elections, ministerial reshuffles, new laws/regulations, organisational restructures); (b) reflecting on interventions which have worked (or not); and (c) discussing changes in the needs and demands of counterparts. By collecting and recording this information, peer-to-peer partnerships are enabled to adapt on an ongoing basis.

A core tool for any MEL activity is the Theory of Change (ToC), which identifies critical pathways from the intervention to the end-level impact¹¹. However, for a programme to be flexible and adaptive, the ToC needs to

¹⁰ http://www.sparc-nigeria.com/RC/files/5.3.2_Nigeria's_State_Peer_Review_Mechanism.pdf

¹¹ Center for Theory of Change, <http://www.theoryofchange.org/what-is-theory-of-change/>

become an active and 'living' tool to help peer-to-peer partnerships reflect and learn. A meaningful and useful ToC will include some of the following features:

- Strong contextual analysis of the wider political environment, including political dynamics, triggers for change, champions and spoilers;
- Clear understanding that change is not a linear process, moving predictably from point A to B, but that multiple factors will interplay to shift direction;
- Explicit assumptions that underpin the causal pathway, which can be tested through the life-cycle of the intervention;
- Regular points of reflection and 'feedback loops' which allow for real-time information to guide decision-making.

While there are a range of practical tools which might be used to embed feedback loops (see below), Elbereth reflected on some of the lessons for programmes looking to work more adaptively.

As a first step, it's worth acknowledging the level of risk involved, and think about how this risk might be shared or managed with other programme partners. Adaptive approaches involve repeated cycles of experimentation, and learning-by-doing, and necessarily involve a level of failure. These risks can be managed carefully by taking 'small bets' with short sprints of implementation. However, this also means that all of the design features of an intervention cannot be pinned down up-front, and will require revision and 'resets' throughout the life-cycle of the programme.

In the earlier session, the conference stressed the importance of trusting relationships with counterparts. For the purposes of adaptive programming, trust is also vital between the donor and implementer, as well as an evaluator. Peer-to-peer partnerships will require a higher level of engagement and reassurance that 'flexible and adaptive' is not the same as 'working without a strategy'.

Flexible and adaptive MEL might seem attractive to those keen to avoid rigid milestones and indicators, this approach demands a serious investment in time and funding. Peer-to-peer partnerships need to select the right people with skills and appetite to engage in experimentation. Systems and processes can help ensure that information is being collected regularly and routinely to create an 'audit trail' of evidence and log lessons. All of this needs to be properly resourced, with a significant proportion of the budget devoted to MEL activities.

Finally, all of the skills, systems and processes introduced through a MEL strategy are of little use unless the lessons being learned are used to shape decision-making. Highly centralised or bureaucratic decision-making processes are not equipped to take advantage of the information gathered through MEL. More decentralised and collaborative processes (with counterparts) are better-placed to flex and respond.

4.3 What tools can we use to work more flexibly and adaptively?

There has been significant innovation across a range of organisations and countries, which provide learning to peer-to-peer partnerships. In some cases, existing tools and techniques can be tweaked to be made more flexible. However, there are a number of new MEL tools which remain to be tested. Elbereth outlined some of these approaches, and was joined by Mari Chrys Pablo, a Programme Officer with the Asia Foundation in the Philippines who presented practical tools they had been using there.

Any discussion on MEL tools inevitably provokes debate around the use, and potential misuse, of logical frameworks (or log-frames as they are commonly labelled). Favoured by many donors, peer-to-peer partnership implementers frequently argue that the log-frame methodology includes in-built assumptions of linear delivery, and predictable and measurable results. As has already been noted, this stands at odds with the experience of most partnership providers.

During the third session, Elbereth made the argument for log-frames that can allow for greater flexibility. Practical real-world examples could be found in a recent paper on two innovative and adaptive DFID programmes, Legal Assistance for Economic Reform (LASER) and the State Accountability and Voice Initiative (SAVI) in Nigeria¹².

For instance, LASER's log-frame, which captures results across a number of different countries, includes 'nested log-frames' for each country which allow for results to be tailored to each context. It also draws on a 'menu of results' approach, which sets a target for the number of 'major' or 'moderate' results (according to agreed definitions) drawn from a menu of agreed potential outputs. This provided the implementer with considerable flexibility to adjust planned interventions in accordance with shifts in the political context, demands from counterparts and an understanding of what works, without being seen as under-performing.

The team implementing SAVI agreed a deliberately under-designed log-frame at the start of the programme, so that the outputs and outcomes could be identified as implementation progressed. By the end of the programme, the log-frame was in its 14th iteration. SAVI also adopted an 'outcome harvesting' approach. Rather than describing the precise nature of the changes to be delivered, this meant that evidence was collected (or 'harvested') at the end of the programme about what had changed, and worked backwards to determine whether and how SAVI contributed.

Nevertheless, in many cases a donor may insist on agreeing some specific and measurable indicators for peer-to-peer learning. Mari Chrys shared the methods used by the Asia Foundation in the Philippines to finding 'measures that matter'. Criteria they used included whether the measure was: (a) easy to understand; (b) allowed for ratios or rates of change to make comparisons; (c) relatively easy to collect; and (d) established a clear link between project intervention and outcome.

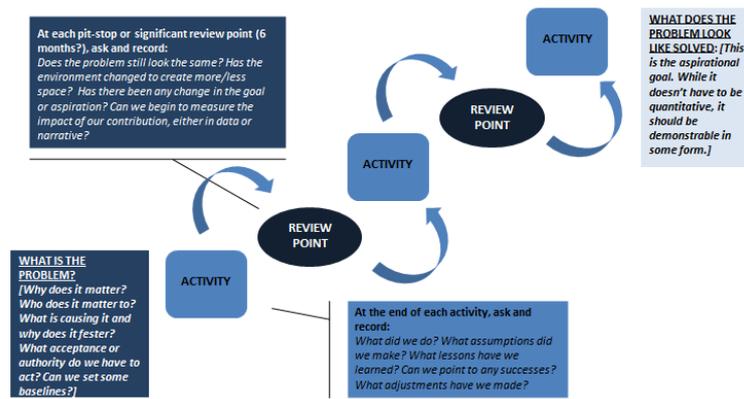
Moving beyond log-frames, there are other tools and techniques that create space for more adaptive programming.

An explicit alternative to the log-frame was developed by Matt Andrews, a senior lecturer at Harvard University, which he has described as a 'search framework' (or search-frame)¹³. Rather than setting out planned targets, the search-frame embeds experimental iteration into a structured approach to make policy or reform decisions in the face of complex challenges. It aims to facilitate a transition from problem analysis, through a structured process for finding and sitting solutions.

Fig 3: Search framework

¹² Helen Derbyshire and Elbereth Donovan (2016), *Adaptive programming in practice: shared lessons from the DFID-funded LASER and SAVI programmes*, DFID

¹³ Matt Andrews (2016), *SearchFrames for Adaptive Work (More Logical than LogFrames)*, <https://buildingstatecapability.com/2016/06/06/searchframes-for-adaptive-work-more-logical-than-logframes/>



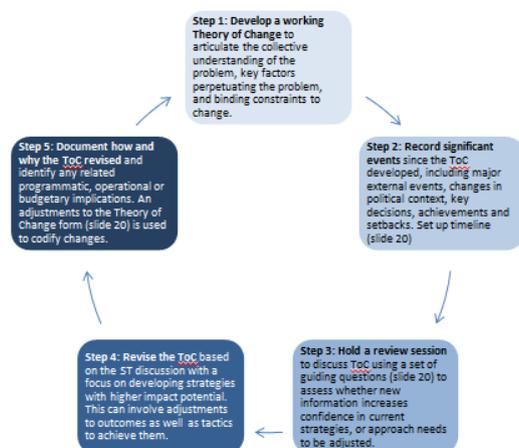
The Asia Foundation has recently published a guide to Strategy Testing¹⁴, a system which they are using for monitoring programmes that are addressing complex development through a highly iterative and adaptive approach. It emphasises building strong relationships and deep knowledge, experimentation and maintaining tight feedback loops between learning and action. On the basis of a Theory of Change, it requires programme teams to take periodic structured breaks from day-to-day program implementation to collectively reflect on what they have learned, and to ask whether the assumptions are still valid in light of new information, insights and shifts in local context.

A number of elements are required to make Strategy Testing effective:

- Timely recording of key events ensures an audit trail and why decisions have been taken
- Embeds shared responsibility of all partners to make the programme work
- Encourages lateral thinking and proactive and timely responses to changing circumstances
- Forces an examination of the root causes of problems and unorthodox solutions
- Provides framework for structured reflection and regular testing of results
- Encourages project to keep abreast of politics, power and incentives
- Takes a structured ‘whole-systems approach’ from the strategic to detail level.

For Strategy Testing to be successfully implemented, peer-to-peer partnerships need (1) time to develop, test and review every 4-6 months; (2) a team to plan, manage and participate; and (3) flexible funding arrangements to respond and adapt.

Figure 4: Strategy Testing cycle

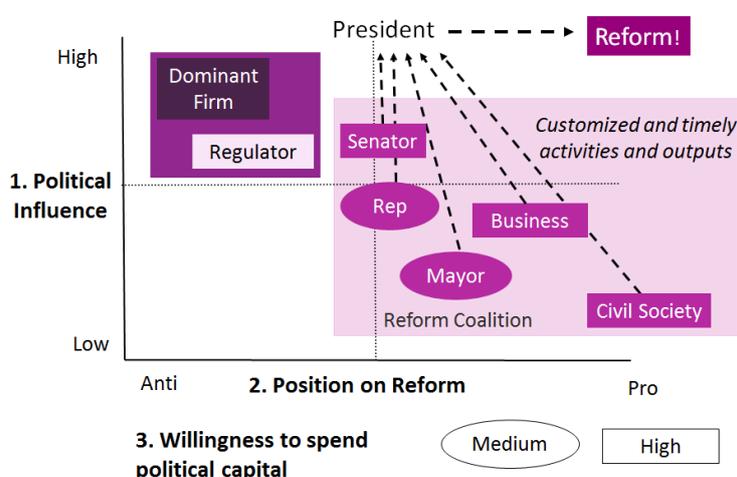


¹⁴ Debra Ladner (2015), *Strategy Testing: An innovative approach to monitoring highly flexible aid programs*, The Asia Foundation

Peer-to-peer partnerships might also consider using Problem or Project Diaries in their MEL strategies. These are contemporaneous written records of significant activities, events or processes that take place during the term of the intervention, and how they might shift the boundaries of the problem identified at the beginning. Again, this provides peer-to-peer participants space to reflect and learn, whilst ensuring there is a data trail on which to make meaningful evaluation of impact, rather than relying on second-hand anecdotal evidence and imperfect memory.

The conference also heard from Mari Chrys on the Asia Foundation’s use of coalition analysis and action maps. These can be useful MEL tools for identifying where programmes should be looking to invest in peer-to-peer learning partnerships to have a significant impact, and tracking this over time. By mapping actors within the reform space against two axes – their political influence, and their attitude to reform – programmes can also consider their level of willingness to spend political capital to progress or resist reforms.

Fig 5: Coalition analysis and action map example



Presentation from speakers in this third session provoked debate from the floor. Peer-to-peer partnerships highlighted the importance of maintaining a proportional approach to MEL activities, in line with resources and intended results. There is also the risk of creating ‘participation fatigue’ from counterparts in recipient countries, who may feel overwhelmed by the number of requests for feedback. However, feedback can be elicited through more careful, informal and subliminal methods. Conference participants reflected on the difficulty of measuring influence and access, frequently a key (if not always explicit) goal of peer-to-peer interventions. This was an emerging area of further research.

The attraction of flexible and adaptive programming, and MEL tools and techniques that support it, is clear. But as ever, peer-to-peer partnerships need to adopt these approaches with their eyes open – both in terms of the level of investment required and the risks they can entail. Perhaps most importantly, MEL activities should not be seen as something separate from programme design or implementation, but as an integral component which is considered before an intervention starts.

5. Concluding observations

The London conference centred around the key challenges and questions facing this new and emerging aid modality. It is clear that international political assistance has long been too focused on an approach more concerned with creating new institutional architecture than with individuals who will ultimately determine whether those reforms succeed. Through hearing from those who have experienced peer-to-peer partnerships both as a donor and as a receiver, and broadening thinking on this by incorporating evidence from behavioural

science, business and social entrepreneurship, the conference kick-started the process of broadening the horizons of traditional technical assistance as a means to deliver assistance and support.

Academics have argued that peer-to-peer relationships oriented around shared values can yield better results than other forms of support, but the evidence base remains limited. This event sought to address this, looking at the emerging tools we can employ to more consistently measure outcomes, impact and inform decision making, supporting the problem-driven iterative approach of peer-to-peer partnerships.

Overall, there were three key messages emerging from the London conference: First, it is important to focus on individuals and relationships. This means starting small and understanding the contextual politics that the partner is working within. While there is undoubtedly a need for larger scale development projects, they often miss the detail and frequently misinterpret how political change happens.

Second, partners should take the time to build genuine trust between partners with a view to sharing problems and jointly find solutions. Establishing trust is a hugely challenging task and will often take a long time. It also involves sending people who not only have the right technical skills, expertise and experience, but perhaps more importantly, people with strong soft skills of emotional intelligence, contextual analysis, diplomacy and integrity.

The third key message is the importance of embedding the monitoring, evaluation and learning through ongoing real-time data analysis and adaptation of the support provided. Assumptions around linear and predictable pathways to impact do not apply when working on institutional reform. But there has been a great deal of experimentation in more flexible and adaptive approaches.

It is clear from the attendance and lively debate at the London conference that there is increasing recognition that peer-to-peer partnerships can be used as an effective way to deliver development assistance to promote institutional reform. It is hoped that bringing together this community of practice regularly will help increase the understanding of peer-to-peer partnerships and help establish the evidence base for its effective use.

6. Additional Resources

Alari, C. and Thomas, P., (2016), *Increasing the Impact of Aid Interventions to Support Centre of Government Reforms*, National School of Government, London

Andrews, M and Manning N.,(2016), *A Guide to Peer-to-Peer Learning*, Effective Institutions Platform, Paris

Derbyshire, H. and Donovan, E., (2016), *Adaptive programming in practice: shared lessons from the DFID-funded LASER and SAVI programmes*, DFID, London

Hudson, D., Mcloughlin, C., Marquette, H. and Roche, C., (2018), *Inside the black box of political will: 10 years of findings from the Developmental Leadership Program*, Developmental Leadership Program, Birmingham

Hudson, D., Marquette, H. and Waldoock, S., (2016), *Everyday Political Analysis*, Developmental Leadership Program, Birmingham

Global Partners Governance, (2014), [*The Logframe and the Beautiful Game: Project Logic v. Football Logic*](#), Politically Agile Programming Paper No. 1, GPG: London

Ladner, D., (2015), *Strategy Testing: An innovative approach to monitoring highly flexible aid programs*, The Asia Foundation, San Francisco

Power, G., (2016), [All About Behaviour: KAPE, Adaptation and 'Sticky' Institutional Change](#), GPG: London

Power, G., (2018), [Integrating Politics into the Project Cycle: README, Politically Agile Programming Paper 4](#), GPG: London

Power, G and Carothers, T. (2018), [Guide to Working with Parliaments and Political Parties for Sustainable Development](#), A DFID Strategic Document, DFID

Whaites, A., (2017), *The Beginner's Guide to Political Economy Analysis (PEA)*, National School of Government International, London