MAKING ALL
VOICES COUNT

A GRAND CHALLENGE
FOR DEVELOPMENT

Learning to Make All Voices Count: Lessons and reflections on localising the Open Government Partnership

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Summary

This report reviews the evidence from Learning to Make All Voices Count (L-MAVC), a programme funded by Making All Voices Count and implemented in collaboration with Global Integrity. L-MAVC intended to support six Making All Voices Count grantees, working in five countries, in co-creating and applying a participatory, learning-centred, and adaptive approach to strengthening citizen engagement in governance processes in their contexts, including with respect to the Open Government Partnership (OGP).

Two overarching sets of lessons emerge from the experiences of L-MAVC grantees. First, supporting citizen engagement and government accountability in subnational contexts, and localising the OGP in ways that matter to citizens, is not straightforward. Doing so successfully entails engaging with, navigating and shaping political and power dynamics in those contexts, and iteratively adapting to emerging lessons and challenges. Second, the effectiveness of adaptive ways of working depends in part on the extent to which they offer opportunities for cross-context peer learning, support the regular collection and use of data, and are themselves adaptive.

These lessons have implications for the broader community of actors working to support governance reform, including the OGP and its partners, donors and multilateral institutions, and practitioners and policy-makers. The evidence from L-MAVC suggests that if these actors are to contribute more effectively to reforms that affect citizens' lives, substantial changes – with respect to the nature of support provided to domestic stakeholders and to grant-making practices – may be warranted.

What does it mean, in practice, for domestic reformers to take a politically engaged, learning-focused and adaptive approach to governance reform?

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

An increasingly compelling body of evidence suggests that governance reform is inherently political and complex.[1] There are no one-size-fits-all solutions to governance challenges, no blueprints for reform that can be imposed by external actors, or transplanted wholesale from one context to another. Rather, attempts at encouraging reform are most likely to be successful when two conditions are met: first, local stakeholders are at the forefront of efforts to define governance challenges, develop and implement solutions, and pursue sustainable change; and second, those stakeholders have the flexibility to learn and adapt as they go, especially when working in complex political contexts.[2]

Despite an emerging consensus on the importance of local ownership and learning, many questions remain about the practical implications of these insights, including with regard to the Open Government Partnership (OGP).[3] What does it mean, in practice, for domestic reformers to take a politically engaged, learning-focused and adaptive approach to governance reform? How would external actors support such an approach?

And how might adaptive programming fit into and complement existing OGP processes, such as the National Action Plan cycle and the Subnational Pioneers Program?

1.2 The programme

The Learning to Make All Voices Count Initiative (L-MAVC), a programme funded by Making All Voices Count[4] and implemented in collaboration with Global Integrity,[5] was an attempt to explore and address these questions. Global Integrity partnered with Making All Voices Count staff and six Making All Voices Count grantees in Kenya, Indonesia, the Philippines, South Africa and Tanzania, to design and operationalise a participatory, learning-centred and adaptive programme management methodology that aimed to help grantees strengthen citizen engagement with governance processes, and the OGP, in their contexts.[6]

L-MAVC had two overarching objectives:

1. *At the grantee level:* to strengthen their impact and effectiveness as they attempted to help citizens shape the design and implementation of OGP action plans, including in subnational districts.

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1 See, for example, Halloran (2014), Menocal (2013) and Levy (2011), as well as the 2017 World Development Report (World Bank 2017), among many others.
2 These pieces by Guerzovich and Schommer (2016), Valters, Cummings and Nixon (2016), Ramalingam (2013), Booth (2011), Unsworth (2010), Andrews (2009) and Grindle (2005) are among many recent arguments to this effect.
3 The OGP is a multi-stakeholder initiative that "aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and … strengthen governance". For more information, visit OGP's website (nd).
4 Making All Voices Count, an initiative founded in 2013, aims to harness the power of emerging technologies to promote transparency, fight corruption and empower citizens in 12 priority countries in Africa and Asia. Since its inception, Making All Voices Count has aspired to support learning and action in countries, among grantees, as well as across countries, and shape the discourse on and practice of development. Beyond being financially supported by Making All Voices Count, the design and implementation of the L-MAVC programme is informed by the innovative approach Making All Voices Count has applied to its broader portfolio. For more, see the Making All Voices Count strategy.
5 Global Integrity supports progress towards more open governance in countries and communities across the world.
6 Appendix A1 provides a more detailed methodology.

2. *At the aggregate level:* to generate evidence on how external actors – including Making All Voices Count, the OGP secretariat, donors, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and others – might provide their in-country partners with more effective support, and accelerate the emergence of transformative governance reforms, including under the auspices of the OGP.

To accomplish objective 1, we worked with grantees on an individual basis and facilitated their efforts to put cycles of adaptive learning into practice in their contexts. This meant supporting them as they iteratively:

- explored the systems in which they work, and identified and analysed the problems they wanted to solve

- framed the outcomes to which they intended to contribute

- developed a strategy for making progress towards those outcomes, including through engaging with and shaping political and power dynamics

- constructed a flexible, light-touch monitoring framework that would enable them to track their progress

- collected and reflected on monitoring data

- made strategic course corrections in response to emerging lessons and challenges.

At every stage of this process, Global Integrity worked with grantees to rigorously document all of the above, and generate a 'living' record of their adaptive learning journeys. At the end of the programme, we supplemented this data by working with grantees to produce short, distilled case stories of their experience with L-MAVC.[7]

In addition to this support to individual grantees, Global Integrity facilitated comparative peer learning throughout the programme. This

entailed convening a series of reflective learning workshops. Spaced regularly throughout the life of the programme, these workshops provided a structured forum in which grantees, all of whom were working in different contexts, could come together to share experiences and insights, collectively troubleshoot problems and reflect on how to make more effective progress towards their intended outcomes. Outside of these workshops, we helped grantees connect for additional experience sharing and dialogue on an ad hoc basis.

In service of objective 2, we tracked, analysed and synthesised the adaptive learning journeys undertaken by each grantee. They produced reams of data, including their documentation and case stories. This information, when combined with primary data collected by Global Integrity during regular interactions with grantees (over Skype and in person), comprises a wealth of evidence with which to generate lessons on how to more effectively make progress towards open governance, on the value and limits of learning-centred adaptive approaches, and on how such approaches might be supported. These lessons hold implications that are relevant for everyone working in governance, including the OGP.

1.3 Structure of this report

Section 2 introduces the grantees that participated in L-MAVC, and briefly summarises the objectives of their projects. Section 3 unpacks the key lessons from the L-MAVC experience, with regard to effectively supporting citizen engagement in governance processes linked to the OGP, and with regard to the practice of adaptive learning. Section 4 reflects on the implications of these lessons for the OGP, donors and multilateral institutions, and social accountability practitioners.

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7 Appendix A2 contains the individual grantee case stories.

2. Grantee profiles

Grantees participating in L-MAVC were selected by the Fund Management Consortium at Making All Voices Count, with some input from Global Integrity. Making All Voices Count assessed proposals on the basis of two criteria: the extent to which proposed projects linked up with, and added value to, the OGP in the applicant's country (nationally or subnationally), and the demonstrated capacity and interest of applicants in putting an adaptive learning approach into practice.[8]

Selections were made in August 2016 after an open, competitive application process.

Six projects were selected to participate.[9] All winning proposals were led by civil society organisations (CSOs) involved with the OGP, and with experience in taking innovative, citizen-centred approaches to governance work. Table 1 provides short project descriptions and grantee profiles.

Table 1. Grantees and projects

Grantee	Country	Organisational profile	Project description
Perkumpulan Praksarsa	Indonesia	Prakarsa, a thinktank based in Jakarta, is a leading producer of research and action on public policy. It has strong links to government officials and CSOs throughout Indonesia, and is experienced in the application of participatory action research methodologies.	Prakarsa intended to conduct participatory action research on the implementation of e-government initiatives in several subnational districts. It planned to: • explore the experiences of those districts • generate evidence on whether and how e-government had improved the delivery of public services • identify the critical factors in implementing a successful e-government initiative. Prakarsa would then use these findings to advocate for the inclusion and implementation of sound e-government commitments in upcoming policy processes, like the OGP National Action Plan.
Jesse Robredo Institute of Governance (JRIG)	Philippines	JRIG, part of De La Salle University in Manila, is well known for its work to support civil society monitoring of public service delivery, and for fostering knowledge coalitions for open governance. It has trained local officials, CSOs and universities in the use of civic tech.	JRIG intended to work with regional universities, and equip them to serve as 'infomediaries' that could support citizens and CSOs outside of Manila in learning about, engaging with and putting to use the data made available under the Bottom Up Budgeting programme (an OGP National Action Plan commitment). JRIG also intended to support broader public awareness of, and engagement with, the OGP more widely, as well as with other open government initiatives in the Philippines.

8 Candidates were assessed, in part, on their completion of this form.
9 Full accounts of grantee experiences on the project, that include what they learned, how they adapted, and what was accomplished, are available in the case stories appended to this report.

Grantee	Country	Organisational profile	Project description
InciteGov, Affiliated Network for Social Accountability in East Asia and the Pacific (ANSA-EAP) and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP)	Philippines	Staffed by a number of crossovers',[10] InciteGov has been one of the leading players in the OGP Philippines and has done a good deal of innovative work focused on democracy and governance. ANSA-EAP has experience in piloting various tools and approaches to support citizen engagement with governance. ULAP, a union of local government units, has worked to support the implementation of various budgeting initiatives.	The project team – a multi-stakeholder consortium of CSOs and local government officials – intended to: • support the creation of a non-governmental OGP secretariat • pilot a participatory budgeting programme at the provincial level • broaden awareness of participatory budgeting throughout the country. They planned to use these activities to expand and strengthen the participation of citizens in OGP processes, and to inform the development of the third OGP National Action Plan.
Constitution Reform and Education Consortium (CRECO)	Kenya	CRECO is a network of Kenyan CSOs working on human rights, governance and democracy. It has a long record of mobilising and supporting citizen action at the community level throughout the country, and is experienced in supporting monitoring and advocacy activities.	CRECO intended to support the implementation of OGP National Action Plan commitments in two counties through training and mobilising community oversight committees in each county. They also intended to help these committees to rigorously monitor and assess the implementation of these commitments, and to use the results from that work to support advocacy around the OGP in those counties, and at the national level.
Tamasha and Oxfam	Tanzania	Tamasha is a grass-roots CSO experienced in supporting community-level participatory action research, and helping youth to hold local governments accountable. Oxfam has worked on OGP issues in Tanzania and supported citizen engagement in various ways, including through the Chukua Hatua project.[11]	Tamasha and Oxfam intended to support more accountable governance at the district level. They planned to gauge awareness of the OGP and open government among citizens in those districts. Then, by facilitating participatory action research, they hoped to help marginalised citizens mobilise around OGP-linked issues, and hold district officials accountable for delivering solutions to those issues. Tamasha and Oxfam also planned exchange visits for officials in Mbogwe and Kigoma, where an OGP subnational pilot project was taking place.
Democratic Governance and Rights Unit (DGRU)	South Africa	DGRU, an applied research unit at the University of Cape Town, works to support the rule of law and public accountability in South Africa. It has previously worked with community advice offices to improve the provision of legal information, and to build the capacity of community paralegals.	DGRU intended to support the implementation of an OGP National Action Plan commitment focused on the provision of access to justice. It planned to do this through distributing legal resources to community advice offices across the country, and through developing a mobile phone application (app) containing legal information that the offices could use. DGRU also hoped to coordinate other CSOs to collectively advocate for more civil society influence in the OGP process in South Africa.

10 In the Philippines, the term 'crossover' refers to individuals who have worked both as government officials and in civil society.
11 More information on Chukua Hatua is available here.

The documentation and case stories produced by grantees provide detailed accounts of open government entrepreneurship in action – from challenges encountered, to lessons learned, to adaptations made and results achieved.

3. What did we learn?

The experiences of grantees – both in their own specific contexts and as part of the collective learning journey of L-MAVC – have generated two sets of lessons:

- *What we learned from working adaptively:* lessons on how domestic pro-reform actors can more effectively support citizen engagement in governance processes in the complex contexts in which they work, including with respect to the OGP.

- *What we learned about how to support adaptive ways of working:* lessons on the overall adaptive learning approach applied in these projects, and the factors and practices that enable and constrain learning and adaptation in and across complex contexts.

Many of the lessons and insights from these projects are consistent with the emerging evidence on the potential of adaptation in governance and development work,[12] and may not be especially surprising to those familiar with recent advances in the field.[13] That is not to say, however, that they have little to add to the current discourse.

The experiences of the L-MAVC grantees illustrate how their efforts to strengthen citizen engagement in complex contexts, including through the OGP, have played out in practice. The documentation and case stories produced by grantees provide detailed accounts of open government entrepreneurship in action – from challenges encountered, to lessons learned, to adaptations made and results achieved. The rich evidence from

L-MAVC is deeply rooted in the experiences of grantees and their partners. L-MAVC as such provides an opportunity to explore how change happens amid complexity, and for learning about whether and how adaptive ways of working, and support for those ways of working, can contribute to more effective reform efforts.

The lessons in this section, and their implications (discussed in Section 4) are therefore of great relevance to those considering how to more effectively strengthen citizen engagement and support progress towards open governance and better development outcomes. The insights that emerge from L-MAVC are particularly relevant to pro-reform actors engaging with OGP.

In the remainder of this section, we identify and explore these lessons.

3.1 What we learned from working adaptively: lessons on supporting citizen engagement in complex contexts, including with respect to the OGP

Lesson 1. Making the political personal is key to building resilience to political transitions

Many of the countries in which our partners work have recently experienced political transitions. These transitions have resulted in the emergence

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12 See work by **Mercy Corps and IRC** (nd), DFID's **LASER** programme and Derbyshire and Donovan (2016) on the **SAVI** programme, among others, the effectiveness of adaptive programmes.

13 See, for instance, **Burns and Worsley** (2015) on navigating complexity, Andrews, Pritchett and Woolcock (2015) on problem-driven iterative adaptation, **Faustino and Booth** (2014) on development entrepreneurship, **Ladner** (2015) on strategy testing, Williams and Hummelbrunner (2010) on systems thinking, and Quinn Patton, McKegg and Wehipeihana's (2015) **developmental evaluation** methodology.

of an increasingly populist, authoritarian-tinged strain of politics. In the Philippines, President Rodrigo Duterte has carried out a brutal war on drugs, railed against human rights advocates and threatened to kill his own son.[14] In Indonesia, Ahok, the governor of Jakarta, was unseated by a rival riding a wave of extremist support and jailed under dubious blasphemy charges.[15] In South Africa, a series of scandals and cabinet reshuffles have put OGP processes on hold.[16] In Tanzania, President John Magufuli, elected in 2016, has suppressed public dissent.[17] These events have posed challenges for our partners, and required them to adjust the ways in which they engage with political leaders.

Our colleagues at Prakarsa, for example, had initially planned to use e-government initiatives carried about by Ahok as an exemplar of well-implemented, reform-minded policy. They had also planned to encourage other political leaders to model themselves and their leadership styles after Ahok in their reform efforts. However, given Ahok's rapid fall from a successful, admired governor to a maligned prisoner, and the corresponding decline in his popularity, Prakarsa realised that relying on Ahok's personal example might drive away, not attract, other policy-makers. Prakarsa needed to adjust in light of this change to the political context, and tailor its advocacy strategies to fit with the interests of key government officials.

Prakarsa therefore decided to undertake a revised power analysis, and make sure that it was targeting the key stakeholders in government, whose influence it wanted to secure. The organisation held bilateral meetings with many of the identified officials. Rather than focusing on Ahok and other leaders of the reform processes in Jakarta, Makassar and Bojonegoro, Prakarsa emphasised the benefits of participatory e-government initiatives during these meetings. This framed their appeals with respect to the particular interests of each group of officials with whom they were speaking – these initiatives were not just examples of great leadership but, more importantly, they led to improvements in the delivery of public services.

Prakarsa also organised a national policy dialogue, bringing together citizens, CSOs and local

government officials from each of their research districts, as well as important government representatives at the national level, and the National Secretariat of Open Government Indonesia. This dialogue provided a forum for frank, multilateral discussions on the results of Prakarsa's research, including the value and pitfalls of e-government initiatives, and how the evidence it had gathered could inform policy elsewhere.

As a result, Prakarsa secured the support of numerous federal government agencies, including the ministries of National Development Planning, Home Affairs, and Communications. These ministries have agreed that Prakarsa's research findings will inform the implementation of a previously selected OGP commitment, and other government policy processes in the future.

To sum up, when faced with a change in political context, Prakarsa made the political personal. It adapted its advocacy strategy, and made sure that its engagements with key government officials were framed with an emphasis on results and performance. The organisation also mobilised a broad, multi-stakeholder coalition of reform-minded supporters to place additional pressure on its advocacy targets. These adaptations enabled Prakarsa to successfully shape the design and implementation of current and forthcoming e-government initiatives across Indonesia – despite the fall of Ahok – and ensure that those initiatives accounted for the needs and interests of local citizens more effectively.

Other partners also adapted in response to political transitions, and made the political personal, with a view to winning the support of key allies. This meant identifying power brokers, learning about the incentives that govern their behaviour, and then working to reshape those incentives, including through forming and leveraging the power of multistakeholder coalitions.

In the Philippines, for example, the Duterte administration did not initially commit to remaining a member of the OGP. In response, InciteGov and ANSA-EAP launched a sophisticated lobbying campaign, bringing together subnational open government champions from various sectors,

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14 Berehulak (2016) details the ongoing war against drugs in the Philippines.
15 See The Economist (2017) for more on Ahok.
16 See the DGRU case story in appendix A2.
17 See, for example, Eyakuze (2017).

Simply providing a stand-alone repository of tools and information was insufficient for equipping local partners to learn about and collaboratively address the issues that were important in their regions.

members of the country's OGP steering committee, and the OGP's International Secretariat to persuade the budget secretary, Benjamin Diokno, of the value of OGP membership. That campaign was successful: the administration reaffirmed its commitment to the OGP and its principles, and the Philippines recently launched its third National Action Plan.[18]

In Kenya, the start of the 2017 election campaign meant that all elected officials left office and began campaigning, just as CRECO's project was getting started. CRECO adapted its strategy and focused on shaping the behaviour of county-level bureaucrats rather than elected officials. By working with citizens and CSOs to gather data on the implementation of OGP commitments, and then carefully facilitating private and public meetings with individual county officials, CRECO was able to maintain pressure on locally relevant issues despite the election campaign.[19]

In each of these cases, grantees faced difficult political transitions that could have doomed their projects. But by identifying key stakeholders, mapping their incentives and then leveraging coalitions to shape those incentives – by tailoring political engagements to particular individuals and their individual circumstances and contexts – our colleagues were able to successfully adapt to and overcome emerging obstacles. As a result, they increased the scope and depth of subnational participation in open government processes, including processes linked to the OGP, thus helping to make the OGP more salient to local citizens.

Lesson 2. To support progress towards more open governance at the subnational level, including through the OGP, tech platforms must be informed by, and account for, the challenges, needs and interests of users working in local political ecosystems

Several of our partners in these projects initially planned to use the power of civic technology – from mobile phone apps to online dashboards to social media campaigns – to help beneficiaries learn about the OGP, and support action to open governance. Over the 12 months in which we were working, however, partners realised that their assumptions about the usefulness of tech in the contexts in which they were working were worth revisiting.

In the Philippines, JRIG, for example, planned to develop websites with tools that had been used by CSOs working on open government and the OGP in regions across the country. JRIG's thinking was that its regional university partners could then use the information provided online to help local CSOs influence local city budgets, adapt tools developed elsewhere for their own purposes, and eventually, support local participation in national-level OGP processes.

As they worked and gathered data on the needs and interests of their university and CSO partners, however, JRIG learned that not all the regional CSOs and citizens it hoped to engage could easily access or use the Internet. JRIG also came to realise that simply providing a stand-alone repository of tools and information was insufficient for equipping local partners to learn about and

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[18] The new National Action Plan features, for the first time, two commitments that were proposed and developed by citizens and subnational governments. These commitments – which represent a substantial broadening of citizen participation in, and engagement with, the OGP and open government processes – emerged from subnational consultations and activities undertaken by InciteGov and ANSA-EAP. Had the project partners failed to convince the new administration to reaffirm its commitment to the OGP, these commitments would not have been possible.

[19] As discussed later in this report, these adaptations enabled CRECO to contribute to expanded citizen engagement with the OGP, and to train local open government advocates to mobilise collectively and hold local officials accountable for the implementation of OGP commitments. It is likely, though by no means guaranteed, that CRECO's work will eventually support improvements in the transparency of county assemblies and the availability and usefulness of county budget data.

Opening governance, including at the subnational level, is an iterative process of shaping those political dynamics and rebalancing power. It therefore requires local actors to constantly learn about, and adapt to, the conditions of particular political contexts.

collaboratively address the issues that were important in their regions. Offline activities that could help local partners explore the links between regional development challenges and the OGP were also necessary, as was practical support to help partners adapt and use the provided tools.

JRIG therefore continued working with its university partners to develop bespoke online knowledge platforms, but complemented these efforts by adapting its plans in two important ways:

1. JRIG encouraged the emergence of formal knowledge partnerships between regional universities, CSOs and local government units, in which participants agreed to work together to open, shape and use government data in the longer term.
2. JRIG decided to host a series of multi-stakeholder policy dialogues, bringing together universities, CSOs and local government unit officials. In these facilitated workshops, JRIG helped its partners to identify pressing local issues and develop action plans for addressing those issues, including through using the resources JRIG was helping provide.

These adaptations changed the tenor of the project substantially. The online knowledge platforms were no longer at the core of what JRIG had planned. Instead, the websites were tailored to meet the needs of local partners, and complemented by various offline activities that supported multi-stakeholder learning, action and coalition-building at the regional level.

Our partners at CRECO, DGRU and InciteGov / ANSA-EAP made similar realisations in their projects. Each of these teams adjusted the way in which they were using tech as they learned more about the needs, interests and challenges faced by the stakeholders they aimed to support in addressing local problems.

*   CRECO decided to focus on supporting offline communication, rather than build an online monitoring dashboard.
*   DRGU learned that flash drives containing legal information were not as easy to use as assumed, and reassessed how it could assist community paralegals more effectively.
*   InciteGov / ANSA-EAP learned that, given the emergence of online 'trolls' and bots during the recent presidential election in the Philippines, a social media campaign was unlikely to effectively support citizen engagement with the development of OGP commitments. Instead, they held subnational roundtables and consultations to solicit local inputs.

In all of these cases, partners found that off-the-shelf tech solutions, especially when designed in isolation from the highly specific, highly political contexts in which pro-reform actors work – were unlikely to help local users tackle concrete problems. To be useful, tech needs to be informed by a strong understanding of local contexts and the problems potential users face, at every stage of its development and use. Tech can help with solving a highly complex puzzle, but it is rarely, if ever, a solution by itself.[20]

Lesson 3. Effectively localising OGP requires different approaches in different contexts

There is no blueprint for opening governance, or making the OGP work for citizens. Political dynamics and power relationships – who has power, how that power is exercised, the incentives that shape behaviour – vary from place to place. Opening governance, including at the subnational level, is an iterative process of shaping those political dynamics and rebalancing power. It

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20 This finding is consistent with the emerging literature on civic tech. See Edwards, Brock and McGee (2016) and Prieto-Martin, Faith, Hernandez and Ramalingam (2017).

therefore requires local actors to constantly learn about, and adapt to, the conditions of particular political contexts.

The L-MAVC projects demonstrated this point many times over. Each grantee began the programme aiming to strengthen citizen engagement in the OGP and make government more responsive to the challenges that citizens face. As the grantees learned more about their contexts over the 12 months of L-MAVC, and adapted to emerging lessons, challenges and shocks, their strategies for pursuing their aims evolved substantially. To effectively localise OGP, and translate it into an initiative that helps subnational reformers tackle the pressing challenges, grantees had to develop bespoke localisation approaches, or models. Over

time, grantees tailored these models to fit the particular conditions of the local contexts in which they worked. In developing and operationalising their own localisation models, grantees were able to help local pro-reform actors use OGP to more effectively tackle local problems, strengthen the influence of citizens on subnational policy-making, and pave the way for more accountable, participatory governance in the future.

Table 2 describes some of the models used by L-MAVC grantees, and sorts them into a rough typology based on the enabling factors present in particular contexts, the levels at which action took place, and the specific strategies that the grantees ultimately implemented.

Table 2. Localisation models in action

Model	National / subnational	Direction of action	Enabling factors	In action	Key results[21]
Info-mediaries enabling action (JRIG, Philippines)	Subnational (regions)	Bottom up	• Presence of regional universities with strong links to local CSOs, local government units and citizens • A highly institutionalised OGP process • Professionalised CSOs • Existing OGP National Action Plan commitments	JRIG used the existence of deeply rooted regional academic institutions, with strong links to local CSOs, governments and citizens to link OGP National Action Plan commitments and regional governance processes. JRIG recognised the potential influence of regional universities as infomediaries that could link subnational reformers – largely excluded from OGP processes in the Philippines to date – to the OGP. JRIG identified and recruited three universities, brought them together with regional partners, and developed online and offline knowledge products and services to help those partners improve the quality of data available under OGP commitments, and to use that data to identify and tackle service delivery problems at the regional level.	As a result of JRIG's work, regional reformers from various sectors have worked together to identify key open government challenges in their contexts, signed memoranda of agreement with one another, and are in the process of using the tools and resources made available by JRIG to collaboratively improve regional public service delivery.
Vertically integrated sandwich (InciteGov / ANSA-EAP / ULAP, Philippines)	National and subnational (provinces, local government units)	Bottom up and top down (sandwich)	• A highly institutionalised OGP process • Professionalised CSOs • International reputational concerns • Subnational open government entrepreneurship	The partners used the presence of a heavily institutionalised OGP process, robust CSOs and reform-minded provincial leaders in the Philippines as leverage for taking a multi-level approach to localising the OGP, and ensuring that priorities and preferences of reformers outside of Manila were incorporated into OGP processes. At the national level, InciteGov drove the creation of a new, independent non-government OGP secretariat, to strengthen the influence of regionally based CSOs in the national OGP steering committee, and improve the scope and depth of CSO engagement with OGP processes. InciteGov also led a successful advocacy campaign to maintain the country's OGP membership. At the provincial level, ANSA-EAP piloted a provincial participatory budgeting process, with a view to demonstrating the benefits of participatory budgeting and creating an evidence base with which to mobilise other subnational actors around open government issues, and to inform the national-level OGP process. At the community level, ULAP presented the evidence gathered by ANSA-EAP to local governments, and helped governments to consider how participatory budgeting processes and the OGP might help them improve their delivery of public services. In this vertically integrated model,[22] our partners combined top-down advocacy and coalition-building with bottom-up participation, to strengthen subnational participation in the OGP and in government more broadly.	The consortium's work contributed to the renewal of the Philippines' membership of the OGP, and to the creation of a civil society OGP steering committee. As a result of the work by ANSA-EAP and ULAP, budgeting processes in Bohol are more citizen-centred; other provinces are considering how to adapt and apply similar processes to their contexts. The project also successfully supported the incorporation of two subnational commitments – developed through consultations with provincial and local stakeholders – into the new National Action Plan.

Subnational Evidence, National Advocacy (Prakarsa, Indonesia)	Subnational (province, city, county) and national	Bottom up	• National-level policy commitments • Subnational open government entrepreneurship • A highly institutionalised OGP process	Prakarsa took advantage of the fact that Indonesia had committed to pursuing e-government at the national level, and of the presence of three subnational pioneers with deeply rooted track records on e-government. Prakarsa was able to feed the perspectives of subnational stakeholders - citizens, CSOs, and government officials, into the design and implementation of e-government initiatives across Indonesia. Prakarsa identified three pioneering subnational districts that had carried out ground-breaking e-government reforms. It used participatory research techniques, involving local stakeholders from various sectors in those districts, to generate evidence and insights on the methods and effects of those reforms. Prakarsa then took a politically savvy approach – informed by power analysis – to sharing its research findings with key stakeholders at the national level.	As a result of Prakarsa's work, national policy-makers are now incorporating its findings into the development of plans to guide the design and implementation of national e-government policy across Indonesia, including with regard to OGP commitments.
Citizen-Generated Data + Multilevel Advocacy (CRECO, Kenya)	Subnational (counties) and national	Bottom up	• National-level policy commitments • A legacy of community activism	CRECO used OGP National Action Plan commitments and a legacy of local activism to organise community members in two counties to investigate the county-level implementation of certain key commitments, and advocate for more effective implementation and better governance in those counties and across Kenya. CRECO supported local committees in generating data on whether and how the implementation of selected commitments was proceeding, and in identifying impediments to more successful implementation. CRECO then mobilised local partners to use the collected data, lobby local government officials and encourage better implementation. CRECO also shared the collected data with key CSO partners and relevant government officials at the national level, with a view to building a coalition that could support more effective multi-stakeholder OGP processes in Kenya.	CRECO's efforts have contributed to improvements in the extent to which citizens and CSOs in Makueni and Elgeyo Marakwet participate in, and engage with, OGP processes; this may lead to improvements in the county-level implementation of National Action Plan commitments. These activities have also strengthened the capacity of local activists to coordinate and engage in local advocacy. CRECO has further supported the development of more coordinated CSO activism on OGP issues at the national level, and facilitated more cooperation between the state and civil society on national-level OGP processes. Its work may help to provide a framework for more representative, participatory and relevant OGP processes in the future.
OGP as a Spur (Tamasha / Oxfam, Tanzania)	Subnational (districts)	Bottom up	• National-level policy commitments • A legacy of community activism • Local governance structures	Tamasha and Oxfam used the concept of the OGP, the fact that Tanzania had made specific commitments as part of the OGP process, and a history of local activism to mobilise community youth and women at the district level, broaden participation in local governance processes, and hold local officials accountable. They brought together groups of marginalised citizens and facilitated their exploration of whether and how local government officials had addressed (or failed to address) local problems linked to national OGP commitments. Tamasha and Oxfam then supported efforts to pressure local government officials, and develop and implement action plans for solving identified problems.	As a result of Tamasha / Oxfam's work, youth and women are far more involved in the functioning of local village assemblies. Their participation and collective action has led, in some wards, to the identification of instances in which local officials misappropriated public funds, which they have now been forced to return. Some government officials have also acknowledged other issues – from land rights to militia violence – raised by the people's committees supported by the project, and begun to work with them to address those issues.

21 The compressed time frame in which these projects were implemented (9–12 months) limited our ability to conclude whether grantees achieved transformative changes in their contexts. We can, however, explore whether and how their work influenced the behaviour of the partners, beneficiaries and policy-makers whom they wanted to influence, and whose engagement with open government and the OGP they attempted to support. These micro-level outcomes may pave the way for deeper, more transformative macro-level changes in the future.

22 Project partners, and this analysis of the InciteGov / ANSA-EAP project, are indebted to the pioneering work of **Guillán, Aceron and Fox** (2016), among others who have written about vertically integrated social accountability.

These examples demonstrate the diversity of models that our partners developed, throughout the L-MAVC programme, to localise the OGP in their contexts. None of these models, nor the way in which they were operationalised, was completely in place when the programme started in September 2016. The specific strategies that the grantees used to put these models into practice changed – sometimes quite radically – over time, as they learned what worked, and what didn't, in their local contexts.

Note that the performance of these models is a direct result of how well tailored they were to the contexts in which they were developed. The Filipino models, for example, depended on the existence of a highly professionalised civil society and a highly institutionalised OGP process, among other factors. As such, it is likely that they would have been a poor fit in the districts where our Tanzanian partners worked.

Conversely, the bottom-up, citizen-driven model of mobilisation and action undertaken in Tanzanian districts was highly dependent on socio-political dynamics and governance traditions in those districts – in particular, on a legacy of community activism, the existence of village assemblies, and the hierarchical, patriarchal way in which those assemblies are traditionally organised. As such, the 'OGP as a spur' model would be unlikely to translate effectively to the Philippines, which lacks those very specific enabling factors.

Variations in contextual conditions from place to place, even within the same country, means that none of the models described are, strictly speaking, replicable elsewhere. Nevertheless, the identification of these rough typologies of action is useful for two reasons:

1. The models present 'ideal types'[23] that can provide a basis for pro-reform actors working in other contexts to consider how they might leverage OGP to address local problems, given the conditions and characteristics of their particular systems. The rough typology might help reformers reflect on which enabling factors are present in their local environments, and guide them in adapting and applying some of the models developed by L-MAVC grantees to fit their own contexts.

2. The experiences of grantees strongly suggest that learning and adaption is important in governance processes, including with respect to the OGP.[24]

Each of the models described in Table 2 emerged over time, as the grantees worked with local stakeholders, explored their assumptions, learned about their environments, and adapted. By working adaptively, grantees learned how to effectively support meaningful citizen engagement in ways that fit with their highly specific and complex contexts. Without opportunities for learning and adaptation, it is unlikely that grantees could have identified and implemented a strategy to effectively localise the OGP.

Lesson 4. Participatory processes of learning, reflection and adaptation can enable more effective pursuit of political transformation, especially in volatile and / or complex environments

The evidence from L-MAVC suggests that structured, systematic processes of learning, reflection and adaptation, which rely on rigorously collected data and incorporate beneficiary perspectives, can strengthen the ability of pro-reform actors to respond to unexpected changes – from political transitions to environmental disasters and unexpected changes in local power relationships – in complex environments. Grantees' experiences demonstrate this in several ways.

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23 See **Brian Levy** for more on typologies of governance, and their potential use.

24 The absence of true counterfactuals limits the extent to which we can conclusively capture the impact of grantee projects. It does seem clear, however, that had the grantees not adapted to emerging challenges and lessons throughout their work, they would have been far less likely to contribute to improvements in the scope and depth of engagement with OGP processes, or in the salience of those processes at the subnational level. In the Philippines, for example, without the adaptations undertaken by InciteGov / ANSA-EAP, it is highly likely that the government would have withdrawn from the OGP, and that the termination of the Bottom Up Budgeting programme would have forestalled JRIG's attempts to broaden and deepen the usefulness and use of regional budget data. In Indonesia, a failure to adapt to Ahok's fall from grace would have probably doomed the project, leading to the suboptimal implementation of e-government policies in years to come. In Kenya, without CRECO's various adaptations to context challenges, the project may have been imperiled, and the OGP would likely have continued to be largely irrelevant to county-level governments. And in Tanzania, without the adaptive action undertaken by Tamasha and Oxfam, it is unlikely that government officials and village assemblies would have become more responsive to the interests and demands of marginalised citizens.

In the Philippines, for example, the new Duterte administration abruptly discontinued the Bottom Up Budgeting (BuB) programme. This decision had serious implications for our colleagues at JRIG, who had initially intended to help regional universities to train local CSOs to support the implementation of BuB. In response, JRIG carried out a series of participatory consultations with university partners, local CSOs and local government units. These enabled JRIG to determine that, even in the absence of Bottom Up Budgeting, regional pro-reform actors wanted to improve local fiscal transparency, especially with regard to city budgets.

Accordingly, JRIG shifted its focus from BuB – which no longer existed – to supporting its partners in leveraging another Nation Action Plan commitment focusing on fiscal transparency (the Full Disclosure Policy, or FDP) to explore and improve the availability and use of city budget data. This adaptation enabled JRIG to weather the unanticipated demise of BuB. JRIG's partners are now using the resources made available as part of the project to explore and improve the use and usefulness of available budget data, and to tackle local service delivery challenges.

In Tanzania, our partners at Tamasha and Oxfam experienced unexpected changes in the exercise of power in the districts in which they were working – changes that occurred, in part, because of the project itself. The response to Tamasha / Oxfam's early rounds of participatory action research (PAR) was strong – so strong that village members insisted that village assemblies select the people's committees that were charged with implementing PAR action plans. This unexpected development gave people's committees an official status for their work, and made them a formal part of the local power landscape, enabling them to exercise more influence than originally anticipated, and tackle and contribute solutions to longstanding local problems – from the misappropriation of local funds to land rights issues.

Tamasha / Oxfam have consequently been working with local partners to consider whether and how to formally incorporate these people's committees, and make them a permanent, institutionalised feature of the local governance landscape. This adaptation has required adjustments in the project's activities, but may have the effect of ensuring the sustainability of the work that Tamasha / Oxfam and partners are carrying out to strengthen the capacity of

marginalised citizens to hold local government officials to account.

In Kenya, several months into their project, our partners at CRECO encountered an unexpected spate of cattle rustling and violence in the counties in which they were working. These conditions, which emerged relatively quickly, made travel dangerous for members of CRECO's community oversight committees. Being unable to meet in person dampened the committees' ability to monitor the implementation of OGP commitments, share information with one another, and coordinate advocacy efforts. To maintain forward momentum, CRECO and the committees needed to adapt.

CRECO discovered that many committee members already used WhatsApp on a regular basis. Building on this, CRECO worked with them to form WhatsApp groups, which the members could use to communicate and coordinate until the violence had died down. This adaptive innovation, though simple, allowed them to continue gathering and sharing data on commitment implementation, and keep the project on track.

The case stories appended to this report provide additional detail of how the projects responded to unexpected changes in context. Each case story explains and describes how and why grantees adapted their strategies and, in some cases, their ways of working to enhance their ability to make progress towards supporting outcomes that mattered to local citizens. These adaptations were possible because of the structure of L-MAVC. Regularly gathering and reflecting on data, with the participation of local partners, enabled grantees to quickly identify changes in the complex conditions in which they were working, and make course corrections when necessary.

Figuring out how to successfully apply adaptive processes, however, is challenging, especially when implementers and donors are used to more traditional modes of project programming. This means that the systematic application of adaptive learning across all six grantee projects, and the support provided by Global Integrity and Making All Voices Count, also had to be adaptive: flexible enough to respond to unexpected challenges, sensitive to the needs of grantees, and yet still consistent with the expectations of donors. In Section 3.2, we discuss what we learned about supporting adaptive ways of working.

3.2 What we learned about how to support adaptive ways of working: lessons on the application of adaptive learning

Lesson 5. Structured, cross-context peer reflection and learning are key to supporting adaptation within specific contexts and enabling projects to strengthen their impact and effectiveness

Global Integrity hosted four peer-learning workshops over the course of the L-MAVC programme. In these, we brought representatives of all grantee organisations together in one location, dedicating between two and four days to sharing experiences, troubleshooting challenges and identifying collective insights.[25]

Grantees found that these facilitated opportunities for sharing and discussion were an invaluable part of their learning experience. The frank and honest exchanges that took place at workshops contributed to the emergence of a small international learning community, in which reformers working across the globe could ask one another questions, share concerns and solicit advice and guidance with respect to their in-country work. This community became a place for mutual support and dialogue about challenges, and enabled constructive exchanges that furthered grantees' capacity to overcome those challenges successfully.

The workshops were also a dedicated space for grantees to reflect on the different aspects of their specific projects, from problem statements to theories of change to gathered data, and to do so with the support of Global Integrity, Making All Voices Count and, most importantly, other grantees. The critical but supportive perspective offered by external people – all of whom were applying the same adaptive approach to their own work – helped the grantees to identify potential gaps in their project logic, uncover new lessons, and discover potential innovations and adaptations that they might apply to their own projects.

Peer learning and reflection strengthened the grantees' effectiveness, both individually and collectively. For example, learning workshop

exchanges between Tamasha / Oxfam (Tanzania) and InciteGov / ANSA-EAP (the Philippines) helped both projects to reshape their ways of working. InciteGov / ANSA-EAP pushed Tamasha / Oxfam to consider incorporating local CSOs into the process of setting up and mobilising people's committees. This advice helped the Tanzanian project to integrate their work more effectively with existing governance structures, which improved the relevance and influence of people's committees at the community level. For their part, Tamasha and Oxfam helped InciteGov and ANSA-EAP take a more inclusive, and less prescriptive, approach to citizen consultations. Tamasha and Oxfam's insights will enable their Filipino colleagues to ensure that citizens' preferences – as expressed during consultation processes – have a stronger influence on future National Action Plan commitments.

Other projects reported that they derived similar benefits from the learning workshops, and that L-MAVC's cross-country peer learning was instrumental in improving their effectiveness. The experiences of project participants strongly suggest that opportunities for learning and reflection across countries can strengthen the extent to which effective adaptation takes place in countries.

Lesson 6. Support for adaptive processes must itself be adaptive, and responsive to the needs and capacities of those putting learning and adaptation into practice

In September 2016, Global Integrity, Making All Voices Count and the L-MAVC grantees gathered in Nairobi, Kenya, for an inception workshop. While there, we agreed on three items that would guide our work on the initiative:

1. a common template to guide grantees' application of the adaptive learning methodology at the country level
2. a standardised management process for the submission of progress reports and financial documents
3. a schedule for subsequent learning workshops.

As we put these elements of L-MAVC into place in late 2016, we gradually realised that each of items to which we agreed were not playing out quite as planned. The template needed to be more user-friendly, the grant management process needed

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25 For more information on the learning workshops, see Global Integrity (2017).

streamlining, and reflective learning workshops were both too infrequent and too short to support the learning community we had envisioned.

So, we adapted, and continued doing so over the life of the programme. We worked with grantees to regularly update the structure of our adaptive learning documentation template, so that it really helped the grantees to monitor, learn and adapt on the ground. We simplified grant management procedures as best we could (although constraints on Making All Voices Count's flexibility meant that grantees still had to produce compliance reports). And we adjusted the schedule of the reflective learning workshops. These adaptations – which were applied to a programme premised on adaptive learning – enabled us to ensure that the support we offered to grantees was continuously tailored and re-tailored with respect to their needs. Over the course of the L-MAVC programme, grantees reported that these adaptations helped them to be more effective.

The evidence from L-MAVC suggests that modalities of support that are meant to encourage learning and adaptation among country-level partners can and do benefit from the application of data-driven participatory learning, reflection and adaptation to their own ways of working.

Lesson 7. Traditional donor accountability procedures can constrain partners' ability to learn and adapt – even, or especially, in the context of adaptive programming

From the start, L-MAVC was an innovative programme, explicitly set up to help grantees learn and adapt as they supported citizen engagement with the OGP. Despite its intent, L-MAVC suffered from several challenges, including staff turnover at Making All Voices Count; conflicting messaging about accountability and reporting requirements; short, rigid grant and project timelines; and institutional barriers inside grantee organisations. At times, these challenges constrained the participants' ability to adapt.

Staff turnover in Making All Voices Count's country programmes and administrative offices meant that, in some cases, grantees received scant support. Making All Voices Count's country engagement developers are exceptional, hard-working

professionals, and were key sources of in-country advice and guidance for grantees. But high turnover and reductions in their working hours contributed to difficulties for some grantees trying to navigate the formidable hurdles posed by the programme's bureaucracy. Reduced hours and staff restrictions also limited the extent to which country engagement developers could consistently provide their valuable perspective and support to grantees at reflective learning workshops.[26]

Staff turnover also meant that the programme officers in charge of the OGP grants changed multiple times during the course of the project. New staff often (and understandably) lacked the institutional memory to quickly get up to speed on L-MAVC. Consequently, programme and financial officers sometimes requested compliance reports that were not required by the terms of the L-MAVC grants.

Conflicting messaging about accountability requirements cropped up consistently, and resulted in the misallocation of grantees' valuable time and resources. More importantly, confused communication about which reports were due when meant that many grantees experienced serious delays in their receipt of project funds from Making All Voices Count, despite having complied with the procedures that were written into their contracts. As a result, some projects – being implemented by resource-poor organisations – were forced to operate in deficit, even as the grants approached their conclusion.

The experiences of grantees suggest that short timelines restrict the space for learning and adaptation. Because of external constraints at Making All Voices Count, L-MAVC was limited to around 14 months. Contracting and disbursement delays for some grantees meant that, in practice, they had even less time – between nine and 12 months – to implement their projects. This constrained the extent to which they could fully buy into, and engage in, adaptive practice.

Finally, institutional barriers in their own organisations sometimes hindered participants' capacity to fully engage in adaptive learning processes. One grantee's learning journey was negatively affected by staff turnover, for example.[27] For others, their project was simply one of several

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26 Some country engagement developers were able to attend, and made valuable contributions to two of the four workshops.
27 One of DGRU's two project leads left the organisation in July 2017.

These projects strongly suggest that time invested in gathering and reflecting on data on three particular issues – problems, politics and outcomes – is well spent. This is especially true when facing challenges that are fundamentally political in nature.

in their organisational portfolio. Southern CSOs receiving northern funds are often set up to meet compliance-driven project management requirements. This means that one-off opportunities for adaptive programming, limited to a single project, can place extra administrative burdens on implementers. Adaptive approaches might not fit with an organisation's prevailing culture, or with its existing financial systems. Consequently, partners had to spend time and energy trying to navigate their own organisational bureaucracies in order to protect spaces for learning and adaptation.

This meant that although partners reported that adaptive learning processes contributed greatly to their ability to support progress towards open governance in their contexts, organisational impediments – many of which resulted from traditional donor accountability requirements – may limit their ability to employ similar methodologies in the future. Moving away from project-level funding, and toward more organisation / programme support, may help whole organisations become more adaptive – and more effective – over time.

Lesson 8. Data – especially data on problems, politics and outcomes – is the fuel that powers reflective learning, adaptation and effectiveness

The collective experiences of the L-MAVC grantees are a testament to the importance of regularly collecting, using and reflecting on data in adaptive processes. These projects strongly suggest that time invested in gathering and reflecting on data on three particular issues – problems, politics and outcomes – is well spent. This is especially true when facing challenges that are fundamentally political in nature. Rich, qualitative data, generated in collaboration with local partners, seems to be especially useful.

Gathering data on problems – particularly early on in projects, and in consultation with local partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries – was key to helping the grantees understand and frame the challenges they were trying to tackle. In Indonesia, for example, consultations with local stakeholders in their study areas helped Prakarsa to understand the key issues affecting e-government initiatives, and to build a research strategy that generated insights on those issues.

In some cases, grantees' understanding of the problems they were tackling evolved over the course of the project, as they gathered more data on the issues they were confronting. Tamasha and Oxfam, for example, initially assumed that deficits in government accountability at the community level were largely a matter of awareness. Indeed, results from a baseline survey they conducted seemed to confirm this. However, by engaging more deeply with members of their target communities through participatory action research, Tamasha and Oxfam came to realise that while citizens might not have known about the OGP, they certainly understood and valued open government principles, and saw gaps in transparency and accountability in their districts. Gaps persisted not because of a lack of awareness, but because of prevailing power structures and local political dynamics that excluded youth and women from community decision-making processes. As a result of this realisation, Tamasha and Oxfam adapted their strategy to focus more on supporting collective action, rather than raising awareness of the OGP.

Data on politics was also crucial. Monitoring political dynamics throughout their projects, and tracking whether and how the implementation of their strategies were affecting those dynamics, helped grantees to learn, adapt and overcome emerging challenges, as described earlier in this

report.[28] Grantees gathered data on politics and power on a regular basis, often through participatory power analyses carried out with local partners, as well as in coordination with Global Integrity and Making All Voices Count staff at reflective learning workshops. These living, sometimes informal, analyses helped to ensure that the grantees were able to engage with and shape relevant political dynamics as they pursued change.

Finally, data on outcomes helped the grantees keep an eye on the long-term changes to which they were hoping to contribute, rather than being distracted by the delivery of outputs defined in a static log frame. Early on in their projects, grantees were encouraged to clearly define an outcome-level change goal,[29] framed with respect to the problems they had identified, and incorporating input from local partners. Doing this, and establishing a few simple metrics by which they could determine whether they were making progress towards that goal, helped them make timely course corrections.

For example, JRIG sought to improve the ability of universities to support citizens and CSOs outside of Manila in taking advantage of, and effectively using, open government data. Focusing on this change goal, rather than strictly on activities and outputs, meant that when the new Duterte administration discontinued the Bottom Up Budgeting programme, JRIG was able to adapt, as it was not wedded to a set pathway of change. By remaining focused on its change goal, JRIG could shift gears in a dynamic political context. The project ended up using fiscal data available under the Full Disclosure Policy, and continued to make progress towards its goal.

These richly textured lessons cannot be understood in isolation from the experiences from which they emerged. They are the result of six highly structured, innovative and deeply rooted efforts to improve citizen engagement at the subnational (and occasionally) national level in five countries. Yet despite being very much from certain places, and tied to particular experiences, these lessons do have broader implications, especially for others working on governance and development. We discuss some of these implications in Section 4.

4. What does it all mean? Reflecting on L-MAVC

The findings from the L-MAVC programme are especially relevant for three audiences: (1) the OGP secretariat and its partners; (2) donors and multilateral institutions supporting governance reform; and (3) practitioners working on the frontline of open governance in countries and communities across the world. In this section, we discuss how each of these audiences might apply the lessons we have identified.

4.1 The Open Government Partnership

The OGP is focused on helping its member countries deliver transformative changes that matter to citizens. In recent years, the OGP has run up against two challenges: (1) ensuring that a higher proportion of ambitious commitments in its National Action Plans are effectively implemented; and (2) making sure that commitments contribute more effectively to solving problems that citizens care about.

The OGP is tackling these challenges in a variety of ways. The Support Unit is developing a menu of support options to assist country-level reformers in developing and implementing more relevant, effective National Action Plans. And the recently expanded Subnational Pioneers programme aims to get provinces, counties and cities actively involved in OGP processes and broaden citizen engagement with the OGP. These innovations are promising, and

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28 Prakarsa's adaptation to Ahok's fall from power is one example of this, as is InciteGov's advocacy campaign to secure the support of Secretary Diokno.

29 For more on the initial theories of change and change goals, see the full case stories in Appendix A2.

Data-driven, citizen-centred, reflective and adaptive learning support – focused on supporting the development and implementation of specific action plan commitments – could help OGP champions more effectively engage with and shape power and political dynamics, respond to unexpected changes in contextual conditions, and incorporate emerging lessons into their ways of working as they go.

may help pro-reform actors more effectively leverage the platform OGP provides to deliver on changes that really affect people's lives. The lessons from L-MAVC might help OGP build on, and improve these ongoing efforts.

OGP could do so by:

(1) expanding the provision of systematic learning and adaptation support to local OGP champions

Participation and multi-stakeholder collaboration are at the heart of the OGP model. The Subnational Pioneers programme in particular intends to help citizens and activists on the ground to shape the ways that governments function and perform. The evidence in the L-MAVC cases suggests that, all too often, participation in OGP processes – even subnational processes – is still limited, featuring isolated government champions and, at best, a few professional CSOs. This is not a bad thing; the reformers who engage with the OGP are often fiercely committed to improving government performance and addressing citizen concerns. But the limited range of individuals, organisations and agencies that participate in the OGP, and find it relevant to their goals, may limit its reach and impact.

L-MAVC grantees have all confronted this dilemma in their work. And they have, through structured processes of trial and error, and cycles of iterative learning and adaptation, learned how to support subnational citizen engagement with OGP more effectively. All the grantees have made progress towards localising OGP in their contexts.

The models suggested by grantee experiences are not one-size-fits-all blueprints. We cannot simply take InciteGov / ANSA-EAP's approach, for example, transplant it to Tanzania, replicate it, and expect to make a difference. Each grantee's localisation model is too deeply interwoven with the

specific context from which it emerged for that to be possible.

The evidence from the cases suggests that external actors can, however, do more to help local OGP champions learn how to work more effectively in their own contexts. L-MAVC demonstrates how pro-reform actors, including those at the subnational level, can benefit from structured learning journeys. Data-driven, citizen-centred, reflective and adaptive learning support – focused on supporting the development and implementation of specific action plan commitments – could help OGP champions more effectively engage with and shape power and political dynamics, respond to unexpected changes in contextual conditions, and incorporate emerging lessons into their ways of working as they go. Support for adaptive learning could help local champions develop their own localisation models.

The OGP and its partners might also benefit from further exploring how to help subnational pioneers, especially those in civil society, engage in participatory learning journeys. In doing so, the OGP could help local champions more effectively develop solutions to local problems, accelerate progress towards closing implementation gaps, and strengthen the transformative impact of OGP action plans.

(2) providing more, and deeper, opportunities for structured comparative peer learning

The experience of the L-MAVC grantees demonstrates the value of comparative peer learning. If and when the adaptive programming laid out above, or some variant thereof, is put into to place, providing opportunities for cross-context peer learning will be a crucial component of maximising its value. Peer learning is already fundamental to the way the OGP works. Structured exchanges would build on and enhance the support

Donors should consider reducing the emphasis on evaluation, and instead encourage grantees to focus on, and rigorously document, learning.

that the OGP already provides to its partners. Bringing together reformers that are tackling similar issues, but applying different strategies and working in different contexts, would provide opportunities to compare experiences, share lessons, troubleshoot challenges and generate shared insights. The evidence from the L-MAVC programme indicates that these kinds of exchanges can play an important role in helping reformers uncover blind spots, develop new tactics and improve their effectiveness.

These exchanges could take the form of small, facilitated, in-person workshops in regional hubs and occur at regular intervals throughout action plan cycles, or on the side-lines of previously scheduled OGP meetings. They could even take place virtually, if necessary (though this would not be ideal). The focus of exchanges, regardless of their format, should be on creating a shared community space in which participants can share, reflect, and learn together over the course of their efforts to support the design and implementation of citizen-centred action plan commitments, rather than on promoting a particular approach to be applied across different contexts.

4.2 Donors and multilateral institutions

In recent years, many donors and multilateral institutions have expressed interest in, and support for, adaptive programming that grapples with the complex political conditions in which governance work takes place.[30] Despite various pilots of adaptive approaches – from problem-driven iterative adaptation, to systems thinking, to strategy testing – more adaptive programming has yet to really take root across the governance sector.

With a few exceptions,[31] most donors continue to distribute support on the basis of requests for proposals, expect adherence to static, linear theories of change, and encourage monitoring and evaluation that – for understandable reasons – emphasises the

strict delivery of outputs, for the purpose of making funding recipients accountable, rather than prioritising the learning processes that are key to delivering results. Consequently, those working on the ground, who are pursuing change in complex systems, are boxed in by the constraints of traditional project and grant management, and lack the flexibility they need to adapt to emerging challenges.

The evidence from the L-MAVC programme suggests that if donors and multilaterals are serious about bolstering efforts to improve governance, change is needed. To enable more effective local learning and action that might improve the effectiveness of governance projects and programmes, and enable transformative change at the country level, donors and multilaterals should accommodate more adaptive programming at an expanded scale.

This could mean:

(1) emphasising the learning in monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)

The vast majority of grants require recipients to develop monitoring and evaluation plans that focus on compliance. They encourage grantees to measure whether planned outputs were achieved, and whether predefined, quantitative targets were met. MEL systems of this sort are set up primarily to assess a project's impact, and tend to prioritise compliance with donor-mandated metrics. They set aside questions about whether 'impact' is a useful concept, or even capable of being assessed in complex, dynamic systems – in which causality is rarely linear, and never straightforward. Consequently, traditional MEL plans tend to subordinate the 'L' – learning – which, if it is captured at all, tends to occur at the end of projects and programmes, when it's too late to put that learning to use.

Donors should consider reducing the emphasis on evaluation in MEL, and instead encourage grantees to focus on, and rigorously document, learning.

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30 See DFID (2017), World Bank (2016) and USAID Learning Lab (nd a).
31 Notably, the Omidyar Network and the Asia Foundation are taking more system-level approaches to some of their grant-making practices.

A learning-focused system would help grantees to gather information on the context in which they are working, to regularly assess power and political dynamics, and to explore and revise their assumptions about how change happens as they go. It would focus on outcomes, not outputs, and provide space for regular, data-driven and participatory reflection, so that grantees figure out what mix of strategies and activities are likely to support progress towards those outcomes. Grantees could then make strategic course corrections throughout a project and / or programme. As part of emphasising the L, donors might do more to bring together grantees working in different contexts for comparative learning sessions. These would enable implementers to learn about, adapt and apply perspectives generated in other contexts to their own systems, while also permitting the generation and synthesis of collective insights to inform the field.[32]

A stronger emphasis on learning could also generate richer data on whether and how donor-financed projects and programmes support change in complex contexts. This might help donors to improve their understanding of the systems they are trying to influence, and enable them to adapt their funding strategies for maximum impact. L-MAVC took this kind of learning-centred approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning, and the early evidence indicates that doing so strengthened the effectiveness of grantee projects, and of the programme as a whole.

(2) operationalising flexibility in projects and funding models, including through building trust

More flexible reporting and financial procedures would free grantees from onerous compliance requirements, and give them extra latitude to focus their resources on identifying and responding more effectively to emergent features of their contexts. This wouldn't mean that donors give grantees carte blanche to expend funds without justification – rather, it would entail streamlining and reducing compliance procedures, and complementing or replacing many of those procedures with efforts to strengthen programme officers' relationships with grantees. Stronger relationships, more regular check-ins and more transparency on both sides would improve programme officers' understanding of the complex conditions in which grantees work. It would also enable both parties to work together

to reflect, capture lessons, and adapt and justify changes to budgets and project plans when warranted.

The experience of the L-MAVC grantees demonstrates the importance of flexibility and deeper relationships between donors and grantees. As previously noted, there were issues with the timely disbursement of project funds throughout the programme. But because of their strong relationships with Global Integrity, country engagement developers and programme leaders at Making All Voices Count, the grantees were able to navigate those issues successfully and continue making progress.

(3) reducing the prevalence of technical requests for proposals, which limit local ownership and restrict space for learning and adaptation by local stakeholders

Requests for proposals – especially those developed by large institutional donors – often focus on solving problems that may be very different from the challenges local stakeholders actually face in a given context, or are framed in ways that don't align with local priorities. Applications and programmes that respond to these requests therefore end up trying to address the issues that donors have identified as important, or to comply with the donor's understanding of local problems. This may limit winning proposals' ability to address the issues that affect citizens' lives in a meaningful way.

Donors should consider simplifying requests for proposals, or doing away with them completely. Instead, they could take a more systemic approach. This would entail encouraging and / or working with local stakeholders, helping them to submit proposals in which they describe processes for identifying, learning about and solving local problems, including in partnership with intended beneficiaries. The L-MAVC application process, while imperfect, followed this basic approach. And, as evidenced by L-MAVC, the adaptive programming that emerges from learning-focused calls could help grantees define and tackle problems that really matter, establish a framework for supporting learning processes, and enable donors to generate evidence on the particular aspects of systems change they are best placed to pursue.

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32 This sort of initiative would benefit from building on the example provided by the **Transparency and Accountability Initiative** (2015), the **TWP Community of Practice** (nd) and **DDD Manifesto Community** (nd) communities of practice, among others.

These projects offer proof of concept demonstrating that locally led, problem–driven, adaptive approaches to governance work can, in some cases, strengthen the resilience and capacity of local actors and help them more effectively support citizen engagement in governance processes linked to the OGP.

These sorts of changes, if taken to scale, would fundamentally reorient how power is held and exercised in most funding agreements. Programme officers would be more like partners than managers; power and agency would be more evenly distributed between donors and grantees as they engage in shared learning journeys together.

Without radical changes, it seems unlikely that the governance sector will effectively harness the potential of adaptive programming. Indeed, the experience of the L-MAVC grantees demonstrates the difficulty of applying adaptive approaches in a landscape in which the majority of funding is distributed on the basis of requests for proposals developed in donor offices, and in which prevailing donor–grantee relationships encourage dogmatic adherence to donor priorities, even in complex, dynamic, political contexts.

When donor systems and procedures do not emphasise learning and adaptation among their partners on a consistent basis, institutional hurdles can sometimes affect even adaptive pilots. And when grant recipients have to integrate one-off adaptive projects with more traditional programming, organisational barriers can constrain the extent to which they are able to learn, react and adapt.

Scaling-up more adaptive programming might help to remove these obstacles, by creating a virtuous circle in which grant recipients are able to apply principles of learning and adaptation across their entire portfolios, and develop new institutional ways of working. The same could be said for donors. Rather than being a sideshow, an exception to the traditional rules, and therefore forced to integrate into traditional administrative procedures, adaptive programming could become the rule itself.

It is important to acknowledge that the L-MAVC projects are small pilots, oriented around a specific initiative and supporting small-scale efforts to strengthen citizen engagement in the OGP. They do, however, offer proof of concept, demonstrating that locally led, problem-driven, adaptive approaches to governance work can, in some cases, strengthen the resilience and capacity of local actors and help them more effectively support citizen engagement in governance processes linked to the OGP, and all this despite the institutional and funding constraints grantees faced in the programme.

Rolling out these sorts of principles more broadly, and applying them to more governance projects, would enable donors to test whether and how adaptive programming can strengthen their systems-level impact and effectiveness, as well as that of their grantees.

4.3 Practitioners

Finally, the experience of the L-MAVC grantees have a few implications for practitioners – both northern and southern, from international NGOs and domestic civil society organisations – working on governance issues amid complexity. These include:

(1) listening

Make sure that governance work is informed by, and done in partnership with, citizens and organisations living and working in the targeted context. The experiences from the L-MAVC programme demonstrated, many times over, that local stakeholders have the best perspective on which problems need solving, on relevant political dynamics, and whether and how efforts are contributing to outcomes. For change to be sustainable in the long term, the perspectives and values of those working at the grass roots need to be at the heart of reform processes.

(2) participating

Ensure that projects and programmes build in space for participation by the stakeholders they aim to support. The evidence from L-MAVC

suggests that participation by local stakeholders can enable productive learning and adaptation that otherwise might not occur. Take advantage of opportunities for cross-context peer learning, should they exist. Pursue modes of development programming that encourage participatory monitoring and learning, and allow for strategic adaptation at regular intervals throughout a project or programme cycle.

(3) holding donors accountable

Try to make sure that reality, in all its messy complexity, is presented to donors. Mistakes are going to happen; so are failures. But documenting the full gamut of on-the-ground experiences, and carefully explaining adaptations made in response to emerging challenges, will help donors to better understand the complex conditions in which reform efforts take place. More realistic, data-driven accountability may help donors and other external actors evolve, and do more to make sure that local change agents are at the forefront of efforts to open governance. In the long term, this kind of evolution could reshape the governance sector, and development more broadly, enabling domestic stakeholders to learn and adapt their way to sustainable, transformative reforms that fit in their contexts.

Appendices

A1. Summary of methods used

As noted in the introduction to this report, L-MAVC was motived by two objectives:

1. At the grantee level: to strengthen their impact and effectiveness as they attempted to help citizens shape the design and implementation of OGP action plans, including in subnational districts.

2. At the aggregate level: to generate evidence on how external actors – including Making All Voices Count, the OGP secretariat, donors, INGOs and others – might provide their in-country partners with more effective support, and accelerate the emergence of transformative governance reforms, including under the auspices of the OGP.

Our methodological approach was informed by various emerging methods that aim to support politically aware, contextually grounded and problem-focused development practice, including action research,[33] problem-driven iterative adaptation,[34] strategy testing,[35] adaptive management[36] and more.[37]

All these approaches emphasise, to varying degrees, the importance of participation, collection and use, in iterative cycles, of monitoring data, reflection and adaptation in development work. By combining aspects of various strands of thinking into one framework, we intended to provide flexible, consistent guidance to support the L-MAVC grantees in their work to strengthen citizen engagement in OGP (objective 1), and generate the evidence needed for a compelling and useful synthesis of grantees' learning journeys (objective 2).

In support of objective 1, Global Integrity served as a sounding board for advice and guidance as the grantees implemented their activities, collected evidence and reflected on how their theories of change were playing out in practice. This meant that we supported grantees as they:

- explored the systems in which they work, and identified and analysed the problems they wanted to solve

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33 See, among others: Burns (2014); Popplewell and Hayman (2012); Mikkelsen (2005); Newman (2000); and Pettit and Guijt (nd).

34 For more on problem-driven iterative adaptation, see: Andrews, Pritchett and Woolcock (2015); Unsworth (2010); Rodrik (2008); and Ostrom (2005). Faustino and Booth (2014) argue for a similar approach.

35 Ladner (2015) is a good resource on strategy testing. For an alternative, though similar approach, see van Zyl (2011).

36 Valters, Cummings, and Nixon (2016) describe the importance of adaptive management and lay out some ways in which it can be implemented. Ørnemark (2016) is also useful on this topic, as are Proud, Willett, Westerman and Kurtz (2015). The USAID Learning Lab (nd b) outlines some features of adaptive organisations, while the Doing Development Differently (nd) manifesto highlights the importance and usefulness of adaptive approaches.

37 Hudson, Marquette and Waldock (2016) outline some of the important features of politically informed approaches to supporting reform. Booth (2016) digs into politically aware flexible programming. Davies (2016) and Valters (2014) provide useful reflections on using theories of change.

- framed the outcomes to which they intended to contribute
- developed a strategy for making progress towards those outcomes, including through engaging with and shaping political and power dynamics
- constructed a flexible, light-touch monitoring framework that would enable them to track their progress
- collected and reflected on monitoring data
- made strategic course corrections in response to emerging lessons and challenges.

Using the flexible adaptive learning template, which was co-created early in the programme and subsequently adapted at various points, the grantees documented their learning journeys on a regular basis. These tracking documents included monitoring data, records of their reflection sessions, and revisions to problem statements, contextual dynamics and theories of change, as well as justifications for those revisions.

These rich documents served as a foundational element of short case stories produced by grantees, in collaboration with Global Integrity, in and after the final reflective learning workshop in September 2017. Each case story explores a given grantee's learning journey, including key learning moments, outcomes and achievements, and the grantee's reflection on and assessment of the adaptive approach applied in L-MAVC. These accounts offer an evidence-based synthesis of each grantee's experience in L-MAVC. Global Integrity has cross-referenced these stories with our own data and insights.

In support of objective 2, we reviewed and analysed the documentation, case stories and evidence produced by grantees and their partners throughout their projects, as well as the data, insights and reflections generated and captured at each reflective learning workshop,[38] and the multitude of records maintained by Global Integrity throughout the L-MAVC programme.

Next, taking a realist-synthesis inspired approach, we investigated: whether / how grantees made progress towards supporting citizen engagement in the OGP in their contexts; whether / how the

adaptive process we developed and applied contributed to grantee effectiveness; and under which conditions it might have done so. This synthesis report – and other synthesis products developed as part of L-MAVC – is therefore sourced from an analysis of rich, evidence-based accounts of grantee efforts to support change. As such, they contribute rigorous, validated and actionable insights into whether / how external actors, from donors to multilateral initiatives to INGOs and the OGP, might better support locally owned efforts to strengthen citizen engagement and government accountability.

Materials from this project will continue to be made available through various fora and media, in the hope that the varied experiences of citizen engagement and learning featured in L-MAVC become more widely used, and the lessons incorporated into the discourse, policy and practice of those seeking to transform open governance.

A2. Case stories: grantee accounts of their work as part of L-MAVC

1. Making hay while the sun shines: working with opportunities and adapting to constraints – a case study on universities and knowledge partnerships for open government in the Philippines (JRIG)

2. Responding to reality: people, politics and technology in facilitating local involvement in OGP – a case study from the Philippines (InciteGov / ANSA-EAP)

3. Voiceless voices made loud: Opening open governance – a case study from the Constitution and Reform Education Consortium (CRECO) in Kenya

4. Testing the claims of e-government through engagement: a case study from Indonesia (Prakarsa)

5. Evaluating and shaping engagement on OGP - a case story from Tanzania (Tamasha / Oxfam)

6. Revisiting assumptions about technology – a case story from the Democratic Governance and Rights Unit (DGRU) in South Africa

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38 This is especially true of the final reflective learning workshop, held in Brighton, UK, in September 2017, at which the grantees had the opportunity to practice synthesis in relation to their own learning journeys, to support each other in refining these, and to engage in collective synthesis and sense-making about the L-MAVC journey as a whole. This was of value to these individuals, as well as to the synthesis process, because by working collectively, we generated deeper insights in a participatory fashion. The data and sense-making generated in the final learning workshop was a form of actor validation for the findings in this report.

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About Making All Voices Count

Making All Voices Count is a programme working towards a world in which open, effective and participatory governance is the norm and not the exception. It focuses global attention on creative and cutting-edge solutions to transform the relationship between citizens and their governments. The programme is inspired by and supports the goals of the Open Government Partnership.

Making All Voices Count is supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Omidyar Network, and is implemented by a consortium consisting of Hivos, IDS and Ushahidi.

Research, Evidence and Learning component

The programme's Research, Evidence and Learning component, managed by IDS, contributes to improving performance and practice, and builds an evidence base in the field of citizen voice, government responsiveness, transparency and accountability (T&A) and technology for T&A (Tech4T&A).

About Global Integrity

Global Integrity champions transparent and accountable governance around the world by producing innovative research and taking action to inform, connect, and empower civic, private, and public reformers seeking more open societies. Undergirding our work is the knowledge that governance reform is inherently political and complex, and that there are thus few, if any, cookie cutter solutions to governance-related challenges. As such, we acknowledge that any efforts to drive progress toward more open, accountable and effective governance must be led by local stakeholders, navigating and shaping the political dynamics in their own particular contexts.

We support local stakeholders, including both government and civil society, with our assistance in putting adaptive learning – a structured, data-driven, problem-focused and iterative approach to learning by doing, which engages with local political realities while drawing on experiences from elsewhere – at the heart of their efforts to design and implement effective governance reforms. This helps reformers close the gaps between policy commitments and implementation and contributes to better governance and development outcomes. Further, we seek to support and enhance the effectiveness of other key players in the governance arena by sharing the insights generated from our innovative and exploratory work with local partners.

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