

Helpdesk Research Report

Effectiveness of sector-wide approaches in fragile contexts

Brian Lucas

26.11.2013

Question

What reviews have been undertaken assessing the effectiveness of working through a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) in fragile contexts, specifically focusing on health and education SWAps and decentralised contexts?

Contents

1. Overview
2. Reviews of health sector SWAps
3. Reviews of education SWAps
4. Bibliography
5. About this report

1. Overview

There is no consistently strong evidence that sector-wide approaches (SWAps) have been effective at achieving development outcomes in fragile contexts. Available evidence is mixed, partly because of the uniqueness of each country's context (Negin 2010, p. 5). SWAps are generally considered to be most appropriate in relatively stable low- and middle-income countries, with national political leadership and institutional capacity considered to be prerequisites (Pavanello & Darcy, 2008, pp. 17-18). However, there is some evidence that if given sufficient time, a mature SWAp can contribute to stabilisation and state-building processes (Boak & Ndaruhutse, 2011). Processes of decentralisation can either enhance or undermine state-building objectives depending on context (Boak & Ndaruhutse, 2011, pp. 9-10). This report presents brief summaries of a selection of health and education sector reviews completed within the last four years, covering a range of fragile and conflict-affected states in Asia, the Pacific, and Africa.

SWAps were developed in the 1990s "to overcome problems of fragmentation of programmes and overly prescriptive donor assistance" by integrating government and donor activities under government leadership (Peters, Paina, & Schleimann, 2012, p. 2). They aim to bring all funding for a sector under a single policy and expenditure program, agreed upon by government and donors at a strategic level consistent with national priorities (Pavanello & Darcy, 2008, pp. 17-18).

SWAPs are typically **expected to produce improvements both in processes and in development outcomes**, including better harmonisation and alignment of assistance, and improved system management, quality and coverage (Vaillancourt, 2012, p. xi). They are also intended “to reduce transaction costs for governments who have to deal with the various mechanisms and processes of multiple donors” (Negin & Martiniuk, 2012, p. 143).

However, many authors point out that there is a **lack of rigorous evidence of the effectiveness of SWAPs in achieving development outcomes**, both in health and education (Boak & Ndaruhutse, 2011, p. 12; Negin, 2010, p. 5; Pavanello & Darcy, 2008, p. 25; Rothmann, Canavan, Cassimon, Coolen, & Verbeke, 2011, p. iii; Vaillancourt, 2009, p. xi). There are no randomised controlled evaluations of SWAPs, before-and-after studies have been difficult to conduct because SWAPs are often implemented gradually and results due to the SWAP are difficult to disentangle from other influences, and SWAPs often lack comprehensive monitoring and evaluation systems (McNee, 2012, pp. 13-14). In the health sector, which has been more thoroughly studied than the education sector, “no study or meta study can or does claim a definitive, causal link between a SWAP and improved health service coverage or improved health status” and although some studies show a correlation between SWAPs and improvements in outcomes, “when more rigorous statistical methods are applied this association disappears, and factors beyond aid become significant” (McNee, 2012, p. 14).

The reviews of health and education SWAPs included in this report consistently find that:

- Evidence of the effectiveness of SWAPs in achieving development outcomes is limited, and what evidence exists is mixed, partly due to differences in country context and problems of measurement and attribution.
- SWAPs can lead to improvements in aid harmonisation, in relationships among development actors, and in processes for coordinating and planning.
- There is a significant risk of focusing too heavily on developing coordination and planning processes and not enough on development results.
- SWAPs can help build national capacities for financial management.
- It is common for donor agencies to continue to fund projects in the same sector outside a SWAP rather than being fully committed to the SWAP.
- SWAPs do not reduce transaction costs for country governments, and in some cases transaction costs have been observed to increase.

2. Reviews of health sector SWAPs

McNee, A. (2012). *Rethinking Health Sector Wide Approaches Through the Lens of Aid Effectiveness*. Canberra: Development Policy Centre, Australian National University. doi:10.2139/ssrn.2041830

This review of health SWAPs argues that while “the theory of change underlying SWAPs is highly-consistent with effective aid, in practice the approach has failed to realise its potential” (p. 1). The theory is that robust, legitimate institutions are necessary for sustainable, effective health systems, and that SWAPs facilitate the development of these institutions by “removing the damaging effects of project aid, and creating the space, incentives and accountability for government to lead and own the development process.” (p. 1) In practice, however, SWAPs have become overly technical, and focus on elements such as plans, expenditure frameworks, and sector coordination mechanisms, without enhancing government ownership and commitment to indigenous development processes (p. 1).

McNee finds that it is very difficult to establish direct links between SWAPs and health outcomes, and that while there is a rich body of literature examining the contribution of SWAPs to strengthening health systems (p. 14), there is little evidence of development effectiveness, and the evidence that exists indicates that “performance is mixed at best” (p. 1). SWAPs have been used to establish “policy frameworks, medium term expenditure frameworks / programmes of work, structured donor and government meetings, and common funds”, but these initiatives have demonstrated only partial or moderate success, and donors have often been reluctant to use country systems or to stop funding projects outside the SWAP (p. 16). There is no evidence that SWAPs have decreased transaction costs, and some evidence that they have led to an increase (p. 16). There has been some evidence of improved overall budget execution, but little or no evidence of increased expenditure on front-line services (McNee, 2012, p. 17).

McNee suggests that poor performance of SWAPs can be due to a range of factors, including (pp. 18-31):

- Poor quality plans and expenditure frameworks, including insufficient political economy analysis, inadequate review, unrealistic ambitions, and inadequate resources.
- Insufficient local capacity across all core government systems including planning, resource allocation, procurement, financial management, and monitoring.
- Problematic partnerships including lack of involvement from civil society and the private sector, and poor quality dialogue and accountability tracking.
- Unpredictable resource flows due to poor costing, rigid accountability requirements, lack of follow-through on multi-year commitments, and other system weaknesses.
- Donors’ internal requirements, including: the need to promote and profile their agency; a tendency to continue to provide project aid and earmark funds; a need to meet expenditure targets regardless of SWAP requirements; impatience for results; high staff turnover; and a focus on SWAP architecture rather than the dynamics of a particular context.
- Within government, resistance on the part of some actors to increase transparency in resource allocation, or to increase donor influence over sector policy and resource allocation: “there are likely to be individuals who – within both central and line agencies – enjoy the benefits associated with project aid that will be lost under a SWAP.” (p. 23)
- In national politics, struggles between central and line agencies, between national and local levels of government.
- In the relationship between governments and donors, the tension that can exist when there is a power imbalance; overemphasis on macro-level sector policy, planning, and priority setting/resource allocation; privileging the role of government in service delivery; and overestimating the capacity and commitment of government.

Vaillancourt, D. (2009). *Do Health Sector-Wide Approaches Achieve Results? Emerging Evidence and Lessons from Six Countries*. Washington: World Bank.

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTWBASSHEANUTPOP/Resources/wp4.pdf>

This study commissioned by the Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank examines evidence for the effectiveness of health SWAPs in Bangladesh, Ghana, Kyrgyz Republic, Malawi, Nepal, and Tanzania. The study found only **modest improvements in capacity and efficiency**, mostly demonstrated by the establishment of plans, processes and partnerships, but found **little evidence of improved health outcomes** except in Tanzania. Country capacities were inadequate in many cases to provide the leadership necessary for an effective SWAP.

The review found that health SWAPs have helped to establish tools and processes for improved sector coordination and oversight, such as programmes of work and expenditure plans, partnership structures and processes, and plans for strengthening procurement and financial management capacity (p. xii). They contributed to some improvements in harmonisation and alignment of aid, including establishing country-led partnerships for policy dialogue, planning and budgeting, and performance review, although in five of the six countries a failure to involve a sufficient range of stakeholders in partnerships undermined service coverage and quality (p. xii-xiv).

Health SWAPs have been only modestly successful in improving efficiency, focusing on results, and defining and enforcing accountabilities. In most of the cases studied, national health objectives, health system strengthening objectives, and service delivery objectives were only modestly achieved (Tanzania showed substantial achievement). Budget execution rates are improving in some countries but in five of the six countries this has not yet substantially strengthened the health sector's results focus or accountabilities. The effects of SWAPs on transaction costs have not been monitored (pp. xii-xiv).

Efficiency and effectiveness were undermined by a lack of data, a lack of guidelines and procedures, weak performance reviews, and inadequate accountability and follow-up. The quality of national management capacity and leadership is crucial, but in five of the six countries studied, local capacities for planning, resource allocation, monitoring, expenditure tracking, and results monitoring were not adequate for strategic management. Assessment and strengthening of national monitoring and evaluation capacities has been neglected in favour of an emphasis on procurement, disbursement and financial management, resulting in an insufficient focus on results. Predictability of resource flows was undermined by weaknesses in budgeting, macroeconomic instability, lack of alignment of development partners' planning and budgeting cycles with country cycles, lack of commitment to medium-term financing, and the earmarking of assistance. Although flows of funds improved under the SWAPs, flows were irregular, slow, and did not always match commitments. The actual use of resources were not well documented (pp. xiv-xv).

Key lessons arising from the study were (pp. xii-xiii, xv-xvi):

- Programmes of work that set specific, prioritized, phased, and ambitious-but-feasible targets and that assessed the political economy of reforms were more likely to achieve their objectives.
- The strength of local capacities and systems used for common implementation arrangements determined the pace and efficiency of implementation.
- Three dimensions of partnerships can enable or undermine results: who is in the partnership; the main functions of the partnership and how effectively they are carried out; and how the partners interact.
- The predictability, flow, and use of health sector resources have affected the efficacy and efficiency of implementation.
- A collaborative process and national ownership are not sufficient to ensure sector performance and outcomes.
- Sequencing efforts to develop and use local skills and systems can mitigate risks of delayed implementation and a weak results focus.
- Management for development effectiveness requires linking resources to results.
- Incentives (rewards, sanctions, pedagogical interventions) can strongly affect a SWAP's results focus.
- The effectiveness of SWAPs at the local level can be improved through management of political economy issues and strengthening local technical, strategic decision-making, and service delivery capacities.

Negin, J., & Martiniuk, A. (2012). Sector wide approaches for health in small island states: Lessons learned from the Solomon Islands. *Global Public Health*, 7(2), 137-148.

doi:10.1080/17441692.2011.584326

This peer-reviewed journal article examines the implementation of the health SWAp in the Solomon Islands through interviews and literature reviews conducted in 2009. The SWAp is still in the process of being established and although national leadership has been slow to develop, progress is being made in engagement and harmonisation among the partners. However, the SWAp has not yet demonstrated concrete improvements in outputs and health outcomes.

The initial idea for a health SWAp was promoted by the Australian Government in 2006, and in 2007 the National Health Strategic Plan provided a foundation for it, although initially government engagement was limited. In 2008, the Australian Government started providing funds channelled through local government systems. Frequent changes of senior personnel at the Ministry of Health hampered the relationship building that was important to developing the SWAp, but by 2009 the Ministry appeared to be taking ownership of the process. As of 2009, the SWAp involved three UN agencies, two bilaterals, and the Ministry of Health, with Japan and the World Bank collaborating outside the pooled funding mechanism. In 2006, donors provided more than half of the country's total expenditure on health, and that proportion has probably increased since then (pp. 139-142).

In the Solomon Islands, the SWAp has been led more by donor agencies than by the national government, although the government acknowledges the need to increase local leadership. The focus of the SWAp is more on **partnership** and **coordination** than on procurement and pooled funding, although there are efforts to increase donor transparency to government about how much money and technical assistance they have available and how it should be allocated. Transaction costs were not evaluated but there was a feeling among those interviewed for this study that transaction costs would probably increase in the first few years because of the negotiation of new procedures. Both donors and the national government have found it difficult to change working practices, and there is a need for greater relationship skills and management support (as opposed to technical assistance). High staff turnover in donors and the government is a problem for relationship-building. Interviewees also noted the risk-averse nature of donor agencies and said that governments and donors need to **experiment with new approaches** even if there is a risk of failure, and to look to the long term. Some donor agencies continue to fund health projects outside the SWAp, rather than being fully committed to it. Some interviewees were concerned that the SWAp had led to too much focus on **procedures, inputs and management**, and less on implementation, performance, activities, and health outcomes (pp. 142-145).

Pearson, M. (2010). *Impact Evaluation of the Sector Wide Approach (SWAp), Malawi*. DFID.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67670/imp-eval-sect-wde-appr-mw.pdf

This independent desk-based review was carried out by the Human Development Resource Centre for DFID and the National Audit Office. Malawi's health SWAp is mature (in place since 2005) and **health sector outputs have generally increased** under the SWAp, but results vary by type of treatment or intervention, and most of the data available reports quantities of treatment without considering quality or equity of access (pp. 24-25). The SWAp is credited for the adoption of a more coherent programmatic approach, leveraging increased funding from donors and from government, improving access to some key services, and implementing some reforms (pp. 42-43). However, "progress has been patchy and links to health outcomes are often difficult to make" (p. 44), there is little evidence that transaction costs have declined (p. 45), and much of the credit for improvements in health outcomes can be attributed to factors other than the SWAp. (p. 45)

Of the programme indicators that have been evaluated, two-thirds have achieved or partially achieved their targets, and one-third did not (p. 22). However, Malawi has had a good record of improving health outcomes since well before the SWAp, and although progress is being maintained, the SWAp's contribution to this is not clear, and some limited data suggest that the rate of improvement may have

slowed (p. 23). Progress towards improving outputs “has been patchy and links to health outcomes are often difficult to make” (p. 44).

Significant progress has been made in supporting **decentralisation**, which has enabled financial resources to flow directly to districts and given greater local control over how these resources are used, and in developing **public-private (and NGO) partnerships** which has broadened access to health facilities (p. 31). The SWAp is also credited with fulfilling the Abuja Declaration commitment to allocate 15 per cent of the total government budget to the health sector (p. 34). A national strategy is in place, including plans for various functions within the Ministry of Health, and oversight and coordination mechanisms have been established (p. 33).

However, the effectiveness of **planning and oversight is weak** in practice, donors continue to operate projects outside the SWAp, and there are examples of **poor coordination** and lack of clarity on organisational responsibilities (p. 33). Serious weaknesses are apparent in procurement capacity, distribution of supplies including drugs, management and leadership capacity, budget execution, and monitoring and evaluation (p. 32, 34).

Paul, E., Samaké, S., Berthé, I., Huijts, I., Balique, H., & Dujardin, B. (2013). Aid for health in times of political unrest in Mali: Does donors’ way of intervening allow protecting people's health? *Health Policy and Planning*, 2013, 1-4. doi:10.1093/heapol/czt082

This short (four-page) peer-reviewed journal article presents a cautionary tale of how donor agencies rapidly changed their approach to delivering aid in Mali following the coup in 2012, undoing much of the progress that had been made over the previous decade.

A health SWAp in place in Mali since 1999 had been credited with significant improvements in aid efficiency, health system strengthening and results. When the coup took place in March of 2012, donors suspended most development assistance, though continuing to engage in bilateral humanitarian assistance, and the relationships and coordinating mechanisms established under the SWAp were interrupted. After stabilisation and the establishment of a civilian government in August, each donor “decided on an individual basis whether to resume which forms of aid and how, based on its own political agenda and constraints” (p. 2). A great deal of the progress in establishing harmonisation and coordination was undone in the process: the Ministry of Health lost its leadership role in crisis management, and “the way donors intervened outside of the health administration in Mali lacked legitimacy and contributed to degrading the image of the State” (p. 3).

The authors recommend that it is important to **maintain harmonisation and collaboration** with functioning national institutions in crisis situations, donors’ in-country representatives should have more freedom to find solutions and more decision-making power, and **financing should be flexible** and able to be diverted to alternative channels when central government channels cannot be used, although use of government systems should not necessarily be abandoned in crises. Donors need to revisit their ways of adapting to situations of crisis rapidly.

3. Reviews of education SWAps

Boak, E. and Ndaruhutse, S. (2011) *The impact of sector-wide approaches: where from, where now and where to?* CfbT Education Trust. <http://www.cfbt.com/en-GB/Research/Research-library/2011/r-the-impact-of-swaps-2011>

This study, based on a literature review and stakeholder interviews, examines the effectiveness of education SWAps worldwide, citing many examples from a variety of contexts. It finds that while “the expected harmonisation and alignment gains from SWAps have not always materialised” (p. 8), mature SWAps in stable low-income countries have had a **strong impact on institutional development**.

Effectiveness has at times been constrained due to the broader political economy. SWAPs have contributed to dramatic increases in the provision of and enrolment in fee-free primary education in low-income countries, but there is evidence that quality of education may have suffered as a result. The authors argue that well-designed SWAPs can contribute positively to state-building in fragile and conflict-affected states, but recommends careful attention to political economy and conflict analysis, sensitivity to fragility particularly in relation to support for decentralisation, consideration of looser “SWAP-like” approaches, and strengthening state regulatory capacity to improve accountability (pp. 10-11).

The study finds that SWAPs have significantly **improved partnerships between governments and donors**, but there has been less progress on involving civil society. Good political economy analysis and strong ownership and leadership by the national government are important for success. In some countries, SWAPs have included a strong focus on managing for results through joint sector reviews which have supported accountability (p. 8). SWAPs have demonstrated improvements in planning capacity, working ethic, governance and broader institutional development. In general, **more mature SWAPs promote effective and accountable decentralisation**, and strengthen planning processes at national and sub-national levels, but the opposite is true of less mature SWAP-like approaches (p. 9). Despite the goal that SWAPs should replace project funding with more aligned aid, fragmented approaches are still being employed by some donors, partly due to weaknesses in public financial management systems. The promise of reduced transaction costs “has certainly not been delivered in the short term, where they have actually increased” and evidence regarding the long term is mixed (p. 9).

There is **limited data on SWAPs’ contribution to education outcomes**, but “it is acknowledged that SWAPs have been more concerned with planning, management and financing arrangements than with their impact on children’s access, completion and learning outcomes” (p. 45). SWAPs have been linked with expanding the reach of formal education systems, and have helped promote equitable access. However, there is evidence that increased enrolment has led to reduced learning achievements, indicating that “SWAPs have not placed a sufficient emphasis on quality” (p. 9).

The study notes that SWAPs have mostly been implemented in stable low-income countries, but argues that **SWAPs are relevant in fragile and conflict-affected states** as well. Some countries have compensated by using SWAP-like “low-level” approaches which “place more of the burden on donors rather than on partner governments with a focus on coordination and sharing data” (pp. 9-10). Mature SWAPs have contributed to stabilisation and state-building initiatives in more resilient countries, can build the legitimacy and capacity of the state, and can strengthen political and policy processes as well as state-citizen accountability. Processes of decentralisation have the potential to either enhance or undermine state-building objectives (pp. 9-10).

Coxon, E., and Tolley, H. (2011) *Researching SWAPs in Pacific Education: A study of experiences in Solomon Islands and Tonga*. Research Unit for Pacific and International Education (RUPIE), University of Auckland.

<http://www.aid.govt.nz/sites/default/files/Researching%20SWAPs%20in%20Pacific%20Education%20-%20Eve%20Coxon%20report%20-%20for%20website.pdf>

The Solomon Islands education SWAP was launched in 2004 with the participation of the national government, the European Commission (EC) and NZAID. The approach had strong political backing, but other preconditions considered necessary for a SWAP were absent, so **early phases focused heavily on capacity building**. Seven more bilateral and multilateral agencies have since joined the process to varying degrees, although only NZAID is fully engaged with country systems and sector budget support; other agencies still maintain their own separate processes. The government shows strong leadership and ownership, but there are concerns that resources channelled through the SWAP have “overly concentrated on the top, with little visible or tangible improvement at school and classroom level” (p. 14).

Tonga’s education SWAP began in 2005, with NZAID and the World Bank playing leading roles. The relationship between the government and donor agencies had been one of “mistrust and suspicion” (p.

16) from the beginning. Cumbersome financial arrangements, a lack of awareness of capacity and capacity needs, and unclear communication and decision making processes further contributed to tense relations initially. Personnel changes in 2008 and greater decentralisation of NZAID authority to the local office have helped improve relations. Relationships between government and non-government education providers have been strengthened under the SWAp arrangement. The SWAp is still seen as a 'policy division project' and implementation has not been smooth, but current initiatives are attempting to bring reform processes more in line with SWAp methodologies, in particular strengthening communication and bringing all activities under the government's operational and budget framework (pp. 16-18).

The study concludes that (p. 33):

- Dialogue and harmonisation have improved, but there is a long way to go. Many donors are reluctant to align with country systems and continue to operate projects outside SWAp arrangements, especially for financial management and procurement.
- SWAps have not substantially reduced transaction costs.
- Due to significant need for capacity building and institutional strengthening, there continues to be high dependence on international and national technical assistance.
- A focus on capacity building of central government agencies has delayed improvement of front-line education services.
- An effective SWAp requires sensitivity to individual country contexts and a degree of flexibility that some donors have difficulty with.
- There is a need for greater recognition of the necessity for coordination and communication across all sector stakeholders, including non-state providers.

Although the Solomon Islands started from a weaker base in education management and service delivery, the country has progressed faster towards meeting key SWAp components. The authors argue that the assumption that political stability and a high level of local capacity are prerequisites for a SWAp is incorrect; where there is strong political will, state fragility can be a good basis for a SWAp, provided that the weaknesses are addressed through appropriate partnerships and with the understanding that results may take a long time to become visible (pp. 33-34).

In the Solomon Islands, the SWAp appears to have contributed to increased primary enrolment rates but attendance, non-completion, gender equity, teacher training, and teacher absenteeism were not addressed (pp. 34-35). Tonga has long had universal and compulsory primary education, but the SWAp contributed to improved school community participation, and school resourcing, and curriculum reform.

Vaillancourt, D. (2012). *In Sweet Harmony? A Review of Health and Education Sectorwide Approaches (SWAps) in the South Pacific, Desk Study, Appendix 1: Samoa Education SWAp*. Washington, DC: World Bank. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2012/08/15/in-sweet-harmony-a-review-of-health-and-education-sectorwide-approaches-in-the-south-pacific>

Samoa's pilot education SWAp brings together the Asian Development Bank, the Australian Government, NZAID, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture (MESC). The SWAp does not include NGO or civil society representatives. Arrangements are specified in several different strategy documents and frameworks which are not fully systematic and consistent, so "there is a lack of clarity and risk of confusion about the objectives of the approach... and how to measure them" (p. 11). Implementation is managed by the national government, with procurement required to be in line with ADB guidelines. The government and participating donors operate a pooled funding arrangement but several other donors support education projects outside the SWAp (pp. 13, 23). Oversight is maintained through joint review missions conducted at least annually (pp. 12-14).

Tools for sector management and coordination have been established, although partnership and implementation arrangements are only in place as a pilot for learning, while a medium-term expenditure framework and monitoring and evaluation framework have been implemented sector-wide. There have been improvements in harmonisation and alignment of aid in some areas, but there is no evidence of changes in transaction costs (pp. 15-17). There is **insufficient evidence to assess efficiency** of resource use, and although a new monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework and capacity-building efforts should support a greater focus on results, this has not happened yet. There has been a “lack of reporting at a strategic level with evidence-based results” (p. 17). There have been some **improvements in defining accountabilities**, but “there is no evidence of MESC systems, capacities or practices in tracking performances and accountabilities for results” (p. 17). Progress in achieving targets for education service delivery improvements has been mixed and it is unlikely that all targets will be achieved, although the study notes that targets are very ambitious (pp. 18-19). Weaknesses in sector management have undermined efforts and may not have been assessed at the outset (p. 21). Limited procurement capacity was a problem initially but improvements have been noted over time (p. 22). The management and oversight of **technical assistance remains a critical challenge**, with problems reported in quality, results, accountability, clarity of roles and responsibilities, communication between consultants and the Ministry, and integrating technical assistance into annual plans (p. 22). Financial management systems are in place, but there are serious shortcomings in financial management capacity and performance: financial control, performance monitoring, and financial reporting are all very weak (p. 23). In addition, the predictability of financing has been “uncertain at best” (p. 25).

The report draws the following principal lessons from the Samoan experience (pp. 30-31):

- The SWAp could be enhanced with the clear articulation of SWAp-specific capacity and efficiency objectives and indicators. Currently, objectives and indicators are not systematically defined, and the pilot SWAp is not well designed.
- Development agencies’ support to strengthening the strategic sector framework could help improve coherence, quality and efficiency. These efforts should be linked to outcomes and impacts to ensure that efforts are results-focused and -driven. The quality and effective application of the new M&E framework and the quality and candour of sector dialogue are critical. The role of civil society might be better assessed and more fully exploited.
- Capacities are being strengthened through a learning-by-doing process, but they still fall short of the needs and demands of an ambitious sector agenda. Development agencies can support improved capacity assessment and the development of a holistic, results-based approach to capacity.
- Development agencies might reassess their business models and costs in light of the new and emerging needs for support prompted by the aid effectiveness principles.

4. Bibliography

Boak, E., & Ndaruhutse, S. (2011). *The impact of sector-wide approaches: where from, where now and where to?* CfBT Education Trust. Retrieved from <http://www.cfbt.com/en-GB/Research/Research-library/2011/r-the-impact-of-swaps-2011>

Coxon, E., & Tolley, H. (2011). *Researching SWAps in Pacific Education: A study of experiences in Solomon Islands and Tonga*. University of Auckland. Retrieved from <http://www.aid.govt.nz/sites/default/files/Researching%20SWAps%20in%20Pacific%20Education%20-%20Eve%20Coxon%20report%20-%20for%20website.pdf>

McNee, A. (2012). *Rethinking Health Sector Wide Approaches Through the Lens of Aid Effectiveness*. Canberra: Development Policy Centre, Australian National University. doi:10.2139/ssrn.2041830

- Negin, J. (2010). *Sector-Wide Approaches for health: an introduction to SWAps and their implementation in the Pacific region*. Melbourne: Nossal Institute for Global Health, University of Melbourne. Retrieved from http://ni.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/331754/HPHF_hub_wp2.pdf
- Negin, J. (2010). *Sector-Wide Approaches for health: lessons from Samoa and the Solomon Islands*. Melbourne: Nossal Institute for Global Health, University of Melbourne. Retrieved from http://ni.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/543384/wp4.pdf
- Negin, J., & Martiniuk, A. (2012). Sector wide approaches for health in small island states: Lessons learned from the Solomon Islands. *Global Public Health*, 7(2), 137-148. doi:10.1080/17441692.2011.584326
- Paul, E., Samaké, S., Berthé, I., Huijts, I., Balique, H., & Dujardin, B. (2013). Aid for health in times of political unrest in Mali: Does donors' way of intervening allow protecting people's health? *Health Policy and Planning*, 2013, 1-4. doi:doi:10.1093/heapol/czt082
- Pavanello, S., & Darcy, J. (2008). *Improving the provision of basic services for the poor in fragile environments: International Literature Review Synthesis Paper*. London: ODI.
- Pearson, M. (2010). *Impact Evaluation of the Sector Wide Approach (SWAp), Malawi*. DFID. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67670/imp-eval-sect-wde-appr-mw.pdf
- Peters, D., Paina, L., & Schleimann, F. (2012). Sector-wide approaches (SWAps) in health. *Health Policy and Planning*, 1-7. doi:10.1093/heapol/czs128
- Rothmann, I., Canavan, A., Cassimon, D., Coolen, A., & Verbeke, K. (2011). *Moving towards a sector-wide approach (SWAp) for health in fragile states: Lessons learned on the state of readiness in Timor Leste, Sierra Leone and Democratic Republic of Congo*. Royal Tropical Institute (KIT). Retrieved from http://www.kit.nl/net/KIT_Publicaties_output/ShowFile2.aspx?e=1749
- Vaillancourt, D. (2009). *Do Health Sector-Wide Approaches Achieve Results? Emerging Evidence and Lessons from Six Countries*. Washington: World Bank. Retrieved from <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTWBASSHEANUTPOP/Resources/wp4.pdf>
- Vaillancourt, D. (2012). *In Sweet Harmony? A Review of Health and Education Sectorwide Approaches (SWAps) in the South Pacific*. Washington, DC: World Bank. Retrieved from <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2012/05/16764819/sweet-harmony-review-health-education-sectorwide-approaches-swaps-south-pacific-vol-1-4-main-report>
- Vaillancourt, D. (2012). *In Sweet Harmony? A Review of Health and Education Sectorwide Approaches (SWAps) in the South Pacific, Desk Study, Appendix 1: Samoa Education SWAp*. Washington, DC: World Bank. Retrieved from <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2012/08/15/in-sweet-harmony-a-review-of-health-and-education-sectorwide-approaches-in-the-south-pacific>

5. About this report

This report is based on three days of desk-based research. It was prepared for the Australian Government, © Australian Government 2013. The views expressed in this report are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of GSDRC, its partner agencies or the Australian Government.

The GSDRC Research Helpdesk provides rapid syntheses of key literature and of expert thinking in response to specific questions on governance, social development, humanitarian and conflict issues. Its

concise reports draw on a selection of the best recent literature available and on input from international experts. Each GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report is peer-reviewed by a member of the GSDRC team. Search more than 400 reports at www.gsdr.org/go/research-helpdesk. Contact: helpdesk@gsdr.org.

Expert contributors

We would like to thank the following experts who recommended some case studies for inclusion in this report:

- Stephen Commins, University of California at Los Angeles
- Enrico Pavignani, independent consultant

Suggested citation

Lucas, B. (2013) *Effectiveness of sector-wide approaches in fragile contexts*. GSDRC Helpdesk Research Report no. 1031. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham.