

First workshop on defining a multi-dimensional approach to fragility for the OECD States of Fragility Report 2016

Berlin, 15 October 2015

OUTCOME SUMMARY

On 15th October 2015 the first **expert consultation workshop on defining a new multi-dimensional approach to fragility for the OECD States of Fragility Report 2016** was held in Berlin. The workshop, hosted by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), was the first in a series of consultations. Further workshops will take place in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 19 October and in Washington, DC on 23 November. Moreover, consultations with the G7+ group of countries will be held later this year. 33 participants from the policy community, academia, think tanks and civil society gathered in Berlin to discuss the European stance on fragility and how to measure it.

The aim of the workshop was to clarify the **use of an OECD model**, understand the **expectations** towards it, gather inputs on its **dimensions and components**, and on ways to measure them. The results of the workshop set the direction for the remaining consultations. Together, they will feed into a working paper, which will form the basis of the OECD's States of Fragility Report 2016.

The workshop was divided into three sessions. The first session focused on **the rationale behind, and the expectations towards a multidimensional fragility model** for the OECD. There was consensus that the model should:

- (1) be derived from **empirical evidence** about fragility, not from political consensus (PSGs, SDGs, etc.);
- (2) be rooted in an explicit underlying **theory**; one that goes beyond the Westphalian state;
- (3) be **universal**, while not losing sight of the most fragile countries;
- (4) be **multi-dimensional**. It should therefore not be aggregated into one index, but rather help to establish country groupings with similar fragility characteristics, and distinguish 'types of fragility';
- (5) be mainly **descriptive**, but should have some predictive power by also measuring long-term structural developments;
- (6) not focus on drivers (since theories of change are difficult to establish; so they would merely be assumptions) but rather on **characteristics / expressions** of fragility;
- (7) focus on **statehood**, while recognizing the importance of societal aspects for fragility;
- (8) if possible, show **trajectories** of countries into and out of fragility.

Participants agreed that the fragility model was most helpful as a tool for:

- (1) **advocacy** for a group of countries and/or for specific issues;
- (2) **monitoring and reporting**; as well as for
- (3) **guiding policies** at the macro level and **diffusing policy ideas**.

While the model may be an entry point for country programming, it needs to be complemented by in-depth country assessments to be useful for operational purposes.

The second session dealt with **different fragility models and their dimensions**. The OECD provided an overview of different models measuring fragility and its own working model presented in the 2015 States of Fragility report. That model relied on 5 dimensions extracted from the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): violence, justice, institutions, economic foundations and resilience. The German Development Institute (DIE) contrasted the OECD model with its own, functional model of fragility, which is centered around the state's core tasks of capacity, legitimacy and authority. The subsequent discussion focused on:

- (1) The importance of including a **dimension beyond the state**. The state does not exist in a vacuum, but is affected by a large number of external factors.
- (2) A **societal dimension**: a fragility model needs to capture societal dynamics, including inequality and exclusion. This may be especially important for states that are “too strong” (“dictatorial peace”, e.g. Turkmenistan), where fragility does not stem from weak statehood.
- (3) Fragility is often not confined to the national level; thus a **subnational and/or regional view** is essential.
- (4) The **political economy** of fragile states: an elite's interest in maintaining fragility may limit the possibility of change. While **informal dimensions** of fragility, such as **shadow economies and institutions** (e.g. organized crime), are difficult to measure, they are nevertheless important to keep in mind.
- (5) **Temporal dynamics**: the model should capture **trajectories** of countries into and out of fragility.
- (6) **Alignment of dimensions**: the relation between the dimensions needs to be clearly spelled out. It may be necessary to rank dimensions according to importance.
- (7) **Measuring** of dimensions: some elements of fragility may be difficult to measure. Strategic choices need to be made when choosing indicators in order to not overload the model and ensure quality. Using indices as indicators may be problematic as their underlying assumptions are adopted.

During the third session, participants were asked to work on the **dimensions of the new OECD fragility model** in smaller groups. Group work was structured by four questions relating to (1) dimensions of fragility, (2) underlying assumptions, (3) elements of the dimensions and (4) indicators to measure elements. There was a remarkable overlap of dimensions between the four groups. Most groups focussed on **state legitimacy, state capacity, economic foundations and security** as central dimensions for measuring and understanding fragility. Moreover, most groups recognized the importance of a dimension to capture **societal dynamics** as well as **external factors** to the state that can have negative impacts on fragility. Further issues that emerged during this session were (1) **non-state perspectives on fragility** and the question of how to deal with societal dimensions of fragility (do we need two models to measure state and societal fragility?), (2) **social cohesion** and active **community mechanisms** as necessary requirements for resilient and peaceful societies, (3) economic foundations and the strong link with the **availability and management of natural resources** as conflict drivers, (4) the potential of a **robust civil society** as a counter balance to the (fragile) state, (5) the impact of **external and outside-regional factors** on fragility (e.g. climate change), and (6) the impact **refugee and migrants flows** can have on fragility.

The final discussion revolved around the concept of **legitimacy**, involving, i.a., the state's ability to mediate relationships between groups, and manage power relations. Legitimacy is central to fragility, and the difficulties to measure it should not preclude it to from being part of the concept.

Annex 1: Group Work

In particular, the four groups developed the following models (for more details see attached photo documentary).

Group 1:

Dimensions	Assumptions	Elements	Indicators
Political settlements		History of conflict/ violence	PRIO
Justice		corruption	TI
Security	Core state function		New Deal indicators
State capacity	Core state function		Agenda 2030 monitoring
Economic foundations		Youth unemployment Natural resources Food and energy security	
External conflict/risk factors:	Important for analysis		

Group 2:

Dimensions	Assumptions	Elements	Indicators
Resource mobilization, economic foundations, Natural environment, natural resource management capacity	Economic basis for state to operate, Resources necessary to provide services, can trigger conflict	Employment, development/ welfare orientation	
Legitimacy, good governance, rule of law	Legitimacy is requirement for effective governance	Trust, respect	
Social Cohesion, civil society/ robust community mechanisms	Culture of tolerance reduces fragility, resilient civil societies as corrective for the state	Equality, inclusiveness	
Security, territorial reach	Security is prerequisite for governance	Human security, national security	
State capacity, bureaucratic capacity	State capacity central for policy implementation	Shadow/ alternative service provision	

Model 3:

Dimensions	Assumptions	Elements	Indicators
State/ society relationship	Conflict trigger, barrier to development	Trust, human rights, expectations & satisfactions	
Social cohesion	Positive peace, resilience of individuals & communities	Shared identity, trust equality	
Regional/ international environment	Impacts on both society and state stability	Conflict in neighboring countries, transnational	

		crime, regional institutions, regional power interests, refugees/ migrants	
Economic foundations	Influences state capacity, economic grievances as conflict trigger	Resource dependency, economic inequality, poverty, informal economy, infrastructure	
Violence/ conflict	Self-evident	Violent conflict, interpersonal violence, gender violence, displacement, organized crime	
Capable, accountable and inclusive institutions (formal and informal)	Can mediate conflicts, feed into legitimacy, absence can fuel grievances	Taxes & revenues, political institutions, corruption/ informal institutions, monopoly of violence, social services, justice & rule of law	

Model 4:

Dimensions	Assumptions	Elements	Indicators
External influences	External conflicts, spillover effects from neighboring countries	Economic interests, trade routes, criminal networks, climate change	
Security	Core function of state to protect its citizens and borders (input & output)	Ability to defend borders and to control internal conflicts, social violence, political violence,	
Governance	Governance can be provided by state & non-state actors	Cohesion, economic governance, linkages within country, resource management	
Horizontal inequalities/ inclusion	Inequality and political/ economic exclusion lead to grievances & conflicts	Economic inclusion, different patterns of inequality: gender, ethnic	
Legitimacy			

Annex 2: List of Participants

Surname, Name	Institution
Balthasar, Dominik	swisspeace
Brück, Tillman	International Security and Development Center Berlin
Castillejo, Clare	Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior (FRIDE)
Corneliussen, Hans Inge	Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD)
Feda, Basir	Berghof Foundation
Fiedler, Charlotte	German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)
Gast, Ann-Sophie	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
German, Megan	Federal Foreign Office / Bosch fellow
Hauck, Volker	European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)
Hofmann, Jana	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
Hoppe, Martin	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Nygård, Håvard Mokleiv	Peace Research Institute Oslo
Jongman, Marjolein	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands
Kreibaum, Merle	German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)
Leclercq, Sidney	Academic Research Organisation for Policy Support (Acropolis)
Leininger, Julia	German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)
Lewerenz, Florian	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
Lorenz, Kathrin	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
Mayer, Markus	International Alert

O'Neill, Grainne	Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Ireland
Pape, Elisabeth	European Commission, Directorate-General for Development & Co-operation
Profos, Jolanda	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
Reiter, Zoe	Transparency International Secretariat
Sander, Shinta	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
Schalhoff, Lara	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
Schröder, Ursula	Free University Berlin, SFB 700 – Governance in Areas of Limited Statehood
Spelten, Angelika	Working Group on Peace and Development / Arbeitsgemeinschaft Frieden und Entwicklung (FriEnt)
Sperrfechter, Johannes	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Stamm, Ralph	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), Switzerland
Van Acoleyen, Koen	Direction Générale de la Coopération au Développement et de l'Aide Humanitaire, Belgium
Van Sluijs, Peter	New Deal Civil Society Platform
Wallton, Åsa	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)
Zaum, Dominik	University of Reading
Ziaja, Sebastian	University of Heidelberg / DIE