The value of a long-term investment

Lessons for clients and evaluators from the Fleming Fund's 10-year learning partnership between Itad and DHSC

itad

Department of Health & Social Care

> Working closely with an agency over a long period of time and seeing the programme adapt in response to your findings is so fulfilling for an evaluator.
>
> *Jon Cooper, Fleming Fund Evaluation Team Director, Itad*

> Having a continuous contract is good value for a large, complex, long-term programme. Itad hasn't just delivered an evaluation – it's been a strategic thinking partner.
>
> *Dr Milena von und zur Muhlen, Policy and Programme Manager for the Fleming Fund, UK Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)*

More lessons from Itad on learning partnerships

Continuity improves utilisation

Working with a client over multiple phases gives the evaluator a deeper understanding of the context, the decisions being made by the client and the trade-offs. This meant Itad could provide information that met DHSC's priorities at the right time, be that responding to budget changes or preparing a business case for the next phase.

That long relationship allows the evaluation to adapt as the programme changes, rather than treating each of the phases in isolation. We were already discussing the evaluation of the second phase, in the middle of the first.

Long-term partnerships need active boundary setting

When trust is built up over time, the evaluator can play the role of 'honest broker', sharing information on what isn't working and challenging the client. But the evaluator has to remain independent.

The evaluator's job is to present the evidence and its implications, to support design decisions. It is the client's role to hold the programme implementers to account and decide what changes need to be made.

Empathy is the key

For the client, this means sharing information about shifts to the programme with the evaluator, as early as possible. This makes it more likely that the evaluator can adapt to meet the client's changing needs.

As evaluators, it is vital to invest in relationship building - substantially at the outset and establishing regular and open communication throughout the years, especially when personnel change.

About the Fleming Fund

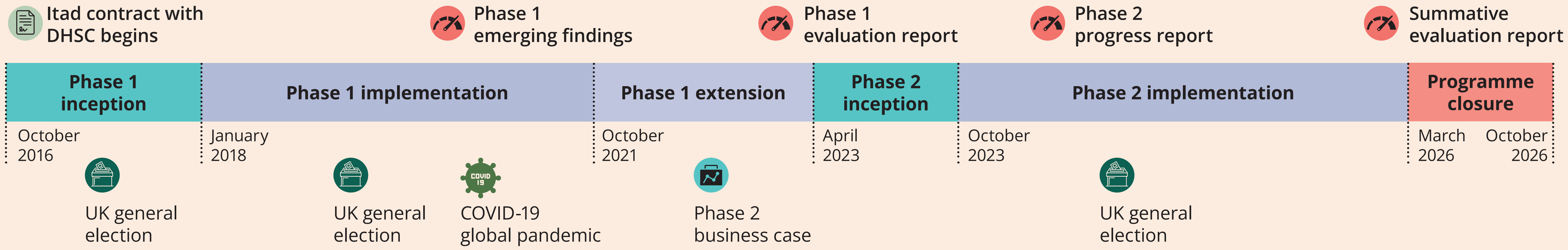
The Fleming Fund was the UK's flagship investment in strengthening antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in low and middle-income countries.

Our partnership covered two five-year phases of funding, three general elections, two government spending reviews and a global pandemic.

The Fleming Fund

UKaid from the British people

A decade of collaboration and adaptation – 2016 to 2026



Itad contract with DHSC begins

Phase 1 emerging findings

Phase 1 evaluation report

Phase 2 progress report

Summative evaluation report

Phase 1 inception	Phase 1 implementation	Phase 1 extension	Phase 2 inception	Phase 2 implementation	Programme closure	
October 2016	January 2018	October 2021	April 2023	October 2023	March 2026	October 2026

UK general election

UK general election

COVID-19 global pandemic

Phase 2 business case

UK general election