

Summary report

# Twenty years of UK governance programmes in Nigeria

Achievements, challenges, lessons and implications for future support

Laure-Hélène Piron, Clare Cummings, Gareth Williams, Helen Derbyshire and Sierd Hadley with Suwaiba Said Ahmad, Sunny Kulutuye and Imrana Alhaji Buba

October 2021



## Introduction

The Flagship report analyses 20 years of governance programmes in Nigeria funded by the British Government through the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and, since September 2020, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), as described in Box 1.

In the North-western states of **Jigawa** (since 2001), **Kano** (since 2005) and **Kaduna** (since 2006), as well as the North-eastern state of **Yobe** (since 2011), UK governance programmes aimed to improve the effectiveness of Nigerian

State Government spending and, in doing so, enable them to deliver improved and sustainable education and health outcomes for their populations.

This uninterrupted and continuous UK support provides a unique opportunity to analyse:

1. How governance reforms come about and can be sustained over time
2. How governance reforms contribute to improved health and education service delivery
3. How UK programmes' ways of working have contributed to governance, health and education

### Box 1 Three generations of UK governance programmes

#### First generation

**State and Local Government Programme (SLGP)** 2001–2008; £25 million. It was the first UK investment to engage with state officials and state-level governance processes as Nigeria transitioned to democratic rule.

#### Second generation

**State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability (SPARC)** 2008–2016; £62 million. It worked with State Governments to support changes in the way financial resources were managed and in how strategies and policies were prepared.

**State Accountability and Voice Initiative (SAVI)** 2008–2016; £32.3 million. It worked alongside SPARC and supported civil society organisations (CSOs), the media and State House of Assembly (SHoA) elected representatives, working in issues-based advocacy partnerships.

#### Third generation

**Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL)** 2016–2023; £133 million, with three pillars: (i) Accountable, Responsive and Capable government supporting 'supply-side' reform to government systems; (ii) Engaged Citizens supporting 'demand-side' initiatives with CSOs, media and SHoAs; and (iii) Learning, Evidence and Advocacy Partnership (LEAP) supporting learning, evidence and research. Collectively, 'PERL supports how Nigerian State governments organize their core business of making, implementing, tracking and accounting for policies, plans and budgets used in delivering public goods and services to citizens, and how citizens engage with these processes'.

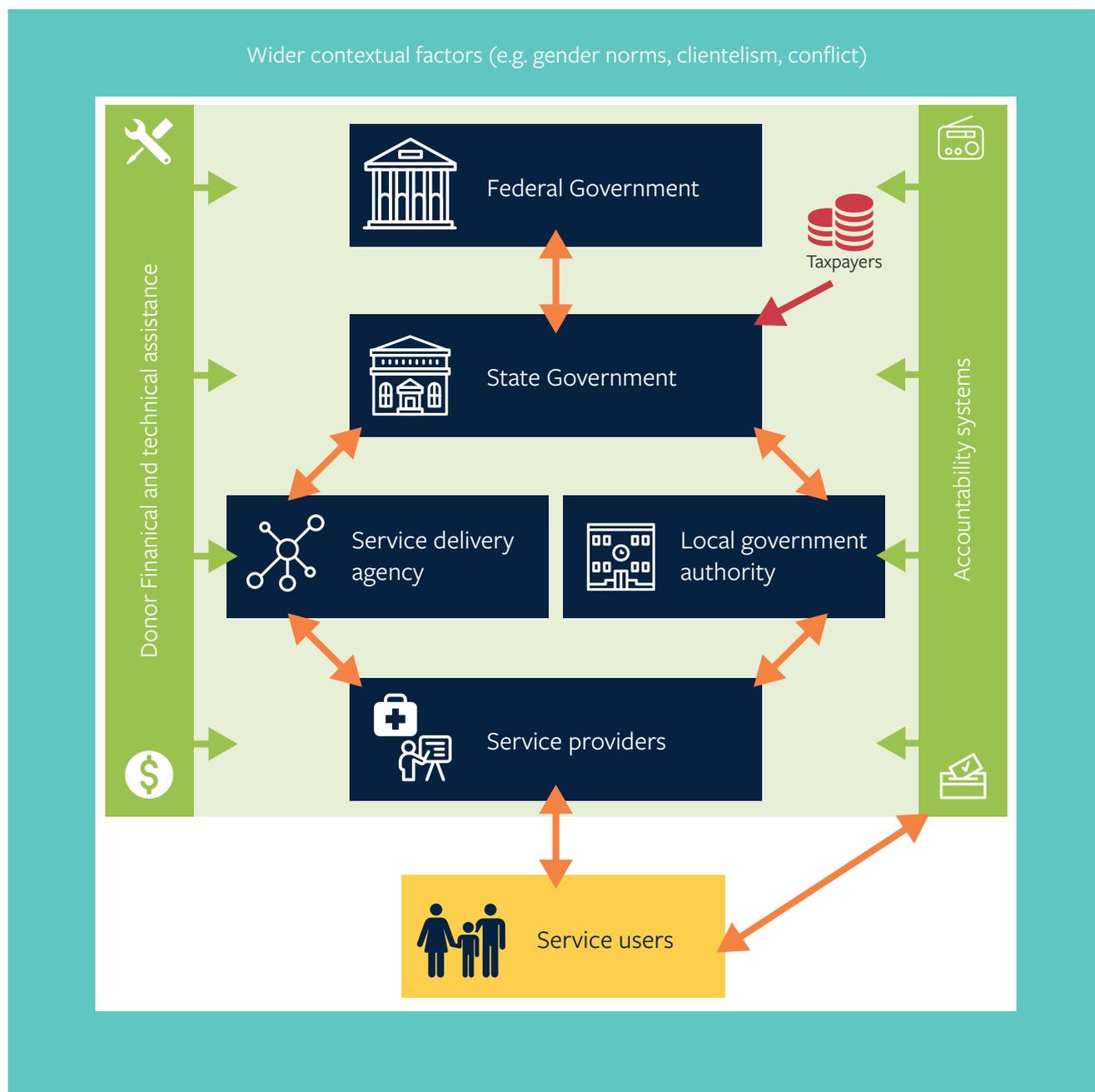
## Methodology

This research project was undertaken by the Learning, Evidence and Advocacy Partnership (LEAP) pillar of the Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL) which constitutes the third generation of UK governance programmes in Nigeria. It is based on 68 interviews and a review of 265 documents.

This research aims to identify the **contextual factors** and **causal mechanisms** that can explain how UK **governance interventions** can contribute to **improving governance, health and education outcomes** by influencing the ‘service delivery chain’ that connects the Nigerian federal, state and local governments to frontline service providers (e.g. primary schools, local health facilities) and to users of health and education services (Figure 1).

How do UK programmes’ interventions stimulate change through causal mechanisms? They can motivate public servants to adopt more efficient ways of managing state resources; create new spaces where parents can give their views on the quality of education; or provide legislators with evidence and policy options that are useful when passing new laws or monitoring the use of health budgets. In the language of the ‘realist synthesis’ method which inspired the research, governance interventions provide new *resources* and *opportunities* which, depending on contextual factors, can influence changes in *reasonings* and *behaviours* of key actors. This is what the research refers to as ‘causal mechanisms’, which have been categorised in terms of four types of incentive: political, financial, bureaucratic and state–society relations (see Table 1).

Figure 1 Nigeria: service delivery chain



## What was the context for UK interventions?

Since the end of military rule, Nigeria has undergone **significant socioeconomic transformation**. Its population increased from 119 million in 1999 to over 200 million in 2019, the largest in Africa; and poverty declined from 56.3% of the total population in 2003 to 39% in 2018, but health and education indicators remain low in Northern Nigeria. Governance indicators have not progressed as much as in other countries. While voice and accountability improved the most during the period, restrictions on participation and rights, such as civil society and media, have increased since 2015.

At the federal level, and in each of the four states, power is based on **competitive clientelist political settlements**. A narrow network of individuals (mostly men) benefits disproportionately from access to Nigeria's national resources, oil and gas. Elections are usually competitive; different elite coalitions try to win support through patronage and clientelist promises to voters. While State Governors are the more powerful state-level actors, they face different levels of political competition, and have more or less broad social bases.

**States rely on federal transfers** to fund the provision of services, which in turn depend on international oil and gas prices. There has been a steady decline in overall government revenues relative to the size of the economy over the period because of recessions caused by a fall in oil prices in 2014 and COVID-19 in 2020. This created a challenging context for reforms and for increasing state spending on primary health or basic education.

The research project examined how UK interventions influenced governance, health and

education outcomes in four different states.

**Kaduna and Kano** are large Northern states of national influence; they are more populated, urban, richer and more politically competitive than poor and rural **Jigawa and Yobe**, which were both created in 1991.

## What were the UK interventions in the four states?

While Nigeria is not an aid-dependent country, international assistance has been an important source of financing for service delivery, in particular for health. The UK is Nigeria's second largest bilateral donor, with its Official Development Assistance growing over ten times between 2002 and 2018 and disbursements peaking at the equivalent of nearly \$450 million in 2017.

SLGP, SPARC, SAVI and PERL have been working consistently on relatively similar public financial management (PFM), public sector management (PSM) and empowerment and accountability (E&A) reform areas for between 10 years (Yobe) and 20 years (Jigawa). They supported the following **state-level core governance interventions**:

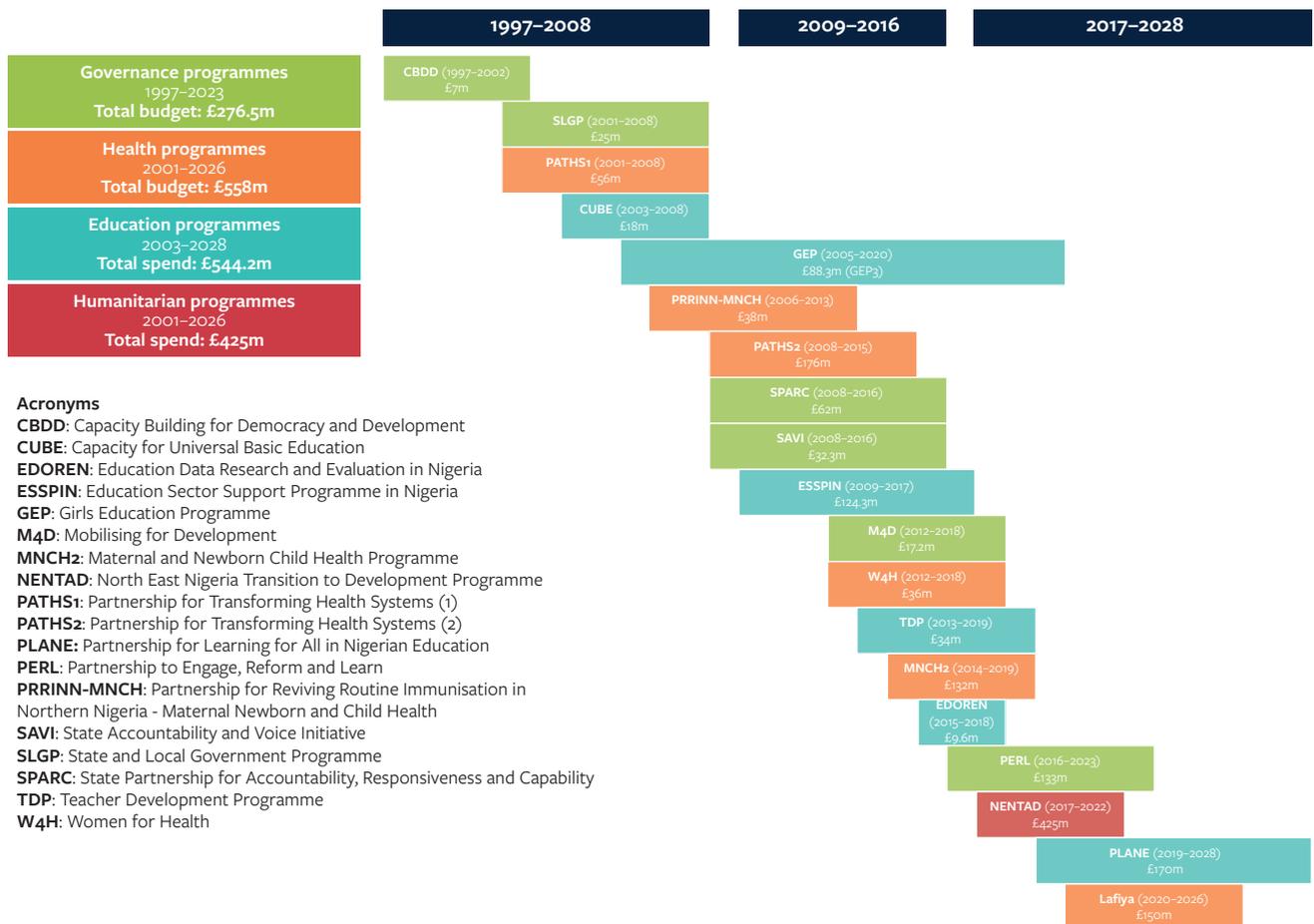
- policy-making and planning, and PFM;
- PSM, specifically organisational development of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and human resources management (HRM); and
- supporting citizens to influence State Government decision-making and hold the authorities to account.

These governance programmes indirectly, and sometimes directly, supported **state-level health and education governance**: sector policy-making, planning and budgets; recruitment and training of teachers, nurses and midwives; or civil society monitoring of school or health

facilities. Governance programmes operated alongside much larger UK health and education programmes, which also aimed to support health

and education governance as well as service delivery (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2** Timeline of UK aid to Nigeria by sector



### Which sustained changes in outcomes can be documented?

The research found that, over 10 to 20 years, there had been sustainable improvements in a number of core governance and sector governance dimensions, as well as in service delivery.

- In all states, there appears to have been a **sustainable strengthening of E&A**, such as civil society participation in budget processes

and the media holding government to account. Improvement in state PFM processes that do not include an E&A element has been more variable, such as links between budgets, policy-making and planning.

- Sustained governance changes **cannot be documented in three areas** of consistent UK governance support: budget execution, PSM (MDAs’ organisational development and HRM) or parliamentary oversight.

- All states have **increased the share of their budget for health and education** (except Yobe in education), and there has been a general **improvement across most health and education service delivery indicators** (except immunisation).

**Jigawa**, which benefited from the longest period of support, showed the most improvements, not only in core governance but also in health and education governance, while **Yobe**, which both had a shorter period of support and was affected by conflict, achieved fewer sustained changes, most of which were restricted to core governance reforms rather than service delivery. **Kaduna** achieved the second-highest number of governance improvements after Jigawa, with a significant reform drive in the post-2015 period, building on some of the past UK initiatives. By contrast, **Kano** achieved the most health and education final outcomes improvements without many governance improvements. (Case studies of these four states, on which the Flagship findings are based, can be found in Annex 1).

## How have UK programmes contributed to these outcomes?

*How can governance reforms come about and be sustained over time?*

**Over 20 years, UK governance programmes have contributed to demonstrable and sustainable institutional changes in some important dimensions of governance and service delivery.** The evidence identifies a mix of partial and firm contribution of UK governance interventions to improvements in core governance outcomes.

**Political economy contextual factors, and programmes' ability to understand and make**

**use of them through 'causal mechanisms' to support change, are the most important determinants of whether and how external governance programmes were likely to influence core governance or service delivery processes.** The level of political competition emerged as the main factor to understand reform prospects. More lasting changes were documented when State Governors were politically secure, as in Jigawa, Yobe and Kaduna (since 2015), rather than in contexts with fragmented politics, as in Kano. These Governors were able to implement broader-based or efficiency agendas without the threat of undermining their patronage base.

**The respective role of financial, bureaucratic or state–society incentives, and the programmes' ability to respond to them, varied to a greater degree.** Table 1 summarises how UK programmes achieved results in the four states, illustrating how they stimulated the main political, financial, bureaucratic and state-society causal mechanisms identified by the research.

**UK governance programmes clearly contributed to institutional transformations, which explains sustained improvements.** They contributed to creating new dynamics between key stakeholders (in particular between citizens' representatives, the bureaucracy and politicians) on specific issues or in relation to new processes (such as inviting the **Yobe** civil society Voice and Accountability Platform to participate in new budget processes). Most progress on outcome indicators was made when there were elements of E&A, that is, participation, transparency and accountability. These almost always took the form of constructive engagement, rather than confrontational or less structured engagement. Examples include a number of reforms in **Jigawa**, such as well embedded policy–planning–budget processes, and collaboration around procurement

decisions and contract implementation between the State Government Due Process Bureau and the civil society Project Monitoring Partnership network. In **Kaduna** (post-2015) and **Yobe** (2011–2020), changes are still relatively recent, but participation in budget processes is particularly well institutionalised and can influence state–society relations.

By contrast, PSM, budget execution and SHoA oversight showed less progress, probably because of political economy factors, as they impinge on central patronage systems.

**The second and third generations of UK governance programmes were explicitly designed to ensure collaboration between supply- and demand-side interventions.** They avoided confrontational advocacy strategies, and instead developed coalitions between politicians, officials, sector professionals, citizens groups and media. This strategic decision has been validated by the finding that most sustained changes included E&A components, even in relation to core state processes such as budgets. The main lesson for development assistance programmes in general is to never focus solely on reform internal to government systems without considering how participation, transparency and accountability will also be promoted.

**Differentiated progress on PFM, PSM and E&A should not be taken as evidence that they are either always or never worthwhile.** The starting point should be strategic thinking about what are the critical barriers to development and what is politically feasible and technically sound in a particular context. For example, PSM reforms are exceptionally politically sensitive but often

approached in a technical fashion. Yet the political conditions for their success are not common, given the role of the political power of appointments in sustaining support for incumbents from their base. There will be contexts when PSM interventions are feasible. Post-2015, the Kaduna Governor implemented drastic changes to the state civil service without requiring PERL assistance.

**Governance programmes fall short on gender and inclusion when they focus only on systems and processes, and do not consider different service users from the outset.** UK governance programmes could have been more explicit in their strategy about which citizens their civil society partners represent, their relative political power and how their advocacy may generate change for different social groups. A political strategy on how to improve gender equity (or equity more generally) would be useful, applying the same energy and political insight as in other aspects of PERL’s work.

*How do governance reforms contribute to service delivery improvements?*

**The research can only evidence association (rather than a firm or partial contribution) between general core governance interventions and sector governance improvements,** with PFM and E&A much better evidenced than PSM factors. Improving funding flows and accountability are *necessary conditions* for services to be delivered. A plausible connection can be made with UK PFM and E&A interventions which strengthened these ‘upstream’ core systems and which, as a result, improved ‘downstream’ health and education services:

- i. improving State Governments' capacity to plan, allocate and use financial resources in general and specifically in the health and education sectors. In both **Jigawa** and **Kaduna** SLGP, SPARC and PERL understood how to motivate politicians and officials to strengthen central systems, which also improved in health and education sectors (such as linking sector policies to plans and budgets). In **Kaduna**, the State Government has been able to use governance frameworks promoted by UK programmes to better coordinate development partners' support to health and education.
- ii. improving State Governments' capacity to engage with and respond to external pressures in general (e.g. through a more capable media or as a result of participatory budgeting) and also around health and education issues. In **Jigawa**, **Kaduna** and **Yobe** CSO and media capacities improved as a result of SAVI and PERL activities, and so did CSO health advocacy capacities.

When donor governance interventions pushed State Governments against political interests driving their service delivery programmes, they risked undermining health or education improvements. In **Kano**, Governors gained political credit with voters from school feeding and other education programmes, but embedding them in state systems would be against their interests.

**Targeted 'downstream' interventions by UK governance programmes provide stronger evidence of their contributions to service delivery** (and not just an association). There was strong evidence when SPARC, SAVI and PERL supported processes to address specific barriers to health or education delivery (such as funding reaching health facilities or schools;

trained teachers or nurses staying in post; or improving health or education accountability committees at the local or state level) and when they also collaborated with relevant UK health and education programmes.

**Ultimately, governance programmes that aim to develop sustainable capacity in specific sectors need to be able to flex between 'upstream' and 'downstream'.**

Governance for service delivery should not limit itself to centre of government reforms; it does not only start 'upstream' with policies or budgets flowing to 'downstream' service delivery. Conversely, core governance improvements can be stimulated by sector governance and service delivery improvements. And health and education sector programmes can at times push for unsustainable or unaffordable measures, which 'upstream' governance programmes can help governments identify. Governance programmes add value by ensuring a more sustainable framework: not simply sequential steps along a 'service delivery' chain, but a series of potentially mutually reinforcing interventions.

**The contrasting experience of Kano with that Jigawa, Kaduna and Yobe is that service delivery can improve, over the short to medium term, in the absence of improved governance, but that long-term, sustained improvements in service delivery probably do require core governance reform.** The political insecurity of Kano Governors motivated either visible education programmes that would give them 'political credit' with their support base, or accepting development partners' sector programmes because of their 'low political cost' and appeal to poor rural populations. Health and education outcomes can improve without deep governance reforms, sustained by funding from development partners.

**Ultimately, development partners can ‘buy’ health and education outcomes. This means that improved service delivery is not simply derived from State Governments’ more effective use of their resources** – the shared objective of DFID/FCDO governance programmes in Nigeria, as noted above. In the short term, development partners can fund service delivery (e.g. vaccination programmes, building schools, training nurses and teachers), which can lead to improved outcomes. But could improved access to health and education potentially generate citizens’ expectations of continuously improving services, and in this way incentivise politicians to invest in systems to make this happen? There is anecdotal evidence, for example of the **Kano** Governor having to continue to reinstate his political rival’s school-feeding programme, or the **Jigawa** Governor needing to increase funding for free maternal health services because of their popularity.

*How have UK programmes’ ways of working contributed to governance, health and education outcomes?*

**For over 15 years, UK governance programmes in Nigeria have been at the forefront of seeking to understand the political economy of their contexts, tailor interventions accordingly, and work in politically smart and adaptive ways.** They relied in particular on frontline delivery teams from these Northern states, who developed relationships of trust with State Governments and non-state actors, with deep contextual knowledge based on regular political economy analysis (PEA) and at times decentralised decision-making. This ability to ‘think and work politically’ (TWP) is the main reason why programmes were able to achieve the range of contributions to outcomes documented by the research. Based on these UK governance programme experiences, important

and internationally recognised lessons have been documented and disseminated inside DFID/FCDO, and globally.

**In order to ensure that governance interventions contribute to sector outcomes, DFID/FCDO has also encouraged close collaboration between its governance, health and education programmes** over the past two decades. There are many examples of programmes working together in a complementary and mutually supportive manner, and some results clearly derive from these synergies. There are, however, gaps and missed opportunities in cross-programme collaboration.

**The research’s main operational implication is that development partners’ governance and sector programmes need the capacity to TWP. This is not a new message, yet it is still not mainstreamed in development.**

In recent years, UK government development policies and processes, and the incentives they create for programme management and delivery, are increasingly preventing UK governance programmes in Nigeria from operating in TWP ways. The ‘authorising environment’ created by the UK Government has become increasingly constraining, for instance in demands to demonstrate short-term results and associated contract-management tools such as Payment by Results. As a consequence, UK governance programmes have probably achieved less than their full potential.

Given the report’s main findings that these programmes achieved most results when they tailored their interventions to a deep understanding of the context, and through their cumulative learning over nearly 20 years, the consequence is that DFID/FCDO incentives might be preventing their programmes from achieving

their full potential. Drastic cuts, organisational restructuring and changes in UK policy priorities in 2021 indicate that this trend is unlikely to be reversed in the near future.

**Finally, the realist synthesis methodology used by the research has demonstrated its value-added for TWP programmes: it opens up the ‘black box’ of incentives that can motivate the behaviour changes that can drive institutional change.** This helps unpack ‘political will’ assumptions too often made by programmes to justify their objectives and ways of operating, regardless of how realistic they appear. Table 1 provides a number of detailed illustrations. While the relevance of political and wider incentives is well acknowledged in the literature, there are fewer studies examining how interventions can contribute to changes by stimulating specific incentives in practice, taking different aspects of the context into account. It is therefore a useful addition to the TWP and adaptive management tool box.

## Recommendations

**To international development partners:**

- 1. Invest for the long term – 10 to 20 years – combining support for both state and non-state actors.** As the UK in Nigeria has shown, consistently investing in the same places and on similar issues contributes to results. Transformational changes can be achieved especially when interventions target how governments relate to their citizens, rather than only focusing on internal state processes.
- 2. Ensure programmes have the strategic-level mandate, managerial capacity and frontline staff skills to pursue politically savvy opportunities.** TWP requires not only programmes with the right staff and adaptive management systems, but most importantly,

an ‘authorising environment’ to operate in politically savvy, adaptive ways. This means less time on upwards reporting, and more time on analysing, testing, learning and sharing. And in the new COVID-19 context which requires localising development now more than ever, successful programmes will be those with staff well embedded in states, cities or rural areas where they live and work, with enough autonomy and delegated responsibilities.

- 3. Take PEA to the next level by unpacking ‘causal mechanisms’.** In some programmes, PEAs have at times become a tick-box exercise, even when staff have an in-depth understanding of the political context which shapes how they operate. Drawing on the insights of the realist synthesis approach, this Flagship report has shown how incentives can be understood and used to design interventions that provide the reasonings or resources to make change happen. Monitoring, evaluation and learning systems can then assess the relevance of causal mechanisms at play, and inform strategic decisions.
- 4. Give governance programmes the ability to flex between core governance and service delivery issues.** There is a tendency for governance programmes to focus on ‘upstream’ issues, such as state systems and processes, and not engage with how these systems actually influence the lives of citizens. The Flagship evidence shows more sustainable results are likely with E&A elements to the approach. This could mean, for example, including ‘downstream’ elements in centre of government programmes, to ensure a feedback loop between how services are provided and policy processes. Let programmes select the best entry points for change, even if they are not conventional or part of the expected ‘menu’ of sectors or policies designed in a programme document.

**5. Incentivise greater collaboration between governance and sector programmes.**

Development partners can manage tensions and rivalries between programmes implemented by different companies or grantees by putting the right incentives in place. This can include, for example, results framework objectives shared by governance, health and education programmes. How development partners organise themselves also sends messages to implementers and programme partners. Technical advisers shared across governance and sector teams can contribute to greater coherence.

**6. Incentivise greater attention to gender, and to social inclusion beyond disability issues, in governance programming.**

Governance programmes need to ask systematically: who benefits, who is excluded, why, and what can be done about it? They also need to differentiate between different civil society groups – whom do they claim to represent, and for whom do they actually speak? These issues should be explicitly embedded within the mandate of all governance programmes, broadening beyond gender and disability which are more commonly prioritised. This will reinforce attention to service users and accountability issues, more likely to contribute to sustained institutional change.

**To FCDO:**

**7. Empower and resource FCDO teams to enable TWP programmes.** There is a fear that the creation of FCDO in 2020 will affect the ability of UK development programmes to support locally led change by centralising decision-making in London. FCDO must ensure that decision-making autonomy is

maintained with country teams so they can respond to local priorities and retain advisory staff with the right skills and mindset. As the evidence provided in this report shows, this is likely to lead to a better use of UK taxpayers' contributions, with more sustainable results that contribute to poverty reduction.

**8. Re-imagine TWP for FCDO Nigeria.** These significant UK policy and budget changes since 2020 mean that FCDO Nigeria must design and manage programmes in radically different ways. Protecting the most significant governance investments, such as PERL, from further short-term budget insecurity, and giving programme implementers and their delivery teams the space to operate in TWP ways, is most likely to achieve FCDO Nigeria's objectives for these programmes.

**9. Incentivise stronger collaboration between PERL, Lafiya (health programme) and the Partnership for Learning for All in Nigerian Education.** FCDO Nigeria governance and human development teams should invest the time to develop and continuously send consistent messages to these large-scale state-level programmes. This will incentivise programme implementers to work in collaborative and complementary ways, drawing on 20 years of lessons summarised in this report.

**10. Invest in impact data analysis.** This research was possible because of the availability of impact-level data on core governance reforms and service delivery improvements. However, there is limited data on final service delivery outcomes from 2018 onwards. PERL's extension provides an opportunity to address this shortcoming, which will need to be resourced. FCDO should consider collecting such data in other long-running programmes.

**To partner governments in Nigeria and beyond:**

**11. Explicitly set out the objectives for which you would like to receive assistance.**

Programmes documented in this Flagship report achieved more results when they were aligned with political incentives. This lesson applies also to local actors who need to select with which bilateral or multilateral development partners they want to work, and around which shared objectives. If partner governments do not define their objectives, development partners will do it for them through their funding decisions.

**12. Use TWP principles to decide how development partners can support your political objectives.** TWP principles also apply to partner governments; they can use PEAs and ‘causal mechanisms’ to understand the incentives faced by the UK government and their other development partners, and the scope for politically-feasible and mutually-beneficial collaboration.

**13. Invest in the coordination of development partners.** While it may initially appear beneficial not to share too much information with development partners, it can result in wasted resources; development programmes may compete with one another or support contradictory interventions. State-led

coordination of development and humanitarian partners can release more resources towards political leaders’ objectives.

**To non-state partners in Nigeria and beyond:**

**14. Join coalitions to achieve your priorities.**

Most of the results documented in this report relied on some aspects of E&A interventions and were delivered through coalitions of state and non-state partners, including CSOs developing relationships with media, political actors and government officials. By working in coalitions, they achieved more than they could have on their own.

**15. Select development partners that can strengthen your skills, not just fund your activities.** Local civil society groups need financial support to pay staff and undertake activities. In the search for funding some organisations can lose sight of their main objectives. However, programmes such as SAVI and PERL have been able to offer something additional to funds: developing technical skills, such as understanding a budget, and learning to work through coalitions. These experiences can have longer-lasting benefits, such as gaining access to state-level decision-makers because of the new technical credibility gained and relationships forged.

**Table 1** ‘Causal mechanisms’ documented in the case studies

Incentives	Mechanisms	Description	Examples from the case studies
<p><b>Political incentives</b>  <i>They apply to Governors, Commissioners, SHoA members, other politicians as well as powerful actors (e.g. Emirs) who can initiate or block major reforms or routine activities.</i></p> <p><i>Finding: Necessary in all instances of significant change</i></p>	<p><b>Personal political credit-claiming</b></p>	<p>This mechanism incentivises politicians to support some targeted initiatives or wider reforms because they would lead to visible, concrete benefits which could be credited to individual politicians.</p> <p><i>Finding: more likely to be associated with visible, concrete changes in service delivery or infrastructure</i></p>	<p>Politicians need to consider donor-supported initiatives or reforms as beneficial to their political reputation as well as ability to strengthen the civil service to deliver their agenda. Governors El-Rufai in Kano and Lamido in Jigawa both sought political credit through <b>more competent administration</b> general. Internal improvements to state systems are less likely to generate political credit than investment in sector governance or <b>service delivery</b> (e.g. health funds released, teachers recruited) which can be associated with a Governor or Commissioner (such as in education in Jigawa, Kaduna or Kano).</p>
	<p><b>Political constituency linkages</b></p>	<p>This mechanism incentivises politicians to support targeted initiatives or wider reforms because they calculate that responsiveness to targeted (social or geographical) constituencies is critical to their re-election or continued popularity.</p> <p><i>Finding: subcategory of the political credit mechanism</i></p>	<p>This mechanism is potentially present due to patronage systems (by definition ‘clients’ expect benefits from their ‘patrons’) but militates against system-wide reforms, such as HRM or budget execution (that would reduce patronage). In the research, it was most visible when <b>SHoA members</b> were motivated to act in support of health or education initiatives that provided visible benefits to their constituencies, for example in female staff for health initiatives in Jigawa and beyond. <b>Participatory budgeting processes</b> can also appeal because of the mechanism: Yobe Community Charters of Demand enable politicians to appear responsive to their communities.</p>
	<p><b>Broader-based political legitimacy</b></p>	<p>This mechanism incentivises politicians to support more broad-based initiatives or wider reforms (e.g. more accessible service provision or more transparent policy processes) because these would lead to consolidating power through gaining trust among a wider section of society or realising a broader political vision (e.g. state-building, modernisation, peace).</p> <p><i>Finding: rarer but associated with potentially longer-lasting, institutionalised changes</i></p>	<p>The deep and sustained governance and service delivery <b>improvements in Jigawa</b> are associated with a state-building and broader political legitimacy agenda, in particular under Governor Lamido, which drove the most significant reforms with a long-lasting legacy across the four states. A more targeted example is provided by the <b>Yobe Community Charters of Demand</b> which, in a conflict-affected context, can be seen by politicians as a tool to build trust with disaffected populations (beyond targeted benefits to their communities).</p>

**Table 1** ‘Causal mechanisms’ documented in the case studies (continued)

Incentives	Mechanisms	Description	Examples from the case studies
<p><b>Political incentives</b></p>	<p><b>Low political cost</b></p>	<p>This is the counterpart to the positive political mechanisms described above. State Governments collaborate with development partners towards achieving policy objectives (such as participation and transparency, maternal health or primary education) because not being seen to collaborate and not improving access to these services would be too damaging: it could lead to unpopularity while the initiatives have low political cost (in terms of diverting resources away from patronage networks). In other words, initiatives or reforms demanded by communities or external actors are permissible as long as they are non-threatening and do not undermine politicians’ power base.</p>	<p>This mechanism offers the most powerful explanation of political incentives in non-conducive environments, such as <b>Kano health and education initiatives</b> (which are disconnected from wider governance reforms which would be politically too costly).</p>
<p><i>Finding: associated with less conducive environments</i></p>			
<p><b>Financial incentives</b></p> <p><i>They apply mostly to politicians and to bureaucrats who will benefit from the use of these funds.</i></p> <p><i>Finding: present in many but not all cases of change – seem associated with incentivising state actors</i></p>	<p><b>Accessing federal funds</b></p>	<p>This financial mechanism incentivises politicians and bureaucrats to adopt new laws and/or implement new processes to meet federal requirements because these initiatives allow them to access federal government funding. Domestication of federal laws at state level or State Governments providing matching funds are examples (though laws can be passed but not implemented) where mechanisms can be ‘fired’ by UK programme interventions (e.g. technical assistance to meet the requirements).</p>	<p>The case studies documented this mechanism in <b>health and education counterpart funding</b> in all the states (e.g. Kano case study). However, we did not find as much evidence for federal funds motivating governance reforms, although it may exist. Federal governance frameworks (e.g. PFM, procurement, SHoA financial independence) could incentivise change as a form of peer pressure / standard-setting (see separate mechanism) but the primary motivation had to come from state politicians (e.g. Governors Lamido or El-Rufai).</p>
<p><i>Finding: requires further evidence.</i></p>			

**Table 1** ‘Causal mechanisms’ documented in the case studies (continued)

Incentives	Mechanisms	Description	Examples from the case studies
<p><b>Financial incentives</b></p>	<p><b>Accessing international funds (through meeting programme conditions or through better aid coordination)</b></p>	<p>This second financial mechanism incentivises politicians and bureaucrats to adopt new laws and/or implement new processes to meet internationally set requirements because these initiatives allow them to access international funding to deliver their state-level agenda. UK programmes can ‘fire’ this mechanism, for example through support to government-led donor coordination (to access donor funds) or meeting programme conditions (e.g. meet Open Government Partnership criteria to access World Bank funds).</p> <p><i>Finding: financial incentives evidenced in all states (though not the coordination element)</i></p>	<p>State Fiscal Transparency Accountability and Sustainability (<b>SFTAS</b>) World Bank programme conditions in all four states incentivised PFM and PSM reforms, though to a much lesser degree in Kano.</p> <p>In Kano, accessing <b>World Bank health and education</b> funds to finance service delivery incentivised the limited sector governance reforms they required.</p> <p>Kaduna post-2015 made use of governance coordination framework to coordinate donors (e.g. health); Jigawa only provided time-limited examples (e.g. COVID-19).</p> <p>Yobe provides the only example of <b>humanitarian coordination</b> facilitated by PERL to enable to the State Government to gain greater control over funds greater than the state budget.</p>
<p><b>Bureaucratic incentives</b></p> <p><i>Expected to be present in all cases of internal state processes change – requires sufficient trust and autonomy from political leadership.</i></p> <p><i>Finding: They do not operate independently of political incentives: the bureaucracy needs to be given the political space and resources, and possess a minimum level of skills, to be motivated by these mechanisms</i></p>	<p><b>Politico-bureaucratic reform ownership</b></p>	<p>This mechanism incentivises bureaucrats to design and implement targeted or ambitious initiatives or reforms because they are motivated to deliver their self-identified priorities. UK governance programmes stimulate this mechanism by the way in which they operate, such as facilitative approaches to support self-assessments.</p> <p><i>Finding: evidenced in conducive contexts, activated by political incentives</i></p>	<p>Programmes and interventions are more or less able to stimulate ownership; it depends greatly on how assistance is offered. The first years of <b>SLGP were process-oriented</b> as documented in Jigawa PFM, pension and procurement reforms, as well as the <b>SPARC PFM self-assessments</b>. Where policy areas were imposed by DFID/FCDO, or technical reforms were part of a standard programme package, this mechanism was not activated (e.g. State Development Plans in Kano or in Kaduna pre-2015).</p>

**Table 1** ‘Causal mechanisms’ documented in the case studies (continued)

Incentives	Mechanisms	Description	Examples from the case studies
<b>Bureaucratic incentives</b>	<b>Innovators, state-building, early adopters and peer pressure</b>	<p>This family of similar mechanisms incentivises bureaucrats to design and implement ambitious initiatives or system-wide reforms because they are motivated to see their state transformed, for example being the first to innovate or to catch up with a more developed state. UK programmes can stimulate this mechanism, for example by providing opportunities for technical innovations or by supporting peer review or sharing examples between states.</p> <p><i>Finding: evidenced in newer, poorer states or after a change in leadership</i></p>	<p>Programmes and interventions can stimulate (but not always sustain) change by appealing to the desire to innovate, improve, and even to do better than others. There are numerous examples in <b>Jigawa</b> (PFM, procurement, pensions reform) where the state sought to out-do others. In Jigawa and <b>Yobe</b>, a commitment to build a new state was found among politicians, civil servants and civil society representatives. Kaduna post-2015 PFM reforms were also motivated in this way (e.g. high ranking in SFTAS).</p>
	<b>New skills and awareness</b>	<p>This is relevant for all UK programme interventions, whether working with state or non-state partners. In contexts where politicians have given the state civil service some autonomy (or SHoA members gain some independence from the executive), the provision of UK technical support and training can incentivise new practices because they respond to individual and organisational appetite for change among programme partners, and enable them to realise the powers they could gain by making use of their roles.</p> <p><i>Finding: used in some way in most interventions</i></p>	<p>Some mechanisms operate more clearly at the individual level, such as the feeling of empowerment through acquiring new skills or an improved ability to deliver a mandate. One illustration was <b>Kano SHoA</b> members’ awareness of their role, but a similar motivation will be found in <b>CSOs or civil service</b> initiatives that use mentoring or training (e.g. PMP members in Jigawa developing procurement monitoring skills or mentoring of senior women). For sustainable change, this mechanism needs to be associated with more enduring mechanisms that will help institutionalise new ways of working, such as the adoption of new norms.</p>

**Table 1** ‘Causal mechanisms’ documented in the case studies (continued)

Incentives	Mechanisms	Description	Examples from the case studies
<b>Bureaucratic incentives</b>	<b>Routinisation</b>	<p>This mechanism encourages the adoption and institutionalisation of new ways of working as they become part of the expected process of government. Government officials are motivated to follow improved policy, planning, budget cycle (or other newly introduced systems) because they learn to expect periodic revision, and the process is routinised (‘periodically revised’). In other words, stakeholders adopt shared norms, which enable government officials to introduce significant improvements to bureaucratic processes that contribute to outcomes.</p> <p><i>Finding: used in institutionalised processes, applies to civil servants and to those seeking to influence reforms and can find new entry points</i></p>	<p>This mechanism is relevant to the institutionalisation of new ways of working. It was most evident across <b>PFM reforms</b>, such as those on budget preparation and transparency as documented in the Yobe budget reform case study.</p>
<p><b>State–society relations incentives</b>  <i>These mechanisms were expected to be effective only if there is a minimum of civic and political space for engagement between citizens and governments on policy issues directly or via elected officials, media, CSOs or other organised interests.</i></p> <p><i>Findings:</i>  <i>Favourable political contexts during the period (less so in Kano).</i></p> <p><i>E&amp;A dimensions present in most outcomes.</i>  <i>Programmes mostly used constructive engagement approaches.</i></p>	<b>New public spaces and processes</b>	<p>This mechanism is a form of institutionalised constructive engagement. Government and societal/political representatives (e.g. civil society groups, private sector, SHoA members as elected representatives) identify and act on areas of shared interests and mutual benefits because newly created spaces or processes (e.g. transparent budgets, formal consultations) which are repeatedly used, over time, generate trust in each other’s intentions.</p> <p><i>Finding: used in almost all documented cases</i></p>	<p>This mechanism is most evident across budget transparency and participation interventions as well as health and education accountability platforms under SAVI and PERL in Jigawa, Kaduna and Yobe, but not in Kano. It is a characteristic of UK programmes’ <b>demand–supply integration</b> adopted by SAVI and PERL’s <b>multi-stakeholder coalitions</b>.</p>

**Table 1** ‘Causal mechanisms’ documented in the case studies (continued)

Incentives	Mechanisms	Description	Examples from the case studies
<p><b>Financial incentives</b></p>	<p><b>Accessing international funds (through meeting programme conditions or through better aid coordination)</b></p>	<p>This second financial mechanism incentivises politicians and bureaucrats to adopt new laws and/or implement new processes to meet internationally set requirements because these initiatives allow them to access international funding to deliver their state-level agenda. UK programmes can ‘fire’ this mechanism, for example through support to government-led donor coordination (to access donor funds) or meeting programme conditions (e.g. meet Open Government Partnership criteria to access World Bank funds).</p> <p><i>Finding: financial incentives evidenced in all states (though not the coordination element)</i></p>	<p>State Fiscal Transparency Accountability and Sustainability (<b>SFTAS</b>) World Bank programme conditions in all four states incentivised PFM and PSM reforms, though to a much lesser degree in Kano.</p> <p>In Kano, accessing <b>World Bank health and education</b> funds to finance service delivery incentivised the limited sector governance reforms they required.</p> <p>Kaduna post-2015 made use of governance coordination framework to coordinate donors (e.g. health); Jigawa only provided time-limited examples (e.g. COVID-19).</p> <p>Yobe provides the only example of <b>humanitarian coordination</b> facilitated by PERL to enable to the State Government to gain greater control over funds greater than the state budget.</p>
<p><b>Bureaucratic incentives</b></p> <p><i>Expected to be present in all cases of internal state processes change – requires sufficient trust and autonomy from political leadership.</i></p> <p><i>Finding: They do not operate independently of political incentives: the bureaucracy needs to be given the political space and resources, and possess a minimum level of skills, to be motivated by these mechanisms</i></p>	<p><b>Politico-bureaucratic reform ownership</b></p>	<p>This mechanism incentivises bureaucrats to design and implement targeted or ambitious initiatives or reforms because they are motivated to deliver their self-identified priorities. UK governance programmes stimulate this mechanism by the way in which they operate, such as facilitative approaches to support self-assessments.</p> <p><i>Finding: evidenced in conducive contexts, activated by political incentives</i></p>	<p>Programmes and interventions are more or less able to stimulate ownership; it depends greatly on how assistance is offered. The first years of <b>SLGP were process-oriented</b> as documented in Jigawa PFM, pension and procurement reforms, as well as the <b>SPARC PFM self-assessments</b>. Where policy areas were imposed by DFID/FCDO, or technical reforms were part of a standard programme package, this mechanism was not activated (e.g. State Development Plans in Kano or in Kaduna pre-2015).</p>

**Table 1** ‘Causal mechanisms’ documented in the case studies (continued)

Incentives	Mechanisms	Description	Examples from the case studies
<b>Bureaucratic incentives</b>	<b>Innovators, state-building, early adopters and peer pressure</b>	<p>This family of similar mechanisms incentivises bureaucrats to design and implement ambitious initiatives or system-wide reforms because they are motivated to see their state transformed, for example being the first to innovate or to catch up with a more developed state. UK programmes can stimulate this mechanism, for example by providing opportunities for technical innovations or by supporting peer review or sharing examples between states.</p> <p><i>Finding: evidenced in newer, poorer states or after a change in leadership</i></p>	<p>Programmes and interventions can stimulate (but not always sustain) change by appealing to the desire to innovate, improve, and even to do better than others. There are numerous examples in <b>Jigawa</b> (PFM, procurement, pensions reform) where the state sought to out-do others. In Jigawa and <b>Yobe</b>, a commitment to build a new state was found among politicians, civil servants and civil society representatives. Kaduna post-2015 PFM reforms were also motivated in this way (e.g. high ranking in SFTAS).</p>
	<b>New skills and awareness</b>	<p>This is relevant for all UK programme interventions, whether working with state or non-state partners. In contexts where politicians have given the state civil service some autonomy (or SHoA members gain some independence from the executive), the provision of UK technical support and training can incentivise new practices because they respond to individual and organisational appetite for change among programme partners, and enable them to realise the powers they could gain by making use of their roles.</p> <p><i>Finding: used in some way in most interventions</i></p>	<p>Some mechanisms operate more clearly at the individual level, such as the feeling of empowerment through acquiring new skills or an improved ability to deliver a mandate. One illustration was <b>Kano SHoA</b> members’ awareness of their role, but a similar motivation will be found in <b>CSOs or civil service</b> initiatives that use mentoring or training (e.g. PMP members in Jigawa developing procurement monitoring skills or mentoring of senior women). For sustainable change, this mechanism needs to be associated with more enduring mechanisms that will help institutionalise new ways of working, such as the adoption of new norms.</p>

**Table 1** ‘Causal mechanisms’ documented in the case studies (continued)

Incentives	Mechanisms	Description	Examples from the case studies
<b>Bureaucratic incentives</b>	<b>Innovators, state-building, early adopters and peer pressure</b>	<p>This family of similar mechanisms incentivises bureaucrats to design and implement ambitious initiatives or system-wide reforms because they are motivated to see their state transformed, for example being the first to innovate or to catch up with a more developed state. UK programmes can stimulate this mechanism, for example by providing opportunities for technical innovations or by supporting peer review or sharing examples between states.</p> <p><i>Finding: evidenced in newer, poorer states or after a change in leadership</i></p>	<p>Programmes and interventions can stimulate (but not always sustain) change by appealing to the desire to innovate, improve, and even to do better than others. There are numerous examples in <b>Jigawa</b> (PFM, procurement, pensions reform) where the state sought to out-do others. In Jigawa and <b>Yobe</b>, a commitment to build a new state was found among politicians, civil servants and civil society representatives. Kaduna post-2015 PFM reforms were also motivated in this way (e.g. high ranking in SFTAS).</p>
	<b>New skills and awareness</b>	<p>This is relevant for all UK programme interventions, whether working with state or non-state partners. In contexts where politicians have given the state civil service some autonomy (or SHoA members gain some independence from the executive), the provision of UK technical support and training can incentivise new practices because they respond to individual and organisational appetite for change among programme partners, and enable them to realise the powers they could gain by making use of their roles.</p> <p><i>Finding: used in some way in most interventions</i></p>	<p>Some mechanisms operate more clearly at the individual level, such as the feeling of empowerment through acquiring new skills or an improved ability to deliver a mandate. One illustration was <b>Kano SHoA</b> members’ awareness of their role, but a similar motivation will be found in <b>CSOs or civil service</b> initiatives that use mentoring or training (e.g. PMP members in Jigawa developing procurement monitoring skills or mentoring of senior women). For sustainable change, this mechanism needs to be associated with more enduring mechanisms that will help institutionalise new ways of working, such as the adoption of new norms.</p>

**Table 1** ‘Causal mechanisms’ documented in the case studies (continued)

Incentives	Mechanisms	Description	Examples from the case studies
<b>Bureaucratic incentives</b>	<b>Routinisation</b>	<p>This mechanism encourages the adoption and institutionalisation of new ways of working as they become part of the expected process of government. Government officials are motivated to follow improved policy, planning, budget cycle (or other newly introduced systems) because they learn to expect periodic revision, and the process is routinised (‘periodically revised’). In other words, stakeholders adopt shared norms, which enable government officials to introduce significant improvements to bureaucratic processes that contribute to outcomes.</p> <p><i>Finding: used in institutionalised processes, applies to civil servants and to those seeking to influence reforms and can find new entry points</i></p>	<p>This mechanism is relevant to the institutionalisation of new ways of working. It was most evident across <b>PFM reforms</b>, such as those on budget preparation and transparency as documented in the Yobe budget reform case study.</p>
<p><b>State–society relations incentives</b>  <i>These mechanisms were expected to be effective only if there is a minimum of civic and political space for engagement between citizens and governments on policy issues directly or via elected officials, media, CSOs or other organised interests.</i></p> <p><i>Findings:</i>  <i>Favourable political contexts during the period (less so in Kano).</i></p> <p><i>E&amp;A dimensions present in most outcomes.</i>  <i>Programmes mostly used constructive engagement approaches.</i></p>	<b>New public spaces and processes</b>	<p>This mechanism is a form of institutionalised constructive engagement. Government and societal/political representatives (e.g. civil society groups, private sector, SHoA members as elected representatives) identify and act on areas of shared interests and mutual benefits because newly created spaces or processes (e.g. transparent budgets, formal consultations) which are repeatedly used, over time, generate trust in each other’s intentions.</p> <p><i>Finding: used in almost all documented cases</i></p>	<p>This mechanism is most evident across budget transparency and participation interventions as well as health and education accountability platforms under SAVI and PERL in Jigawa, Kaduna and Yobe, but not in Kano. It is a characteristic of UK programmes’ <b>demand–supply integration</b> adopted by SAVI and PERL’s <b>multi-stakeholder coalitions</b>.</p>

**Table 1** ‘Causal mechanisms’ documented in the case studies (continued)

Incentives	Mechanisms	Description	Examples from the case studies
<b>State–society relations incentives</b>	<b>Insider status</b>	<p>This ‘personal networking’ or ‘insider’ mechanism is another form of constructive engagement. Government and social representatives identify and act on areas of shared interests and mutual benefits because personal relationships and private meetings can be used to put pressure on politicians more discreetly or convincingly than in public spaces or transparent processes. Such mechanisms would be more commonly used to pursue narrowly targeted interests but as part of UK programmes would be (eventually) associated with public measures.</p> <p><i>Finding: complemented ‘new spaces’ as an informal channel</i></p>	<p>This complementary mechanism was visible in most cases where SAVI or PERL supported <b>advocacy platforms</b> (such as health or education budget releases following personal meetings with governors, commissioners or SHoA members). However, one-off disbursements did not always constitute a strategy to achieve sustained changes.</p>
	<b>Eyes and ears</b>	<p>This mechanism enables non-state actors to influence government policy and practice through external monitoring and communication. If CSOs have the skills and mandate to assess performance, monitor government spending or implementation of commitments, and if there are communication channels (e.g. radio phone-in programmes or personal access to officials), citizens can influence State Governors, SHoAs or ministries (e.g. to release funds or improve in specific areas of service delivery) because their willingness to assess performance and the consistency of this monitoring and reporting back convinces Governors (and/or others with power) that they need to keep their promises, for example for electoral calculations.</p> <p><i>Finding: complemented ‘new spaces’ through evidence and credibility</i></p>	<p>This complementary mechanism ensured that CSOs and media motivated by ‘new public spaces’ had evidence from their monitoring and credibility when they participated in state processes. For example, the <b>Yobe Voice and Accountability Platform</b> and Constituency Clusters, or various examples of media interventions across the states.</p>

**Table 1** ‘Causal mechanisms’ documented in the case studies (continued)

Incentives	Mechanisms	Description	Examples from the case studies
State–society relations incentives	<b>Eyes and ears with voice and teeth</b>	<p>This is a type of diagonal accountability mechanism, where citizens, CSOs and the media working with state organisations can incentivise behaviour because the monitoring (‘eyes and ears’) and communication on the issue (‘voice’) is combined with credible action (‘teeth’).</p> <p><i>Finding: complemented ‘new spaces’ with sanction power</i></p>	<p>The best example was Jigawa’s institutionalised combination of the State <b>Due Process Bureau</b> alongside the Project Monitoring Partnership a CSO monitoring network with sanctions set by a government body. This contributed to an improved procurement system which seems to be incentivising private-sector behaviour. There were fewer examples of ‘teeth’ in the case studies.</p>
	<b>Naming and shaming</b>	<p>This is a less constructive form of public pressure which can be associated with more powerful sanction. Organised or represented citizens (through CSOs, media, private-sector bodies, individual SHoA members) can influence State Governors, SHoAs or ministries through different forms of public shaming: a Governor’s personal reputation (and in a politically competitive environment the fear of not being re-elected), a State Government’s reputation (e.g. social norms would demand that the needs of girls and women be respected), potential loss of aid (financial damage), or potential disruption to relationship with key political funders/backers.</p> <p><i>Finding: an alternative to collaborative approaches, rarely used in the reviewed UK governance programmes in Nigeria</i></p>	<p>The research identified very few confrontational examples, with <b>Kaduna Know Your Budget</b> the most commonly cited.</p> <p>The close SAVI/SPARC collaboration, PERL as an integrated programme, and DFID/FCDO’s desire to maintain good relationships with State Governments all militate against using these strategies in UK programme interventions.</p>