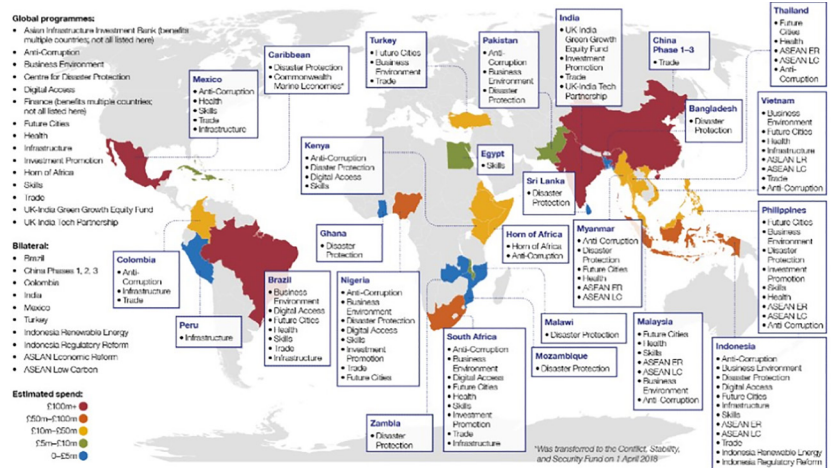# Ensuring £1.2 billion fund delivers on its promise to support inclusive growth in middle-income countries

LTS-NIRAS has been leading the design and implementation of evaluation and learning services for the UK's Prosperity Fund and its 24 related programmes.

Prosperity Fund country/region and sector focus: 2017–2023

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The Prosperity Fund is a cross-UK-Government £1.2 billion portfolio of programmes, running from 2017 to 2021, which aimed to promote economic growth in middle-income countries around the globe. The Fund was structured around five key sectors: infrastructure; human capital, innovation and technology; trade; financial and economic reform; and ease of doing business. By improving the global business environment, strengthening institutions, and encouraging greater global private investment, the Fund aimed to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all in line with SDG 8. By contributing to inclusive growth in recipient countries, it aimed to create opportunities for international business including UK companies (Secondary Benefits).

The role of LTS-NIRAS

LTS-NIRAS had a rolling contract with lead consortium partner Tetratech and consultancy firm Integrity to deliver the evaluation and learning services to the whole Prosperity Fund portfolio, including technical design, evaluation implementation and learning services.

The objectives of the evaluation over the course of the programme's implementation period were to:

• support organisational learning so that the programme team learns 'what' is working well and not so well (and 'how' and 'why') and uses this information to improve programme design and implementation (i.e. adaptive programming) to enhance programme effectiveness during implementation;

• contribute to the accountability mechanisms of the Prosperity Fund including supporting Fund teams to report on progress through annual reviews;

• help generate evidence for external communication and outreach by the Fund.

Description of MEL tasks

LTS-NIRAS led the design of both the Fund Evaluation and the 24 programme evaluations. We developed a framework methodology for all the programme evaluations utilising contribution analysis and an approach to synthesise the evaluation findings by sector and at the overall Fund level. The evaluations generated information on progress towards results, lessons for ongoing implementation and supporting and constraining factors (i.e. what works well in what contexts and for whom).

The approach in the early part of the evaluation was formative (exploring design and set-up, etc.) and theory-based. As the programme matured, the emphasis shifted to a more summative focus on actual results delivered against the project and programme Theories of Change, including what difference the programme made (i.e. observed changes and the contribution of the programme vis-à-vis other factors), and how and why the results emerged. We employed contribution analysis, which aimed to establish a programme's contribution (not attribution) to results including identifying other influencing and contributing factors. LTS-NIRAS worked closely with the multiple UK Government departments and offices implementing the Prosperity Fund and its programmes, with implementing partners and other programme stakeholders, and also engaged regularly and productively with the contractors responsible for monitoring and reporting to ensure that monitoring outputs were quality-assured and useful for evaluation and lesson learning. We managed the inputs from a large team of internal and external evaluation specialists and coordinated with the teams undertaking stakeholder engagement and operational aspects of the evaluation with TetraTech and Integrity.

Client
UK Government Joint Funds Unit (JFU)

Partners
TetraTech and Intregity

Location
Global

Duration
September 2017– March 2021