Improved aid effectiveness but waiting for results: What are the missing links?

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The “top-down” rationale of the Paris/Accra agenda for aid effectiveness:

**INTERNATIONAL LEVEL**

**Improved Aid Delivery Effectiveness**
- Ownership
  - Respect ownership (conditionality)
  - Support capacity strengthening
- Alignment
  - Budget support
  - Use national financial and procurement systems
  - Coordinate technical cooperation
  - Reduce fragmentation of aid
  - Predictable, untied aid
- Harmonisation
  - Programme-based approach/SWAP
  - Joint missions/analyses
- Managing for Results
  - Use Performance Assessment Framework, Information systems
  - Reduce constraints to increase aid results
- Mutual Accountability
  - Transparency, Mutual assessments

**NATIONAL LEVEL**

**Improved Quality of National Policies & Systems**
- Governance
  - Broad country-level policy dialogue (including with civil society orgs)
  - Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
  - Sector policies & programmes
  - National Compacts (HP+)
  - Mutual Accountability
- Service Delivery
  - Improved access and quality of care
- Health Workforce
  - Capacity development
- Information
  - Improved information systems
- Financing
  - Improved public finance management systems
- Medical products
  - Improved procurement systems

**OPERATIONAL LEVEL**

**Improved Health Services and Impact**

- The “top-down” rationale of the Paris/Accra agenda for aid effectiveness:
  - Missing Links: “Bottom-up” approach
    - INTERNATIONAL LEVEL
      - Donor agencies’ constraints underestimated:
        - Administrative habits
        - Inappropriate capacities
        - Political decisions
        - Perverse incentives
      - Global health policies / initiatives ≠ Health System Strengthening
      - Too much focus on quantitative results
      - (Continued) direct interventions by donors
      - Non-OECD donors
    - Results take time!
    - Need for behaviour change in aid delivery
  - NATIONAL LEVEL
    - Insufficient look at policy implementation ("Policy – implementation gap")
    - Disconnection between national & operational level (insufficient feedback loop)
    - National financial management systems sometimes inappropriate for health activities
    - Results take time!
    - Need to reinforce links between different levels within a complex system – there is no linear causality between national policies & systems, and results
  - OPERATIONAL LEVEL
    - What are the operational problems from the patients/providers perspective
    - Empowerment of demand
    - External factors impacting:
      - Inter-sectoral matters (education, equipment)
      - Private sector
    - Results take time!
    - Need for a reactive, bottom-up approach to problem-solving

**Conclusion**

The values behind the Paris/Accra Declarations are sound, but a bottom-up application and a realistic evaluation approach have to be promoted to ensure quality, effectiveness and reactivity.