



The Independent Monitoring and Evaluation Project for the State Level Programmes (IMEP)

Final Evaluation of the State Level Programmes: Review of Coordination and Management Issues
Final Draft

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	i
Executive Summary	ii
Overview	ii
The SLPs within DFID's state portfolio	ii
Management and coordination	iii
Conclusions	iii
Implications	iv
Table of Acronyms and Abbreviations	v
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Background: The State Level Programmes and the Final Evaluation	1
1.2 Objectives and Evaluation Questions addressed	1
1.3 Data sources used	3
1.4 Structure of the Report	4
2 The SLPs and DFID in Nigeria	5
2.1 The SLP design concept and initial implementation	5
2.2 The Suite concept and DFID's current pattern of engagement in Nigeria	8
3 Effectiveness of Coordination	11
3.1 Initial approaches to Suite management and coordination	11
3.2 The development of DFID's approach to state engagement	12
3.3 Assessments of the effectiveness of coordination and management	13
3.3.1 Perspectives from DFID Staff	13
3.3.2 Perspectives from the SLPs	14
4 Conclusions	16
4.1 SLP implementation	16
4.2 Coordination arrangements	16
4.3 Possible implications	18
Annex A: DFID Nigeria Programmes in the SLP States	19
Annex B: Overview of DFID Nigeria Projects and Locations	23

Executive Summary

Overview

This report (as part of the Final Evaluation of DFID's State Level Programmes in Nigeria) examines how DFID's strategic and management decisions and processes have impacted on SLP implementation as well as the effectiveness and influence of the coordination arrangements between the SLPs as a way to improve synergies between them. It is based on the following sources of information:

- The Suite Mid-Term Review (finalised in 2012) and the 2014 Lesson Learning Review, both prepared by IMEP.
- Documentation on the development of DFID's country strategy for Nigeria and on the main strategic and management decisions that DFID Nigeria has taken.
- Documentation on DFID's approach to state level engagement including State Engagement Strategies for 2013-15.
- A tabulation of information on the profile by state of DFID's activities in Nigeria.
- Preparation of timelines of key events for each of the SLPs.
- Questionnaires administered through an online survey and interviews with DFID staff, and a meeting with DFID Nigeria's Regional Team.
- Questionnaires administered through an online survey of the SLPs.
- Comments from the Evaluation Steering Committee and DFID staff on presentations of earlier drafts of this report.

The SLPs within DFID's state portfolio

The Suite Mid Term Review in 2012 concluded that the design process for the programmes militated against the original design concept for the Suite (envisaging a mutually reinforcing process of addressing governance and service delivery constraints in states with a demonstrated willingness to reform) through the fact that each programme was separately designed and managed without effective cross-sectoral perspectives or mechanisms to require the achievement of results jointly.

The period since the MTR has seen a continuing dilution of the significance of the SLPs within DFID's state engagement. The main legacy of the Suite in terms of DFID's state programme structure is therefore best seen as the way in which

attention to supply and demand side governance through SPARC and SAVI remains at the core of DFID's interventions in those states with which it regards itself as most deeply involved. However, the clear link to system-wide sector reform in education and health has not been taken forward beyond the original five SLP states, while the link to growth-focused programmes was never in practice implemented as a core part of the Suite approach.

Management and coordination

The Suite MTR concluded that DFID had limited capacity to exercise strategic management of the Suite and did not undertake effective oversight or risk management across the SLPs as a whole. The MTR identified several factors as contributing to this including: a lack of clearly defined accountabilities within DFID Nigeria for the Suite as a whole, a "silo" structure that limited joint work across sectors, variable effectiveness of devolution of authority to Regional Offices, and high levels of advisory staff turnover. Since then, there have been some initiatives to strengthen the role of DFID's state representation and there has been some effective coordination and collaboration where this has helped each programme achieve its separate objectives. The axis between SPARC and SAVI has been strong, but linkages with other programmes weaker.

Conclusions

It is clear that the complete SLP Suite concept as originally articulated is now of little relevance to DFID, and coordination across the SLPs as originally defined is not an appropriate objective. The GEMS programmes have never been effectively integrated into a single approach and DFID's pattern of engagement in the states in which it works as a priority has not been based on a replication of the SLP concept. What does remain important from the original Suite intervention logic is the need to address governance issues (both accountability and the effectiveness of key public management systems) as part of any attempt to improve service delivery.

While there has been some progress in establishing collaborative arrangements where this has been mutually beneficial to help programmes achieve their objectives, the core constraints to effective and flexible collaboration remain and have changed relatively little over the period since the Suite was developed. They can be summarised as follows:

- DFID's programmes operating in states remain largely separately designed and managed within thematic or sectoral silos that are deeply rooted in DFID culture and management practice.
- Results frameworks and accountability for them focus on activities directly under the control of each programme, rather than on joint results.
- It would appear that there has been some move away from the model of trying to support comprehensive organisational reform of the state basic

health and education systems (which was the objective of ESSPIN and PATHS2) towards more limited forms of sectoral intervention. There has also been a continuing relative lack of focus on Local Governments, despite their key role in service delivery and accountability.

- There has been some strengthening and increased recognition of the role of DFID’s state representation, but DFID State Engagement Strategies do not articulate a comprehensive “One DFID” approach, or a fully developed analytical basis or adequate Theory of Change.

Where there are relatively strong initiatives from states to set out clear development plans and priorities and a willingness actively to manage donor coordination mechanisms around these (most notably in Kaduna and Lagos) this does appear to be encourage better coordination within the DFID portfolio.

Implications

Two main linked areas of action may be identified for DFID as emerging from this study so far:

- DFID still needs to strengthen its strategic analysis and management at the state level. There does not appear to be an explicit process of managing the portfolio as a whole in each state and effectively addressing risks and identifying and responding to positive opportunities as they emerge.
- Since the scope for being able to use aid resources flexibly across the existing project portfolio in states (in support of wider state level strategic objectives) is likely to remain very limited, it may be desirable to have additional resources available that can be used in a more responsive way to respond to opportunities as they emerge.

Table of Acronyms and Abbreviations

BCIA	Big Common Impact Areas
CUBE	Capacity for Universal Basic Education
DFID	Department for International Development
ESSPIN	Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria
EQ	Evaluation Question
FEPAR	Federal Public Administration Reform Programme
GEMS	Growth, Employment and Markets in States
IMEP	Independent Monitoring and Evaluation Project
LGA	Local Government Area
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MTR	Mid Term Review
MTSS	Medium Term Sector Strategy
PATHS	Partnership for Transforming Health Systems
SAVI	State Accountability and Voice Initiative
SLP	State Level Programme
SPARC	State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability

1 Introduction

1.1 Background: The State Level Programmes and the Final Evaluation

This study forms part of the Final Evaluation of DFID's State Level Programmes (SLPs) in Nigeria, which is being undertaken by the Independent Monitoring and Evaluation Project (IMEP). The SLPs are five programmes with a combined budget of around £510 million:

- The State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability Programme (SPARC), which focuses on public management and finance;
- The State Accountability and Voice Initiative (SAVI) which focuses on the development of civil society and State Houses of Assembly;
- The Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN);
- The Partnership for Transforming Health Systems (PATHS2); and
- Growth and Employment in States (GEMS) dealing with the business enabling environment and private sector development.

These programmes were designed to work primarily at state level with some federal level activities, initially focused on five states (Enugu, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano and Lagos). The SLPs were preceded by earlier DFID initiatives aimed at strengthening service delivery and supporting reform, largely in the same states.¹ All the SLPs (except GEMS whose implementation began in 2010) started in mid-2008. The overall objective of the SLPs has been to contribute to Nigeria's progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly through the better use of Nigeria's own resources.

The Final Evaluation seeks to identify what has been achieved from DFID's support and the lessons that emerge from the experience, including for future DFID support to development in Nigeria but also for DFID programming elsewhere and for wider integrated approaches to development assistance. The Final Evaluation of the SLPs will be completed by September 2016. The approach and methodology for the Final Evaluation (including the full list of Evaluation Questions) is set out in the Final Evaluation Inception Report.

1.2 Objectives and Evaluation Questions addressed

This report examines how DFID's strategic and management decisions and processes have impacted on SLP implementation as well as the effectiveness and influence of the coordination arrangements between the SLPs as a way to improve synergies between them.

¹ These were the State and Local Government Programme (SLGP) from 2001-8, Capacity for Universal Basic Education (CUBE) with two phases from 2002-6 and 2006-8, and the Partnership for Transforming Health Systems (PATHS) from 2002-8.

Within the framework for the Final Evaluation this report provides evidence in relation to Evaluation Question (EQ) A.2, “How were the SLPs implemented and why did implementation differ from the original design?” focusing specifically on the following sub-questions:

- What factors influenced decisions made about the implementation of the SLPs (including expansion beyond the original states)?
 - Over the period since 2008 what have been the main strategic decisions that DFID Nigeria has taken that have influenced the SLPs and DFID’s engagement in the SLP states? What factors influenced the decisions made? What have been the effects of these decisions?
 - How has DFID responded to evidence of differing levels of commitment by stakeholders to the reforms that SLPs have been advocating or supporting?
 - To what extent has DFID implemented the recommendations of the Suite MTR? What factors influenced the response to the recommendations?
- How effective have arrangements been for coordination between SLPs nationally and at state level?
 - How have the SLPs sought to coordinate their activities in the SLP states to improve effectiveness and synergies between them? How has coordination changed over the evaluation period? How effective has coordination been between the SLPs, and how might it have been improved?
 - How has DFID’s approach to engagement (including political analysis and seeking to achieve influence and build ownership) and coordination at state level developed over the evaluation period? How effective has this engagement been? What have been the challenges for state-level engagement, and how might it have been improved?
 - How has DFID sought to coordinate its approach across the sectors in which the SLPs have worked (for instance in relation to the role of advisers)? How effective has this coordination been? What have been the challenges for this coordination, and how might it have been improved?

It also provides evidence in relation to the following sub-question of EQ A.1 (“Was the SLP suite the right approach to achieve the objectives when it was conceived?”):

- Was the intervention logic behind the suite valid?

In relation to lessons, (EQ E.2) the Suite Analysis principally addresses the following sub-question:

- What are the lessons for DFID's future engagement at state level?

The approach used has been to draw on a combination of secondary sources and primary data collected from key informants in order to provide perspectives from in particular DFID staff and the SLPs.

1.3 Data sources used

The Suite Analysis has drawn on the following sources of information:

- The Suite Mid-Term Review (finalised in 2012) and the 2014 Lesson Learning Review, both prepared by IMEP.
- Documentation on the development of DFID's country strategy for Nigeria and on the main strategic and management decisions that DFID Nigeria has taken over the period of SLP implementation that have influenced resourcing and programme focus.
- Documentation on DFID's approach to state level engagement including State Engagement Strategies for 2013-15.
- A tabulation of information on the profile by state of DFID's activities in Nigeria.
- Preparation of timelines of key events for each of the SLPs.
- Questionnaires administered through an online survey and interviews with DFID staff,² and a meeting with DFID Nigeria's Regional Team (held in Abuja on 1st September 2015).
- Questionnaires administered through an online survey of the SLPs. This focused on coordination arrangements and collaboration between the SLPs, DFID's role in programme management and coordination, the realisation of synergies between the SLPs, and developments since the Suite MTR in 2012.
- Comments and discussion following presentation of earlier drafts of the report to the SLP Final Evaluation Steering Committee and to DFID staff in Abuja.

²² The potential DFID key information identified included Deputy Heads of DFID Nigeria over the evaluation period. DFID staff responsible for management of the SLPs, DFID State and Regional Team members, and DFID Results advisers. Only nine responses were received from 34 potential key informants, but a wider group of DFID staff provided comments following a presentation of an earlier draft in Abuja in January 2016.

1.4 Structure of the Report

The remainder of the report is structured as follows. Section 2 describes how the SLP Suite has evolved within the wider context of DFID's engagement in Nigeria. Section 3 presents findings on the effectiveness of SLP coordination arrangements and synergies achieved between the programmes. Section 4 summarises conclusions and lessons, and possible implications for the remainder of the evaluation.

The following information is annexed to the main draft report. Annex A contains a list of the DFID projects (SLPs and others) that have operated in the five core SLP states over the evaluation period. Annex B provides a summary of the states in which DFID projects are being implemented.

2 The SLPs and DFID in Nigeria

2.1 The SLP design concept and initial implementation³

As noted in the Suite MTR, the submission to the DFID Secretary of State in November 2007 presenting the SLP Suite concept argued that the predecessor programmes to the SLPs⁴ had shown that:

“Achieving a transformation in the capacity of State Governments to deliver effective public services and to support growth requires that our programmes are mutually reinforcing and focus explicitly on systemic change. Only some of the weaknesses which undermine the effective delivery of education or health care are sector specific. Core problems around the management of finance and people cut right across the Government system and need to be tackled simultaneously at both sectoral and central levels... Interdependence between the programmes is central to their design and is reinforced at the purpose level, with public financial management and public sector reforms supported by SPARC facilitating reforms in the sectors, and with sectoral level reforms driving and feeding into the central reform process from below.”

The original Suite concept in 2007 envisaged three sectoral programmes, focused on education, health and growth, with a single governance programme with two components, focusing on the support and demand sides of government reform. The five states initially selected were Cross River, Enugu, Kano, Kaduna, and Lagos mainly on the basis of these having been selected as “better performing” in a 2005/6 benchmarking exercise carried out by central government, along with population, poverty levels and record of working with development partners.

Cross River was subsequently replaced by Jigawa,⁵ and the envisaged single governance programme divided into two (SPARC and SAVI). The voice and accountability components of the education and health programmes however remained part of ESSPIN and PATHS2. While the principal focus of the SLPs was at the state level, both ESSPIN and PATHS2 also contained components focusing on the Federal level policy framework. A separate DFID programme (the Federal Public Administration Reform Programme - FEPAR) was focused on federal level public administration reform, though SPARC has also had a federal work stream designed to strengthen the Federal Government’s support and incentives to States to improve performance.

The Suite MTR that was completed in 2012 concluded that the design process for the programmes militated against the original design concept in several ways, with each programme being effectively separately designed:

³ This section is based on a summary of Section 2 of the Suite MTR, 2012.

⁴ The State and Local Government Programme (SLGP) from 2001-8; Capacity for Universal Basic Education (CUBE), Phase 1 from 2002-6, Phase 2 from 2006-8; Partnership for Transforming Health Systems (PATHS) from 2002-8.

⁵ Reflecting an increased desire from DFID to focus on poor states in Northern Nigeria.

- Design of the SLPs was undertaken by separate teams of specialists, accountable to sector advisers – the option of having one multi-sectoral programme per state was considered but rejected;
- There was little if any interaction between the design teams to identify synergies or to address coordination issues, with it being envisaged that coordination arrangements would be developed by the selected service providers;
- Project designs did not refer to synergies between programmes (other than the assumption that other programmes would succeed), or to the joint planning or implementation of activities, or provide any basis for accountability for contractor performance in relation to cooperation with other SLP contractors;
- The growth programme was originally intended to help state governments improve the performance of key sectors and the overall investment climate (to be jointly designed and executed with the World Bank). This was transformed into a set of sectoral programmes operating in the states where each sector was significant, with one programme (GEMS 3) concerned with improving the business environment;
- The detailed design of each programme took place separately through their inception processes, without any specific requirements for collaboration.

The 2009 Inception Review for the Suite had already identified the tensions between the Suite concept and the design process and concluded that:

- States had not and were not likely to exercise effective management and oversight over the SLPs;
- Risks included lack of sustained and strong political commitment from states, internal weaknesses in the Suite design, institutional weaknesses (notably in relations between levels of government), inconsistencies in the quality and content of governance reform models between the SLPs, and weak arrangements for performance management and co-ordination of the SLPs at State and national level

The Inception Review suggested the following measures to address these risks:

- Establishment of Memoranda of Understanding between DFID and the states based around agreed performance indicators;
- Clarification of programme assumptions and definition and monitoring of indicators of political commitment;
- Redesign of relationships between the SLPs and links with Nigerian partners;
- Strengthened DFID role in the management and oversight of the SLPs at federal and state level;

- Strengthened processes to address key cross-cutting reform themes (medium term planning and budgeting, voice and accountability and gender empowerment).

The Suite MTR concluded that further design weaknesses of the SLP Suite related to the assumption that State Governments and DFID had shared goals and priorities related to achievement of the MDGs, whereas in fact state ownership of these goals has varied between states and over time. It also noted that the need for DFID to have overarching state level engagement strategies had been identified from the experience of the predecessor programmes, but that this issue was not given attention during the design process.

The Suite MTR also noted several further features of the implementation process specifically that DFID was expanding its budgets and particularly its activities in Northern States and was required to have a stronger focus on achieving the MDGs and on demonstrating value for money. The delay in the development and implementation of the growth component of the Suite and the move away from an integrated approach to addressing growth constraints to the separate GEMS packages meant that the Suite was never implemented according to the original concept of addressing health, education and growth.

In practice the principal focus was on the seeking to improve health and education service provision within a wider framework of governance and accountability reforms. As DFID's engagement in Nigeria deepened (in terms of the levels of expenditure) and broadened (to involve more states), the approach taken was the selective expansion of some of the Suite programmes to more states (notably SAVI and SPARC which eventually covered ten states) without wider implementation of the Suite as whole, along with a range of new programmes (many of which were education and health focused).

The Suite MTR concluded that important insights from the Suite concept had guided DFID's subsequent engagement, notably:

- The recognition that the resources that DFID can provide are small relative to what was needed to achieve the MDGs, so that increasing the effectiveness of the use of Nigeria's own resources was of critical importance;
- That sustainable improvements in government health and education services require changes in how state centre-of-government ministries function and changes in the relationship between state and local government;
- Progress in accountability is required to improve the functioning of public institutions and the delivery of public services.

The MTR also concluded that an approach to expanding DFID's involvement in more states through a roll out of the Suite model, rather than through seeking to tailor interventions to state needs, would have been inappropriate, particularly as attention focused on states that were selected principally on the basis of need,

rather than of a promising track record of reform progress and signs of political commitment to reforms.

Subsequent experience has highlighted⁶ how the weakness of Local Government capacity and budget systems has constrained and limited the sustainability of health and education reforms undertaken at state level. The focus on state level in the Suite concept can be seen as necessary to achieve improved performance in service delivery, but action at state level alone is not sufficient given the role of Local Government in management and supervision of frontline service provision. Both ESSPIN and PATHS2 have placed an increasing focus on action at Local Government level, though there are major challenges in achieving state-wide coverage and sustainability of interventions at this level. The ESSPIN and PATHS2 capacity studies also noted that Federal leadership on education and health policy has not generally been strong over the period of SLP implementation.

2.2 The Suite concept and DFID's current pattern of engagement in Nigeria

The process of development of DFID's engagement at state level in Nigeria since the Suite MTR was conducted in 2011/2 can be characterised as involving a further dilution of the Suite concept as the basis of DFID's state level intervention. The main features of the development included the following:

- Implementation of expansion of SPARC and SAVI into new states beyond the original Suite states, so that from 2012 SPARC was also operating in Anambra, Katsina, Niger, Yobe and Zamfara, and SAVI in Katsina, Yobe and Zamfara. DFID defined its eight "focal states" in Nigeria as the original five SLP states plus Katsina, Yobe and Zamfara. DFID's engagement in these eight states are referred to as "in-depth state partnerships" in DFID's Operational Plan documents;
- The diversification of DFID's interventions in education and health through the establishment of a range of new programmes, rather than through the roll out of ESSPIN and PATHS2 (or versions of them) to new states. This may be seen in both sectors as a move away from a principal (though never exclusive) focus on system-wide reform and addressing sector governance and management as a central part of improving service delivery.
- A process of articulation of Theories of Change for the SLPs and of development of their results frameworks, but with no further attempts to try to develop a Suite level logframe or results framework, following the development of "Big Common Impact Areas" (BCIAs) which are discussed in the next section.

An analysis of the profile of DFID's current pattern of state engagement, as shown in Annexes A and B shows how elements of the Suite approach (in terms of the combination of governance-focused and service-delivery focused) interventions remain in DFID's programme, and how DFID's state-level engagement remains

⁶ See the PATHS2 and ESSPIN capacity development studies, carried out as part of the Final Evaluation.

relatively heavily concentrated in the original five SLP states. In each of these states (as shown by the table in Annex B) a range of additional programmes has been implemented, including further interventions in education and health, though the GEMS programmes were only implemented in three of the five SLP states (Kaduna, Kano and Lagos). In 2016, the successor programmes to SPARC and SAVI have been contracted and are beginning operations. These have been jointly designed but separately contracted across three pillars (covering public management reform, accountability, and monitoring and learning) though with coordination arrangements between the pillars being established. This programme is now concentrating on three states (Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano).

Table 1 provides an analysis of the pattern of DFID's state level spending (defined in terms of estimated input towards results in states, rather than the physical location of spend) in 2014/15.⁷ This shows that the SLPs account for 39% of DFID's state level spending across the whole programme, rising to 54% of spending in the original five SLP states. If spending on GEMS is omitted (since the GEMS programmes have not in practice formed part of the core of the suite as it was implemented), the totals are 29% and 41% respectively. The comparative totals are 44% and 33% in the eight focal states.

Table 1 Analysis of DFID State Level Spending, 2014/15

	All States	5 SLP States	8 Focal States
Total DFID State Expenditure	132,390,000	63,550,000	87,490,000
SLP Total	51,190,000	34,550,000	38,690,000
SLP Total less GEMS	38,130,000	26,220,000	29,090,000
SLP Total Including IMEP	52,140,000	34,900,000	39,120,000
SLP Total (%)	39%	54%	44%
SLP Total less GEMS (%)	29%	41%	33%

These figures show that in spending terms, the SLPs remain a significant part of DFID's total state engagement, and are a relatively larger part of DFID's engagement in those states in which DFID is most deeply engaged. However, a high proportion of DFID spending takes place outside the SLPs even when defined to include the GEMS programmes. If GEMS is excluded, the SLPs account for only just over 41% of DFID state spending even in those states where they are most deeply established.

⁷ Comparable estimated are not available for earlier years.

The main legacy of the Suite in terms of DFID's state programme structure is therefore best seen as the way in which attention to supply and demand side governance through SPARC and SAVI remains at the core of DFID's interventions in those states with which it regards itself as most deeply involved. However, the clear link to system-wide sector reform in education and health has not been taken forward beyond the original five SLP states, while the link to growth-focused programmes was never in practice implemented.

3 Effectiveness of Coordination

3.1 Initial approaches to Suite management and coordination

The Suite MTR noted several initiatives and processes that were envisaged as contributing to management and coordination across the SLPs, and assessed their influence and effectiveness:

- Structured Approach Papers were prepared in 2009 to guide SLP contractors in handling common themes and issues confronting the programmes. These were regarded as having provided useful guidance, particularly on the process of developing Medium Term Sector Strategies (MTSSs).
- The definition of “Big Common Impact Areas” (BCIAs) was intended to provide a focus for the SLPs on results, in part in response to the agenda of the new Coalition government elected in the UK in May 2010 for a greater focus on impact and value for money. The BCIAs were developed during 2010. They were regarded as helping strengthen the results focus of the SLPs but the fact that they were introduced just after the SLPs had finalised two year work programmes reduced the scope for influencing programme activities. As a result the BCIAs largely concentrated on the presentation of activities that were already planned. The Suite MTR noted that this may have been a missed opportunity to strengthen attention to issues that had already been identified as potentially requiring more attention, including LGA development, the mainstreaming of gender, and state human resource management, training and employment policies.
- Joint political economy analysis was useful for enhancing SLP understanding of the context in which they were working and in informing approaches to political engagement.
- The envisaged DFID/SLP National Programme Manager Steering Committee met only infrequently. DFID appears not to have actively addressed the management of risks at the level of the Suite as a whole, with actions being taken principally by each individual SLP.
- State government level SLP Steering Committees which had been envisaged were never formed, partly because of a lack of perceived value to this for state governments – although in some states (Lagos, and more recently Kaduna) wider coordinating mechanisms with development partners were developed.
- There were active processes of the meetings of SLP teams in each states, under SPARC chairmanship, though the effectiveness of these in achieving coordinated action varied.
- The Suite Inception Review had recommended the agreement of MoUs between DFID Nigeria and State Governments. They were envisaged as

providing state level results frameworks around which coordination could develop along with joint accountability. In practice while these were prepared they did not have strong State Government ownership or engagement and do not appear to have influenced implementation.

- No overarching logframe or M&E plan was developed for the SLP Suite. IMEP (contracted to provide M&E for the Suite from 2011) subsequently developed a proposed M&E framework for the Suite, including proposed outcome indicators. This was not adopted and in the absence of an active joint state-level process of managing against results, and with each SLP being managed against its own largely separately developed logframe, there has been little traction for such initiatives.

The Suite MTR concluded that DFID had limited capacity to exercise strategic management of the Suite and did not undertake effective oversight or risk management across the SLPs as a whole. The MTR identified several factors as contributing to this including: a lack of clearly defined accountabilities within DFID Nigeria for the Suite as a whole, a “silo” structure that limited joint work across sectors, variable effectiveness of devolution of authority to Regional Offices, and high levels of advisory staff turnover.

3.2 The development of DFID’s approach to state engagement

Partly in response to the findings of the Suite MTR, DFID sought to develop a stronger approach to state level engagement from 2012. In April 2012, DFID Nigeria Management highlighted the need to encourage systematic analysis at state level (for instance through state peer reviews) and that SPARC and SAVI would play a key role in scaling into new states (such as Anambra and Niger), while decisions about state engagement should be informed by analysis of both political will and technical capacity in each state.

A review by DFID’s SLP Core Group in May 2012 noted that attention should move beyond the SLPs to a focus on managing the whole DFID portfolio in each state, while continuing to implement the principle that governance and improving service delivery needed to be addressed jointly. It was noted that DFID’s state level representation was of key importance, and that the objective should be to exploit identified synergies between programmes, rather than to require comprehensive collaboration. Several management implications for DFID were noted, including the importance of regular (though not annual) state level review processes and results reporting that looked across DFID’s engagement in each state as a whole, and the need for consultative processes to inform decision-making so that programmes focus on agreed priority states.

Subsequently, State Engagement Strategies have been developed for DFID’s focal states, mainly covering the periods from 2013-15. The Engagement Strategy documents were intended to highlight DFID’s current priorities in each state, outline key contextual information about the state and key stakeholders, and to provide a basis for policy direction and consistent messaging on DFID’s priorities and

approach in each state. Each Strategy included an identification of actions required to address priority issues. Each Strategy also included a summary statement of the main development challenges and the main focus of DFID attention (labelled as a “Theory of Change”). While the articulation of “priority issues” provided a basis for taking a perspective across the DFID portfolio in each state, there was no attempt to develop an overall state level results framework.

From April 2015, the structure of DFID’s Regional Team was changed. Previously State Representatives in Lagos and Enugu had reported directly to the Deputy Head of Office, while other State Representatives reported to DFID’s office in Kano. Under the new structure, the intention is that all the State Representatives will operate as a single team with a common reporting structure, so as to improve lesson sharing across states and to strengthen regular coordination processes. It was also noted that the continuing combination of an increase in DFID Nigeria’s overall programme funding and a squeeze on administrative budgets (impacting in particular on the extent to which Abuja-based advisers could spend time in the field) was leading to greater recognition of the role of the Regional Team in managing DFID’s engagement in states.

3.3 Assessments of the effectiveness of coordination and management

3.3.1 Perspectives from DFID Staff⁸

DFID staff who responded⁹ to the survey questionnaire considered that there had been some improvements in the effectiveness of arrangements for coordination between the SLPs and with other DFID programmes over the period since 2008. No respondents rated either national or state level coordination as more than slightly effective in 2008, whereas in 2015 none rated it as lower than slightly effective, and coordination in some states was rated more highly than this. Respondents judged that there had been some improvements since 2012 in addressing problems identified in the Suite MTR, with generally the rating of progress in the areas of improving flexibility to reallocate resources in response to context and opportunity, incentives for state governments to make effective use of TA, and learning from experience being higher than the rating of progress in ensuring a design or management structure to ensure that each SLP works for a common purpose.

Examples cited as involving effective coordination and collaboration included work on strengthening budgeting involving SPARC, SAVI and the other programmes, and more effective coordination in some states where this could be done around well-articulated state government priorities (Lagos) and donor coordination processes (Kaduna). Generally coordination was seen as most effective in Kaduna, Lagos and Jigawa. However generally there remained a lack of flexibility

⁸ This discussion is based on the Survey of DFID staff and meetings with the DFID Regional Team and with other DFID Nigeria staff.

⁹ The low response rate to the survey may potentially itself be an indicator of a relative lack of interest among DFID staff in Suite level management issues.

and incentives for effective work across programmes, and examples were cited of inconsistencies between the advocacy approaches of SLPs.

The actions identified as necessary to ensure more effective coordination between DFID programmes (not just the SLPs) were to address the lack of common goals and vision across programmes and sectors, with a clear theory of change to guide DFID strategy in each state being the appropriate common thread, along with the provision of incentives for joint deliverables across programmes (by incorporating these into logframes). This needed to be supported by more effective decentralisation of decision-making to the state level, and modes of intervention that provided more flexibility to tailor interventions to the particular state context.

Perspectives from the DFID Regional Team on these issues were that formalised coordination attempts at state level had not been very effective so far, but that the process of establishing a Monthly Programme Diary in each state had been helpful in improving coordination including with DFID programmes outside the SLP Suite. Members of the Regional Team also noted that the original Suite concept involved SPARC taking the lead on state level coordination but that DFID needed to play a more active role, and that it was important to move away from thinking in terms of the SLP Suite to a perspective across the whole of DFID's engagement in each state. Separate programme logframes and accountability against separate rather than joint objectives and deliverables (exacerbated by programmes operating over different timescales) continued to militate against effective coordination, though some progress was being made in addressing this. Some examples were cited of using the Regional Initiative Fund to support catalytic interventions that were outside the responsibilities of existing programmes. DFID's State Representation was seen as fulfilling a valuable role in providing an understanding of the context and facilitating high level political dialogue. A clear message was that effective coordination was much easier where State governments wanted to take an active lead in this process and were developing both clear state level strategies and their own coordination systems for development partners.

3.3.2 Perspectives from the SLPs

The SLPs considered that at the national cross-programme level there was some useful sharing of information and experience through the SLP National Programme Managers Meeting, and some example of effective joint work at this level which has been driven by perceived joint needs where these exist. The general picture was of a strong SPARC-SAVI axis with engagement with both ESSPIN and PATHS2. However, it was noted that ESSPIN and PATHS2 were designed as stand-alone programmes without necessarily requiring close collaboration with SPARC and SAVI. This had happened where mutual advantages had been identified, but there were some examples of inconsistency in approach for engagement on accountability issues between SAVI and the sectoral programmes. The GEMS programmes were almost entirely outside this system and not involved in active coordination or collaboration.

At state level, coordination had generally been ranked more highly in Kaduna than in other states (as a result of state government led attempts to strengthen the

alignment of donor support around the state's development strategy), though with Lagos, Jigawa and Kano catching up over time and more recently achieving a similar level of effective coordination.

It was noted that personalities and interests of DFID Nigeria staff influenced the effectiveness of coordination arrangements, which were though generally much stronger at state than national level. This coordination was more around shared issues and concerns (e.g. security, political developments) than joint activities, though several examples of effective joint working at state level were cited (for instance in relation to political economy analysis, and in facilitating access to contacts in state governments, and information sharing, and in the development of medium term expenditure frameworks). Weaknesses in coordination related to the lack of coordination between SLP Theories of Change and the separately developed management and organisational structures. Each programme has its own deliverables and mandate, and collaboration occurred (beyond the close working relations between SPARC and SAVI) where this facilitated achieving individual programme results.

The effectiveness of DFID's role in management and coordination was seen to be constrained by DFID's thematic organisation and structure of responsibilities. This tended to reinforce incentives to work in programmatic (human development, growth, and governance) silos on particular results areas. DFID Nigeria was also considered to have had weak knowledge management systems and high staff turnover, with security considerations also restricting DFID's ability to effectively coordinate and provide oversight of state engagement. The increased role of the State Representatives was seen as helpful. However, State Representatives did not have authority over programmes or within the core of DFID's management structure.

In relation to weaknesses identified in the Suite MTR in Suite implementation, the lack of cross-suite perspectives in the design of SLPs and of accountability for a common purpose was seen as a continuing problem (and not one that appeared to be being addressed through the design of the SLP successor programmes). Similarly, there was some progress with increasing flexibility within programmes (through more flexible interpretations of logframe targets) but no progress in increasing flexibility across programmes.

4 Conclusions

4.1 SLP implementation

Over the period since 2008, DFID has expanded its level of resourcing to support Nigerian states and increased the number of states in which it is engaged. There has also been some shift of focus towards an emphasis on results-based objectives (in terms of service delivery and related outcomes) rather than systems strengthening. The SLP Suite as a whole has not provided a model for this expansion, though the concept of the need for action on governance and accountability through SPARC and SAVI has been at the basis of DFID's approach for moving into new states.

DFID has had some difficulty responding to differing levels of commitment by stakeholders (i.e. by the political and administrative leadership of states) to the reforms that SLPs have advocated or supported, in part because of a lack of flexibility in the way that resources have been provided through the SLPs, and the lack of a DFID portfolio management focus at the state level. The problem has been recognised through the period of SLP implementation, but initiatives such as the development of Memoranda of Understanding with State governments were not effective. Continued engagement from the SLPs at both the political and administrative level does appear to have contributed to enhancing ownership and commitment to the reform agenda over time.

The Suite MTR recommendations have been broadly implemented, including the extension of the SLPs and some increased focus on DFID's representation and management at state level. However, this process did not go as far as the Suite MTR suggested (in terms of establishing a more structured approach to managing political risks, and providing mechanisms for DFID to link the provision of resources to states to performance). The recommended process for extension to new Northern States (based around a state strategy and a jointly-agreed results framework) was not implemented.

4.2 Coordination arrangements

Coordination arrangements between the SLPs have developed over time, and by the last year of the SLPs are now judged to be relatively effective in enabling some synergies to be realised, given the constraints imposed by their separate contractual and results frameworks.

It is clear that the complete SLP Suite concept as originally articulated is now of little relevance to DFID, and coordination across the SLPs as originally defined is not an appropriate objective. The GEMS programmes have never been effectively integrated into a single approach and DFID's pattern of engagement in the states in which it works as a priority has not been based on a replication of the SLP concept (particularly because there have not been attempts to extend PATHS2 and ESSPIN into new states). The need for complementary action to state

initiatives at federal and in particular local government level has become increasingly clear over the period of the implementation of the SLPs.

What does remain important from the original Suite intervention logic is the need to address governance issues (both accountability and the effectiveness of key public management systems) as part of any attempt to improve service delivery. Consequently, DFID's process of expansion of its state engagement has involved a pivotal role for SAVI and SPARC in all the focal states, whatever the configuration of other programmes has been. DFID's new Public Sector Accountability and Governance (PSAG) Programme which is succeeding SPARC and SAVI has involved joint design of the components covering public sector governance and strengthening accountability mechanisms. However, the relationship between this programme and the remainder of the DFID portfolio, particularly given the much-restricted number of states on which the programme will concentrate, remains to be determined.

While there has been some progress in establishing collaborative arrangements where this has been mutually beneficial to help programmes achieve their own objectives, the core constraints to effective and flexible collaboration (particularly to allow both the level and type of interventions provided to be tailored to the changing context and opportunities in each state) remain and have changed relatively little over the period since the Suite was developed. They can be summarised as follows:

- DFID's programmes operating in states (i.e. including and beyond the SLPs) remain largely separately designed and managed within thematic or sectoral silos that are deeply rooted in DFID culture and management practice.
- Results frameworks and accountability for them focus on activities directly under the control of each programme, rather than on some concept of joint results.
- While this review has not looked in detail at DFID programmes outside the SLPs, it would appear that there has been some move away from the model of trying to support comprehensive organisational reform of the state basic health and education systems (which was the objective of ESSPIN and PATHS2) towards more limited forms of sectoral intervention. There has also been a continuing relative lack of focus on Local Governments, despite their key role in service delivery and accountability.
- There has been some strengthening and increased recognition of the role of DFID's state representation, but DFID State Engagement Strategies do not articulate a comprehensive "One DFID" approach, or a fully developed analytical basis or adequate Theory of Change to underlie DFID's engagement and approach (and how this varies between states). This partly reflects the fact that there are few instruments available for any activities to take place outside the established programmes and that these have not been designed to provide cross-sectoral flexibility.

Where there are relatively strong initiatives from states to set out clear development plans and priorities and a willingness actively to manage donor coordination mechanisms around these (most notably in Kaduna and Lagos) this does appear to be encouraging better coordination within the DFID portfolio.

4.3 Possible implications

While it is premature to derive recommendations from the Evaluation, some suggestions do appear to merit consideration, while it is also important to note that some fundamental challenges appear to be inherent in the context and DFID's management and working arrangements and so may not be amenable to significant short- to medium-term change. Two main linked areas of action may be identified:

- DFID still needs to strengthen its strategic analysis and management at the state level. There has been some success in improving context analysis and building political contacts to the benefit of the current portfolio, but there still appears to be no clear point at which explicit state-focused strategic decisions are made about the content and specific results to be achieved from DFID's engagement in each state. So there does not appear to be an explicit process of managing the portfolio as a whole in each state so as to address risks and to identify and respond to positive opportunities as they emerge.
- Since the scope for being able to use aid resources flexibly across the existing project portfolio in states (in support of wider state level strategic objectives) is likely to remain very limited, there is a case for having some additional resources available that can be used in a much more responsive way to respond to opportunities as they emerge. This approach would be more in line with an attempt effectively to "Think and Work Politically" within the Nigerian state context than current project designs appear to be. More generally, the structure of DFID's Nigeria portfolio and the instruments used still do not appear to be well-adapted to respond flexibly to state-level reform initiatives when they emerge.
- The core logic of the Suite (that improving the performance of state centre-of-government and strengthening accountability mechanisms is central to improving service provision and achieving education and health outcomes) still appears to be valid and to underlie much of the DFID programme in Nigeria, but the programme approaches used are still not well-adapted to support this approach across DFID's portfolio of activities.

Annex A: DFID Nigeria Programmes in the SLP States

Projects (Approved)	Duration of Programme	SLP States	Managing Agency
ESSPIN - Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria	2008 - 2014	Jigawa, Kano, Kaduna, Lagos, Enugu	Managed by Cambridge Education
PATHS2 – Partnership for Transforming Health Systems	2008 -2014	Kano, Jigawa, Kaduna, Enugu, Lagos	Managed by Abt Associates
State Accountability and Voices Initiative (SAVI)	2008 - 2015	Lagos, Kano, Kaduna, Enugu, Jigawa	GRM
State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability (SPARC)	2008 - 2015	Lagos, Kano, Kaduna, Enugu, Jigawa	HTSPE
Growth & Employment in States (GEMS) 1 (Meat & Leather)	2010 - 2015 2014 - 2015	Kano, Kaduna, Lagos Jigawa	GRM
GEMS 2 (Construction)	2010 – 2015 (Programme terminated in 2013)	Kano, Kaduna, Lagos	Coffey
GEMS 3 – Business Environment	2010 - 2015 2014 - 2015	Kano, Kaduna, Lagos Jigawa	ASI
GEMS 4 – Wholesale & Retail	2012 - 2017	Kano, Kaduna, Lagos	Coffey
Other DFID projects that are active in the five SLP states			
DFID Support to Meningitis Outbreak Response in Northern Nigeria - MEDECINS Sans FRONTIERES (MSF) France Section	2009	Jigawa	Medecins Sans Frontieres – French Section (MSF-F)
Security, Justice and Growth Programme	2002 - 2010	Jigawa, Lagos, Kano, Enugu	
Girls Education Project – Phase 1 (GEP)	2005 - 2008		
Girls Education Project – Phase 2 (GEP 2)	2008 - 2011		

Projects (Approved)	Duration of Programme	SLP States	Managing Agency
Girls Education Project – Phase 3 (GEP 3)	2012 - 2016		
Sanitation, Hygiene and Water in Nigeria (SHAWN) Project	2010 - 2014	Jigawa	UNICEF
NIAF - Nigeria Infrastructure Advisory Facility	2007 - 2011	Lagos	Adam Smith International
Enhancing Nigeria's Advocacy for a better Business Environment Phase I (ENABLE I)	2008 - 2014	Kaduna, Kano, Lagos	
Promoting Pro Poor Opportunities for Service and Commodity Markets (PrOpCom)	2004 - 2011	Kano, Lagos	
PRRINN-MNCH - Partnership for Reviving Routine Immunisation in Northern Nigeria – Maternal, New-born and Child Health	2006 - 2014	Jigawa	Includes a delegated cooperation with the Government of Norway. Managed by HPI
SUNMAP – Support to the National Malaria Programme	2008 - 2013	Lagos, Kano, Enugu and Kaduna.	Managed by Malaria Consortium
ENR – Enhancing Nigeria's Response to HIV	2008 - 2014	Kaduna, Lagos, and Enugu.	Managed by Society for Family Health - SFH
Regional Initiative Fund - RIF	2008 - 2016	Enugu, Lagos	
Financial Sector Development Programme (FSD) - EFiNA	2008 - 2018	Lagos	
HERFON – Health Reform Foundation of Nigeria	2009 - 2013	National with zonal offices in Enugu, and Kaduna	Managed by HERFON a Nigerian NGO.
BIF –Business Innovation Facility	2010 - 2013		
SHAWN II – Sanitation, Hygiene and Water in Nigeria	2010 - 2015	Jigawa, Kaduna	Managed by UNICEF
Justice For All (J4A)	2010 - 2015	Kano, Lagos, Kaduna, Jigawa, Enugu	British Council as

Projects (Approved)	Duration of Programme	SLP States	Managing Agency
			service provider.
NUTRITION –Improving Newborn and Child Nutrition in Northern Nigeria Programme (WINNN)	2010 - 2017	Jigawa	UNICEF, SCUK and OPM
Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP)	2011 - 2016	Kano, Kaduna	British Council
FP - Access to Family Planning Commodities	2011 - 2017	Kano, Lagos, Kaduna, Jigawa, Enugu	
W4H – Women for Health Programme	2012 - 2017	Jigawa, Kano	Managed by HPI
NIAF Phase II Nigeria Infrastructure Advisory Facility	2012 - 2017	Kano, Lagos, Kaduna, Jigawa, Enugu	
PrOpCom - Maikarfi	2012 - 2017	Kaduna, Kano, Lagos	GRM
Mobilisation for Development (M4D)	2012 - 2016	Kano, Kaduna, Jigawa	GRM
Voices for Change: Making Women and Adolescent girls count	2012 - 2016	Kano, Lagos, Enugu	
APHC Reforms - Advocacy For Primary Health Care (PHC) Reforms in Nigeria	2013 - 2016	Enugu, Kaduna	
Developing Effective Private Education in Nigeria (DEEPEN)	2013 - 2018	Lagos	
ENGINE - Educating Nigerian Girls in New Enterprise	2013 - 2016	Kano, Kaduna, Lagos	
Discovery Girls	2013 - 2016	Kano	
NTDs Neglected Tropical Diseases in Nigeria	2013 - 2016	Kano	
Child Development Grants (CDGP)	2013 - 2017	Jigawa	Save the Children Funds
MNCH 2 – Maternal, Newborn Child Health	2014 - 2020	Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano	
CONCUR		Kaduna	
Deepening Democracy in Nigeria DDiN 2 (Phase 2)	2014 - 2018	Kaduna, Kano, Lagos	
MADE		Lagos	

Projects (Approved)	Duration of Programme	SLP States	Managing Agency
SOLAR- Solar Nigeria Programme	2014 - 2020	Kano, Lagos, Kaduna, Jigawa	
Enhancing Nigeria's Advocacy for a better Business Environment Phase II (ENABLE II)	2014 - 2019	Kaduna, Kano, Jigawa	

Annex B: Overview of DFID Nigeria Projects and Locations

STATE	SPARC	SAVI	M4D	NSRP	GPF	J4A	CDG	PATHS 2	SUNMAP	PRRINN	GEP 3	ESSPIN	ENR	SHAWN	HERFON 2	NUTRITION	W4H	GEMS 1	GEMS 2	GEMS 3	GEMS 4	LOW COST PRIVATE EDUCATION	DELTA PROG	Total Number	
Abia																							X	1	
Adamawa																									0
Akwa Ibom													X										X	2	
Anambra	X	X							X										X					4	
Bauchi											X			X										2	
Bayelsa				X																			X	2	
Benue													X	X										2	
Borno				X																				1	
Cross River													X						X	X	X	X		6	
Delta				X	X																		X	3	
Ebonyi																								0	
Edo																							X	1	
Ekiti																								0	
Enugu	X	X				X		X	X			X	X		X									8	
Gombe																								0	
Imo																							X	1	
Jigawa	X	X	X			X		X		X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			10	
Kaduna	X	X	X	X		X		X	X			X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X			14	
Kano	X	X	X	X		X		X	X			X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X			12	
Katsina	X	X							X	X	X			X			X	X						10	
Kebbi																								0	
Kogi																								0	
Kwara												X												1	
Lagos	X	X				X		X	X			X	X					X	X	X	X	X		12	
Nasarawa													X		X									2	
Niger	X	X							X		X													4	
Ogun									X				X											2	
Ondo																							X	1	
Osun																								0	
Oyo															X									1	
Plateau				X																				1	
Rivers				X											X								X	3	
Sokoto											X													1	
Taraba																								0	
Yobe	X	X		X					X	X					X	X	X							8	
Zamfara	X	X					X			X	X					X	X	X						7	
FCT															X									1	
Federal Level Programmes	DMO	ENABLE	PDF	FSD (GLOBAL SME FINANCE)	EFINA	PROPCOM	DDIN	C4C	FEPAR	FOSTER	NIAF II													11	

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