

New Norms and Forms of Development: *Foreign Aid and Maternal and Child Health Service Development and Delivery in Malawi*

Research Dissemination Programme

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School of Health in
Social Science



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Political Science



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About the project

- Time-frame: May 2014 – October 2016
- Aim: to generate policy relevant knowledge on the roles and functions of institutions that broker health and development programmes and projects
- Methods and processes: mapping; key informant interviews; in-depth case study of four/five projects using participant observation & interviews; review of policy documents and reports



Socio-political organisation of external development assistance

- a major challenge to get information on what donor-funded institutions do with their financial resources, and where and how they spend it
- a messy assemblage of actors, institutional arrangements and activities involving providing, managing and spending
- Donors critical of Public Finance Management System, and have put forward various institutional modalities including SWAp

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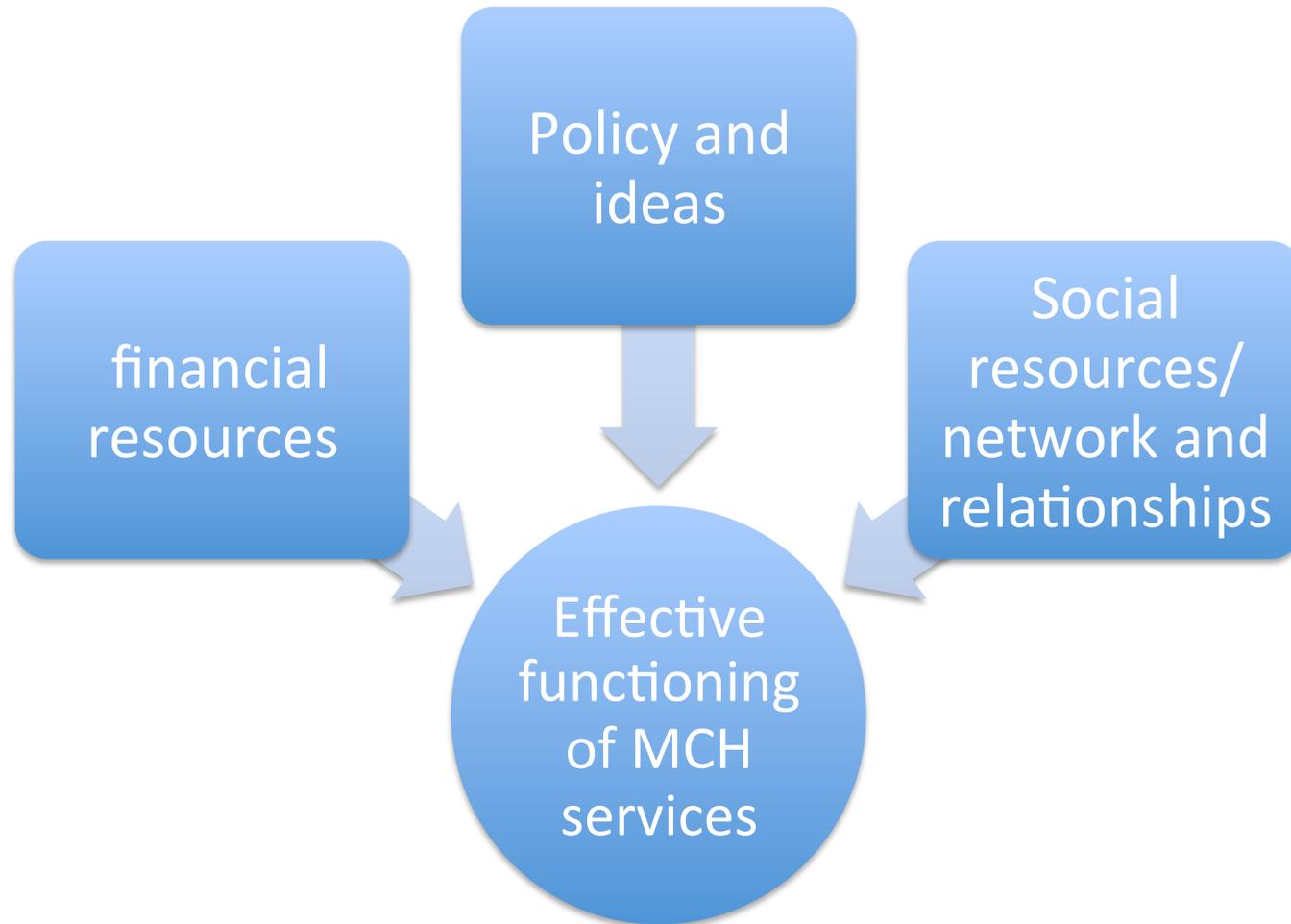
- Large amount of resources is channeled outside of the government system and runs through private firms and INGOs (remain important even when resources flow through the government system)
- Importance of NGO and local experts, who are often hired as contractors or advisers, in navigating a complex institutional and bureaucratic system.
- Sub-contract to local NGOs as implementing partners



Networks and relationships: key characteristics

- Formal/ informal; individual and institutional
- Operate internationally, nationally and locally
- As valuable as the 'foreign aid' itself in functioning of any project

Trust as a key ingredient



Personal reflection/ experience

- **Access:** personal/ professional networks and relationships has eased our access to research field sites
- **Forming new networks and relationships and maintaining them** with stakeholders has been very important

further points

- Boundaries of such networks and relationships are flexible, can take different shapes and forms.
- Challenging task to fully understand such informal networks and relationships.

New norms of value for money, evidence and measurement of results

- profound political pressure to demonstrate the impact and demonstrate that the disbursement of resources are tied to measurable results
 - organised as a set of measurable results;
 - need to show that the costs are directly linked to the achievement of measurable results;
 - organised around generation of evidence through monitoring and evaluation and a results-based framework.
- Little institutional space to undertake innovative work; ignorance of political-economy and socio-cultural milieu

Implications for policy and practice

- preoccupation with metrics and results-based frameworks has reduced the impact to measurable results only; marginalised and rendered invisible politico-economic and sociocultural dimensions
- Direct impact on State capacity in terms of coordination challenges; demoralisation of government staff and aid patronage
- Need to create critical dialogue on the unintended effects of new norms and forms of development

A green balloon is centered in the frame against a light gray background. The balloon has white text printed on it. The text is arranged in three lines: "10,000" on the top line, "Happy" on the middle line, and "Birthdays" on the bottom line. The balloon is tied at the bottom with a small green string.

10,000
Happy
Birthdays

Thank you