

**TOLERATING AND LEARNING FROM MISTAKES:  
LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE  
FINAL EVALUATION OF  
THE PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM INITIATION  
PROGRAMME**



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12 November 2014.**

# FOSTERING AN EVALUATIVE CULTURE

- John Mayne (2008) suggests that an organization with a strong evaluative culture:
- Engages in self reflection and self examination-deliberately seeks info. On ‘what difference are we making’; uses info. To challenge and support what it is doing; values candour, challenge and genuine dialogue;
- Engages in evidence based learning: makes time to learn in a structured fashion;learns from mistakes and weak performance and encourages knowledge sharing;



# FOSTERING AN EVALUATIVE CULTURE

Measures required to build such a culture include:

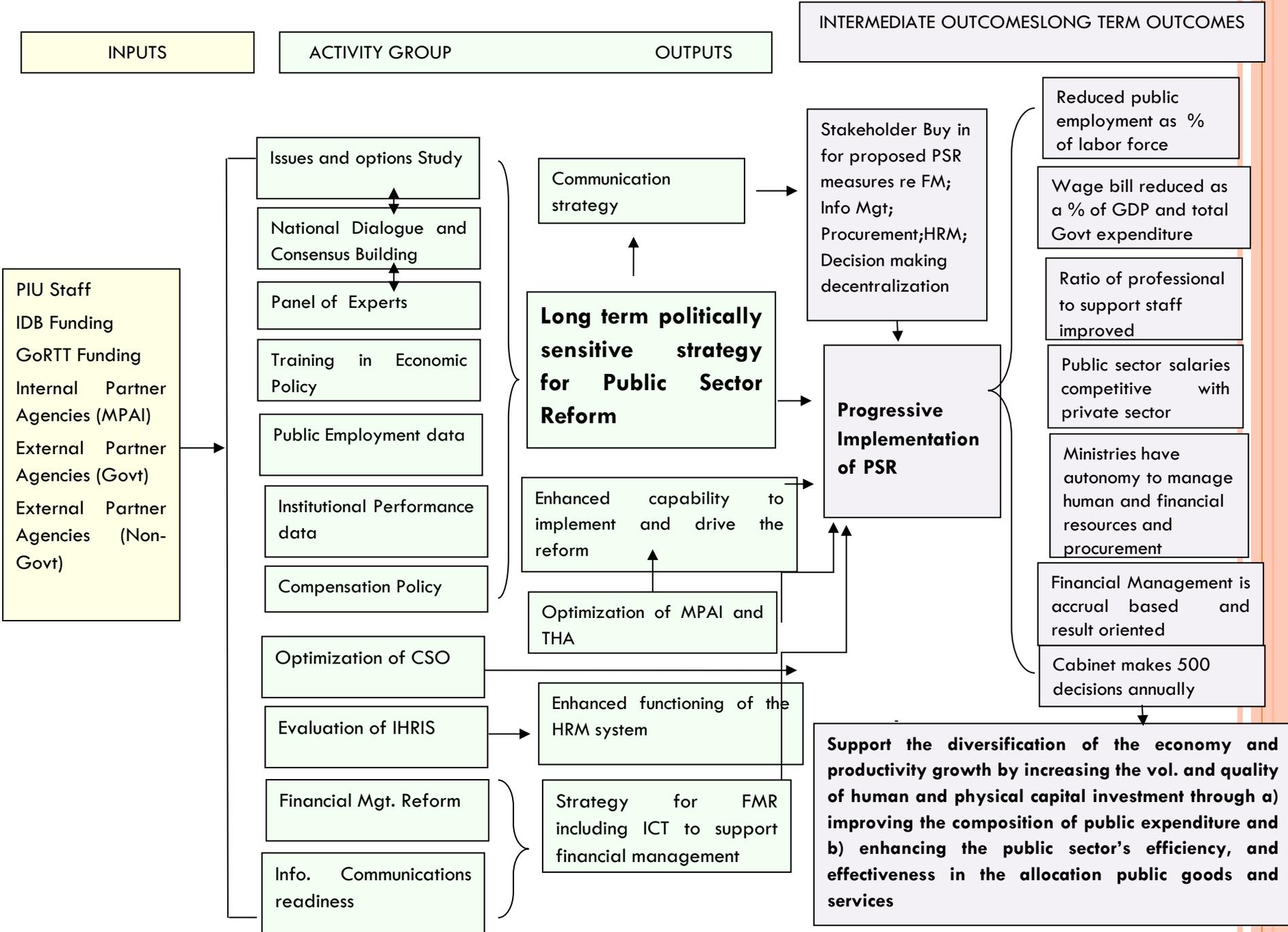
- Leadership-demonstrated commitment to results; regular informed demand for results information; building capacity; establishing and communicating a clear role and responsibilities for results mgt.;
- Organizational support structures: Policies, procedures and systems; an outcome oriented and supportive accountability regime; learning focused evaluation and monitoring;
- A learning focus: building in learning and tolerating and learning from mistakes



# OBJECTIVES OF THE PSRIP

- The PSRIP was intended to support the development and implementation of a long-term strategy to reform the Public Sector.
  - The specific objectives of this operation were to:
    - (i) assist the government to better identify the issues for the transformation of the Public Sector;
    - (ii) define a suitable socially and politically sensitive strategy for the transformation of the Public Sector;
    - (iii) facilitate the attainment of widespread agreement and support necessary to implement such strategy; and
    - (iv) develop some basic management instruments and the capacity to help the GORTT to better plan and manage the reform process.
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**Chart 1-Public Sector Reform Initiation Programme - Logic Model**



## FINDINGS: DESIGN RELEVANCE

- Overall, the evaluation determined that the project's design was conceptually sound and highly relevant to the GORTT's development strategy.
- The comprehensive analysis of prior reforms and the commissioning of six (6) studies in preparation of the loan document reflected a thorough understanding of issues that had impacted previous reforms and potential challenges to effective reform implementation, as well as critical systems that needed to be addressed in any reform program.
- The focus on a political economy analysis to inform development of a long term strategy illustrated an appreciation of the underlying causes of failed efforts and the need to address these to get reform 'right'.
- Major project risks were identified, particularly stakeholder resistance and mitigating strategies included, however these were not operationalized as intended.

## FINDINGS: EFFECTIVENESS

- Assessing the effectiveness of the PSRIP was hindered the lack of measurable indicators related to stated project outcomes and the lack of reliable data on project outputs and outcomes;
- The PSRIP did not achieve any of its stated objectives aimed at a long term politically sensitive strategy for PSR and strengthened capacity to plan and manage the reform process;



## FINDINGS: EFFECTIVENESS

- The limited effectiveness of the project was due to a number of factors including the significant deficiencies in key outputs such as the issues and options study.
- Further key sub-components that were intended to inform the issues and policy options study were never implemented such as the compensation policy, institutional performance data collection, public employment data collection, panel of experts and training in economic policy
- As a result of the inadequate completion of the key project components, the project did not produce a long term PSR strategy



## FINDINGS: EFFECTIVENESS

- Project effectiveness appeared to be negatively affected by a limited understanding of the project's design and intent, expected sequence of implementation of key outputs and rationale for certain sub-components.
- The project was also negatively impacted by weak governance arrangements, significant changes in political and senior public service management and the active resistance to interventions by stakeholder agencies outside of the then MPAI



## FINDINGS: EFFICIENCY

- In light of the extended implementation time frame-from 2 ½ years to 10 years, the fact that the majority of outputs were not implemented and project objectives were not met, project implementation was deemed to have been highly inefficient.
- At the end of ten years, the limited number of outputs at a total cost of USD6.7million reflects a poor utilization of the allocated resources



# LESSONS LEARNED: PROJECT DESIGN

- The political complexity and typically longer duration of public sector reforms mean more analytical and preparatory work, including on political issues. As such, the PSRIP design was sound in its effort to complete a political economy analysis to inform development of the PSR strategy;
- Political and executive commitment to reform must be clearly ascertained prior to loan approval.
- Key stakeholders, particularly the executing agency and its personnel need to understand the overall project design, how elements are linked and the required sequence.



# LESSONS LEARNED: PROJECT DESIGN

- Fidelity to the project's design is critical to effective project implementation:
- Departure from key elements of project design should constitute a red flag requiring consensus by the Bank and Executing Agency:
- If and when fundamental changes to the project's design are likely to negatively impact the likelihood of attaining the project's objectives, discontinuation of the programme needs to be explored.



# LESSONS LEARNED: IMPLEMENTATION

- Readiness for project implementation, especially in institutional strengthening projects, needs to be carefully assessed and mitigated prior to project implementation:
- PSR executing agencies must have legitimacy and credibility to lead the reform process.
- Project Implementation timeframes must be based on a realistic assessment of the country's procurement process:
- Access to technical advisory services where this is inadequate within the Executing agency is critical to effective implementation of projects.



# LESSONS LEARNED: IMPLEMENTATION

- Dedicated and adequately skilled project implementation resources must be retained throughout the project life cycle.
- Clear penalties and/or incentives to project implementation including coordination and collaboration need to be built into loan conditions where possible.
- Project Governance arrangements must be closely monitored to ensure the adequacy of oversight.
- Results frameworks need to be clearly articulated, including the definition of measurable outcome indicators.



QUESTIONS?

