

Applying Rigorous Impact Evaluation in GIZ Governance Programmes: Results of a GIZ Initiative on Impacts in Governance

Final Report

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Executive Summary

Pressure is mounting on international development cooperation agencies to prove the impact of their work. This refers not only to pressure about reporting duties, but also the standards accepted to measure the impact of their interventions. Private and public commissioners as well as the general public are increasingly asking for robust evidence of impact.

In this context, rigorous impact evaluation (RIE) methods are increasingly receiving attention within the broader German development system (Bruder et al., 2019) and in GIZ itself (GIZ Evaluation Unit, 2020). Compared to other implementing agencies such as DFID or USAid, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH has so far relatively little experience in systematically applying rigorous methods of impact evaluation. This is particularly true in the governance sector. In order to gain more experience and to understand which methods and formats are best suited for GIZ governance programmes, the Governance and Conflict division and the Africa department launched the 'Impact Initiative Africa' in 2016, a cooperative effort with several programmes in Africa. This Initiative set out to apply the experiences from GIZ governance programmes to design and conduct RIEs, and to use the results to steer programme implementation. Initially, the Initiative included three countries: Benin (Programme for Decentralisation and Local Development), Malawi (Support to Public Financial and Economic Management) and Mozambique (Good Financial Governance in Mozambique). During its implementation, the Initiative also benefitted from the experience of two additional governance programmes which had already undertaken RIEs, namely Peru (Citizen-oriented State Reform Programme) and Pakistan (Support to Local Governance Programme II). Progress and results were discussed and shared by a task

force of the GIZ sector network, 'Good Governance in Africa' (FV GGA).

RIEs are understood as a subset of evaluations that apply (quasi-)experimental designs to determine the net effect of an intervention, and causally attribute the impact to a specific intervention. Governance programmes are often depicted as particularly challenging when it comes to assessing their impact through an RIE (Garcia, 2011; Giselquist and Niño-Zarazúa, 2015). Arguments supporting this claim tend to emphasise that many governance programmes require transformation processes in partner countries that are dependent on broader political developments and do not evolve in a linear manner. Furthermore, many governance interventions require long time periods for the impact to be visible, and their causal chains tend to be longer and more complex than in other sectors. To be successful, governance programmes have to be particularly sensitive to the context they operate in and adapt quickly to changing circumstances.

Against this background, the main goals of the Initiative were:

1. Identify opportunities and limitations regarding the use and usability of RIEs in GIZ governance programmes.
2. Develop proposals on how to organise RIEs to maximise learning potential and benefits for the specific programmes and the GIZ Governance sector at large. Some insights are also valuable beyond the sector.
3. Identify mechanisms to encourage the effective and efficient use of results in planning and management activities.
4. Provide information on how to present and use more efficiently robust evidence in the interaction with commissioners and partners.

This publication summarises the insights gained from these questions. In this sense, the main goal of this report is documenting

the experiences of the five governance programmes enumerated earlier in experimenting with RIEs and elaborating on the lessons learnt for the programmes and the Governance portfolio at large. The goal is to help GIZ staff to think about the process of an RIE. Furthermore, based on the concrete examples, the report aims to providing ideas in the broader sense for GIZ, on how to create a supportive institutional architecture to increase both the quantity of RIEs and also the effective and efficient use of the evidence these generate.

The basics of the methodological approaches and the main result are described for each country individually. But the focus lies prominently on the benefits and challenges that the programme experienced in implementing the assessments, as well as how the results were used.

The main result of the initiative is that implementing RIEs of governance programmes is possible in a GIZ context. Against common perceptions, the cases discussed in this report show that interventions within governance programmes can be assessed with rigorous methods, and it is possible to attribute certain outcomes causally to GIZ interventions. This is not to say that an RIE is easy, neither that it is the best and most valid evaluation approach for all questions. The experiences indicate that conducting an RIE involves some compromises that have to be balanced with the potential benefits. Most importantly, the starting point must always be the question that the projects or organisations have. An RIE is useful and a strong approach for some crucial questions in the governance sector around measuring impact and learning what works. But an RIE is not the appropriate tool for many other questions relevant to governance programmes.

Furthermore, the results indicate that some particularly underestimated benefits lie in the areas of capacity building (especially for the partners) and strengthening the positioning of programmes in the partner countries and beyond. The exposure to the logic and

challenges of an RIE that comes with being close or even directly involved in an RIE, help programmes and development partners be more precise about the causal assumptions their activities are based on, as well as gain a better understanding of rigorous evaluation methods. Furthermore, RIEs provide programmes solid evidence about the impact of their activities and sends a strong signal to partners and other donors about the rigour with which the programmes approach their work. This gives programmes an edge in visibility and standing in debates. It can even strengthen the programme's position when it comes to acquiring further funding. In the area of reporting, the contributions of the RIE were below initial expectations of the programmes. The fact that an RIE demanded narrow questions to be addressed implied that the coverage of programme activities was rather low. This reduced the significance of the results of the RIE for the overall programme portfolio. In addition, the timing when the final results were available influenced the possibilities to use them. The greatest impact was achieved when results were available to inform the design of the next project phase. Finally, the commonly alleged incongruity between the adaptability that programmes need and the assumed rigidity of RIEs appears to be overestimated. It is certainly right that as far as possible the intervention approach should remain stable over time in order to enable RIEs to achieve meaningful results. Yet, in most cases, this is never an issue and if the programme has to make major adaptations, the RIE can manage these and still generate meaningful insights. It is certainly true that RIEs are particularly complex to implement in fragile environments because in these contexts, programmes tend to require more often adaptations and changes of strategy. This does not imply, however, that RIEs are impossible to implement in these contexts.

The analysis of the experiences demonstrates that the scope to implement robust methodologies to assess the impact of

measures in the governance sector definitely exists. There is, however, a tension that cannot be ignored, between precision and breadth of the analyses. A fundamental constraint connected to the issue of scope is the necessity to narrow down the question. The Initiative shows that most projects tend to prefer investing their limited funds into assessments using methodological approaches that cover broader sets of activities, and are in a better position to say something about the overall project, rather than an RIE that tends to demand a narrow focus and zooms in on specific activities. In order to deal with this concern and find solutions for the programmes, GIZ needs a more systemic approach to RIEs, which highlights and recognises that results are not only good and useful for the individual programme that invests in them, but for the organisation at large. It also involves thinking about how to distribute costs among different actors and highlights the benefits that RIEs can generate beyond the narrow idea of strengthening accountability and into areas such as learning. A detailed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis discusses this and other concerns that the GIZ Governance portfolio faces to continue moving the impact agenda further. In doing so, the report takes the debate from the programme level to an analysis on how a more supportive, efficient and effective institutional architecture might look like.

The cooperation model of impact-oriented accompanying research, which provided academic support to a project team over a full project implementation phase (up to 3 years), was most successful as it enabled regular exchanges on designing, implementing and using results. This set-up was also particularly good at dealing with the precision–breadth dilemma as, parallel to the precise analysis of the RIE, the researchers generated and shared valuable insights for the programmes on aspects that went beyond the narrow focus of the RIE itself.

Finally, the report presents a list of recommendations geared, on the one side, towards

measures on how to maximise the benefits for Governance programmes implementing or planning to implement RIEs and, on the other side, on aspects to institutionally encourage and support more and better RIEs, as well as how to use their insights more intensively and strategically. In this line, recommendations for the Governance and Conflict division as well as the programmes and other actors, such as the GIZ Evaluation Unit, are presented for further discussion.

In terms of recommendations for the Governance programmes, the most relevant ones are integrating RIEs early in the process of programme design to ensure that rigorous analysis can be carefully implemented, and that the ongoing research results can be used in the context of the programme long before the final report and end results are presented. This is crucial to safeguard timeliness and maximise the usefulness of the results. In addition, RIEs should be considered by programme managers as opportunities to enhance the careers of their staff, and thus develop them in an integrated and transparent manner to ensure the support and ownership within the programme staff and stakeholders. This is also fundamental to maximise the learning effects as well as the use of the results.

The main recommendations to the Governance and Conflict division include the following: first, take the lead in identifying issues that merit the investment in rigorous evidence. The degree to which some intervention is innovative or how widely it is applied by GIZ in different contexts can be useful criteria to decide the area in which to invest in an RIE. It is key that GIZ, beyond the Governance and Conflict division, develops guidelines for strategic decisions on the use of RIEs. Second, cooperate closely with the Evaluation Unit to monitor the collection of evidence and the implementation of assessments. Individual studies on one aspect will be at best only indicative of what works (in the governance sector as in all sectors). There is a need to aggregate the evidence coming from analyses on similar issues in several countries. The division

should maintain the overview and identify where there is the potential aggregate evidence, what instruments and strategies have been used for success, and under which conditions. Third, consider investing, with other units including GloBe, in capacity building in the area of the RIE in order for its members to be able to (i.) better identify programmes and interventions that might be suitable for an RIE, and (ii.) use and evaluate existing evidence to build it in their work. Fourth, contribute to the development of strategies to assure that the sectoral department's support in setting up projects on governance issues includes explicit discussions with the project responsible of suitable programmes, during appraisal and planning missions, on whether including an RIE is possible and reasonable.

Overall, the analysis shows that the potential for RIEs within governance programmes is underutilised. It is also safe to say that GIZ has a lot to gain from encouraging the use of RIEs and exploiting the results they generated better and more strategically. This refers not only to learning opportunities where the potential is huge, but also in terms of positioning, at the institutional level, and career development, at the individual level. The experiences show that the potential is there, and that much of the leverage comes from optimising the interaction between the programmes in partner countries and headquarters.

Contents

Executive Summary	1
1. Introduction.....	11
2. Individual case studies	16
2.1. Benin.....	16
2.1.1. The project.....	16
2.1.2. Focus of the assessment, methodological approach and main results.....	17
2.1.3. Methodological challenges.....	20
2.1.4 Use of results.....	20
2.2. Mozambique	21
2.2.1. The project.....	21
2.2.2. Focus of the assessment, methodological approach and main results.....	22
2.2.3. Methodological challenges.....	24
2.2.4. Use of results	25
2.3. Pakistan.....	27
2.3.1. The project.....	27
2.3.2. Focus of the assessment, methodological approach and main results.....	27
2.3.3. Methodological challenges.....	29
2.3.4. Use of results	30
2.4. Malawi.....	32
2.4.1. The project.....	32
2.4.2. Focus of the assessment, methodological approach and main results.....	32
2.4.3. Methodological challenges.....	33
2.4.4. Use of results	34
2.5. Peru.....	34
2.5.1. The project.....	34
2.5.2. Focus of the assessment, methodological approach and main results.....	35
2.5.3. Methodological challenges.....	35
2.5.4. Use of results	36
3. Taking stock and lessons learnt	39
3.1. Main issues.....	39
3.2. Experienced benefits	42
3.3 Identified potentials and threats: A SWOT analysis on how to move the impact measurement agenda forward	44
3.2.1. Strengths.....	45

3.2.2.	Weaknesses	46
3.2.3.	Opportunities	47
3.2.4.	Threats	48
3.3.	Conclusions	50
4.	Recommendations	53
4.1.	Recommendations for the programme on how to maximise benefits.....	53
3.3.1	General principles	53
3.3.2	Underestimated phases in an RIE	54
3.3.3	Mode of cooperation between the programme and research team.....	57
4.2.	General recommendations for the GIZ Governance and Conflict division	58
4.3.	Recommendations to individual actors within GIZ	60
5.	References	62

List of tables

Table 1: Main benefits of an RIE	42
Table 2: GIZ's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats	45

List of figures

Figure 1: Map of selected municipalities for the RIE in Benin	18
Figure 2: The design of the randomised control trial	24
Figure 3: Visualisation of results on satisfaction by gender over all data collection rounds (Haripur district)	29
Figure 4: The phases of an impact assessment	55

List of abbreviations

AA	Action area
ANAMM	Associação Nacional dos Municípios de Moçambique/National Association of Mozambican Municipalities
BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung/Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development
CEDP	Citizen Engagement in Development Planning
DEval	German Institute for Development Evaluation
DIE	Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik/German Development Institute
D-PIP	Development Priority Identification and Processing
EGAP	Evidence in Governance and Politics Network
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
EU	European Union
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
IESE	Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos
3ie	International Initiative for Impact Evaluation
IFMIS	Integrated Financial Management Information System
IPRA	Imposto Predial Autárquico
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
LoGO	Local Governance Programme
LGE&RDD	Local Government, Elections and Rural Development Department
LGS	Local Governance School
NTC	non-treatment communities
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PDDC	Programme d'appui à la Décentralisation et au Développement Communal
POEMA	Planificação, Orçamentação, Execução, Monitoria e Avaliação
RIE	Rigorous impact evaluation
SDP	Support to Development Planning
SGGP	Support to Good Governance
SDC	Swiss Development Cooperation
SECO	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs
TC	treatment communities
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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The author would like to thank everyone involved in the ‘Impact Initiative Africa’ for their openness and engagement to realise this ambitious project. Elke Siehl and Andreas Proksch had the idea of delving deeper to understand opportunities and constraints for GIZ to engage in rigorous impact evaluation (RIE); they rallied for support from programme leaders to step forward and conduct such work in GIZ’s governance programmes in Africa. Gerald Schmitt (Benin), Barbara Dutzler (Malawi) and Katharina Hübner (Mozambique) came forward and started discussions with the DIE Team and the Governance and Conflict division at GIZ’s sectoral department on how to get started. The DIE Team comprised, apart from the author, Julia Leiniger, Evelyn Funk, Lisa Groß and Christopher Wogens. The Malawi case was designed and conducted by Mark Miller from the Overseas Development Institute. Renate Kirsch (Governance and Conflict division) and Annette Schmid (Sectoral department), Sylvia Schweitzer (Africa Department) and colleagues from the corporate evaluation unit (Claudia Kornahrens, Franziska Krisch, Tatjana Till and Michael Florian) threw their evaluation expertise into the ring in order to find approaches for an RIE that suit the GIZ context, and for communicating progress, process and results among GIZ networks and staff. In the second phase of the initiative, two additional governance programmes which had already conducted RIEs were included and a fruitful exchange of experiences became possible. Adi Walker, Christian Kapfensteiner, Sanjeev Pokharel, Gouhar Ayub and Zarshad Shaista shared their knowledge and experience from the RIE in Pakistan. Hartmut Paulsen, Claudia Gonzales del Valle and Luis Camacho (former DIE colleague now at NORC at the University of Chicago) kindly shared their insights from the experience in Peru.



Introduction

1. Introduction

Pressure is mounting on international development cooperation agencies to prove the impact of their work. This refers not only to pressure about reporting duties, but also the standards accepted to measure the impact of their interventions. Private and public commissioners as well as the general public are increasingly asking for robust evidence of impact.

Governance programmes are often depicted as particularly challenging when it comes to assessing their impact (Garcia, 2011; Giselquist and Niño-Zarazúa, 2015). They often require transformation processes in partner countries that are dependent on broader political developments and do not evolve in a linear manner. Furthermore, most governance interventions require long time periods for the impact to be visible, and their causal chains tend to be longer and more complex than in other sectors. To be successful, governance interventions have to be particularly sensitive to the context they operate in and adapt quickly to changing circumstances.

Rigorous impact evaluation (RIE) methods are increasingly receiving attention within the broader German development system (Bruder et al., 2019) and in the GIZ itself (GIZ Evaluation Unit, 2020). For the sake of this report, RIEs are understood as a subset of evaluations that “apply (quasi-)experimental designs for determining the net effect of an intervention” (Florian et al., 2019: 9). RIEs aim to causally attribute impact to a specific intervention. As described by Bruder et al. (2019:1), “the core of the method involves making a comparison between an intervention group that has received a certain intervention, and a control or reference group that is as similar to it as possible.” Methods that are usually labelled as being rigorous are randomised controlled trials, difference-in-difference estimates,

propensity score matching and regression discontinuity.

Compared to other implementing agencies, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH has had relatively little experience in systematically applying rigorous methods of impact evaluation. This is particularly true in the governance sector. In order to gain more experience and to understand which methods and formats are best suited for GIZ governance programmes, the Governance and Conflict division and the Africa department launched in 2016, in cooperation with several programmes being implemented in Africa, the ‘Impact Initiative Africa’. This Initiative initially included three countries: Benin (Programme for Decentralisation and Local Development), Malawi (Support to Public Financial and Economic Management) and Mozambique (Good Financial Governance in Mozambique). During its implementation, the Initiative also benefited from two additional experiences with RIEs in Peru (Citizen-oriented State Reform Programme) and Pakistan (Support to Local Governance Programme II) that had been launched independent of the Initiative. Impact Initiative Africa was further accompanied by a task force on Impact within the GIZ sector network, ‘Good Governance in Africa’ (FV GGA).

GIZ was motivated to launch this Initiative by a list of assumptions and expectations which included the following:

1. Learning how to measure the impact of chosen governance interventions will allow GIZ to better understand the effects of specific interventions within a particular context, why these effects occur and when.
2. Integrating RIEs into programme implementation can be a valid instrument to steer and manage programmes based on evidence.

3. Evidence-based decision making will lead to better results and more effective interventions and programmes.
4. Generating evidence on impact can facilitate communication with partners and commissioners, particular in highly political environments.
5. Accumulated evidence on effective interventions will help GIZ to promote its approaches and methods better in the wider community of international development partners.
6. Commissioners will raise the bar on the robustness and evidence standards to report on achieved impacts. To meet these demands, GIZ needs to learn how to integrate measuring impacts into routine programme planning and implementation processes.

Based on these expectations, the main goals of the Initiative were to:

1. Identify opportunities and limitations regarding the use and usability of RIEs in GIZ governance programmes.
2. Develop proposals on how to organise RIEs to maximise learning potential and benefits for the specific programmes and the GIZ Governance sector at large. Some insights are also valuable beyond the sector.
3. Identify mechanisms to encourage the effective and efficient use of results in planning and management activities.
4. Provide information on how to present and use more efficiently robust evidence in the interaction with commissioners and partners.

Set up the impact initiative

The majority of the RIE projects in this Initiative were set up as “impact-oriented accompanying research” (Funk et al., 2018: 5). The Initiative wanted to experiment with this model that deviates from the idea of a series of short-term consultancies with a very narrow focus and tasks. By contrast, this cooperation mode between the research

team and the project is characterised by lasting for a longer period of time, and more intensive and regular exchanges between the partners. Also, the starting point is a broader perspective on the programme, and the decision on what to focus on in the RIE is taken with the explicit support of the research partner.

Beyond the work in the individual countries, the Initiative’s members met regularly to discuss their different experiences and draw overarching conclusions on the topics listed. A workshop each took place in Pretoria (October 2017), Bonn (November 2018) and Berlin (September 2019). The workshop in Pretoria was in the context of a meeting of the task force ‘Impact’ and included task force members as well as personnel from the programmes involved in the RIE and the research teams accompanying them. The second workshop took place at the Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik/German Development Institute (DIE), which was the research partner of the GIZ programmes in Benin, Peru and Mozambique. In this case, the Initiative and the closely linked task force reached out to a broader set of actors within GIZ. The workshop at GIZ was an internal event and focused on the strategic value of RIEs and institutional solutions to foster their use, as well as how to maximise their utility for the programmes and the organisation at large. At the core lay the discussion about how experimental and quasi-experimental evaluation methods (in particular randomised controlled trials) can be better integrated in a GIZ programme cycle, and the circumstances under which using these methods might be particularly attractive for the programmes. The third and final workshop took place in September 2019 and was organised by the GIZ and DIE. It facilitated exchanges on experiences from within the Initiative with experiences from elsewhere. The discussion focused on the limitations and adaptability of rigorous methods and approaches, and also on institutional and structural incentives and impediments to

enhance the use of rigorous methods. National and international experts representing both practitioners and academics came together, including participants from organisations such as the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP) Network, the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval), and the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW).

Goals of the report and structure

This report has three main goals. First, the report aims at documenting the experiences of the five governance programmes enumerated earlier in experimenting with rigorous impact measurements and elaborating lessons learnt based on these. Not all the programmes actually ended up implementing a narrow defined rigorous impact measurement project. In all cases, however, the potential and the pros and cons in terms of benefits and cost were discussed. Hence, whether an RIE was implemented or not, much can be learned about the potential, challenges, benefits and concerns.

The basics of the methodological approaches and the main result are described. But the focus lies prominently on the benefits and challenges that the programme experienced in implementing the assessments as well as how the results were used.¹

The second goal is to identify lessons learnt for programmes thinking about starting an RIE. The focus lay on highlighting aspects to be considered at different steps in the process, always with the aim to maximise the benefits for programmes involved in such an assessment. This is closely connected to the publication ‘Lessons Learnt from Impact-Oriented Accompanying Research:

Potentials and Limitations to Rigorously Assessing the Impact of Governance Programmes’ (Funk et al., 2018). But it has a different focus as it looks beyond the programmes and, through a SWOT analysis, discusses the challenges and opportunities for GIZ as an organisation with regard to enhancing the use of RIEs.

Finally, the third goal is to discuss practical recommendations that can be drawn from the experiences.

The intended readers of this report is first and foremost the GIZ governance community. However, the shared experiences, the results and the recommendations will be useful and relevant for all persons working in GIZ projects, as well as for staff in the sectoral department and in global projects. The corporate evaluation unit had an active part in forging the results presented in this report. GIZ cooperation partners (consultants, think tanks) will benefit from the country experiences and the lessons learned.

Overall, this is certainly not a technical evaluation report. It focuses on learning from and reflecting on a series of experiences in order to think about how to enhance the use and improve usability of RIEs in the governance sector. This report represents a valuable input for policy makers, evaluation and governance practitioners and researchers. It helps GIZ staff to think about the process of an RIE, how to maximise its impact, and how to create a supportive institutional architecture to increase both the quantity of RIEs and also the effective and efficient use of the evidence these generate.

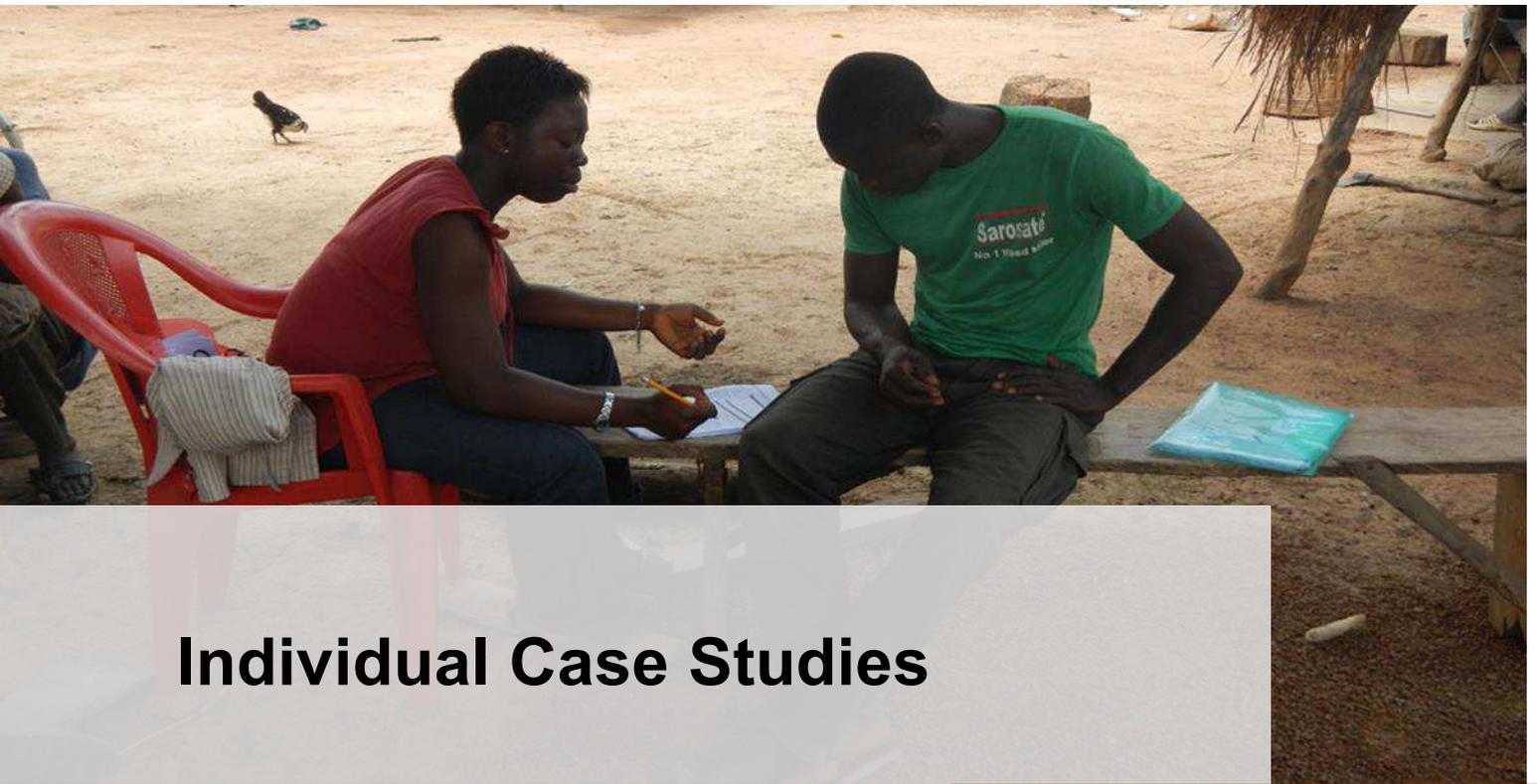
The report is organised as follows. After this introduction, Section 2 describes the individual cases highlighting the focus of the assessment, the methodological challenges

methodological approaches, exist in individual country specific documentation.

¹ Additional information on individual experiences, including details on the usage of results as well as

faced in the implementation and the use of the results. Section 3 focuses on the overall lessons learnt with regard to benefits and processes. In addition, it presents the SWOT analysis to understand where GIZ stands in the discussion currently, and the

opportunities and risks that exist in working to move the impact agenda further. Section 4 concludes by stating recommendations for the different actors involved in an RIE.



Individual Case Studies

2. Individual case studies

All five case studies are about governance programmes that cover areas present in many programme portfolios around the world. It is important to highlight that the mode of cooperation between the programme and the research team varied. For one, the research partner differed. DIE was the research partner in three cases (Benin, Peru and Mozambique). In the case of Malawi, the research partner was the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), while for Pakistan it was the World Bank. Furthermore, the timespan of the collaboration varied, ranging from 6 months to over 5 years.

The following sections record the experiences of the individual countries. After a description of the overall programme, the focus of the RIE, the main challenges encountered and how the results were used are discussed in individual subsections. Basic information on the programme as well as the focus and the design of the RIE are also provided.

2.1. Benin²

2.1.1. The project

The ‘Programme d’appui à la Décentralisation et au Développement Communal’ (PDDC) launched one of the RIEs of the Initiative. Benin has pursued the decentralisation of local governance structures since 1999; GIZ is one of the longstanding partners of the Benin government in this area. The PDDC has worked with the Benin government since 2003 in a different programme set-up.

PDDC V, the project in progress until December 2020, focuses on four components (action areas [AA]) to support Benin in its decentralisation efforts. The first component, ‘Localising Agenda 2030’ (AA 1), advises the Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Governance (Ministère de la Décentralisation et de la Gouvernance Locale) and the Ministry of Planning and Development (Ministère de la Planification et du Développement), as well as communities and civil society actors at the national and local levels to coordinate their efforts to localise the implementation of Agenda 2030. The second component, ‘Fiscal Decentralisation’ (AA 2), advises the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the deconcentrated services and the secretariat of the National Commission of Local Finances (Commission Nationale des Finances Locales) on how to improve tax returns and finance transfer to municipalities. It also advises municipalities and local tax administrations on how to raise local taxes and improve financial management. The third component, ‘Citizen-Oriented Municipal Administration’ (AA 3), provides capacity building services to the training centre for the local administration (Centre de Formation pour l’Administration Locale). It also offers ca-

² For more information on this specific case, please refer to ODI (2019).

capacity building services and advises the municipal administration regarding the citizen-oriented provision of basic public services, particularly the coordination of deconcentrated and municipal services, and the drafting of municipal development plans. AA 3 has close contact with the Chef de Planification in the municipal administration. The fourth component, ‘Local Democracy and Citizen Participation’ (AA 4), offers capacity building services and advice to the municipal administration, the municipal council and civil society on how to include citizens and civil society into decision-making processes in matters of public interest and public service provision at the municipal level. The programme works with the government at the central level and 25 partner municipalities. Since 2017, this AA is co-financed by the European Union (EU).

Looking at AA 4, which was the focus of the RIE, the main focus of GIZ was to improve interaction and cooperation between the local government and civil society or the citizenry at large. Challenges exist on both sides. On the one hand, opportunities offered by the local government are few and not especially well received. On the other hand, citizens themselves are not enthusiastic about actively engaging in politics to advocate for their interests or public goods. This interaction suffers from a political tradition in which citizens’ involvement was not encouraged, if not openly opposed and criminalised. Nevertheless, Benin has an active and heterogeneous civil society of community-based associations, development associations, professional organisations, trade unions, church groups and non-governmental organisations. These organisations have been built around specific purposes—economic self-help, education, health, economic development and professional interests—and have developed different strategies to engage with their community and administration. The challenge in Benin is to engage these organisations and

citizens more directly in municipal decision-making processes in the context of decentralisation.

2.1.2. Focus of the assessment, methodological approach and main results³

a. Focus of the assessment

The assessment was designed like an accompanying research model in which the DIE and GIZ team engaged in a cooperative effort that lasted over 18 months. In close exchanges with the programme and after a scoping mission in which different possibilities were discussed, the decision was taken to focus on AA 4.

The programme had a special interest in this area as it wanted guidance on how to proceed after having tried out different approaches in the past. PDDC started to support citizen participation in the third phase of the programme. Taking into account the nature of the problem, GIZ pursued both top-down and bottom-up approaches to support citizen participation. The PDDC promoted different citizen participation formats in its partner municipalities.

Three formats were chosen for closer scrutiny: Reddition de Comptes (public accountability hearings), Suivi-PAI (citizen participation through a joint monitoring by civil society and local governments of the implementation of annual investment plans), and Suivi-PDC (citizen participation through the independent monitoring of the implementation of 5-year community development plans). The assessment was seen as an opportunity to consolidate this line of work based on evidence and in-depth analysis. The main interest was measuring the effect of GIZ activities on the quality of implementation of these formats and, ultimately, its impact on the quality of local governance and public service provision in the municipalities.

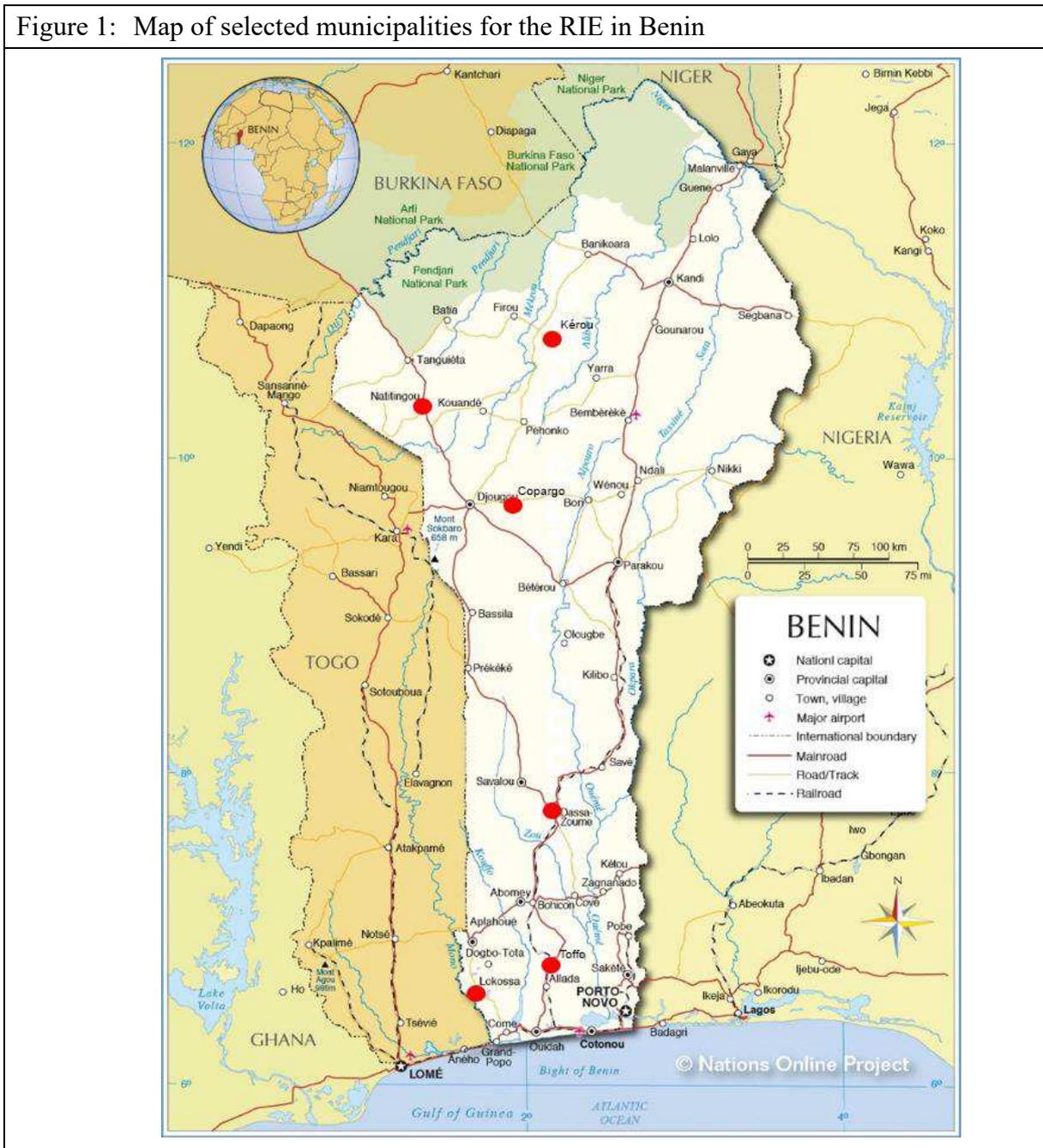
³ More details on the assessment can be found in the final report (Groß, 2018a).

b. Methodological approach
Methodologically speaking, there were limitations with regard to what could be done using experimental and quasi-experimental methods. One limitation was based on the focus of interest that made creating a control group really hard. Also, using randomisation appeared practically impossible. The most problematic issue in RIEs was, however, that the evaluation design was discussed after the intervention had started to be implemented. This limited the possibility

to use certain designs. At the end, the decision was taken to use a comparative approach, in which the group to be compared with resembles the idea of a control group.

The study compares GIZ partner municipalities (treatment communities [TC]) and non-partner municipalities (non-treatment communities [NTC]). Using the method of structured case comparison, the study compares two partner municipalities with a high degree of GIZ intervention, two partner municipalities with a medium degree of GIZ

Figure 1: Map of selected municipalities for the RIE in Benin



Source: Groß, (2018a: 20)

intervention, and two non-partner municipalities to assess the impact of GIZ support in the field of citizen participation. The focus is on specific GIZ-sponsored citizen participation formats—Reddition de Comptes, Suivi-PAI and Suivi-PDC. Reddition de Comptes received continuous support every year, while the Suivi-PAI and Suivi-PDC received only selective support from PDDC AA 4.

Due to the flexible character of the GIZ activities in the citizen participation component, not all PDDC partner municipalities received the same treatment. This added to the limited degrees of freedom resulting from the low number of municipalities, leading to the decision to methodologically rely on a qualitative case studies base approach. The impact chain was followed in two steps. In the first step, the influence of GIZ activities (input level) on the quality of the citizen participation format (outcome level) was observed. In the second step, the influence of the citizen participation format (outcome level) on the quality of local governance/public services (impact level) was analysed. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with civil society as well as municipal administration, and by a survey conducted amongst members of the civil society and municipal administration in each municipality included in the sample (see Figure 1). To gather data on the impact level in terms of success stories induced by a particular citizen participation format, the questionnaire included open questions.

c. Main findings

The key findings of the assessment were the following:

1. The multi-level approach to decentralisation marked an important contribution to the institutionalisation of citizen participation practices beyond partner municipalities. Citizen participation practices enshrined in national-level procedures or guidelines were more likely to be taken

up by non-partner municipalities and also be sustainable.

2. Continuous support increased the sustainability of citizen participation formats. Citizen participation mechanisms that were supported for several years were more likely to be kept up by partner municipalities, while practices with one-time support were less likely to be repeated.
3. Partner municipalities were slightly more professional and inclusive of civil society when it came to organising citizen participation events. Partner municipalities are also more likely to follow guidelines in detail and include civil society at different stages.
4. Citizen participation mechanisms in partner municipalities are more likely to have an impact on the quality of public services and governance. Partner municipalities were more responsive to citizen requests raised in the context of Reddition de Comptes, Suivi-PAI and Suivi-PDC. More success stories were collected from partner municipalities than non-partner municipalities. The number of success stories was particularly high in Natitingou and Kérou, the two GIZ partner municipalities with the highest level of activities (treatment intensity). It is likely that the emphasis of GIZ and its civil society partners on the follow-up on citizen requests led to greater responsiveness by the municipal administration and, therefore, to greater impact. However, the more professional and more inclusive processes associated with the mechanism have not led to a higher mobilisation of civil society.
5. Civil society actors in partner municipalities have a higher sense of self-efficacy with regard to the degree of influence they can have on municipal politics (at the individual level, level of their own

organisation, and civil society in general).

2.1.3. Methodological challenges

The case of Benin shows one of the challenges at the core of the work of the Initiative: the set of methodological approaches to be used is highly constrained when the number of cases is low, in this case, the number of municipalities. It was decided to take a more qualitative approach and the design of the RIE was based on a structured case comparison, which deviates from the expected use of experimental and quasi-experimental design.

Another challenge that Benin testifies to is the major difficulty that arises from setting up the assessments when the activities are already in progress. The identification of a good control group is extremely complicated (regardless of whether more or less experimental designs are pursued). The task of creating a proper (or at least plausible) situation to show what would happen in the absence of GIZ activities is far more difficult if we cannot compare with the earlier situation. In addition, how the partners were selected (why GIZ started somewhere) is far more difficult to understand in retrospect, as well as the implications this selection might have on the effect (for instance, maybe there is self-selecting and GIZ is only working with the municipalities that are already high performing because they are receptive).

Practically, Benin shows how difficult it is to get information on non-participants. If GIZ works in a municipality, the propensity of officials to share information with the team doing the assessment will tend to be higher. This is far more difficult if the team shows up in a municipality that GIZ has no connections with. In addition, setting up data collection exercises is also remarkably easier in a partner municipality.

An additional major challenge is the ability to isolate the effect of the GIZ sponsored

formats in a context in which different initiatives and activities sponsored by other donors take place. Many donors are active in this area, sometimes focusing on slightly different issues. Getting information on their activities and controlling for impact to be connected to other initiatives was complex. This is another characteristic of the environment that calls for qualitative approaches.

Finally, it was difficult to assess the impact of a format because the format as such was a fuzzy concept. It had a core that was respected but, for good reasons, it was adapted to the specific municipalities. Similarly, the intensity of GIZ activities varied tremendously. As a result, there was a **high within-group variance** amongst the partner municipalities. Since GIZ partner municipalities did not receive the same treatment, it is difficult to justify a simple comparison, as different versions of the treatment were being implemented.

2.1.4 Use of results

The results of the assessment were presented in several documents and workshops. One of the documents was a policy brief to analyse more general topics such as the contribution of GIZ's multi-level and multi-stakeholder approach to the success of decentralisation reforms (Groß, 2018a). One discussion paper presented a detailed analysis of the result for the benefit of the academic and policy community (Groß, 2018b).

The programme used the results for various goals. Ongoing results were discussed and reflected upon within the programme before publication. Once the final documents were available, workshops with stakeholders took place in Benin. These occasions were perceived as particularly useful as they offered the programme an opportunity to discuss and exchange ideas with a solid empirical basis. The results were discussed in detail with programme members and partners.

One of the workshops was specifically linked to the discussion of strategies to enhance citizen participation in decentralisation for the follow-up phase of the programme. The results helped GIZ and the partner community in Benin to focus on and plan subsequent activities in this area.

Beyond the analysis itself, in the early phases of the RIE, the project in Benin benefited from in-depth discussions on their causal chain as well as how to measure their potential impact. This included a discussion on indicators. Finally, as a side effect, the project in Benin aimed at a larger data collection exercise. The research team accompanied and supported the project in formulating the questionnaire, and quality assurance of the design and implementation of the data collected. Unfortunately, given the content focus of the data collected and the timing, this information could not complement the analysis in the RIE.

2.2. Mozambique⁴

2.2.1. The project

‘Good Financial Governance’ builds on GIZ programmes in Mozambique that have been active since 2007. ‘Good Financial Governance in Decentralised Administrations in Rural Areas’ was built on a preceding programme that had been broadly set up around the topic of ‘Decentralisation’; this had been implemented in two phases, between 2007 and 2010, and 2011 and 2014.

As the change of titles shows, the focus of GIZ intervention has shifted gradually in emphasis from rural development to decentralisation, and general issues of public administration to good financial governance. Still, the coverage of the programme is broad and includes aspects such as revenue mobilisation at the local level, efficient financial management and procurement at the local level, resource governance and overall decentralisation architecture, including fiscal.

The current programme (as for 2020) is organised around four output areas. The aim of **Output 1** is to create the conditions to strengthen decentralisation. On the one hand, the prerequisites are the development of concepts to implement decentralisation reform; on the other hand, the development, application and approval of POEMA Training Modules (Planificação, Orçamentação, Execução, Monitoria e Avaliação/Planning, Budgeting, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation) aims to strengthen the capacities and capabilities of the municipalities. By contributing to the implementation of the decentralisation reform, the project contributes to clarifying the roles and mandates of the national, regional and municipal/district levels. This clarification is nec-

⁴ For more information on this specific case, please refer to von Schiller (2019).

essary to make the fiscal processes functional and aim at the institutionalisation and sustainability of the processes of good financial governance over time.

Output 2 aims to improve financial governance in selected municipalities, in particular, the mobilisation of its own resources, budget execution, procurement, internal control and supervision by municipal councils. In order to improve good financial governance in the selected municipalities, training concepts and instruments are piloted, procedures are defined and optimised, and proposals for the design of (legal) framework conditions are developed, which are then fed back to the provincial and national levels (see Output 1).

Output 3 focuses on strengthening the capacities to perform audits and monitor their follow up in the strategic sectors of extractive industries and public works, mainly road construction. Furthermore, support is provided to the chapter on extractive industries in the annual report by the Court of Auditors to Parliament.

Finally, **Output 4** aims to provide information on the process of payment transfer and use of the 2.75% of tax revenues from extractive industries. So far, this process has not been transparent. The programme supports the Ministério dos Recursos Minerais e Energia (MIREME, Ministry of Mineral Resources and Energy) and the Court of Auditors in analysing the accuracy, efficiency and effectiveness of this process, as well as deviations from legal requirements. The programme also supports actors to better accompany and report to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), a focal point of transparency on these issues.

The RIE took place in 2017–18, in the previous phase of the programme. At that time,

the programme also had four output areas: (i.) creating proper conditions to improve revenue collection in districts and municipalities (Distritos e Municípios); (ii.) improving capacities in the expenditure management in districts and municipalities; (iii.) improving and strengthening the capacities in the field of internal and external controlling and accountability, as well as accountability towards citizens of districts and municipalities; and (iv.) sharing and reflecting on experiences with transfers to subnational governments based on revenues from extractive industries. As the next section discusses, the focus of the RIE was on the first output area.

2.2.2. Focus of the assessment, methodological approach and main results

a. Focus of the assessment

GIZ activities target all the different steps of revenue mobilisation in municipalities. In line with the Good Financial Governance Concept (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung [BMZ], 2014), the programme approaches revenue mobilisation from a holistic perspective and works not only on revenue administration, but also on the controlling and budgeting institutions. It is worth mentioning that the programme works to both improve the legislation on local taxation (and decentralisation of competencies more generally) and strengthen the capacities to implement the existing legislation in an effective and efficient way.

When it comes to its cooperation with the municipalities, a special emphasis of the programme lies on building proper (mostly electronic) cadastres. Existing cadastres are of poor quality. They tend to contain outdated information and have limited coverage. This work on cadastres is a good example of the interconnection between activities in the programme. In setting up the cadastre, geographical information is generated to-

gether with the urban development department; exchange mechanisms between different departments are optimised; and data collection and management practices at the tax department are improved. All this jointly contributes to more effective and efficient processes within the local administration that go well beyond the setting up of the cadastre itself. Revenue is increased and the value of cooperating across departments to avoid duplication of effort and benefit from existing data becomes very tangible. The programme also includes activities such as support in developing capacities to analyse and generate data and strengthening controlling mechanisms, including internal and external political and administrative oversight.

Much of the work in the area of municipal revenue mobilisation focuses on the initial steps of the process⁵—registration, valuation and assessment, although there is an explicit line of activities focusing on expenditure management. After several exchanges and a scoping mission, the programme and the DIE team, the research partner in this RIE, decided to focus on the delivery steps of the process of revenue mobilisation. The idea was, however, to approach this as a nested design that also allowed learning about the effects of GIZ activities on other steps.

b. Methodological approach

The fact that the steps in revenue collection are so interlinked offers opportunities to use the knowledge gained from the experiment, beyond its insights on bill delivery, to learn about how the previous steps work and, to a certain degree, test the effectiveness of the GIZ programme. This is the case because the implementation of the experimental design implied the correct functioning of the other steps. As such, proper capacity in the initial steps of revenue collection is a precondition for the experiment. Assuming that

the required capacities are in place in Mozambican municipalities is not advisable. Hence, implementing the experiment is an indirect test of the contributions of the GIZ programme to the revenue capacities of the municipalities because, without the work on the previous steps, the municipalities would not be able to implement such an experimental design. In this line, the experimental evidence would create high quality causal evidence as to whether different letters had a different effect on compliance, but through its implementation much more would be learnt about the impact of the programme.

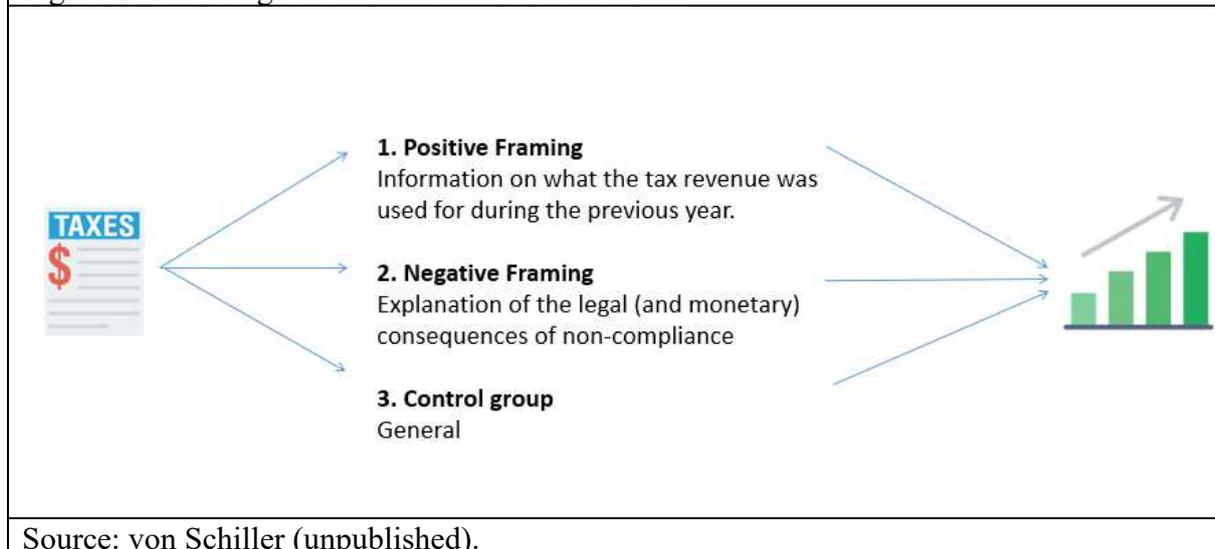
On top of this nested design, the cooperation between GIZ and DIE included, as part the accompanying research project, the coordination of the experiment with the country working group, ‘The Political Economy of Local Tax Collection in Mozambique’, from the DIE postgraduate course. This research generated additional quantitative and qualitative evidence on questions of interest to the programme beyond the narrow focus of the RIE including, for example, an explicit analysis on major administrative and political factors affecting efficient revenue generation at the municipal level in Mozambique (von Schiller et al., 2018). The RIE and ongoing work of the programme were closely interlinked and benefitted from each other. For instance, activities in the accompanying research project were coordinated with and benefitted from insights provided by other studies supported by GIZ, such as the analysis of the transfer system made by the consultants MAP Consultoria in 2016, which generated a reliable database on local finances in 16 municipalities (partners and non-partners of the GIZ project) that were analysed to study the use of the tax potential.

⁵ The subdivision of the revenue collection process is based on Ahmad (2015).

The design of the tax letter experiment was as follows. All registered taxpayers for the Imposto Predial Autárquico (IPRA, Municipal Property Tax) in Vilankulo and Dondo, two partner municipalities of the GIZ programme, were randomly assigned into one of three groups (see Figure 2). The basic composition of the letter was the same. Only a part of it was used to place different messages. One group received a letter with a positive framing, in which the local government informed them about what the revenue generated at the local level had been used for. The message was developed in coordination with the local authorities and highlighted something that happened in the

municipality, and that members of the local administration considered to be particularly salient and/or valuable for citizens and that had been financed in the previous year. The second group received a letter explaining clearly and prominently the legal consequences of not paying (negative framing). Finally, in the letter for the control group, a logo of the city or a very general slogan that was commonly used by the municipal administration was added to the formal letter. These slogans were placed in other communications too and appealed to some type of common goal and effort by the community, but in an abstract way and without a direct link to taxation.

Figure 2: The design of the randomised control trial



Source: von Schiller (unpublished).

c. Main findings

Looking only at the experimental component of the design, which is in a narrow sense the RIE, three results appear particularly relevant. First, getting a notification letter matters. Compared to those who did not receive the notification letter, the probability of paying increased by around 25%. Second, tax behaviour tends to be repeated over time. The probability of paying increased by around 30% if the taxpayers had paid the previous year. This result was strongly robust across all types of estimations. Third, positive framings appeared to

be particularly promising in increasing compliance by individuals, while negative framings seemed to work better to motivate enterprises. In fact, positive framings backfired when they were used towards enterprises.

2.2.3. Methodological challenges

Beyond the experiment, in the context of the cooperation between DIE and GIZ-Mozambique, further analyses shed light on other aspects: (i.) the particular relevance of upstream processes, such as registration and the creation of a cadastre as main obstacles

for revenue generation in Mozambican municipalities; (ii.) the heavy reliance of most municipalities on administratively less demanding revenue sources; and (iii.) the lack of cost–benefits analyses to decide whether substantial upfront investments necessary to raise more demanding revenue might pay off in the long term.

One peculiarity of this project was the heavy reliance on administrative data. This might be considered a risky decision because of the heavy reliance on the cooperation of the partner, especially given the initial justified concerns about the capacity of the municipalities to implement the design. To a certain degree, these capacities were the object of an analysis itself, as the question of whether the implementation worked was an indirect test of GIZ measures. However, this decision also had positive connotations. First, it improved ownership through the direct involvement of the staff of the municipality in the RIE. Also, the RIE was seen as an activity that aligned with the municipalities’ strategy and not as an external process. Second, working so intensively with the data brought about indirect benefits to the project as it fostered in-depth discussions of the monitoring system of the municipality. Third, it significantly reduced the additional work required to implement the RIE for everyone involved—the DIE researchers, GIZ programme employees and employees of the municipalities—as the main data used was what the municipalities were already planning to collect. The experiment just added the different randomised treatments within the normal workflow of the municipalities. Fourth, connected to the ownership argument, it increased the motivation of all the actors involved.

It is important to highlight the fact that this example illustrates how much work the GIZ team put into the implementation of this process. The principal investigator of the research team visited Mozambique and the municipalities several times. Questions and problems pop up regularly that could not

have been solved without the strong investment in time and human resources by the GIZ team. GIZ advisors could follow up on the experiment with their other activities in the municipalities, so synergies definitely existed. Still, it is important to recognise that the additional workload that the assessment represented had not been clearly foreseen and anticipated

Finally, this experience is a good example of the trade-off between precision and breadth that a programme can be confronted with when conceiving an RIE. The evidence of the effect of the letter is very strong, but this represents a low proportion of activities that the programme actually implements. The solution was to combine this narrow question with other measures that enable insights into broader aspects of the actions of GIZ. In this sense, the combination of results from the different components of the accompanying research project proves the claim that the GIZ programme ‘Good Financial Governance’ is not only working on the right topics and using the right approaches, but also that its interventions, at least in the area of municipal tax mobilisation, have a measurable impact on the performance of the municipalities. The most rigorous analysis is certainly limited to the effect of the intervention regarding the framings in the notification letters. But the combination it studies allows making strong statements about the contribution of the broader programme and offers an empirical basis with which to discuss both its effects and potential new activities.

2.2.4. Use of results

The results of the RIE have been presented on different occasions to different audiences in Mozambique and Germany. The events included a presentation at a major conference organised by ANAMM (Associação Nacional dos Municípios de Moçambique/National Association of Mozambican Municipalities); a specific meeting organised by the DIE country

working group at the end of their stay in Mozambique; an internal workshop with the partner municipalities of the programme; a BMZ event on behavioural insights; and a conference on methods and the use of RIEs organised by the German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval).

Given that most of the results arrived at the end of the phase, in project management and strategic learning, the results were more relevant for the follow-up project than the ongoing one. A particular example of this use is in reconsidering the relevance of including the behavioural component in the programme planning more explicitly in the following phase.

The results and the process of implementing the RIE had positive effects in spillovers for the partner and the engagement of the programme with them. The assessment was relevant for improving the processes of taxpayer registration and invoicing in the municipalities. The implementation showed weaknesses that municipalities addressed quickly. As information exchange between departments was a key area of work of the programme, the example here was instrumental to identify similar bottlenecks in other areas and point at their practical implications. The implementation of the experiment was also an opportunity to link some actors in Mozambique more closely (for example, academic institutions and government organisations with which the research team worked such as ANAMM or Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos [IESE, Institution of Social and Economic Studies]). Overall, the assessment could be successfully used to position the programme more strongly towards other donors, and in the national discussion around the area of local revenue mobilisation. This enhanced relationship has already led to follow-up output, such as a nationwide survey on municipal tax administration capacities and the biggest perceived challenges implemented by DIE, ANAMM and IESE in close cooperation with GIZ. The GIZ has

also assigned a development worker in the IESE.

There were some direct benefits for the commissioner (for instance, contribution to the discussion on behavioural insights) but these remain small. Also, in terms of reporting, the benefits were small as the coverage of the assessment was modest.

2.3. Pakistan⁶

2.3.1. The project

GIZ has been working on decentralisation in Pakistan over a long period of time. Before the support to the Local Governance Programme (LoGO), which was launched in 2017, two projects aimed to strengthen different aspects of local governance in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces. These were Support to Development Planning (SDP, 2014–16) and Support to Good Governance (SGGP, 2014–17). The three initiatives, while also working at the federal level, complemented and built on each other and pursued the following five mutually reinforcing result areas (Gros, 2019:10).

There was a **focus on citizen participation in development planning**. The work in this area aimed at designing, piloting and consolidating an approach that would allow local councils to identify the development priorities of their constituencies in a participatory manner. The logic was that local development priorities should feed into the district development plans, via the annual development programme at the village council/neighbourhood council and the sub-district ('tehsil') level. Two additional and closely related areas included the **coordination between institutions involved in development planning** and the **strengthening of state–citizen dialogue and access to information**. In this line of work, GIZ facilitated the horizontal (across sectors) and vertical (across hierarchies) coordination of government agencies, with responsibilities in development planning. It also encouraged the involvement of non-governmental organisations in multi-stakeholder planning processes and facilitated and encouraged

the proactive sharing of information and citizen involvement in public decision-making.

Given the crucial gender dimension in development planning, the programmes had a special emphasis on **women's empowerment** and the **prevention of violence against women**. In addition, the GIZ programme focused on the areas of revenue generation and statistics. In the first case, the programme supported the Federal Board of Revenue and its provincial counterparts to improve the performance and transparency of the tax administration at the federal and provincial levels. In the latter case, by working with the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics and the provincial bureaus in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab, the programme contributed to strengthening the quality of the data these organisations produce, so as to provide a starting point to foster evidence-based development planning and decision-making.

2.3.2. Focus of the assessment, methodological approach and main results

a. Focus of the assessment

The focus of the assessment lay on the mechanism whereby the local government could transparently share information about development planning with citizens, and the people could meaningfully engage in identifying priority issues at the local level and influence public development plans to address their needs. Thus, most prominently, the assessment was linked to the areas of citizen participation in development planning, and strengthening the state–citizen dialogue

⁶ This section relies strongly on Gros (2019)

This was seen as the cornerstone of the programme and they wanted to generate reliable data on the effectiveness of the approach they helped to develop. As a result, they focused the assessment on this area and planned project activities around this goal.

b. Methodological approach

The explicit aim was to have a design that would enable making a causal claim. This implied that methodologically the goal was to get as close as possible to the idea of randomising the treatment. Given the security and stability concern in Pakistan this was a particularly difficult goal. The GIZ programme—together with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial government—drew up a list of village and neighbourhood councils in the pre-selected districts of Nowshera and Haripur, where security conditions and logistical means would allow them to work. In mid-2014, representatives from all councils, together with the media and civil society stakeholders, were invited to a joint meeting in which targeted communities were defined by a lottery system. All councils agreed to this procedure and although GIZ's SDP project would not work in some of the municipalities, data would be collected in all municipalities to help the project—and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government—learn. In each district, the lottery picked one urban (neighbourhood) and two rural (village) councils as treatment areas for the project interventions. The control areas in which the GIZ had no intervention were identified by matching techniques. Among the remaining councils, relying on government census data at the village or enumeration block level, communities with similar socio-economic indicators were se-

lected. In each district, five non-intervention areas, four rural and one urban, were chosen via the matching procedure to constitute the control group. From each group, households were randomly chosen to be interviewed for the SDP survey.

The assessment included three survey rounds in the intervention and control areas:

1. A baseline survey of 1,637 households in September 2014, before the start of the project implementation (Wild, 2015);
2. A midline survey of 1,206 respondents, originally planned for late 2015 but, for several reasons, delayed until August 2016 (Wild, 2017a); and
3. An endline survey collecting data from 972 households in August 2017 (Wild, 2017b).

c. Main results

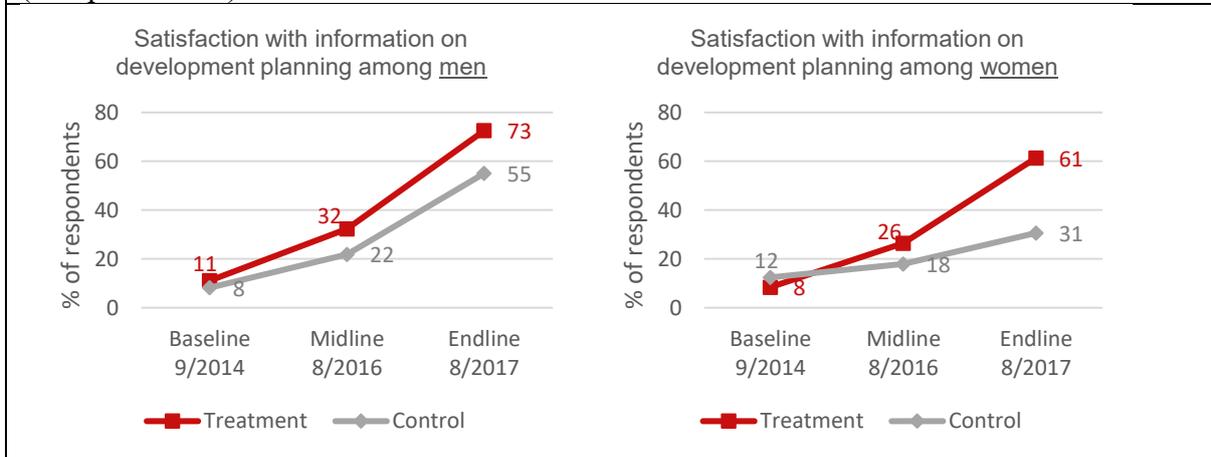
The SDP was particularly interested in measuring through the survey three key concepts it expected to have an impact on.

1. **Knowledge:** This aspect referred mainly to the respondent's awareness of the provincial development priorities, the annual development planning processes at the different levels of government, and the extent to which citizens thought their priorities were reflected in these planning processes.
2. **Involvement:** This aspect referred to questions related to motivation and the actual participation of citizens in council meetings at any level of government, but with a particular stress on neighbourhood councils and less formal village meetings.
3. **Satisfaction with information on development planning:** This area of enquiry focused on the degree to which citizens

had been contacted by persons of authority or by institutions to share information about development planning, as well as

the level of information about and use of official feedback or complaint mechanisms vis-à-vis the government.

Figure 3: Visualisation of results on satisfaction by gender over all data collection round (Haripur district)



Source: Gros (2019: 25).

The data collected clearly indicated that the CEDP approach (Citizen Engagement in Development Planning approach, previously known as D-PIP approach) in village and neighbourhood councils had been effective in increasing the citizens’ satisfaction with information on development planning (see Figure 3). Data on citizen involvement in development planning were far more inconclusive. In this case, there was a clear general trend towards more involvement in both treatment and control groups. In terms of gender differences, the results from Haripur district indicate a remarkable effect of the approach with regard to men but no effect on women. The least encouraging results come with regard to the knowledge dimension, as data indicate that there is no basis to claim that the CEDP methodology had any lasting positive effect on the respondents’ knowledge about the annual development planning processes.

In short, as Gros puts it “the survey results indicate that citizens feel more informed by the government about local development

planning, and some have become more involved in local governance processes, seemingly thanks to SDP, but overall the understanding of how these planning processes work continues to be limited” (2019: 25).

2.3.3. Methodological challenges

One of the major challenges that this RIE faced was the security and logistical constraints of a fragile environment. This led to problems associated with running the surveys themselves besides legal and ethical considerations. As a result, the team required a lot of flexibility and adaptation. For instance, there were travel restrictions as well as changes in legislation that banned the use of tablets for interviewing. This made the implementation difficult and very time consuming for the team.

Another challenge was the procedure to assure randomisation. At the core of the RIE is the idea of a valid counterfactual. In many cases, it is difficult to get information on areas where the programmes are not active. This has practical reasons (Why should a non-partner serve as a control point without

enjoying the benefits?) but also ethical (Why take time from people who will not benefit?). Managing randomisation and convincing partners to use and respect it is easier when it happens within the partner structure (for example, randomisation of citizens within partner municipalities in Mozambique). In many cases, GIZ's governance team works on issues that do not allow this randomisation as the major administrative bodies or regions are treated as clusters. The lottery idea enabled the SDP programme to overcome this challenge and offered a fair and clear process of allocation preserving the random element.

One challenge was also the continuity and endurance in the effort. Overall, the programme invested a large amount of resources over a long period of time. It demanded courage and vision from all those involved. The combination of the required adaptation and the long-time span was particularly challenging. Planning and coordinating with the political partners, which was essential for both the implementation and the use of the results, was difficult given the volatility in partners, and the rather short-term orientation of stakeholders which clashed regularly with the long-term vision required by the assessment

2.3.4. Use of results

The RIE was integrated completely into the project. In 2014 the managers of the SDP project decided to invest over 400,000 Euros to measure the effectiveness of the CEDP approach. They considered it worthy to invest in rigorous evidence to learn whether their participatory planning approach was effective.

The vision was to use this evidence to make an informed decision about scaling up a tried and tested model. In case the data showed that the approach was ineffective, the data would provide pointers on how to modify the methodology to make it work. Furthermore, the quality of the evidence was seen as a major asset in effectively and

efficiently advocating for other partners to help take their solution to scale. Also, GIZ needed data for its internal accountability requirements, not least to report on progress and results to its funding and commissioning institution, Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The results framework, agreed with BMZ, included population-based survey indicators on access to development planning information and involvement in local governance, and GIZ needed to deliver on these metrics.

In terms of the internal use of evidence for the SDP project, the baseline survey results were possibly the most pivotal: the data confirmed that the SDP project, and a practical approach to participatory development planning, were needed. The baseline thereby offered a robust justification for BMZ's investment in GIZ's governance programme and its goals in Pakistan.

The midline and endline surveys provided evidence that the SDP project approach was an effective tool to satisfy the citizens' need for information on development planning. The data helped the SDP management to advocate successfully for a scale-up of CEDP with the government and development partners, and convinced BMZ to reinvest in an SDP successor programme, Support to Local Governance (LoGo, 2017–2019), co-financed by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC). With BMZ and SDC funds, the LoGo programme expanded the participatory planning approach from two to four districts and from six to over 230 village and neighbourhood councils in 2018.

Moving to the external use of evidence, the main element was the relevance of the assessment to convince the government and development partners to scale up.

Thanks to their long-standing coordination, in conjunction with efforts by the SDP project management to share the findings from the experimental surveys, both the EU and United Nations Development Programme

(UNDP) bought into the CEDP approach, the main advocates of an alternative approach to local development planning. The EU modified its Community-Driven Local Development methodology to include key elements of CEDP. The UNDP signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with GIZ and piloted participatory development planning—following the CEDP model—in 10 additional districts in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The SDC had followed the development and piloting of CEDP with interest. The suitability of the approach, together with the experimental evidence, convinced the agency to co-finance the LoGo programme with BMZ, and to become the sole sponsor of the LoGo governance portfolio baseline survey in 2017.

Representatives from non-project councils within Khyber Pakhtunkhwa approached the provincial government to learn more about the participatory planning approach. This led to a final certification and institutionalisation of the GIZ methodology by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government.

Following the implementation of CEDP in the six pilot councils, representatives from Punjab and the federally administered Tribal Area asked the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial Local Government, Elections and Rural Development Department (LGE&RDD) for demonstrations of CEDP to explore how they could implement it in their provinces. For the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, the demand from within and outside their province provided convincing evidence of the value of the CEDP approach, at least as strong as the experimental survey data.

As a consequence, and based on the collaboration between GIZ, DFID, EU and the government, the Director General of LGE&RDD officially notified CEDP for 12 out of 25 districts in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. With this decree of June 2017, CEDP became the mandatory approach to be used for local development

planning in a participatory manner. In addition, the government integrated CEDP into the curriculum of the provincial Local Governance School (LGS). Since then, the LGS has trained hundreds of local councillors and government staff on the approach. It has also built the capacity of a cadre of CEDP master trainers that have been instrumental in the scale-up of the methodology to hundreds of village and neighbourhood councils in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and the federally administered Tribal Area under the LoGo programme.

2.4. Malawi

2.4.1. The project

The programme ‘Strengthening Public Financial and Economic Management’ focuses on improving general conditions in the public finance system and monitoring the expenditure system. The lead executing agency is the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, which plays a key role in the country’s budgetary and financial policy. Other important partners are the Office of the President, the National Audit Office, the Central Internal Audit Unit, Malawi Revenue Authority and non-state actors (including civil society organisations and the EITI). These supervisory bodies of the Malawian government are being supported through technical and organisational consultancy. The project is also advising the Malawian government on how to improve the legal framework in relation, for example, to external auditing. In addition, the project is helping partners to network with one another more effectively and is creating forums for regular exchanges to ensure that important information is made available in good time to all the institutions involved. Cooperation with the Malawi Revenue Authority focuses on strengthening accountability mechanisms and developing new domestic revenue streams. Furthermore, the project is collaborating with universities, media and civil society to inform the population about the principles of good governance, particularly with regard to the transparent use of public funds and natural resources.

2.4.2. Focus of the assessment, methodological approach and main results

a. Focus of the assessment

The programme was keen to learn more about the impact of their work on the Integrated Financial Management Information System (from now on IFMIS system). As a result, the focus of the assessment was on component ‘A’ of the programme—budget

implementation). The goal of the component was to enable the Ministry of Finance technically and structurally to implement a sound management system of public finances and the focus was on the IFMIS, Cash Management and Contract Management. The discussion about the object of analysis was less open than in other experiences of the Initiative, and the inception phase focused on how to assess the work around IFMIS than identifying the question that would guide the assessment.

The work on IFMIS was based on a mix of long-term advisers and short-term consultancies, combined with training and the provision of equipment. To assess the contribution of GIZ, the team used several approaches that ranged from collecting hard data on coverage and functioning of IFMIS; structured interviews to understand precisely what had been done, by whom and how it might have affected partners; and more open interviews. The bigger question of the contribution in component A was subdivided into mini case studies of success and failure, with specific interventions to analyse what factors enabled some measures to gain traction while others did not.

b. Methodological approach

The methodological approach in the case of Malawi was a contribution analysis. The programme decided early in the process that this method would provide more valuable information than an RIE in the narrow sense. Contribution analysis does not allow for the attribution of impacts solely to the GIZ programme. It can help to understand whether GIZ support was a fundamental or even a necessary part of an overall ‘causal package’ leading to observed outcomes, but it does not provide the same type of evidence. In particular, the size of the impact cannot be measured.

To organise information, a measurement framework was developed by the research

partner (in this case Overseas Development Institute [ODI]). The framework comprised a combination of quantitative and qualitative metrics that could be used to assess progress and aimed to get detailed information along the theory of change on which the intervention was based. The key strategy was to collect information on whether changes had occurred in line with what the programme had assumed in their theory of change. The primary sources of information to measure performance were quantitative and qualitative data from publicly available documents from the government and development partners, quantitative data from government financial reports and qualitative data from formal and informal interviews, which included talking to the same group of people repeatedly and informally over the two years of the study.

c. Main results

The analysis attests to a remarkable number of improvements in the Malawian financial management system during the period studied. The evidence indicated that GIZ contributed particularly to observed improvements in expenditure control, and most effectively when supporting change demanded by the government (often under pressure from the International Monetary Fund) in finding solutions to complex technical problems that rise from the increased use of technology in public financial management.

The analysis shows that there is a clear contribution although any conclusions on the impact of those changes on the way government money is being spent have to be very cautious. The analysis highlights the value of resident advisers as effective and instrumental actors in supporting change processes in the realm of public financial management, especially when any reform in this area is so politicised.

2.4.3. Methodological challenges

This specific case shows the limitation that certain measures and the impact question face. The focus agreed on between the programme and ODI restricted the number of methods that could be used. Experimental and quasi-experimental approaches were not the right choice given the formulation of the question. The most important criterion in defining the question is its relevance for the programme. The selection of the method derives from the questions asked, not the other way around. The approach employed, contribution analysis, is not able to establish attribution.

This example also shows one of the major challenges connected to RIE in the governance sector—the focus was on improving one nationwide system. In addition, GIZ was only one development partner among many providing support in this area. Hence, the major challenges were to construct a viable counterfactual and to attribute any improvements to the specific GIZ support.

As a result, the actors involved decided to go ahead with the already mentioned contribution analysis. This is a particularly tough approach precisely when there is little or no scope to vary (or randomise) how the programmes are implemented. Although desirable in all approaches, in such an assessment approach, a clearly articulated theory of change is key as the contribution analysis is meant to reconstruct the causal mechanism (rather than the impact) by which the intervention developed its contribution. In essence, it confirms or denies a theory of change so a clear statement by the programme team about the expected paths is essential. Nothing should be presumed as all will be tested.

Contribution analysis is not able to capture and quantify impact, as understood in this report, more specifically in the debate around impact in development cooperation. It allows making plausible conclusions

about whether the programme made a difference, but not causally attributing any impact to the individual activities of GIZ. It is reasonable to understand that not all questions can be answered, and that some key questions of governance do not lend themselves to being approached through quasi-experimental and experimental means.

Another challenge that became obvious in the case of Malawi is that assessments around areas that are in the centre of political discussions are particularly difficult. The openness to talk as well as the access to data is complicated. Also, data access was a persistent challenge throughout the evaluation, although the assessment had been co-ordinated and arranged with political actors in Malawi. Qualitative information based on interviews faced the challenge of volatility in personnel, so the original idea of interviewing the same set of people over time was given up.

2.4.4. Use of results

The results of this assessment were primarily used internally in the programme. No bigger event or dissemination strategy was pursued; from the beginning, the project decided to focus on this highly controversial issue and a more private use was envisioned. The results were informally discussed with partners but there was no systematic approach to it.

Internally, the results helped the project think about subsequent interventions and project phases. This referred to the approach as well as the content. The study highlights the great value and contribution of resident advisors. This analysis helped a strategic discussion around their deployment and reflected upon the difficulties that this position implies. The final report included reflections on how the project could make

more use of the expertise and strong network it had built up. This led to strategic discussions within the team.

2.5. Peru⁷

2.5.1. The project

The Citizen-Oriented State Reform programme implemented by GIZ in Peru (2014–18) stated in its main objective that, “**Public institutions** at national, regional and local levels **improve service delivery**, applying the criteria of citizen-orientation and good governance.” To achieve this goal, the programme adopted a multilevel approach, including national and subnational government actors as well as non-governmental organisations.

The project worked on three main components. The first component, ‘Coordination of Budgeting and Planning’, focused on advising local and regional governments on how to plan and programme their budgets to more effectively and efficiently provide public services, that also respond to the citizens’ needs. The second component, ‘Social Policy and Administrative Modernisation’, assisted local and regional governments in improving the coverage rate and quality of social welfare programmes through reforms in public services and optimisation of administrative processes. The third component, ‘Strengthening Accountability’, supported state actors at the subnational level, boosting transparency and facilitating better access to information for citizens.

On behalf of the German government, and with funding from Switzerland’s State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), the project supported more than 120 municipalities and other actors.

⁷ For more information on this specific case, please refer to Camacho (2017).

2.5.2. Focus of the assessment, methodological approach and main results

a. Focus of the assessment

The focus of the assessment relied on so-called ‘change projects’, an instrument used extensively in the programme; narrowly defined challenges raised by the partner were addressed directly by solutions developed by the programme closely with the partner. Content wise, the focus was on activities connected to the work around simplifying administration in municipalities. It was linked to one of the overall indicators of the programme aimed at increasing citizen satisfaction with public services.

It took a long process to decide the focus. Ideas were sketched in the context of a project appraisal mission. Before working with DIE, the project had had some mixed experiences with other research partners. After the scope for cooperation was identified, administrative simplification was chosen as the most promising and relevant area to focus the assessment on. The assessment was set up as an accompanying research project with DIE as the research partner

b. Methodological approach

The methodological set-up was based on the comparison of satisfaction levels before and after the measures were implemented between treatment (simplified procedures) and control (non-simplified procedures) groups in the advised municipalities. Most of the data came from self-administered questionnaires placed in boxes in 18 municipalities. Beyond satisfaction with their overall experience, the questionnaire asked citizens about objective measures regarding service attributes (for example, wait days, number of visits, cost, and number of requisites), and subjective assessments of other attributes—quality of customer service, quality of information provided, state of facilities. All these were used as dependent variables in the analysis to measure their impact and triangulate results.

The design demanded a high level of involvement by both the GIZ project member working in the municipalities and the municipal administration. The procedures were explained first within the GIZ team and then in the municipalities, including the political and technical administration units.

A relatively high number of questions and smaller problems arose regularly, which demanded continuous monitoring and accompanying of the process. To deal with this, a monthly meeting between the actors was instituted.

c. Main results

The main results indicated that satisfaction increased by 16% with regard to improved procedures; this was around half a point in a 5-point Likert scale. It is interesting to see how different elements connected to satisfaction—such as days required to get the document, cost, required documentation, customer service and state of facilities—work out. The biggest improvement came with regard to waiting days. The subjective measures rose by 14% while the objective one, by which persons were asked about the number of days they needed for the procedure, improved by 67% (representing around 25 days). The effects on the perception on whether costs were reasonable, and how burdensome the required documentation was also improved remarkably (around 11%). The quality of customer service and the state of facilities were perceived to have improved, although less strongly, which is surprising as these elements are clearly independent of the improved mechanism.

2.5.3. Methodological challenges

As with other experiences in the Initiative, the coordination with the partners and implementing the design in a clean fashion were the key challenges. In this case, the fact that treated and control procedures were factually very close added problems in

assuring that there was no spillover that might bias the results.

In terms of lessons learnt, the assessment showed the importance of investing time to build a trusted relationship with the administrative personnel in charge of control procedures not directly connected to GIZ. The problem was not institutional support at the high management level, but from the administrative personnel implementing the experiment. It is they who had the extra work and were responsible for the correct implementation of the experiment. They also felt that they were the ones being indirectly tested. The team had considered engaging external staff to make the data more reliable. But given budgetary constraints, as well as considering the spillover that letting municipalities drive the data collection could have on capacity development and ownership, they decided to let the municipalities collect data themselves. This trade-off between the reliability of the assessment and involvement of partners was a difficult decision to make. The rule is easy in theory, to let the partner do as much as possible as long as the quality of the assessment is not compromised. In practice, identifying that point in the continuum is difficult and requires a lot of context knowledge that the programme, rather than the research partner, can assess.

Securing enough time to guide and train the GIZ technical advisors involved in the assessment was a major challenge. Like in the other cases, it is not a common type of work and is rapidly perceived as an add-on. Due to the unforeseen workload, the experiment had to be reduced from its original scope.

This example shows how much time and energy a proper RIE based on its own data collection requires. This was not properly communicated from the beginning and led to surprise amongst some team members.

A different challenge was the low number of completed questionnaires. The response

rate was only 26% but there was a lot of variability across groups, time, and municipalities. Uncertainty about the drivers of these differences made the assessment of the results difficult.

2.5.4. Use of results

Even though their workload increased, the employees recognised the value of the exercise, both for the project and themselves, in terms of learning how it actually works. They knew the benefits of regular discussions with the researcher on why things were done in a certain way (capacity spillover) and finding solutions for the challenges arising during implementation.

The team created a short video at the end in which the principal investigator and one member of the GIZ project explained the main results in accessible language. This was sent to all the municipalities with the actual report. This can be considered a good and easy replicable practice as it disseminates the results and assures the recognition of municipalities that participated.

Given the positive results, the dissemination encouraged further activities by the municipalities. It was important for the administration to have proof that their efforts paid off and that citizens perceived the changes to be positive. The project used the results to discuss with partners about activities that went beyond the focus of the assessment. More generally, it was a useful example of evidence-based policy making that gave another perspective to strategic discussions with the partner.

In terms of reporting, the results were more broadly used than in other examples described in this report. The impact measured was directly on one of the main indicators of the programme. This is encouraging given the constraints discussed earlier in addressing the broader goal of the project.

Still, it is relevant that although it was a project indicator at the component level, the activities assessed only cover a fraction of what this project implemented towards that end. The programme valued highly the legitimacy that the robust and strong evidence gave them in interacting with the commissioner.



Taking Stocks and Lessons Learned

3. Taking stock and lessons learnt

3.1. Main issues

The experiences offer a great pool of diverse topics, mode of cooperation, challenges and opportunities. The goal of this chapter is to bring together this knowledge and draw some overall conclusions and lessons learnt.

One main result, answering one of the main questions motivating the Initiative, is that implementing RIEs of governance programmes is possible in a GIZ context. Against common perceptions, the cases show that interventions within governance programmes can be assessed with rigorous methods, and it is possible to attribute certain outcomes causally to GIZ interventions. This is not to say that an RIE is easy, neither that it is the best and most valid evaluation approach for all questions. The experiences indicate that conducting an RIE involves some compromises that have to be balanced with the potential benefits. Most importantly, the starting point must always be the question that the projects or organisations have. An RIE is useful and a strong approach for some crucial questions in the governance sector around measuring impact and learning what works; but an RIE is not the appropriate tool for many other questions relevant to governance programmes.

Another important lesson learnt refers to the issue of scope. Programmes experience a clear trade-off between breadth and precision. RIEs can be done, but they demand a narrow focus. Rigorous approaches usually are not able to assess the overall impact of a programme, but rather particular interventions. Identifying research designs able to make causal claims about the impact of overall programmes is simply too difficult. There are too many factors that cannot be controlled and that can play a role. Hence, any claim would rely on heroic assumptions.

In this line, it is wise to clearly communicate that RIEs are about interventions not the overall project. In this sense, they are about “development effectiveness not aid effectiveness” (White, 2013: 31). This implies that the motivation must come from learning what intervention works rather than proving that the aid is effective, which is rather a positive outcome of the analysis if effectiveness is confirmed.

The decision on the focus of the RIE is arguably the most important step in the process. The relevance refers to content (What will I look at?) but is also crucial in assuring ownership. Though the programmes invested different amounts of time in the assessment, all of them spent more than they had expected in the beginning. Some had a very clear idea from the start of the focus of the assessment; others took longer and more participatory and deliberative processes to define it. The results indicate that transparency in the selection of the focus, as well as goals and anticipated workload is key at the start of an RIE. RIEs make teams nervous. Very few people are happy to be evaluated. Questions about the consequences, and why one intervention and not the other pop up quickly. This is why clear communication in the selection of the scope is key to get the support of the project staff and partners. Similarly, the programmes must let the team and stakeholders know from the onset what the goal of the exercise is, as well as the plan of how the results will be used. This is fundamental because without the support of everyone involved, the implementation of the assessment will not work including aspects as crucial as gaining timely access to data. Only an assessment for which the team and stakeholders have ownership can assure quality and lead to significantly more use of the results. The same counts, beyond ownership, to allocation of resources and workload. It is essential that the process is set up as a collaborative project and time is realistically allocated from the start. Otherwise, frustrations about the extra work, as well as a perception of the assessment as something alien and running parallel (but

detached) from the programme quickly arise.

Another fundamental constraint connected to the issue of scope is that the necessity to narrow down the question makes some project managers consider the cost benefit calculation to be negative. The Initiative shows that some projects are not willing to invest a significant part of their budget into an assessment that might tend to cover only a small part of their portfolio. Hence, they prefer methodological approaches that cover broader sets of activities and are in a better position to say something about the overall project rather than specific activities. In order to deal with this concern and find solutions for the programme, GIZ needs a more systemic approach to RIEs, which highlights and recognises that results are not only good and useful for the individual programme that invest in them, but for the organisation at large. It also involves thinking about how to distribute costs among different actors and highlighting the benefits that RIEs can generate beyond the narrow idea of strengthening accountability and into areas such as learning. In general, it is obvious that projects have good reasons and strong incentives to use their monitoring budget to cover as much as possible of the portfolio. As will be discussed later, overcoming these incentives to foster the use of RIEs within GIZ demands not only thinking carefully about the distribution of the financial cost associated to an RIE, but also measures to recognise the effort of those colleagues open to embark on such projects.

Methodologically speaking, the experiences in the Initiative confirm the well-known fact that for an RIE to be doable, it is crucial that the intervention is delivered to many units. In White's words,

For "large n" interventions, in which the intervention is delivered to many units (households, schools, clinics, firms, villages, districts or whatever) then statistical analysis is the most appropriate

means of constructing a counterfactual. Where "n" is not large then the most appropriate methods are deductive approaches based around causal chain analysis, such as process tracing (2013: 31).

One common argument raised by persons working in the governance sector to pursue a stronger use of RIEs in this area is that many programmes are geared towards a small number of units. The experience of the Initiative tells us, however, that although the ultimate goal is commonly framed as targeting a small number of cases within the causal chain to achieve overall goals, some interventions are targeted to a large number of units (for instance, individuals and/or government bodies). These particular interventions lend themselves perfectly well to be assessed using rigorous methods.

Certainly, the experiences in the Initiative indicate that implementing such rigorous assessment is not always easy from a methodological point of view, even when there is a lot of interest in the study and openness to look for those opportunities. In fact, not all projects were able to conduct RIEs as intended. In the case of Malawi and Benin, the programmes defined questions that demanded the use of evaluation methodologies that deviated from those envisioned at the start of this Initiative.

The reasons to explain these decisions are a mix of two dimensions. On the one hand, there are methodological aspects. First, when the projects have been running for a long time, finding leverage for an RIE is difficult. The number of questions that can be tested rigorously as well as the methodological approaches that can be applied are reduced remarkably in this set-up. Hence, even though Benin was open to a rigorous impact, the methodological scope was very small and considered too narrow for the interest of the project. Second, governance programmes that focus on one big actor or target a small number of actors tend to consider that the methods do not apply to them.

Malawi is an example of this dynamic. Their main focus is on IFMIS and it is certainly right that there is only one IFMIS. Identifying a counterfactual and randomising is not possible. If the programme sticks to looking at its effect on IFMIS, there is no scope for an RIE.

Both aspects being legitimate constraints, other experiences in the Initiative show that they can be overcome. We are convinced that in the majority of the cases, there is scope to assess some activities using rigorous methods. In most of the programmes, there are measures that target a large number of units. For instance, even though the goal might be a legislative reform (there is only one of this), programmes have capacity building components working with many individuals. These interventions could be assessed rigorously and provide strong evidence on one step of the assumed causal chain. Thinking in this direction is a particularly promising avenue to pursue.

A final challenge that is brought up regularly is an alleged incongruity between the adaptability that programmes need and the assumed rigidity of RIEs. To succeed, governance and peace interventions have to be sensitive to the context they operate in and adapt quickly to changing circumstances (Kirsch et al., 2017). Hence, projects require a certain level of flexibility. Many perceive that the GIZ is good in doing this. In this line, many people within GIZ fear that performing an RIE implies giving up the adaptability that is so necessary because of the rigidity they attribute to an RIE. The experiences in the Initiative indicate that this fear might be overestimated. It is certainly right that as far as possible the intervention approach should remain stable over time in order to enable RIEs to achieve meaningful results. This is especially important and demanding in the RIE design phase that involved several rounds of data collection. But the necessities of the programme are paramount, and they should always get precedence over the RIE in case of a conflict. However, in most cases, this is

never an issue and if the programme has to make major adaptations, the RIE can manage these. Countries with higher risk tend to require adaptations in programming more often in order to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances. This makes RIEs in fragile environments especially complex to implement although not impossible. Pakistan is an example where the design needed major adaptations, and this was successfully managed. The key is continuous trusted communication that allows the persons involved in the assessment to receive any relevant information as soon as possible in order to react. Of course, this is applicable in both directions—if something in the assessment plan is delayed, the programme at large should be informed as soon as possible to adapt and preserve the integration in the overall planning.

From a more systemic perspective, one further lesson learnt is that assuming that the incentives appeal to both the headquarters and programme is naïve. Goals can clash remarkably, and everyone should be aware of this. As stated earlier, projects will be happy to have rigorous evidence about their activities, but they also have a strong incentive to cover as much as possible of their portfolio in the analysis. By contrast, headquarters might have fewer problems in narrowing down the question in exchange for stronger causal evidence on the impact of individual interventions. They are interested in strong results and clear messages that can potentially inform programmes in other contexts and help strengthen the position of GIZ in national and international debates.

As a result, the vision of which primary goals RIEs should have is very different. This has strong implications on the actual design of these assessments. Agreeing on the vision is crucial. Discussing these goals openly and early, also with the research team present, is key to have a common understanding. In some cases, it will be possible to cover all interests, but most often this is not the case, especially when resources (funding and human) are restricted.

Related to the vision and goals discussion, some are concerned about “researcher capture”, that the researcher might skew the design of the assessments towards more publishable questions rather than working on answering questions that are of interest to the programme.⁸ This was not a particularly explicit issue in the experience of this Initiative, although there was some argument regarding narrowing down the question. In any case, this is an issue that should be addressed proactively, like the situation between headquarters and the programme. On a similar note, coordination between researchers and the project is also key with regard to how researchers present themselves to partners. Some projects in the Initiative were concerned and had some negative experience in this regard. Projects in partner countries invest a high amount of time and energy in building up trustful relationships with the local partners. It is important for researchers to be aware of sensibilities, and for the programme and team to present the

exercise in a transparent and coordinated way. This is not meant to restrict the researchers’ scope, which certainly might include asking sensitive questions, but rather to coordinate in presenting the exercise to minimise the chances that the assessment might negatively affect the relationship between the project and its partners

3.2. Experienced benefits

The experiences of the Initiative give clear insights about the potential benefits that programmes can expect to enjoy from implementing an RIE. One main result in this regard is that benefits go well beyond reporting. Actually, in terms of reporting, the value added is less than was often expected, while major unanticipated benefits could be identified particularly in areas such as indirect benefits for the partners, as well as strengthening the positioning and profile of the programmes.

The potential benefits are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Main benefits of an RIE
1. Learn about what works and test interventions.
2. Gain evidence about your impact and the validity of core assumptions your programme design relies on.
3. Gain in-depth insights for strategic decisions and the general management of the programme.
4. Build capacity in the area of impact evaluation for your team and partners.
5. Acquire valuable inputs for internal and external accountability and reporting responsibilities.
6. Strengthen the positioning and profile of your programme in the partner country and beyond.
7. Contribute to strengthening evidence-based policy making as well as scientific and policy debates about what works.

⁸ More on this aspect as well as strategies to minimise this risk (some of which are mentioned later

in this report) can be found in White and Raitzer (2017: 142–43).

There is no case within the Initiative where all benefits were realised. In this sense, the list should be interpreted as potential benefits to strive for. The Initiative shows that it is wrong to simply expect the benefits to naturally and mechanically come from the implementation. One strong conclusion is that it is crucial to think carefully before initiating the RIE about what the specific goals are to make sure that these are emphasised. In this sense, the recommendations and lessons learnt can be seen as aspects to consider maximising the potential benefits. Unfortunately, even in the examples of the Initiative, RIEs are not used to their fullest potential, but solutions exist that can mitigate that gap.

In all cases, benefits 1 and 2 were achieved. All projects perceived that the analysis of the research teams provided interesting insights as well as evidence on particular aspects of their interventions. This was not questioned. A different aspect is whether only receiving that benefit, given the narrow focus, would legitimise the investment in these exercises, an issue that was already discussed earlier. Precisely this concern makes it relevant to analyse the degree to which additional benefits are possible, and the degree to which these are realised, to understand when the investment is attractive for the programmes.

In several instances, the implementation of activities related to the assessment in close cooperation with the partner was perceived to have strong positive spillover effects for the partner, as well as to provide useful insights for the programme into the partners' processes (in particular, in Mozambique and Peru). Concretely, partners and programme staff benefited from analysing carefully the data basis, procedures and monitoring system not in abstract terms but in an applied manner. This effect was particularly strong where administrative data were used. Similarly, the spillover effect of the joint implementation in terms of capacity building for programme staff was seen

as a benefit that was underestimated at the start (for example, Pakistan and Peru).

In various cases, the benefits for the programmes regarding reporting were lower than expected (for example, Mozambique, Benin). More positive experiences in this regard were made in Pakistan, Peru and partly Malawi. The explanation seems obvious. Where the indicators measured in the assessment were closer to more fundamental indicators of the programme in terms of their result matrix, the benefits in terms of reporting were higher. For the commissioner, although not directly connected to reporting, the RIEs were useful to flag some activities of issues that were gaining attention at BMZ (for example, Mozambique offering insights to discussions around behavioural issues that happened to gain momentum at BMZ during the implementation of the assessment).

To some degree, all projects considered that the results of the RIE provided a qualitatively better empirical basis that enabled discussions with partners. Also, the signalling in terms of evidence-based policy making associated to using rigorous methods was perceived as strategically useful. The case where these benefits had the most evident consequences is Pakistan, where the assessment led to upscale approaches by the partner and additional funds from other international donors.

Finally, the projects felt that there was a contribution to policy debates in the country through the studies. This was certainly more in the cases where results were directly presented to the broader policy community. The effect in terms of strengthening evidence-based policy making was stronger where the partners of the programme were more involved, as they were directly exposed to the process of the RIE and the scientific methods on which it is based.

3.3 Identified potentials and threats: A SWOT analysis on how to move the impact measurement agenda forward

Looking at the main results of the experiences, it is obvious that the potential for RIE within programmes is underutilised. We can draw the same conclusion if we look at the GIZ at large. The degree to which the insights generated in the programmes through RIEs is used institutionally is low (GIZ Evaluation Unit, 2020). This applies to the qualitative dimension of how much existing evidence is strategically set up and used. But quantitatively also, the amount of rigorous evidence that is generated within the GIZ is presently still low taking into account its size. A report by GIZ's corporate evaluation unit shows that in the period between 2014 and 2018 at least 39 RIEs were conducted at GIZ. The RIEs unfolded across different regions and sectors. Four RIEs were identified in the case of governance (Florian et al., 2019).⁹ One main conclusion of the report is that an "RIE offers significant corporate value for GIZ that has yet to be realised to its full extent. Opportunities for adding corporate value through RIE systemically exist on the demand and supply side as well as within the enabling environment" (ibid.: 7).¹⁰

This opens up a question on how GIZ can enhance the use of an RIE and the usability of its results.¹¹ In this line, a programme centre perspective turns into a broader one,

explicitly thinking about how the interaction between programme and headquarters can be improved to foster the use of an RIE.

With regard to the opportunities, challenges and limits of RIEs, the experience of the impact initiative is summarised in the form of a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis. The first step in this analysis is describing the existing environment to develop specific recommendations for GIZ and particular actors within it. Table 2 summarises the SWOT that GIZ has in this area.

⁹ This is a further element pointing at the fact that not all assessments launched in the context of the impact initiative were formally rigorous impact assessments.

¹⁰ This study elaborates on a series of findings referring to the conditions under which the project successfully used impact assessment for operational and conceptual learning, as well as for improving accountability and communication of results. Broadly

speaking, the results resonate with the idea described earlier.

¹¹ An overview with recommendations on how to plan and set up an RIE, as well as a description of existing and planned measures by the evaluation unit at GIZ to support GIZ programmes considering implementing an RIE can be found in GIZ Evaluation Unit (2020).

Table 2: GIZ’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

Strengths to conduct RIE	Weaknesses to conduct RIE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Network in the countries to get the support and to transmit the knowledge - Enjoys trust of partners and is well reputed - Relatively large staff in the country with solid knowledge about the context - Part of the staff is highly motivated - M+E System in place and could, in many cases, be easily complemented to go in the direction of RIE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of strategic focus in selecting topics and issues of overarching relevance - Poor knowledge management within the organisation - Financial basis and cost–benefit calculation - Weak connection to the leading international actors in this area - Little support structures for interested actors - Little expertise in this area
Opportunities to enhance the application of RIE within GIZ	Threats to use RIE in GIZ
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International support is growing - Quasi-experimental setting arises naturally from implementation: lots of scope for pipeline models - Administrative data are a trend - Presence in a large number of countries implementing similar intervention approaches - Flexibility and time to gain experience given current low demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reliance on programme funding combined with the breadth and precision trade-off - High expectation about reporting cannot be satisfied - Fear of losing adaptability during programme implementation

3.2.1. Strengths

GIZ has a lot of strengths that a strategy to improve the usage of RIEs could rely on. RIEs are more beneficial for the programmes when implemented in close exchange with partners. GIZ is present in many countries and enjoys the strong trust of its partners and high reputation. Moreover, GIZ has a lot of country expertise. This is an invaluable asset to properly implement RIEs and share effectively the insight to affect policy making.

Part of the GIZ staff is highly motivated, which is shown in the fact that impact assessments take place, even if the incentives for programmes are extremely low. Compared to other organisations, GIZ has more staff present in the country which is an important resource. Finally, GIZ does have functioning monitoring and evaluation systems to rely on. There is much potential in enriching and complementing these monitoring systems to get an RIE to work. There is no need to create completely new structures.

3.2.2. Weaknesses

The list of weaknesses starts with what could be labelled as the elephant in the room—financial aspects. Implementing RIEs has a relatively high cost. The financing arrangement should not overload the programmes, which appear to be the actor currently able to mobilise resources to fund these exercises. RIEs provide value to programmes but the capacity to provide funds for this while implementing is limited for programmes. This calls for measures to incentivise thinking about RIEs in the planning phases of programmes in order to plan the costs in the budget. Most importantly, programmes have incentives to generate insights and evidence that is not necessarily in the form that an RIE is best at. The experiences in the Initiative show that benefits are valued and acknowledged, but the cost–benefit calculation is controversial, especially if the coverage of the programme portfolio is small.

Many benefits of RIEs go beyond the programmes although much of the burden (at least as they were organised in the context of the Initiative), financial and the workload, is on the programmes. This needs to be reassessed. This has been a key issue in the discussion and any recommendations coming out of the Initiative, especially the Task Force meeting in Pretoria 2018, point in this direction—sharing costs and clarifying roles and goals between the programme and headquarters. The headquarters need to first send a clear signal that interests them; and second, support programmes in setting up, accompanying and making use of the results of an RIE. There are good reasons to do that. It is more efficient to build up expertise in the headquarters than expect programmes to do so. Headquarters have a better overview of questions that might be of strategic relevance for the organisation and its international profile; they can make sure that knowledge sharing works.

A connected second weakness is that the **GIZ knowledge management regarding RIEs can be improved. This refers to two dimensions: results based on RIEs that are not widely known or easily accessible, as well as procedural knowledge on how to organise RIEs.** Even genuinely interested GIZ employees appear to have major problems finding information on the results of previous assessments, as well as support on how to set up an RIE (administratively, in terms of process and content). The GIZ has some problems in systematically tracking which programmes RIEs have been used or are being implemented. The recent stock taking of all RIEs conducted by GIZ, presented by the corporate unit evaluation in their review report, provides a helpful overview and snapshot of the year 2019. However, it cannot address the flaw as such. The exchange of the actual results achieved is highly dependent on the particular person leading the studies and is circulated to rather informal networks. This again severely affects the cost–benefit calculation for impact assessment as the usage of the result is restricted mostly to the programme itself. The experiences also do not reach outside the organisation, which affects how GIZ is perceived in the international stage as a relevant actor in this area. Overall, this is a massive loss of potential for the GIZ.

An additional weakness is the **lack of strategic selection of topics to be assessed by rigorous methods.** The thematic focus of RIEs should be carefully selected to ensure that the development organisation invests its resources in strategically important topics. The choice to conduct multi-year RIEs should also be taken with a view to take decisions at the organisation level. For example, it might be useful to assess a pilot governance project, or other innovative approaches with which the agency has no prior experience, to decide on its roll-out or to assess particularly costly programmes. So far,

this does not seem to happen. This undermines the use of the result at the organisational level and diminishes incentives for programmes to engage in an RIE.

Furthermore, the expertise and the capacities for the sectoral department to support programmes willing to engage in impact assessment remain low. Although there has been an increase in recent years in personnel and support,¹² the capacities of the evaluation unit remain low in relation to the size of the organisation. Also, global programmes are increasingly assuming a leading role in supporting through expertise and funding RIEs, although not many in the governance sector. Setting up an RIE is not easy and demands skills and support. In GIZ, expertise and experience in the field of impact evaluation is limited and where it exists, the capacities are so scarce that support in starting to experiment with these approaches is almost non-existent. This refers to various steps and aspects where support and guidance is desperately needed such as setting up Terms of Reference, finding good research partners, discussing potential goals of the analysis, quality assurance, and dissemination and use of results.

Broadly speaking, expertise on RIEs is relatively low amongst the GIZ staff. A critical mass of persons who understand the basics of the logic behind an RIE and are able to discuss and make use of the results are key to create acceptance; they will also support an organisational culture more open and keener to use the evidence of RIEs in their activities.

3.2.3. Opportunities

Moving from strengths and weaknesses to emerging issues in opportunities and threats

will allow GIZ to **get a full picture of the environment it has to take into account to encourage the use of RIEs.**

At a systemic level, the growing interest and support for this topic in the international and especially German debate can trigger opportunities to augment the number of RIEs. It is an opportunity for GIZ that within the strategy of its main commissioner, BMZ, the interest is growing but the pressure and the standards are not yet as high as in other contexts. This gives GIZ some time to learn, experiment and build up expertise and experience in this area before the standards rise. The alternative is being in a situation in which, when the standards rise, GIZ will face a sudden demand but will lack the capacities and expertise to respond meaningfully.

From a methodological perspective, the GIZ has a number of opportunities. The experiences indicate that the easy opportunities for RIEs are often overseen. Awareness about this would help to demystify the difficulty around creating situations that lend themselves to rigorous assessment. Systematically building in discussions about these opportunities, even in project appraisal missions, would help identify these situations and funding budgets for them. Some particularly prominent opportunities are:

- Pipeline models: In many cases, GIZ activities start in one place before the other. This can have many reasons. As long as these reasons do not bias the results by directly affecting the outcome, the areas where activities start later can be used as the control groups. This is a great option to gain access to information about control groups, which is difficult if you do not actually cooperate with the actor. Pakistan showed the lottery approach, which included the

¹² On support that can be provided, see GIZ Evaluation Unit (2020).

clause that, when taking part in it, districts not benefiting from the intervention would still allow data collection to make the assessment design possible. This is a clear but sometimes difficult approach to use, and it seems that this second-best approach is more commonly feasible.

- Administrative data: GIZ cooperates closely with many partners with whom it has a trusted relationship. So GIZ has access to data that others would not get. Relying on administrative data can also generate remarkable positive spillover effects, in terms of capacity building and sustainability of the intervention through the joint work of those implementing the RIE and the local partners. Particularly promising areas are good data collection and maintenance practices. Also, in many cases, relevant data already exist but are highly underused. Showing how this information can be used is crucial to motivate partners to improve their own monitoring and statistics systems. Moreover, using administrative data can be cost effective and avoid the duplication of efforts with regard to information that administrations are planning (or expected) to collect.
- The GIZ works in around 120 countries and is known for its expertise in some sectors. There are similar challenges in different countries. Of course, the strategies and approaches are adapted to the context, but the basic ideas are similar and many activities resonate with each other. This opens up two different avenues that represent clear potentials. First, although external validity has to be taken seriously and it cannot be taken for granted that an intervention proved to work in one setting is going to work

elsewhere, RIEs certainly are an important point of reference and serve, at the minimum, as inspiration. They can be extremely instrumental in starting discussions about how the logic might not work in a context for particular reasons and how it might to be adapted. Second, the geographical coverage of GIZ puts it in a position to run RIEs on similar measures in diverse countries simultaneously. This allows it to gain very valuable insights on the circumstances under which different measures work or do not. This is a high potential not only with regard to learning, but also in the profile of the organisation.¹³

3.2.4. Threats

One major threat is the **fear of losing adaptability in the implementation of programmes**. It is part of the core identity of GIZ and one of its strengths to be very demand-oriented and to adapt rapidly to the context (also political) it operates in. Many actors are afraid of losing this element as they think that implementing methods of an RIE will preclude this adaptability and create rigidity in formats, strategies and activities during an assessment.

This concern appears not to materialise as strongly in practice. One conclusion of the Initiative is that this fear is commonly overestimated (see section 3.1). In the context of the Initiative, this problem never came up. If, hypothetically, this would happen and a programme has to make major adaptations to activities while being assessed, normally RIEs can manage these and still generate reliable and discerning results. Of course, sometimes this information will not be on causal effects, but they can provide insightful descriptive information of the situation,

¹³ The Metaketa Initiative is a collaborative research model launched by EGAP that aims to go in this direction to improve “the accumulation of knowledge from field experiments on topics where

academic researchers and policy practitioners share substantive interests.” See <https://egap.org/metaketa>.

as well as provide estimates of the effect that the cause of the adaptation (for instance, external shock such as drought) had on the measures of interest. In extreme and rare occasions, the adaptation can of course lead to stopping the assessment—for instance, if activities to be assessed are cancelled for security reasons. The key is that adapting does not mean that the investment in a rigorous assessment is completely lost. Even in this situation, the information generated until that point would surely still be valuable, although not providing reliable estimates of any causal effect. Communicating the fact that these methods do not necessarily threaten the flexibility in implementation is a task that the GIZ can deal with internally.

A threat that the GIZ can also deal with, at least partly on its own, is the overwhelming reliance on programme funding for these kinds of assessments. RIEs are perceived as a very valid instrument and the quality of the evidence is highly regarded and acknowledged. Still, the experience of the programmes indicates that the demand for narrowing down the question clashes with the incentive of covering as much as possible of the broad array of activities that the programmes implement. This logic pushes programmes away from methods of an RIE.

There is a mismatch in the incentives for weak programmes and the fact that funds for these activities come mainly from the programmes. As a result, there is a tension that needs to be resolved as not doing so can have remarkable consequences in the long term. The biggest threat comes from implementing RIEs that try to cover all interests and deliver below expectations. This creates frustration, disappointment and negative experiences that will accompany all actors for the rest of their careers, making future implementation more difficult.

Identifying approaches and packages of analysis that can strike a balance between

the demand to define goals of the RIE narrowly and serve the broader incentives of the programmes is key. It must be communicated clearly that an RIE can usually not assess all the impacts achieved by a project or programmes in a large number of areas. They will have to focus on one selected area or intervention. It is important to think about a combination of methods that can strengthen and generate evidence of different kinds that is valuable and useful to the programme, in the short and long term, to make it attractive to participate in.

This aspect in itself is difficult to solve and is accentuated by the financial considerations. The fact that the financial burden of the assessment, both economic and personnel resources, is carried by the programmes makes the threat bigger and the scope for solution smaller. As benefits are distributed, mechanisms should be found to distribute the cost more evenly between headquarters and the programme.

Finally, it is a threat that the high expectation in terms of reporting cannot be satisfied. The expected benefits of reporting were far lower than what many programmes participating in the Initiative had anticipated. This is partly connected to the scope issue, but also to the fact that the type of information generated would not fit the existing reporting duties well. A result of the Initiative is that the expected benefits in this line will not be as high as many anticipated. There is a need to address this issue to avoid disappointment and clearly state that, although useful for reporting and in engaging with commissioners, implementing an RIE does not reduce the work around monitoring remarkably. It adds high quality evidence that can be used for reporting but does not substitute the efforts needed in this area remarkably.

It is also safe to say the GIZ has a lot to gain from encouraging the use of RIEs. This refers to learning opportunities where the potential is huge but also positioning and career development. The analysis shows that the potential is there, and that much of the leverage comes from optimising the interaction between the programmes and GIZ. There are many aspects to consider but, generally speaking, the use of these methods can be expected to remain modest if the main driver remains enthusiastic programme leaders willing to invest resources into this experience.

In the line of transparency and expectation control, it is important to make it clear that an RIE is a relevant tool, but it is not a substitute for other sources of information. RIEs have huge potential but they will not be able to answer all the questions that are relevant for the governance sector and respond to all issues that GIZ should develop answers and positions on. Not all interventions need nor should be addressed through a rigorous assessment. Other methods will continue to be used and relevant, but it seems obvious that, given the marginal use within GIZ so far, there is scope to find a more balanced mix of evaluation methods.

3.3. Conclusions

The main questions from the programmes perspective that motivated the launching of the Initiative includes whether it was possible to apply rigorous methods to governance programmes, which benefits existed and how to maximise those, and how the results could be used by programmes in the interaction with commissioners and partners as well as how to communicate results effectively.

The analysis of the experiences indicates clearly that, referring to the first question, there definitely exists scope to implement robust methodologies to assess the impact of measures in the governance sector.

Causal impact can be proved although it gets more difficult to attribute the effect the broader the measures assessed. This creates a trade-off between precision and breadth that is difficult to solve.

Referring to the second question, the experiences indicate that there are a number of benefits that can be potentially achieved and are commonly underestimated. Benefits for the programme can be manifold and on very diverse dimensions. Insights generated can be used for strategic decisions, such as whether to roll out, adapt or expand a particular intervention in a certain context. In addition, preliminary and final results will allow you to estimate where the programme can make a bigger difference. This information is crucial for the general management of the programme, to plan how to invest your human and economic resources. RIEs also create benefits in capacity building. Just the exposure to the logic of an RIE and being involved in discussions about the design and the implementation, help programmes and development partners gain a better understanding of the basics of RIEs and rigorous evaluation methods. Furthermore, getting solid evidence about the impact and implementing a rigorous approach sends a strong signal to partners and donors. This gives programmes an edge in visibility and standing in the debates. It can even strengthen the programme's position when it comes to acquiring further funding as the case of Pakistan testifies.

Realising all these benefits will not always be possible and it is a strategic decision of the programmes to decide and communicate what their main interests are. It is safe to say that the expectations in terms of reporting were not satisfied. If the main incentive for programmes to get involved in an RIE is improving or making reporting easier, this is not the right tool although their results can be used to engage strategically with the commissioner and partners. The benefits

must be understood and approached from a broader perspective. Otherwise the cost–benefit calculation for the programmes simply does not work.

Similarly, it is safe to say that the result in improving the communication of effect are below what was expected. The experience shows that as the focus of the assessment is commonly narrow, communication about this narrow part can be enhanced with strong evidence and more easily understood numbers but not more. It helps partly to gain credibility on other elements of the portfolio, but this communication effect is rather small, and certainly smaller than many expected at the start.

Recommendations

Form for New PAN Card Or/ And Changes Or Correction in PAN Data

Permanent Account Number (PAN) [REDACTED]

1. Full Name (Full expanded name to be disclosed as appearing in grant of passport, unless otherwise notified see the guidelines)

Please select one of the following options: Individual Joint Partnership Trust Other

Last Name / Surname: CHUMBIKHA
First Name: SURESH
Middle Name: [REDACTED]

Name you would like to print on the PAN card: [REDACTED]

2. Father's Name (Only 'Individual' applicants. Even married women should fill in father's name only)

Last Name / Surname: CHUMBIKHA
First Name: SURESH
Middle Name: [REDACTED]

3. Date of Birth/Incorporation/Agreement/Partnership/Trust Deed/ Formation of body of individuals or Association of Persons

Day: 11, Month: 07, Year: 1982

4. Gender (for 'Individual' applicants only) Male Female

5. Photo Mismatch

6. Signature Mismatch

7. Address for Communication

Name of office in the case of all others: [REDACTED]
Flat/Room/Door / Block No: [REDACTED]
Name of Premises/ Building/ Village: [REDACTED]
Road/Street/ Lane/Post Office: [REDACTED]
Area / Locality / Taluk/ Sub-Division: [REDACTED]
Town / City / District: [REDACTED]
State / Union Territory: [REDACTED]

8. If you desire to update your other address also, give required details in additional sheet.

9. Telephone Number & Email ID details

Country code: [REDACTED] Area/STD Code: [REDACTED] Telephone / Mobile number: [REDACTED]
Email ID: [REDACTED]

10. AADhaar number (if allotted): [REDACTED]

11. Mention other Permanent Account Numbers (PANs) inadvertently allotted to you

PAN 1: [REDACTED] PAN 2: [REDACTED]
PAN 3: [REDACTED] PAN 4: [REDACTED]

12. Verification

I/We VOTER CARD the applicant, in the capacity of VOTER CARD
do hereby declare that what is stated above is true to the best of my/our information and belief.
I/We have enclosed number of documents in support of proposed changes/corrections.

Place: [REDACTED]
Date: [REDACTED]

Signature / Self/Thumb Impression of Applicant (inside the box): [REDACTED]

4. Recommendations

This chapter presents recommendations that can be drawn from the analysis of the different experiences and the discussions in several workshops. First, some general recommendations for the programmes on how to maximise benefits are listed, including a discussion on how to organise an RIE. Second, recommendations for GIZ as an organisation are presented. These recommendations involve all actors and can be understood as general guidelines that everyone can take into account. Finally, recommendations geared towards individual actors are presented.

4.1. Recommendations for the programme on how to maximise benefits

3.3.1 General principles

The experiences in the cases described in this report support the idea that a number of aspects are particularly relevant to maximise the benefits that programmes and organisations extract from an RIE.¹⁴ Funk et al. (2018) based their study on the three assessments discussed here, which were implemented with the DIE as a research partner, and a fourth one which was implemented in cooperation with the KfW. They developed the ‘seven golden rules for impact-oriented accompanying research projects’.

1. Select topics and programmes that are useful for strategic processes throughout the organisation.
2. Integrate RIE projects at the programme level early in order to have the largest amount of methodological potential and integrate and coordinate milestones of the RIE with those of the programme.
3. Clarify expectations early amongst all the actors involved. This implies also assuring that a common language is used,

meaning that concepts such as ‘impact’ and ‘causal’ are understood in the same way. Knowing the needs and concerns of all sides and discussing openly the interest and what can realistically be achieved will clear the way for a constructive and fruitful cooperation.

4. Define jointly the scope of the assessment as well as discuss in depth the common goals and the logic and requirements of the methodological approach. This can, for example, be done formally in a joint kick-off workshop with all collaborating partners present. But the experience reveals that there is need for a sustained exchange before the RIE is launched. This aspect is key to encourage a broad ownership of the RIE that will contribute to the utilisation of results.
5. Communicate continuously and build teams with researchers, practitioners and local partners. They need to communicate to coordinate their activities and stay informed about any changes. That way they can adjust their own work accordingly. An RIE organised as accompanying research is a collaborative exercise that needs the engagement of everyone involved. It makes sense to think of all collaborating partners as one team and to invest in team building. Local research institutions should be included in the partnership to provide for a better local grounding, enhance the validity of the results and as a platform to strengthen network in the country.
6. Use the RIE as an opportunity to learn. If the main interest is to have information on how to improve reporting, the experience of the Initiative shows that this is not the right format. If it is about testing and assessing to improve a particular intervention, the RIE is the right tool.

¹⁴ The following aspects rely on Funk et al. (2018).

7. Integrate chip-in moments for policy advice during the project cycle. Chip-in moments for policy advice by researchers should be carefully planned at the start of the cooperation. This allows them to prepare targeted policy advice when strategic or operational decisions need to be made by the governance programme. That way, programmes can make use of the discussions and preliminary results throughout the collaboration, not only after the presentation of the final results. In essence, the goal is to closely integrate the assessment in the programme cycle, involving the team in the assessment to maximise the benefits.

These general principles appear to work also for the broader debate and resonate well with the two cases included here that were not part of the original publication. In this line, it seems reasonable to consider these as guiding principles for the GIZ when thinking about RIEs.

3.3.2 Underestimated phases in an RIE

Looking at the RIE from a temporal dimension, the experiences of the Initiative indicate that there are certain steps of the RIE that are particularly relevant in assuring that the benefits materialise (see Funk et al. [2018] for details). The phases are relevant for all kinds of RIEs but seem particularly helpful as a guideline for GIZ projects. GIZ's mode of delivery, meaning how GIZ works in general and in the governance sector in particular, demands understanding the political context and adapting quickly to it. As Kirsch et al. (2017: 36) highlight, this demand "multiplies the roles that program staff have to take on while straddling between technical, political, and managerial challenges in the attempt to support partners in their function while steering the next steps of a transformation." To deal with this

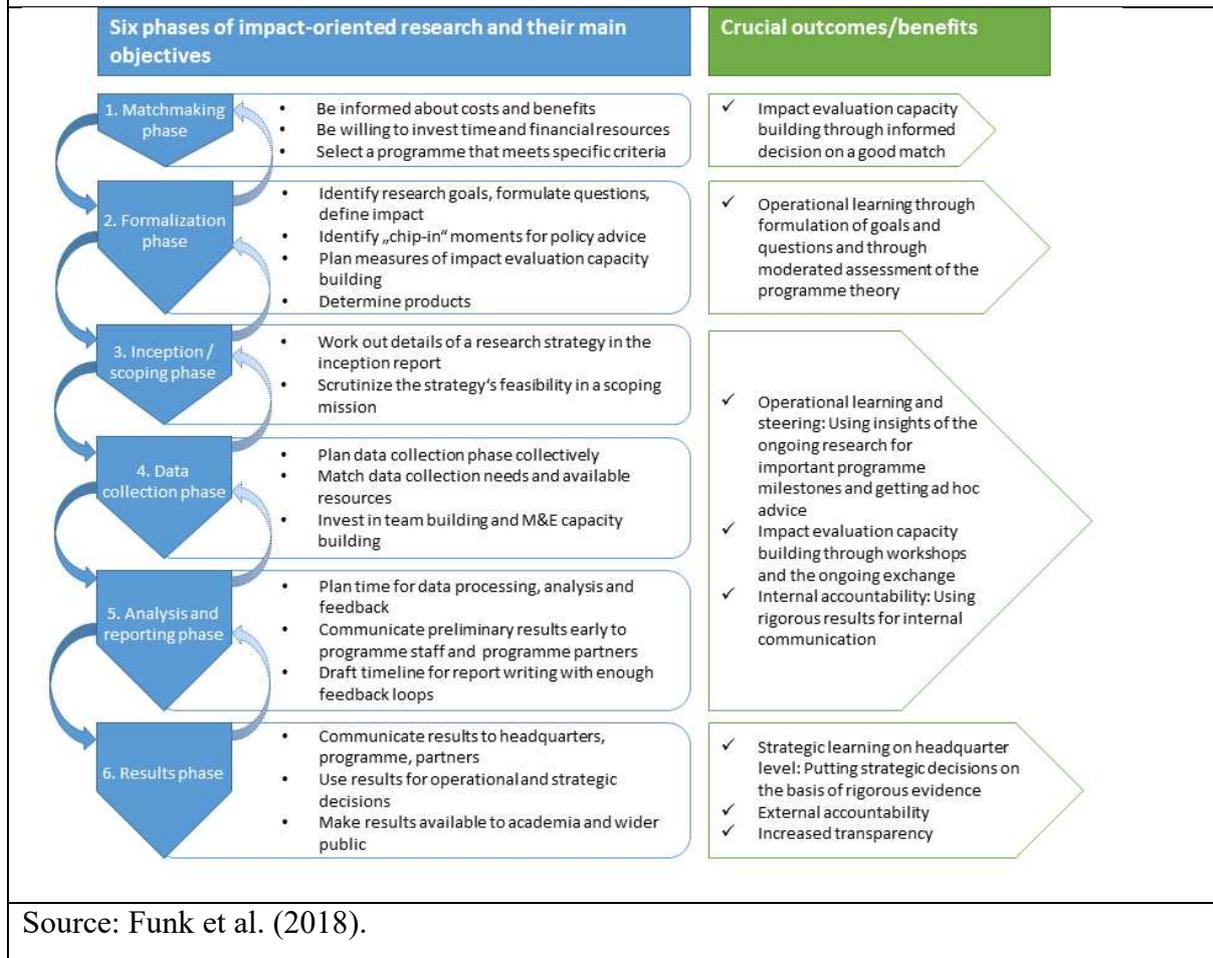
tension between short-term considerations and long-term vision, planning the assessment in these phases balances the need to define a scope that is relevant, doable and politically feasible in the short term, with the development of a long-term vision which anticipates the evidence needed in the future. It is also about having a route map to plan for the best, but also thinking carefully about alternative plans. Planning is certainly a difficult endeavour but necessary. This is not to say that all will be set from the start. Enough flexibility to respond to changes in the environment that, in most cases, are inevitable is also paramount for RIEs.

The fundamental phases that an RIE goes through are presented in Figure 4. It is important to highlight that although the phases appear to resemble a linear process, the RIE is an iterative process that demands adaptability.

Due to the heavy workload, the steps before the implementation of the assessment and after it are neglected. Data collection and results attract much of the attention while, especially in the matchmaking phase, the formalisation and dissemination of results are usually approached in a less intensive and structured way. For this reason, in the following, the focus lies on recommendations and aspects related in these three steps.¹⁵

¹⁵ See Funk et al. (2018) for details on all phases.

Figure 4: The phases of an impact assessment



The **matchmaking phase** is key as it is the starting point of a cooperation that will last for quite a long time. It involves an open and honest discussion of expectations, ideas and opportunities. It demands the sharing of a lot of information about the programme at a time when the cooperation is not certain, which is not easy. In essence, it is a first discussion about whether the activities that interest the programme are suitable to be evaluated rigorously. Out of this exchange will emerge not the exact design but the idea that there is potential in some areas that merits further exchange. To get to this point demands information on which activities exist and how these are implemented in order to think about the potential for an RIE. Particular interesting aspects are the potential to

randomise treatment or use the implementation timeline to create comparison groups that are thought about later than others.

Beyond the content dimension, it is equally important that the persons discussing the potential collaboration exchange notes on their understanding of impact to make sure that they are on the same page. They should discuss openly about how the cooperation is envisioned to function and what roles the different actors would have. It is particularly important to clarify expectations and visions on how the team will be integrated in the assessment. It is also a good point in time to discuss the sensibility of the intervention that might be assessed. Assessments on politically sensitive issues might be particularly attractive but also riskier to implement. Finally, any ethical concern that

might exist should also be stated here, although they will certainly require further elaboration in the next phases.

The goal of the **formalisation phase** is signing a formal agreement (Terms of Reference or Memorandum of Understanding) that will serve as a guide. It should include all the relevant activities and the finances to cover them. Some flexibility is always required but the main building blocks should be in place here. This is also a perfect moment to define the expected contribution by the team doing the assessment that goes beyond the implementation of the RIE and the final report. In most of the cases, the discussion on this aspect was too short and not formalised in the documents. This is not just about stating the expectations but the timing of these. It is relevant to identify chip-in moments in which the insights of the ongoing assessment can contribute to other processes in the programme. As has been already described, if RIEs are perceived to run in parallel to the programme activities and especially if their focus is narrow, many potential benefits for the programme are lost. By integrating the RIE in the project cycle, it can be made sure that the insights (factual information but also methodological and content advice) are exploited by the broader programme. Typical chip-in moments are often closely linked with milestones of the project cycle. For instance, researchers may provide input to strategic documents such as the programme proposal. Inputs can be valuable at the beginning of the programme when it is setting up its strategy and monitoring system. Impact-oriented accompanying research will help the programme staff to think more thoroughly and carefully about the theory of change guiding their activities, and the choice of indicators measuring their performance. In addition, adding an assessment RIE perspective helps when discussing all approaches and activities in terms of their

evaluability. At the same time, if demanded, the researchers might help the programme to choose and formulate indicators for follow-up proposals.

Data collection efforts, not directly linked to the assessment, can benefit from inputs by the researchers. In many cases, projects ask companies to collect data in their respective countries. Lack of expertise makes it difficult to control the quality of the exercises. Researchers can help set up these processes and evaluate the quality of the data generated. Capacity-building workshops can also be planned so that they complement the field visits of the researchers. The main advantage of this setting is that training content can be closely connected to the actual phase of the research process, and that the illustration of the content discussion can be based on the programme itself. Typical topics for workshops on impact evaluation include the theory of change and drafting indicators, as well as discussions about impact contribution versus impact attribution. It is not always the case that the programmes involved in the Initiative asked for this but when these were included, it was a considered a positive experience. There are two main reasons for this. It helps raise ownership. Explicitly planned capacity building workshops for programme members or interested partners offer an opportunity to discuss the logic of the assessment and apply it directly to the question at hand. This allows them to fathom why things are done the way they are, understand better the demands for quality and discuss potential problems that may arise. This boosts ownership which also helps implementation. All the projects, especially those demanding primary data collection and accompanying collection of administrative data, have required substantial support from the programme staff. This involves monitoring that everything is going well and assuring the quality of the data. Only if the programme

staff is motivated and understands the logic of the analysis can this crucial role for the quality and usability of the results be performed correctly.

The other aspect is less tangible, but several of the experiences suggest that capacity building had spillover effects on the discussions about impact. Understanding why the evidence of the RIE strong enables programmes is to think more carefully about how to frame and how much can be claimed with regard to other aspects. Also, it has a positive effect on later planning; for example, the quality of discussions about indicators formulation and evaluability of interventions is better. This means that future measures are set up differently due to an understanding of how an RIE functions.

Special mention is due finally for planning the use of results. It is important for all actors involved to be flexible and open to windows of opportunity. Still, discussions about formats in which to present the results should start early. In many cases, this phase falls short timewise and in planning. However, this is crucial to make sure that the generated evidence is shared and effectively used for the different potential goals. It is important to highlight that the activities that go beyond the actual implementation of the RIE tend not to be included in contracts with researchers. This is why it is so important to communicate this expectation early for the research team to also plan its involvement in these activities.

The expectations of the Initiative were less fulfilled in the area of results dissemination. This also has a planning dimension. When it comes to using the results beyond the programme, the number of options is vast. It is important to underline that intermediary and final results can be presented in different formats and used with different goals in mind. The keys are being innovative and adaptive to the needs of the persons you

want to address and communicate with. What policymakers at the national level need and want to know will differ substantially from what municipal politicians, public employees or other donors would find relevant, useful and appealing. The goals you pursue in your communication might also diverge. You might be interested in ‘simply’ presenting the results, but you might also want to strategically position issues on the agenda, push for a policy option, reach out to new networks or consolidate existing ones, etc. Formats to communicate the results and insights should be adapted to these goals and this demands time and requires planning. Sketching ideas of what goals are envisioned in the beginning and allocating enough time at the end to adapt the presentation of the results to the different goals is essential.

3.3.3 Mode of cooperation between the programme and research team

All the assessments involved in the Initiative had a medium or long-time horizon and the research partners were meant to interact continuously with the programmes. In general, this is seen as a positive approach and congruent with the aim to maximise benefits that go beyond just the analysis of the effectiveness of a certain intervention.

Long-term cooperation enables the researcher to engage with broader sets of information and get to know more about the project activities beyond the focus and context of the programme (and the RIE). It also facilitates the development of trust between the different actors which is key. The initial transaction costs for the project to enable researchers to understand a programme are higher, but the experiences suggest that the investment pays off in the long run. Always having new experts join for short-term consultancies appears to be far more problematic.

Furthermore, a relatively intense mid- to long-term cooperation is a prerequisite to achieve the integration of the assessment in the project cycle, and activities identified as being key for maximising benefits. This model improves both the quality of the assessment and the use of its results. This model is also instrumental in the programme staff taking ownership of the assessment and understanding that it is not a control mechanism but rather a learning opportunity. From a programme perspective, although more costly, it seems that the most promising avenue is an engagement over time that goes beyond the narrow assessment and provides a broader mandate for the research team.¹⁶ This does not seem to come as a trade off with rigour. There were no instances in which the independence of the researchers and the rigour of the assessment process were seen to be compromised by close interactions with the programme and other stakeholders.

4.2. General recommendations for the GIZ Governance and Conflict division

An RIE is one way of responding to the increasing external demand and cementing GIZ's position in the global debate. As Florian et al. (2019: 6) state, “[An] RIE is a vehicle for strategic positioning of GIZ. Though demand is not yet systematic, a trend of increasing demand and efforts to facilitate RIE is evident on multiple levels.” In the discussion and workshop that took place in the context of the Impact Initiative, as well as in individual exchanges with persons involved in the assessments, there was a general agreement that an RIE can be of great value for learning and strengthening the profile, especially if their focus is well

chosen. RIEs as well as broader discussions on how to provide evidence of impact should be on the agenda of any development organisation. Furthermore, any organisation that **promotes evidence-based policy making, as the GIZ does, should include the implementation** of an RIE of strategically selected interventions in its monitoring and evaluation portfolio.

The relevance of the topic will continue to grow in policy and academic circles in the coming years. This is particularly true for Germany which is, to some extent, lagging behind the movement. The pressure is not high on GIZ activities yet, so there is some time to learn and create effective and efficient structures anticipating growing demand in the future.

There are five general recommendations which we would like to bring to the attention of GIZ's governance community.¹⁷

1. Create incentives for implementing RIEs and assuring that experimenting with these methods is valued within the governance community. RIEs can tap their full potential when they are realised in an organisational context. Those persons doing an RIE are contributing to a common good. They are increasing the evidence basis from which all in GIZ can learn and getting a strong sense of the impacts that the organisation can achieve. Given the structure of GIZ, any initiative to expand the use of RIEs will be based on the commitment (and interest) of the projects in partner countries. Currently, the cost-benefits structure for projects in partner countries is not particularly supportive for those aiming at implementing RIEs. RIEs are not demanded by the commissioner, they represent extra work and require a remarkable amount of money

¹⁶ DIE has developed, on the basis of several impact assessments done in cooperation with GIZ and kfW, a concept for impact oriented accompanying research which defines the elements it should include (Funk et al., 2018).

¹⁷ This section relies strongly on Funk et al. (2018) as well as the discussions within the Task Force 'Impact'.

that could be used elsewhere. On top of that, there is uncertainty of the consequences that potential negative results of the assessments might have on budgets, contracts and career opportunities. Given this situation, doing an RIE in the current set-up is really based on the commitment of individuals. Supporting, recognising and rewarding them is key to create a broader group of persons within GIZ who support these approaches, and also use the evidence generated through these methods within and outside GIZ. If the impression consolidates that it is not worth the effort, or even that it can be risky to support such efforts as negative results of assessments may hurt career opportunities, the resistance will be fierce.

2. *Build and improve knowledge on RIEs across all levels of seniority.*

Knowledge of the key principles of RIEs will enhance their effectiveness and usefulness. Since senior officials are ultimately taking the strategic decisions on RIEs, they should be equipped with the necessary knowledge about methods, limitations and potential, especially in the governance sector. A stronger exposure to the methods of RIEs within the governance community will reduce resistance and increase how much the evidence generated by them, regardless of whether in-house or not, is used in planning and management activities. Of course, not every staff member of the GIZ needs to become an impact evaluation expert but ensuring the opportunity to learn the basics is key to encourage more implementation and better use of evidence. It also seems essential to build capacity in the headquarters to better support and accompany programmes willing to embark on an RIE.

3. *Invest in better knowledge management with regard to RIEs to ensure that existing evidence is shared.* RIEs offer great benefits, particularly with regard to strategic questions that go beyond single

programmes. This potential can be reached to its fullest when an organisation is prepared to ensure that lessons learnt reach the right units. So far, the experiences in the Initiative and beyond it indicate that if programmes involved make limited use of the results, the use so far is negligible when looking beyond the programme. Even interested staff had problems getting the right information. This is not only inefficient but also problematic for the future strengthening of the implementation of RIEs. The poor exchange of evidence increases the perception that these kinds of studies have low value, although the problem is that they are being institutionally underused. This adds to lowering the motivation among those who invested time and project resources in generate evidence.

4. *Find strategies to overcome the strong reliance on financial means from the programme.*

The efficiency of an RIE can be enhanced if the benefits are maximised, but also if the burden of cost is distributed better among the ones benefiting. As has been already indicated, at GIZ the efforts to implement RIEs are highly decentralised. Motivation but also the budget is covered prominently by the programmes. In general, it is up to the programme to find the money to pay the cost of the assessment. If not directly contributing, the headquarters should support by finding sources of funding. Since RIEs offer great learning opportunities for different levels at GIZ, it would be desirable to share the costs they generated between the respective units. In this vein, there are already ongoing efforts that will hopefully materialise in the near future (GIZ Evaluation Unit, 2020; Bruder et al., 2019). Increased ownership by everyone involved, more openness towards the assessment's results and, consequently, more opportunities to make use of the findings are positive side effects of institutional arrangement in which all actors also contribute.

5. **Implement an RIE as accompanying research.** There are many formats to implement an RIE; the experiences in the Initiative indicate that the format of accompanying research has a lot of merits that make it particularly attractive, especially when the focus is on learning. The medium to long time horizon it implies is important for several dimensions, such as ownership, trustful relationship and helping maximise the benefits of the RIE to aspects particularly useful for the programme staff and the partner. This seems a reasonable investment when compared to shorter consultancy-based approaches.

4.3. Recommendations to individual actors within GIZ

To the Governance and Conflict division

1. Take the lead in identifying issues that merit the investment in rigorous evidence. Not all interventions and assessments should be rigorously evaluated. The key is that GIZ develops guidelines to allow for strategic decisions on RIEs. The sectoral department is probably the most appropriate actors within GIZ to take up the task to carefully select topics for an investment in an RIE jointly with Globe and the evaluation department (Policy Brief, GIZ, 2020). The Governance and Conflict division is encouraged to lead the process to set up a research agenda and identify suitable questions.
2. Cooperate closely with the evaluation unit to monitor the collection of evidence and the implementation of assessments. Individual studies on one aspect will be at best only indicative of what works (in the governance sector as in all sectors). There is a need for the aggregation of evidence coming from analysis on similar issues in several countries. The department should maintain the overview and identify where there is the potential aggregate evidence, what instruments and strategies have been used for success, and under which conditions.

3. Invest in capacity building in the area of the RIE in order for its members to be able to (i.) better identify programmes and interventions that might be suitable for an RIE, and (ii.) use and evaluate existing evidence to build it in their work.
4. Develop strategies to assure that the sectoral department's support in setting up projects includes explicit discussions with the project responsible for suitable programmes, during appraisal and planning missions, on whether including an RIE is possible and reasonable. This would lead programmes to think about this early which would increase the possibilities of an RIE remarkably. In some cases, even replicating studies to further increase external validity might be of special interest.

To the Evaluation unit

1. Dedicate and invest in further capacity (personnel) and expertise to support programmes that decide to embark on an RIE. In the given set-up the commissioning, management and financing of an RIE is the sole responsibility of the programmes as an RIE is supported as a decentralised evaluation tool. The evaluation unit can and should play an even more significant role in supporting programmes that lack expertise and experience in this field.
2. Support programmes in the inception and implementation phase of the RIE, as well as in ensuring the quality of the output.
3. Support the extraction of relevant messages for the public and commissioners.
4. Create structures to ensure that research results are distributed, discussed and used within the organisation where relevant. Prepare results to use the data generated to showcase GIZ's expertise in the market.
5. Provide staff the information on opportunities to finance or co-finance potential RIEs. In addition, lead the debate about creating RIEs within GIZ budget lines to encourage the use of these methods.

6. Organise matching events in which researchers and interested programmes can meet, as well as keep an overview on the potential researchers with whom GIZ might work.

To Programmes

1. Be open to these methods and think about their potential usage in your programmes.
2. Integrate RIEs early in the process of programme design to ensure that rigorous analysis can be carefully implemented, and that the ongoing research results can be used in the context of the programme long before the final report and end results are presented. This is crucial to maximise timeliness and usefulness of the results.
3. Consider RIEs as opportunities to develop the careers of your staff.

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