



Empowerment and Accountability

Promoting Citizen Empowerment
and Government Accountability

Overview

Poor people will continue to have limited opportunities as long as governments and service providers remain disinterested in their priorities.

In our work, Itad seeks to break this cycle of disenfranchisement, giving people the skills and confidence to speak out and negotiate better governance from their leaders.

Poor people often report that they don't feel entitled to resources such as health and education services. They express feelings of powerlessness and an inability to influence those in power. This makes it all the more difficult for people to move out of poverty. It also reduces the impact of investments to reduce poverty made by national governments and international donor agencies alike.

Recognising these challenges, an increasing emphasis is being given to initiatives which enable people to take greater control of their own development and to place demands on, and negotiate and work with, their governments. This involves increasing people's awareness of their rights, strengthening their abilities to voice concerns through alliances, lobby for change, and by creating 'space' for citizen monitoring of government actions. A newer generation of initiatives has also emerged which work to empower the citizens individually for example through Information Communication Technologies (ICTs).

Empowering citizens implies a change in power relations. There are often vested interests against this happening, so interventions must pay close attention to existing power relations and identifying drivers of change.

At Itad, we pride ourselves in designing interventions which work with the grain of local societies and yet which do not maintain the status quo. We successfully use political economy analysis to develop an in-depth knowledge of the context, key players and 'rules of the game' in which we are working. This helps us identify priority issues and approaches that have a high probability in making positive change, not least through also supporting citizens and development organisations to act politically.

A commitment to delivering results drives our actions. As part of project implementation teams, we use our monitoring skills to understand which project interventions are working, or not, and then advise on how implementation strategies can be revised to enhance results. On evaluations, we recognise the importance of not only quantifying results, but also drawing lessons to inform future programming. We prefer to use a mix of quantitative and qualitative methodologies to generate a detailed understanding of what has worked, for whom and how these changes have been brought about.

To contribute to citizen empowerment and government accountability, Itad offers these core services:

Monitoring systems

We design innovative and thorough monitoring systems to measure the effects of projects on citizen empowerment and government accountability. These are difficult areas in which to measure change, and we have developed a range of proven types of indicators that work in this type of programme.

Evaluation

We carry out evaluations of on-going and completed projects to understand whether they are empowering people. Working independently from the project implementers, we bring a fresh perspective which can contribute to improving results achieved and understanding why things do or do not work. We recognise the difficulties of giving people the confidence to speak out and demand better from their leaders and always seek to provide pragmatic guidance to help improve performance.

Strategic planning

Through our monitoring and evaluation (M&E) work we have developed a good understanding of approaches that can work. We draw on this to design creative project and programme strategies that can help women and men have more control over their own development and influence over the communities they live in. To make long-term change, we know projects and programmes need to work with the grain of local societies. Our strategic planning is therefore always founded on an in-depth analysis of the local context, the existing 'rules of the game' and the key players that have power and influence.

Measuring value for money of governance interventions

We are leaders in the development of innovative approaches to measuring value for money of governance and other interventions. We have developed methodologies for quantifying benefits achieved by governance interventions, as well as approaches to achieving value for money in empowerment and accountability projects and programmes, particularly drawing on the suite of this type of programmes we are working on in Africa.

Knowledge sharing and capacity building

Itad is committed to sharing good practices. Much of our empowerment and accountability work centres on building the skills and capacity of our partners to enable them to achieve the best possible results from their work. We also increasingly communicate results and lessons from our work through publications, seminars, and blogs.

OUR PROJECTS

Supporting Transparency, Accountability and Responsiveness in Ghana (STAR-Ghana)

Transparency, accountability and responsiveness are key aspects of good governance. Itad is part of the consortium managing DFID's STAR Ghana project which supports civil society and Parliament in influencing how Ghana uses its budget and delivers public services.

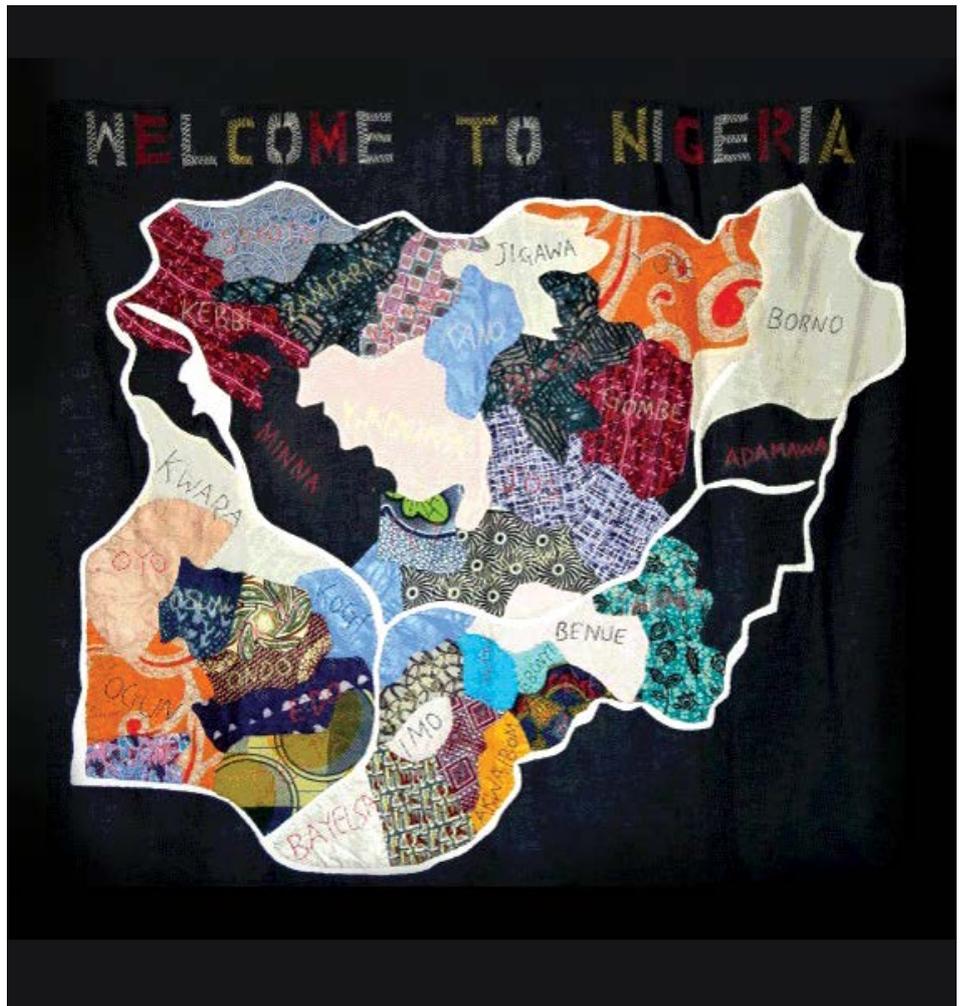
STAR-Ghana is a multi-million project, jointly funded by DFID, the European Commission, Danida, and USAID. The bulk of funding is managed as a grant fund for civil society organisations (CSOs) to undertake projects that improve areas such as quality of primary education and access to justice.

The project has four main work streams:

- Building capacity of CSOs to help citizens claim their rights;
- Improving engagement of CSOs and the media in formulating, implementing, and monitoring government policies on key issues;
- Increasing the use of research and information produced by CSOs in government policies and programmes;
- Improving the way selected Parliamentary committees work.

In addition to supplying the project's Technical Director, Itad also supports on M&E and advises STAR Ghana on its approach to Value for Money (VFM). M&E work has included developing an approach to aggregating the results of many different grant projects to assess the 'sum of the parts'. The VFM approach includes innovative participatory work to assess the social value of supporting governance initiatives, thereby comprehensively quantifying the benefits resulting from the project. The Technical Director has led the development and revised the project's Theory of Change, which has helped cluster grants around themes, and explained the project to a wider audience.

- To find out more about this project visit: www.itad.com/projects/supporting-transparency-accountability-and-responsiveness-in-ghana-star-ghana



Voices for Change

Voices for Change (V4C) is an ambitious project, which aims to empower women and adolescent girls in Nigeria to access basic services, grasp economic opportunities and increase their influence and control over decisions that affect them. Itad are one of four partners in the consortium managing this £26 million project for the UK Department of International Development (DFID). Our role is to define the results to be achieved by the project, help to guide implementation to deliver them, and ensure that systems are in place to measure the achievements.

To achieve its objectives, V4C is strengthening the enabling environment for adolescent girls and women in three ways: by building girls' self-esteem and self-confidence, changing society's discriminatory attitudes to women and girls and strengthening their legal rights. This translates into creating 'safe spaces' for girls, a heavy investment in communications campaigns and social media on issues like early marriage and keeping girls in school and targeted advocacy on laws such as the violence against the person act.

We are leading on 'results' in this programme. This means we provide technical leadership on project monitoring and evaluation, including development of the V4C logframe, and M&E Strategy, and a theory-based internal evaluation. We provide the project's Results Director and guide the fulltime Results and Learning Manager.

DFID has contracted V4C as a 'design and build' project. This means the inception phase has centred on producing a DFID Business Case submission, which sets out the project's intended approach. We contributed to the theory of change in the appraisal case, the Value for Money justification of the project, and the M&E sections in the management case.

- To find out more about this project visit: www.itad.com/projects/voices-for-change

CASE STUDY

State Accountability and Voice Initiative

The State Accountability and Voice Initiative (SAVI) is a six-year, £29million DFID-funded project designed to support responsive, accountable and inclusive State-level governance in Nigeria. It encourages citizen groups, elected State House of Assembly (SHoA) representatives and the media to work together and play their part in promoting a more effective use of public resources. Itad plays a key role in defining the technical direction on the project, in the project's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system and value for money approach.



'A Woman's Work' Photo Credit: Claire Hughes

The project covers ten States in Nigeria's Northern, central and Southern regions. It has adopted a facilitating and enabling approach. SAVI celebrates its ability to empower others through a series of innovative ways and seeks to share its learning with others.

We are a core consortium partner in SAVI, providing staff, consultants and advice across the project. Our inputs build on our previous governance work in Nigeria, particularly our DFID-funded Joint Wetlands Livelihoods (JWL) water governance project. JWL worked with coalitions of civil society, government and water service providers to improve public resource management. We provide SAVI's Technical Director and cross-cutting inputs on governance and specialist inputs on M&E and Value for Money (VFM) approach. We have been leading the development of cost effectiveness case studies on the impact of SAVI's advocacy projects, including issues of attribution and sustainable economic benefit.

At its mid-point SAVI – a programme on which Itad is providing technical direction on governance – has been successful in many different ways in increasing citizen empowerment and state accountability. Examples of concrete successes with attribution to SAVI include: accelerating key pieces of State legislation to support better governance, and improving service delivery. For example, in Lagos, Bills on fiscal responsibility, public procurement, and freedom of information, have now been passed, signed into law and in the process of being implemented. In Jigawa, the fiscal responsibility legislation has been passed, signed into law and given budgetary provision. Likewise, in service delivery, Kaduna State has established a primary health care and drug management agency; Kano State has new legislation for decentralised water management; and Jigawa State has made progress on a Free Maternal and Child Health Bill and recruitment of more female staff in health and education sectors. At its mid-term review, SAVI was judged to be providing good value for money.

➤ Link on website: www.itad.com/projects/state-accountability-and-voice-initiative

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Kano Kurmi Market' Photo Credit: Claire Hughes

Itad

12 English Business Park
English Close
Hove BN3 7ET
United Kingdom

T +44 (0) 1273 765 250
E mail@itad.com
W itad.com