

Grasping the Strengths of Fragile States:

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# Aid Effectiveness Between ‘Top-down’ and ‘Bottom-up’ Statebuilding

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## Executive summary

Over the last decade, state fragility has become an international policy concern of the donor, security, and peacebuilding communities. Despite different institutional perspectives, the debate over fragile states has reflected an implicit consensus in these communities that a strong and functioning state is *the* instrument to solve the challenges of poverty, armed violence, and sustainable development. This consensus has marked a significant shift away from the widely-held belief of the 1980s as to the merits of market-based solutions to these problems. Instead, ‘statebuilding’ has become somewhat of a prescriptive normalcy, as evidenced in the international community’s responses to armed violence and insecurity in countries such as Afghanistan, Bosnia Herzegovina, Liberia, Haiti, and Iraq.

In this CCDP Working Paper, Achim Wennmann identifies an increasing gap between ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ approaches to building robust state structures. ‘Top-down’ statebuilding encompasses most development engagements in fragile states, and is guided by a particular set of assumptions related to the composition and structure of national and local government, and on the functions the state apparatus should perform. These assumptions usually entail a working and accountable bureaucracy, the monopoly over the legitimate use of violence, and the capacity to deliver on a series of basic services to individuals residing on the state’s territory. Yet in the focus countries themselves, such statebuilding efforts are often perceived as an imposition of authority that is only vaguely related – if it is related at all – to pre-existing formal or informal governance structures.

By contrast, the notion of ‘bottom-up’ statebuilding is based on a transitional pact between local stakeholders and communities, central governments, and the international community, with the aim of nurturing the fusion of traditional, informal, and new state components through a progressive transformation process. Such a context-sensitive statebuilding strategy focuses more on already established government capacity at the municipal and district level, and recognises that informal governance arrangements may also provide ‘classic’ state services such as protection, justice, or welfare – sometimes even more effectively than the state itself. ‘Bottom-up’ statebuilding, therefore, lies between the utopianism of quick-fix solutions advocated by top-down approaches, and the impracticalities of a violent, century-long state formation process. The Working Paper thus invites us to rethink the way the international community approaches the issue of fragility, and explores the opportunities and implications for development agencies to embark on more ‘bottom-up’ approaches to statebuilding.

‘Bottom-up’ statebuilding opens a new policy space for aid effectiveness and emphasises the importance of identifying the relative strengths of fragile states as a starting point for development engagements. The literature review suggests that many contributions focus on the weakness of fragile states in terms of institutional capacity, economic performance, or state-society relations. Their conceptual starting points prevent a better understanding of the political and economic logics of state fragility, one that would also take into account pre-existing forms of political authority and social organisation. Adjusting our optics on fragile states also connects to an evolving consensus as expressed, for example, by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), that statebuilding is “an endogenous process to enhance capacity, institutions and legitimacy of the state driven by state-society relations” (OECD, forthcoming, p.3).

The paper also highlights a number of knowledge gaps related to enhancing aid effectiveness in war-to-peace transitions. Donors often have a comparative advantage in facilitating conflict transformation due to their long-time presence in a given region or country, their local knowledge, and their developmental expertise. However, many potential gains in the effectiveness of aid are lost because donors tend to engage only once a peace agreement has been signed. Greater donor involvement at earlier stages of peace processes could help to positively shape future economic expectations, prepare post-conflict recoveries, and ensure that enduring mediation support structures are developed that strengthen transitional pacts between local stakeholders in war-to-peace transitions. Identifying the added value of current mediation practices for aid effectiveness opens a promising policy space for development agencies.

'Bottom-up' statebuilding can also be supported through targeted armed violence prevention and reduction programming. An increasingly sophisticated evidence base on armed violence provides a new vantage point to explore the mechanisms between armed violence and development. Better information on the distribution and magnitude of the cost of armed violence at the municipal level could also assist in the building of constituencies advocating armed violence reduction, as well as the nurturing of local ownership and the facilitation of improved state-society relations.

The Working Paper conducts its analysis in three parts. The first part sets out the context that made fragile states a development concern and introduces the scope and dilemmas of current aid effectiveness initiatives. The second part critically reviews research streams on fragile states including various definitions and rankings, case study contributions, as well as scholarly work on state formation, the political and economic logics of state fragility, and sub-state governance arrangements. The third part distils options for future research that relate to the expectations in statebuilding, aid delivery at the sub-state level, aid effectiveness in war-to-peace transitions, mediation support infrastructure, and armed violence reduction.

As such, this working paper takes stock of a diverse selection of scholarly and policy literatures, and makes a contribution to the evolving discussions on state fragility in academia and the donor community. It is part of a larger project supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) on development cooperation in fragile states and conflict situations. The project proposes new research opportunities on the OECD-Development Assistance Committee's (OECD-DAC) initiatives that are related to the 2005 Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the 2007 Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations.

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Even though this Working Paper has undergone a careful review, any errors and omissions of fact or judgement are of course my own. The text is an interpretation of the state of knowledge on state fragility based on publically available sources published by October 2009. The views expressed in this publication are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Government of Switzerland.

# List of acronyms

BMZ	Bundesministerium für Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development)
BTI	Bertelsmann Transformation Index
CCDP	Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding
CIFP	Country Indicators for Foreign Policy
CSRC	Crisis States Research Centre
DAC	Donor Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FSDC	Fragile States Development Consortium
FSI	Failed States Index
ISW	Index of State Weakness
LICUS	Low Income Countries Under Stress
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
PCIL	Peace and Conflict Instability Ledger
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SFI	State Fragility Index
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

# Introduction

Since its origin after the Second World War, development assistance has occurred in contexts that would today qualify as fragile states or conflict situations.<sup>1</sup> However, a unified perspective on the role of the state in facilitating development has only recently emerged. For most of its history, the development community has been divided about the relationship between the state and the market in society.<sup>2</sup> In the 1980s, many donors considered development to be a set of technical measures aimed at improving the economic performance of developing countries according to economic policy prescriptions. This position became associated with the Washington Consensus, which prioritised markets over state structures and was believed to represent interventions that were ‘outside the realm of political debate’ (Rist, 1997, pp. 78-79).<sup>3</sup>

Over the last two decades, however, there has been a shift of attitude towards the state in development policy. The state has come to be perceived as a central development enabler and, as such, development is increasingly recognised as a political process. The United Kingdom’s White Paper on Development, for example, argues that in fragile states ‘development cannot be separated from politics and security’ (DFID, 2009a, p. 71). This development and security nexus emphasises the need to expand the traditional development optic towards conflict resolution, social reconstruction, and statebuilding (Duffield, 2002b). A focus on the state also emerged after development economists realised that economic growth could not occur without improvements in state policies and institutions (Burnside and Dollar, 1997). The 2008 global financial crisis further undermined market confidence, and emphasised the urgent need to create a new consensus in which state policy and intervention would have a larger role (Mold et al., 2009, pp. 34-35).

The objective of this Working Paper is to review various strands of literature on development assistance in fragile states, with the aim of identifying research streams in support of initiatives within the OECD-DAC on aid effectiveness. The OECD has become the central forum to improve aid effectiveness in fragile states and conflict situations, efforts that culminated in the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (hereafter ‘the Paris Declaration’) and the 2007 Policy Commitment and Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations (hereafter ‘the Principles’). This Working Paper adopts a multidisciplinary perspective and draws on qualitative and quantitative contributions from the fields of development economics, political science, political economy, international relations, history, and new public management, as well as policy documents from national and international development agencies. Given the magnitude of these literatures, the Paper concentrates on the main issues and perspectives.<sup>4</sup> The main findings are:

- Most international statebuilding efforts have focused on a ‘top-down’ approach that purposefully imposes a specific state model on fragile states. Much less attention has been devoted to ‘bottom-up’ approaches that nurture the fusion of traditional and new state components through a progressive transformation process forged by means of transition pacts among multiple stakeholders.
- The measurement of state fragility has to shift from the assessment of weaknesses to the assessment of strengths. Most fragile state indices measure state fragility according to specific benchmarks that tend to emphasise lacking rather than existing capacities. A better understanding of the relative strengths of fragile states would assist in informing development initiatives on the ground and increasing local ownership.



- 'Top-down' statebuilding approaches do not reflect the actual historical record of state formation in Europe. This disconnect emphasises that expectations in statebuilding may need to be adjusted, and that by recognising alternative forms of political authority and local governance arrangements, new policy spaces are created for donor engagement in fragile states.
- Fragile states are characterised by fragmented patterns of political authority. While political economy or drivers of change analyses can identify different powerful actors, engaging them is often a sensitive issue. The challenge for donors is to find strategies that insulate them from the criticism of dealing with these actors, before they undermine the donor's development objectives.
- Mediation support activities have a great potential benefit for aid effectiveness. In fragile states, unresolved disputes hinder development yields, and a better understanding of mediation support may open new opportunities to prevent and reduce armed violence, free-up private sector investments, and strengthen state-society relations.

The Working Paper conducts its analysis in three parts. The first part reviews the evolution of the policy concern with fragile states and introduces the objectives and dilemmas of the Paris Declaration and the Principles. The second part charts various research streams on fragile states, including various definitions of state fragility, rankings of fragile states, case study contributions, historical perspectives on state formation, functionalist approaches to governance in developing countries, as well as sub-state governance arrangements as alternatives to 'the state'. The third part distils options for future research and emphasises the policy opportunities deriving from the notion of 'bottom-up' statebuilding.<sup>5</sup>

# Fragile states as a development concern

The term ‘fragile state’ has become a common way of characterising all developing countries, even though it relates to a phenomenon that cuts across low, medium and high-income countries.<sup>6</sup> ‘Fragility’ usually describes something that is easily broken, delicate, or vulnerable. It can manifest itself at the state level through a state’s inability to deliver basic services to its citizens (state failure), or the continuous erosion of political institutions (state collapse) (Milliken and Krause, 2002). At the societal level, the notion of fragility captures the vulnerability and resilience of communities that are exposed to risk factors such as armed conflict and violence, disease, and natural disasters (Fabra Mata and Ziaja, 2009, p. 5). Weak state-society relations feed fragility by delegitimising the state in the eyes of the population, and increasing the society’s vulnerabilities to armed violence and disease (OECD, 2008a, p. 16). The following sections review the historical context and evolution of the discourse on fragile states and why it has become a major concern for development policy. It also introduces the OECD’s Paris Declaration and Principles, and analyses their implications for strengthening development prospects in fragile states.

## The evolution of the fragile states discourse

The discourse on fragile states emerged as a consequence of four interrelated developments: a realisation in the development community that the effect of aid on economic growth would be minimal if state policy and institutions in developing countries did not change; the experience of weak states as a threat to global stability; United Nations peacebuilding activities; and changes in the security agenda after the Cold War. These perspectives on fragile states vary in terms of why and in what context the discourse emerged; however, their common thread is that they perceive the state – and not the market – as *the* instrument to solve a problem. For some, this problem was poverty and armed conflict, for others it was the insecurity of states or people.

In the mid-1990s, many development agencies recognised that the effect of aid on economic growth and poverty reduction was greater in countries with ‘good’ policies and institutions (Burnside and Dollar, 1997, p. 33; Burnside and Dollar, 1998, p. 15).<sup>7</sup> Japan’s state-led development approach, and the restructuring of the economies of Eastern Europe, also emphasised that the state can be an important development catalyst (Wade, 1996; Amsden et al., 1994). These insights connected to a pre-existing discourse in the social sciences associated with Theda Skocpol’s work on ‘bringing the state back in’, which fostered discussions on the capacity of states, their strengths and weaknesses, and their role as development catalysers (Skocpol, 1985; Migdal, 1988). They also invited a rethinking of the Washington Consensus and devoted greater attention to ‘the institutional dimensions [and] the sort of policies (...) that promote an equitable distribution of income as well as a rapid growth of income’ (Williamson, 2000, p. 262). State institutions became strategic opportunities to make aid more effective, with some arguing that the poverty reduction impact of aid could in fact be doubled (Collier and Dollar, 2002, p. 1475). New initiatives emerged that focused on donor coordination, absorptive capacities of recipient countries, and optimal sequencing of interventions (McGillivray, 2005, p. ii).

The fragile state also became a policy concern because of the growing perception that the absence or weakness of a state could be a threat to economic stability. The Asian financial crises of 1997 and 1998 exposed the risks of global economic integration and the

vulnerability of emerging economies. The crisis was explained by weak and corrupt governance, as well as financial liberalisation without the appropriate regulatory framework (Wade, 1998, p. 1535). The crisis, therefore, underlined the need to increase the economic governance and resilience capacity of states to harness the opportunities of globalisation. A similar rationale was used in relation to the spread of infectious diseases, uncontrolled migration, and climate change (Wesley, 2008, p. 372).

With the events of 11 September 2001, fragile states also became a crucial security threat (Patrick, 2007). As noted by the 2006 National Security Strategy of the United States of America (USA): 'Weak and impoverished states and ungoverned areas are not only a threat to their people and a burden on regional economies, but are also susceptible to exploitation by terrorists, tyrants, and international criminals' (PUSA, 2006, p. 33). In a sense, managing fragile states had become 'vital to international security' and statebuilding was 'central to the future of world order' (Fukujama, 2004, pp.162-163). The perception of fragile states as a security threat remains popular even though scholarly research has exposed its limitations (Hehir, 2007).<sup>8</sup> In Latin America, the fragile states-security linkage has also been used by politicians in order to attract the attention of the USA, and justify requests for development and military assistance as exemplified by the Plan Colombia (Serrano, 2008, p. 2).

Fragile states also emerged in the context of United Nations peacebuilding activities. As part of the 1992 Agenda for Peace, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali delineated activities around preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, and peacekeeping, and added a fourth dimension on post-conflict peacebuilding as an 'action to identify and support structures which tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid the relapse into conflict' (UNGA, 1992, para.21).<sup>9</sup> This understanding of peacebuilding emphasised the need to consolidate peace after war, and prevent renewed conflict, thus encompassing both remedial and preventive purposes (Paris and Sisk, 2009b, p. 5). The notion of peacebuilding does not just mean the elimination of armed conflict, but also the achievement of a 'positive' peace,<sup>10</sup> the creation of non-violent behaviour patterns and attitudes, as well as the transformation of the structures of conflict – the institutions, actors, issues, and discourses that are held to reproduce armed violence (Barnett et al., 2007, pp. 37, 42). Gradually, peacebuilding was associated with a democratic state, a liberal market economy, and the rule of law, as well as to activities that would promote the respect for human rights, multi-party elections, and good governance norms while reducing military expenditure (Paris, 2002, p. 638). These state attributes were also held to define a new type of political conditionality of international engagement in fragile or conflict states (Uvin and Biagiotti, 1996, p. 377).

In addition, the fragile states discourse was related to the broadening and deepening of the security agenda after the cold war (Buzan, 1991; Krause and Williams, 1997). Rather than just focusing on the security of the state, emphasis was placed on the factors and conditions that determine the people's experience of insecurity and violence. Such a perspective stressed a state's functional capacity to deliver security, welfare and representation (Krause and Jütersonke, 2005). The role of the state was also emphasised after a series of human tragedies in the mid-1990 – especially Rwanda and Bosnia – resulted in the development of the notion of a 'responsibility to protect' (R2P), whereby states were called upon to protect their citizens against genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity (ICISS, 2001). Ensuing debates questioned if R2P provides a new basis for an international 'obligation' to intervene if states failed to deliver basic protective functions (Jütersonke, 2006, p. 13; Bellamy, 2008, p. 135).

## Aid and armed conflict

Fragile states also became a development concern through the recognition of a greater linkage between development and armed conflict. The end of the cold war changed the status of a number of peripheral territories from strategic interests to potentially dangerous places. Development became increasingly related to security concerns because armed conflict and crime were perceived to occur predominantly in developing and rapidly urbanising countries (Burr et al, 2007, 9). In this context, development did not just mean improving long term economic conditions and opportunities, but also 'attempting to transform societies as a whole, reconstructing social relations anew, and especially, changing behaviour and attitudes. Rather than building physical things or redistributing material resources, development now means getting inside the head to govern the hand' (Duffield, 2002a, pp. 1066-1067).

Armed conflict was understood by many policy-makers and development agencies as a social regression or 'black box' that interrupted a linear process of development. It was portrayed as 'development in reverse', trapping countries into recurring cycles of poverty and violence. Presenting armed conflict as an economic pathology justified an interventionist agenda, and the need for post-conflict aid, peace operations, security guarantees, and caps on military spending (Collier et al, 2003, p. 32; Collier et al, 2008). However, these accounts of armed conflict did not recognise the social and economic transformations also taking place during armed conflict (Cramer, 2006, p. 197). In many situations, armed violence was used to further economic ends, and represented 'not simply a breakdown of a particular system, but a way of creating an alternative system of profit, power and even protection' (Keen, 1998, p. 11).

Development agencies found themselves increasingly exposed to these situations. They became involved in complex humanitarian emergencies,<sup>11</sup> and became 'trapped' in countries – such as Rwanda and Nepal – that slipped into conflict despite a long record of development assistance (Paffenholz, 2006a, p. 8; Väyrynen, 2000, p. 49). The experience of these engagements showed that aid had specific functions that did not necessarily support humanitarian or development prerogatives (Keen, 2008, p. 116). Aid was found to affect local resource transfers and disputes over resource distribution. It also financed armed groups, legitimised belligerent factions, and entrenched conflict economies (Paffenholz, 2006b, pp. 28-29). The lesson was, therefore, that 'when international assistance is given in the context of a violent conflict, it becomes part of this context, and thus also of the conflict' (Anderson 1999, p. 1).

The recognition of such wide-ranging consequences of aid shaped a series of strategic concerns on conflict-sensitive development engagements. For example, donors follow the 'do no harm' principle when disengaging from conflict countries, staying on, or facing those within their jurisdiction that are responsible for an armed conflict (OECD, 2007a, pp. 6-7). Donors also explored the ways in which they could work *around*, *in*, or *on* the armed conflict. They could work *around* a conflict by withdrawing or suspending aid or structural adjustment programmes. Such actions would reduce their role to watching from outside and reengaging at the cessation of conflict. Donors could work *in* a conflict situation out of recognition that it is at this time that poverty and human suffering is most severe and aid therefore most needed. Some donors worked *on* the conflict to resolve an existing conflict and prevent future ones, thereby removing a principal development impediment (Goodhand, 2001, pp. 30-31). In cases where development actors remain on the ground during a conflict, they often need to maintain a sensitive balance between humanitarian and development mandates, both of which may be conducted at the same time depending on the spatial distribution of armed violence and its effects (Paffenholz, 2006b, p. 22).

## The Paris Declaration and the Principles

The changing historical context after the Cold War and the experience of donors in conflict situations shaped efforts to rethink their possible new roles in a changing world. The OECD formalised such endeavours over the last decade as it established guidelines for the role of aid in conflict prevention and in transitional, conflict, and post-conflict situations (OECD, 1998, p. 7-8; OECD, 2001). It also focused on donor guidance on topics such as security sector reform (SSR), anti-corruption, justice and security delivery, and armed violence reduction (OECD 2007b; OECD 2007b; OECD, 2007d; OECD, 2009). Governments were also called upon to structure their development assistance along 'whole-of-government' approaches. These approaches implied the coordination of policy inputs across various government departments dealing with fragile or conflict countries, with the aim of increasing cost effectiveness and legitimacy, and strengthening implementation (OECD, 2006, p. 18).

The efforts to enhance coordination between states culminated in the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the 2007 Policy Commitment and Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations (see Table 1). The Paris Declaration is an action-oriented roadmap aimed at improving the effectiveness of development aid. Its spirit is described by strengthening efforts to increase the ownership of partner countries over their development policies; to align donor strategies to partner countries' national development strategies; to harmonise the actions of development agencies; to strengthen decision-making for results; and to ensure mutual accountability (OECD, 2005, p. 1). The 2007 Principles entail ten guidelines on how donors should engage in fragile states. Both the Paris Declaration and the Principles have an inward-looking character in that they are primarily targeted at the development community itself and explore specifically how the impact of this community can be improved. Concerns focus on the harmonisation of activities in partner countries across development agencies and the improvement of development results. One recommendation is to yield greater control of development processes to partner countries in order to increase national ownership.

**Table 1: Key aspects of the 2005 Paris Declaration and 2007 Principles**

<i>Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005)</i>	<i>Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations (2007)</i>
<p><i>Ownership:</i> Developing countries set their own strategies for poverty reduction, improve their institutions and tackle corruption.</p> <p><i>Alignment:</i> Donor countries align behind these objectives and use local systems.</p> <p><i>Harmonisation:</i> Donor countries coordinate, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplication.</p> <p><i>Results:</i> Developing countries and donors shift focus to development results and results get measured.</p> <p><i>Mutual Accountability:</i> Donors and partners are accountable for development results.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take context as the starting point.</li> <li>2. Ensure all activities do no harm.</li> <li>3. Focus on statebuilding as the central objective.</li> <li>4. Prioritise prevention.</li> <li>5. Recognise the links between political, security and development objectives.</li> <li>6. Promote non-discrimination as a basis for inclusive and stable societies.</li> <li>7. Align with local priorities in different ways and in different contexts.</li> <li>8. Agree on practical co-ordination mechanisms between international actors.</li> <li>9. Act fast... but stay engaged long enough to give success a chance.</li> <li>10. Avoid pockets of exclusion ('aid orphans').</li> </ol>

Sources: OECD, 2005; OECD, 2007a.

The Accra Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2008 took stock of the implementation record of the Paris Declaration. The Accra Agenda for Action recognised that ‘we are making progress, but not enough’ and key recommendation included increasing country ownership, building more effective and inclusive partnerships, as well as achieving and accounting for development results (OECD 2008d, p. 1; OECD 2008c, pp. 14-16).

Ongoing activities focus on monitoring and periodic reports that are intended to foster state compliance with the Paris Declaration and the Principles. Concerning the monitoring of the Paris Declaration, the OECD has developed a series of progress indicators along the principles of ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results, and mutual accountability (OECD, 2005). In 2006, the OECD conducted a cross-country baseline assessment that was followed by a second expanded survey of progress on implementing the Paris Declaration in 54 countries (OECD, 2006b; OECD, 2008c).

With regards to the Principles, findings from the 2009 Principles Monitoring Survey Report highlight good, moderate, or improving results for most of the Principles with mixed results for Principle 1 (taking context as a starting point), and weak results for Principle 10 (avoiding pockets of exclusion). Based on national consultations in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, DRC, Haiti, Sierra Leone, and Timor-Leste, the monitoring illustrates the work ahead on issues such as defining and resourcing the analytical efforts required for context-sensitive programming, overcoming the fragmentation of donor activities and parallel implementation structures, increasing the coverage of crisis prevention efforts, and redressing the imbalance of aid between and within countries (OECD, 2010).

In support of the Paris Declaration and the Principles, recent efforts have shifted towards a coherent, coordinated and complementary – the ‘3C’ – approach across security, diplomacy, aid, and finance in situations of conflict and fragility. Here, the idea is that 3C builds on the common requirements of whole-of-government and whole-of-system approaches in a combined effort to focus on the required results, rather than on questions of mandate, resources and leadership (SDC, 2009, p. 8).

## **Implementation dilemmas**

The interrelated issues of aid effectiveness and fragile states have become a principle policy theme for the development community, and donor countries have been shaping their development strategies accordingly (UNDESA and UNDP, 2007; BMZ, 2007a; USAID, 2005; DFID, 2005; DFID, 2009c). The United Kingdom’s White Paper on Development exemplifies how much development practice has changed from technical market interventions to addressing development as an inherently political challenge:

The best way to stem the rise of violence and create a platform for sustained growth is to build a state that is capable of delivering basic services effectively and fairly, and is accountable and responsive to its citizens. It also requires working more politically. Conflict and fragility are inherently political. They are about how power and resources are shared in society, between ethnic groups, social classes or men and women. Their solutions must be rooted in politics (DFID, 2009a, p. 70).



These new directions of development policy, however, also mean new practical challenges. The pursuit of aid effectiveness 'is premised on the assumption that a government is willing and able to lead and is perceived as legitimate by its citizens' (OECD, 2009, p. 23). Yet in situations of armed conflict or authoritarian rule, such willingness and ability is not always given. In these circumstances, there is little – if any – dialogue between donors and the government, and the implementation of the Paris Declaration is limited (OPM and IDL, 2008, p. vi). Finding ways of dealing with governments that are unwilling to implement development-oriented transformations is therefore a crucial challenge for donors.<sup>12</sup>

Moreover, the perception of development as politics and the focus of the Paris Declaration on changing a country's political system may ultimately be self-defeating in terms of strengthening development outcomes. If the aid effectiveness agenda is increasingly perceived as an agenda for engineering political change, it is unlikely to provide an incentive for commitment from many governments. As a consequence, the Paris Declaration may be perceived as yet another attempt by the international community to intervene in developing countries, even if such efforts are well intended (Booth, 2008, p. 1).

In addition, if political changes were really influencing the trajectory of development outcomes, most donors would be ill-suited to advance this goal because their prevailing attitude is one of risk avoidance and political correctness. A study of Irish Aid concluded:

Risk-aversion and illusions of control are leading even progressive donors to adopt practices – within sector programmes and budget support – that are at variance with the policies they espouse. (...) The fact that political 'realities' in the donor country make this behaviour hard to avoid does not seem a sufficient reason for not doing what is right. A thinking and learning organisation would set itself the goal of managing these constraints, rather than tamely accepting them (ABIA, 2008, p. 48).

Thus, if the Paris Declaration shifts development practice towards reforming political systems, its full development gains could remain unfulfilled unless donors take risks, and go beyond their current preoccupation about disbursement conditions and aid allocation (ABIA, 2008, p. 49).

Another dilemma of the Paris Declaration is its ambition to reduce poverty and increase aid effectiveness without tackling armed violence. There is an increasing recognition that armed violence undermines development and prevents achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Steward, 2003, p. 325; Turner et al, 2005). Armed violence imposes tremendous human, social, and economic costs, and destroys development opportunities. Understanding armed violence in fragile contexts is therefore imperative to achieving the goals of the Paris Declaration. Recent work undertaken by the OECD and the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development has begun to address this gap, emphasising the need for a bottom-up understanding of people's insecurity and the related linkage to state institutions and development (OECD, 2009; Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2008; Miller and Rudnik, 2008). In this view, a crucial element for shifting a state from fragility to resilience is a better understanding not that *the state has failed*, but clarifying the indicators that establish *whom* the state is failing, *where*, *how*, and *why*.<sup>13</sup>

Since the Paris Declaration and the Principles have been adopted in 2005 and 2007 respectively, other guidelines have also emerged. In 2008, World Bank President Robert Zoellick presented principles with a slightly different priority setting and provided an alternative reference for structuring development assistance in fragile states. The World Bank and OECD principles overlap on national ownership, donor coordination, local context, and long-term donor commitment. The World Bank, however, is more explicit on the need to tackle security in order to ensure development, engage the private sector, and recognise political economy constraints on development (Zoellick, 2008a, pp. 74-75, 77-78). The World Bank principles are particularly different in relation to armed violence. Zoellick emphasised the importance of shifting beyond classic development or conflict thinking towards 'securing development' – a notion that entails 'bringing security and development together first to smoothen the transition from conflict to peace, [and] then to ensure stability so that development can take hold over a decade and beyond' (Zoellick, 2008b, p. 11). In this way, the World Bank principles connect to the growing recognition that ending conflict, building peace, and achieving development are interconnected (UNDP, 2008, xix-xx; ILO, 2008; de Soto and del Castillo, 1994, p. 76).

In order to strengthen war-to-peace transitions and development it is, therefore, important to go beyond an operational division that separates conflict from post-conflict phases, and shift policy towards systems approaches that increase aid effectiveness through improving the coherence, coordination, and complementarity of interventions. In some cases, such as the DRC and Afghanistan, increasing aid effectiveness also means adopting a regional approach and recognising the inherent interconnectedness of conflict and fragility across borders.



## Research inventory on fragile states

In the broadest sense, perspectives on ‘fragile states’ can be distinguished in two ways (Di John 2008, pp. 2-3, 30-31). The first emphasises the role of markets and their needs for transparent and accountable states as a necessary input for economic development, a development that is limited in developing countries through the existence of corrupt and patrimonial state structures. State fragility is a deviation from an ideal type that is usually associated with a functioning bureaucracy, the monopoly over the legitimate use of force, and the capacity to deliver a series of basic services to the populations living within it. From this perspective, efforts to address the failings of the state focus on a ‘top-down’ implementation of a specific state model.

The other perspective considers client and patrimonial states as purposefully constructed entities. These serve local elites or foreign interests and strengthen monopolised capital accumulation and the maintenance of political power. This view exposes the formal measurement of state fragility, because it fails to conceptualise state weakness as a strategy to manage resources, territory, people, and power. It also places armed violence in the context of social transformation, and the historical conditions of state formation, and recognises alternatives to a specific state model. These involve traditional figures of authority, or strongmen, that are perceived by local populations as a legitimate authority (Rodgers, 2006, pp. 316-318).

The following section charts the main research streams on fragile states. These are located between the two perspectives just considered. It analyses various definitions characterising the fragile state as a deviation from a Weberian model centred around the state as the legitimate holder of the monopoly of violence. The next sections then look at various ranking exercises as a basis for development planning, and chart an ever-increasing pool of qualitative country case studies. The reader is then invited to rethink the prevailing orthodoxy associated with the Weberian state by exploring the record of state formation in Europe and reflecting on the historical success and failures of states. The final section explores the importance of the political and economic logics of state fragility for the governance of developing countries, as well as various governance arrangements at the sub-state level as alternatives to ‘the state’.

Overall, this part of the Working Paper highlights that most international efforts have focused on a ‘top-down’ approach that purposefully imposes a specific state model on fragile states. Much less attention has focused on a ‘bottom-up’ approach that nurtures the fusion of traditional and new state components. The Annex provides an overview of the various research centres and government departments that have made contributions to the fragile states debate.

## Defining fragile states

Most definitions tend to describe fragile states in relation to some ideal notion of 'the state'. This model is usually understood as connecting the historical experience of the European state with Max Weber's classic definition: 'a compulsory political organisation with continuous operations will be called a "state" insofar as its administrative staff successfully upholds the claim to the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force in the enforcement of order' (see Hay and Lister, 2006, p. 8). State institutions manage state affairs and are distinct from civil society. They have their own interests, preferences and capacities. Weber's definition has been the reason for the emphasis on the legitimacy of force used to constrain populations, state strategies to construct and sustain the use of force, the balance between coercion and consent of societies, and the mechanisms by which legitimacy can be established (Hay and Lister 2006, pp. 8-9).

Many contemporary definitions of the 'fragile' state highlight the continuous relevance of Weber's characterisation of the state (see Table 2). Donor definitions underline that fragility is a function of the measurable absence of state attributes (institutions) and the delivery of state functions (security, welfare, justice and representation). Hence, they capture the inherent *weakness* of fragile states.

**Table 2: Selected donor definitions of fragile states**

<b>BMZ</b>	Fragile statehood exists in situations where there is low level of government performance, where state institutions are weak or on the verge of collapse and where the state either fails to perform core roles or performs them wholly inadequately.
<b>DFID</b>	Where the government cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor.
<b>European Union</b>	Fragility refers to weak or failing structures and to situations where the social contract is broken due to the State's incapacity or unwillingness to deal with its basic functions, meets its obligations and responsibilities regarding service delivery, management of resources, rule of law, equitable access to power, security and safety of the populace and protection and promotion of citizens' rights and freedoms.
<b>OECD</b>	States are fragile when state structures lack political will and/or capacity to provide the basic functions needed for poverty reduction, development, and to safeguard the security and human rights of their populations.
<b>SDC</b>	A state or context is describe as fragile if a significant proportion of the population does not regard the state as the legitimate framework for the exercise of power, if the state does not or cannot exercise its monopoly of the legitimate use of force within its territory, and if the state is unable or unwilling to provide basic goods and services to a significant part of the population.
<b>USAID</b>	Fragile states refer to a broad range of failing, failed, and recovering states that are unable or unwilling to adequately assure the provision of security and basic services to significant portion of their populations and where the legitimacy of the governments is in question.
<b>World Bank</b>	Low Income Countries Under Stress (LICUS) are vulnerable in their capacity to deliver services to their citizens, to control corruption, or to provide for sufficient voice and accountability.

Sources: BMZ, 2007a, p. 13; DFID, 2005, p. 7; European Union, 2007, p. 5; OECD, 2007a, p.7, FDFA, 2007, p. 47; USAID, 2005, p. 1; World Bank, 2005a, 1.

Most of these definitions highlight that fragile states are characterised by a lack of will and capacity to deliver core state functions. DFID's definition focuses on the provision of entitlements in the context of poverty reduction and distinguishes between capacity and willingness. This definition leads to four categories of countries, including the 'good performers', the 'weak but willing', the 'strong but unresponsive', and the 'weak-weak states' – the latter having neither capacity nor willingness to reduce poverty (DFID, 2005, p. 8). USAID emphasises that there is no predictable path of failure and recovery and that 'it is more important to understand how far and quickly a country is moving from or toward stability than it is to categorise a state as failed or not' (USAID, 2005, p. 1). While the World Bank tends to understand fragility as an economic problem, the European Union emphasises the need for a social contract between state and society. Despite these variations, donor definitions seem to have a tendency to measure state fragility against an ideal type state that in turn becomes the basis for the ranking of fragile states.

## Ranking fragile states

The assumption of an ideal type state as a benchmark is the quintessential requirement to measurement techniques (Migdal, 1988, p. 19). Depending on their score, states are then categorised as 'strong' or 'weak', 'robust' or 'fragile', or 'successful' or 'failing' (Bøås and Jennings, 2005, p. 388). In these rankings, western democracies often represent strong, robust and successful states – and have therefore become a 'prescriptive normalcy' – while those that deviate are labelled weak, fragile, or failing (Dornboos, 2002, p. 808; Rotberg, 2004, p. 1).

Indicators for state fragility orient themselves mainly according to the lack of a state's capacity to maintain 'empirical' – as opposed to 'juridical' – statehood and fulfil certain state functions (Krause and Jütersonke, 2007, p. 5).<sup>14</sup> Indicators to measure this 'stateness' include, for example, the minimum requirements for a state set out by the 1933 Montevideo Convention: a permanent population, a defined territory, a government; and the capacity to enter into relations with the other states (Malanczuk, 1997, pp. 75-76). Others have also described these indicators as including the rule of law, the monopoly on the legitimate use of force, administrative control, management of public finances, investment in human capital, the creation of citizenship rights and duties, the provision of infrastructure services, the formation of markets, and the management of public asset (Ghani and Lockhart, 2008, pp. 124-166; Holsti, 1996, 104-108).

In recent years, the measurement of state fragility has become a popular research venture (see Table 3).<sup>15</sup> Underlying the numerous ranking exercises is the idea that fragility can be rated according to what functions the state is not delivering on. Thus, the severity of failure is related to a hierarchy of political goods including security, dispute settlement, participation, and social service delivery (Rotberg, 2004, pp. 3-5). The identification of state fragility can also occur via a three-way process that identifies the relevant configurational and composite variables; postulates thresholds to identify transformations and shifts from states of equilibriums; and determines the independence of variables to isolate their causal significance (Carment, 2004, p. 138). Current state fragility indices draw indicators and data sources from 41 categories (Fabra Mata and Ziaja, 2009, p. 81).

*Table 3: Selected state fragility indices*

<i>Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI)</i>	The BTI is a larger index that measures transformation processes towards democracy and market economy. It uses expert surveys entailing 52 questions and 17 indicators. Two of the questions relate to state weakness and address coverage of the monopoly of the use of force over the entire territory and the extent to which administrative structures exist.	Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2009.
<i>Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP)</i>	The CIFP draws on country-level structural indicators to develop effective policies to respond to intrastate conflict. It departs from three fundamental state properties: authority, legitimacy, and capacity. These properties are then measured for 192 countries through range of 74 indicators covering the spheres of governance, economics, security and crime, human development, demography, the environment, and one cross-cutting theme: gender	Carment et al., 2006; Carment et al., 2007.
<i>Failed States Index (FSI)</i>	The FSI tracks the risk of state failure using the Conflict Assessment System Tool (CAST) developed as a methodology for early warning and assessment of internal conflict (FFP, 2009). The FSI ranks 177 countries based on indicators that proxy demographic pressures, complex humanitarian crises, group grievances, human flight, uneven development, economic growth and decline, state legitimacy, public services, rule of law and human rights, security sector, factionalised elites, and external intervention.	FFP, 2008.
<i>Peace and Conflict Instability Ledger (PCIL)</i>	The PCIL ranks 160 countries according to their risk of future state instability. It uses a combination of publicly available statistics and includes indicators on regime consistency, infant mortality, economic openness, militarisation, and neighbourhood wars.	Hewitt et al., 2009
<i>State Fragility Index (SFI)</i>	The SFI ranks 162 developed and developing countries in terms of effectiveness and legitimacy across four dimensions of state functions (economic development, governance, security, and social development), using a variety of indicators in these fields. The objective is to assess the system performance of states.	Marshall and Goldstone, 2008
<i>Index of State Weakness (ISW)</i>	The ISW ranks 141 developing countries according to their relative performance in the economic, political, security, and social sphere. It is structured along 20 indicators.	Rice and Patrick, 2008

**Table 4: Top ten state fragility rankings compared, 2007**

<i>Ranking</i>	<i>CIFP 2007</i>	<i>FSI 2007</i>	<i>CGSF 2007</i>	<i>ISW 2007</i>
1	Myanmar	Sudan	DRC	Somalia
2	Afghanistan	Iraq	Afghanistan	Afghanistan
3	Sudan	Somalia	Sierra Leone	DRC
4	Iraq	Zimbabwe	Somalia	Iraq
5	DRC	Chad	Chad	Burundi
6	Somalia	Côte d'Ivoire	Myanmar	Sudan
7	Liberia	DRC	Sudan	CAR
8	North Korea	Afghanistan	Burundi	Zimbabwe
9	Turkmenistan	Guinea	Côte d'Ivoire	Liberia
10	Burundi	CAR	Ethiopia	Côte d'Ivoire

Source: Rice and Patrick, 2008, p. 39; Marshall and Goldstone, 2007, p. 15; FSI, 2008. Available online at [http://www.carleton.ca/cifp/app/gdp\\_ranking.php?order=Average](http://www.carleton.ca/cifp/app/gdp_ranking.php?order=Average), accessed 3 April 2009. The BTI and PCIL do not cover the year 2007.

The measuring of state fragility has not been without its critics. As the various projects listed above suggest, they have often been conceived for different purposes and use a different set of indicators and ranking methods that measure different things, produce different results, and are therefore not really comparable (Carment et al., 2007, p. 15). A comparison of the top ten fragile states in four indices presents a different mix of countries (see Table 4). These indices can thus hardly provide a basis for defining the strategic priorities for development interventions, and generally need to respond to the challenge that impressionistic descriptions of state fragility may be a better classificatory tools than cross-country indices (Gutiérrez Sanin, 2009, p. 2). Nevertheless, the potential of rankings as a policy instrument may improve if they produce comparable series of measurement over time, triangulating the results with qualitative and contextual analysis (Krause and Jütersonke, 2007, p. 11).

Moreover, indices provide only a retrospective picture of state fragility because they use data that capture past events or conditions. It is therefore questionable if they are able to capture the dynamic elements of fragility and identify policy recommendations for future action. Indices only establish correlations and do not provide answers to the cause of fragility. They are also largely unable to capture the mechanisms and actors involved in the process of making states fragile, even though this would be of primary importance for practitioners confronting state fragility (Krause and Jütersonke, 2007, p. 10; Carment et al., 2007, p. 14). The distinctions between the various spheres that are measured – such as authority, capacity, and legitimacy – often break down if translated into a practical context (Rice and Patrick, 2008, p. 6).

Given the prevalence of national level indicators of the rankings, it is also difficult to assess the sub-national dimensions of fragility. For example, states are said to have a 'responsibility to protect' their citizens against genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity (ICISS, 2001). The tendency for national level indicators, however, does not allow identification of sub-national variations and trends in relation to the provision of security, welfare and representation. In terms of human security, therefore, assessments of fragile states should less be concerned with how states compare to some fictitious ideal of the state

but rather in relation to ‘a state’s ability or willingness to function in a manner conducive to the welfare of the majority of the citizens’ thus asking ‘for whom is the state failing and how’ rather than these states are failing and why (Bøås and Jennings 2005, p. 386; see also Woodward, 2006, p. 6). Thus, fragile states indices have a tendency to focus on what is missing rather than existing state strengths. Shifting current indices from weakness to strength assessments could make an important contribution to informing development programmes on the ground.

## Case study literature

The last few years have also seen a proliferation of case studies on fragile states. These studies provide a qualitative and context-sensitive analysis of state fragility of specific cases, and thus contrast the cross-country statistical work discussed previously.

The Crisis States Research Centre (CSRC) of the London School of Economics, for example, produced a series entitled *Analytical Narrative on State-Making* that includes case studies on Afghanistan (Giustozzi, 2008), Colombia (Sanín et al., 2007), the DRC (Hesselbein, 2007), Mozambique (Sumich and Honwana, 2007), Rwanda (Goloba-Mutebi, 2008b), Tajikistan (Matveeva, 2009), and Uganda (Goloba-Mutebi, 2008a). The CSRC has an additional series on *Cities and Fragile States* that takes the analysis of state fragility to the sub-national level and includes contributions on Maputo (Sumich, 2007), Dar es Salaam and Kampala (Bryceson, 2008), Gulu (Branch, 2008), Managua (Rodgers, 2008), Kabul (Esser, 2009); Dili (Moxham, 2008), and Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali (Sanín et al., 2009).

The Centre for the Future State of the Institute of Development Studies in Brighton structured its analyses around various themes related to the functions of the state, and their implications for development assistance. The six themes include aid and the international dimension of governance; collective action and political representation; public action and private investment; public service delivery; state capacity; and tax revenue and public finance. Case study volumes drawing on this research exist on state reform and social accountability (Brazil, India, and Mexico) (Houtzager et al., 2008), and on taxation and statebuilding (Brätigam et al., 2008). There are case study references in most conceptual work, including one of the main reports of the project entitled *Signposts to More Effective States* (Centre for the Future State, 2005).

The scholarly community has also produced a number of case study volumes that explore various perspectives on fragile states. Examples include collected case studies on state collapse and state failure (Zartman, 1995; Rotberg, 2003; Chesterman et al., 2005), on statebuilding (Call and Wyeth, 2008; Paris and Sisk, 2009), and economic policies and statebuilding (Boyce and O'Donnell, 2007b; Brätigam et al., 2008). There are also various special issues of academic journals that include case studies on specific countries or contexts (see Table 5).

*Table 5: Special issues of academic journals on state fragility*

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Journal</i>	<i>Lead or introductory article</i>
State collapse, state failure, and state reconstruction	Development and Change (Vol.33, No.5)	Milliken and Krause, (2002)
Rebuilding governance in fragile states and post-conflict societies	Public Administration and Development (Vol.25, No.1)	Brinkerhoff (2005)
Insecurity and development	European Journal of Development Research, (Vol. 17, No. 3)	Biekart et al. (2005)
Globalization, liberalization, and prospects for the state	International Political Science Review, Vol. 26, No.1	Putzel (2005)
Nation- and state-building	Third World Quarterly (Vol.27, No.1)	Berger (2006)
Failed states	Conflict Management and Peace Science (Vol. 25, No. 2)	Starr (2008)
Urban Insecurities	Security Dialogue (Vol. 40, No. 4-5)	Jütersonke et al. (2009)
Challenging the Weberian state: armed groups and contemporary conflicts	Contemporary Security Policy (Vol. 30, No. 2)	Krause and Milliken (2009)
Conflict, development, (in)security and violence in the 21st century	Third World Quarterly (Vol. 30, No. 1)	Berger and Weber (2009)
Internal dynamics and external interventions	Peace Review (Vol. 21, No. 1)	Clements (2009)

From the perspective of development agencies, there are case study volumes from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ, 2007b), and the World Bank (Manor, 2007). Both volumes provide practical examples and lessons learned from development projects in fragile states. Other case study work is based on the OECD's efforts to evaluate the impact of the Paris Declaration. So far, specific studies include Afghanistan, Burundi, the DRC, Nepal, Indonesia, Guatemala, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Sudan (OPM and IDL, 2008; Stewart and Brown, 2009). A useful progression of these case studies would be the adoption of a similar conceptual framework in order to allow country comparisons (SDC, 2008, p. 16). The Paris Declaration progress indicators, as well as the guidance on evaluating conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities, could represent a valuable structure for case study research (OECD, 2005; OECD, 2008e).

By recognising the variety of contexts and characteristics of fragile states, the vast amount of existing case studies underline one of the ten Principles of the OECD – namely that

it is essential for international actors to understand the specific context of each country (...). Sound political analysis is needed to adapt international responses to country and regional contexts, beyond quantitative indicators of conflict, governance or institutional strength (OECD, 2007a, p. 6).



In terms of future research, this Principle points in the direction of qualitative case studies. While this would not exclude quantitative approaches – as research ultimately gains from the combination of different methods as long as these are transparently documented – there is much to gain from relating quantitative findings to a context-sensitive analysis (Krause and Jütersonke, 2007, p. 11). Such combinations of quantitative and qualitative research may be a basis for the ongoing monitoring in specific countries of the implementation progress of the Paris Declaration and the diagnostic needs for donor engagement in the field.

## State formation in Europe

Having charted the ranking and case study evidence from fragile states, this section invites the reader to step back for a moment and reflect on the orthodoxies involved in current approaches to fragile states themselves. This section shows that there is no uniform view in the historical record of what an ideal state should look like, and how it came about and evolved over time. Despite modern reliance on the state, historical contributions on the subject of state formation suggest ‘most of human history has not been graced by the presence of states’ (Hall and Ikenberry 1989, p. 16).

Overall, states are a relatively recent innovation to manage violence, structure political authority, and support economic development. The growth of states has been related to the tendencies of fragmentation and concentration of political authority. In late 15<sup>th</sup> century Europe, for example, there were allegedly 500 independent political units in Europe alone; these were then concentrated into 25 by 1900 (Leftwich, 2008, p. 212). Since then, there has been a progressive fragmentation of political authority as evidenced by the growing number of states globally. One estimate holds that there were 55 recognised state polities in 1914, a number that increased to 59 in 1919 after the end of the First World War and the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Rotberg, 2004, p. 2). The United Nations started with 51 Member States in 1945 and increased to 76 in 1955, 117 in 1965, 144 in 1975, 159 in 1985, 185 in 1995, and 191 in 2005. The latest member of the United Nations is Montenegro, raising overall membership to 192 in 2006. Together with the Vatican, which is the only non-Member State with a permanent observer status, the total number of states is therefore 193 (United Nations, 2006).

These figures emphasise that the state has been an evolving entity that has never been a completed project: ‘From the outset, the modern state represented an ideal of sovereign territoriality to which rulers aspired, but which they seldom achieved’ (Krause and Milliken, 2002, pp. 753, 755). Processes resembling state-like structures have first been observed in Mesopotamia around 3,000 BC, then in the Greek city-states and the Roman *res publica*. In general state structures are said to have evolved in the transition from nomadic subsistence and hunting-gathering to agrarian societies: ‘(...) It was the relative geographical immobility of agricultural production that led to the development of the institutions and infrastructure capable of governing and projecting power (...) over a specific and delineated territory’ (Hay and Lister, 2006, p. 5). Manifestations of cohesive political units resembling states were observed in the pre-Colombian Americas, as well as in many territories in the Middle East, Central Asia, China, Japan, and India (Strayer, 1970, p. 12). In a sense, Europe was a relative latecomer to state-making.

In Europe, states evolved during the Middle Ages between 1100 and 1600. As a result of the Investiture Conflict in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the Church increasingly distinguished itself from lay governments, and thereby implicitly fostered a recognition that ‘the Church could not perform all political functions, [and] that lay rulers were necessary and had a sphere in which they should operate’ (Strayer, 1970, p. 22). Rulers thus came to have the primary



function to guarantee and distribute justice. Over time, these rulers realised that justice was not only good business as most penalties involved a payment, but that it was also a way to assert authority. In parallel, financial institutions grew out of the estate management needs of kings and princes. As general taxation was unknown in these times, their wealth depended on lands, tolls, market dues, and fines, and how effectively these could be collected. Revenue was centralised by those responsible for collecting these taxes – shire-reeves in England or the *prévôts* in France – and given to the ruler against a record of collected revenue over time.

The essential attributes of the state began to appear between 1100 and 1300:

Political entities, each with its own basic core of people and lands, gained legitimacy by enduring through generations. Permanent institutions for financial and judicial business were established. Groups of professional administrators were developed. A central coordination agency, the chancery, had emerged with a staff of highly trained clerks' (Strayer, 1970, p. 34).

From the perspective of medieval state-making, the attributes of a state have been related to the appearance of 'political units persisting in time and fixed in space, the development of permanent, impersonal institutions, agreement on the need for an authority which can give final judgements, and acceptance of the idea that this authority should receive the basic loyalty of its subjects' (Strayer, 1970, p.10).

This version of state formation considered that judicial and financial institutions were at the outset of the modern state. Consequently, state formation is just as closely linked to the existence of a monopoly to dispense justice and extract taxes, as it is to the monopoly over the legitimate use of violence (Jütersonke, 2008). The state 'was conceived principally as an instrument to impose law and order on groups and people' (Van Creveld, 1999, p. 415). While war was the major occupation of rulers, these wars were fought by bands of fighters commanded by noblemen, and were mainly conducted through negotiation and not active fighting (Howard, 1976, pp. 4-7). In addition, the expenses for a permanent army were too high for medieval rulers. Early state-making in Europe concentrated on institutions for internal affairs, rather than be preoccupied about external security (Strayer, 1970, pp. 80-81, 86-87).<sup>16</sup>

It is important to note that armed force only became a main driver of state formation after the 16<sup>th</sup> century. However, this evolution was based on pre-existing state structures that had emerged during the Middle Ages. Postulates such as 'war makes states and states make war' emphasise the mutual supporting functions of state-making, war-making, protection, and extraction.<sup>17</sup> These should, however, be considered in the context of the pre-existing monopolies over justice and taxation that fostered a new dynamic in state formation. Other elements that facilitated state formation in Europe were its geographic limitations to further expansion. The competition between state entities over territory and economic opportunities reinforced the development of states (Rasler and Thompson, 1989, pp. 18-19, 210).

Another feature of state formation was that not all states followed the same development trajectory. In England, for example, a relative centralised state could emerge between 1100 and 1300 because provincial power holders were decimated by a number of foreign incursions, widely dispersed, and did not command a sufficient concentration of land or power to create autonomous administrations. Most landholdings and justice institutions were held by the king and as a result the emerging institutions would be royal institutions. In contrast, France was composed of a series of autonomous provinces that had to be reined into one state. Thus, rather than centralisation, French state-making included multilayered

administrative structures that were governed at the top level by representatives of the king, but with representatives from the provinces representing lower levels: 'French methods did make it possible to create a state out of provinces and regions with widely divergent characteristics. And because most of the European states which eventually emerged were mosaic states like France, they tended to follow the French model' (Strayer 1970, pp. 53, also pp. 36-37, 49-51).

The variation of state structures has also been explained by their underlying economic structure. Sea powers and land powers, for example, evolved differently. Given their reliance on trade, sea powers – like Venice, the United Provinces of the Netherlands, and England – were better at creating wealth and developing a commercialised economy, something which thus facilitated taxation. They were also mainly concerned with fighting off external rivals. This fostered a slimmer state, a smaller capacity to deal with domestic rivals, a dominance of trading interests in state policy, and a greater emphasis on technology and capital in state development. The control of the state by merchants led to a lower protection and overhead cost of the state. Land powers were characterised by their large population and ability to mobilise man power. The size of the army and the territorial reach of the state led to a bigger state administration and the maintenance of a feudal system to ensure domestic order. Overall, conservative players ensured their dominance in policy. Thus, in the case of France and Russia, the control of the state by bureaucrats contributed to a high cost of protection and state overheads to maximise salaries and other benefits (Rasler and Thompson, 1989, pp. 7, 23, 208).

Despite all its different manifestations, the European state was such a successful strategy to gaining economic and political superiority within a specific territory, that it was soon implemented in non-European settings. One of the central elements of its success was the taming of violence in support of economic development:

Specialists in the use of violence needed revenues to fight their wars; and those who prevailed were those who allied their political force with the economic fortunes of the towns. The result of this alliance was a new political and economic order, (...) one in which prosperity profitably coexisted with peace, and one in which coercion was used not for predation but rather to enhance the productive use of society's resources (Bates, 2001, p.51).

Another central element in the success of European states was the shifting of social organisation from mobilisation around kinship to mobilisation around interests. This shift allowed overcoming the organisational limitation associated to agrarian society, where capital formation occurred on the bases of kinship and not the market (Bates, 2001, pp. 31, 47-48).

These illustrations of the historical evidence of the state suggest that an ideal state type – as it is assumed in current discussions about state fragility – never really existed. States were rarely 'ideal', but represented pragmatic compromises between rulers and interest groups. It also did not come about in a few years but rather, it took 'four to five centuries for European states to overcome their weakness, to remedy their administrative deficiencies, and to bring lukewarm loyalty up to the white heat of nationalism' (Strayer, 1970, p. 57). The disconnect between the historical record of state formation and current approaches to fragile states is remarkable (Woodward, 2006, p. 6). One consequence of such a disconnect has been that the focus on a specific state model prevented the recognition of additional entry points for development opportunities. These are located in the often messy and sometimes illiberal realities of the states categorized as 'fragile' today.

## The political and economic logics of state fragility

According to some accounts, fragile states have been characterised as dangerous, marginalised, and anarchic environments in which ‘vicious networks of criminality, violence and drugs feed on disenfranchised populations and uncontrolled territory’ (Ghani and Lockhart, 2008, p. 3; Rothberg, 2004, p. 5). In these situations, the state was replaced ‘by a jagged-glass pattern of city-states, shanty-states, nebulous and anarchic regionalisms’ (Kaplan, 2000, pp. 43-44). However, these perceptions do not account for the mechanisms that order the political and social relations of fragile states. Since these are very different from the expectations of Western observers, they often remain unrecognised or are simply labelled as ‘chaos’ (Duffield, 2000, p. 82). A functionalist perspective on state fragility helps to recognise that disorder can have political or economic logics. These orders derive from the history of African state formation, as well as from the process by which local elites adapted governance structures to local realities and external incentives and pressures (Chabal and Daloz, 1999, pp. 1-2).

A central problem for African state formation was the projection of authority over inhospitable territories with a low population density. In Europe, border demarcation was the result of wars with external challenges. The development of the hinterland was often related to protecting the state’s riches from capture and therefore moving them further away from the border. These processes did not take place in pre-colonial Africa and it was only through colonialism that a state system with fixed borders was created. With decolonisation, the leaders of newly independent states claimed full sovereignty over distant hinterlands without ever having established full control. The fact that there was no external challenger also meant that there were no incentives to build taxation systems in order to defend the borders (Herbst, 2000, pp. 11, 74, 254).

This mixture of incomplete control over the hinterlands and full claims to sovereignty has been one of the explanations of state fragility in Africa. It has also been underlying the incentive structures of state leaders:

Where the ability of rulers to draw revenues from commodity exports or from great-power military aid has allowed them to bypass bargaining with their subject populations, large state edifices have grown in the absence of significant consent or support from the citizens. Lacking strong ties between particular state institutions and major social classes within the population, those states have become more vulnerable to forcible seizures of power and abrupt changes in the form of government (Tilly, 1992, pp. 207-208).

The result of these processes was a weak base for state-society relations. Society viewed the state as a predator or oppressor, or was simply something that occurred somewhere far away that just happened to be in the same country.

Thus, in contrast to the European experience of strong state-society relations as a basis for political authority, in Africa it evolved from indirect rule and the empowerment of elite networks during colonialism (Di John, 2008; pp. 23-24). Rapid decolonisation in the 1950s and 1960s fostered the spread of patronage politics in the absence of independent state bureaucracies (Chabal and Daloz, 1999, p. 5). In addition, political contests often involved winner-takes-all outcomes rather than accommodation or compromise with opponents or interest groups (Di John 2008, p. 27). In these circumstances, disorder became a political and economic instrument (Chabal and Daloz 1999, p. xix; Bayart et al., 1999).

The workings of such systems have been captured by the notion of 'limited access orders' (North et al., 2009). In these orders, authorities limit access to valuable political and economic opportunities. Such barriers-to-entry allow governments to create a credible commitment among elites not to fight each other because they are better off participating in a patrimonial network than by challenging the authorities violently. They also build a relationship with a larger constituency of supporters through the provision of protection, welfare and justice. The concept is contrasted to 'open access orders' that structure access to political and economic opportunities in competitive terms through markets, elections, and merit.

The difference between 'limited' and 'open' access orders frequently remains unrecognised by those intervening in fragile states. For instance,

Development policies often fail because they try to transplant elements of the open access order – such as competition, markets, and democracy – directly into limited access orders. The reforms threaten the rent-creation that holds the society together and in many cases challenge the very logic on which the society is organised. Not surprisingly, the elite and many non-elites resist, sabotage, or subvert such reforms in limited access societies that are not ready for them (North et al., 2007, p. 5).

This example emphasises the need for a better recognition of the way in which political and economic orders are structured in fragile states. The next section reviews a series of contributions investigating the workings of sub-national governance arrangements.

### **Sub-state governance arrangements and 'bottom-up' statebuilding**

The state's inability or unwillingness to deliver justice or welfare services evenly to a population does not mean that these are not provided by someone else. In many contexts, state functions have been assumed by gangs, private networks, local militias, guerrilla armies, or customary authorities; this with the consequence of splintering countries into different zones of autonomy (Rapley, 2006, p. 95). Of course these actors create their own insecurities, but 'partly due to their success in providing security, these sub-state groups often become the most legitimate political authority in areas that they control' (Reno, 2008, p. 143). Thus 'imperfectly effective state authority can viably and normatively coexist territorially with more localised non-state forms of social regulation' (Rodgers, 2006, p. 317; O'Donnell, 1993, pp. 1358-1361). In recent years, such phenomena have received increasing scholarly attention as exemplified by the work on hybrid political orders, the mediated state, and pockets of effectiveness.

Hybrid political orders have been characterised as places in which:

Diverse and competing claims to power and logics of order co-exist, overlap and intertwine, namely the logic of the "formal" state, of the "informal" societal order, and of globalisation and associated fragmentation (...). In such an environment, the "state" does not have a privileged position as the political framework that provides security, welfare and representation; it has to share authority, legitimacy, and capacity with other structures' (Boege et al., 2009, p. 24).

Hybrid political orders emphasise that the Weberian state is just one of many forms of structuring order in a specific territory, and that these alternative governance arrangements can be a middle ground between socially-engineered statebuilding and state formation as an organic, but violent, process (Trota, 2000, pp. 253-254).

The workings of such sub-national governance arrangements have been illustrated in case studies on West African states, Somalia, and Mozambique (Reno, 1998; Menkhaus, 2006; Buur and Kyed, 2007; Hagmann and Huehne, 2007; Bradbury, 2008). Somalia is especially telling because it is often considered as the best example of a collapsed state. But rather than complete anarchy, there are various levels of alternative governance mechanisms that have been described as a 'mediated state'. In such a state,

The government relies on partnership (or at least coexistence) with a diverse range of local intermediaries and rival sources of authority to provide core functions of public security, justice, and conflict management (...). Mediated states are intrinsically messy, contradictory, illiberal, and constantly renegotiated deals – not ideal choices for governments but often the best of bad options for weak states' (Menkhaus, 2006, p. 78).

The 'mediated state' highlights that when a ruler or government has little capacity to impose control over a given territory, existing power realities foster governance arrangements based on deal-making, cooption, and sub-contracting whatever local non-state authority is in power in a particular locality (Wennmann, 2009a, 1133).

For much of the academic literature, the fact that the capacity of government in fragile states is not equally distributed across the country and held by 'privatised, often sultanistic, circuits of power' is certainly nothing new (O'Donnell, 1993, p. 1359). Indeed, areas with functioning state capacity have been called 'pockets of effectiveness'. These are 'public organisations that are reasonably effective in carrying out their functions and in serving some conception of the public good despite operating in an environment in which most public organisations are ineffective and subject to serious predation [or] patronage' (Leonard, 2008, p. 8).

Hybrid political orders, mediated states, and pockets of effectiveness can be important for development assistance in fragile states. They are forms of authority that often go unrecognised but show that something can work in fragile states, and that they follow a particular political or economic logic or order that, alas, does not always coincide with Western perceptions of the way a state or society should work. There may be much to gain for development policy from reaching out to these existing governance arrangements and recognising them as a policy opportunity. Rather than building parallel state structures that marginalise functioning structures already delivering protection, welfare and justice to local populations, donors should explore the implications of integrating them into a long-term transition process. The starting-point for statebuilding should, therefore, revolve around what *is* there rather than what *should be* or *is not* there; hence emphasising the need for assessments of strengths rather than weaknesses.

While most interventions into fragile states have rested on a 'top-down' approach that purposefully imposes a specific state model, less attention has been given to a 'bottom-up' approach that nurtures the fusion of traditional and new governance components through a progressive transformation process. Such a process needs to be accompanied by constant negotiations that continuously renew transitional pacts between the main stakeholders.

## New research perspectives on aid effectiveness in fragile states

Research on state fragility is an evolving field that cuts across many scholarly disciplines and the multiple priorities that inform donor policy. The previous sections have shown how the discourse on fragile states evolved after the end of the Cold War, opening a policy space to transform development practice into a holistic endeavour that addresses poverty, security, and statebuilding. In the course of two decades, development assistance has also become recognised to represent a political process.

The different intellectual traditions underlying the literatures on fragile states reflect a tremendous variety of research efforts, and defy easy categorisation. Overall, the review emphasised that more attention has focused on 'top-down' rather than 'bottom-up' approaches to statebuilding, and that analyses of state fragility tended to highlight the weaknesses of fragile states rather than their strengths. A better understanding of these strengths could form a new evidence base for development engagements in specific contexts. Moreover, the disconnect between 'top-down' statebuilding approaches and the historical record of state formation in Europe highlights that expectations in statebuilding may need to be adjusted. Recognising alternative forms of political authority may strengthen aid effectiveness, local ownership, and state-society relations.

This part draws on these findings in order to propose a series of research themes on development assistance in fragile states and conflict situations. It starts by exploring the knowledge requirements necessary for the adoption of a 'bottom-up' approach to statebuilding. Topics discussed include the implications of adjusting expectations in statebuilding and delivering aid at the sub-national level, as well as improving aid effectiveness in the context of war-to-peace transitions and through mediation support. The sections also highlight the need for research to have a better understanding of the linkages between armed violence and development.

### Adjusting expectations in statebuilding

There is a widespread belief today that it is possible to create a functioning state through externally driven processes in just a few decades, and that this state is a solution for armed violence, poverty, and disease. However, such expectations do not reflect the past record of state formation and may even suggest that 'donors have consistently been unrealistic about the capacity required to manage complex processes of change' (Centre for the Future State, 2005, p. 1). Reforming a country's civil service, for example, is so complex and difficult that 'it should not be attempted at all – save in rare, very propitious circumstances' (Leonard, 2008, p. 7). Statebuilding in Afghanistan and Iraq illustrates these observations only too well and underlines the limits of such endeavours in the context of an ongoing war (Felbab-Brown, 2009; Williams, 2009).

These observations suggest that it is timely to step back, evaluate lessons, and review expectations in statebuilding. Such a reassessment would involve rethinking the merits of the current 'top-down' statebuilding consensus that focuses on formal state institutions and compares these globally in fragility indices. The result is a 'weakness' analysis that captures what is missing rather than what is there. In contrast, country studies should explore the existing strengths of traditional and local governance arrangements, as well as their roles in



delivering state services to populations. On the one hand, the task is to review expectations in past statebuilding projects; on the other, it is to define what can be pragmatically expected in specific contexts from 'bottom-up' statebuilding.

## **Aid delivery at the sub-national level**

State fragility is not an absolute but a relative condition. There are various alternative sources of political authority in many fragile states that can provide security, welfare and justice. Diagnostic tools such as political economy or drivers of change analyses may be able to account for these actors at the sub-state level (DFID, 2009b; Dahl-Østergaard et al., 2005). These types of analyses contribute to the mapping of existing strengths at the sub-national level as well as to locating new entry points for development assistance. Potential practical advantages include a more direct access to violence or poverty affected populations; the valorisation of existing governance arrangements and capacities; and the strengthening of local ownership. The implications of recognising informal political authority figures or customary institutions as opportunities for aid effectiveness requires further investigation.

However, implementing such a perspective is far from easy. Policy-makers face the difficult choice of 'accepting that for the sake of peace, stability, and progressive change deals may have to be struck, or allowed to be struck, that confound expectations of good governance or good policy' (Cramer, 2009, pp. 139-140). While co-opting what some call 'criminals' or many consider 'warlords' may be deemed unacceptable, such deals could form the basis for transitional pacts, political settlements, violence reduction, and development. Thus, engagement of these actors may harness their locally-perceived legitimacy, as well as networks and money to support development transitions.

At the same time, donors need to strengthen their capacity to deal with the political consequences entailed by such an approach. Engaging alternative political authorities does not mean to romanticise them. They can play a positive role in specific contexts, but have multiple faces and sometimes use coercive means to go about their business (Cockayne and Lupel, 2009, p. 153). The challenge is to make them support – or at least tolerate – a development transition in the region that they control, instead of using their powers to undermine it.

## **Enhancing aid effectiveness in war-to-peace transitions**

War-to-peace transitions are composed of various overlapping phases including the engagement of armed groups in a peace process, the resolution or transformation of violent disputes, and the establishment of a lasting peace. The role of donors is important in these transitions. They are often the only actors with a prolonged presence in a country slipping into conflict, and can thus actively engage in its transformation and facilitate alternative economic futures that make post-conflict realities worthwhile for ex-combatants and civilian populations (SDC, 2008, pp. 8-10). In order to increase aid effectiveness in war-to-peace transitions, the development community must recognise its comparative advantage in peace processes. For instance, it can adjust expectations on expected peace dividends, facilitate dialogue and build confidence, and offer quick impact or long-term development programming (OECD, 2001, pp. 51-52; Brown and Grävingholt, 2009).

Despite these potential benefits, the involvement in peace processes is often perceived by donors as beyond their mandate. Many follow the line that engagement in a conflict country is conditional on a signed peace agreement. However, when a peace agreement has been signed it is often too late to influence the conditions that could facilitate post-conflict

economic recovery. The case of Liberia exemplified that the internally-brokered peace process provided an unprecedented opportunity for external intervention in a sovereign state (Dwan and Bailey, 2006, p. 23). A better understanding of the institutional limitations of donors to engage in war-to-peace transitions would therefore be an important first step to further exploration of how the strategic engagement of donors in peace processes can assist in the task of increasing aid effectiveness and laying the foundations for a lasting peace.

## **Aid effectiveness through mediation support**

While there is an emerging support infrastructure for peace negotiations, there is little -if any- support capacity that ensures negotiations are ongoing after a conflict. At present, mediation is mainly perceived as a strategy to find a negotiated exit out of a conflict. However, the need to support new transitional pacts when peace agreements are implemented is well known, but still too little is done in practice to support them. Nepal, for example, shows the importance of mediation support to bring an end to conflict, but also to assist the political processes in the aftermath of the war that shaped the country's political and economic prospects (Wennmann, 2009b, pp.17-18).

There is a growing recognition of the potential of mediation outside its traditional role in conflict resolution. The OECD highlighted the role of mediation in strengthening the resilience capacity of states through stronger state-society relations. Important elements include supporting dialogue processes between civil society, the private sector, and state institutions (OECD, 2008a, pp. 27-29; Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006; Bignon and Korf, 2004). Mediation support activities may also prevent armed violence and therefore its negative development consequences. Early engagement in Ghana helped transform local disputes into processes of 'normal' politics, and thereby successfully prevented violence during the 2008 elections (UNDP, 2009, p. 16-17). Mediation has also strengthened private sector investment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where between 2004 and 2006 local mediators resolved disputes between companies and thereby facilitated the release of investments worth eight million Euro (IFC, 2008, p. 2).

These examples illustrate the potential gains of mediation support activities for aid effectiveness. Identifying the value-added of current mediation practices provides important insights into strengthening political accords and economic conditions in war-to-peace transitions.

## **Securing development through armed violence reduction**

Timely investments into armed violence reduction represent an opportunity for aid effectiveness (OECD, 2009, p.15). Armed violence has tremendous human and economic costs that undermine past development achievements and their future prospects. The OECD, UNDP, the World Bank, and the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development attempt to identify the mechanisms by which armed violence reduction becomes a development multiplier in fragile and conflict contexts in various ways (OECD, 2009; UNDP, 2008; Skaperdas et al., 2009; Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2008). Current research initiatives map the global and sub-national distribution and the cost of armed violence, and establish detailed armed violence assessments in specific countries such as Burundi (Pézar and de Tésières, 2009).

As the research agenda on armed violence reduction unfolds, the available evidence base on the relationship between armed violence and development will become richer (Muggah and Krause, 2009). A particular contribution would be to develop a greater clarity on the



mechanisms that link armed violence to lower levels of development, and what this means in specific local contexts. For example, better information on the distribution and magnitude of the cost of armed violence at the municipal level could assist in creating constituencies for armed violence reduction. In addition, a better grasp of armed violence reduction programmes may offer insights into the necessary multi-stakeholder coalitions between national and municipal authorities, the business community, local communities, and donors that can forge a lasting end of violence and strengthen economic prospects.

### **Concluding comments: Towards context-sensitivity and coordination**

In conclusion, there are two additional points that deserve to be highlighted. The first is the need for more context-sensitive analyses that inform local development transitions. The 2007 Principles emphasised that understanding the context of development interventions is essential for the international community to assist fragile states. This is a request to the research community for more field research and collaboration with local researchers. It highlights that conceptual innovations must be translated into local contexts. The research tools to implement these analyses include household surveys, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews with key informants, and usually involve research teams composed of local and international researchers from various backgrounds. Thus, the issue is not the validity of one or the other methodology, but rather the creation of knowledge as a joint process, and making it directly relevant for the people that have to drive the political processes behind development.

The second point is that development transitions are never the outcome of a single actor, be it national or international. The review underlined the inherent complexity of engineering change and the clear need to coordinate efforts, identify and use synergies, and allow others to be in the driving seat if they are actually better placed to deliver the assistance needed. In recent years, there has been an increasing bilateral interest in whole-of-systems approaches and an evolving consensus that statebuilding is an endogenous and locally driven process that the international community merely nurtures and supports. While these efforts are encouraging, there is much work ahead to transform these trends into standard development practice, and identify appropriate entry-points for integrated approaches. The way donors will deal with their own risk adversity and attitude towards competition with each other will be an important component in advancing efforts to structure development assistance in a coherent, coordinated, and complementary fashion.

# Endnotes

- 1 Michael M. Cowen and Robert W. Shenton (1996) and Gilbert Rist (1997) described the evolution of a development discourse after the Second World War to have started from US President Harry Truman's 1949 inaugural address and its 'Point Four', which set out a technocratic agenda 'for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas' (see Rist, 1997, p. 71).
- 2 The relationship between the state and the market is of course a standard topic in political economy. See Polanyi (1944), Heilbroner (1985) or Strange (1988).
- 3 The 'Washington Consensus' describes a lowest common denominator of policy advice developed by Washington-based institutions towards Latin American countries as of 1989. This consensus revolved around 'prudent macroeconomic policies, outward orientation, and free-market capitalism' (Williamson, 1990).
- 4 This paper joins a series of reviews on fragile states and statebuilding which include, for example, FDFA (2007), Debiel, Lambach and Reinhardt (2007), Di John (2008), OECD (2008a), Wesley (2008), Call and Cousins (2008), and Paris and Sisk (2009b).
- 5 The term 'bottom-up' statebuilding has been used previously. The author is indebted to William Reno's work on this issue (Reno, 2008).
- 6 The label 'fragile' is often used interchangeably with 'failed', 'failing', 'crisis', 'weak', 'rogue', 'collapsed', 'poorly performing', 'ineffective', 'shadow', 'quasi', 'de-facto', 'rentier', 'warlord', or 'semi-authoritarian' (Cammack et al., 2006, p. 16). These terms are, however, not the same: they describe different types of states. For example, 'quasi' states are characterised by their international juridical recognition as a determinant of their sovereignty, despite lacking empirical statehood (Jackson, 1990, pp. 5, 26). In contrast, 'de facto' states are states that have a degree of empirical statehood but are not (universally) recognised as independent states by other states (Pegg, 1998, p. 26; Lynch, 2004, p. 16).
- 7 For a critique of the claim that the effect of aid on economic growth and poverty reduction was greater in countries with 'good' policies, see Hansen and Tarp (2000). Based on a review of three decades of empirical work, they argue that aid has increased aggregate savings and investments, and underscore the robust evidence for an aid-growth link.
- 8 The nexus between state fragility and terrorism has been especially questioned. One analysis concludes that there is 'no causal link or pronounced correlation between failed states and the proliferation of terrorism or between democratisation and the negation of terrorism' (Hehir, 2007, p. 328).
- 9 In addition to creating the conditions necessary for a lasting peace in war-torn societies, peacebuilding has also been associated with the promotion of marketisation and democratisation, and the exportation of the European liberal state (Paris, 2004, pp. 5-6). For a history of the evolution of peacebuilding see Paris (2004, pp. 13-39). For a critical review of the peacebuilding discourse see Kartas (2007). For a genealogy of the relief and development continuum see Bocco et al., (2009).

- 10 Peace studies differentiates between 'negative peace' – the absence of turmoil, tension, conflict, and war – as opposed to 'positive peace' – a condition of good management, orderly resolution of conflict, and harmony (Boulding, 1978, p. 3).
- 11 Complex humanitarian emergencies are a 'profound social crisis in which large numbers of people unequally die and suffer from war, displacement, hunger, and disease owing to human-made or natural disasters' (Väyrynen, 2000, p. 49).
- 12 Some aid agencies have adjusted their aid delivery to the level of cooperation to be expected by a host state. Aid is delivered *through* the state where the state is responsive, and capacity and risks are improving; it is delivered *with* the state where the situation is more mixed and risks are higher, and it is delivered *outside* the state in contexts where the state is unresponsive and its legitimacy is questioned (DFID, 2009, p. 30).
- 13 A conceptual framework to shape proper diagnostics of the different facets of armed violence has been proposed to include four core elements of people-centred security, (the people affected by armed violence, the perpetrators of such violence, the supply and availability of weapons and ammunitions, and the institutional context that enables or restrain violence), as well as four level of analysis (local, national, regional, and global level) (OECD, 2009, pp. 49-58).
- 14 'Empirical' aspects of statehood relate to institutional capacity, effective control over territory and population, and an organic state-society relationship; 'juridical' aspects of statehood relate to the international legal recognition as a state by other states or international institutions (Jackson, 1990, pp. 5, 26).
- 15 For a review of these measuring project and others see Marshall (2008, pp.17-18) and Rice and Patrick (2008, pp. 5-7). A regional measuring project is the Harvard Kennedy School (formerly Mo Ibrahim Foundation) Index of African Governance. A detailed technical comparison of the indices shown in Table 3 and others is conducted in Fabra Mata and Ziaja (2009, pp.43-78).
- 16 This trend was strengthened through the legal customs and infrastructure that remained from the Roman Empire and fostered consensual trading relations and tax-based political entities (Hay and Lister, 2006, p. 6).
- 17 This dynamic is said to have unfolded as follows: The preparation for war and actual warfare between competing lords increased the control over territory. The population within these territories were then subjected to extraction by the state in order to contribute to the costs of war. The increasing costs of war led to an ever greater need to expand and regularise the extractive infrastructure of the state. The consolidation of tax bases in turn affected state-making as state authorities engaged in co-opting (or eliminating) domestic rivals and strengthened the monopoly over extraction and the use of force. The growth of military establishments in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries fostered the bureaucratisation of the armed forces, war industries and mass education. When taxation no longer sufficed to cover the costs of war, state rulers formed alliances with influential groups in society to obtain loans and manpower for which the latter received protection against external rivals. However, resistance of these groups affected the level of extraction and thereby affected state-making and war-making alike (Tilly, 1992, pp. 74-76, 96; Kindleberger, 1993, p. 7; Rasler and Thompson, 1989, pp.18-19, 210).

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## About the author

Achim Wennmann is Researcher for the Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP) and the Small Arms Survey at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva. He is currently involved in research projects on the economic dimensions of peace processes as well as armed violence prevention and reduction. His active research interests focus on the political economy of conflict, state fragility, peace processes, war-to-peace transitions, and the dynamics of armed conflict and violence. Achim Wennmann has country expertise on Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, and has worked extensively on the peace processes of Angola, Kosovo, Nepal, and Sudan. Selected publications include:

- "Getting Armed Groups to the Table: Peace Processes, the Political Economy of Conflict and the Mediated State." *Third World Quarterly*. Vol. 30, No. 6 (2009), pp. 1123-1138.
- "Grasping the Financing and Mobilisation Cost of Armed Groups: A New Perspective on Conflict Dynamics." *Contemporary Security Policy*. Vol. 30, No. 2 (2009), pp. 265-280.
- "Conflict Economies." In Vincent Chetail, ed. 2009. *Post-Conflict Peacebuilding: A Lexicon*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 74-91.
- "Economic Provisions in Peace Agreements and Sustainable Peacebuilding" *Négociations*. No.11, No.2 (2009), pp. 43-61.
- "The Political Economy of Conflict Financing: A Comprehensive Approach Beyond Natural Resources." *Global Governance*. Vol. 13, No. 3 (2007), pp. 427-444.
- "Resourcing the Recurrence of Intra-state Conflict: Parallel Economies and Their Implications for Peacebuilding." *Security Dialogue*. Vol. 36. No. 4 (2005), pp. 479-494.

Achim Wennmann was co-editor (with Keith Krause and Robert Muggah, 2008) of the *Global Burden of Armed Violence* report for the Secretariat of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development at the Small Arms Survey. He was the author of three previous CCDP working papers on the economic dimensions of the peace processes in Sudan (North-South), Nepal, and Indonesia (Aceh).

## Annex: Selected institutions conducting research on fragile states

**Bertelsmann Foundation, Gütersloh, Germany:** The Bertelsmann Foundations maintains the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) that compares and ranks the political management and progress towards democracy and market economy of 125 countries. The BTI is a biannual product and so far exists for the years 2003, 2006, and 2008. It also publishes country reports that use a standardised framework to detail specific country challenges, and compare advances of reform processes. The results are presented visually in the Transformation Atlas. Website: <http://www.bertelsmann-transformation-index.de>.

**Centre for the Future States, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton, United Kingdom:** The Centre links researchers from the Institute with a network of partner organisations and collaborators from Africa, Latin America, South and Southeast Asia, China and Egypt. A first phase covered the period 2000-2005, and a second phase runs until 2010. The Centre has the objectives to undertake, disseminate, and mainstream new research on key issues relating to the future of public authority in developing countries, and foster research inputs from developing countries. Publications are structured along six themes: aid and international dimensions of governance, collective action and political representation, public action and private investment, public service delivery, state capacity, and tax revenue and public finance. Website: <http://www2.ids.ac.uk/futurestate/general/index.html>.

**Centre for International Development and Conflict Management, University of Maryland, USA:** The Centre produces the PCIL that so far appeared for the years 2003, 2005, 2008, and 2010. Every two years, it tracks the trends in armed conflict, democratization, and instability for 160 countries and focuses on a specific topic such as the challenges of post-conflict transitions in the 2010 edition. The PCIL uses a series of indicators on regime consistency, infant mortality, economic openness, militarisation, and neighbourhood wars. Website: <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/pc>.

**Country Indicators for Foreign Policy, Carlton University, Ottawa, Canada:** The CIFP include three main research streams including a conflict risk assessment, governance and democracy processes, and failed and fragile states. CIFP Fragile States reports are based on six clusters of indicators relating to governance, economics, security and crime, human development, demography, and environment. Overall, country reports include up to 75 separate structural indicators for a detailed quantitative assessment. Website: <http://www.carleton.ca/cifp>.

**Crisis States Research Centre, London School of Economics, London, United Kingdom:** The Crisis States Research Centre was launched in 2001 and completed its first research cycle in 2005. The Centre has now nearly completed its second phase for the period 2006 to 2010. In the first phase, the project produced 81 working papers, in the second phase there are so far 71 working papers that are related to the three interlinked themes: development and state-making, cities and fragile states, regional and global axes of conflict. Both phases include a rich collection of case studies, some also at the city level. Website: <http://www.crisisstates.com>.

**Index of State Weakness in the Developing World, Brookings Institution, Washington D.C., USA:** The ISW was designed to provide policy-makers and researchers with a credible tool for analyzing and understanding the world's most vulnerable countries. The Index ranks and assesses 141 developing nations according to their relative performance in four critical spheres: economic, political, security and social welfare. Website: [http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2008/02\\_weak\\_states\\_index.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2008/02_weak_states_index.aspx).

***Institute for Development and Peace, University Duisburg-Essen, Duisburg, Germany:***

Research at the Institute is structured along three research areas that include global governance and human security, violent conflicts and peace strategies, and development and human rights. Under these general research streams the Institute has specific research projects on development assistance in fragile states with a focus on development policy under conditions of globalisation, successful and failed nation-building in the Third World, and regime type and the collapse of state institutions. Website: <http://inef.uni-due.de>.

***Fund For Peace, Washington D.C., USA:***

The Fund For Peace produces the annual FSI. The Index is based on risk indicators and uses specific software to process thousands of articles and reports. The Index is constructed around three types of indicators. Social indicators include mounting demographic pressures; massive movement of refugees or internally displaced persons; legacy of vengeance-seeking group grievance or group paranoia, and chronic and sustained human flight. Economic indicators include uneven economic development along group lines and severe economic decline. Political indicators are criminalisation of states, progressive deterioration of public services, suspension or arbitrary application of the rule of law and widespread violation of human rights, legitimacy of security actors, the existence of factionalised elites, and intervention of other states or external actors. Website: <http://www.fundforpeace.org>.

***Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit, University of York, United Kingdom:***

The Unit is part of the Fragile States Development Consortium (FSDC) and leads the Social Development Framework Agreement that manages consultancy needs for various government institutions in the United Kingdom and leading development agencies. The FSDC is an international partnership of research and consultancy organisations that combine their expertise for technical assessments, programme design and implementation, training, technical assistance and policy work in conflict-affected environments, and extensive social development work. It maintains a global networks of consultants and was previously known as the United Kingdom's Post-conflict Reconstruction Unit. Website: <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/poli/prdu/fragile/index.htm>.

# CCDP Working Papers

Emanuel Schäublin. *Role and Governance of Islamic Charitable Institutions: The West Bank Zakat Committees (1977-2009) in the Local Context*. CCDP Working Paper No. 5 (November 2009).

Thania Paffenholz. *Summary of Results for a Comparative Research Project: Civil Society and Peacebuilding*. CCDP Working Paper No. 4. (June 2009).

Achim Wennmann and Jana Krause. *Managing the Economic Dimensions of Peace Processes: Resource Wealth, Autonomy, and Peace in Aceh*. CCDP Working Paper 3 (April 2009).

Achim Wennmann. *Economic Issues in Peace Processes: Socio-Economic Inequalities and Peace in Nepal*. CCDP Working Paper 2 (April 2009).

Achim Wennmann. *Wealth Sharing Beyond 2011: Economic Issues in Sudan's North-South Peace Process*. CCDP Working Paper 1 (April 2009).

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