

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN SITUATIONS OF CONFLICT AND FRAGILITY

Background

The DAC defines situations of fragility as those with very weak capacities and weak systems of accountability and legitimacy. Between 30 and 50 countries could be included in such a definition but it is important to acknowledge the diversity of possible contexts. For example, conflict driven capacity deficits require different responses to those in situations of long term governance deterioration. The DAC's Fragile States Group increasingly views capacity development as one element in of state building processes which concern political settlement, state society relations and fundamental administrative state capability—without the latter, the state is impotent.

What priority measures are required?

More intensive efforts are required to build basic administrative capacity and core state functions in fragile situations. This requires a more rational distribution of aid to address countries marginalised from international attention and **predictable and responsive ways of providing support**.

In post conflict countries, **more flexible pooled financing instruments could help capacity development efforts to start earlier and continue for longer**, providing a bridge between the recovery and development phases.

Donors can set up **cadres of TA personnel** (some have already) to support capacity deficits on a rapid response basis in fragile situations. Facilitating the return of the diaspora should also be a focus.

Gap filling and personnel substitution may be legitimate approaches if the partner government wants interim support. In all cases, early attention must be given to capacity development needs and exit strategies.

Development practitioners must work with other policy communities on Capacity Development issues. Aid is only one part of the Capacity Development picture in situations of fragility---defence and security practitioners often lead CD efforts on security system reform for example; diplomats lead peace negotiations and agreements which have significant capacity implications.

Why are these initiatives important/promising?

Evidence suggests some fragile states are marginalised from international attention, often because they lack strategic significance. Several countries are underaided and lack a diverse enough range of donors which could provide them with advice and technical support. A more rational global distribution of aid, based on state building priorities would help.

The international community lacks flexibility in the use of instruments to make progress on capacity development at the interface between recovery and development particularly in post conflict countries.

Evidence suggests that Technical Assistance often tails off in post conflict situations at the point when countries can make use of it. TA is often slow to arrive owing to procurement and contracting constraints in donor countries.

Evidence suggests that the interim provision of experts to underpin core state functions can help 'get the job done', but there are few examples of how such approaches can evolve into successful capacity development strategies.

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