

RT7: Fragile and conflict states

Chair: George Carner, Rapporteurs: Robert-Jan Siegert, Jenny Pearson, Presenters: Ben Dickinson, Damoni Kitabire

Approximately 15 people attended, an interesting mix of people from post-conflict and fragile states, and officials with experience or current responsibilities in this area. There was a lively and wide ranging discussion, drawing on many relevant experiences. The focus was on the What? and How? as the Why? is obvious in this context.

The chair's summary of the discussion was as follows:

- Situations of fragility vary from pre- to post conflict – from somewhat bad to total collapse – so context counts a lot and calls for tailored approaches
- Depending on the situation the primary need is to re-establish core state functions which requires early analysis of immediate needs, and flexible responses.
- The need is to think about transition from emergency interventions to long-term CD, and ensure that interventions don't undermine one by the other. Many situations need a rapid response, a transition and then an exit strategy, but it must be nuanced to the particular circumstances – TA needs to get in quickly and stay longer, but not create dependencies.
- Early warning systems are important in both pre- and post- conflict situations, this calls for building capacity in dialogue and diagnosis
- Countries with pockets of fragility need CD to be able to deal with them
- CD is an even bigger challenge in situations of fragility and conflict
- Emerging donors may need some CD in order to contribute effectively

The What? points captured from the discussion were?

- **Focus on core state capabilities:** but recognise that needs are different: pre-conflict (dialogue, early warning), conflict (humanitarian relief) and post-conflict (institutions, exit strategy)
- There is a need for **urgent action**, which might include gap-filling and personnel substitution if the receiving government wants it, but the basic principles of ownership, CD and state building need to be kept in focus, together with an exit strategy.
- **More flexible pooled funds and continued international engagement:** CD needs to start earlier and continue for longer, bridging the transition through different phases from humanitarian relief through recovery to development.
- Facilitate the **return of the Diaspora** and explore ways to work effectively with refugees
- **Interim measures to reduce fragility** are necessary, in circumstances where the pressing need is to prevent relapse into conflict it isn't always feasible to think in terms of MDGs.
- **Development practitioners must work with others**, such as military/security personnel, diplomats, emerging donors, etc. Interventions with different actors need to be targeted to help dialogue, reconciliation and prevention of relapse.

The How? points captured from the discussion were:

- Do joint assessments of fragility, to be used for establishing interim indicators for conflict/stability, including CD targets
- Help bring back Diaspora and refugees
- Invest in secondments, attachments, training, knowledge and especially dialogue
- Use non-sovereigns (e.g. KPMG, Crown Agents) where critical service gaps exist
- Ensure increased transparency in resource rich countries, e.g. through the EITI, as part of conflict prevention