

Lessons / key points from the Webinar presented by SAPST from Zimbabwe

1. The presentation highlighted the importance of **integrating elements of the PSAM SAM approach into existing programmes** (rather than trying to fit existing programmes into a pre-defined SAM approach). The importance of doing what you know where your expertise lies and then integrating elements of the PSAM approach to SAM into that is apparent. A key question here is
 - Which elements of the PSAM approach are essential and which can be left out?
 - How much can you skim away from the PSAM approach and still call it SAM?
2. It is important to build relationships across stakeholders in a context informed by a situational analysis of the space. A clear understanding of what each stakeholder is doing; about what is already being done around an issue, this then creates opportunities to identify and fill gaps in meaningful ways. For example, CSOs and parliament both carry out oversight in a context however; both actors approach it from very different angles. The question then is
 - **How do you leverage the oversight roles** of both of these institutions in order to optimise oversight and avoid unnecessary duplication/overlap?
3. **Champions are important.** In this case, they were essential to implementation and practice. Therefore, there is a need to identify individuals in key institutions that will assist in creating opportunities (opening windows) and build relationships that allow for SAM practice. The question then is
 - How to leverage relationships with champions beyond the individual and scale up to the institutional/organisational so that even if individuals move or leave an organisation, you have established relationships with a champion institution rather than an individual?
4. The following areas are important to take into consideration in planning and executing a strategy of which a balance is struck based on effectiveness of the 'formula/recipe'.
 - formal VS informal relationships
 - fixed VS flexible strategies for implementation
 - fixed VS flexible strategies for MEL
 - intuitive learning and adaptation VS documented and structured learning
5. It is necessary to be flexible and adaptive in your approach in an intervention so as to **take advantage of 'open windows'** that may present themselves along the journey through for example relationships with individuals or at key moments in a political situation. Conversely, key questions here are:
 - How much control do SAM practitioners have in terms of opening their own windows?
 - How do you work around structural limitations that keep windows shut?



- How can you establish an implementation plan when many of your opportunities for engagement are limited by external factors/actors?
- How can we share lessons across SAM practitioners in different contexts if so many of the windows of opportunity rely on external forces that may or may not be unique to a context?

6. Monitoring and evaluating interventions becomes complicated due to adjustments to strategy using an adaptive management approach to which **flexibility and adaptation is essential**. The questions here are:

- How to develop MEL systems that can track change and impact, but are also adaptable and flexible enough to change when implementation changes are necessary?
- If changes are intuitive (rather than structured) and there is a difficulty in documenting changes and adaptation; how then can lessons be shared?

7. **Situation analyses or baselines are essential** throughout the course of a programme/project (not only in the start), but should be conducted to provide a realistic picture of the context so that implementation is not based on assumptions. This is also important because learning and implementation are not linear journeys – they are determined by the prevailing contextual conditions.

