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RE-EXAMINING THE TERMS OF AID

Turning promises into practice in fragile states

Acknowledgements

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Acronyms and abbreviations

CABRI	Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative
CPA	Country programmable aid
CSPPS	Civil Society Platform on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding
DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee
EU	European Union
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army
FPIP	Fiscal Performance Improvement Plan (Afghanistan)
g7+	A voluntary association of countries that are or have been affected by conflict and are now in transition to the next stage of development
GNI	Gross national income
IDA	International Development Association
IDPs	Internally displaced persons
ISE	Institute for State Effectiveness
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
ODA	Official development assistance
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PFM	Public financial management
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
U.N.	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
U.K.	United Kingdom
U.S.	United States
WDR	World Development Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal of development in fragile states is well established: to help forge pathways out of fragility towards self-reliance and to deliver inclusive and sustainable social, economic, and security outcomes for citizens. The way to get there is also clear: build national capacity to fulfil the core functions of a state. Development partnerships can play a critical role in this process: by working with individuals, teams, and institutions – both within and outside of government – development partners can support and incentivise efforts to close the gap between what citizens expect and what governments are able to provide.

There is now a broad international consensus on the goal and how we get there, including repeated commitments at the highest levels that promote effective development partnerships. In some places, we have seen countries emerge from conflict and show signs that they are escaping the fragility trap – recently Aceh, Colombia, Kosovo, Liberia, Nepal, Rwanda, the Solomon Islands, and Timor-Leste. However, we are not seeing the change that is needed: an implementation gap remains. There are also signs that the challenge is becoming greater, as fragility becomes endemic. Both sides of the 'development handshake' – development partners and host countries – will need to live up to the promises they have made and make necessary changes to the terms of their partnership.

While there is no panacea, there is a different way to harness collective energies and investments. This paper re-examines the terms of aid and explores *how* development partnerships can better support fragile states to build state functions, deliver on their citizens' expectations, and transition from fragility to self-reliance. It builds on the widely agreed principles for effective development in fragile contexts, and on the key innovations in policy, practice, and theory over the past two decades. It focuses on *why* promises have not translated into practice and *how* development partnerships can work to close the implementation gap.

The implementation gap is in considerable part a reflection of the failure to properly address the incentives that drive behaviour and outcomes. Drawing on the policy and programming experience of ISE and partners in fragile-state development assistance, this paper argues that there are five key areas in which development practice has fallen short:

1. **National strategies, plans, and policies:** Failure to have clear, coherent national strategies and development programmes identified by government that will actually build self-reliance.
2. **Donor incentives:** Failure to prioritise the goal of building state functions and ensuring donors are aligned with that goal, in their own systems.
3. **Human capital:** Failure to develop the human capital strategies that would allow for the diffusion of reforms throughout government, including extending leadership beyond individuals to cadres of mid-tier reformers who are responsible for implementing reforms.
4. **Implementation and accountability:** Failure to actually implement national strategies and development programmes and, over time, test that this is being done well, including whether governments are building capacity to advance ownership and addressing threats to development and stability, such as corruption and criminality.
5. **Whole-of-society approaches:** Failure to build inclusive governance structures and inclusive reform agendas, with citizens helping to shape national strategies and progress being communicated back to citizens.

We focus on these five areas as critical to the way forward for changing incentives and how development partnerships can achieve their stated goals and development outcomes. Building on country experience, we offer examples of what has worked in supporting fragile states to build the core functions needed to transition from fragility towards self-reliance (see Box 1).

Box 1 - Key recommendations

These recommendations are for partners on both sides of the development handshake. While areas 1, 3, 4 and 5 are largely for host governments, they include features that development partners should consider. And while area 2 is predominantly for development partners, there are also considerations here for host governments.

1. NATIONAL PLANS, STRATEGIES, AND POLICIES

- Identify core priorities early and iterate to set realistic goals.
- Encourage experimentation to find effective approaches to build core functions.
- Cut through sectoral siloes between humanitarian, security, and development planning.
- Have effective strategic communications and engagement in devising the national strategy.
- Include a focus on economic self-reliance from the start.

2. DONOR INCENTIVES

- Frame the agenda in terms of mutual interest.
- Shift the conception of 'risk' to include 'development risk' (and quantify this).
- Set realistic conditions and benchmarks, over realistic time frames.
- Harness external oversight mechanisms, including parliaments; and
- Reconsider how performance is rewarded.

3. HUMAN CAPITAL

- Build coalitions of reformers, including mid-tier reformers, to sustain reform efforts.
- Provide organisational management skills and not merely technical support to reformers.
- Invest in the education and training of cadres of leaders and managers.
- Encourage folding the 'old guard' into new agendas.
- Find ways to foster collective decision-making (across both government and citizenry).
- Retain the confidence to say 'no' to ideas and programme proposals that are not a priority.

4. IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Strengthen basic management capacities on which government operations rely.
- Use a consolidated budget to understand where the money is.
- Redouble efforts to tackle corruption and take a holistic approach to building public financial management and broader accountability systems.
- Monitor institutional capacity to determine when to sequentially transition functions to government.
- Have the right metrics and use the reporting in place to track progress.
- Use performance frameworks that reflect and reward teamwork and resiliency.
- Enable national programmes that collaborate with communities and can scale delivery.

5. WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY APPROACHES

- Design inclusive and sustainable peace and reconciliation processes.
- Address urban–rural divides.
- Broaden platforms for civil society engagement.
- Consider using traditional community systems to instil and communicate the reform agenda.
- Communicate and engage in dialogue with citizens.
- Resource and equip communities to adapt to change through national programmes.

INTRODUCTION

> “We are long on commitments and short on behavior change.”
>
> - Development partner representative (2018)

> “If [recipient countries] want donors to use national systems, they have to put in the work to seem accountable and credible, in leadership, systems and processes.”
>
> - Minister of finance of a fragile state (2017)

The goal of development in fragile states is well established: to help forge pathways out of fragility towards self-reliance and to deliver inclusive and sustainable social, economic, and security outcomes for citizens. Governments, citizens, and development partners have committed to this goal through electoral platforms, national development strategies, international instruments, partnership frameworks, and various multilateral forums. The way to get there is also clear: build national capacity to fulfil the critical functions of a state. Development partnerships can play a critical role in this process. By working with individuals, teams, and institutions – both within and outside of government – development partners can support and incentivise efforts to close the gap between what citizens expect and what governments can provide. Development assistance should help to build national capacity to fulfil the critical functions of a state and forge sustainable pathways to self-reliance.

Over the past 15 years, a great deal has been learned about development programming and practice in fragile contexts. In some places, we have seen countries emerge from conflict and show signs that they are escaping the fragility trap. In recent years, these examples have included Aceh, Colombia, Kosovo, Liberia, Nepal, Rwanda, the Solomon Islands, and Timor-Leste. The community of development practitioners and partners has learned much about how development partnerships can better support the building of state functions, which can in turn design and implement country strategies, and promote development pathways towards self-reliance. Governments, donors, development partners, and the private sector have also made significant strides, not only in discourse and theory, but in the collaboration, coordination, and implementation of principles of more effective development assistance.

At the international level, there is growing consensus on key principles and approaches, both in terms of how we do development generally and as it relates specifically to fragile states. From the 2003 Rome Declaration on Harmonisation, to the 2011 New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States (‘New Deal’) and the 2016 Stockholm Declaration on Addressing Fragility and Peacebuilding, support for several central themes has emerged. These themes include: a focus on results; facilitating country ownership; increasing transparency; strengthening mutual accountability between partners and governments; building inclusive partnerships; and aligning aid with country plans. Collectively, these principles and the commitment to put them into practice has been known as the ‘aid effectiveness’ agenda – or more recently, the ‘effective development partnership’ agenda. The New Deal in particular was a critical juncture for effective development practice in fragile states, setting out a new architecture for working with fragile states (see Box 2). There has been a conscious effort to improve aid effectiveness, including improvements in funding allocation and mechanisms and reorienting towards country-led development strategies.

However, many of these commitments and principles have not translated into practice and an implementation gap remains. Despite a broad international consensus on the goal and how we get there – including repeated commitments at the highest levels that promote effective development partnerships and practice – we are not seeing the change that is needed. Innovations on the ground have led to isolated achievements but have not cohered into systematic change. Generally, there has been little change in how aid is delivered: development partners are not sharing risk, using country systems,[1] cstrengthening the capacity of host governments, establishing mutual

1 Use of country systems refers to development partners using fragile state’s country systems to deliver aid. This can be through their planning, procurement, budgeting, financing, or oversight functions. The Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI) devised a classification framework for ‘use of country systems’ in 2008 outlining these different potential modalities. See, CABRI (2008) Putting aid on budget – Good practice note: Using Country Budget Systems, www.cabri-sbo.org/uploads/files/Documents/report_2008_cabri_transparency_and_accountability_use_of_country_systems_english_putting_aid_on_budget_-_good_practice_note_-_using_country_systems.pdf.

accountability, or providing more timely and predictable aid. And just as credit for successes goes to partners on all sides of the development handshake, so too does responsibility for lack of progress.

Development partners continue to prioritise short-term projects, with burdensome reporting requirements, that operate outside of national institutions and change with the political tides at home. Progress on delivering aid through budget support has also been subpar. For example, there was only a two-percentage-point increase in budget support by donors in 18 of the self-identified fragile and conflict-affected states (known as the g7+) between 2005 and 2017. Meanwhile, fragile-state governments continue to make insufficient progress towards agreed metrics for transparency, anti-corruption, and internal management. For example, only two of the g7+ countries had met the public financial management (PFM) targets required for use of country systems commitments by 2017.[2] As one development practitioner working in fragile contexts for the past 30 years described:

> Fragile state governments cannot stay focused when their senior staff are in donor meetings from sunup to sundown, when aid programmes suck out their best staff with exorbitant salaries, and when changing donor fashions load them up with new conditions every three years. For their part, donors are rightly frustrated by persistent issues of mismanagement and cannot sustain aid without clearer results, less corruption, and more commitment to inclusive development.

As a result, there is a great deal of dissatisfaction and frustration, both in donor and government offices, and on the street. Meanwhile, states' abilities to fulfil the core functions necessary to be effective and legitimate remain underdeveloped. Outcomes are not improving fast enough, peace, prosperity, and self-reliance remain elusive goals – with citizens bearing the burden.

In an environment of frustration, it is important to recognise that restoring or establishing core functions and building state systems is incredibly hard and takes a long time. A successful state has to have systems to raise and spend money, defend its territory, consult its people, and deliver services. Every one of these requires decades to establish, whether a state is fragile or not. Yet this time dimension is not part of how the terms of aid get defined. Instead, there is a gap between the general (and econometric) recognition that recovery operates on very long time scales, and aid programmes that are planned, budgeted, and measured in three- to five-year cycles. So, the problem is not 'failure' of aid per se, but of its 'fitness for purpose'. As a result, systems do not get built, and instead actors are continuously putting duct tape around a leaky pipe rather than replacing it.

Box 2 - Principles of aid effectiveness

1. Facilitating country-led rather than donor-driven development.
2. Adopting integrated approaches to development, rather than fragmented projects in different sectors.
3. Programming to achieve sustainable medium to long-term outcomes, not only short-term results.
4. Supporting stronger and more inclusive domestic institutions rather than operating through parallel, non-government systems.
5. Delivering contextually appropriate programmes and avoiding blanket (mis)application of 'best practice'.
6. Investing to build the foundations for equitable peace and prosperity in pursuit of national self-reliance and the exit of development partners.

Adapted from The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States

A critical moment for change

There is increased urgency to change how development assistance and partnerships can help lead to results in fragile contexts, and to translate commitments on paper into reality on the ground. More than 1.6 billion people live in fragile situations and over 3.3 billion live in the shadow of political violence.[3] The circumstances, conditions, and definition of fragility are fast evolving.[4] Of the 58 countries identified as fragile by the Organisation for Economic

2 g7+ (2017) Policy Note on The Use of Country Systems in Development Assistance: the g7+ Perspective.

3 OECD (2016) States of Fragility 2016: Understanding Violence, Paris: OECD Publishing, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/states-of-fragility-2016_9789264267213-en.

4 One such taxonomy outlines five classifications: fragile and conflict-affected states, middle-income countries, Middle East and Africa transition states, countries with significant pockets of violence or conflict, and OECD states in financial crisis. See: Lockhart, C., Hezir, S., and Theros, M. (2019) Global Trends in Fragility and Towards a Future Research Agenda in Fragile Contexts, Institute for State

Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 2018, 30 are middle-income. Migration, forced displacement, and climate change mean that the impacts of fragility are not bound by national borders and are hitting both fragile and donor countries at home.

There may be an opportunity in which to make this change in practice. Key policy functions are putting pressure on leaders, decision-makers, practitioners, and academics to continue seeking solutions and delivering on their commitments. These include the World Bank's Fragility Forum; the United Nations–World Bank Pathways to Peace collaboration; the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding and its tripartite constituency of the g7+ group of fragile and state-affected countries, the International Network on Conflict and Fragility comprised of engaged donor countries, and the Civil Society Platform on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS); the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the OECD's *States of Fragility* report and upcoming Fit for Fragility project; the U.S. Congress-mandated Task Force on Extremism in Fragile States and Global Fragility Act, passed in 2019; as well as growing discussion on the nexus between the security, humanitarian, and development sectors.

At the same time, however, the window to get it right is growing smaller as patience wears thin on all sides of development partnerships. Domestic pressure to cut official development assistance (ODA) is growing. Although the United Nations and donor governments have been aiming since 1970 to commit 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) to ODA, only five countries met that threshold in 2017, and some have even been retreating from it.5 While earmarked development assistance to fragile contexts increased overall from $52 billion in 2007 to $68 billion in 2016, country programmable aid (CPA) to fragile states is estimated not to have grown between then and 2019.6 Even as the International Development Association (IDA) has recently committed to double the amount of financing available for fragile countries, from $7 billion to $14 billion by 2021, increases in ODA have been stagnant compared to short-term humanitarian assistance.7 New development actors and models are emerging, especially in the infrastructure financing space. These offer new opportunities for frustrated fragile country actors, but carry with them risks, such as not always being accompanied by governance and citizen delivery criteria benchmarks.

Responding to the retreat in ODA, and drawing on the significant experience and learning of those working on development in fragile states, this paper first seeks to collate key lessons and to examine why current development practices have fallen short. It then proposes a new way to focus investments and energies, identifying some specific ways that development assistance can support reformers and national institutions in strengthening their state functions to guide, stimulate, and deliver development effectively.

Our research: taking a 'ground-up' approach to understanding what works

This paper builds on the policy and programming experience of ISE and partners in fragile-state development assistance reform over the past 15 years.[8] It draws from insights and contributions across the many organisations around the world that are working to align complementary agendas, recognise and distil successes, establish new ways to share experiences, and reassess how we as a community approach development partnerships in fragile environments. This paper also incorporates perspectives that are essential to development programming, but which are often left out of the conversation – either by design or because of technical barriers (e.g. the exclusionary effects of jargon). These perspectives include the viewpoints of those working in the

Effectiveness and International Development Research Center (IDRC), https://effectivestates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Global-Trends-in-Fragility-and-Towards-a-Future-Research-Agenda-in-Fragile-Contexts.pdf. Gertz and Kharas choose to use the term Severely Off Track Countries referring to progress against the SDGs, noting that 'the term "fragility" encapsulates many different concepts and masks important variation across countries': Gertz, G. and Kharas, H. (2018) Leave No Country Behind, Global Economic & Development Working Paper 110, www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/leave_no_country_behind_working_paper.pdf.

5 Australia, for example, reduced its ODA to 0.21% of GNI in 2019-20, down from higher levels (0.32%) in 2015. See: Development Policy Centre, Australian National University (2017) Comparisons, Australian Aid Tracker, http://devpolicy.org/aidtracker/comparisons; and Clare, A. (2019) Official Development Assistance (ODA): A quick guide, Parliament of Australia, www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1819/Quick_Guides/ODA. See also: OECD, Development Assistance Committee (2016) History of the 0.7% ODA Target, www.oecd.org/dac/stats/ODA-history-of-the-0-7-target.pdf; and Development Initiatives (2018) Preliminary ODA data for 2017, https://reliefweb.int/report/world/preliminary-oda-data-2017.

6 OECD International Development Statistics (2018) Detailed aid statistics: ODA official development assistance: disbursements, OECD International Development Statistics (database), http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/data-00069-en.

7 Igoe, M. (2018) Q&A: The World Bank's pivot to fragile states, Devex, https://www.devex.com/news/q-a-the-world-bank-s-pivot-to-fragile-states-92572. See also OECD International Development Statistics (2018).

8 Institute for State Effectiveness (2019) Where we work, https://effectivestates.org/about/where-we-work.

security sector, parliamentarians, and line ministry officials, among others.

In compiling this paper, we reviewed the abundant academic and policy literature, conducted field visits in Afghanistan, Colombia, Rwanda, and Somalia from which we produced four dedicated country case studies, and reflected on ISE's experience in 20 countries over the past 13 years – some of which has been at least partially successful. We also held extensive consultations (see Annex A: Methodology for more information on the research process and methodology). Through this process, we found goodwill and a sense of responsibility across the multitude of development actors – governments, development partners, civil society, security actors, and civil society. People want to do the right thing and achieve results.

Our research has taken a 'ground-up' approach to understanding what drives effective development cooperation. Our recommendations stem from the practical experience and lessons learned from the country perspective, rather than working down from the prescriptions of international commitments. To this end, the key insights were provided not only by national leaders, agency leads, and designated development representatives, but also by those whose job it is to translate goals and plans into operational policies and programmes. These are the project officers, deputy ministers, sector specialists, and career bureaucrats – the people that work every day within these well-intentioned but often contradictory and ineffective systems and procedures. This paper aims to give these voices a platform. What was clear across these perspectives was that development assistance generally, but especially in fragile contexts, continues to focus on too many disparate problems and does not maximise the role of reformers and the civil service. Because everything is a priority – and donors are under pressure to demonstrate quick returns on investment – assistance is geared towards the most visible or current issues.

There are some central functions of the state that governments need to be able to manage in order to function. Prioritising and sequencing investments to develop these core functions early on provides the building blocks for tackling the complex set of political, fiduciary, and social accountabilities in fragile countries. This will enable further development towards a country's inclusive, legitimate self-reliance. What emerged through this project is that sequenced, focused investment by governments, donors, and partners in a few key areas can help better direct development assistance towards these core functions of the state, establishing the foundation for effective development (see Annex B: Core functions). The recommendations in this paper put forward specific policies and approaches that can and have worked to incentivise efforts to build core functions.

HOW WE GOT HERE: POLICY, PRACTICE, AND THEORY

PROGRESS OVER THE PAST 15 YEARS

Importantly, the shared goal of building states that can serve the people's interests through well-functioning institutions is not new; the international development community has pursued this as an aim for the past 15 years. This section offers a brief overview of the innovations in policy, practice, and theory of working in fragile states, recognising the lessons learned and identifying some of the issues that still need to be addressed for further progress.

Policy and analytical innovations

Over the past 15 years, there have been key innovations in policy, practice, and theory with regard to supporting fragile states' transitions to stability. In response to the rise of U.N. peacekeeping missions in the 1990s, the international community placed additional focus on states affected by and emerging from conflict. This attention led to new organisations and platforms, and increased financial support, with corresponding political commitments. International organisations identified the need for better operations for keeping and building peace in conflict-affected states in as early as 2000, with the publication of the *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (commonly the 'Brahimi Report').[9]

Over the same time that these policy innovations have evolved, there have also been key analytical innovations. More than a decade ago, ISE's work on statebuilding proposed a model built around the ten functions that a state must carry out to provide for human security and prosperity for their citizens, embedded in a sovereignty strategy.[10] This approach calls for careful sequencing and prioritisation, fostering consensus on critical tasks, and aligning domestic and international efforts to achieve them.

The seminal *World Development Report* in 2011 built on these foundations, analysing causes of state fragility and how these can be overcome. A key insight emerged: 'when state institutions do not adequately protect citizens, guard against corruption, or provide access to justice; when markets do not provide job opportunities; or when communities have lost social cohesion—the likelihood of violent conflict increases.'[11] Hence the need to focus on citizen security, justice, and jobs. The *World Development Report 2011* presented other innovative insights, including that on average, conflict-affected states take 35 years to recover and build institutions.[12] This focus on institutions and national reform leaders was important, but somewhat omitted *how* to ensure reforms delivered over time, with stability beyond a single administration.

These policy and analytical innovations culminated in the 'aid effectiveness' and 'development partnership' agendas (see Box 2), which crystallised 'a focus on results, reiterating the principle of country ownership, increasing transparency, strengthening mutual accountability between partners and governments, and building inclusive partnerships.'[13] Figure 1 summarises the policy commitments regarding aid effectiveness and support to fragile states.

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9 The Brahimi Report outlined the need for institutional change and greater political and financial support for U.N. peacekeeping operations after the failures of the United Nations in both Rwanda and Srebrenica (Bosnia and Herzegovina). See: United Nations General Assembly Security Council (2000) *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305 and S/2000/809)*, https://undocs.org/A/55/305.

10 Ghani, A. and Lockhart, C. (2008) *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 174.

11 World Bank (2011) World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development, World Bank. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/4389.

12 Ibid.

13 These commitments have been analysed at length in the wider literature on aid effectiveness. See, for example, Abdel-Malek, T. (2015) *The Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation: Origins, Actions and Future Prospects*, German Development Institute, www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/Studies_88.pdf.

Figure 1

INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

2003 Rome Declaration on Harmonisation

Concrete commitments: first set of concrete commitments to aid effectiveness, emphasizing ownership, alignment, and harmonization

2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness

Monitoring framework: binding targets and framework to monitor progress, as well as additional commitments to focus on results and improve mutual accountability

2007 Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations

Minimizing harm: 10 principles for maximizing aid effectiveness and minimizing unintentional harm

2008 Accra Agenda for Action

Accelerating progress: accelerating progress towards the Paris commitments, with additional commitment to focus on the root causes of fragility

2010 Dili Declaration

Setting the focus: setting out four key areas of focus for fragile states: capacity development, aid flexibility, planning processes and political dialogue

2011 Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation

Inclusive development strategy: shifting focus from aid effectiveness to effective development cooperation

2011 New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States

Focusing on fragile states: a new architecture for working with fragile states, including aligning with country conditions and priorities

2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 16 & 17

Setting sights on long-term goals: the successor to the Millennium Development Goals, renewing momentum for commitments from Rome to New Deal and setting 2030 goals

2016 Stockholm Declaration on Addressing Fragility and Peace-building in a Changing World

Recommitting to the New Deal: reaffirming the need to focus on root causes of fragility and recommitting to the New Deal principles

Organisations, institutions, and communities of practice

Some of the policy commitments and early analysis spurred new organisations, institutions, and communities of practice. In 2005, the U.N. Secretary-General report *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All* recommended the creation of the U.N. peacebuilding architecture to 'improve UN planning for sustained recovery, focusing on early efforts to establish the necessary institutions' to help states transition from war to peace.[14] Introduced in 2011, the New Deal was established to advance platforms, tools, and processes to implement better support to fragile states. The g7+ group of fragile and conflict-affected states aims to serve as a platform for governments to take greater ownership of their development agendas and pursue reforms through their domestic institutions, particularly through their ministries of finance. The International Network on Conflict and Fragility, the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding and the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding have also focused on securing better outcomes. The 2015 SDGs incorporated SDG 16, which aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice, and accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.[15] The Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies is a multistakeholder partnership, created in 2017 to coalesce efforts to achieve SDG 16 and to build national institutions.[16]

Tools, funding, and instruments of support

These growing international bureaucracies absorbed lessons and promoted innovation through associated tools, funding, and other instruments of support. For example, the IDA – the World Bank fund reserved for the poorest countries, including many fragile states – has evolved in its priorities and approaches every three years in its replenishment rounds. IDA17 (funding from 2014-2017) started to translate emerging lessons for working in fragile contexts into operational reforms. IDA18 (2017-2020), which saw a record $75 billion committed to fragile states,[17] sought for the first time to leverage donor contributions with private sector funds raised from capital markets, recognising that donor funding alone is not the answer. Innovative features include efforts to jumpstart private sector development in fragile states and increased emphasis on regional drivers of fragility. Both emphasise pathways to self-reliance. Funding has also been structured in support of national development strategies. In 2013, the EU established statebuilding contracts as a budget support mechanism in fragile states. [18] The statebuilding contracts, which are typically in place for three to six years, focus on restoring peace and macroeconomic stability in countries at critical transition moments.[19] Thus, there has been progress in policy, practice, and theory of how fragile states build core functions and lay the foundations for sustained, inclusive economic growth, and stability.

Academic underpinnings

These efforts have all been underpinned by academic contributions of think tanks, universities, and other intellectual contributors. Although a wide array of influences require credit, a small selection of examples could include the 'working with the grain' movement, 'thinking and working politically', Kleinfeld's work on development trajectories and books such as Brinkerhoff's *Managing Policy Reform* (2002), and Andrew's *Limits of Institutional Reform in Development* (2013).[20] Beyond these, a key insight produced by the academic community is on the factors that have prevented systemic change

14 United Nations General Assembly Security Council (2005) In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security, and Human Rights for All (A/59/2005), https://undocs.org/A/59/2005.

15 For further information on Goal 16, including targets and indicators and progress toward its achievement, see: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform *Sustainable Development Goal 16*, https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg16.

16 For further information on the work of the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, see: New York University, Center on International Cooperation, *Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies*, https://cic.nyu.edu/programs/sdg16plus.

17 World Bank, International Development Association (2017) Additions to IDA Resources: Eighteenth Replenishment; Towards 2030: Investing in Growth, Resilience, and Opportunity, World Bank, http://ida.worldbank.org/replenishments/ida18-replenishment.

18 Bernardi, M., Hart, T., and Rabinowitz, G. (2015) EU State Building Contracts: Early Lessons from the EU's New Budget Support Instrument for Fragile States, Overseas Development Institute, www.odi.org/publications/8614-eu-state-building-contracts-budget-support-fragile-states-mali-south-sudan.

19 Hauck, V., Galeazzi, G., and Vanheukelom, J. (2013) *The EU's State Building Contracts: Courageous Assistance to Fragile States, But How Effective in the End?*, Maastricht, European Centre for Development Policy Management.

20 See: Kleinfeld, R. (2012) *Advancing the Rule of Law Abroad: Next Generation Reform*, Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; Brinkerhoff, D.W. and Crosby, B. (2002) *Managing Policy Reform: Concepts and Tools for Decision-makers in Developing and Transitioning Countries*, Kumarian Press; and Andrews, M. (2013) *The Limits of Institutional Reform in Development: Changing Rules for Realistic Solutions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

from taking hold. Blattman has chronicled how small-scale trial and error strategies are largely unpractised by development partners.[21] The 'doing development differently' initiative has characterised disincentives for change as a baseline for its work to cultivate a community of practice for change.[22] The Problem Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA) community has focused on fast and iterative changes, with short feedback loops to assess progress and make adjustments – an approach that can help to build evidence bases and momentum for broader change.[23]

WHAT WE KNOW NOW

Over the past 15 years of working in fragile states, we have learned a great deal in trying to advance better outcomes for fragile states. Critical lessons include what has and has not worked in supporting fragile states, and how development partnerships have at times fragmented the state, increasing reliance on foreign assistance. There has been exploration of appropriate entry points for reform and change.[24] Before moving forward with recommendations on how these partnerships can be best aligned and calibrated, we assess the following key lessons:

- **Reformist political leaders matter to development success, to an extent.** Reformist national leaders are helpful, but not necessary for development to take place. The leadership team and other coalitions can articulate and execute the reform vision, and coordinate across government. In some cases, there may not be a reformist leader in place for the international community to partner with. In the worst cases, the national leader may be directing violence against their country's people and may be hostile to the international community. Humanitarian, geostrategic, economic, or poverty reduction imperatives may drive the international community to remain engaged. Experience shows the international community can still support development, including working in technical sectors or at different levels of the state (e.g. support to local or municipal councils). The key is looking for entry points for reform and change.[25]

- **Elite agreements are a tool to help end conflict but may not be enough to create stability in fragile states.** Peace agreements negotiated among a narrow set of elites may not address – and may even exacerbate – the underlying causes of conflict. Globally, there is growing popular mistrust of elites, evidenced by protests in countries from Chile to Sudan to France. We know that what goes further in making both peace and development sustainable are inclusive political settlements that address root causes of violence and institutions that ensure people's voices are heard.[26] A key question is how to create the political space and political coalitions to advance a development agenda, including for necessary technical reforms. The 'thinking and working politically' community of practice calls for broadening the understanding of the political economy and the key stakeholders involved in policy decisions. Reform decisions, including priority setting and funding decisions will create winners and losers that are important to consider.[27] This means engaging civil society, citizens groups, and communities.

- **(Re)building national identity matters for stability and development.** A number of conflicts in the last two decades have been driven by exclusion and inequalities – perceived or real – between people and groups. Inclusive development and the technical work of strengthening inclusive governance institutions can help overcome the reality and perceptions of exclusion. But also critical for success are people's feelings of being invested in an 'imagined community' of a country.[28] We have learned many lessons from tools of nationbuilding, such as transitional justice, national

21 Blattman, C. (2014) *Crossing the River by Feeling Each Stone: How Big Bureaucracies Can Find Their Path in Fragile States* (lecture given at the World Bank technical workshop on *Sustainable Jobs and Livelihoods in Fragile Countries: What Will It Take? Defining Questions, Analytical Tools and Way Forward*).

22 Wild, L., Andrews, M., Pett, J. and Dempster, H. (2016) *Doing Development Differently: Who We Are, What We're Doing, What We're Learning*, Overseas Development Institute, https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/11199.pdf.

23 Center for International Development, Harvard University (2018) *Problem Driven Iterative Adaptation Toolkit*, Harvard University, https://www.hks.harvard.edu/centers/cid.

24 Levy, B. (2014) *Working with the Grain: Integrating Governance and Growth in Development Strategies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

25 Ibid.

26 World Bank (2011) *World Development Report 2011*.

27 USAID, Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (2018) *Thinking and Working Politically through Political Economy Analysis: A Guide for Practitioners*, USAID, https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/PEA2018.pdf.

28 Anderson, B. (1983) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso.

dialogue, reconciliation processes, civic education, and recognition and celebration of culture.[29] These approaches can cultivate a shared sense of national values and aspirations, which can in turn bolster inclusive, country-led development. A good statebuilding plan includes nationbuilding elements and goals, offering a foundation on which to build the shared values and vision that bind a population.[30]

- **The cadre of rising leaders in fragile states is an opportunity.** The demographic changes across the developing world have been well documented.[31] Not only are these young leaders growing in number, but they bring new skills and perspectives to their service. This rising generation is more digitally connected than ever before, with greater access to communication, information, and education. Many of these young people may have been abroad for education or work or may be returning diaspora. Others may remain within their communities, either by choice or due to the lack of inclusive institutions and opportunities afforded to their peers, and it is important to leverage their talents as well. These young leaders, including those in the private sector, will be key in shaping future trajectories for their countries. The key will be how the international community works with and invests in them over the long term.

- **Efforts among development actors to build productive economies have been generally unsuccessful and insufficient.** We know about patterns of economic activity in fragile states and how those patterns need to shift to allow for countries to develop. As the LSE-Oxford Commission on State Fragility, Growth, and Development notes:

> Fragile states are chronically short of conventional firms: instead, people work overwhelmingly informally in micro-enterprises. While micro-enterprises can keep people from destitution, only firms can enable workers to reap the huge productivity gains that come from scale and specialization. Attracting such firms, and helping local entrepreneurs copy them, requires a major refocusing of international and domestic policies.[32]

Countries not only need to create the foundations for their own private sector development, but they and their development partners also need to focus on urban economies. Economic growth in urban areas typically drives development. From decades of work in and on fragile states, we know that in times of instability and violence, people often move to cities, putting a strain on urban resources and infrastructure while flooding the labour market.[33] This has implications for balancing growth strategies between urban and rural economic concerns and linkages.

- **To strengthen the social compact, states need to consider not just what services they deliver, but how they deliver them.** The previous assumption among development partners was that improving access to services would have a positive effect on state legitimacy. However, literature shows that people's access to services and even satisfaction with those services does not necessarily lead to increased perceptions of state legitimacy.[34] What does increase state legitimacy is when the state delivers services according to rules (formal and informal), and when those 'rules align with shared beliefs about how power should be exerted.'[35] The lesson is

29 See, e.g., Grotenhuis, R. (2016) *Nation-Building as Necessary Effort in Fragile States*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press; and Helling, D. (2009) *Anatomy of a 'Political Chameleon': Re-examining Fluid Shapes and Solid Constants of Nationalism and Nation Building*, Crisis States Research Centre Discussion Paper No. 17 (Series 2), London: London School of Economics and Political Science. See also: Gregg, H. (2018) *Building the Nation: Missed Opportunities in Iraq and Afghanistan*, Lincoln, NE: Potomac Books.

30 Anderson (1983) *Imagined Communities*; Yadgar, Y. (2003) From the particularistic to the universalistic: national narratives in Israel's mainstream press, 1967–97, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 8, No. 1, pp. 55-72; Amin, S.N. (2014) The impact of identity politics in challenging national narratives: a case study among Canadian Muslims, *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 418-435, https://doi.org/10.1111/sena.12105.; Létourneau. J. and Chapman, A. (2017) Negotiating the nation: young people, national narratives and history education, *London Review of Education*, Vol. 15 Iss. 2; See also Grever, M., and van der Vlies, T. (2017) Why national narratives are perpetuated: A literature review on new insights from history textbook research, *London Review of Education*, Vol. 15, pp. 286-301.

31 World Bank (2015) Global Monitoring Report, Development Goals in an Era of Demographic Change, World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/global-monitoring-report.

32 International Growth Centre (2018) *Escaping the Fragility Trap*, LSE-Oxford Commission on State Fragility, Growth and Development, https://www.theigc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Escaping-the-fragility-trap_Aug-2018.pdf.

33 Ibid.

34 Schomerus, M., Buell, S., McCullough, A., Gunesekara, V., Richards, G. (2017) *What Matters to People When Recovering from Conflict*, Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium. https://securelivelihoods.org/publication/what-matters-to-people-when-recovering-from-conflict.

35 Ibid.

that there must be space for citizens to articulate their priorities for service delivery.[36] In turn, the state needs to be accountable to those articulated demands.

- **Fragmentation between multiple donor-imposed agendas constrains leaders from making decisions about their own development and recovery and executing those strategies.** The statebuilding, peacebuilding, development, humanitarian, counterterrorism, and development financing agendas have introduced a multitude of international actors, interests, and instruments to fragile states. Not only does this make achieving policy consensus difficult, but it floods these states with competing priorities. These various agendas present a management challenge for fragile states, which often have weak capacity, and make it harder for countries to lead their own development strategies. There is evidence to suggest that development partners are increasingly diversifying their assistance to fragile states and asking states to do more across multiple sectors. For example, the number of different sectors represented in World Bank projects in fragile states has grown from 3 sectors in 2009 to 13 in 2018, suggesting that international support is becoming more varied, and priorities potentially more jumbled, making it difficult for states to focus on a few key areas (see also Box 3).[37] This fragmentation continues to undermine prospects for long-term development and stability, making international support actually less efficient and more costly.

Box 3 - Fragmented and poorly targeted support in Afghanistan's Agricultural sector

Between 2000 and 2014, 229 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were engaged in development projects in Afghanistan's agricultural sector.[i] A 2018 study mapped some $1.5 billion between 2000 and 2016, only part of the international donor investments in the sector, which was stretched across 17 different donors and 76 different projects in the country. Of these 76 projects, 30 were in Afghanistan's central regions, which do not include the provinces with the highest rates of poverty, but where security conditions or other interests facilitated NGO access.[ii] The estimate of active projects is conservative but the fragmented distribution of assistance reflects the continued practice of funding small projects over national programmes and putting resources through parallel structures (rather than through existing national institutions). It also suggests that factors other than need are influencing NGOs' decisions of where to operate and deliver projects.

i Mitchell, D.F. (2017) NGO presence and activity in Afghanistan, 2000-2014: A provincial-level dataset, Stability: International Journal of Security and Development, 6(1), Fig. 6.

ii Leao, I., Ahmed, M., and Kar, A. (2018) Jobs from agriculture in Afghanistan (from series on International Development in Focus), World Bank, pp. 101, http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/661131517899018100/Jobs-from-Agriculture-in-Afghanistan.

- **Focusing efforts on a few development priorities and sequencing these over time makes a difference.** We know that revenue, expenditure, and security institutions in the short-term matter just about more than anything else. Weak state institutions need to focus on a few key priorities first to set the conditions for future success, which is at odds with current development practice. Important work has also been done on understanding the sequencing of development strategies, based on initial conditions and ultimate goals for a country. For countries whose primary goal is to build state capacity as a platform for growth, improved public sector performance and enhanced credibility for investors are top priorities, followed by strengthened political institutions and civil society in the longer term.[38] Other sequences are also possible, based on different starting points and goals. While international financial institutions have moved away from the Washington Consensus[39] conditionalities of the 1990s, innovations in development lending, statebuilding contracts, and mutual accountability frameworks have been experimenting with sequenced conditionalities.

- **Corruption remains a significant problem for development and an impediment for donors to invest in country systems.** The current generation of anti-corruption measures are not working well enough, in part because greater specificity is needed in diagnosing corruption challenges. In many places a general 'hollowing out' of the state is occurring due to multiple pressures on the state and its institutions. State capture can result when firms seek to shape the institutional and rule of law environments in their favour.[40] Transnational

36 McCullough, A. and Papoulidis, J. (2020) *Why we need to rethink our understanding of state legitimacy to address fragility*, World Bank Blog – Development for Peace, https://blogs.worldbank.org/dev4peace/why-we-need-rethink-our-understanding-state-legitimacy-address-fragility.

37 Lockhart, C., et al. (2019) *Global Trends in Fragility.*

38 Levy, B. and Fukuyama, F. (2010) *Development Strategies: Integrating Governance and Growth*, World Bank, http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/620961468178127445/pdf/WPS5196.pdf.

39 A set of economic policy recommendations for development.

40 Kaufmann, D., Hellman, J., and Geraint, J. (2000) *Seize the State, Seize the Day: State Capture, Corruption, and Influence in*

criminal networks are also fostering corruption, aiming to keep the state weak as they benefit from chaos and conflict.[41]

There has been some worsening of corruption in areas of the Northern Triangle and parts of the Balkans. But some ground has been gained: in addition to the classic examples of Singapore and Hong Kong, more recent progress in Albania, Colombia, and Indonesia tells us that fighting corruption requires systemic changes in controls, incentives, and monitoring arrangements, but within an overall strategy. This suggests there may be a need for more iterative strategies for countering corruption and an increased focus on civil society.[42] Moreover, not only does corruption damage the relationship between a state and its people, it also can erode trust between a state and its international partners. As one Minister of Finance from a fragile country told his colleagues, donors cannot be expected to put money through country systems until host governments in fragile states do their fair share and turn promises of reform and anti-corruption into practice.[43]

Transition, World Bank, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTABCDEWASHINGTON2000/Resources/hellman.pdf.

41 Shelley, L. (2005) The Unholy Trinity: Transnational Crime, Corruption and Terrorism, *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Vol. XI, Iss. 2, http://bjwa.brown.edu/11-2/the-unholy-trinity-transnational-crime-corruption-and-terrorism/.

42 Kleinfeld (2012) *Advancing the Rule of Law Abroad*.

43 G7+ High Level Side event during the 2017 World Bank Annual Meetings on The Statebuilding Dilemma: Fragmented Budget = Unsustainable Development, International Monetary Fund, 13 October 2017.

WAY FORWARD: FIVE AREAS OF FOCUS

The previous chapters demonstrate how the past 15 years have resulted in key principles and lessons learned of practice for delivering better development outcomes in fragile states. However, **the lack of widespread change suggests that these previous efforts have failed to properly address the incentive structures that drive behaviour**. This paper proposes that focus is reoriented towards the drivers of effective development outcomes, rather than the 'symptoms' we often observe when development partnerships fail to deliver (see the following sections, including Box 4, for more on the distinction between drivers and symptoms).

Focus on the drivers, less than the symptoms

We argue that focusing on the symptoms rather than the drivers of effective development outcomes misdirects emphasis from how to solve them. Symptoms are often cited as part of the problem in development practice, and include:

- Fragmentation of development assistance, including the proliferation of development projects that are not part of a central programme designed to build systems and self-reliance.
- Domestic 'brain drain', whereby higher salaries attract talented people away from government ministries to work for international organisations or donor agencies.
- Failure of development partners to correctly read the local context and as a result designing poorly suited interventions or misapplying 'best practice'.
- Technical assistance that fails to transfer knowledge and skills, often with a shorter-term focus on outputs rather than on outcomes.
- Development interventions failing to account for the socio-political conditions, which in turn means they are unsustainable and may aggravate existing political tensions.
- General substitution of state functions by external actors.

From this list, we know that many of the aid/development effectiveness principles should be working to resolve these problems. However, as Pritchett and Woolcock argue, considerable energy has been devoted to "what governments should do, with relatively less attention given to the economics and politics of how to accomplish the 'what.'"44 Addressing the drivers we hope provides some contribution to that 'how'. This paper proposes that differentiating between the drivers and the symptoms, offers as a starting point a new way forward that may help us resolve the how of building state functions to close the implementation gap and facilitate transitions out of fragility.

Box 4 Distinguishing 'drivers' from 'symptoms'

'Symptoms' are the results of development delivery shortcomings that occur when principles, knowledge, and lessons are not put into practice and development goals are not reached. Symptoms remain valid and important to discuss, but they will not be systematically resolved (nor will the terms of aid change) unless the drivers of development practices are addressed. 'Drivers' are the underlying incentive structures preventing or enabling change and improved development practice. The drivers and symptoms described in this report are not intended to serve as an exhaustive list, but rather a conceptual framing.

Five areas of focus to close the implementation gap

This paper identifies five key issues, driven by underlying

44 Pritchett, L., and Woolcock, M. (2004) Solutions When the Solution is the Problem: Arraying the Disarray in Development, *World Development*, Vol. 32, No. 2, pp. 191-212.

Box 5 - Five areas of focus to shift incentives

1. NATIONAL STRATEGIES, PLANS, AND POLICIES

Issue: Lack of clear, coherent national strategies and development programmes identified by government that will actually build self-reliance.

Focus area: Forming a coherent national strategy with the right focuses to enable and encourage stakeholders to stay on track, including by planning for iteration and experimentation, building in mechanisms to deliver at scale and sustainably, breaking down siloes between sectors, and communicating clearly about responsibilities.

2. DONOR INCENTIVES

Issue: Failure to prioritise the goal of building state functions and ensuring donors are aligned with that goal, in their own systems.

Focus area: Aligning incentives within donor agencies to the statebuilding agenda (building core functions), including by emphasising the mutual interests in statebuilding, reframing risk in fragile contexts, and leveraging external oversight mechanisms to the task at hand.

3. HUMAN CAPITAL: REFORMIST LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND COALITIONS

Issue: Failure to develop the human capital strategies that would allow for the diffusion of reforms throughout government, including by extending leadership beyond individuals to cadres of mid-tier reformers who are responsible for implementing reforms.

Focus area: Fostering coalitions of reform leaders throughout national institutions to diffuse responsibility for implementation and increase confidence in the sustainability of reform, including by providing mid-level reformers with support systems and technical and soft skills, encouraging them to build on existing knowledge and to make collective decisions, and backing their efforts to stay focused on their goals.

4. IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Issue: Failure to implement national strategies and development programmes and, over time, to test that this is being done well, including whether governments are building capacity to advance ownership and addressing threats to development and stability, such as corruption and criminality.

Focus area: Creating pathways for stakeholders to follow through on implementation and track their progress, including by building essential management capacities, using a consolidated budget for oversight and accountability, adapting to changes in institutional capacity, and encouraging incremental progress.

5. WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY APPROACHES

Issue: Failure to build inclusive governance structures and inclusive reform agendas, with citizens helping to shape national strategies and progress being communicated back to them.

Focus area: Consulting and engaging the broader public from the start to ensure buy-in and support of both the public and development partners, and to prevent resurgence of conflict, including by designing inclusive peace processes at the earliest opportunity in the post-conflict phase, addressing urban–rural divides, supporting civil society, leveraging traditional practices, and supporting communities to adapt to changing circumstances.

incentive structures, that contribute to the implementation gap and prevent effective development outcomes. It then **recommends five areas of focus for development partnerships**, which form the way forward in helping build state functions, close the implementation gap, and facilitate country transitions out of fragility (Box 5).

We see these five areas of focus as a framework for *prioritising* development efforts in fragile contexts. They are not intended to be prescriptive, nor to be taken as a standard template for 'success'. All reform strategies will still need to be tailored to context, including the local root causes of conflict and fragility and the character and nature of the state in question (e.g. the power structures, decision-making processes, and baseline capacities).

Drawing on existing principles and tools that work

Before moving on to each of the five areas of focus, **it is important to acknowledge the existing body of principles and tools that can be drawn upon to effect behavioural change.** While we propose a shift in *prioritisation*, we do not advocate an entirely new paradigm or approach. The principles set out in international instruments – focus on results, facilitation of country ownership, increased transparency, strengthened mutual accountability between partners and governments, the building of inclusive partnerships, and alignment of aid to country plans – are the right ones. They are at the centre of guiding development partnerships to build the functions states need to deliver to citizens and close the implementation gap.

Similarly, there are a range of tools that have shown varying degrees of success in translating principles into practice. For example, efforts to develop a shared baseline and understanding including through Fragility Assessments (prescribed by the New Deal 'FOCUS' principles) and Recovery and Peace Building Assessments (supported by the European Union, U.N., and the World Bank) have helped to identify and build consensus around the root causes of fragility in a particular country and provide a common foundation to align interventions and policies. Further, the creation of PFM benchmarks and mutual accountability indicators, OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) peer reviews, pooled funding in multidonor trust funds, and frameworks such as the Collaborative Africa Budget Reform Initiative (CABRI) metrics[45] in monitoring and evaluation, have in some cases successfully encouraged the use of country systems. Not all of these tools are right and many are poorly utilised.[46] That said, we should look to draw from them rather than to reinvent the wheel.[47] These instruments and tools can be strengthened by a shift in focus to address the underlying incentives that drive the failure to see wide-reaching reform in development strategies, donor alignment, human capital, implementation and accountability, and whole-of-society approaches. The five areas should contribute to how these tools are applied and to improving the scope of these international instruments' operations.

"It's not that we don't have the answers to these issues. It's that those answers don't [currently] solve the problems."

- former U.S. Ambassador, 2018

45 The CABRI metrics for different 'use of country systems' modalities include putting aid on budget (ODA is included in the national budget numbers), on treasury (ODA is channelled through the country's treasury), on plan (the programming and sectors that donors are funding is incorporated into the national planning documents), etc. See: CABRI (2008).

46 For instance, evaluations like the 2016 *Independent Review of the New Deal in Fragile States* and 2017 *g7+ Policy Note on The Use of Country Systems in Development Assistance* show that use of country systems is limited and uptake of New Deal tools, including the compacts and fragility assessments, is insufficient.

47 For example, the Division of Labour policy (proposed in the Paris Accord and constituting an attempt to address the proliferation of projects) was a strong technical solution in Rwanda for coordinating donors and regulating how many sectors they invested in. Rwandan policymakers credit this policy as one of the major redefining features of progress towards self-reliance, even though it is not always strictly applied. In Afghanistan, on the other hand, donors largely ignored the policy and it was eventually abandoned.

Figure 2 - Symptoms and drivers

SYMPTOMS

- The proliferation of aid projects, rather than broader programmes that try to build systems.
- Domestic 'brain drain', whereby talented people are attracted to work for international organisations or donor agencies and away from government ministries.
- Failure of development partners to correctly read the local context and therefore designing poorly suited interventions.
- Technical assistance that fails to transfer knowledge and skills, a shorter-term focus on outputs rather than outcomes.
- Development interventions failing to account for the socio-political conditions, which in turn means they are unsustainable and may aggravate existing political tensions.
- General substitution of state functions by external actors.

CORE ISSUE

"Development partnerships do not fulfill their promise to invest in governments' capacity to fulfill core functions and move towards self-reliance."

- Incoherent national strategies
- Misaligned donor incentives
- Lack of investment in human capital
- Undisciplined implementation and accountability
- Noninclusive reform and governance

DRIVERS

NATIONAL STRATEGIES, PLANS AND POLICIES

Countries need to have in place a national strategy that can incentivise stakeholders to work in alignment to achieve self-reliance through building core functions and setting foundations for economic growth. This strategy forms the foundation for aligning all parties' energies and investment. Without this foundation for reform, which must be coherent and appropriate, all other efforts to organise incentives will be redundant. Yet national development strategies are too often overloaded with priorities, are not adapted to the context or to addressing root causes of conflict, fail to include the wider population, and are overly ambitious in terms of what can be done within a certain time frame.

In fragile states, there is often low institutional carrying capacity, a growing list of needs, narrow fiscal space, a deluge of stakeholders, and a great deal of uncertainty. Here, national strategies and plans need even more to be realistic about what is achievable, not setting public expectations too high while also keeping in mind the long-term goals. The right foundation is needed from the start. It is on this that the core functions for self-reliance can be built.

Key to establishing achievable plans that build national governance systems are setting the right priorities at the start, bringing necessary stakeholders to the table, and ensuring approaches fit the context. This includes:

- Identifying core priorities early and iterating to set realistic goals.
- Encouraging experimentation to find effective approaches to build core functions.
- Cutting through sectoral siloes between humanitarian, security, and development planning.
- Having effective strategic communications and engagement in devising the national strategy.
- Incorporating from the outset a focus on economic self-reliance.

Identifying core priorities early and iterate to set realistic goals

Far too often development agendas in fragile contexts translate into a long list of programmes, projects, and policies. Everything is a priority for one of the many actors with a stake in process – from donors providing the resourcing, to ministers with important political constituencies. This risks strategies and plans becoming a 'Christmas tree' of ornamental programmes and reduces the likelihood that any will be implemented comprehensively. By having too many priorities, development partners and ministries can champion any programme (including the easiest), without investing in the more difficult reforms that help to build the systems needed to run an effective government.[48] Alternately, strategies become incoherent and inconsistent, making it difficult for actors to align, and for the public to understand and support, implementation efforts. The strategies themselves then becomes ceremonial, and easier for all stakeholders to ignore. In turn, this undermines the government's leadership role in setting and maintaining the development agenda. Instead, the truly critical priorities need to be identified and sequenced in a national strategy and policies, plans and programmes of different ministries and the functions that will underpin their delivery. These should be based on the outcomes of consultations with and inputs from a broad swath of citizens and the public (see chapter on 'Whole of society approaches').

Many countries have adopted a model of pillars or platforms under which different partners and actors can align their activities. This approach of setting 'umbrella goals' allows for flexibility, but maintains coherence across different activities, focusing diverse efforts towards a select number of outcomes. In Rwanda, the National Vision 2020, published in 2000, outlined six pillars for Rwanda to transition into a middle-income country by 2020.[49] These pillars emerged from extensive national consultations across society, but also from the imperative in the late

48 Andrews points out that a persistent problem with governance and development reform is that it focuses on 'ceremonial' issues that are very public but do not have the most significant impacts on politics and power. See: Andrews (2013) *The Limits of Institutional Reform in Development*.

49 These are: good governance and a capable state; human resource development and a knowledge-based economy; private-sector led development; infrastructure development; and regional and international integration. See: Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (2012) Rwanda Vision 2020 (Revised 2012), www.minecofin.gov.rw/fileadmin/templates/documents/NDPR/Vision_2020_.

1990s to provide a simple plan for the government and donors to start negotiations and delivery. Somalia's National Development Plan 2017-19 is based around nine pillars.[50]

However, the content of these strategic pillars, and the discipline to work within set priorities, is more important. The *World Development Report 2011* found that, among very fragile countries in the 20th century, the fastest reforming took an average of 27 years to establish rules-based controls against corruption.[51] Persistence in fulfilling critical reforms is necessary if progress is to be achieved. Afghanistan uses the National Priority Program (NPP) model to implement its national plan,[52] but the number of NPPs has grown from 10 to 22. This thins resources and focus across each priority. It also confuses the signals that civil servants and citizens receive about government priorities. The central goals of Rwanda's Vision 2020 strategy remained consistent and present across subsequent strategic documents, at national, sectoral, and subnational levels, and in public messaging.[53] In an otherwise unstable political environment, this consistency provided an anchor for partners', citizens', and bureaucrats' investment and focus.

The pillars of national plans need to reflect statebuilding goals, public priorities, and a realistic sense of what the country and its institutions can do in that moment. Tools for asset mapping, as opposed to the 'needs assessment' that is so common in donor programming, can identify existing environmental, human, cultural, and infrastructure resources.[54] Using these assets as a basis for sequencing priorities – and shaping the plans and policies to implement them – means that stakeholders are not starting from zero. They do not have to rely wholly on external resources and have a foundation from which to move faster towards greater self-reliance. What precisely these priorities are will differ according to context, but they should focus on the foundational systems that enable other development priorities – for example, revenue, so that government can fund its reforms; expenditure and PFM, so that government can disperse funds and have them go to the right places; and security, without which conflict and instability will continue to draw resources and undermine any other development goals.[55] Centre-of-government functions are also needed to coordinate between priorities and ministries.

Critical priorities will change over time as benchmarks are reached in foundational areas and as the needs of the public evolve and the capacity of national institutions develops post conflict. Development strategies and plans need to be iterative to account for those changes. As a country emerges from fragility and stabilises (even during its 'ups and downs'), plans can account for longer-term and less foundational reforms – from establishing basic security to building the judicial system; from ensuring functional payroll to implementing civil service reform; from ensuring children receive primary education to strengthening tertiary education. These changes are crucial to building effective, accountable, and self-reliant national institutions and should be considered at the outset of planning. However, they are longer term priorities and can be included as pillars later as planning horizons increase from one-year time frames, to two- or three-year, to five-year.

Encouraging experimentation to find effective approaches to build core functions

Planning for experimentation creates space to manage the risks and ups and downs of development in fragile

pdf; and Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (2013) Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy II 2013-2018, www.minecofin.gov.rw/fileadmin/templates/documents/NDPR/EDPRS_2.pdf.

50 These are: inclusive politics; security; rule of law; efficient, effective institutions; economic growth; infrastructure; social development; resilience; and gender and human rights. See: Federal Republic of Somalia, Ministry of Planning, Investment and Economic Development (2018) *NDP Pillars*, http://mop.gov.so/index.php/ndp/ndp-pillars/.

51 World Bank (2011) World Development Report 2011, pp. 108.

52 Afghanistan's priority programmes include: Human Capital Development Program; National Infrastructure Plan; Private Sector Development Program; Comprehensive Agriculture Development Plan; Justice Sector Reform Program; Women's Economic Empowerment; National Mineral and Resources Development Program; Citizens' Charter; Urban Development Program; Effective Governance Program.

53 These include the three poverty reduction strategies: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2002-2005, Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2008-2012, and Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2 2013-2018, the Decentralization Policy (2001 and 2012), Aid Policy (2006), etc.

54 Institute for State Effectiveness (2019) Asset Maps, https://effectivestates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Asset-Map-v1.pdf.

55 There are various efforts to analyse how national development plans are put together and sequenced. This includes ISE, with its Reform Tracker tool, documenting reform sequencing in both fragile and non-fragile countries, and the Strategic Network for New National Planning which has been analysing 120 national development plans and using causal process tracing to take a detailed look at practices in selected countries. See Chimhowu, A.O., Hulme, D., and Munro, L.T. (2019) The 'New' National Development Planning and Global Partnership Goals: Processes and Partnership, World Development, Vol. 120 (August), pp. 76-89, www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305750X19300713.

contexts. Rigid strategies and plans are destined to failure in fragile contexts where conditions change rapidly and what has proven successful in another situation can easily fall short. Plans should not only be iterative but encourage experimentation. As we have seen, the established approaches and metrics applied in fragile contexts have, overall, failed to achieve their goals; there needs to be room to work outside these, even if the results are not known.

An experimental approach allows actors to operate outside the regular metrics of output and fiduciary zero-sum game. It does not force actors to try to meet limiting criteria or unlikely goals. It also demonstrates to citizens and partners that the fragile state government is willing to put themselves on the line to find development solutions that work. This in turn puts governments and national stakeholders in a stronger position to ask development partners to take risks to fulfil their side of the arrangement.

In Somalia, government and development partners have worked closely to identify and promote 'pseudo-use of country systems'. This recognises that the CABRI model for 'use of country systems' may be perceived as too risky for donors to apply in some particularly fragile contexts. Instead, it encourages creative ways to incrementally increase the use of country systems as they become stronger, and for these incremental approaches to be recognised as use of country systems.

Kharas and Gertz reiterate the need to 'experiment with new forms of country ownership' so that governments and donors are not left with the false choice between '(perceived) inefficient reliance on country systems versus bypassing government systems altogether'.[56] In Rwanda, one of the ways the government indicated its commitment to improved development practices was by inviting the U.N. to pilot its 'One United Nations' initiative, in an attempt to find a system for increased coordination within the U.N. and with government.

Cutting through sector siloes between humanitarian, security, and development planning

A state's national strategy, and the plans made to fulfil it, need to serve as an integrated framework between the development, security, and economic sectors – and in conflict-affected contexts, humanitarian actors as well. The siloes that exist between these areas are well known, and forums such as the OECD DAC, including its Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus recommendation, are increasingly trying to dismantle them.[57] These siloes exist between partners, within donor agencies, and across government bureaucracies, and traditionally the different actors within them are not included in discussions on devising and implementing one another's agendas. Instead, these sectors are seen as separate from one another, despite the fact that each plays a vital role in the success of the other and to the overall success of the statebuilding goal. For example, security is needed to roll out development activities, and domestic security and national defence are core functions of the state that require support from security actors.

This means that security, trade, diplomatic, humanitarian, and private sector actors need to be at the same table from the start. Development planning cannot happen in a silo and the national development strategy documents and plans should serve as the unifying guide for all. This has to happen from the top down for both donors and governments. There need to be military representatives in the room at the highest policy level, where national leaders make commitments to effective development partnerships and promise to invest in country-led core functions. This involves following the recent OECD DAC Humanitarian Development Security Nexus recommendation, including recognising mutual objectives between different sectors where incentives or mandates may conflict[58] and using more accessible language to bridge the disconnect and allow the goals of self-reliance and effective national institutions to be internalised by the different actors working

56 Gertz and Kharas (2018) Leave No Country Behind, pp. 31.

57 Chandler, D. (2007) The security–development nexus and the rise of 'anti-foreign policy', Journal of International Relations and Development, Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 362-386; and OECD (2018) States of Fragility 2018, Paris: OECD Publishing, pp. 118, https://www.oecd.org/dac/states-of-fragility-2018-9789264302075-en.htm.

58 For example, humanitarian actors are driven by an urgent, life-saving imperative to ensure assistance is delivered quickly. This often results in the building of systems in host countries that run parallel to government structures. These systems are then meant to be replaced by government functions, often with longer-term development professionals supporting civil servants. But in fragile environments, conflict often does not come to a clear and 'neat' end, and pockets of hostilities remain. The result is that, in many cases, these 'temporary' systems stay in place for years, attracting funding, capacity, and legitimacy away from nascent government institutions and obstructing the path towards self-reliance.

on the ground.[59,60]

Having effective strategic communications and engagement in devising the national strategy

The country strategy and plans are only as strong as they are understood. Releasing a well-thought out plan filled with jargon or which is poorly disseminated means that partners do not buy-in to it, the public does not back it, and civil servants cannot implement it. Despite this, strategies to frame and communicate development plans are often not considered a priority.

Reaching the public and bringing them into the planning stage is a way to address grievances, to check and make sure that the plan reflects the public's priorities so that they will support it, and to demonstrate collective ownership to partners. Support for the Colombian government's agenda was bolstered in the 2000s by President Álvaro Uribe's practice of visiting previously inaccessible and overlooked parts of the country to speak with citizens. This showed solidarity with them, and gave both the government and citizens the opportunity to have a dialogue on the national agenda for security and peace, bolstering the national plans.[61] In Rwanda, President Kagame held monthly public meetings during which citizens could raise issues with policy decisions (announced publicly) or with policy goals (which Cabinet and legislature members declare publicly during the President's biannual retreats).[62]

As one deputy minister noted, communication is not just about announcing what a national plan says: it is about framing the policies or development decisions for the audience to care. This involves considering why it matters or may resonate with their goals and priorities, and using language that is accessible to laypeople. For the public, this may mean framing it in terms of family or everyday concerns. For development partners it may mean situating planning decisions against a backdrop of the development commitments they have made. In Rwanda, the government harnessed the language of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in its own national documents and framed programming discussions through it, appealing to donors' own commitments and propelling it to the fore.[63]

Including a focus on economic self-reliance from the start

An economic growth strategy invests in the legitimate economy, creates jobs in specific sectors, and carefully balances with service delivery priorities. It requires a careful examination of existing assets and potential, with a view to leveraging these rather than starting from scratch and importing all of the necessary resources and expertise. In particular, it requires high quality, local expertise across government institutions and the private sector, well supported by the development community, to undertake targeted reforms and investment.

The economies of fragile states are dominated by the agriculture sector, which is a tremendous source of jobs.[64] At the conclusion of a conflict it is the construction sector that tends to grow fastest for the first few years, followed by transport, telecommunications, and mining.[65] Early recovery and growth are heavily influenced by the public sector

59 The language and goals of effective development cooperation, which prioritise building national capacity and ownership, are not widely known outside the international development community. Even within it, these discussions primarily take place among a select group of practitioners focused on global policy and partnership. The terms themselves can be a barrier for those outside of development, meaning that documents that do use them, alienate other stakeholders. Bringing other actors into the conversation to familiarise them with the goals, and not relying on development jargon will make inroads towards bridging the gap.

60 OECD, Development Assistance Committee (2018) *Operationalising the 'Nexus:' Principles and Approaches for Strengthening and Accelerating Humanitarian, Development, and Peace Coherence,* http://www.oecd.org/development/conflict-fragility-resilience/docs/Final%20summary_DAC_Roundtable%20Nexus_19Nov.pdf.

61 Uribe, A. (2012) No Lost Causes, New York: Penguin Publishing Group, pp. 9.

62 Institute for State Effectiveness (2014) *'Nobody Owes Us Anything': Self-Destruction to Self-Reliance in Rwanda*, http://effectivestates.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/%E2%80%9CNobody-Owes-Us-Anything%E2%80%9D-Self-Destruction-to-Self-Reliance-in-Rwanda.pdf.

63 For example, Rwanda's 2006 Aid Policy reaffirms its commitment and that of its 'major development partners' to the Paris Declaration and its Aid Policy Manual of Procedures makes repeated references to the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda in a manual that is designed to provide the Government and its various agencies 'with procedures to guide and improve the implementation of the 2006 Aid Policy … [and] with the overall aim to improve aid effectiveness in Rwanda'. See, Republic of Rwanda (2011) *Rwanda Aid Policy Manual of Procedures*, http://www.devpartners.gov.rw/fileadmin/templates/documents/Rwanda_Aid_Manual_of_Procedures.pdf.

64 Studwell, J. (2013) How Asia Works: Success and Failure in the World's Most Dynamic Region, Grove Press.

65 McKechnie, A., Lightner, A., and Willem te Velde, D. (2018) Economic Development in Fragile Contexts: Learning from success and failure, Overseas Development Institute, pp. 7, https://www.odi.org/publications/11128-economic-development-fragile-contexts-learning-success-and-failure.

and by foreign aid, which sees an influx when hostilities cease then slows quickly over the following years. Typically, multidonor trust funds are established early to facilitate disbursements and provide oversight. Development plans should identify sustainable ways to finance government investments to reduce dependency on aid contracts, focusing on building the systems and safeguards for increased domestic revenue generation through taxes, customs duties, and investments. This will include exploring alternative and local financing mechanisms such as sovereign credit guarantees, *sukuk* (Islamic bonds), or project bonds. It should be noted that investment in economic growth and self-reliance should be carefully balanced against the delivery of basic services and peace dividends in countries emerging from conflict.

It is particularly important in these nascent stages to consider the risk presented by influxes of donor money. Situations like the 2014 drawdown of the U.S. military in Afghanistan reveal the economic risks of short-term solutions such as simply using local vendors and contractors. Domestic companies will spring up to serve or get contracts from international donors, but this is not sustainable in the long term. Market distortions prevent the private sector from taking root as rent-seekers work to perpetuate a system that delivers significantly higher profits at the cost of social welfare. A diversified strategy that balances the benefits of short-term wins against the longer-term risks is needed, otherwise any gains will collapse when the external market buoy exits. However, there a specific examples where temporary distortions should be considered to build investor confidence. For instance, the Afghan government previously allowed a temporary duopoly over telecommunications before competition kicked in, a decision which has seen the creation of a vibrant sector.

Growth strategies must be designed with careful, evidence-informed selection and design of programmes that will lead to a productive economy in the long-run. For sustainable growth to be achieved, governments must have a clear strategy for how productive capacity can be integrated into both regional and global value chains. There need to be concerted efforts to help fragile states move up value chains and avoid being trapped in only primary production. Regional economic connectivity and interdependence also have key secondary benefits in establishing peace and security. Efforts to change global production patterns demand a rethinking of the business models of development agencies and development finance institutions to help governments better understand their natural comparative advantage and private sector interests and ensure that countries are appropriately supporting productive capacity in targeted industries.

There are renewed calls for increased investment in human capital and infrastructure in fragile states.[66] The recent shift in development approach towards crowding-in private sector investment – seen, for example, in the World Bank's cascade strategy – aims to address underinvestment and market distortions. However, in fragile states, facilitating private sector investment faces a number of challenges, including establishing a pipeline of projects and credible contract tendering and management mechanisms, as well as the political economy effects of making large-scale infrastructure investments. The expansion of instruments like political risk guarantees, first loss guarantees, and servicing interest on loans to make the investments attractive is underway but still constitute a relatively small part of development assistance in fragile states.[67] From a planning perspective, growth strategies should articulate clearly how the private sector should engage with risk (security, regulatory, currency etc.) in the country context, and the measures intended to be implemented to address the risk factors. Governments should prioritise open access to high-quality macro and micro datasets that enable deep understanding of markets and investment opportunities so that markets can self-organise.

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66 Pritchett notes that several studies have found 'material' gains such as economic growth, jobs and infrastructure are the biggest priorities for people in developing countries. Despite this, traditional development partners are less and less interested in those kinds of investments. See, Pritchett, L. (2015) Can Rich Countries be Reliable Partners for National Development?, Horizons: Journal of International Relations and Sustainable Development, Vol. 2 (winter), The Center for International Relations and Sustainable Development (CIRSD), https://www.cirsd.org/en/horizons/horizons-winter-2015--issue-no2/can-rich-countries-be-reliable-partners-for-national-development.

67 It should be noted that while this shift in has the potential to drive the significant increase in capital investment required to meet the SDGs in fragile states, both the depth of the capital pool/risk appetite for investment in fragile states and whether development finance institutions can effectively price guarantees at scale without similar market distortions remain to be demonstrated.

DONOR INCENTIVES

The second key area in which to consolidate focus is shifting donor incentives. Incentives within donor and partner organisations often do not align and may inadvertently undermine the goals and strategies that have been agreed. This makes it difficult for country management and leadership to fulfil their mandates and leads to many of the symptomatic issues that paralyse the development of core state functions.

Donor incentives are institutionalised by explicit policies and cultural norms that inform staff behaviour and decisions. Such policies and norms include established codes of conduct, performance criteria, and organisational planning documents, as well as the way in which institutional oversight mechanisms are wielded and directives are interpreted. As such, donor incentives inform internal risk appetites, how performance is rewarded, and how decisions are made about programming. These incentives vary from donor to donor and have changed over time.[68] However, two common factors that shape donor incentives are domestic priorities and low appetite for fiduciary risk.

Domestic priorities often take precedence in donor decision-making and are determined through citizen voting patterns and executive decisions on core national interests.[69] Donors are inherently concerned with how development assistance bears on issues of trade, migration, geopolitical standing, and security.[70] Donor agencies are also geared towards minimising, at almost any cost, the fiduciary risks of losing any amount of ODA through fraud or corruption in host countries.[71] Ministers, secretaries, public inquiries, and the media are all acutely focused on what is perceived as the 'mismanagement' or 'misspending' of aid funding, and on preventing it as a matter of priority.

Together, domestic priorities and aversion to fiduciary risk shape donor incentives in a way that is often misaligned or directly at odds with the principles and practice of effective development outcomes, building core functions and self-reliant national institutions. This misalignment can result in a number of problems, such as donors supporting sectors in host countries that align with their domestic interests but are not reflective of the host states needs and priorities;[72] a reluctance by donors to focus on complex challenges and instead direct efforts to 'low hanging fruit' and 'quick wins';[73] and adopting funding cycles that are too short.[74]

68 Multilateral organisations, which are comprised of national members and are accountable to a governing board rather than a single national legislature or public, have different incentives to bilateral donor agencies. For example, some, such as the World Bank, are financially protected by sovereign guarantees. However, multilaterals share similar bureaucratic incentive structures as large bilateral development partners, with limited resources (the allocation of which needs justification), large staff who need to be retained and managed, and competing priorities. Therefore, much of this chapter can also be applied to their experience. This is especially important as multilateral organisations often act as norm-setters for bilateral partners.

69 Clist, P. (2011) 25 Years of Aid Allocation Practice: Whither Selectivity?, *World Development*, Vol. 39, No. 10, pp. 1724-1734.

70 Clist refers to these factors as ones pertaining to 'proximity' (i.e. a donor's relative geographic, security, and economic proximity to the host country). Clist (2011) 25 Years of Aid Allocation Practice.

71 Fiduciary risk is the risk 'that aid or government funds: (i) are used for unauthorized purposes; (ii) do not achieve value for money; or (iii) are not properly accounted for' (Laing, A. (2017) Who Cares About Development Risk?, Institute for State Effectiveness, https://effectivestates.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Development-Risk.pdf).

72 Donor agencies will often prioritise support to certain sectors within host countries that fit with domestic priorities and interests. There is also tendency to diversify development assistance across sectors, in case any sector should emerge as a domestic political priority ('hedging') or because existing in-house specialists favour work in that area. This incentivises donors to provide tenuous justifications for how development assistance advances mutual goals, rather than aligning to a host country's plan or donor 'division of labour' policy.

73 Bureaucratic reform and institutional capacity building are at the core of pathways to self-reliance, yet they tend to be slow and non-linear processes, only taking root after years of effort. In the face of continuously evolving political priorities and public pressure to demonstrate results within an election cycle in donor countries, higher organisational value is placed on pursuing tangible programme outputs with quicker returns (such as building a school). Performance measurements and reporting requirements in donor agencies are tailored to these so-called 'low-hanging fruit', making it more difficult to justify longer-term, systems-building programmes.

74 Having shorter development funding cycles is perceived to help lower the fiduciary risk, by requiring programmes to demonstrate success and allowing donors to account for investment dollars quickly. It also aligns with donor countries' political schedules and shifting political priorities. This quick turnaround, however, means that programme operators, both within government and development agencies, spend a great deal of their time on reporting rather than on delivery and refining implementation. In fragile contexts, where transitions require twenty to thirty years, long-term programmes and plans are necessary to see lasting results and institutional impact.

> Across the board, rich countries are backing away from the national development goals of poor countries, such as broad-based prosperity and effective government.[75]

Despite certain adverse incentive structures, there is an opportunity to shift the accountabilities of donor agencies. Development partners and donor governments respond to the rules of their legislatures, set by the expectations and demands of their citizens. If these expectations and demands can be shifted, then the rules against which donor agencies work can be as well. Understanding the real costs and benefits of different kinds of engagement (e.g. development vs fiduciary risk; short-term projects vs longer-term programmes; working through subcontractors vs through country systems, etc.) will adjust the demands and expectations of the public, legislatures, and agencies.

To realign donor incentives so that they value systems building and support core functions, key areas to focus on are:

- Framing the agenda in terms of mutual interest.
- Shifting the conception of 'risk' to include 'development risk' (and quantify this).
- Setting realistic conditions and benchmarks, over realistic time frames.
- Harnessing external oversight mechanisms, including parliaments.
- Reconsidering how performance is rewarded.

Framing the agenda in terms of mutual interest

Examples show that it is possible for host countries to appeal to donors by reframing their development agenda as one of mutual interest. In Colombia, the government varied how it presented to the U.S. government the imperative for development assistance. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Colombian effort to combat local narco-terrorists was framed as part of the U.S. War on Drugs. After the 2001 9/11 terror attacks, Colombia reframed its development agenda to align with shifting U.S. security priorities and included a greater focus against terrorist groups like the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army (FARC) and the National Liberation Army.76 This continued support can also be attributed to the Colombian government's strategy of identifying and engaging with allies within Congress to build legislative support.77 According to consultations with both Colombian and U.S. officials, this strategic framing helped enable continued bipartisan U.S. support through three administrations and the 2007 economic downturn, from the initiation of its national plan, Plan Colombia (1998 -2002) to the present day Colombian peace process (Paz Colombia 2012-present).[78]

Shifting the conception of 'risk' to include 'development risk' (and quantifying this)

Many donor bureaucracies are set up to respond swiftly and firmly to any signs of corruption or mismanagement, but not to the impact of millions of dollars of funding (sometimes billions) being misspent on programming that fails to achieve its goal – building national systems for the country to achieve self-reliance. Some actors in fragile countries are working to reset the appetite for fiduciary risk

75 Pritchett (2015) Can Rich Countries be Reliable Partners for National Development?.

76 FARC were a leftist guerrilla force founded in 1964, as the armed branch of the communist party. The FARC fought the government on platforms against oppression and rural inequality up until 2016, when a peace agreement was struck. The National Liberation Army, also founded in 1964 as a leftist guerrilla group, continues to fight against Colombian government forces. For more information on how US engagement in Colombia was reframed into a war on terror, see: Youngers, C. (2003) *The US and Latin America After 9-11 and Iraq*, Institute for Policy Studies, https://ips-dc.org/the_us_and_latin_america_after_9-11_and_iraq.

77 This included specifically reaching out to members of Congress who had served in Colombia with the Peace Corps, among others. Consultations October 2018.

78 Paz Colombia is a $450 million assistance programme to Colombia's peace process, initiated by President Obama and President Santos in 2016 as a follow on to Plan Colombia. Its support has been maintained under the Trump administration thanks to continued bipartisan support. See, Norman, J. (2017) Congress Keeps U.S. Vow on $450M 'Peace Colombia' Aid Package. Colombia Reports, https://colombiareports.com/us-congress-approves-vowed-450m-peace-colombia-aid-package.

against the longer-term and much more substantial risk of not achieving development outcomes (the 'development risk'). The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) recognises the risk inherent in building these national systems and has developed its internal policies to make it possible for their staff to operate in these realities.[79] While there is recognition that SIDA needs to improve their risk communication strategy and guidelines for what constitutes a reasonable 'burden of proof' in different contexts, they have managed to achieve an excellent balance of accountability and flexibility in fragile states. In Afghanistan, an attempt was made to *quantify* development risk, calculating how much funding will be misspent or is at risk of being lost through ineffective development programmes. This demonstrated the financial trade-off of setting up parallel investment systems in attempts to avoid fiduciary loss.[80] It also appeals to the demand from donor governments to see value for money and tangible results.

Research is also showing that in acutely fragile contexts the risk of mismanagement or poor value for money can be even higher outside government systems. In places like Somalia, where security prevents donor staff from travelling far beyond their offices, they often rely on third- or fourth-party operators over whom they have limited oversight in the field and who vastly increase overhead costs.[81]

As Cramer and Honig note, the question is ultimately not *if* government functions transition to delivery through country systems, but when and how.[82] If the real risk of failing to deliver development outcomes and exit strategies is considered against immediate fiduciary risk, it can dramatically alter the incentives for development partners to help fulfil their commitments to build national institutions, systems, and leadership. Instead what is needed is an *acknowledgment of the trade-off* between the two risks and an approach that becomes more balanced throughout the partnership duration. For example, at the initial stages of a development partnership, the institutional strength of developing countries is at its weakest (and fiduciary risk at its highest). During this period, donors can use joint systems that are still managed externally, and gradually channel more of their assistance through country institutions as they grow stronger (and as fiduciary risk lessens).

Setting realistic conditions and benchmarks, over realistic time frames

The development community – and international financial institutions in particular – rightly moved away from the Washington Consensus conditionalities embedded in structural adjustment programmes of the 1980s and 1990s. However, through development policy lending, statebuilding contracts, and mutual accountability mechanisms, conditionalities continue to provide a way to set incentives and provide accountability for development support to country systems. Key to formulating these conditions are a number of factors, such as: allowing sufficient country ownership of and input into their creation; setting realistic benchmarks that are not so ambitious as to be quickly disregarded or so many as to overwhelm limited bandwidth; allowing for review mechanisms that enable flexibility to changing conditions, including the use of floating tranches to allow for inevitable early wins or delays and adjustments in sequencing. There is no consensus as yet on whether paying for performance yields better outcomes than funding inputs or conditioning assistance on reform actions.

Conditions and benchmarks also need to be set over realistic time frames. It is widely understood that the time frames needed for institutional change, and for planning and measuring reforms, need to span periods of decades rather than short programming cycles. While some reforms can be completed in shorter time frames, others require a medium-term period of years – and in some cases decades. Even where gains are made, there is often backsliding. While there short-term benchmarks and time frames are still necessary for certain reforms (e.g. establishing core PFM and executive, centre of government decision-making functions), these need to be nested within realistic, longer-term time frames that we know institution building

79 SIDA's 2016 Policy Framework takes into account the risks of political uncertainty, conflict, weak systems and institutions, and corruption: See: Gulrajani, N. and Mills, L. (2019) *Fit for fragility? An exploration of risk stakeholders and systems inside Sida*, Overseas Development Institute, www.odi.org/publications/11388-fit-fragility-exploration-risk-stakeholders-and-systems-inside-sida.

80 Disclosure: ISE has supported these reforms and authored reports on the need to balance fiduciary and development risk, both in Afghanistan and Timor-Leste. See: Ashcroft, V., Laing, A., and Lockhart, C. (2017) *Statebuilding in Conflict-Affected and Fragile States: A Comparative Study*, Institute for State Effectiveness and the g7+ Foundation, https://effectivestates.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/ISE-6-timorAfghan-1-WEB.pdf.

81 As is the case in Somalia, where many development partners are based in Nairobi with quick fly in and outs of Mogadishu's fortified airport. Cramer and Honig estimate some 30% to 60% of project funds for initiatives through NGOs and third parties are put towards overhead on expenditures for security and management. See: Cramer, S. and Honig, D. (2017) *Strengthening Somalia's Systems Smartly: Country Systems Risk Benefit Analysis*, World Bank, http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/779801520341781240/pdf/123945-WP-PUBLIC-P164350-UseofCountrySystemsReport.pdf.

82 Cramer and Honig (2017) *Strengthening Somalia's Systems Smartly*.

requires. Achieving this will mean changing the institutional incentives that drive short-term programming cycles, including the role played by external oversight bodies.

Harnessing external oversight mechanisms, including parliaments

External oversight mechanisms, including public opinion, the media, parliamentary committees, and parliamentarians, can align their oversight with the intended goals and realistic time frames of building core functions in fragile states in order for those states to achieve self-reliance. Public opinion in donor countries plays a significant role in how funding decisions are made.[83] Both the parliament and the general public in donor countries need to better understand the real risks – and goals – of their support to fragile contexts. There is currently significant misconception: across multiple contexts, survey evidence tends to suggest that the public view aid predominantly as a form of selfless, charitable policy.[84] For example, about 70% of public participants in an Australian survey listed humanitarian motivations as the main rationale for Australian aid, with the remainder providing reasons relating to the national interest.[85] There is limited comprehension of the tangible economic and security benefits accrued to donor countries when developing countries achieve self-reliance (this may be changing with increased migration and refugee flows).[86]

Given the impact that voting patterns have on international development assistance agendas and the ability of citizens to lobby their representatives, these groups could become a compelling oversight mechanism in support of meaningful transitions from fragility. But this will only materialise if the imperative for more effective aid, and what is at stake, is better understood. Improving public understanding would require a communications campaign on the benefits of, and not only the intuitive rationale for, humanitarian aid in general. Parts of the media would need to be brought on board to provide a more rounded perspective on the role of development aid in our interconnected world and the real risks associated failing to provide effective support, rather than the current tendency towards sensational stories of scandal and corruption.[87] If the media and public could become a more active public accountability lever for aid effectiveness, it could put pressure on donor countries to comply with principles of effective development.[88]

The power of external oversight mechanisms remains underutilised in the mission to obtain better development outcomes.[89] External oversight mechanisms often incentivise the opposite of what is needed to build state functions: small-scale, short-term results. Ministries of finance in donor countries require that budget reporting on donor funds is set to their own domestic time frames (rather than the calendar of the host country), with fixed disbursements and projects that are typically funded for 3-4 years (rather than the 20-30-year time horizons required for stability and national transformations). Donor agency procedures and interests weakens coordination between development partners, leading to fragmentation.

Donor parliaments control their national budgets, giving them significant power to withhold or increase certain types of funding. However, legislators, development agency staff, and members of parliamentary oversight committees (which inform and shape parliamentary decisions on international development) explained during consultations that, in reality, the legislative branch typically operates in a 'light touch' way, leaving policy and programming to donor agency leadership and executive functions.[90] There are parliamentary inquiries into the quality of development programming and even its 'effectiveness'. Public accountability mechanisms such as congressional hearings or the U.K.'s parliamentary Question Time can also be influenced by the media's drive for headlines, and therefore

83 Wells, T. (2019) Can advocacy change the views of politicians about aid? The potential and limits of a presence-based approach, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 13, Iss. 3.

84 Heinrich, T., Kobayashi, Y., and Bryant, K. (2016) Public Opinion and Foreign Aid Cuts in Economic Crises, *World Development Volume* 77, pp. 66, 68.

85 Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2005) *Overseas Aid Study,* Canberra: AusAid.

86 Heinrich, Kobayashi, and Bryant (2016) Public Opinion and Foreign Aid Cuts in Economic Crises.

87 Ibid.

88 Geddes looks at Jacobs' four factors for radical change and Stern's analysis of key features of successful international agreements: Geddes, M. (2011) *With few incentives for donors to do better, can the Busan outcome document be salvaged?*, Overseas Development Institute, www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7403.pdf.

89 Despite coordination tools such as joint fragility assessments and shared data platforms, many donors continue to align their programming to their own internal reporting requirements and supply-driven sectors (i.e. sectors in which the country has expertise and has specialists in their development agency). This can create divergences – both from the country plan but also with other donors, each following their own systems and interests, preventing coordination, and fragmenting development.

90 Exceptions to this observation may include the U.K.'s Independent Commission for Aid Impact. Countries interviewed included Australia, Sweden, and the U.S.

centres on politically topical issues, such as corruption, rather than interrogating the effectiveness of development programming. This means the entire framing of what matters, and the ultimate goal of fostering self-reliance, remain unchecked.

Parliamentary committees (including expenditure review committees) could directly ask agencies about institution building and working through country systems, including percentages of ODA that are channelled to it. They could ask for the percentage of programming that is aligned with the host's country plan,[91] or ask host governments to score their development agency's country programme strategy and use this to inform funding decisions. They could emphasise the need for coordination with security and treasury functions, and the importance of supporting long-term economic growth strategies that would help host countries reduce reliance on aid. Indeed, the financial power and political mandate of parliamentary mechanisms could be used to interrogate why millions of dollars of development programming have not led to better outcomes, and why aid effectiveness commitments are not being met.

Mobilising legislators and parliamentarians can have an enormous impact on the magnitude and continuity of funding. In Colombia, the government strategically framed the international assistance to U.S. national priorities. They also targeted specific members of Congress with connections to Colombia (such as having served there in the Peace Corps) and petitioned them to become champions of U.S. assistance to Colombia. Similarly, in Afghanistan (2002-2005) there the government made a strong push to engage with senior members of U.S. Congress. Colombian leadership also decided to share credit with development partners for their reform and development successes. This allowed partners to demonstrate returns on their international assistance, thereby making the public and successive parliaments more likely to support future investments.

Important research emerging on this subject is emerging, and development partners such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation are investing in 'exposure visits' to developing countries for parliamentarians to help them understand first-hand the importance of programming.[92] Given the decreasing size of aid budgets, however, these programmes and research studies are more often about demonstrating the importance of aid than about changing how aid is delivered and fostering self-reliance.[93] This same influence could be applied to putting aid effectiveness principles into practice, as it was in Colombia.

Researchers have been studying the impact of cabinet-level, international cooperation ministers on the aid budget. These ministers are responsible for presenting on international assistance to parliament. Where there is a cabinet-level minister among DAC donors, the donor country scores better in terms of 'aid quality' – including on alignment with country systems, transparency and harmonisation with host country policies – and has higher ratios of international assistance to GNI and likelihood of fulfilling commitments.[94] This suggests that when development agencies need to answer to parliamentary oversight, it can lead to improved development practice.

Reconsidering how performance is rewarded

Many development officials have traditionally been recognised, rewarded, and promoted as a result of volumes of funding disbursements, the completion of projects, or quality of relationships with counterparts, rather than being based on the impact on the country's institutional capabilities and development outcomes as a result of their tenure. Adjusting the way in which development officials' performance is rated so as to reward systemic institutional change and large-scale development outcomes could play a significant role in aligning development partner incentives with systemic and sustainable change. A dialogue with human resource departments to adjust these ratings would seem a productive avenue for investigation and dialogue.

91 Day, B., Hoy, C., Spratt, J., Wells, T., and Wood, T. (2019) *Panel 3a – Advocating for Australian aid*, Australasian Aid Conference.

92 Wells (2019) Can advocacy change the views of politicians about aid?

93 Spratt, J. (2018) Donor policy domains in official development assistance: ideas, actors and rules in and beyond Asia, *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 40, No. 2, pp. 83-97.

94 Prizzon, A. (2012) *Development Ministers: Implications for aid quality and quantity*, ActionAid and Bond for International Development, https://www.actionaid.it/app/uploads/static/development_ministers_2012_0.pdf.

HUMAN CAPITAL: REFORMIST LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND COALITIONS

Human capital investment is a well acknowledged development platform. Much of the literature and practice over the past 15 years has rightly focused on the importance of two strategies. First, development partners have targeted broad based investment in the infrastructure for wide primary school access. Second, strategies have sought to bolster reformist national leaders within government.

To create a self-perpetuating learning machine, and one that development partners, governments and citizens are motivated to support, it is critical to strengthen teams of leaders and cadres of managers. These are the managers and operational leads who push the institutional transformations and implement the leader's vision by translating it into programmes and policies and delivering on them. They drive and diffuse the reform agenda – and often stay beyond one political cycle – so that it can take hold and materialise at the operational level, changing the incentives within bureaucracies and for donors. While a single national leader cannot be relied on as a continued reformist presence (because their administrative terms are limited, or their focus is redirected), this mid-tier of a country's leadership helps to distribute power and responsibility, create internal checks and balances, and generate the ideas that carry the agenda forward. It is this effort and perseverance of this cohort of progressive civil servants who incentivise partners and their own bureaucracy to invest in a reform agenda over the long period of building core functions.

These mid-tier reformers may need space, support, and advice to maintain focus on strengthening core functions and expanding government ownership in order to see through the transition from fragility. Without this, they can become drawn into political competitions, paralysed by an overstretched mandate or lack of support or lost in trying to meet donor demands. With assistance, however, these reformers can have a significant impact on how goals get translated into reality, how processes are implemented, and how core functions ultimately develop.[95] One donor agency official in Rwanda noted, 'We send our best people [here] because we know there will be great counterparts.'[96]

A cadre of reformers is important given that, as discussed, a visionary leader at the national level is neither sufficient nor always available to achieve success. When one is in power, they cannot carry out their vision alone. When there is no reformist head of state or senior leadership able or willing to make the reforms needed to deliver to citizens, there remains a population in need of basic services. These progressive mid-level leaders and managers then become critical to implementing reforms and strengthening government capacity. The alternative is that these countries rely on emergency humanitarian assistance from NGOs, delivered outside of government systems, with no institutional foundations or core functions being built.[97]

Some of the key ways in which government leadership and development partners can nurture and support this cohort in carrying out reforms and building core functions are:

- Building coalitions of reformers, including mid-tier reformers, to sustain reform efforts.
- Providing reformers with organisational management skills and not merely technical support.
- Investing in the education and training of cadres of leaders and managers.

95 They are the deputy ministers, director generals, and programme managers.

96 Rwanda's hierarchal structure and the strong influence of the President has both helped enable its transformation and been the source of criticism. However, the development of a new generation of effective, mid- and senior-level bureaucrats has been essential to its successes.

97 These reformers can exist within the central government, within line ministries, at subnational levels, or in non-governmental institutions. There are different entry points for international support where the most senior levels of leadership are absent. The World Bank continued to provide 'low case' support to Nepal during its civil war, working with a broader range of actors and relying more heavily on local stakeholders and private sector participation. Once the war was over, this support had strengthened wide reaching non-governmental institutions and provided groundwork for reform within the new government. See: World Bank, Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) (2010) *The World Bank in Nepal 2003-2008*, World Bank, http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/872151467991907448/pdf/100007-PUB-P094297-Nepal-CPE-Box393217B-PUBLIC.pdf.

- Encouraging efforts to incorporate the 'old guard' into new agendas.
- Find ways to foster collective decision-making (across both government and citizenry).
- Retaining the confidence to say 'no' to ideas and programme proposals that are not a priority.

Building coalitions of reformers, including mid-tier reformers, to sustain reform efforts

Low institutional capacity in fragile contexts means it is essential to build and sustain capable and well supported teams led by reform-minded managers within key institutions and agencies. Donors and development partners can play an important role in helping to identify reformers and, in particular, mid-tier leaders to build these coalitions of change agents. However, this requires that partners engage meaningfully and directly with government counterparts in fragile states; donors who do not go out to meet officials at different levels in government institutions will inevitably struggle to identify key reformers.[98] Once identified, mid-tier reformers need to be supported to institutionalise the reforms they are undertaking through their programming, and then expand on the results in other teams or ministries. It is important to highlight and promote these reformers in order to signal to others an incentive for choosing a path of reform.

However, identifying promising mid-tier reformers and building standalone 'islands of excellence' is not enough to have key reform agendas 'stick' and to ensure their sustainability. For this reason, governments, with the support and backing of development partners, should seek to build coalitions and networks of reformers across key institutions and agencies, as well as other key, non-government stakeholders. A wider, connected coalition of reformers helps to create interdependency between islands of excellence, such that one team's outputs is affected by how well others do their job. It is important to create this critical mass of reformers as it can create a reinforcing 'multiplier' effect on the outcomes generated across various lines of effort. It can also help to guard against the risk of an isolated reformer being too weak to break systemic patterns of behaviour or vested interests that prevent the cultural and performance changes needed to build institutions and core functions.

Providing reformers with organisational management skills and not merely technical support

Reform managers may need to be equipped with necessary skills and resources to push through and institutionalise their efforts. This requires deep knowledge of the context and strong technical skills. It also requires a great deal of dedication, problem solving, leadership, teamwork, and optimism. This is particularly true in fragile institutional environments and when trying to establish those first core functions of the state. These core skills and capabilities need to be both cultivated and reinforced. Reform managers in government require mentorship, networking opportunities, a peer group to share lessons, facilitated spaces to process work through problems, and allies within and outside government. Traditional technical assistance, however, does not prioritise these activities and funding for them is not always readily available.

In this way, broad support to high performing mid-tier leaders can help incrementally introduce reforms, increase capacity, and improve systems. Critically, reformers need support in the form of *patience*, including when reforms do not appear to be bearing fruit. Systems change takes time, and reform progress will not follow a straight, incremental trajectory. Sometimes progress will stagnate or even regress, particularly in the earlier stages of reform where spoilers with vested interests will resist changes. Reform leaders need more than technical support to deliver on their mandates: they need space for creativity and to make mistakes, with political backing when things do not go to plan; rewards for performance, including effective use of resources and service delivery; trust and patience from donors and partners supporting the reform agenda; and open lines of communication with leadership and constituents.

In Burundi, the Burundi Leadership Training Program works to build leadership networks through workshops that focus on collaboration, trust building, communications, recognising that post-conflict, representative development will first require cooperation across political and ethnic

98 To guard against criticisms of 'cherry picking' reformers according to preferential biases (e.g. 'donor darlings'), it is important that governments and development partners work to identify those reformers who might otherwise go unnoticed. To achieve this takes both time and meaningful engagement. What is essential is to ensure that those that are identified and elevated to leadership positions have a demonstrable track record of progress and success, and have shown creativity, collaboration, and competence in managing teams and delivering reforms. They must, however, be supported to develop these skills and capabilities in order to shape a productive operating environment.

divisions.[99] In Afghanistan, mid-level reformers are supported through programmes that identify young reformers and hold retreats and workshops that focus on their softer skills and needs. Embedded senior advisors act as mentors and provide support not only on the technical components but also on how to navigate difficult institutional or political situations. This includes retreats that bring young reformers specifically together out of country to build peer networks and reflect on their work away from the pressures of everyday management. In Timor-Leste, retreats have built trust between leaders and fostered consensus on development priorities.

Investing in the education and training of cadres of leaders and managers

Some countries will have cadres of educated leaders and managers. Others, especially after years of conflict and out-migration, will have suffered devastating losses to their human capital. In practice, there has often been a tendency to rely on diaspora educated abroad to return with these more advanced skills and expertise. However, this is neither sustainable in the long term nor does it set the institutional foundations needed to develop human capital domestically. As well as ensuring populations have access to primary education, countries that have transitioned out of fragility have also focused on training people on critical areas including finance, engineering, agricultural sciences, and medicine. Japan, Singapore, and South Korea stand out for having made these early investments.

Encouraging efforts to incorporate the ‘old guard’ into new agendas

To ensure that institutional reforms take hold, it is important to leverage existing knowledge and prevent erosion by entrenched interests. In many countries emerging from conflict, however, there is often an overloaded public service, with aging civil servants who persevered under institutional decline, became accustomed to institutional paralysis, may have been hired under a corrupt system of political favours, or are aligned with the previous (and often conflict-implicated) government. These ‘legacy operators’ can hold back institutional transformations through passive resistance, foiling the reform agenda. In such cases, a well-known route is to offer pensions or buy-out options, particularly in the beginning of a reform agenda when new institutional cultures are being set. This would require donor support for such programming at an early phase. Traditionally, however, it has been seen as a low funding priority for donors and governments.

Legacy operators, or the so-called ‘old guard’, know how existing institutions and systems work and how to push through – or derail – programmes and reforms. It is the job of managers and leaders to not ‘throw out everything (and everyone) that was there before,’[100] and instead bringing these actors onboard and directing their knowledge towards the new agenda. One of the persistent problems in governance and development is the lack of appreciation for existing capacities and that reform begins with understanding what was. The ‘old guard’ knows what has worked, what has been tried, and what the blockages are in the system. This information can help reduce redundant efforts. They have relationships, information, and influence – and longevity within government institutions – that new civil servants may not, and which can help move policies and implementation forward in otherwise difficult institutional environments. One-size-fits-all, ‘best practice’ approaches that foreign-educated diaspora or young technical experts bring may be ill suited or applied to the context. This ‘old guard’ can help translate new reforms for other national actors and help bring others on board. Managers and operational leads can help marry this legacy asset with the new reform agenda towards strengthening the core functions.

Newcomers to government, including local activists and returning diaspora, can be a force for reformist leadership, helping foster institutional transformations. They do not have inherited process biases and may be more willing to try new approaches and embrace reforms. Many will have been educated abroad and can apply broader global lessons, which partner organisations can recognise and support. They also speak the language of donor agencies – literally and culturally – which can help bridge gaps in trust and coordination. At the same time, it is important to be mindful that returning diaspora may find it hard to adapt to their country of origin and their return and actual or perceived preferential treatment may be resented by those who remained. Equally important to harness are those reform-minded activists (often working in citizen representative groups) who did not leave the country, have stayed and provided a voice for service delivery throughout the conflict or fragility, sometimes with a relentless focus on citizen outcomes. These highly valuable reformers can

99 The Burundi Leadership Training Program was implemented by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars with support from the World Bank’s Post-Conflict Fund, U.K.’s Department for International Development, the European Community and USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI). See: Wilson Center (2020) *The Burundi Leadership Training Program*, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/the-burundi-leadership-training-program.

100 Interview, senior policymaker, South Asia.

bring new energy and approaches to implementation. They are not, however, a replacement for long-held institutional, political, and contextual knowledge and know-how, nor do they ensure that reforms are not eroded by existing interests.

Finding ways to foster collective decision-making (across both government and citizenry)

Key to ensuring the buy-in and longevity of reforms is understanding leadership as collective decision-making. As discussed, a key challenge is diffusing the reform agenda so that it can take hold and manifest, including having input from the public. Effective leadership means bringing the different stakeholders into the fold, which includes involving them in decision-making. Reforms in fragile contexts can be slow, inconsistent, and require a great deal of faith and patience from the citizens who are relying on them for results. Therefore, these reform decisions need collective buy-in and support not only from government teams but also from constituents. Technological, physical, and security limitations constrain the ability to engage the public in decision-making, but there are ways to do so, even in fragile states.

There are good examples of how reform leadership can (i) communicate decisions so citizens have ownership, and (ii) involve community representatives in the consultation process. These both improve the sustainability of reforms, as it helps their likelihood to take hold.

Afghanistan made important strides in public finance reforms in its post-2001 era. While the government initially improved public access to and transparency of its budget significantly, it quickly plateaued and room for improvement remained.[101] The Ministry of Finance piloted townhall meetings in selected provinces for public participation in the budget process. Important insights and lessons emerged through these townhall meetings and from engaging the public in the budgeting process.[102] Such consultative processes are used in many contexts to build public buy-in. In Tunisia, the National Constituent Assembly altered their constitutional process to allow for public comments on drafts. In Somalia, national public opinion polls were conducted on the proposed constitution and the results broadcast. These forms of generating public buy-in are necessary so that the reforms are diffused and can take hold, with citizen endorsement. The key is to ensure these are inclusive and extend beyond the elite or literate (see chapter on 'Whole of society approaches').

> "It worked because we were stubborn. That's why. We cared and we were stubborn. Otherwise things get diluted over time."
>
> — government representative progressing the reform agenda in Eastern Europe, 2019

Retain the confidence to say 'no' to ideas and programme proposals that are not a priority

To create strong incentives for development partners to align, and retain precision of intent, reform managers need to be emboldened to say 'no' to emergent ideas and programmes that put their mandates and the reform goals off track. Continually adding new priorities or objectives undercuts a reformer's ability to deliver. However, it can be hard to say 'no' when development partners offer to fund new programmes within a ministerial portfolio. This is especially the case if the proposed programme is in an area of personal interest or is likely to benefit the country generally. It is difficult to say 'no' to funding when country resources are generally lacking, particularly when – because of donor incentives (see previous chapter) – rejection may extinguish the discussion and opportunity for partnership. It is also difficult for young reformers to decline resources when politically this may jeopardise their careers; political backing on this issue therefore needs to come consistently from the highest levels.

Saying 'no' requires a great deal of perseverance and stubbornness, and sometimes involves risk. Building alliances, mentorship, and having political support from key partners can help give reformers the confidence needed to say 'no'. Collective decision-making with the public and having the support of the civil service also help. In Rwanda,

101 Afghanistan's score on the open budget survey of 2017 stood at 49 (moderately higher than the global average of 42), compared to 21 in 2010, and 42 in 2015. See, International Budget Partnership (IBP) (2017) *Open Budget Survey 2017 – Afghanistan*, https://www.internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/afghanistan-open-budget-survey-2017-summary.pdf.

102 Payenda, K. (2019) *Budget Reforms in Afghanistan - A Practitioner's Perspective*, Institute for State Effectiveness, https://effectivestates.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/ise-dpn-budget.pdf.

the leadership throughout the government had a great deal of confidence to push back against development partners to maintain alignment of programming and funding to the country plan, Vision 2020. This confidence came from a number of factors, including:

- Backing from the president, who was willing to decline donor funding if it did not match the priorities and instruments outlined in the Vision 2020.
- The extensive national consultation process behind Vision 2020, which gave the plan such credibility and political weight that donors were more compelled to prioritise its goals above competing donor incentives.
- The government harnessing in its own national documents the language of international commitments such as the Paris Declaration and framing programming discussions through this, appealing to donors' own commitments and propelling it to the fore among domestic incentives.[103]
- Most significantly, the government and the broader population having lost so much trust in the donor community after the genocide, changing the power balance in the policy dialogue on development programming.[104]

As a result, the government's priorities were elevated to the primary status. This meant that partners were compelled to use the national accountability framework (the Imihigo Process), to align with the Division of Labour policy, and to follow the national sequencing of reforms, such as the early focus on building tax collection capacity and instituting fibre-optic lines. These all incentivised the shift towards better development outcomes in Rwanda that so often lapses in other examples.

103 See footnote 63. Republic of Rwanda (2011) *Rwanda Aid Policy Manual of Procedures*.

104 Consultations, Kigali, Rwanda, June 2018. The strong influence of President Kagame is seen as both a positive (there is a great deal of bureaucratic discipline, working for government is considered fairly prestigious, less partner fragmentation, etc.) and negative (overly controlling and wary of criticism, less interested in conditions around inclusion and human rights, etc).

IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Once strategies, plans, and policies are in place, there needs to be systems and incentives to ensure follow through. Implementation of plans and policies – and accountability for delivering against them – has fallen short in fragile state development. Even in mature, established bureaucracies it is difficult to ensure that departments and line ministries across government are on track to deliver against a central strategy. This is even harder in fragile states, where sometimes basic management functions may be nascent. Capacity constraints, emerging priorities, and the inability to effectively track progress prevent civil servants and leaders from adhering to, implementing, and reporting on plans.

From the beginning, adherence to the central plan and monitoring institutional readiness are critical, and guardrails should be established against the setting in of corruption. All parties should work toward improving implementation and accountability. This can be done through:

- Strengthening the basic management capacities on which government operations rely.
- Using a consolidated budget to understand where the money is.
- Redoubling efforts to tackle corruption and taking a holistic approach to building PFM and broader accountability systems.
- Monitoring institutional capacity to determine when to sequentially transition functions to government.
- Having the right metrics and use the reporting in place to track progress.
- Using performance frameworks that reflect and reward teamwork and resiliency.
- Enabling national programmes that collaborate with communities and can scale delivery.

Strengthening basic management capacities on which government operations rely

A legitimate state must fulfil a range of functions for its citizens.[105] Doing so requires civil servants and reformers in particular to have the necessary organisational management capacities. These actors need to be able to oversee teams, devise budgets, ensure that decisions are recorded and communicated, and establish and oversee hiring practices (with pay scales and clear terms of reference for staff and partners). These basic but universal capacities are foundational to delivering the core functions of government: revenue raising, procurement of staff, goods and services, payroll, accounting and auditing, coordinating across ministries and partners, and delegating roles and responsibilities.

There is plenty of material and guidance on these executive government functions, and also growing recognition of the importance of targeted support for them, yet they are often overlooked when establishing lines of technical assistance.[106] Rather, technical assistance is typically geared towards the skills needed for more complex functions of the state – managing infrastructure projects, setting up judicial systems, etc. While these state functions are necessary to ensure just allocation of resources and services to citizens, they can be implemented and likely co-managed by partners in the near term while foundational skills are consolidated. These functions require not only specialist technical knowledge, but also basic management skills. These management capacities allow development partners' government counterparts to have greater ownership from the outset, which will support the transition to self-reliance.

105 The ten functions of the state outlined in *Fixing Failed States* include rule of law, monopoly on the legitimate means of violence, administrative control, sound management of public finances, investment in human capital, creation of citizen rights through social policy, formation of a market, management of public assets, effective public borrowing and sovereignty dividends and the sovereignty gap. See Ghani and Lockhart (2008) *Fixing Failed States*.

106 See public service management specialists, and cabinet procedures, such as: Goldsworthy, D. (2013) *GET Note: Strengthening Cabinet Office Procedures, from the Recently Asked Questions series*, World Bank, http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/926301468189541248/pdf/98814-BRI-VC-ADD-SERIES-PUBLIC-Box393182B.pdf.

Using a consolidated budget to understand where the money is

Managing a budget is a foundational management competency, but the budget itself needs to provide the full information for policymakers to make decisions. This helps in monitoring whether the national strategy is taking effect (that all other incentives are built around ensuring). Funding in fragile states can be complicated, with multiple partners' resources coming in via diverse channels.[107] After a conflict, crisis, or natural disaster, these resources can flow quite rapidly and the disparate funds are often not reflected in a single, comprehensive budget. This means that it is difficult to know where the money is being directed, whether the priorities identified in national plans and strategies are being resourced, and what inefficiencies there are. A consolidated national budget can improve the visibility on what is under- or over-resourced and can reveal where in the national systems there are resource leakages and blockages, and who to hold accountable for these.

The national budget can be seen as the central engine of policymaking within a country, and a key coordinating tool. Obtaining a comprehensive picture of what is being spent where (both by sector and geographical area) allows policymakers to reallocate funding to ensure that different priorities, populations, and geographies are being appropriately resourced. It also allows them to identify inefficiencies and corruption,[108] and can offer stakeholders sightlines so they can see where progress is being made and reward those sectors or ministries that are delivering.[109]

A consolidated budget means more than reducing 'off-budget' contributions from partners. According to CABRI metrics, increasing 'on-budget' funds means more funds are accounted for in the national budget numbers, even if the money itself still moves through external financial systems. However, there can still be separate budgets – operating budgets and development budgets. A consolidated budget helps bring these together, enabling stakeholders to better understand the long-term costs of development decisions and reconcile priorities between the two, ensuring that what is funded is able to be maintained and not an unsustainable use of resources.[110] Building a consolidated budget requires technical assistance from budget specialists, but can initially be fairly low tech, using programs such as Microsoft Excel, rather than expensive, heavy-weight software. Nor is budget consolidation merely a technical exercise; rather, it requires – and encourages – cooperation and communication between ministries and partners.

Redoubling efforts to tackle corruption and take a holistic approach to building public financial management and broader accountability systems

Corruption is a driver of insecurity and remains a severe threat to the well-being of citizens whose national resources are diverted and to the viability of any development strategy. Tackling corruption has to be a central concern of country leaders, citizens and their development partners. There is much debate as to the most effective ways to do this.[111] ISE has argued that a national accountability systems approach, focused on building the systemic accountability cycle in public finance, is an important part of the answer.[112] This means tackling key points in the budget and revenue cycle – from revenue to procurement to accounting and auditing.[113] This is in addition to focusing on law enforcement, ethics and broader accountability mechanisms including watchdogs, media and citizen oversight and scorecards.

Countries that have moved the needle significantly on

107 Institute for State Effectiveness (2017) *The Consequences of Donor-Induced Fragmentation*, http://effectivestates.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Donor-Induced-Fragmentation.pdf; Ashcroft et al. (2017) *Statebuilding in Conflict-Affected and Fragile States*, https://effectivestates.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/ISE-6-timorAfghan-1-WEB.pdf.

108 Ghani, A., Lockhart, C., Nargis, N., and Massoud, B. (2014) *The Budget as the Lynchpin of the State: Lessons from Afghanistan (from Peace and the Public Purse, Chapter 6)*, Institute for State Effectiveness, https://effectivestates.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/The-Budget-as-the-Linchpin-of-the-State-Lessons-from-Afghanistan1.pdf.

109 Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Ministry of Finance (2015) *Implementing Public Financial Management Roadmap (PFMR) II*, http://apmis.mof.gov.af/Public/keydocs.aspx.

110 Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (2015) *Strategic Overview – Development and Public Financial Management*, http://apmis.mof.gov.af/Documents/KeyDocs/d1ab83c5-e153-4dfb-928d-9f86c71c4494.pdf.

111 Transparency International (2020) *Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2019*, https://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/publication/corruption_perceptions_index_2019.

112 Institute for State Effectiveness (2015) *Dissemination Note: Accountability*, http://effectivestates.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Dissemination-Note-Accountability.pdf.

113 For a discussion on the sequencing of public finance capabilities, see Carnahan, M. and Lockhart, C. (2008) *Peacebuilding and Public Finance* (Chapter 4 of *Building States to Build Peace*), Institute for State Effectiveness, https://stateeffective.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Peacebuilding-and-Public-Finance.pdf.

corruption perceptions, including Singapore and Rwanda, have had leaders and leadership teams who have taken a zero-tolerance approach and prioritised attention to anti-corruption through a variety of measures. For example, the Rwandan government demonstrated relatively early its commitment to tackling corruption by establishing an Office of the Ombudsman in 2003. At the same time, in many fragile states, the presence of transnational criminal and narcotics networks that span borders may go beyond the ability of country governments to disrupt and contain and will require international focus and attention.

> "You cannot defy the laws of physics in what you expect. These institutions can only do so much."
>
> — senior policymaker, South Asia

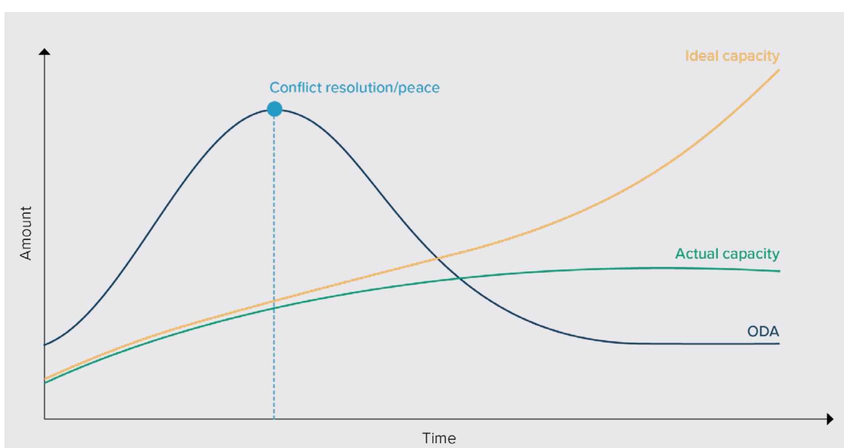
Monitoring institutional capacity to determine when to sequentially transition functions to government

There is pressure on donors to contribute support directly after a crisis – be this a political transition, conflict, or natural disaster – when institutions are weakest. High flows of funding can overwhelm weak institutions and overstretch government systems and actors as they attempt to account for, use, and report on all the funding. This sets any activities off on the wrong foot and, without guardrails for mismanagement, creates a pathway for corruption and paralysing implementation.[114] The increased risk of corruption and poor performance also endanger future donor funds, which will begin to wane as soon as the crisis fades and international attention is redirected elsewhere (see Figure 2). Despite this, there is also pressure on host governments to accept this funding. Instead, funding levels should be appropriate to existing capacity – neither too high nor too low – without compromising performance. A staged plan for increasing those levels over time as institutions demonstrate readiness and as absorptive capacity increases, beginning with building the core functions of government.

This can be measured through performance against a number of measures, including the SDGs, fiduciary performance scores such as the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) program assessments and the Open Budget Index, various government effectiveness and perception measures (including the Human Development Index, Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index, Worldwide Governance Indicators, etc.), macroeconomic or social indicators, or government-based performance management systems (see the following section on having the right metrics).[115]

The *World Development Report 2011* notes that it takes decades for fragile state institutions to become effective (15-30 years in the 'fastest-transforming').[116] Initially, while state institutions are weak, the government should

Figure 3 - State capacity over time



114 Examples from interview include donors sending advanced technical teams to help host governments privatize state owned enterprises, when there was preliminary need for a consolidated budget, and rudimentary filing system for decision-making in Cabinet.

115 Institute for State Effectiveness (2017) *The Absorptive Capacity Limit: The point where too much aid becomes bad aid*, http://effectivestates.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/ise-0-DPN7-1-1.pdf.

116 *World Development Report 2011*, pp. 11.

focus on building capacity across the critical institutions. During this phase, donors can provide funding through partially external systems, while being on-budget to create a consolidated budgetary view, using tools such as multidonor trust funds (MDTFs) and with services that are partially delivered through partners including NGOs. However, the long-term goal should be that once these systems are assessed as 'capable' and have a greater absorptive capacity, there is an increase in the flow of donor funds and a move towards greater use of country systems. This includes services being delivered by line ministries and a greater volume of funding moving through national financial systems. This capacity growth will happen in small, incremental steps, and in turn the growth in use of country systems will be through incremental rather a sudden shift to, for example, putting all funds through the treasury or the host government managing all programmes.[117] This transition plan needs to be agreed to, and monitored regularly, by both the host government and development partners.

Having the right metrics and use the reporting in place to track progress

If institutional capacity and ownership grows in uneven, incremental steps, then the reporting tools and metrics need to be able to account for this. If gradual shifts are not measured and rewarded, then there is no legitimate pathway towards 'use of country systems' and self-reliance. This means having policy benchmarks that may only reflect small steps in progress, but are nevertheless milestones of institutional ownership and capacity, or that measure whether a reform or action is sustained over time.[118]

However, instead of reflecting or incentivising the (necessarily) incremental transfer of responsibilities that lead to systems and institution building of core functions, the international development system has traditionally rewarded project or output metrics because these are easy to capture and quantify. Several initiatives, such as 'working with the grain', 'politically smart, locally led' initiatives and 'problem-driven iterative adaptation' approaches, are helping to build a case for recognition of incremental progress.[119] These initiatives recognise that institutional resiliency comes from dealing with crisis and learning through iteration, rather than just delivering according to what is considered a 'best practice' standard. While these ideas are accepted academically and have been applied to specific programmes,[120] governments and development agencies need to make broader changes to the metrics and approaches they apply in practice.

Existing frameworks such as 'mutual accountability frameworks' provide mechanisms for partners to hold each other accountable for their performance against agreed metrics towards the covenants of their partnership.[121] Examples include the 2018 Geneva Mutual Accountability Framework being applied in Afghanistan.[122] These frameworks can be very powerful mechanisms that enshrine commitments on both sides towards a long-term partnership that delivers self-reliance. They can be tools to embed indicators for small, uneven and incremental progress in institutional capacity. Too often, however, they are layered with several competing reporting frameworks tailored to multiple donors' reporting requirements. This overloads both government and development partners with reporting due to the sheer number of indicators, and can divert energy that should be invested in the original objective.[123] Such mechanisms can also be impeded by 'box ticking' – a focus on the exact wording rather than on substance of the commitments; and by short-term goals such as military withdrawals, reducing aid levels, or other

117 Kharas and Gertz also note that there can be long stretches of time when progress is not so visible, but 'behind-the-scenes political structures may be subtly shifting to be more open to reform initiatives' (Gertz and Kharas (2018) *Leave No Country Behind*, pp. 33).

118 Gertz and Kharas (2018) *Leave No Country Behind*.

119 Proposed in 2012 by Andrews, M., Pritchett, L., and Woolcock, M. (2012) *Escaping Capability Traps Through Problem Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA)*, Working Paper No. 240, Center for International Development at Harvard University, https://bsc.cid.harvard.edu/files/bsc/files/240_andrews_pritchett_woolcock_beyondcapabilitytraps_pdia_final.pdf.

120 Such as the U.S.'s Millennium Challenge Corporation, which aims to provide funding without earmarks and the 'flexibility to work with country partners to diagnose specific governance and poverty problems and co-create solutions with governments through "compacts" that align with national priorities': Ingram, G. and Papoulidis, J. (2018) *Fragile states and the search for 'what works'*, Brookings, www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2018/11/08/fragile-states-and-the-search-for-what-works.

121 United Nations Economic and Social Council *Mutual Accountability: Introduction and Summary of Recommendations*, www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/pdf/mali_accountability_messages.pdf.

122 The Geneva Mutual Accountability Framework builds on the prior mutual accountability frameworks, initially introduced in 2012 as the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework followed by the Self-Reliance through Mutual Accountability Framework approved in 2015.

123 Byrd, W. (2013) Travails of mutual accountability in Afghanistan, *Foreign Policy*, https://foreignpolicy.com/2013/05/28/travails-of-mutual-accountability-in-afghanistan; and Beath, A., Byrd, W., Hogg, R.S., Nassif, C., and Gomez Osorio, C. (2013) *Afghanistan in transition: looking beyond 2014*, World Bank, http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/221481468189862358/Afghanistan-in-transition-looking-beyond-2014.

process-oriented objectives.

There are several, well-documented tools available for these purposes. A range of frameworks and metrics for institutional assessments exist.[124] These can be partnered with World Bank PEFA checks, corruption rankings, and other tools that help to determine readiness for investment.

Using performance frameworks that reflect and reward teamwork and resiliency

There are strong examples of success where country plans have been implemented faithfully. This has occurred where there have been mechanisms to establish clear lines of responsibility and clear articulation of different goals, sub-goals, and activities so that those responsible, all the way down the chain of command, know their functions and outputs. Like a consolidated budget, this also allows systems and individuals to be held accountable, and high performers to be rewarded.

One of the most referenced – and seemingly most effective – mechanisms is Rwanda's Imihigo model. Built from local tradition, Imihigo was introduced in 2006 to report and align activities and hold all parties across central and subnational government, and development partners, accountable to their roles and responsibilities. All participants in this performance accountability framework (including mayors, directors, and agency heads) develop their own work plans and goals based on the national vision and medium-term implementation plan. These work plans are then assessed by the Quality Assurance Technical Team, comprised of staff from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and the Ministry of Local Administration, to ensure they align at the national level and are neither over- nor under-ambitious. Performance is assessed biannually against the goals identified in the work plans and results are made widely available for citizens to review. Positive performance is rewarded with televised recognition from the president, and failure to perform met with real consequences such as relocation, removal from one's post or, in serious instances of failure, arrest. The work plans are considered definitive and were referenced by all interviewees to whom we spoke. The Imihigo mechanism also directly links the work of everyone in the government and across partners, from top to bottom, to the national plan.[125]

In Rwanda, there is highly centralised ownership of the Imihigo contract. In reality, behind the success or failure of implementing plans is a team of operators. In Afghanistan, the Ministry of Finance has been rolling out a team-based performance management approach, called the Fiscal Performance Improvement Plan (FPIP), with similar non-financial rewards.[126] The FPIP aims to incentivise reform and build an institutional culture of performance, teamwork, and bureaucratic discipline. It fosters ownership and healthy competition between units or directorates to improve the likeliness of follow through. This can help to broaden power and responsibility beyond the executive to directors across ministries. To work, the FPIP requires continuity over several years while it takes root, as well as support from senior leadership to deliver the non-financial rewards promised.[127]

The FPIP programme and other performance frameworks review not only delivery against set goals but also the team's problem-solving. In fragile institutional settings, conditions outside of the team's purview can change rapidly – leadership turnover, funding or resourcing constraints, priority shifts, political obstacles, instances of corruption, etc. These disruptions may delay or prevent them from delivering a completed output. How the team works together to navigate the situation, however, is an important performance metric in developing institutional resiliency, so it is critical that this is recognised.

Enabling national programmes that collaborate with communities and can scale delivery

Programming to engage communities in determining and implementing development can help deliver basic services when it is otherwise difficult for the government to do so. This is also true in fragile contexts in which there is continuing insecurity, underdeveloped local government apparatus, stretched central government capacities, and a great deal of mistrust between the people and their government. National programmes that utilise community

124 Examples include the Busan Global Partnership Monitoring Framework, and those consolidated by the Effective Institutions Partnership. See: Effective Institutions Platform (EIP) *Monitoring and Measuring Institutional Capacity*, www.effectiveinstitutions.org/en/pillars/4.

125 For more information on Imihigo, see: Scher, D. (2010) *The Promises of Imihigo: Decentralized Service Delivery in Rwanda: 2006-2010*, Innovations for Successful Societies, Princeton University, https://successfulsocieties.princeton.edu/sites/successfulsocieties/files/Policy_Note_ID133.pdf.

126 For more information, see Ashcroft et al. (2017) *Statebuilding in Conflict-Affected and Fragile States*.

127 In Rwanda, performance reviews were publicly signed by President Kagame. In Afghanistan, President Ghani presents medals on live national television to best performing bureaucrats.

partnerships can reduce the burden on overstretched institutions and help to rebuild trust. Using community partnerships includes devolving responsibilities to local bodies such as community development councils.

In Afghanistan, the Citizens' Charter National Priority Program, the successor programme to the 15-year National Solidarity Program, has allowed the government to deliver basic infrastructure in over 12,690 villages.[128] Under the programme, communities work with trained facilitators to identify, prioritise, implement and manage their own development priorities in participatory and inclusive ways. This allows the government to operate across all 34 provinces, including in Taliban strongholds that would be otherwise difficult for the government to access. The government strategy includes delivering clean water and one of a menu of possible projects to every community, but local bodies have the responsibility (and knowledge) to know where and what is most needed. This approach to delivery planning allows for local differentiation that the central government would not on its own be able to achieve. In the process, it strengthens the relationship between the state and citizens, including in some places that have otherwise had no interaction with the government.

128 Citizens' Charter (n.d.) Progress to Date. http://www.ccnpp.org/Default.aspx.

WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY APPROACHES

> The way in which the core components of a state are built or rebuilt – including its physical infra-structure, economy, rule of law, security forces, government, and social services – needs to start with the people and include them throughout the process in order to help build social capital, give the population ownership and control of the state, and build a future together.[129]

Transformations from fragility to self-reliance require more than the right leaders, country plans, accountability measures, and stakeholder incentives. Efforts to transition from fragility must necessarily include citizens in their planning, communication and delivery. Without this, they risk leaving people behind, being perceived as exclusive, and precipitating a return to conflict. Success relies on *sustainable strategies*, and this means marshalling the engagement and buy-in of a multitude of stakeholders. These stakeholders include country leaders, government institutions, donor agencies, development partners, the private sector, and, critically, the *public*. We have seen across multiple contexts the impact on social cohesion, security, and prospects for economic self-reliance that excluding or deprioritising parts of a population – be it during peace processes or development planning – can have. The failure to involve and account for the 'whole of society' in development planning and programming risks further fracturing the social compact between citizens and state, reigniting conflict, and undermining the potential for development partnerships to facilitate transitions out of fragility.[130] What is national development if it is not for and of the people?[131]

Adopting whole-of-society approaches asks more of governments, donors, development partners, and the private sector than simply providing discrete windows for public participation, be that through elections, specifically designed consultation processes, or access to markets. It requires adopting an *ethos* of genuine inclusion and representation throughout the various stages of a country's transition and putting citizens at the centre of the pathway to self-reliance.

Key ways in which space can be created for the whole of society to be brought into the development agenda include:

- Designing inclusive, sustainable peace and reconciliation processes.
- Addressing urban–rural divides.
- Broadening platforms for civil society engagement.
- Considering the use of traditional community systems to instil and communicate the reform agenda.
- Communicating and engaging in dialogue with citizens.
- Resourcing and equipping communities to adapt to change through national programmes.

Designing inclusive, sustainable peace and reconciliation processes

Peace and reconciliation processes are complex political, cultural, psychological, and technical processes that have multiple objectives. When designed to be inclusive, they can build trust across broad social groups and between citizens and the state, reducing the risk of reversion to conflict by clarifying shared interests and mutual benefits.[132] In this way, inclusive, sustainable peace processes have the ability to build a shared national vision and provide the foundations for a coherent, whole-of-society development agenda.

For example, Rwanda's multiyear, domestically led national reconciliation effort, helped build a foundation for strong development partnerships.[133] After the tragedy of the 1994 genocide, Rwanda's National Unity and Reconciliation

129 Gregg (2018) *Building the Nation*, pp. 37.

130 Exclusion, whether intentional or not, real or perceived, compromises the credibility of development strategies and actors in the eyes of citizens and partners. This creates incentives for donors and partners to work *around* the government systems through parallel institutions and fragmented models of delivery.

131 The relationship of mutual accountability between the government, development partners, and the public is sometimes referred to as the 'double contract'.

132 Nilsson, D. (2012) Anchoring the Peace: Civil Society Actors in Peace Accords and Durable Peace, *International Interactions*, Vol. 38, No. 2, pp. 243-266.

133 Some literature also points to Rwanda's national identity being related to the coalescing event of the genocide. This paper looks at the reconciliation efforts that occurred after that event, and not the impact of the event itself for two reasons: (i) the reconciliation process

Commission was formed in 1999. The Commission led a number of initiatives, many drawing from traditional Rwandan practices, which aimed to support reconciliation and rebuild the national identity across all levels of society.[134] This included two years of national consultations, which built on two years of earlier, government-led, grassroots consultations.[135] To help former enemies live and work side-by-side, these consultations were a participatory platform that brought together citizens and officials to process their experience and identify the priorities for their revitalised country. From this reconciliation process a strong, country-led demand for decentralisation and self-reliance emerged. These tenets formed the foundations of Rwanda's national planning processes and development partnerships, which were reinforced over the next 20 years.

Addressing urban–rural divides

Globally, there is a growing urban–rural divide. In countries emerging from conflict, this can be exacerbated by the influx of development partner resources to specific areas (such as the capital city and surrounding region), which can lead to real and perceived concentrations of security, economic opportunity, and political participation. This bias in public and private investments can further strain often existing social tensions and prevent the whole of society from embracing the development agenda. This can in turn undermine efforts to build core, national *and* subnational institutions that are needed to deliver services to citizens and ultimately repair the social compact between citizens and the state.

For example, Colombia's long history of division and disparity between the cities and rural regions has consistently undermined national unity and alienated parts of the population from the government. The development focus on urban centres, by both the government and partners, aggravated these tensions and presented a significant obstacle in harnessing a shared national vision to pursue unified security and development goals (including in the 2016 peace agreement referendum, which failed to pass by 50.2% to 49.8%). A pilot programme called the Macarena Integral Consolidation Plan (Plan de Consolidación Integral de la Macarena) was launched in 2007 in the Macarena region to bring state services to rural territories previously occupied by the FARC. The idea was that a renewed state presence would help consolidate the national territory under the government. But while the pilot was initially considered a success, it was difficult and costly to replicate on a larger scale, and political energy faltered with a change in administration.[136] The development community in Colombia is now resetting its strategy to devote greater attention to rural areas in the hope of transforming its pockets of fragility into secure, stable, and prosperous regions.[137]

Broadening platforms for civil society engagement

Between elections and absent specifically designed consultation processes, there are few formal avenues through which the public can participate in decision-making. Civil society offers alternative, legitimate ways for citizens to raise concerns and voice their aspirations. This is particularly the case for groups that may otherwise be excluded from mainstream political and development decision-making processes. Civil society also serves as a check both on governments and on development partners by monitoring whether these actors are fulfilling their promises to the public and carrying out their mandates. Broadening and bolstering the platforms for civil society to engage with peace and development planning is essential to facilitating whole-of-society approaches.

Yet, despite the need for greater public participation in

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afterwards arguably had the ability to foster national identity, not the genocide itself, and (ii) the genocide was both a national and international tragedy, never to be replicated; this paper focuses on interventions that might be helpful going forward. There are also valid concerns about the robustness of Rwanda's national cohesion, and how much the hierarchical government structure masks any fractures. See Beswick, D. (2011) Democracy, Identity and the Politics of Exclusion in Post-Genocide Rwanda: The Case of the Batwa, *Democratization*, 18(2), pp. 490-511.

134 Importantly, they were conducted alongside trials in the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, Tanzania, in the national courts, and at the local level through Gacaca community courts. See: United Nations, Department of Public Information (2012) *Background Note: The Justice and Reconciliation Process in Rwanda*, Outreach Programme on the Rwanda Genocide and the United Nations, www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/pdf/bgjustice.pdf.

135 Scher (2010) *The Promises of Imihigo*.

136 Consultations; Isacson, A. (2012) *Consolidating 'Consolidation': Colombia's 'security and development' zones await a civilian handoff, while Washington backs away from the concept*, Washington Office on Latin America, www.wola.org/files/Consolidating_Consolidation.pdf; and Beittel, J. (2019) *Colombia: Background and U.S. Relations*, Congressional Research Service, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R43813.pdf.

137 United Nations, Department of Public Information (2018) *Despite Recent Challenges, Colombia Represents Pinnacle of Success in Fostering Peace, Security Council Hears at Briefing on New Developments*, https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13307.doc.htm.

decision-making, globally, we are seeing a shrinking in the space and platforms for civil society engagement.[138] In Rwanda, for example, regulations require both national and international NGOs to be formally registered, a process that requires extensive documentation to be submitted and processes. Some argue that these regulations put undue hardships on NGOs and can be co-opted as a tool to weaken political opposition. This has led to concerns that predominant national narratives in Rwanda are not sufficiently representative of all parts of the population and has been a source of tension between the government and development partners.

Civil society and NGOs are not a panacea. The policies on NGO activity in Rwanda emerged from the post-genocide experience when NGOs proliferated and operated unregulated. NGOs can help fill a gap in the early days after a conflict when government is deeply stretched and nascent. However, over time, extremely well-resourced NGOs can further disempower governments to fulfil their core functions, eroding the statebuilding process. Nor is civil society immune to elite capture – either by domestic elite interests or international partners. It may not always be representative of the diversity of the public and its opinion and cannot therefore be singularly relied to ensure wider-society approaches.

Considering the use of traditional community systems to instil and communicate the reform agenda

When working in fragile states, governments, civil society, donors, and other development partners often overlook or fail to prioritise the role of culture and traditional systems. The tendency to apply 'best-practice' reforms from international experience means that interventions are often ill-suited to the context and can feel 'foreign' to citizens. Taking a whole-of-society approach is not just about designing inclusive processes; it requires developing a deep understanding of the role that prevailing and evolving culture and traditional systems can play as a source of legitimacy and capacity in building the institutions and processes needed to facilitate the transition to self-reliance.

For example, in Afghanistan, the use of the Loya Jirga has proven an important traditional system in collective decision-making. This council system, whereby elders convene to deliberate an issue of great collective importance, has proven to be an effective way to reach political and developmental goals.[139] Loya Jirgas (which mean 'grand councils' in Pashto) have been used for centuries to consult on matters of national importance. Their use has helped build national support and community buy-in, as well as facilitate public feedback, on critical issues and decisions. For example, Loya Jirgas have been called to elect a transitional administration after the Bonn Agreement (2002), adopt a new Constitution and approve the Afghan Development Framework (2003), and in 2019, to formulate collective goals and build unity ahead of potential peace negotiations with the Taliban.

Similarly, as discussed previously, the Government of Rwanda has a performance programme called 'Imihigo' (a name that translates to 'vow to deliver'), which originates from the pre-colonial practice of leaders promising publicly to complete goals within a designated period of time.[140] Imihigo is part of a 'Home Grown Solutions' campaign in Rwanda, which encourages the use of local, traditional systems that draw on the familiarity of cultural values and history to accelerate development.[141] Rwanda's use of the Gacaca Courts is another example of leveraging traditional systems. Following the genocide, in 2001 the Rwandan government reintroduced the local, conflict resolution practice of the Gacaca Courts. At these open-air hearings, perpetrators admitted to and detailed their actions in front of the community. The practice was used as a way to address the crimes of hundreds of thousands of people implicated in the genocide. It played an important role in bringing together fragmented communities – and the nation – in a shared practice of grappling with the past and resetting a narrative for the future.

Since the Gacaca Courts ended in 2012 they have received criticism for a lack of judicial rigor and for being an overly 'top heavy' initiative. This underlines the fact that it is important not to over-romanticise the 'traditional'; these structures – particularly in conflict and post-conflict contexts – can be exploited for political purposes. However, while imperfect, the use of Gacaca courts did help the government to mobilise quickly in order to help move the country forward after a deeply devastating time in its history.

138 Poppe, A.E. and Wolff, J. (2017) The Contested Spaces of Civil Society in a Plural World: Norm Contestation in the Debate about Restrictions on International Civil Society Support, *Contemporary Politics*, Vol. 23, No. 4, pp. 469.

139 Worden, S. (2011) The law and politics behind Afghanistan's 'traditional' Loya Jirga, *Foreign Policy*, https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/11/15/the-law-and-politics-behind-afghanistans-traditional-loya-jirga.

140 Rwanda Governance Board (2017) *Imihigo*, rgb.rw/home-grown-solutions/rwandas-hgs-good-practices/imihigo.

141 Ibid.

Communicating and engaging in dialogue with citizens

Communication and engagement with the public, which should always be viewed as a 'two-way street', is essential to creating and maintaining whole-of-society buy-in for national development. We have seen how important citizen input is in both diffuse leadership and devising national strategies. However, communications strategies are often an afterthought, considered low priority, or poorly resourced. Even where progress is being made, perceptions of poor performance by both the public and development partners can have profound implications for government legitimacy. While a government may in fact be delivering services to communities, absent effective communications, the public and even development partners may not be aware of the successes.

The ability to communicate and engage citizens in successes – as well as challenges – is a crucial element in repairing the social compact between citizens and state and marshalling the multitude of actors needed for effective development. However, the practical and political realities in fragile contexts, often means that communications are rarely treated as a core state function requiring prioritisation. Low capacity – both in financial and human resources – are often a clear barrier to successful, two-way communications and engagement between the state and citizens, as well as with other critical stakeholders. Poor security also plays a role: development partner staff are often confined to compounds, for their protection, making two-way dialogue and information sharing with government ministries or local communities difficult.

Given these constraints, there needs to be a renewed emphasis on supporting governments to facilitate forums for community feedback and carry out citizen surveys. Although they may take more time, these should be primary considerations when developing an inclusive national vision and strategy, and as a means for citizens to share their grievances and have them addressed. Absent proper support, the burden of these surveys should not fall squarely on governments that lack the capacity to conduct them. They should also not be the kind of surveys that merely add to the growing list of governance indices embedded in international instruments and accords. The statistical burden for reporting against these indices is already far too great.[142] Donors and development partners have the ability to support governments' capacities and willingness to engage in eliciting feedback and data from citizens. For example, Rwanda's development success over the past 15 years, including its ability to maintain the engagement of donors and development partners, has been due in no small part to the country's strong statistical capacity. This capacity has evolved through donor support to building and maintaining the functioning of the country's National Institute for Statistics.[143]

Resource and equip communities to adapt to change through national programmes

Even the best-designed development plans and programmes cannot account for the multitude of potential contingencies that might arise, and this is all the more so in fragile contexts. Whole-of-society approaches are designed to repair the broken social compact between citizens and state, but also to build community resilience to adapt to change. Adopting whole-of-society approaches requires not only putting communities at the centre of development planning and programming – including by fostering participation, drawing from culture and traditional practices, and engaging in two-way dialogues – but it also means providing communities with the autonomy and means to give effect to their own goals and aspirations and to adapt to changing circumstances.

For example, Afghanistan's Citizens' Charter equips communities with the resources to adapt to changing circumstances. It builds on the model of its precursor, the National Solidarity Program, in which communities across the country take collective action to identify, plan, and implement development projects. The Citizens' Charter goes further, aiming to integrate returnees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) into community development outcomes. It brings their voices into decision-making process as members of elected Community Development Councils. The Citizens' Charter provides additional support to the communities hosting returnees or IDPs, including through cash-for-work programmes and by

142 For example, in a report exploring the progress of SDG 16 implementation in the Pacific, the Institute for Economics and Peace observed that the 'SDGs, whilst being more representative of developing states' priorities, quadruple the number of required indicators to be collected. A consensus exists that even well-off nations will struggle to report on all indicators in a timely fashion, if at all. It is unlikely that the same issues that impeded measurement of progress of the [Millennium Development Goals] in the Pacific have been fully resolved for the SDGs.' See Ackman, M., Abel van Es, A., and Hyslop, D. (2018) *Measuring Peace in the Pacific - Addressing SDG16: Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions*, Institute for Economics & Peace, pp. 31, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Measuring_Peace_in_the_Pacific.pdf.

143 Abbott, P. and Mugisha, R. (2016) *Mobilising and managing external development assistance for inclusive growth: Rwanda case study*, African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), pp. 50-51, 65.

allocating additional teachers to schools in areas where IDPs or returnees settle. Instead of a programme targeted specifically towards the reintegration IDPs and returnees, the Citizens' Charter equips communities to *themselves* adapt to the changing circumstances by including marginalised members in their decision-making processes and viewing them as assets to the community. This not only helps extend the provision of services to IDPs and returnees, but also helps diffuse potential community-level tensions that may otherwise arise, including along the lines of ethnic or subnational divisions.[144]

> "There is pressure to push country plans out quickly to signal stability, reform and new beginnings. But this does not leave enough time to consult with all the relevant stakeholders and generate necessary buy-in."
>
> — former president of a g7+ country, 2018

144 Another way that the Citizens' Charter helps communities to adapt to changing circumstances is its use of participatory exercises for communities to identify who of them are poor and ultra-poor and to make collective decisions in response to food insecurity in their villages.

CONCLUSION

More than 1.6 billion people live in fragile situations and over 3.3 billion live in the shadow of political violence. The circumstances of, and efforts to address, fragility are fast evolving, with key policy functions putting pressure on leaders, decision-makers, practitioners, and academics to continue to seek solutions and deliver on promises. There is now a critical window of opportunity in which to change how development assistance and partnerships deliver results in fragile contexts and to help make the in-country reality match the on-paper commitments.

At the same time, however, this window is growing smaller as patience wears thin on all sides of development partnerships and as domestic pressure to cut ODA grows at pace.

There is clear consensus on what needs to be done. Countries have committed repeatedly to a focus on results, facilitating country ownership, increasing transparency, strengthening mutual accountability between partners and governments, building inclusive partnerships, and aligning aid with country plans. Despite our shared goal and the principles underpinning them, we know the track record of implementation has not measured up.

Innovations on the ground have led to isolated achievements but have not cohered into systematic change. There has generally been little change in real risk sharing, use of country systems, capacity strengthening, mutual accountability, or more timely and predictable aid. While credit for progress goes to partners on all sides of the development handshake, so too does responsibility for the lack of progress.

It is clear that another international agreement is not going to provide the solution in the current climate. Such commitments are the result of parties agreeing on high-level principles, while compromising on the details. And while these have certainly helped to capture excellent learning and to build momentum to date, there has been too much focus on addressing the *symptoms* of poor development practice. The challenge now is getting to the underlying issues and turning promises into results. Closing the current gap in implementation therefore requires focus on what will *drive* behaviour change across the development partnership. This can only be resolved if we understand exactly what influences that behaviour, with respect to the shortfall between commitment and practice. It requires more than shifting mindsets, but also reshaping the incentives that underpin development partnerships.

This paper goes some way towards re-examining the terms of aid. Based on our research and learning, we have outlined five areas that can drive incentives for behaviour change to close the implementation gap: improving the quality of country strategies, shifting donor incentives, investing in human capital, implementing and staying accountable, and ensuring a whole-of-society approach. We have tried to work up from a country perspective based on cases studies of what works. However, more introspective work is needed – particularly with regard to modalities of aid being applied by both country governments and development partners. Delivering on the five areas identified in this paper, and implementing aid to support the transition to self-reliance, requires long time horizons (35 years, on average). Progress will be uneven, incremental, and necessarily iterative, but we have seen that it is possible. Ultimately, partners need to invest in the governments of fragile states (explicitly, its people, their vision, and building core state functions) if they want that country to succeed.We hope this effort helps ensure investments and energies by governments and development partners align to support states transition out of fragility towards self-reliance.

ANNEX A: METHODOLOGY

This paper was researched and written over an 18-month period, part-time, in parallel with ongoing ISE country programmes and policy dialogue. The project emerged from conversations with policymakers wanting to understand why there has not been more progress on aid effectiveness principles in fragile states over the past 15 years. If established understanding is that effective development practice is achieved by building country systems and institutions, based on country-led analysis and planning, then *why is this not happening in practice?*

This paper is based on five key inputs: (i) the 13 year history of ISE's engagement with governments, partners and development practitioners in over 20 countries; (ii) a literature review conducted over 12 months; (iii) in-depth interviews with key practitioners in the international development field (via video conference and in person, each lasting between 45 and 90 minutes); (iv) country visits and scoping missions; and (v) several full-day consultative workshops to test and confirm the findings of the report with approximately 100 development practitioners from over eight countries. These full-day workshops were conducted in Paris, Nairobi, and Washington, DC, between December 2017 and December 2018.

Four country case studies – Afghanistan, Colombia, Rwanda and Somalia – were selected based on four approximate criteria: were government and development partners engaged in discussions and testing of aid effectiveness principles; did ISE have access to key decision-makers in the government who were active at the time of the relevant changes or reforms (given the research time frames); did they present a spectrum or add variety to the findings; and how relevant are their stories to understanding development effectiveness or transitions?

The ISE team consulted with current and former stakeholders from government, development partners, academia and think tanks, and civil society, with backgrounds across a variety of contexts. Specifically, this paper draws on the perspectives of individuals and organisations often left out of the wider aid effectiveness and development strategy conversation, including local representatives and parliamentarians, the security sector, and bureaucrats tasked with actual implementation. These ground-level perspectives offered unique insights into the challenges of aid effectiveness, linking the priorities and commitments outlined in grand strategic agreements to the everyday incentive structures and operational realities practitioners face. Consultations were also held with key international organisations, including the g7+, the International Monetary Forum, World Bank, International Network on Conflict and Fragility, and the U.N.[145]

In total, over 75 consultations were held with officials representing dozens of development partner agencies, civil society organisations, and government officials. These interviews were supplemented by extensive literature review and analysis, drawing on ISE's operational expertise and case studies in over 30 country contexts.

This paper aimed to rethink effective development cooperation as an issue underpinned by systemic drivers, highlight several lessons learned from country case studies and potential areas for future inquiry. More analysis, especially of success at the country level, is encouraged and could be led by groups such as the g7+. Further political economy analysis on options to change development partner incentives would also be valuable. The ongoing work of the Fragility Commission, New Deal, and OECD DAC generally will be important to solving these issues.

145 On the development partner side, the most in-depth consultations were with the officials in the country offices and headquarters of the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID), the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Bank.

ANNEX B: CORE FUNCTIONS

Fixing Failed States outlines the ten functions of a fully effective and legitimate state, delivering on its compact with citizens (Figure A1).[146] A fully self-reliant state can execute these core functions in its delivery on citizens' expectations.[147] In conditions of fragility, most states will not be able to build (or rebuild) all of these functions in full, all at once. It is necessary, therefore, to sequence the building of these core functions over time, focussing on key ***components*** of state functions and expanding this capacity as institutional competency grows.[148]

There is great variance across fragile states in their institutional capacities and needs, as well as the resources available (human, financial, political) to build core functions. Examples of components of core functions that need to be built across all states, and the delivery of services that flow from them once established, include: executive decision-making functions at the centre of government; basic public finance (revenue and expenditure) systems (e.g. having a consolidated, transparent budget, revenue collection, basic procurement, payroll and payments, and monetary supervision); basic security provision (particularly where there is no or limited external security support); and citizen engagement and communication, particularly at the local level.[149]

The idea is to build these 'core' components or functions first, recognising that certain groundwork must be laid first in order to build and broaden the remaining functions of the state in an inclusive and sustainable way. There are interdependencies and feedback loops between these functions, and understanding those dynamics is critical to getting the sequencing and prioritisation right.

Figure A1 - Ten functions of the state

146 Ghani and Lockhart (2008) *Fixing Failed States*, p. 124.

147 The ten functions of the state are: Governance and public sector management; Market Engagement; Security; Infrastructure; Rule of Law; Human capital, Health, education and social services; PFM; Citizen engagement and participation; Asset management; Disaster readiness and resilience.

148 This aligns with the need for right-sizing of financing by development partners.

149 Others have core functions as including: '(i) executive decision-making and coordination at the centre of government; (ii) public revenue and expenditure management; (iii) government employment and public administration; (iv) the security sector; (v) local governance; and (vi) aid management' (United Nations/World Bank (2017) *(Re)Building Core Government Functions in Fragile and Conflict Affected Settings Joint Principles for Assessing Key Issues and Priorities,* p. 6, https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Democratic%20Governance/Public%20Administration/rebuilding%20core%20government%20functions%20joint%20principles.pdf).

ANNEX C: SUMMARY OF COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

In researching this paper, we examined the progress of four countries in navigating development partner relationships to tackle the transition to self-reliance: **Afghanistan**, **Colombia**, **Rwanda**, and **Somalia**.[150]

Rwanda and Colombia have, arguably, transitioned to stability, although their development process is ongoing – particularly beyond their respective capital cities. Although development challenges remain, in these countries, pervasive conflict has ended, economic growth continues, institutions are effective, capacity across the public service and beyond is to varying degrees strong, and their resilience to economic shocks continues to grow.[151]

Somalia and Afghanistan are two of the most high-profile fragile countries, and their ability to transition out of fragility has consequences for both regional and global stability.[152] In both, government, civil society, and development partners are actively trying to implement aid effectiveness principles.

Each of these case study countries demonstrates different pathways of progress, with varying levels of success. However, in all four, aspects of progress can be attributed to the ability of government and partners to address the five areas of focus.

TACKLING THE TRANSITION TO SELF-RELIANCE: FOUR COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

Rwanda: Bureaucratic transformation

From 1998 through 2019, Rwanda has implemented several key policies and programmes that were transformative in resetting the country's development agenda. Following years of civil war and unrest, the 1994 genocide in Rwanda left the country in physical, financial, and institutional ruins. The country and government had to re-establish institutions, including security and rule of law, the bureaucracy, and national identity across a deeply traumatised society. The past 20 years have been marked by continuity in the vision that emerged, but also by questions about presidential terms and, at times, contentious relationships with development partners.

Overall, outcomes for Rwanda's citizens are greatly improving, including across gender, health, education, and poverty.[153] Its Human Development Index (HDI) measure increased from 0.234 in 1995, just after the genocide, to 0.524 in 2017 and, in the same period, life expectancy more than doubled, from 32 years to 67.5 years.[154] Rwanda also ranked second in Africa for ease of doing business[155] and

150 Examining these and acknowledging the successes and obstacles in each does not mean that we endorse all the approaches or circumstances. There are devasting histories and troubling trends in each of these countries. Similarly, this paper cannot capture the entire complexity of a country transition, or the many contributing factors. We encourage readers to read the extensive literature that exists on each country for a fuller picture

151 See, e.g., World Bank, Independent Evaluation Group (2017) *Rwanda Country Program Evaluation FY09-17*, http://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/sites/default/files/Data/reports/ap-rwandacpe.pdf; and Meacham, C. Farah, D., and Lamb, R.D. (2014) *Colombia: Peace and Stability in the Post-Conflict Era*, Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS), pp. 10, https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/publication/140304_Meacham_Colombia_Web.pdf.

152 Gertz and Kharas identify Somalia and Afghanistan as the two countries that face all four of their development obstacles to achieving the SDGs: low government effectiveness, weak private sector, conflict and violence, and natural disaster risk. Gertz and Kharas (2018) *Fixing Failed States*, pp. 10.

153 Progress in combatting poverty has stagnated in recent years, however, and there have been criticisms that the government may have skewed its poverty statistics. See World Bank (2019) *The World Bank in Rwanda*, World Bank, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/rwanda/overview. See also: Wilson, T. and Blood, D. (2019) Rwanda: where even poverty data must toe Kagame's line, *Financial Times*, https://www.ft.com/content/683047ac-b857-11e9-96bd-8e884d3ea203.

154 United Nations Development Programme (2018) *Human Development Indices and Indicators: 2018 Statistical Update*, http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-indices-indicators-2018-statistical-update.

155 World Bank (2018) *Ease of doing business index*, World Bank Open Data, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IC.BUS.EASE.XQ?year_low_desc=false.

sixth in the world on gender parity benchmarks.[156] It is one of the fastest growing economies in Africa, and the country remains peaceful in an unstable region.

Development assistance is still a significant source of national financing but is reducing as an annual percentage of GNI as domestic revenue increases (from 23.8% in 2004 to 13.2% in 2014).[157] Rwanda has often been cited as a success story, but with great emphasis on leadership and a few key governance frameworks. We instead focused on institutional mechanisms that have made these frameworks effective where they have failed in other contexts.

The key programmes and approaches repeatedly cited by practitioners and government leaders (from the initial reform period post-genocide, as well as now) were:

- Multiyear citizen consultations on national values and ambitions.
- Comprehensive and well-communicated country plan, with input from citizens ('Vision 2020').
- Leveraging momentum and attention from international commitments, including the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, to resonate with development partners.
- Highly effective government-led coordination unit that coordinates resources from across development partners.
- Confidence to say 'no' to development partners, including through its Division of Labour policy.
- Enforced Imihigo performance management programme across national, subnational and development partner actors, with consequences tied to performance.
- Support for a new generation of bureaucratic leadership.
- Commitment by partners to strengthening the tax, oversight and statistical capacity of the government to increasingly manage its own data and domestic resources in pursuit of self-reliance.

Colombia: Framing the need for assistance

Colombia's development agenda was transformed between 1998 and 2018, with success attributable to several key policies and programmes. Colombia has a strong institutional legacy and high-middle-income status. Despite this, it also has a long history of fragility, particularly in the periphery.[158] After years of civil war between the ruling government elite, reactionary militias, and leftist guerrilla groups, and despite ongoing conflict, Colombia's return from the edge of collapse in the late 1990s was propelled by a common desire for basic security.

The country's development and peace process over the past 20 years has been heavily shaped by the government's long-time close relationship with a single dominant donor, the U.S. Colombia's trajectory was also marked by uneven regional development and fragmented coordination across the government, with some ministries acting independently. There is still much anticipation regarding the longevity and future of the country's newfound peace, especially as coca production rises again.[159] However, the country has largely overcome its political crisis and is a stable regional leader.[160]

Practitioners and government leadership from both the Plan Colombia period (1998-2002),[161] as well as today, repeatedly cited the following key programmes and policies:

- Harnessing the common desire for peace and security, while pursuing elite bargains, to promote a sequenced approach to development with a great deal of early public support.
- Policy of 'intervention by invitation', which allowed the government to claim control of the development agenda and marshal development partners activities.[162]
- Prioritising a few key state functions early through President Álvaro Uribe's 'Triangle of Confidence' model

156 World Economic Forum (2018) *The Global Gender Gap Report 2018*, www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2018.pdf.

157 Abbott and Mugisha (2016) *Mobilising and managing external development assistance for inclusive growth*.

158 As an atypical aid host, there is disagreement on the application of aid effectiveness principles in Colombia. See, McGee, R. and Heredia, I.R. (2010) *Paris in Bogota: Applying the Aid Effectiveness Agenda in Colombia*, IDS Working Paper 342, Brighton: IDS.

159 BBC News (2019) Colombia coca production: US 'deeply concerned' by rise, www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-46743902.

160 Incidents of political violence do continue, e.g. the January 2019 bombing of a police academy by the National Liberation Army. https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-46944984

161 Plan Colombia was a bilateral aid programme, launched by presidents Andrés Pastrana (Colombia) and Bill Clinton (U.S.), to reduce drug production and trafficking and regain security control across Colombia.

162 Mendez, A. (2017) *Colombian Agency and the Making of US Foreign Policy: Intervention by Invitation*, Routledge Studies in Foreign Policy Analysis, London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

focusing on democratic security, private investment, and social cohesion.

- Close coordination with the security sector to tackle security challenges and illicit networks.163
- Development partners that were compelled to align behind one central partner: the U.S., that had worked closely with the government in a sustained manner for decades, and that supported the government's country plan.
- Framing international assistance to fulfil domestic priorities in both the host and donor countries.
- Carefully cultivated and maintained working relationship with the U.S., Colombia's key donor, and U.S. Congress, which enabled flexible, bipartisan, and long-term support.

Afghanistan: Delivering reforms within ongoing conflict

Following the fall of the Taliban, Afghanistan implemented several key policies and programmes since 2002 that were transformative in resetting the country's development agenda. Afghanistan has experienced a long history of fragility, including almost 40 years of conflict and a proliferation of terrorist and criminal networks, all of which continue to present ongoing security, political, institutional and development challenges. There has been heavy foreign military presence and continued fragmentation of the development landscape, with development partners contributing a significant proportion to the country's budget.

Afghanistan's government has also been a champion of the g7+ group, trying to reset development partnerships and increase representation for fragile state governments at decision-making tables. The government and its partners continue efforts to implement bureaucratic reforms designed to build institutional capacity, while dealing with challenging political and security constraints.

The key programmes and approaches cited repeatedly by practitioners and government leadership were:

- A series of comprehensive, government-led national frameworks, co-designed through national consultations, including the: Afghan National Development Framework (2002), Securing Afghanistan's Future (2004), Afghanistan National Development Strategy (2008), Kabul Conference Agenda (2011), London Self-Reliance Agenda (2014) and the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework for self-reliance (2017-21).
- Recognising the national budget as the key instrument of policymaking, coordination and oversight.
- Pursuing reform of and strengthening national procurement, payroll, treasury and budget systems as a first priority within the Government's Self-Reliance Strategy (2014), signalling to international partners that there was the political will to tackle corruption.
- National priority programmes to prioritise and guide inputs across stakeholders. These country-wide platforms allow development partners (including civil society organisations and the private sector) to contribute to key goals and service delivery, under government set policies and regulatory frameworks.
- Direct engagement with citizens to help support equitable service delivery and reinforce relationships between citizen and government through the National Solidarity Program (2002-14) and Citizen's Charter (2017-present).
- Efforts to coordinate and channel donor funds through the national budget with the multidonor Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund.
- Continuing the set of principles and goals of mutual accountability through the Self-Reliance through Mutual Accountability Framework (2015), the follow-on to the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (2012).[164]
- Supporting a new generation of young reformers at director-level posts in the bureaucracy.

Afghanistan faces many ongoing challenges to aid effectiveness. These include: (i) illegal armed groups, including those supported by external actors; (ii) elite capture of resources (illicit networks still operate, despite efforts to reduce corruption); (iii) a lack of social cohesion across ethnic and socio-economic divides; (iv) the growing number of emergent priorities within the government and ministry plans; (v) reduction of foreign troops in

163 It is important to note that Plan Colombia included the use of billions of dollars for aerial pesticide spraying to combat coca production, used in the production of cocaine. This fairly indiscriminate spraying also killed other crops, destroying coca farmers livelihoods (which without sufficient investment in alternate livelihoods, had the perverse effect of giving some farmers little choice but to innovate new productive techniques, ultimately increasing production despite efforts by the U.S. and Colombia to disrupt supply).

164 The 2012 Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework is the central mechanism for coordinating development efforts between the Afghan Government and development partners. Following the formation of the Unity Government in 2014, it was re-launched to bolster effective development cooperation in Afghanistan for the next ten years, in line with the government's Realizing Self-Reliance strategy.

2014 and corresponding economic shock, as well as security consequences and local level operational capacity gap; (vi) powerful political elites who have not committed to the reform movement or national vision; and (vii) continued proliferation of donor fragmentation, despite the progress achieved through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund.

Somalia: Determination, despite challenges

Following decades of conflict, Somalia implemented several key policies and programmes between 2011 and 2018 that have begun reset the country's development agenda. Somalia experienced some two decades of state collapse, a succession of severe droughts and famines, and the presence of several active terrorist groups. Since 2004, the international community has been heavily involved in building up the national government.[165] However, with extremely low institutional capacity and bureaucratic resources, much ODA – which constitutes a significant part of the country's operating costs (42% of the 2018 budget)[166] – continues to run parallel to government spending, and development assistance has been highly fragmented. Security also prevents on-the-ground coordination between the Somalian government and traditional development partners.[167]

Despite these constraints and an ever-present concern of backsliding, the government and its allies secured control of the capital Mogadishu in 2011 and held presidential elections in 2012 and 2017. Diaspora are returning to the country and there is continued investment in Somalia's development. Though it remains the most fragile country in the world according to the OECD's 2018 ranking,[168] consultations suggest there is still great enthusiasm and determination among government and partners to invest in aid effectiveness principles and tools. This enthusiasm persists despite extremely low governance and capacity baselines.

The key programmes and approaches cited repeatedly by practitioners and government leadership were:

- Leveraging energy around international commitments at the time (the New Deal and Stockholm Declaration, 2011 and 2016 respectively) to resonate with donors, prompted convergence around the use of the compact.
- Creating national pillars to prioritise and guide inputs across stakeholders.
- Close and consistent collaboration by government and development partners through mechanisms such as the Somalia Working Group on Use of Country Systems.
- Stakeholders taking risks and championing new ways to apply aid effectiveness principles, including working through country systems, since accepted methods have not delivered results.
- Supporting a new generation of reformers.
- Embracing incremental progress towards public financial management requirements for greater assistance and country leadership.

Like Afghanistan, Somalia faces many ongoing challenges to aid effectiveness. These include: (i) a national plan that some call overly ambitious; (ii) the continuing need to secure buy-in and support for the national plan from political elites, to avoid them undermining it; (iii) limited capacity of staff who manage activities across the bureaucracy with its still fragile institutions; (iv) competing agendas and geopolitical ambitions of development partners and neighbouring countries; (v) disconnect between political/development agenda on the one hand and security objectives on the other; and (vi) corruption and weak national procurement and budget systems.

165 AMISOM, the African Union peacekeeping mission, has been in Somalia since 2007.

166 Up from 33% in 2016, when the budget was 43% less. See: Federal Government of Somalia, Ministry of Finance (2018) *Budget Strategy Paper (BSP)*, http://mof.gov.so/sites/default/files/2018-12/BUDGET%20STRATEGY%20PAPER%20UPDATE%20MOF.pdf.

167 Newer development partners are demonstrating higher risk tolerance.

168 OECD (2018) *States of Fragility 2018*.

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