

**ENABLERS AND BARRIERS TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
ACTIONAID'S WOMEN RIGHTS PROGRAM: APPLICATION OF
ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT APPROACH**

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DECLARATION

The research project is my original academic work and to the best of my knowledge has not been presented for any award in this or any other university.

Signed _____ Date: _____

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This project has been submitted with my approval as the University Supervisor.

Signature: Date:

Supervisor: Dr George Odipo

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my late mother, Roslidah Otero.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The success of this project would not have been possible without the able guidance of my supervisor Dr George Odipo. His wealth of experience and knowledge of the subject matter shaped this project to what it is now.

My gratitude also goes to the ActionAid community, especially the women rights program team, for not only answering my questions but also allowing me access to all the program documents. I equally appreciate all my colleagues, classmates, and the entire Population Studies and Research Institute for their invaluable support.

ABSTRACT

The challenges currently facing development sector is the need to reach the world's most marginalized population with better and sustainable solutions in the face of complex development challenges. This demand for evidence-based approaches to balance the needs of the targeted beneficiaries and the goals of the funding agencies. One approach that shows considerable promise for addressing these challenges is adaptive management, which by now is broadly seen as a natural, intuitive, and potentially effective way to address decision-making in the face of uncertainties. Yet the concept of adaptive management continues to evolve, and its record of success remains limited. This research has adopted a case study approach to examine and presents some of the enablers and barriers to the application of Adaptive Management Approach. Including looking at the key elements of Adaptive Management Approach present in ActionAid's Women Rights Program, highlighting the opportunities and challenges.

From the findings, the Women Rights Program at ActionAid has adopted some of the generic cyclical Adaptive Management Approach steps that include: conceptualizing the situation including defining objectives; planning actions and monitoring; implementing actions and monitoring; analyzing data, using the results and adapting; and capturing and sharing learning. However, some of the reported barriers to greater levels of adaptive management include limited communication of its implementation and evaluation, lack of clarity on what is successful adaptive management as well as social, political, financial and technical barriers.

Adaptive Management Approach requires resource decisions to be made and modified as a function of what program implementers learn about the context. Decisions should therefore be modest in scope, scientifically sound, and reversible. Additionally, implementing adaptive practices requires adoption of monitoring and evaluation processes and tools that permit learning from mistakes, to support mid-course changes, building the capacity of the program staff, addressing internal organizational systems and adequately resourcing Adaptive Programs are some of the recommendation drawn from the study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
ABSTRACT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	xi
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Adaptive Management Approach at ActionAid	3
1.3 The Problem Statement.....	4
1.4 Research Questions	5
1.5 Objectives	5
1.6 Justification of the Study	6
1.7 Scope and Limitation	6
CHAPTER TWO	7
LITERATURE REVIEW	7
2.1 Introduction.....	7
2.2 Adaptive Management Approach Theories	7
2.3 Review of Adaptive Management Approach Studies	8
2.4 Adaptive Management Framework.....	9

2.5 Adaptive Management versus traditional management:	11
2.6 Application of Adaptive Management Approach	12
CHAPTER THREE	14
METHODOLOGY	14
3.1 Introduction.....	14
3.2 Research Design.....	14
3.2.1 Data Collection	15
3.2.2 Study Participants	15
3.3 Sampling Procedures	16
3.4 Data Collection Techniques.....	17
3.4.1 Documents Review	17
3.4.2 Discussions with Key Informants	17
3.4.3 Administration of Questionnaires	18
3.5 Data Analysis and Presentation	19
CHAPTER FOUR	20
BARRIERS AND ENABLERS OF ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT APPROACH	20
4.1 Introduction.....	20
4.2 Respondents	20
4.3 Status of Adaptive Management Approach	20
4.3.1 Participatory Planning and Design.....	21
4.3.2 Participatory Monitoring and Learning	21
4.3.3 Transparency and Accountability	22
4.3.4 Stakeholders Participation	22
4.4 Adaptive Management Approach Enablers	23
4.4.1 Program Design	23
4.4.2 Organisational support.....	24

4.4.3 Participatory Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning	24
4.5 Adaptive Management Approach Barriers	25
4.5.1: Staff Capacity	25
4.5.2: Documentation.....	25
4.5.3: Organisational Culture and Systems.....	25
4.5.4: Budget Constraints.....	26
4.6 Discussions of the Findings	27
CHAPTER FIVE	30
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	30
5.1 Introduction.....	30
5.2 Summary	30
5.3 Conclusion	31
5.4 Recommendations.....	31
5.5 Recommendations for Further Research.....	33
REFERENCES.....	34
APPENDICES	42
APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE.....	42
APPENDIX 2: FGD GUIDE	44
APPENDIX 3: INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE	45
APPENDIX 4: DOCUMENTS REVIEW GUIDE.....	46

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Traditional Approaches Vs Adaptive Management Approach.....	12
Table 3.1: Sample Size	17
Table 3.2: Data Source Matrix.....	18

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Framework for Adaptive Management Approach.....	10
Figure 2.2 Adaptive Management Cycle.....	13
Figure 2.3 Research Variables.....	13

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAI	ActionAid International
AM	Adaptive Management
AMA	Adaptive Management Approach
CLA	Collaborating, Learning and Adapting
DFID	Department for International Development
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
IIASA	International Institute for System Analysis
IRC	International Rescue Committee
LRP	Local Rights Program
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MCP	Multi-country program
NGO	Non-government organisation
PbR	Payment by Results
PDIA	Problem-driven iterative adaptation
PMEL	Planning, monitoring, evaluation, and learning
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
ToC	Theory of change
USAID	United State Agency for International Development
WRP	Women Rights Programme

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Adaptive Management Approach is becoming popular in the international forums as an approach, suited to addressing complex problems, such as those targeted by the SDG's (Bond, 2016). Adaptive Management Approach (AMA) first appeared in fisheries in the 1970s and 1980s and has since been applied in other sectors (Walters, 2007), such as the international development sector from the 1980s, computer science sector and the military (Valters et al., 2016). Korten's (1980) discussion on 'blueprint' and 'learning process' approaches furthered the discourse on Adaptive Management Approach. His argument that the "learning process" focused much more on beneficiary needs, as opposed to activities, has formed the base for which Adaptive Management principles have sprung forth. Korten argument on learning is extended to participatory approaches in research by Cornwall and Jewkes (1995), with Rondinelli (1993), further advocating for 'Adaptive Management' as a substitute for traditional linear methods.

The evolution of AMA has seen the dual pursuit of management and learning (Rist, 2013), included in the definition of AMA. Furthermore, according to Byron and Brown (2016), AM Approach now consists of planning for uncertainty. Wild and Booth (2016) then goes further to describe the Adaptive Management Approach as "...the newest innovation in attempting to do development differently". While calls to do development differently continues to grow louder, there has been little effort in understanding what doing development differently precisely mean. Bain, Wild and Booth (2016) notes that the Adaptive Management Approach has emerged from calls by stakeholders for context-specific and flexible programs. AMA is thus context-oriented. In a nutshell, AMA continues to be driven by the need to move away from business-as-usual practices, which is often rigid (linear thinking), is geared towards addressing short-term goals and places a lot of emphasis on value for money (Valters et al., 2016). Recent studies such as the "World Development Report 2016" and "Governance and the Law" (DFID, 2016) reaffirms this trend. These reviews call for a move from 'best practice' to 'good fit' solutions and promotion of 'ethos of knowledge and adaptive programming' (DFID, 2016).

There seems to be a seal of approval from major donors, towards mainstreaming Adaptive Management Approaches (Wild and Booth, 2016). Moreover, as echoed by Green (2016), Adaptive Management as an Approach is not going away anytime soon. However, amid all these calls for AMA, research in the field has all but ignored what it would take for an organisation to employ AMA effectively. Changing the current practices is not going to be easy. Organisations will need to adjust not only their systems but also their culture to enable Adaptive Management Approach. That, however, does not take away the consensus already building that Adaptive Management Approach can be a strategy of action to reduce the ambiguity that many managers currently face (Rist, 2013). We must admit from the onset though that AMA as an approach to management may be limited to specific conditions. That said, Williams (2014), still argues that it is only the Adaptive Management Approach that will serve to address uncertainty in the development programs context.

Adaptive Management Approach entails consistent information gathering and analysis (Simister, 2018). It is also characterised by exploration of alternative solutions that involves testing, monitoring, and getting feedback and – crucially – making course-corrections where necessary (Bond, 2016). Data collection and analysis is thus a lifetime process in an Adaptive approach (Simister, 2018). The contrast between AMA and the traditional methods is that the latter rely on detailed plans to solve development problems in a mechanical way (Bond, 2016). Where the design includes planned interventions and expected results at the onset, and the program team is expected to adhere to this design throughout the program life (Rogers, 2017).

Adaptive Management Approach also consists of a set of methods and tools (Simister, 2018). It encompasses hands-on approaches to planning and design, organisational learning, research, feedback, and a variety of monitoring and evaluation methodologies designed to deal with complexity (Ladner, 2015). Adaptive Management is considered a flexible and exploratory approach to programming, with the understanding and acceptability that solutions cannot often be predetermined (Bond, 2016).

1.2 Adaptive Management Approach at ActionAid

Bond (2016), highlights the following as the distinctive characteristics of Adaptive Management Approach; a) A strong emphasis on rapid learning and feedback to inform changes; b) Flexibility in implementation to enable leaning and feedback (including within budgets and results frameworks); c) Responsibility for decision-making delegated to staff close to implementation of work as possible, recognizing that those close to the intervention (both affected populations and frontline staff) are knowledgeable; d) Focus on the problems identified and agreed by local people; and e) emphasis on accountability, with a focus on progress towards agreed high-level results and on learning, rather than on pre-defined implementation plans and milestones.

Oxfam, ChristianAid, USAID and Mercy Corps are among the different organisations that have embraced the Adaptive Management Approach to address complex social development issues (Oxfam, 2018). A similar path ActionAid International (AAI), is taking. AAI is a global anti-poverty non-profit organisation working against social injustice, gender inequality and poverty eradication with interventions in areas such as Education, Women's Rights, Land Rights, Governance, Climate Change, Emergencies and Conflict among others (ActionAid, 2018). ActionAid Kenya programs approach is guided by a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA), which supports the beneficiary's rights awareness and accountability (ActionAid, 2018).

The application of HRBA as an approach by ActionAid Kenya, while cannot be said to follow the Adaptive Management Approach, has nevertheless integrated the characteristics of Adaptive Management Approach, by default rather than design. These include working with communities to identify locally viable and sustainable solutions, in the process considering the community as the agents of change. HRBA promotes the building of grassroots partnerships, allowing direct beneficiaries to participate in determining solutions (ActionAid, 2018). It also underscores the issue of accountability and transparency, with the approach also emphasising monitoring, evaluation and evidencing of impact and promoting learning (ActionAid, 2018) and falling just a tad lower of fully embracing Adaptive Management Approach.

1.3 The Problem Statement

The inability of many conventional development programs to deliver on the expected results has prompted debate about the need to change how development agencies implement their programs (Denney, 2016). The discussion has pushed Non-Governmental Organisations towards adopting an Adaptive Management Approach. With the realisation that many development challenges span scales and disciplines, are culturally and socially complicated, and characterised by significant uncertainties with complexity in finding solutions (Commonwealth-Australia, 2007; Meadowcraft, 2009; World Bank, 2010). Making them difficult to address with a prescriptive management approach (Shakya 2018).

While calls continue to grow for change in approach, research on how to tackle the emerging challenges during the program's implementation process to enable organisations to deploy solutions in real-time is still scanty. In the recent past, a few development assistance programs have been designed to tackle complex problems, such as gender-based violence through Adaptive Management Approaches that allow agility for enhancing sustainability (Shakya 2018). The circumstances are complicated further by the fact there are very few studies around how practical the approach is for the development organisation. However, the available few studies are supporting Adaptive Management Approach as a more productive way of working (Denney, 2016). Nevertheless, studies that have focused on how the Adaptive Management Approach has been employed to address complex societal challenges remain limited (Memcott et al., 2010).

Currently, there is a discussion at conceptual levels on the application of Adaptive Management Approach (Denney, 2015) to address social challenges; however, the shortage of studies on the implementation of the approach (Gerber and Kendall, 2018) has slowed down progress. Of the 1300 scientific papers reviewed that referred to AM; a paltry 61 had at least used an Adaptive Management Approach with, only 13 out of the 61 collecting monitoring data (Westgate, 2013). Furthermore, available documented examples of where Adaptive Management has been applied successfully to improved management (Perkins et al., 2011) only cover natural resources management. Making calls for the uses of Adaptive Management Approach in the social sector a significant challenge due to the lack of case studies to guide practitioners (Macleod, et al., 2016).

The few available studies, as noted by Andrews, et al (2015), on Adaptive Management Approach have focused on how much progress organisations have made in cases where the problems they are dealing with are simple, straightforward and require the adoption of policies that are light on implementation. Literature about why development organisations have so far been less successful when dealing with complex problems that are application intensive, such as gender-based violence, climate change mitigation, economic empowerment, and natural resource management among others are scanty (Andrews, et al 2015).

Despite the inadequacy of data on AMA, there is still a push from the funding agencies to explore the impact of working adaptively in delivering results within the program portfolios (DFID, 2016). However, the donor agencies have also not escaped the struggle, as there are few cases studies (Derbyshire and Donovan, 2016) that can give light on how to tackle the complexity that comes with AMA—such as how to technically and operationally design and implement Adaptive programs and monitor success. This study targets to partly bridge the knowledge base by examining the barriers and enablers to the application of an Adaptive Management Approach.

1.4 Research Questions

The study seeks to address the following two questions: -

- a. Which principles of Adaptive Management Approach are currently being applied by ActionAid’s Women Rights Program team?
- b. What are the enablers and barriers to the use of the Adaptive Management Approach in the implementation of ActionAid’s Women Rights Programme?

1.5 Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

- a. Examine the application of Adaptive Management Approach principles in the Women Rights Programme at ActionAid.
- b. Determine the enablers and barriers to the application of the Adaptive Management Approach.

1.6 Justification of the Study

As demands for the adoption of Adaptive Management grows, what is needed is to examine the applicability of the approach critically. While Adaptive Management appears scientifically sound, there are very few cases that explicitly identify themselves as successful in practice (Jacobson et al. 2009). Academicians suggest that the social context (within institutions, partnerships, and group) continue to hinder the adoption of the Adaptive Management Approach (Johnson 1999). Internationally, the need for synthesising of existing perspectives on Adaptive Management and understanding how reflection-building approaches can contribute towards improving its practice are on the rise (Jacobson et al. 2009). This desire for better ways to practice Adaptive Management Approach has heightened the need for research on the use of Adaptive Management strategies in managing uncertainty, especially within the NGO's. The demand for data to inform AMA is as a result of the recognition that information is necessary for navigating complex environments (Chilvers et al., 2016). Also, absent are studies to support how AMA can be used to better an organisation's impact strategy (Oxfam, 2018). The findings from this study will, therefore, go a long way in bridging that gap and providing a better understanding of how best to surmount the challenges that internally make it challenging to employ Adaptive Management Approach to delivering better program results. The study will also add to the knowledge base in academia, allowing for further inquiry.

1.7 Scope and Limitation

The study focused on ActionAid's Women Rights Program in Kenya. Looking at the program from the year 2017 to date. Additionally, due to financial and time constrains, the study is limited to data collection in two locations. Furthermore, the study also focused only on enablers and barriers to the uptake of the Adaptive Management Approach within the Women Rights Program. The study utilised a case study approach that also limits the extent to which the findings from this study from being generalised.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter presents literature on Adaptive Management Approach. Specifically, on the studies around the application of Adaptive Management Approach. The section covers theories of AMA, as well as past case studies on AMA.

2.2 Adaptive Management Approach Theories

Adaptive Management Approach has grown in the recent past as a response to the limitations of traditional program management approaches (National Research Council, 2004). Advances in science in the 1900s, led to widespread optimism, as it brought an increase in certainty and precision, as well as better results through the application of science (National Research Council, 2004). Scientists such as Bohr and Heisenberg have challenged the more traditional models through discovering theories supporting and recognising uncertainties, complexities, and the limits of scientific knowledge to predict the future (Peat, 2002).

The different discoveries are today reflected in different theories (National Research Council, 2004). One such theoretical approach is by Newton, based on the ability to precisely predict nature (National Research Council, 2004). The other is the vision of Bohr and Heisenberg that recognises the unpredictability of the natural systems (National Research Council, 2004). Newtonian principles, while applicable in a perfect, stable system, such as in engineering, are nevertheless inadequate in an imperfect natural system.

Adaptive Management (AM) started from the Natural Resource Management sector in the 1970s, which was then strengthened by Hollings research in 1978. Adaptive Management as an approach draws from many concepts in different fields, the foundation of which is partly within the area of industrial operations theory (Johnson, 1999). Hollings's research, however, places more emphasis on ecosystem dynamics. Today, looking at AM concept, we are safe to say that it has borrowed from natural sciences, economics and social sciences (National Research Council, 2004). In the process, it has also incorporated additional concepts such as

learning, research, economic values, and monitoring (Bond, 2016). However, the gaps in the application of Adaptive Management Approach demonstrate the need for more research to firm what exactly AMA entails. Currently, there is no agreement on what Adaptive Management entails. There is also no prototype for its implementation or set of defined process that can be said to constitute an Adaptive Management program (Williams, 2014). AMA is considered context-specific, with emphasis on learning (Oxfam, 2018). Leaving it to chance and for people to decide what it is as they go along.

2.3 Review of Adaptive Management Approach Studies

Adaptive Management field is awash with different literature; some studies have focused on what drives Adaptive Management (Shakya, 2018). Others such as the World Bank have looked at what is needed for Adaptive programming to be effective. With the world bank report on Adaptive Management stating that "we live in a dynamic world that requires program managers to have not only quality leadership but also the means to continually manage risks by monitoring and adjusting actions based on information acquired" (World Bank, 2015).

Recent studies (López et al., 2017), (Wild et al., 2017), and (Salib, 2016) have focused on the impact of resources (both financial and human) in facilitating the uptake of Adaptive Management. The USAID Learning Lab report shows how USAID is spearheading the mainstreaming of its Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) framework into USAID's Program Cycle guidance (Haugh, 2017); while DFID report, focuses on leadership and how that has encouraged emergent of the structure of the Smart Rules (Wild et al., 2017). Further, there have been different studies focusing on the efforts of various stakeholders to promote Adaptive Management Approach (Algozo and Hudson, 2016).

The development organisations such as the Mercy Corps, the IRC, and the Asia Foundation have not only also tried to apply AMA but have also taken stock of Adaptive Management (Proud. 2016). The existing case studies have also identified Adaptive Management within multi-country programs (MCPs) as a gap; noting the critical role information on AMA plays in navigating complex environments (Chilvers et al., 2016). A study by Oxfam on MCPs however, focuses only on one element of AMA, the Program Monitoring and Evaluation and concludes that the existing literature "...do not show how Adaptive Management can be part

of broader Programme strategy aiming to improve an organisation's capacity, reach, and impact" (Oxfam 2018).

The bulk of the studies in the development sector have, however, focused on the business as usual approach to development and the inherent challenges. One such problem is internal bureaucratic practices that have crowded out interest in real impact and failed to support sustainable change (Natsios, 2010). Bain, Gulrajani and Honig, 2016 have similar concerns in other organisations. Further, a review by DFID on its internal systems and process and way of development also brought up the struggle with the linear approach. In its review report, DFID recommends that programs should be more adaptive and consider having flexible interventions. Excellent programs require collective responsibility and clear accountabilities; with changes in culture and behaviour needed to create a favourable environment (Vowles, 2013).

Closer home, a case study by Mercy Corps on a program in Acholi Uganda provides a window into the challenges organisation's employing Adaptive Management Approach face. The case highlights team skills, organisation culture, open communication, flexible funding, and monitoring and evaluation as some of the critical and necessary elements and supports Adaptive programming (Mercy Corps, 2016), Oxfam's case study on managing to adapt supports the above findings as well. It highlights flexibility in planning, locally owned tools, partnerships for Monitoring and Evaluations, and creating an enabling environment for learning, as the critical ingredients for Adaptive Management (Oxfam, 2018). Other studies have also focused on the implications of how complex programs should be managed (Giordano 2017, Bond 2016). However, according to Byrne (2016), the existing studies have failed to test any Adaptive Management theories.

2.4 Adaptive Management Framework

AMA is characterised by planning, learning, adapting, and re-planning within a broader system that encourages and promotes flexibility. Conceptually (as shown in Figure 2.1), this is quite easy to understand. However, in practice, it is challenging to do. It requires, more than knowing the concept. Salafsky ((2002), note that having an AMA framework contributes to the better realisation of program results using the approach. Figure 1 below, adopted from Arora et al. (2017)), represent the most recent Adaptive Management Approach Framework.

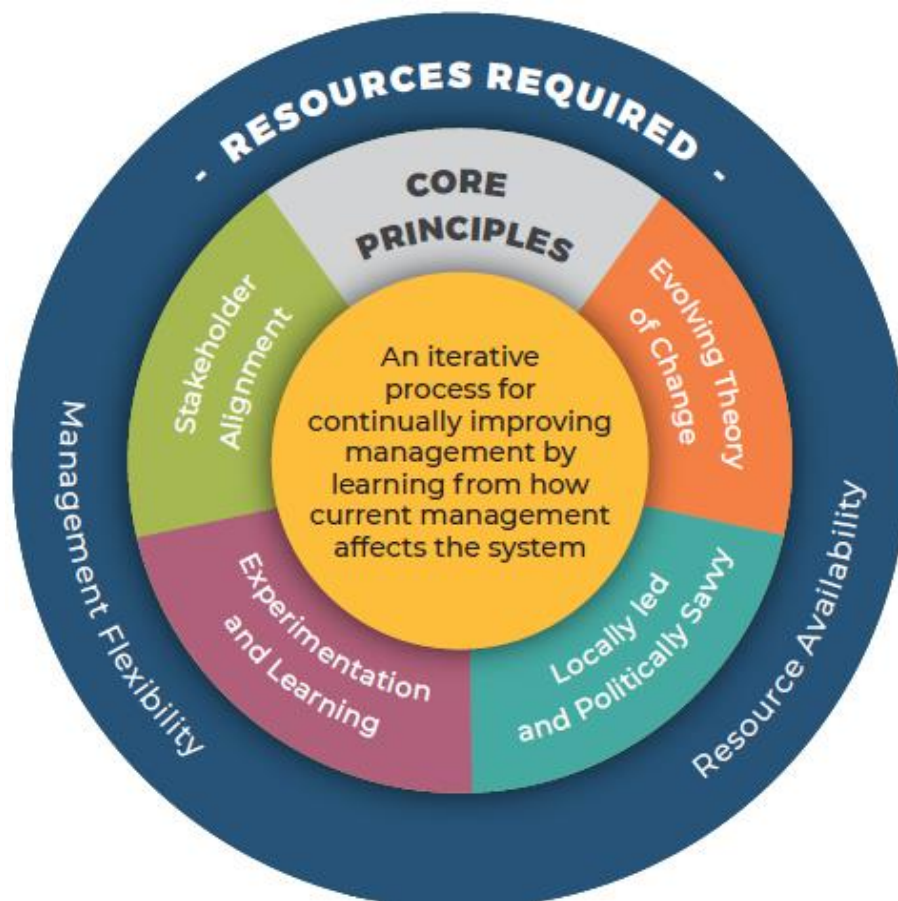


Figure 2.1: Framework for Adaptive Management Approach

Source: Arora et al. 2019.

Adaptive Management Approach principles include **localized decision making**. Adaptive management follows a collaborative approach whereby decision-making authority is delegated to the field level. This means the management team does not perceive team members working daily with government partners and others as merely implementers of prescribed solutions but as active decision-makers (Arora et al. 2019). Other principles include **evolving theory of change**, that is constantly monitored and tested, strong **alignment with and cooperation between stakeholders**, particularly the primary intended beneficiaries (Arora et al, 2019). As well as experimentation **and Learning**.

At the core of the Adaptive Management Approach is an iterative program cycle process. That continually improves the overall program management by learning from one stage to the next to inform better program decision. For Adaptive Programme Management to be feasible, the programme itself must be set up to allow it. Some of the barriers to adaptive Management Approach include **resource availability** and **management flexibility** (Bunnefeld et al., 2015). Adaptive Management is a resource intensive process that requires time and

experimentation, to conduct analysis and make course corrections. Adaptive Management Approach recognises the need to allow a programme the **flexibility to experiment** to discover the right solution. Learning should therefore be embedded to allow for context analysis and timely decision making

This framework is emphasized by other authors who avers that Adaptive Management is characterised by a participatory planning and design process (Bond, 2016), followed by a sequential testing and multiple experiments (Macleod et al., 2016). Sequential adaptation refers to trying one approach and altering it or trying a different approach in response to learning and feedback (Bond 2016). An alternative is carrying out multiple (usually relatively small and rapid) experiments simultaneously, seeing which one - or which combination - works best and continuing that while stopping the others (Bond 2016). Other factors that play a critical role in Adaptive Management Approach include supportive internal accountability mechanisms (Bond 2016).

According to Bond (2016), Adaptive Management requires supportive financial and planning systems. Bond suggests that internal financial, procurement and grant management systems can be a significant barrier to working. Mercy Corps' case study on its RAIN resilience programme in Ethiopia provides a good illustration of how adaptations in finance and procurement systems can unblock opportunities to work in a more effective adaptive way (Bond 2016).

2.5 Adaptive Management versus traditional management:

Andrew et al (2012) also contrasts the characteristics of the Adaptive Management Approach against traditional methods. The Contrast by Andrew et al, *as shown in Table 2.1*, provides an overview of the attributes of an Adaptive Management Approach, and how they differ with the traditional approaches. The gold standards and the characteristics of Adaptive Management approaches thus provides a basis on which to assess the application of the strategy within ActionAid's Women Rights Program.

Table 2.1: Traditional Approaches Vs Adaptive Management Approach

Program Cycle	Traditional approaches	Adaptive Management
Plan	Fixed detailed plans and budgets.	Flexible plans and budgets.
Implement	Implementation follows a pre-defined plan.	Implementation is iterative, with flexible interventions
Manage	Management is concerned with ensuring a programme stays on course.	The management refines the programme considering evolving experiences consistently.
Monitor	Monitoring is on pre-defined indicators-on activities and outputs.	Monitoring covers change at all levels, from activities to impact.
Evaluate	Evaluation is conducted at the midpoint or end of a programme.	Evaluation is conducted throughout a programme.
Learn	Learning is seen as an option to be included where possible.	Learning is seen as an essential and integral part of a programme.

Source: adapted from intrac.org

2.6 Application of Adaptive Management Approach

This study looks at how Adaptive Management Approach has been applied by ActionAid in the Women Rights Program, and what are some of the barriers and enablers to its application. Not every donor-funded development programme requires a full-scale adaptive management approach. Some interventions can achieve the desired results by applying best practices from more traditional management models. However, when a programme or intervention faces the twin obstacles of incomplete understanding and changing systems, it is likely to be best served by adaptive management. As such, the approach that best suit a programme or intervention depends on the context in which it is based and what it is trying to achieve. Ramalingham et al. (2014), Hummelbrunner and Jones (2013) and others have developed a matrix for assessing the appropriateness of different models of programme management and evaluation.

Figure 2.2 below shows Adaptive Management Approach in practices. At each stage of the process, the core principles of Adaptive Management highlighted above plays an enabling role. The combination of the principles and the required resources either enables or create barriers to the realisation of Adaptive Management Approach (Figure 2.3).



Figure 2.2 Adaptive Management Cycle

Source: Carr et al. 2017 (by Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation)

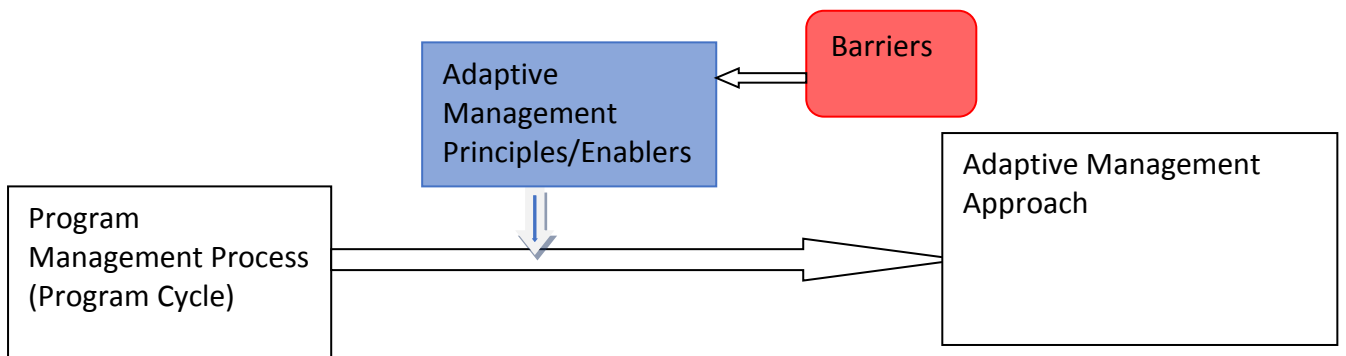


Figure 2.3 Research Variables (Adopted from Arora et al. 2019)

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The study intended to gather information on the practice of Adaptive Management approach from ActionAid Kenya's Women Rights Program team. The researcher planned to use the information to understand the principle of AMA currently in play, as well as enablers and barriers to the implementation of AMA. The chapter includes the research strategy, the data gathering processes and data analysis techniques adopted. The section also highlights the study area and the target population, the process of data collection, the instruments used for data collection, and conclude with how the data is analysed and presented.

3.2 Research Design

The study employed a case study approach. Apart from the case study, there are other approaches, such as experimental and historical designs, that could address similar research questions posed in this study. However, the former tends towards controlling the behaviour of the subject, while the latter does not deal with current events leaving the case study as the only viable option. A case study could also be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory. According to Flyvbjerg (2011), a case study as an approach "has been around as long as recorded history" (p.302). Yet it is one of the most criticised social research methods, stereotyped as a weak, imprecise, subjective and rigour less (Yin, 2003).

Notwithstanding the criticism, there has been an application of case study in diverse fields. The goal of case study research is an in-depth analysis of an issue, to understand the case from the viewpoint of the target population (Merriam, 2009; Simons, 2009; Stake, 2006, Yin, 2014). As a qualitative form of research, a case study was chosen to help the researcher explore, understand and present the perspectives of the program staff, as well as get close to them in their day to day actions (Creswell, 2013). In a case study, the interaction between the researcher and research participants is necessary to generate data. The methods that the researcher has applied to gather data to answer the research questions included interviews, focus groups, and document reviews as recommended by (Yin, 2014).

3.2.1 Data Collection

To understand the application of AMA principles in the Women Rights Program as well as the challenges and opportunities required an in-depth conversation with the program team and the program beneficiaries. Empirical research often relies on two methods of data collection, which are qualitative and quantitative methods. Given the nature of the questions the researcher wants to answer, such as the application of the Adaptive Management Approach, and the barriers and enablers to its implementation, the qualitative method was preferred. “Qualitative approaches are used to explore the behaviour, perspectives and experiences of people under study” (Holloway, 1997 page....). Qualitative methods provide the researcher with an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions of people regarding a phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). Yin (2014) described qualitative research as collecting data from a variety of resources, evaluating the data, analysing evaluations to produce findings, and presenting the results.

The study participants were considered in their natural settings with the researcher trying to understand, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning the study participants bring to it (Denzin. and Lincoln, 2003). The approach permits researchers to study selected issues in-depth and detailed, without predetermined categories of analysis. It also promotes openness and detail of inquiry from a limited number of elements, thus increasing the understanding of issues and situations studied (Patton, 1990). Yin (2003) posited three conditions for the use of a case study: the purpose must be to answer “how” or “why” questions, investigator must have little control over events, and the research must be focused on a current affair within a real-life context, especially when limits of the subject under study and the setting are not clearly evident. According to Creswell (2013), in a case study research the researcher explores a “real-life, modern bounded system (a case) or multiple confined systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information” (p. 97).

3.2.2 Study Participants

The research focused on phase two of ActionAid's Women Rights Program from 2017-2021 as the unit of analysis. The length of involvement in the program, set at more than one year, determined the selection criteria. A year was determined to be the minimum time for the study cohort to have grasped the application of Adaptive Management Approach in the

Women Rights Program as well as the barriers and facilitators to the utilisation of this approach. The target population was the ActionAid Kenya Women Rights Program staff, the senior program leadership team, the partners' staff as well as the direct program beneficiaries who had at least engaged with the program for more than one year. Table 2 indicates the population of the program team. The study participants were selected purposively by open invitation and voluntary involvement. Distribution of the research questionnaires, to the program team, took place after the approval by the senior leadership team at ActionAid Kenya. The surveys had a detailed description of the project, as well as outlining the expectations.

3.3 Sampling Procedures

As with any other research, the first step was to get the consent of the study participants. The researcher, therefore, sent a letter of request to the organisation. For this study, the researcher identified the key study participants, from whom primary data was collected directly using questionnaires. Additionally, the researcher established two FGD in the two localities where the program implementation is taking place with the beneficiaries in Kishushe and Kamuthe location, Taita Taveta and Garissa County Respectively. The recommendations for this number of FGD is because experience tells us that about 80 per cent of themes about an area of interest is identifiable by two to three focus group discussions (Guest et al., 2016). The participants for the FGD self-selected based on those who were available and willing to participate in the discussions. As Stringer (2004) suggests, participants must voluntarily be willing to participate in a research process, without coercion. Additionally, the process of enlisting participants into the FGD, utilised a snowballing approach, where the first participant identified linked the researcher to the subsequent participant, that they shared similar characteristic with, that is of having participated in the program for over one year and are of the same education and economic status within the community. The selection process for the participants was on the assertion that the program targets the most marginalised women in the community.

The Focus group Discussions guide helped to validate the issues that arose during the key informant interviews, as well as during the administration of the program staff questionnaires. The researcher employed the different data collection techniques, to triangulate the information from the other sources, and to improve the validity of the data.

As Mills (2003) notes, to ensure thoroughness, research should not rely on any single sources of data. There is thus an emphasis on triangulation, to allow the researcher to clarify meaning from different perspectives.

Table 3.1: Sample Size

Designation	Target Population	Sample Size
Head of Program	1	1
National Women Rights Coordinator	1	1
Women Rights Officer	1	1
Coordinators	4	4
Monitoring and Evaluation officers	3	3
Community Mobilizers	4	4
TOTAL	14	14

3.4 Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques within the context of a case study research vary depending on the problem under study and the information needed to answer the research question. Walcott (1994) suggest a model for inquiry that can be used in combination to accomplish triangulation. For this study, the researcher adopted the following techniques;

3.4.1 Documents Review

Document review entails examining (using existing records) documents, policies, reports, among others. A document review process was employed to review the program plans, monitoring and evaluation framework, project reports, data collection tools, meeting notes, budgets among others — a document review guide (*See appendix 4*) with guiding questions that guided the review process. The documentation review was the first step in the data collection process, as it supported the researcher to identify gaps for further inquiry, through key informant interviews and questionnaires.

3.4.2 Discussions with Key Informants

The researcher also held discussions with key informants such as the Head of Program and the National Women Rights Coordinator (*see appendix 2 for the discussions guide*). The information from the talks was used to score on how the program performs within the six

critical domains that characterised the Adaptive Management Approach. Additionally, the beneficiaries who participated in Focus Group Discussions (*see FGD guide appendix 2*) provided further insight into how the Women Rights Program employed the Adaptive Management Approach principles. The six critical domains include Planning and Design, Monitoring (Data collection process and tools), Budgeting process, Program decisions making, Participation and Accountability mechanisms.

3.4.3 Administration of Questionnaires

Primary data was collected through the administering of questionnaires to the 12-program team, both from ActionAid and the partners. The Researcher employed the use of Monkey surveys to administer the questionnaires to the program staff. The questionnaires collected data on to gauge the application of the principles of the Adaptive Management Approach in the program, as well as to understand the existing enablers and barriers (*see appendix 1 for the questionnaires*). Themes covered in the survey included project planning, and design process, data collection systems in place, flexibility in the budget to allow for adaptability, how program decisions are made, policies, systems and procedures on accountability and participation.

Triangulation was accomplished by employing additional data collection techniques. Table 3 below provides a matrix of the links between the research question and the data collection techniques used to answer the questions.

Table 3.2: Data Source Matrix

Research question	Data source
How is ActionAid's Women Rights Programme applying Adaptive Management Approach principles?	Focus Group Discussions transcripts Questionnaires responses Key informant interview transcripts Documentation review notes
What are the enablers and barriers to the use of the Adaptive Management Approach in the implementation of ActionAid's Women Rights Programme?	Focus Group Discussions transcripts Questionnaires responses Key informant interview transcripts

3.5 Data Analysis and Presentation

According to Shaqoury Hubbard and Miller Power (1993), data analysis is the process of bringing order and meaning to the data, to discover the meaning underneath. As such data analysis takes a different form for each data collection technique employed. The data from the questionnaires which contained both qualitative and quantitative, were analysed differently. The quantitative data from the questionnaires provided the researcher with the over view of the existing themes, enabling classification of enablers and barriers. The qualitative data from the Key Informant Interviews and the Focus Group Discussions were analysed and coded according to the research questions, the emerging themes from the quantitative data and consistent themes and patterns noted.

Records of the key informant interviews and the FGD was analysed to identify the enablers and barriers giving a view of the program beneficiaries perceptions of the approach. The analysis also included coding of the themes related to the research question about the existing Adaptive Management principles, enablers and barriers to the application of AMA.

CHAPTER FOUR

BARRIERS AND ENABLERS OF ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT APPROACH

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents study results which are in line with the objectives of the research project. The chapter begins by looking at the composition of the respondents and then gives the results and findings from the data collection, based on each of the research objectives, which included the application of Adaptive Management, barriers and enablers. The findings from questionnaires focus groups discussions, review of documents using checklist and dialogue with key informants have all been synthesised to give a general picture on the status of Adaptive Management Approach as shown in table 7.

4.2 Respondents

The study applied four methods to collect data. Firstly, the researcher interviewed two senior programme leaders, the Head of programmes and the National Women Rights Programme Coordinator. Additionally, from the 12 questionnaires sent to the program team members, 11 responses were received, a response rate of 93%. The variance of one was as a result of the program staff being on leave. Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), recommends a response rate of above 50% as the minimum for analysis, with over 70% response rate considered excellent. The researcher also held two focus group discussion with 15 beneficiaries each from the two program locations, Kishushe and Kamuthe in Taita Taveta and Garissa County, respectively.

4.3 Status of Adaptive Management Approach

This section sought to establish the extent to which ActionAid's Women Rights Program employed the various elements of the Adaptive Management Approach in practice. The Elements of Adaptive Management that emerged from the data, to be present in a strong way included Transparency and Accountability, participatory Planning and Design, as well as Monitoring and Learning.

4.3.1 Participatory Planning and Design

Under this section, the researcher sought to find out to what extent the program had utilised the elements of participatory planning and design, to give the power to make decisions to the program team and beneficiaries. This included a jointly defined scope, vision and targets, including the identification of critical threats, regular situation/context analysis. Additionally, the researcher sought to find out the tools employed during the program conceptualisation stage and the steps taken to ensure inclusion of all actors.

From the review of the program documents and processes, the result indicates that the program's goal, scope and target determination was conducted with the participation of the program implementation staff. This is shown by the fact that the program staff (respondents) indicating that they have a shared vision of the program. In getting to a shared vision, the program engaged the stakeholders and staff actively during the design phase. However, there is a feeling, especially from the FGD, that the program did not fully engage the targeted beneficiaries in setting the program goal and scope. It is therefore their opinion in failing to do so, the Women Rights Programme did not fully consider the political, economic and social context of the beneficiaries in setting the scope and program goals. A critical element in the design process as it enables the program to monitor the external environment and design intervention that responds to the changing context.

4.3.2 Participatory Monitoring and Learning

In this section, the researcher investigated existing monitoring and learning frameworks and tools applied to monitor the program through continuously collecting data for reviewing and refining program strategies to support the delivery of program goals and objectives and to learn. The researcher looked at the program action plans, the monitoring plan, while also evaluating the staff capacity as well as the programs risk management processes.

A review of the program document showed that the program doesn't have a monitoring plan in place. However, the country teams report against the log frame yearly and do not see a clear link between the monthly monitoring reports and the results framework. Furthermore, during the key informant interview, the National Women Rights Coordinator felt that "... the log frame was rigid, unclear and failed to give a better direction on where the program was coming from or headed to..."

The discussions with the program team also showed that there are available learning opportunities, through the annual reflection and review process, which informs planning, with the partners. And the yearly team learning sessions for the program team. As a such a conducive environment for learning has been created. Additional learning platforms include the use of teams (in Microsoft office 365), online discussion forums and program support visits by the fund managers (ActionAid Ireland). The application of ongoing learning to adapt and refine programmes is always an essential part of Adaptive Management (Giordano, 2017; Rogers et al 2017, Bond 2016). While there is a regular attempt, through monthly monitoring reports to track the work plan implementation, as well as short- and long-term outcomes as recommended by Carr et al. (2017). The uptake of such lessons seems to be applied only once a year, at the annual planning process. The respondents also agree that this is intermittent and doesn't support better work plan monitoring as short- and long-term outcomes are only monitored sometimes and not regularly.

4.3.3 Transparency and Accountability

The section focused on the interactions between management, program staff and local partners. The focus group discussions showed that ActionAid employed different accountability mechanisms. One of the most utilised accountability mechanisms is transparency boards. Here project details are listed for the community to have access, such as the project funding, duration and partners. Additional accountability mechanism is the annual participatory review and reflection forums. The process is then followed by planning, where lessons from the participatory review and reflection process informs the plan for the subsequent year.

4.3.4 Stakeholders Participation

Under this section, the researcher sought to understand how the Women Rights Program engage stakeholders and the process of decision making, as well as how the leadership has created a conducive learning environment. The findings from the review of documents and discussions with the program team show that the organization conducts annual partner's review and reflection forum. The Focus Group Discussions confirm this, stating that the program is majorly run by grassroots organizations, which identify their needs, as ActionAid support in facilitating intervention designs. Among the stakeholders engaged in the program are the program beneficiaries, the community leadership, both cultural, religious leaders as well as the county government.

4.4 Adaptive Management Approach Enablers

4.4.1 Program Design

The document assessments, FGD and the key informant interviews revealed that the following factors support the use of the Adaptive Management approach in the program, within ActionAid. One is the innovative nature of the program methodology. ActionAid has tended to apply a human-based approach (HRBA) to its programs. However, the Women Rights Programme has improved the application of HRBA, by including a behaviour change approach as a program methodology. The behaviour change approach was developed by Susan Michie (Michie et al. 2011). The approach allows for adaptation as *“it requires that the team constantly monitor the applied interventions, to apply any corrective mechanisms, in case the interventions are not leading to the desired behaviour (outcome)”* National Women Rights Coordinator.

The program team have thus found the approach innovative as *“The behaviour change approach methodology provides a broad room for designing interventions, giving space to apply different myriads of techniques under one broad intervention category, as such, we can as program team often change the technique of delivery without upsetting the early indicated intervention allowing us to manoeuvre the rigid organisational planning and financial system”* — the Women Rights Officer. The use of the behaviour change wheel provides a set of nine broader categories of interventions. There is therefore an opportunity to innovate, and change interventions delivered to the community. Examples given of how this has been employed during the FGD included the retargeting of the program beneficiaries to reach only the most marginalised in the society with the program interventions. The program was also able to take advantage of arising opportunities, such as spaces opening to engage with the county government on gender violence-related discourse and participation during crucial calendars days.

An additional factor considered as an enabler during the FGDs with the partners was the interest the approach has generated among the program staff. *“It is a new thing, and we feel like we want to learn more as the other approaches we have been implementing have gone stale”* — Program Officer Sauti ya Wanawake Kishushe. The interest from staff has been sustained so far because of the existence of a shared understanding between the team members and the line managers. As noted by The National Women Rights Coordinator,

during the key informant interview, *“Despite the challenges, there is a huge amount of enthusiasm among the staff.....to see the approach work...”*.

4.4.2 Organisational support

Further leading to adaptation is the support from the fund Managers (ActionAid Ireland). The Program team felt that they are more motivated to explore and try new interventions as they receive a lot of support and encouragement to do so from ActionAid Ireland, who are the program fund managers. The support includes the freedom to innovate and learn from the program implementation process. *“Ireland provide training, conduct monitoring visits to support implementation teams, and organise annual program learning forum for us”* The Women Rights Officer. Organisational support is also seen from peer to peer support, with the good relationship between the immediate line managers highlighted above proving useful in delegating decision making to the program staff implementing the program in the community.

4.4.3 Participatory Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

The existence of participatory monitoring and evaluation has supported program adaptation. *“Regular reviews and reflections have strengthened adaptive management approach at the community and stakeholders’ level that has enabled the program to be alive to the ever-changing context.”* Chair -Kamuthe Women Network. The feeling among the partners and the program team is that the program has been designed to be flexible, giving the staff the leeway to change the activities, based on regular conversations with the communities, and partners. The learning processes in place has promoted stakeholder’s participation, in the long run, providing data on how effective or ineffective the interventions provided are contributing to the programme outcomes.

Furthermore, there are available spaces for learning for the team – *“We to learn and learn and learn through implementation, and unreserved support and encouragement from the ActionAid Ireland team, as well as from our peers across the country learning platforms.”* The Women Rights Officer. Additionally, from the documentation review, real-time development Evaluation is conducted annually and has provided valuable data to support program change and adaptation, as well as give the program team an opportunity to learn from the implementation processes undertaken so far.

4.5 Adaptive Management Approach Barriers

4.5.1: Staff Capacity

Among the barriers identified during the data collection and analysis process include Staff capacity. Firstly, the number of staffs working in the program is inadequate. Only one person is employed full time to cover Taita and Garissa counties. Apart from the number of Program staff, there is death of technical skill to design and monitor Adaptive Management Approach. The Key informant interview supported this insight indicating inadequate Monitoring and Evaluation support for the program, as a result of insufficient monitoring and evaluation skills set. During the key informant interviews, it became apparent that not all program staff had a good understanding of the adaptive management approach.

4.5.2: Documentation

The challenge in the documentation has also exacerbated the gap in monitoring and evaluation. While the review of the documents showed little to no adaptation, the focus group discussions, and the key informant interviews had instances where the team had changed the earlier designed interventions. *“We realised training was not going to give us the results we need, and thus included other interventions, such as enablement, communication persuasion and even incentivization.”* Women Rights Officer. A clear indication of adaptation. However, these changes are not documented. Which would provide an avenue to learn not only for the team but also externally?

4.5.3: Organizational Culture and Systems

Other barriers include organisational systems and culture; the staffs are slow to adopting new emerging technology that could enhance the adaptive management approach. Especially real-time data collection to enable management decision making. However, sometimes this is down to inadequate coverage of internet access, as the program implementation takes place in remote locations. On the other hands, the adoption of technology, in some instances, such as the finance department, has failed to support flexibility adequately. *“Constraints posed by the wider systems that the programme is part of in the implementing countries, and the exiting organisational traditional structures”* —Head of Programs. For example, *“the organisation has an annual planning and budgeting cycle, where all activities, including procurement plans, are budgeted. Once the budgeting has been submitted and approved, then changing it*

becomes difficult. Time allocated to the Women Rights Programme is another issue- the time is too short for Staff to allocate time for analysis and reflection". The Women Rights Officer.

While there has been a lot of peer to peer support, as well as immediate line managers' support. There is still a feeling that the organisational culture does not fully support adaptive Management Approach. As such, the program team feels that the support they receive in implementing Adaptive Management Approach is limited. To enhance the Adaptive Management Approach requires an enabling environment, this seems to be lacking currently. Another organisational cultural barriers is the need for quick results, that makes the Adaptive Management Approach to be seen to slows down the realisation of quick results. *"The use of behaviour change methodology requires focusing on specific behaviour to change. However, we often feel overwhelmed as we are dealing with diverse Community needs."* LRP Coordinator. The processes in place are less supportive of the approach, *"as the organisation pushes for quantity first before quality, and therefore we as a team are forced to be less in-depth with our interventions, as the approach demand."* Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. The communities also need a quick fix to their problems and are not patient, especially on interventions crafted as experiments. *"The fact that the process is a lengthy one, and I can imagine women losing patience, especially if they are dealing with multiple problems in their context. They probably don't want to experiment and adapt but to implement economic empowerment solutions?"* Head of Program. These are some of the highlighted challenges by the program team to fully embracing Adaptive Management Approach.

4.5.4: Budget Constraints

The analysis of questionnaires responses and the key informant interviews revealed that the organisation's financial systems required that all financial planning is done during the planning process, that takes place every November. However, the program team feels that the financial allocation is inadequate and is often received late. *"The agreement with the donor is that the program runs from January to December, with money sent twice a year. At the beginning of the year and the end of the year. However, in the last two years, the program has always received the first disbursement in June, sometimes even in July, forcing the team to rush the implementation process to beat the December deadline"*. National Women Rights Coordinator.

This requirement to spend funds by the end of the year does not allow adequate time for implementing interventions and conducting reflections — furthermore, donor restrictions on what the funds can be spent on limits adaptability of the program. *“We did our diagnosis and identified girl’s education as a challenge. We, therefore, suggested environmental restructuring as the intervention, which included the construct a school library to support girls reading. however, the grant did not support construction work.”* Member, Sauti ya Wanawake Kishushe.

4.6 Discussions of the Findings

The Women Rights Program has in no small extent, has incorporated in bits and pieces the elements of Adaptive Management Approach. The program design allows the program to be context-specific and to design interventions on the go, to address the emerging issues. The approach is thus in line with the recommendation by a study conducted by Oxfam. That agrees that adaptive Management Approach tends to be context-specific, involving feedback and learning and with a mixture of progress and setbacks (Oxfam, 2018). The challenge for the Women Rights Program, from the findings, is, however, on response time. Changes can only be made annually, as the program follows the already existing organisation’s systems and structures that are not agile to allow for a quick turnaround when they need to adapt arises.

The program has attempted to address the response time, by delegating decisions making to the program team — a key Characteristic of Adaptive Management Approach. Nevertheless, any changes require approval from the head of programs. Additionally, on the one hand, the program teams are continuously engaged in the refinement of the program interventions. On the other hand, this process is hampered by inadequate monitoring and evaluation personnel, and week monitoring framework, which fails to support data collection, documentation, learning and sharing. The result is that the program does not provide space for evolution, by experimenting, which is a necessary condition for designing programmes that address complex issues (Harford, 2011).

Further, the Women Rights Program has been designed to recognise that there is no perfect world, with emphasis on regular community conversations. The conversations not only support context monitoring, but are also useful in analysing progress, and identifying which interventions are contributing to the program outcomes. As Shakya, 2018 avers, Adaptive

Management as an approach arose as a result of the recognition that there are no perfect conditions. The program design thus ought to be flexible enough to accommodate this fact. Nevertheless, as the team admits during the FGDs, sometimes this is challenging as the community are impatient and want to see results as opposed to constant data collection and analysis to determine the best-fit solutions.

The study findings are also in line with the recent studies by the World Bank (López-Calva and Zhou, 2017), which have looked at resource's investment (both financial and human), in the realisation of Adaptive Management Approach. The study also found out that the Women Rights Program team felt there was less support from the organisations' leadership, limiting the ability of the program to adapt. They attribute the inadequate support insufficient knowledge on Adaptive Management Approach, as well as the organisation's emphasis on quantity as opposed to quality with regards to beneficiaries reporting.

The conflict on reporting results, at the organisational level, and for the donors has also contributed to the drawback to the adoption of the Adaptive Management Approach. While a report by DFID, emphasises leadership that provides the conducive environment for Adaptation as an enabler to the realisation of Adaptive Management Approach principles (Wild et al., 2017). It only looks at the leadership at the organisational level, leaving out the need for stronger leadership at the donor level. The world bank report on Adaptive Management also stresses the need for leadership by stating that "we live in a dynamic world that requires program managers to not only have quality leadership, but also the means to continually manage risks by monitoring and adjusting actions based on information acquired" (World Bank, 2015).

Additionally, the study findings indicate that staff interest has spurred the use of Adaptive Management Approach. The reasons given include the fact that the program team feel AMA is something new, which they described as "a breath of fresh air." Coupled with the cooperation between the program team and the line managers as well as the emphasis from the budget holders (ActionAid Ireland), who are supportive of Adaptive Management Approach. The uptake of the approach has slowly gained momentum, transcending the leadership gap.

On the other hand, cultural barriers, especially in the community and at the organisational level, have unintentionally proved to be a challenge towards full adaptability. Furthermore, the program has not fully engaged the entire administrative systems and personnel. The human resources and finance team are not fully involved in the day to day program implementation and as part of the learning processes. It also emerged from the discussions that the current financial systems are not agile enough to allow adaptation in the middle of the year. Vowles (2013) recommends collective responsibility, better accountability and cultural shift.

Overall, there is an emergence of two considerable challenges. The first is that the program has a significant gap in monitoring and Evaluation. The absence of a robust monitoring and evaluation framework tied to inadequate skills set both for program monitoring and in the understanding of Adaptive Management, Approach needs to be addressed. They have contributed to the absence of documented successful interventions going on or unsuccessful ones dropped. And, as Rowlands suggests, evolution is part and parcel of Adaptive Management. (Rowlands, 2012). Yet there cannot be evolution without data from the programme implementation.

Secondly, the program faces the challenge of limited budget and delays in receipt of the funds from the donors. The funds meant to be received at the beginning of the year are often only received mid-year. Added to the fact that there are donor restrictions as to what the funds can be spent on, then the space for fully implementing the Adaptive Management Approach gets narrow. The finding on budget and the challenges it poses to the adoption of Adaptive Management Approach is in line with the study by Dreiss, et. Al (2017), where scholars and practitioners agreed that limited budgets were the most significant barrier to effective AMA.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter presents a summary from the study, conclusions and recommendations. The summary includes enablers and barriers to the application of the Adaptive Management Approach within ActionAid's Women Rights programme. The study also focused on the extent to which the program meets the threshold of Adaptive Management Approach principles.

5.2 Summary

The study objective was to determine the application of Adaptive management approach, to ActionAid's Women Rights program, as well as the barriers and facilitators to the implementation of adaptive management approach as a program delivery strategy. From the findings, the Adaptive Management Approach has partially been employed in the program. The program team themselves admits to the fact that the current Women Rights Program is not fully adaptive. Scoring 60% on the scale of adaptivity, noting there is a need for changes to move the program towards fully embracing Adaptive Management Approach. The analysis of the program documents supports this assertion. The Women Rights Program has indeed incorporated some elements of adaptive management. However, the score from the study just slightly falls short of the teams' and stands at 56%. The program boasts of having a system for learning, as well as the emphasis on stakeholder participation.

The study also from the documentation review, questionnaires and key informant interviews decipher that the elements of Adaptive Management inherent in the program seemed to have arisen by chance, rather than design. There is a clear indication of inadequate understanding of what adaptive management approach entails, as most of the respondents, feel the procedure is synonymous to the word "flexible programming". At the organisational level, some elements of culture and systems that have hindered the application of the approach, include greater emphasis placed on quantity rather than quality, moving the program team towards addressing more of volume than program quality. The findings conclude that Adaptive Management as an approach within the organisation is still at a nascent stage, as

many of the current programs do not apply AMA. Furthermore, delayed funding has led to the program interventions being rushed to meet donor requirements at the expense of taking time to experiment, learn, and choose the best fit intervention, noting that these are the key ingredients of Adaptive Management Approach.

5.3 Conclusion

The drive for the use of AMA has been due to the understanding that the context for delivering complex development programs is not static. As such, a five-year initiative, like the Women Rights Program, ought to be designed to take advantage of the opportunities as they arise. The study notes that employing an Adaptive Management Approach is, however, no easy task. The use of AMA within the context of ActionAid's Women Rights Program is characterised by static results framework, inadequate financial and human resources capacity and rigid organisational culture and systems.

These systems, processes and practices form the basis for the current organisational culture and have evolved, as a result of the emphasis on resources use, at the expense of program results. The study, therefore, advocates for a cultural shift, while also emphasising the need to create a conducive environment for innovation, supportive leadership and learning. While these are fundamental building blocks for the adoption of Adaptive Management Approach, the need for staff with the required skill set will also go a long way in supporting AMA. From the study, we can, therefore, conclude that AMA as an approach that is still evolving. It may not be a silver bullet to all the development challenges, but it is worth a shot. An adaptive strategy is necessary today as a roadmap of the terrain that lies before an organisation and develops a set of navigational tools with different options for reaching the destination. If necessary, the goal itself may shift based on what organisations can learn along the way.

5.4 Recommendations

From the above conclusion, the researcher makes the following recommendations; One challenge noted with the Women Rights programme was the shelving of the log frame, and only using it to report to the donors. As, Valters et al. (2016) suggest, we need to replace fixed output indicators with broader, but still-defined categories. The design would enhance adaptation for the program team, while also provide a platform to which they can collect robust data to monitor program progress. Additionally, there is need to employ the use of monitoring and evaluation tools that promote learning.

Have in place flexible financial frameworks. The greatest challenge that the women rights program faces is the inability to adjust financial budgets— a problem accentuated by internal organisational systems and donor requirements. To support financial flexibility, Proud et al. (2016), suggests building reserve funding for learning and adaptation, along with promoting flexible and trust-based partnership arrangements, this would go a long way in creating a better environment and culture to embrace Adaptive Management Approach fully.

Leverage on technology for data collection: Adaptive Management requires that the leadership have access to the correct information when they need it to make better decisions on program delivery. Technology has enhanced this prospect. It is worth noting that the AMA requires short feedback loops and high-quality and quantity ‘real-time’ data (Greeley et al., 2013). A gap that technology can quickly fill. Collecting and using data for Monitoring and Evaluation and building better feedback loops (Valters et al., 2016) that can allow reflective learning. Something technology can support in realising.

Organisations need to promote bottom-up decision making. The staffs at the forefront in the program implementation often have access to a wealth of information. Giving program team the power to make decisions can lead to capitalisation on local knowledge and be sensitive to change (Proud et al., 2016). Develop agile organisations’ program policy, procedures and processes. Adaption process requires constant monitoring of the external environment as new information and external shocks are essential in encouraging innovation and adaptation (Faustino and Booth, 2014). However, these require carefully-designed organisation strategies, procedures and systems, which promote regular context analysis and this stand at the heart of adaptive programming.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Research

Future research studies should look at the effectiveness of Adaptive Management Approach in the realisation of the goals and objective of complex programs, such as the ones dealing with Violence against Women. Additionally, more research is required to understand the use of prototyping and experimentation as a strategy in the Adaptive Management Approach, as opposed to the use of historical data to predict the future. With not as much of the data available for use to Predict Interventions, prototyping would eliminate the scarcity of data around Adaptive Management as an approach within the development sector. Furthermore, the advent of technology would support prototyping, leading to the better articulation of the conditions under which adaptive management is appropriate. Prototyping would also enable researchers to experiment as experimentation is essential for making well-informed decisions about the management of complex systems.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire has two sections. Section A is for obtaining general information about the respondent. Section B is for getting information about the women rights program. Your assistance in completing this questionnaire will be highly appreciated.

SECTION A: Respondents information

Demographic Data. - Kindly circle or tick one

1. Please specify your gender
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
 - c. Other

2. How long have you worked for ActionAid?
 - a. Under one year
 - b. Below five years
 - c. Over five years

3. How long have you worked under the Women Rights Programme?
 - a. Under one year
 - b. Over two years, but under three years
 - c. More than three years

SECTION B: Women Rights Programme Information

Kindly respond to the following questions by indicating either the letter (0,1,2) against the item according to your preferred choice.

Rating Key:

2- This aspect is done well

1- This aspect is partially present

0- This aspect is missing

No		Rate
1.1	Planning and Design	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the programme goals consider political, economic, and social aspects of the project implementations context? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are plans in place, and are they followed? Do you feel you have a shared vision for your program? 	
1.2	Experimentation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples of where testing has taken place Do you think the goals as currently set support you in managing uncertainty? Have interventions been designed as experiments, and are they recognised as such? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have communication networks been identified, and a process for ongoing communication been established? Have relevant stakeholders been identified, and provision made to involve them? 	
1.3	Participation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have communication networks been identified, and a process for ongoing communication been established? Have relevant stakeholders been identified, and provision made to involve them? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have adequate capacity for your project? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Resources? Organisational support? Skills? 	
1.4	Resources	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have adequate capacity for your project? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Resources? Organisational support? Skills? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have adequate capacity for your project? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Resources? Organisational support? Skills? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have adequate capacity for your project? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Resources? Organisational support? Skills? 	
1.5	Monitoring and Learning	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is monitoring conducted systematically and about hypotheses? Are short and long-term responses monitored? Are there links to research institutions Has data been collected so that management processes can be evaluated? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is monitoring conducted systematically and about hypotheses? Are short and long-term responses monitored? Are there links to research institutions Has data been collected so that management processes can be evaluated? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is monitoring conducted systematically and about hypotheses? Are short and long-term responses monitored? Are there links to research institutions Has data been collected so that management processes can be evaluated? 	
1.6	Transparency and Accountability	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the management process transparent? Is the process iterative? Are management and learning processes evaluated? Are there regular stakeholder engagements? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the management process transparent? Is the process iterative? Are management and learning processes evaluated? Are there regular stakeholder engagements? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the management process transparent? Is the process iterative? Are management and learning processes evaluated? Are there regular stakeholder engagements? 	

APPENDIX 2: FGD GUIDE

1. What does adaptive Management approach mean to you?
2. In your opinion, what makes WRP adaptive?
3. Is what makes WRP adaptive easy to implement?
4. What more can be done to make it fully adaptive?
5. What are the challenges that make it difficult to do more?
6. How do you cope with barriers during the program implementation?
7. How do you document the program approaches and lessons?
8. What opportunities for learning available to you?
9. Describe the kind of support you require to fully enable you to implement an adaptive programme/or any other issues /recommendation?

APPENDIX 3: INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:

Name_____ (Optional)

Role/Title_____

Number of years in the role/position_____

SECTION B: PROGRAM INFORMATION

1. Is the Women Rights programme adaptive? If yes, can you give an example of tools or practices that, in your experience, make this adaptive?
 - a) Was this element of adaptive programming designed, or did it emerge during project implementation?
 - b) What are the factors that enabled/constrained the adoption of this element?
 - c) Could this element be used in other programs? Under which circumstances?
2. Are there any specific technologies, management information systems, or specific management tools that contribute (positively or negatively) to the flexibility of your program?
 - a) How does this technology affect the ability to adapt to the program?
 - b) What are the problems that you face in using this technology?
3. To what extent do you think the team culture or project leadership contributes to the flexibility of the program?
 - a) How do staff members participate in decision-making processes? Which members of staff are involved? Which are not?
 - b) How does management encourage participation and reporting of failure, or create space for reflection?
4. How do you use evidence/feedback to make changes in an ongoing program? Can you give an example?
 - a) Are there any obstacles in making changes following the feedback? Which ones?
5. In your experience, what is the contribution of the donors to fostering or limiting the flexibility and adaptability of a program?

APPENDIX 4: DOCUMENTS REVIEW GUIDE

The researcher will endeavour to review all documents related to the Program. To assess how they enable or hinder adaptive management. In general, the types of materials to be considered include:

1. Program Procedures Manual
2. Program strategies and work plans
3. Program progress reports
4. Evaluations reports
5. Any organisational assessment reports that provide information on organisational practices and systems, the relevance of the organisation's work, and the achievement of stated results;
6. Thematic documents, including strategies, plans and internal reports;
7. Donor reports.
8. Besides, the researcher will seek documents that provide a clear picture of the current practice in a WRP implementation and thus will focus on programme level documents, the current or previous year.
9. Assessing the following variable

Variable	Determined by looking for the following:
Accountability	Interactions between management, program staff and local partners are fluid and continuous
Participation	Documented beneficiaries and stakeholders Participation "bottom-up" to express their interests and concerns
Experimentation	Managers and program staff have an environment where they collaborate and agree upon on the design and execution of experiments; appropriate experimental scale; proper levels of risk and uncertainty
Planning and design	Availability of high-quality current management plans.
Monitoring and Learning	Strong linkages to academic institutions and research structures
Financial Resources	History of timely financial access and enough financial support according to established policy