



**CROWN AGENTS**  
ACCELERATING SELF-SUFFICIENCY & PROSPERITY

# Managing public funds for maximum impact

How we support the public sector to achieve transparency, accountability and value for money.

**Governments play a key role in the sustainable development of all nations. They typically spend significantly more than any other actor in an economy. According to World Bank data, the world average for government spending as a share of GDP was 33.8% in 2020. Governments are responsible for the delivery of essential public services such as education and health and have a key role to play in the fight against climate change. It is therefore crucial that they can mobilise and use financial resources effectively and achieve value for money.**

Managing public funds well is a complex task requiring strong coordination between government ministries, departments, and agencies at both national and subnational levels, and across all sectors.

Given this complexity, technical and political challenges are inevitably encountered in all countries but are particularly acute in resource constrained settings. If left unresolved, such challenges can undermine service delivery, create opportunities for fraud and other forms of corruption, and erode citizens' trust in government.

## **Our capabilities: Adapting good international practice to meet local needs**

For decades, we have worked with governments across the world to support PFM reform processes. For example, we have been supporting the Government of Nepal continuously since 2013, establishing PFM systems to underpin their transition to federalism. From 1998 – 2013, we supported Nigeria's Debt Management Office to re-establish a domestic bond market and negotiate debt cancellation of USD 18 billion. And we have supported countries including Angola, Mozambique, and Sierra Leone to increase revenues collected through fair, transparent, and efficient revenue administration.

Adhering to good international practice is crucial, but proposed solutions need to work in the local context. Working as a not-for-profit entity with the agility of a private sector organisation, we partner with our clients to identify opportunities for reform, design context-appropriate responses, implement sustainable improvements across all stages of the budget cycle, and monitor the progress of reform efforts.

Effective systems only work if their users are skilled in operating them to achieve success. This is why our renowned training and professional development practice offers a range of scheduled and bespoke public financial management training courses for government officials in different locations across the world. Subjects covered include International Public Sector Accounting Standards, International Financial Reporting Standards, public debt management and loan negotiation. And our training locations include London, Dubai and Singapore, amongst others.



# Our capabilities



## Diagnostic assessments: Scoping opportunities for PFM reform

Identifying system strengths and opportunities for improvement is the starting point for any PFM reform process. We work with governments to understand how their practices measure up to international standards through detailed diagnostic assessments based on documentary reviews and consultations with key PFM system stakeholders. The resulting reports provide a performance overview across the PFM cycle and make solid recommendations for reforms that will deliver sustainable improvements.



## PFM reform planning: A roadmap for change

PFM systems comprise many elements, all of which are important. However, comprehensive overhaul of entire systems is unlikely to be feasible within even the medium term. Reforms therefore need to be prioritised and sequenced. We assist governments with this process, working with them to develop achievable, time-bound improvement plans. For example, we recently supported the Government of Nepal to extend the coverage of their PFM reform plan to subnational entities following the country's transition to federalism.



## Progress monitoring of PFM reform: Maintaining momentum

Financial management improvement plans are implemented less frequently than they are drafted. Changes of personnel, evolving circumstances, and shifting priorities can all contribute to a loss of momentum. Periodic monitoring can identify whether reforms are progressing as envisaged or if course correction is required. We have extensive experience in supporting governments with monitoring the progress of their reform efforts.



## Training and professional development for PFM implementers

Systems and processes are crucial but efficient, effective PFM also requires a skilled workforce. Standards of international good practice are constantly evolving, meaning it is vital that officials engaged in the PFM system continue learning throughout their careers. Having trained more than 60,000 delegates since 1960, our training and professional development department offers a portfolio of specific PFM courses. Our portfolio includes a schedule of 11 international courses, designed to enable senior finance managers to plan and implement PFM reforms at an institutional or national level. Among our rapidly evolving PFM offering is a new course on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) business practices and Green Public Financial Management, designed to equip senior managers with the skills to develop strategic transition plans to meet their ESG and sustainable development goals.



## PFM reform implementation: Ensuring practical success

Implementing PFM reforms successfully can be a significant undertaking, requiring both substantive technical expertise and strong project management skills. We deploy teams that blend these capabilities to support ministries, departments, and agencies to implement reforms to their systems and processes across all stages of the budget cycle.



# Our key programmes

Providing systems for efficient, transparent management of public funds

## **SuTRA: A web-based financial management system for all 753 local governments in Nepal**

Our Improving Public Financial Management and Accountability 2 (PFMA2) programme aimed to increase the accountability and effectiveness of Nepal's PFM and revenue systems. The programme's key achievement was the development of SuTRA, a web-based financial management system now used by all 753 local governments in Nepal. SuTRA includes functionality for tracking the allocation and expenditure of climate finance, as well as funding for historically marginalised castes and ethnic groups. PFMA2 also supported Nepal's Office of the Auditor General to establish an IT audit function and developed standard operating procedures for local public accounts committees in five municipalities.

## **Ensuring timely and effective tax revenue in Malawi**

We worked with the Malawi Revenue Authority to design, supply and implement an automated tax administration system. The system makes compliance much easier for the taxpayer, giving them more control over and information about their tax affairs. From the government's point of view, payments can now be accounted for, returns can be processed much quicker, and compliance and enforcement are faster and simpler. The system will also ensure that information on tax affairs is much more accessible and accurate.

Achieving sustainability and value for money through public procurement

## **Championing sustainable public procurement for the benefit of all**

Our Global Capacity Development Programme on Sustainable Public Procurement, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, focusses on developing effective practices for sustainable public procurement. The programme is supporting partner organisations in countries including Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia to implement purchasing processes that are aligned with their national development goals, such as energy and water efficiency, ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources and increasing youth employment.

## **Assessing contracts for their value for money (VFM) for the Government of Ghana**

Since 2011, we have provided independent, third-party assessments of contract documentation between the government and its suppliers, ahead of sole-sourced projects being finalised. These assessments verify whether what's being proposed will meet the government's requirements and deliver value for money to the Ghanaian taxpayer. In over ten years of ongoing support, our advisors have reviewed over \$5.6bn of government contracts and identified potential savings of over \$1.3bn.



# Spending effectively in the health and education sectors

## The USAID AGIS Project: Improving health and education services for the people of Zambia

From 2017 to 2022, the USAID Accountable Governance for Improved Service Delivery Project (USAID AGIS) worked with the Ministries of Health and Education in Zambia to improve accountability and transparency in the management of public funds to deliver better services for citizens. Carried out in nine districts located in three provinces, the project worked closely with central, provincial and district administrations to improve internal controls and auditing and procurement capacities, training approximately 2,000 government officials.

In 2022, the project facilitated PFM training for more than 25,000 teachers countrywide in just three weeks, ensuring that 8,300 schools qualified for government funding after the president introduced free education. AGIS spurred various reforms and oversight mechanisms, such as a national monitoring framework to track the resolution of audit inquiries on the use of public funds.



### Contact us to find out how we can help:

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