

Sector Wide Approach as an aid contract modality



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Objective of this paper

- The objective of this paper is to analyse the negotiation and monitoring environments of the SWAp contract in Uganda.
- The relationship between the Government and development partners under this aid modality (SWAp) is interpreted as a contractual arrangement.



Methodology

- Qualitative case study approach
- Methods include
 - key informant interviews,
 - documentary analysis,
 - direct and participant observation (4 of the authors have been participants in the Ugandan SWAp)



Rationale

- Concerns for equity, efficiency, and government leadership have led to the introduction of the sector-wide approach (SWAp) in Uganda.



Negotiation & Monitoring Environment

- The framework governing the SWAp contract in Uganda is the Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP) – a five year plan developed by various stakeholders which aims to address the country's key health challenges.
 - The SWAp is a platform for adopting a comprehensive approach to implement the strategic plan by harnessing all available resources (human, financial, projects etc.).



Negotiation & Monitoring Environment

- The specific contract instrument is the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Government with various development partners.
- Policy advice, priority setting, decision-making, strategic management, monitoring and evaluation are carried out yearly, through Joint Review Missions and followed up on a monthly basis through the Health Policy Advisory Committee.



Negotiation & Monitoring Environment

- Undertakings: These are actions or processes agreed between the parties, for specific areas of high priority.
 - Progress towards the achievement of undertakings is reviewed yearly, and for a number of donors, successful achievement of the undertakings may determine the release of funds to the Government's budget.
- Tracking studies: are agreed between the parties and allow an in-depth assessment of problems, formulate recommendations for action.
 - They serve as opportunities to build consensus for these actions to be carried out, instead of functioning as internal types of audit.



Key Products of the SWAp

- to enable the strengthening of the budget support mechanism (i.e. an increased GoU budget) as well as to contribute to improved allocative and technical efficiency in the sector.
- - the number of development partners providing budget support to the government increased from 5 (UK, Ireland, Sweden, Belgium, and the World Bank) to 8 (the previous five apart from Belgium plus EU, Norway, Netherlands, and Denmark) (MoH 2003a) between 2000/01-2004/05



Key Products of the SWAp

- to allow for the development of a comprehensive performance monitoring system which is used by all donors, reducing the high number of separate supervision and evaluation missions the MoH and districts had to deal with before the SWAp.
- The parties agreed on a monitoring framework for the HSSP as well as the strengthening of mechanisms for data collection and dissemination.
 - Emphasis was placed on the preparation of Annual Performance Reports. While the first reports focused on programme level accounts of inputs and outputs (e.g. # of workshops held), the most recent ones have been commended for providing good overviews of the sector's performance focusing on key outputs (e.g. DPT3 coverage, OPD attendance, institutionalised deliveries) at the central and local levels of government.



Conclusions

- The SWAp related structures, as the joint review missions, offer a very distinctive opportunity for the contractual parties to share their performance, experiences, views and knowledge, thereby contributing to a more in-depth and open understanding of the system and the reasons why certain elements are not working well.
- The functioning of these structures seems to be providing confidence to more development partners that their resources are channelled according to the plans and agreed priorities.
- While these development partners increasingly trust the efforts and commitment of the Government of Uganda, they also stress the need to improve accountability mechanisms.

Conclusions

- However, competition by other contract modes, i.e. vertical projects (e.g. new global health initiatives) may challenge the functioning of the SWAp arrangement.
- The project incentive structure particularly benefits actors at the national level, preferring project modes and associated control in procurement, high salaries, foreign travel, and limited transparency in decision making, e.g. who gets recruited and how.
- Conversely, the incentive structure of the SWAp mode lies at the operational level (districts) with a greater emphasis on flow of funds to district level and associated activities and more elements of transparency regarding how funds are used.

SWAp Related Structures and Processes in Uganda

	Definition	Purpose / Processes	Frequency
Joint Review Meeting (JRM)	A joint review of sector performance by GoU and Partners (i.e. districts, Parliament, NGOs, private sector and donors).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Joint visits to selected districts (chosen on a rotational basis, according to performance (low and high)) based on standard terms of reference with a view to assess progress on areas such as human resources, financial flows, information and management systems, and agreed technical priority areas; •Review of the Annual Health Sector Performance Report; •Use of the agreed PEAP indicators (health) as the basis for progress assessment; •Discussion of proposals for the Budget Framework Paper / Medium Term Expenditure Framework priorities for the following financial year; •Discussion and agreement on undertakings (priorities), one or two priority programmes, and a tracking study for following year. 	Annual (October) Used to be twice a year.
Technical Review	Substitutes the previous arrangement of two JRMs per year. This meeting among stakeholders aims to review and discuss a specific technical issue agreed during the prior JRM. The 2004 technical review meeting will discuss the first draft of the second Health Sector Strategic Plan (2005-2010).		Annual (around April)
National Health Assembly (NHA)	Involves a broad participation of district and central level, and civil society stakeholders. The purpose of the assembly is to act as a forum for building nationwide consensus and advocacy for the health development agenda in the country. It also is an opportunity to improve sector performance by highlighting differences in district performance.		Annual
Health Policy Advisory Committee (HPAC)	Established as a forum to discuss and advise the Ministry of Health and development partners on the implementation of the National Health Policy and the HSSP.		Monthly Started as weekly and goal is to have it quarterly.

SWAp Related Structures and Processes in Uganda (Cont...)

Sector Working Group (SWG)	Oversees the financing of the SWAP with a particular focus on maximising efficiency and equity in the annual budget process. The SWG discusses and reviews the Budget Framework Paper[1] as well as proposals of new health sector projects before submission to the Development Committee of the MoFPED. It has an important role in vetting projects for compatibility with the HSSP and value for money.	Monthly in the run up the budget and bi-monthly otherwise (but does not happen in practice as regularly)
Working Groups (WGs)	Initially created to prepare for the first HSSP and are now considered to play a key role in translating HSSP outputs into policies, plans and activities. There are currently 9 working groups who report to HPAC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Human resources for health; •Drug procurement and management; •Health infrastructure; •Supervision and monitoring; •Basic health care package; •Public-private partnership in health; •Research and development; •Finance and procurement; •Health systems. 	During JRMs and throughout the year as per programme of work (e.g. on a more regular basis during preparations for the second HSSP).
Interagency Coordinating Committees (ICC)	Bring together all implementing agencies and donors who support a particular programme, and other MoH departments, NGOs and districts. The purpose of these committees is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Define core interventions, review overall progress in implementation and agree priorities for programmes; •Coordinate projects and other forms of support to a specific programme; •Review workplans and budgets of the programme; Examples of existing ICCs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reproductive health; •Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI); •Malaria; •HIV/AIDS; •TB; •Sanitation is in the process of organising an ICC. 	Quarterly

SWAp Related Structures and Processes in Uganda (Cont...)

SWAp Review Meetings	Government and development partners.	Review the general status of the SWAp partnership and discuss specific problems.	Annual
Health Development Partners Group (HDPG)	Established to coordinate development partners working in the health sector in Uganda.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Provide a forum for discussion on issues in the sector; •Enable partners to coordinate and assemble joint responses; •Serve as opportunity for members to communicate amongst themselves and with the MoH more effectively; •Function as a space to discuss issues related to HPAC; •Allow DPs to contribute more effectively to the JRMs in the health sector. 	Monthly
Partnership Fund Account	A special bank account held by the Ministry of Health for implementation of SWAp and HSSP specific activities (e.g. the costs of the JRMs, tracking studies and technical assistance). Monitoring of the account is performed by HPAC. Contribution of funds to the account is made by DPs, which included Ireland Aid, SIDA, NORAD, DFID, DANIDA, and UNICEF over the period of December 1999 to July 2003.		

SWAp and Districts

	Description
NHA	Representatives (political and technical) from all districts are invited to take part.
JRM, technical reviews	One 'good' and one 'bad' performing district from each geographical region (North, East, West and Central) are selected by the Health Planning Department (HPD), on a rotational basis, to host the district visits and to join the JRM. In addition, based on the key topics of the meeting, the HPD invites district representatives based on a purposive sample.
WGs	Districts participate in WGs meetings generally when these take place during the JRMs but not during their regular meetings along the year (unless a district person chairs the WG).
HPAC, SWG	Districts do not participate.
District Directors of Health Services Meetings	Annual meetings organised by the MoH. Meeting aims at sharing key information and discussing implications (e.g. budget allocations for next financial year).
Planning Meetings	Semi-annual meetings organised by the HPD. Regional meetings take place between November and February. These meetings focus on budgetary issues. Meetings at district level, between March and June, emphasise detailed planning issues.
Other meetings / visits / interactions	In line with the MoH function of providing support to districts there are various other forms of interaction and meetings between the two levels such as: Primary health care grant monitoring, area team supervision visits, HMIS, league table.
District and regional hospitals	The HPD meets with superintendents of all district and regional referral hospitals to discuss planning and other general matters.

Sources: SWAp Mechanisms and Structures (HDPGroup 2002); Mid-Term Review Report (MoH 2003); Outcome of SWAp coordination structures meeting (MoH 2003b); ToRs HDPG (HDPGroup 2001); de Loor and Hutton 2003; Kassami 2004; MoFPED 2004d (draft ToRs for HSWG).

[1] These are: utilisation of out-patient services in public and private-not-for-profit units, immunisation rates for DPT3, deliveries in health units, HIV prevalence rates, proportion of posts filled by qualified staff.

[1] Budget Framework Papers are prepared by each sector ministry as part of the budget process in consultation with stakeholders (to be discussed in SWG meetings) and form the basis for the Macroeconomic Plan and Indicative Budget Framework Paper, usually submitted to Parliament in April of each year (Kassami 2004).