Examining Development Change through a lens of Complexity: Sector Wide Approaches in Pacific Education

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Outline & Introduction

- Orthodox approach to development – better aid agenda & results based management frameworks

- Complexity perspectives

- Education SWAPs in Solomon Islands and Tonga

- Re-visioning aid effectiveness & development

Better aid agenda & results based management (RBM) frameworks

- Harmonisation

- Partnership & mutual accountability

- Ownership

- Alignment with local processes

- Managing for results

= Sector wide approaches + RBM frameworks

Complexity Perspectives

View development as a COMPLEX ADAPTIVE SYSTEM

– a "messy reality" - agents react , adapt and co-evolve and unpredictable non-linear change emerges

– sensitive to initial conditions and responsive to inherent energy

How is a Complexity Perspective useful in Development?

- Seeks to understand the dynamics of change and develop capability to know how and where to influence the direction of change

Case Studies

Solomon Islands

- Pop: 550,000; Melanesian
- Geographically, culturally & linguistically diverse >80 languages. 342/992 islands inhabited
- 80% rural subsistence; 60% communities >200
- "Post-conflict state" - Tensions 1998-03
- 1st SWAp in Pacific – SIG/NZAID/EU, 2003-4
- Low education indicators

Tonga

- Pop: 100,000; Polynesian, 98%Tongan
- 70% live on Tongatapu. 4 main island gps. 36/150 islands inhabited
- monarchy for over 1000yrs; strong hierarchical social structure
- Civil unrest 2005-6 – "fragile state"
- 2nd Pacific SWAP GOT/NZAID/WB, 2004-5
- High education indicators Mature education ministry

Applying notions of Complexity to Case Study SWAp experiences

- The degree of connectivity identified in each system

- Importance of influence of the 'whole' context - sensitivity to initial conditions

- The extent to which 'space of the possible' was acknowledged – provision of a 'safe' place for innovation and exploration; whether experimentation is resisted, tolerated or encouraged

Re-visioning aid effectiveness & development

- **Development = Complex Adaptive System:** change *evolves* from behaviour of whole ʼ system

- **Aspirations should not be confused with what is achievable:** pay attention to what actually happens than what should have happened

- **Real time learning:** pay attention to feedback loops to enhance/dampen certain effects

- Learn how to *nudge* change in desired direction

Thank You