Helpdesk Research Report: Evaluations of Donors' Peace-building and Conflict Policies
Date: 23.10.09

Query: Please identify reviews or evaluations of donors' peace-building or peace and conflict policies and, where possible, highlight:

- The evaluation methodology
- Findings of how the policy contributed to policy coherence, particularly in regard to defence, diplomacy and development
- Any identified sets of 'principles for engagement'
- Discussion of gender
- Key lessons learned

Enquirers: AusAID

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1. Overview

There is little information available online about the process or findings of reviews of donor policies on peace, conflict or peace-building. The vast majority of evaluation reports that are available in this area are at the level of programme or project evaluation, rather than overall policy-level or thematic evaluation. Few materials are available online that have explicitly been produced as part of a policy review process. These range from portfolio reviews, to literature-based reviews of lessons-learned, to reports from policy consultations, to (a small number of) large-scale, independent evaluations of the outcomes of donor support.

Methodology
There is subsequently little information available about policy review methodologies (the international guidance speaks mainly to programme or project-level evaluations - see section 4). Nevertheless, the indication from the few sources available is that a review process can combine both quantitative and qualitative research in the form of case studies, results-oriented surveys (e.g. a quantitative analysis of project performance scores in the case of a recent DFID evaluation), or a literature review on international lessons learned. Research methodology can range from secondary desk-based reviews to primary stakeholder interviews.

There is some convergence around the criteria used for such policy evaluation, to an extent mirroring the OECD DAC's evaluation criteria of; relevance, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, efficiency, coherence and coordination, linkages and coverage. Specifically in relation to policy-level review, the OECD DAC suggests looking at the connections between activities and policies at different levels and across sectors, and checking the coverage in terms of whether policies effectively cover all (potential) conflicts; how   contributions to one particular conflict region or country – as opposed to another – relate to need; and whether there are "hidden or forgotten conflicts" that receive little or no international attention.

Policy coherence
Whilst many of the materials included below emphasise the importance of policy coherence, and its associated challenges, there are few 'lessons learned' in this area. It is seemingly regarded as a work in progress. An SDC lessons-learned review highlights how Inter-Agency Working Groups on issues such as security sector reform (SSR) have ensured development work goes hand-in-hand with analyses of the geo-strategic climate and economic conditions, as well as with national and international mediation and facilitation efforts. A DFID review cites its combined peace-building and state-building approach as offering the potential to bring it closer to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). Explicit guidance on achieving coherence is also offered in the DFID 2009 review of its engagement in fragile situations. This emphasises a common commitment to dialogue and joint working across institutional boundaries; country-specific joint operational strategies; upfront investment in joint analysis; joint budgets for operations; and joint monitoring of progress against overall objectives.

Principles for engagement
Many of the reports below contain principles for engagement in conflict-affected or fragile states. The DFID evaluation aims to produce a set of principles for engagement to help guide country offices in their choice of interventions, although it notes that guidance at this very general level is limited in that 'in many respects, practice is already pushing ahead of these principles' (DFID, 2009, p.52).

The principles contained in the evaluation reports commonly emphasize national ownership, long-term engagement, and flexibility in choice of aid instruments. Specifically:

➢ The primary responsibility and ownership for peace consolidation rests with the Government and the people of the host country. Donors must be committed to finding home-grown solutions to institutional problems, and not seek to impose institutional templates. They should always be aware of, and work with, the capacity that exists, however modest.

➢ The length of engagement should be appropriate to the challenges involved. Peacebuilding is a long-term investment and needs a long-term strategy to address sources of conflict.

➢ Since peacebuilding encompasses security, development and human rights, the linkages between them need to be adequately recognized and prioritized.

➢ To build scope for harmonisation and alignment, there needs to be quality communication among stakeholders on roles, processes and potential benefits.

➢ Donors should take a regional approach: Conflicts tend to spread over borders and require a regional approach. It is very important to build regional programmes. Regional and transnational factors influence conflict dynamics as well as peacebuilding.

➢ Poverty reduction and human development have to be key components of the overall strategic vision and need to be integrated into strategic planning at all stages of a conflict.

- At all stages of peace-building, it is important to listen to and involve a range of civil society groups, including women's and grass-roots organizations, as well as politicians and former warlords/commanders.
- Sustainable peacebuilding requires a strong partnership based on mutual respect and accountability between the Government and the people of the host country and their international partners.

Key lessons learned

The evaluations also put forward a range of lessons learned. These include:

- Development interventions in fragile contexts require engagement at the political level, and not only at the operational level. Donors should be constantly aware of the political impact of external assistance, and its potential to create both positive and negative incentives for state-building and conflict reduction.
- In the long-term, stability depends on respect for human rights. Rule of law, political participation, and livelihoods are critical for conflict prevention and recovery. Legitimate political authority is necessary to ensure human rights are respected. The emphasis on legitimacy implies this is not just a matter of establishing state institutions; it also requires the building of trust and respect for institutions.
- 'Future proofing' assistance in conflict-affected and fragile states is very important. Possible future scenarios need to be developed and conceptualised, as donors need to take a more systematic approach to risk management and scenario planning.
- It is important to select a limited number of strategic activities. Holistic and strategic thinking needs to be accompanied by focused and prioritized attention to particular conflict risks. Appropriate prioritization, sequencing and timing are essential if limited resources are to be used effectively. Host governments and international actors need to agree on key priorities and to sequence their implementation appropriately.
- Choice of partnerships is key. A range of partnerships with change agents both inside and outside of the state is likely to be appropriate.
- The adoption of a "do no harm" or conflict-sensitive approach to development needs to be a concrete, operational and context-specific endeavour.
- Constructive political processes are essential to peace consolidation.
- The same factors (such as natural resources, displaced populations or elections) can serve as drivers of conflict as well as instruments of peacebuilding.
- Peacebuilding requires national will, ownership and capacity to resolve problems without recourse to violence. It needs to take place at the national, subnational and local levels and involves the government, civil society and the private sector.
- Predictable and sustained provision of financial and non-financial resources is essential for peacebuilding.
- Peacebuilding often involves difficult trade-offs, tensions and dilemmas across issue areas which need to be reconciled (e.g. the imperatives for peace and justice as well as security and development).
- While peacebuilding requires time, early provision of tangible peace dividends for the population and quick win projects are necessary to build confidence and generate support.

Gender
Whilst there is recognition of the need to incorporate gender into peace and conflict policies, and given that men and women experience conflict and fragility differently, there are no specific lessons learned in doing so contained in the policy reviews below.

Peace-building and state-building
The relationship between peace-building and state-building is addressed briefly in some of the reviews below. DFID's 'emerging policy' paper proposes a combined approach to peace-building and state-building given the complementarities between the two. On the other hand, the SDC lessons learned review cautions against viewing peace-building as synonymous with state-building.

2. Policy reviews/evaluations

DFID

Cox, M., and Thornton, N., 2009, 'DFID Engagement in Fragile Situations: A Portfolio Review: Synthesis Report', Evaluation Report EV700, DFID, London
http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/evaluation/fragile-situ-engagement.pdf

This report forms part of an ongoing thematic evaluation of DFID's work in fragile situations, which is intended to guide future evaluation work and inform the development of new policy and guidance. The evaluation entailed i) a quantitative analysis of project performance scores over a five-year period ii) a literature review on current international thinking on good practice in aid delivery in fragile situations (see Cox and Hemon, 2009 below); and iii) a series of six 'light touch' desk-based case studies country programmes, prepared through telephone interviews with in-country staff.

The report outlines some of the challenges and practical dilemmas facing DFID's programmes in fragile situations, and presents them in light of current thinking and practices on aid effectiveness. The aim is to develop a menu of useful principles, techniques and approaches which country programmes can select from when designing interventions. The report notes, however, that the diversity of the challenges posed by fragile situations makes it difficult to formulate guidance at anything other than a very general level. 'In many respects, practice is already pushing ahead of these principles.' (p. 52)

The report concludes the following (pp. 49-53):

➢ There is scope for DFID to refine its objectives in fragile situations. The literature stresses the importance of selecting a limited number of strategic activities. At present, country offices appear to be juggling a range of objectives, including conflict reduction, state-building and poverty reduction. 'It is inevitable that there are different objectives across the fragile situations portfolio, given the diversity of countries involved. However, it may be helpful for DFID to state a clearer rationale for its assistance in each country programme, and to put more effort into relating individual activities to the overall strategic goals.' (p. 49)

➢ The concept of 'future proofing' assistance is very important in fragile situations, and could be further developed, based upon a more systematic approach to risk management and scenario planning. Country programmes in unstable political environments may find themselves obliged to engage or disengage rapidly. Having the flexibility to manage these changes, without losing the continuity of support, is important.

➢ There is emerging good practice around pooled technical assistance funds, programmed and managed by counterpart institutions. However, this approach may

only be viable where there is a solid core of capacity in ministries. There is a clear need to bring an end to aid practices like salary supplements that are known to be destructive of national capacity.

➢ There may be a good case for using parallel structures, where it meets urgent delivery needs and also reflects the preferences of government. However, country offices need to ensure that parallel mechanisms are balanced by credible, long-term strategies for developing government systems. Flexible approaches to service delivery are necessary in fragile situations.

➢ The choice of partnerships in fragile situations is key. The literature suggests that a range of partnerships with change agents both inside and outside of the state is likely to be appropriate. A focus on building central government capacity may have had the effect of crowding out other partnerships that could be highly strategic.

Cox, M., and Hemon, K., 2009, 'Engagement in Fragile Situations: Preliminary Lessons from Donor Experience - A literature review', DFID Evaluation Report EV699, Department for International Development, London
http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/evaluation/fragile-situ-literature.pdf

This literature review forms part of the thematic evaluation of DFID's work in fragile situations. It presents lessons from donor evaluations and programmatic literature on good practice for donor engagement, focusing on: sequencing and selectivity; capacity building; partnerships; service delivery; community-based approaches; aid instruments; harmonisation; alignment; fragile situation typologies; organisational issues for donors; and general principles.

The report briefly discusses 'Whole of Government' coherence, and the challenge of different government departments having markedly different objectives and institutional cultures.

Suggestions for improving coherence emphasise the importance of:

➢ Developing a clear hierarchy of goals and objectives spanning different departments, focusing on outcomes rather than activities, and articulating the basic rationale for engagement.

➢ A common commitment to dialogue and joint working across institutional boundaries.

➢ Country-specific joint operational strategies, with activities and task allocation derived by working backwards from high-level goals.

➢ Upfront investment in joint analysis.

➢ Specific departmental budgetary allocations for collaborative working (as collaborative working often incurs higher transaction costs). .

➢ Joint budgets for particular operations to help overcome institutional barriers and foster integrated planning.

➢ Joint monitoring of progress against overall objectives. (pp. 36-37)

A range of general principles are offered in the literature to guide donors when engaging in fragile situations. These include:

➢ 'The length of engagement should be appropriate to the challenges involved. State-building processes may take a decade or more before they become self-sustaining, and donors must not withdraw external support too early.

➢ Donors must be committed to finding home-grown solutions to institutional problems, and not seek to impose institutional templates.

➢ Programming should focus on sources of fragility, including institutional arrangements that lack legitimacy and unfair distribution of services and economic opportunities across social groups.

➢ Donors need to find an appropriate balance between short-term, visible impact and supporting long-term, structural change.

➢ Expectations – both among donors' own constituencies and among the national population – need to be carefully managed by setting goals and targets that reflect realities on the ground.

➢ Conditionality is unlikely to be effective in FS. Rather, donors should clearly express their expectations of their partners, and constantly reinforce the message that their ability to justify continuing support depends on overall progress towards agreed goals.

➢ To build scope for harmonisation and alignment, there needs to be quality communication among stakeholders on roles, processes and potential benefits.

➢ The general principles of aid-effectiveness are relevant in FS, and should be introduced progressively as conditions allow.

➢ Pay close attention to risk management. Credible interventions will usually need to incorporate some high-risk, high-return initiatives.

➢ Be innovative and flexible, with a willingness to adjust rapidly to changing circumstances.

➢ Be constantly aware of the political impact of external assistance, and its potential to create both positive and negative incentives for state-building and conflict reduction.

➢ Try to manage the incentives, while being realistic about the level of influence exercised by external actors.

➢ Think nationally and programmatically from the outset, rather than trying to scale up from individual projects.

➢ While state-building processes are inherently top-down in nature, care must be taken to foster local initiatives and community-level dynamics.

➢ Always be aware of, and work with, the capacity that exists, however modest.

➢ Be aware of the distortions that a large donor footprint can cause to national institutions, particularly by drawing the most qualified individuals out of the public service and concentrating resources and economic activity in the capital. These distortions can be minimised by more use of budget support, and by consciously pushing programmes and funds outside the capital.' (p. 38)

Wilton Park, 2009, 'DFID Policy Seminar: Best Practice in Fragile and Conflict Affected Countries', Wilton Park Conference, London
http://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/documents/conferences/WP955/pdfs/WP955.pdf

This report summarises the issues that emerged during a policy seminar organised by DFID to feed into the process of the development of the 2009 White Paper. It highlights that the global economic down turn, rising population, rapid urbanisation, environmental degradation and climate change, will make progress in fragile and conflict affected states difficult. In addition:

➢ State-building and peace-building are essential and relevant to all different situations of conflict and fragility. They are endogenous processes requiring attention to the development of core functions of the state, not least revenue generation. External

donors cannot "do" peace-building and state-building, but they can create an enabling environment and focus on doing "no harm." There needs to be modesty, humility and realism in assessing what can be done.

➢ Ownership is critical and tackling political will continues to be central. Ownership is not just about government but also includes the people that constitute a state.

➢ Conflict and fragility has international as well as national causes. It is essential to strengthen the international architecture around a range of 'global drivers' of bad governance (e.g. corruption, money laundering and the export of natural resources) to ensure better outcomes as the country level.

➢ Climate change brings additional challenges to fragile and conflict-affected contexts. Resilient institutions and the protection of livelihoods will be essential as development strategies.

➢ Donors need to undertake systematic political-economy analysis to better understand the contexts in which they are working and the constraints and opportunities they bring. They also need to move to longer-term timeframes.

➢ For donor agencies and multilateral institutions, staffing issues are essential. More and better skilled people are needed in these environments.

DFID, 2009, 'Building the State and Securing the Peace', Emerging Policy Paper, UK Department for International Development (DFID), London
http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/CON64.pdf

This 'emerging policy' paper (final version to be published later in 2009) outlines DFID's combined approach to peace-building and state-building. It argues there is significant value in addressing them in an integrated way, and donors should engage at the interface of state and society, including with civil society. The main operational implications of the combined approach are:

➢ Prioritise and sequence: Choosing appropriate priorities and sequencing is context-specific. Identifying the most critical risks of instability can be a useful way to start. Political governance should be the highest priority - the political settlement is essential to underpin progress in all other areas.

➢ Design interventions to support the following four objectives:

  o Support inclusive political settlements: Analyse the dynamics of political settlements as they evolve, and develop specific actions to promote a more inclusive, resilient settlement underpinned by accountability. Broadening the political settlement over the long term requires a focus on inclusion, and engagement with a wider range of stakeholders including informal systems of governance.

  o Address causes of conflict and build resolution mechanisms: A focus on prevention is particularly crucial in deteriorating governance situations. Political economy and conflict analysis will often identify numerous causal factors. Deepening democracy is an important element of strengthening conflict resolution mechanisms. A new form of "early warning" programme is also emerging, whereby local civil society actors are involved in detecting potential conflict and responding with appropriate interventions.

  o Develop state survival functions: Work with state and non-state actors to build capacity for poor people's safety, security and access to justice.

- Respond to public expectations: Identifying the causes and effects of conflict and fragility can shed light on past and potential grievances, and thus help to prioritise the expected functions and actions which are of greatest importance to reduce the risk of violence. This may require addressing political exclusion or corruption as much as delivering basic services such as health and education.

➢ Stay engaged for the long-term: Engagement over decades, not years, and continual attention to state-building and peace-building dynamics as they shift over time is needed.

➢ Think and work politically: DFID will be more closely engaged with political dynamics in partner countries, and its partnership with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office will need to be even closer.

➢ Take a regional approach: Engaging with states alone is not sufficient to address statebuilding and peace-building - a regional approach is required. The UK recognises the importance of regional approaches in situations of conflict and fragility, and since 2008 has reorganised its own tri-departmental (DFID, FCO, MOD) conflict prevention strategies along regional lines.

➢ Adapt aid instruments: In situations where there is central government commitment to DFID's partnership, DFID will use aid instruments that work with the state. In contexts where the legitimacy of the state is questioned, it may be necessary to deliver aid outside the state.

➢ Measure progress and learn lessons: Traditional approaches to measuring results – such as frameworks based around the MDGs and related targets - are not sufficient to assess progress in conflict-affected and fragile situations. Following the Accra High Level Forum (HLF) in 2008, an International Dialogue has been established with the aim of agreeing international objectives on state-building and peace-building which can be adapted for use at country level.

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004, 'Towards a Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding: Getting their Act Together', Overview report of the Joint Utstein Study of Peacebuilding, Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/kilde/ud/rap/2004/0044/ddd/pdfv/210673-rapp104.pdf

This joint evaluation of peacebuilding, by Norway, Germany, the Netherlands, and the UK, aimed to improve policy implementation. It is based on an illustrative survey of 336 peacebuilding projects and studies of the peacebuilding policy and activities of each of the 4 commissioning countries. It found major strategic deficits in the peacebuilding efforts of the four governments, and makes several policy recommendations to correct them:

➢ Two strategic frameworks need to be adopted: one to assist in formulating specific peacebuilding intervention strategies when the need arises; the other to assist in formulating a general peacebuilding strategy for donors.

➢ Intervention strategies must be owned by those who implement them.

➢ A general peacebuilding strategy for a donor country should cover the following:

- 'Basic principles and goals and the challenges to the achievement of those goals – a simple statement of political principles and worldview.

o The government's understanding of the concept of peacebuilding and its purpose – a summary of the government's analysis, with emphasis on cooperation.

o The conditions in which the government will consider whether to launch or participate in a peacebuilding intervention – a statement of criteria that presumably highlights humanitarian and global or regional security concerns and the views of potential partners among other donor governments.

o The importance of tailoring each intervention to the requirements of the case – there is no one-size-fits-all version of peacebuilding.

o The basic questions that have to be asked and answered in order for an intervention strategy to be developed – the basis on which to tailor peacebuilding to fit the specific case is a needs assessment and a feasibility assessment, building on the conflict analysis.

o The main techniques used by the government and its agencies and NGOs it frequently supports and preferences for the mode of intervention – within the peacebuilding palette, the activities in which the government sees its particular peacebuilding strengths.

o The government's approach to strengthening its own capacities for peacebuilding interventions – how it organises its own learning from experience, with emphasis on cooperation with other donors.' (pp. 13-14)

The synthesis report incorporates findings from the 4 country policy evaluations, which are available online:

➢ Germany: http://www.gtz.de/de/dokumente/en-utstein.pdf
➢ Netherlands: http://www.euforic.org/iob/docs/200403090934549008.pdf?&username=guest@euforic.org&password=9999&groups=IOB
➢ Norway:http://www.prio.no/Research-and-Publications/Publication/?oid=58408
➢ UK: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/performance/files/ev646s.pdf

SDC

Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), 2009, 'Context-sensitive engagement: Lessons learned from Swiss experiences in South Asia', Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in collaboration with the Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding, Geneva
http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/SDC_LessonsLearnedSwissExperiences_SouthAsia_AidEffectiveness.pdf

This paper, prepared for the 3rd High Level forum on Aid Effectiveness held in Accra, distils lessons from SDC's Conflict-Sensitive Programme Management (CSPM) in South Asia in light of the DAC Principles and the ongoing aid effectiveness agenda. It confirms the importance of the ten DAC Principles, whilst also highlighting certain key aspects which may be further refined and elaborated. In particular:

➢ There is a need for continuous monitoring and assessment of the context in question. It is not enough for projects and programmes to react to changing circumstances. Possible future scenarios need to be developed, conceptualised, and possible means of proceeding incorporated into the management cycle.

- There is a need to rethink the third DAC principle on state-building. The experiences of the Swiss programmes in South Asia highlight the shortcomings of a widely-held belief that peacebuilding is synonymous with state-building. A functioning state apparatus and effective public service delivery should not be the only focus of attention. Peacebuilding is much more than state-building per se. Knowing with whom to work is essential. Going beyond partnership with the state whilst not undermining state institutions represents an enormous challenge.

- Further emphasis needs to be put on strategy and management issues, and in particular on the link between the operational and political levels. The management challenge of working in fragile, conflict-affected contexts is one that goes well beyond coordination among actors in the field, and between the field and headquarters.

- The whole of government approach implicitly acknowledges that it remains unclear whether development is a precondition for security, or vice versa. The establishment of Inter-Agency Working Groups on issues such as security sector reform (SSR) ensures development work goes hand-in-hand with analyses of the geo-strategic climate and economic conditions, as well as with national and international mediation and facilitation efforts.

- The adoption of a "do no harm" or conflict-sensitive approach to development, as outlined in the second DAC principle, needs to be a concrete, operational and context-specific endeavor—otherwise it remains a black box for operational staff and partners. Practice shows that mainstreaming "conflict" into development or humanitarian programmes is more sustainable as a people-centred learning experience rather than a tool-based training approach.

- Civil society organisations (CSOs) are the key to any people-centred, community-based initiatives. Empirical evidence from various countries, however, seems to suggest that donors tend to support moderate, middle class groups that often act as "gatekeepers" vis-à-vis other groups in society. Donor-driven civil society initiatives focusing on NGOs limit the capacity to create domestic social capital and ownership for the peace process, thereby undermining empowerment and leaving domestic groups in a weak and subordinate position.

The report reaches the following conclusions:

- 'Conflict-sensitivity is, first and foremost, a management task. Monitoring changes in fragile, conflict contexts is all very well, but the utility of such efforts only lies in the mechanisms that are put in place to allow programming to consequently adapt.

- Development interventions in fragile contexts require engagement at the political level, and not only at the operational level. Adapting programmes to changing circumstances may well entail engaging with a different set of actors. The political preconditions and implications of such varying interactions need to be recognised and dealt with accordingly. This message, while implicit in the fifth DAC Principle, is in need of further emphasis and elaboration.

- Identifying linkages between field realities and policy decisions lies at the heart of a robust, evidence-based approach to development programming in fragile, conflict contexts.

- Conflict-sensitivity needs to be concrete, operational, and with a particular focus on local ownership. Conflict-sensitivity does not simply mean recognising that things need to be done differently in different contexts. Rather, it entails the establishment of a development machinery that is able to act and react swiftly and effectively, and without the subversion of the do-no-harm principle.

- Diversified collaboration with various types of civil society organisations (far beyond NGOs) is an essential part of a broad-based and pluralistic legitimation of

development activities. Fostering such partnerships in complement to those with "official" bodies is key to an effective strategy.

➢ Whole-of-government approach, as outlined in the fifth DAC Principle, is an essential prerequisite for conflict-sensitive development programming. Internal harmonisation is just as important as donor harmonisation as such: only strong and effective communication channels between country offices, various departments at headquarters, and the multilateral level, can improve both the impact and effectiveness of the aid that is being offered.

➢ Finally, the key element of conflict-sensitive programme management is a flexible recruitment and staff policy. Sensitisation to the subtleties of fragile contexts requires a proactive approach in both the field and at headquarters. A particular change of scenario may require a shift in focus and thus the involvement of expertise that may be found in other departments, government agencies or partner organisations. A policy of staying engaged requires long-term commitment, comprehensive programming, and making the most out of the human and material resources available.' (p. 17)

UNDP

UNDP, 2006, 'Evaluation of UNDP Support to Conflict-Affected Countries' Evaluation Office, UNDP, New York
http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/thematic/conflict/ConflictEvaluation2006.pdf

This report presents the findings and recommendations from an independent evaluation of UNDP policies and operations in conflict-affected countries. The methodology (outlined in full on pp. 18-22) involved primary and secondary research, case studies, a tailored results-oriented survey of 24 countries or areas that are recipients of UNDP assistance, stakeholder interviews, desk research and data collection. The criteria for evaluation were: relevance and positioning; results and effectiveness; efficiency; management; coordination; substantive leadership and credibility.

The main conclusion is that whilst the international community is learning how to stabilize conflicts, the environment is increasingly complex and it has yet to successfully address the structural conditions conducive to conflict. Specific weaknesses of the international role include: failure to provide sufficient protection to civilians; failure to establish legitimate political authority; insufficient engagement with civil society; failure to prioritize development from the outset; failure to mainstream gender; insufficient attention to regional dimensions of conflict; the undermining of national structures through the creation of parallel structures that leave a heavy 'footprint'; and an excessive preoccupation with security (p. 11).

In particular, there has been insufficient emphasis on civil society and gender. Much more effort needs to be devoted to mainstreaming gender into all policies, practices and programmes in conflict affected countries.

The evaluation makes several recommendations to UNDP and the international community, including the following:

➢ Formulate a strategic vision, based on the concept of human security and incorporating the following set of principles:

   o In the long-term, stability depends on respect for human rights. Rule of law, political participation, and livelihoods are critical for conflict prevention and recovery.

   o Legitimate political authority is necessary to ensure human rights are respected. The emphasis on legitimacy implies this is not just a matter of

establishing state institutions; it also requires the building of trust and respect for institutions.

- o Poverty reduction and human development have to be key components of the overall strategic vision and need to be integrated into strategic planning at all stages of a conflict.

- o At all stages of peace-building, it is important to listen to and involve a range of civil society groups, including women and grass-roots organizations, as well as politicians and former warlords/commanders.

- o Conflicts tend to spread over borders and require a regional approach. It is very important to build regional programmes.

- ➢ Enhance coordination and partnerships. Coordination mechanisms should be streamlined and reduced in overall number. Moreover, they should provide substantive, clear-cut, general strategic frameworks for addressing the structural causes of conflict rather than the management of funds. UNDP needs to give much greater priority to civil society groups, both as partners and as guides to the formulation of strategy. Women's groups are particularly important since they are least likely to be pursuing political or sectarian goals. For lasting peace, it is essential for civil society institutions to be encouraged in a manner that ensures public and community oversight.

UNDP should develop clear policies and approaches in recovery and reintegration of war-affected populations, governance and capacity-building, including strengthening parliamentary institutions to broaden participation and inclusion in decision-making; justice and security sector reform; poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods. To improve the effectiveness of implementation it should:

- ➢ Develop the analytical capacity to understand specific conflicts and monitor human security: Build capacity among think tanks and academic institutions in conflict-affected countries so as to have a long-term analysis of the conflict and to collect data on human security.

- ➢ Enhance human resources in conflict-affected countries. This should include developing a clear and effective set of incentives to attract experienced staff to serve in conflict-affected countries.

- ➢ Strengthen internal UNDP decision-making mechanisms. Programmes in conflict-affected countries tend to require more intensive oversight and management than those of non-conflict countries.

UN Peacebuilding Commission

Working Group on Lessons Learned (WGLL), 2008, 'Key Insights, Principles, Good Practices and Emerging Lessons in Peacebuilding: Synthesis Report and Summary of Discussions', Special Session, 12 June
http://www.un.org/peace/peacebuilding/Working%20Group%20on%20Lessons%20Learned/keyInsights/Synthesis%20Report%20with%2012June08%20Meeting%20Conclusions%20Final.pdf

This report compiles key lessons and good practices in peacebuilding based on the work of the Working Group on Lessons Learned (WGLL). Although there is no "one-size-fits-all" model in peacebuilding, there are useful lessons and common principles for effective peacebuilding that have relevance across different contexts. The main challenge lies in calibrating general principles with country-specific realities.

The report lists the following common features of peacebuilding policy and practice across a range of countries:

> 'Situated at the nexus of security, politics and development, peacebuilding requires a holistic and multi-disciplinary approach.

> Peacebuilding is a long-term investment and needs a long-term strategy to address sources of conflict.

> Holistic and strategic thinking needs to be accompanied by focused and prioritized attention to particular conflict risks (e.g. youth unemployment) and issue areas (e.g. return of IDPs) that are context-specific.

> The same factors (such as natural resources, displaced populations or elections) can serve as drivers of conflict as well as instruments of peacebuilding. Thus, peacebuilding depends on sound analysis as the basis for appropriate action.

> Peacebuilding requires national will, ownership and capacity to resolve problems without recourse to violence. It needs to take place at the national, subnational and local levels and involves the government, civil society and the private sector.

> External actors (including the United Nations, the international financial institutions, bilateral and multilateral donors, regional organizations, international NGOs and the private sector) play a critical role in peacebuilding.

> Predictable and sustained provision of financial and non-financial resources is essential for peacebuilding.

> Beyond specific risks and sectoral priorities (such as national reconciliation, rule of law, economic recovery) there are cross-cutting issues (specifically gender and human rights) that need special attention.

> Peacebuilding often involves difficult trade-offs, tensions and dilemmas across issue areas which need to be reconciled (e.g. the imperatives for peace and justice as well as security and development).

> Coherent strategies and integrated policies are necessary but not sufficient. Peacebuilding often falters due to faulty implementation resulting from lack of coordination, capacity and resources.

> Regional and transnational factors influence conflict dynamics as well as peacebuilding'. (pp. 4-5)

The report summarises the key principles and elements of peacebuilding as:

> 'Specificity of peacebuilding: in order to address drivers of conflict that are context-specific, peacebuilding strategies have to be informed by accurate analysis of country realities.

> National ownership: the primary responsibility and ownership for peace consolidation rests with the Government and the people of the host country.

> Strengthening national capacities: the international partners' focus to get things done quickly and effectively should not undermine efforts over the medium- and long-term to strengthen national capacities for conflict management.

> Holistic approach: Since peacebuilding encompasses security, development and human rights, the linkages between them need to be adequately recognized and prioritized.

> Ongoing support for political consolidation: constructive political processes are essential to peace consolidation.

- Mutual accountability: sustainable peacebuilding requires a strong partnership based on mutual respect and accountability between the Government and the people of the host country and their international partners.

- Sustained engagement: peacebuilding is a long-term process requiring sustained and predictable engagement from all stakeholders. Despite the necessity to implement projects that provide tangible peace dividends, sufficient attention should be given to the sustainability of efforts.

- Effective coordination: to avoid duplication as well as gaps in peacebuilding, international, national and local stakeholders need to act in a coherent and mutually reinforcing manner. Existing mechanisms, such as post-conflict needs assessments, integrated peacebuilding strategies, poverty reduction strategies and monitoring and tracking mechanisms, are important instruments for effective coordination.

- Tangible peace dividends and quick wins: while peacebuilding requires time, early provision of tangible peace dividends for the population and quick win projects are necessary to build confidence and generate support.

- Integrating a gender perspective: men and women are affected differently by conflict. Any peacebuilding strategy should address these differences, especially to ensure the end of impunity for gender-based violence, while contributing to gender equality and supporting women's full participation in and ownership of peacebuilding and recovery.

- Encouraging a regional approach: an effective peacebuilding strategy takes into account the regional dimensions of a conflict and provides a regional and/or international solution, in consultation with relevant governments and non-state actors.

- Prioritization, sequencing and timing: when building peace in societies ravaged by violent conflict, everything is considered a priority. However, to use the limited resources most effectively, host governments and international actors need to agree on key priorities and to sequence their implementation.' (13)

Specifically in relation to the cross-cutting issue of gender, key lessons are:

- 'Equal participation of women and men in peacebuilding processes, including peace negotiations and DDR programmes can strengthen local ownership and contribute to greater equality between men and women in post-conflict societies.

- Women are frequently prevented from assuming decision-making positions and participating in the full range of post-conflict processes by the effects, or continued threat, of the violence committed against them. Gender-based violence will never be properly addressed until there are sufficiently high numbers of women in decision-making positions at the peace table, or in post-conflict national and local governments.

- The existence of legal frameworks and policies would not end violence by themselves—implementation, enforcement, and resources are also critical to ensure the end of impunity for gender-based crimes. The following steps can be pursued to greater ensure implementation: a) results-based reporting; b) clearly outlined responsibilities of all national entities; c) engagement of civil society; d) greater gender focus in peacebuilding in collaboration with regional organizations.

- Economic empowerment, in particular ensuring land and property rights, is critical to ensuring women's meaningful participation. Women's agency as generators of socio-economic development and as political leaders in local and national reconciliation must be acknowledged alongside their needs as victims.

- ➢ Gender mainstreaming is effective in the preparatory phase of programming and planning but less so in the implementation and monitoring phase.
- ➢ Serious gaps in terms of research capacity, data availability, institutional mechanisms, targeted programming and financial resources are serious obstacles to overcoming women's full participation in peacebuilding.'

World Bank

World Bank Independent Evaluation Group, 2006, 'Recommendations', chapter 5 in Engaging with Fragile Situations: An IEG review of World Bank support to Low-Income Countries Under Stress, World Bank, Washington
http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/37/40/37418181.pdf

This chapter summarises the conclusions of the review of World Bank policy in Low Income Countries Under Stress. It outlines the following 'lessons of experience', relevant both for the Bank and other donors:

- ➢ 'Staying engaged is only a means to an end and needs to be quickly followed by a clear and relevant reform agenda in LICUS. In the absence of a clear and relevant reform agenda, early successes of engagement may be short lived and contribute little to the achievement of country strategy objectives.
- ➢ Country ownership and absorptive capacity constraints apply as much to knowledge products as to financial products. The involvement of country counterparts in the Bank's analytical work remains limited to administrative aspects, with much less country client participation in selecting topics and undertaking analysis. This thereby reduces national buy-in.
- ➢ Commissioning and consuming—not necessarily producing—good political analysis is critical for LICUS donors. The objective of a country team should be to commission or consume (not necessarily produce) analysis that is directly relevant to and usable in the development of a strategy. In LICUS situations, especially in those environments where speed is of the essence, donors need to ensure that existing political analysis is mined before commissioning a new analysis.
- ➢ The main focus of donor efforts needs to be on helping staff internalize political analysis in strategy design and implementation. The bank has inadequately reflected such analysis in its strategy. Political risk analysis, Structural analysis, analysis of day-to-day politics, Analysis of the history of reform in the country as well as neighboring countries can all be useful.
- ➢ In complex LICUS environments, where virtually every sector requires reform, appropriate sequencing of reforms and sufficient time to implement them are crucial for achieving results without overwhelming limited LICUS capacity. While donors must strive for collective donor selectivity, this is far from being achieved.
- ➢ Capacity development and governance programs need to start early even in post-conflict LICUS. Immediately following the cessation of conflict Donor coordination cannot succeed without a common vision and purpose among donors—when donor objectives cannot be fully harmonized, it is important that they at least be complementary. The Bank's approach has not fully recognized the differing motivations of donors for engaging with LICUS.
- ➢ Field presence alone is insufficient for effective country strategy implementation. It needs to be complemented by adequate communication between field and headquarters donor agency staff, as well as an adequate number of field staff with

the appropriate authority and skills. Sharing experiences—both positive and negative— is essential for learning, but doing so effectively requires a receptive institutional environment and management support.

➢ Effective communication is essential to ensure country acceptance of donor approaches for LICUS and to temper unrealistic country expectations about what can be achieved, especially immediately after the cessation of conflict. Better communication of donors' objectives and approaches for LICUS will be needed to ensure country buy-in and to prevent disillusionment among stakeholders about what can be achieved in a specific period of time.

➢ Better operational guidance is needed for tailoring donor approaches to the special conditions of LICUS. The LICUS Initiative has raised awareness of the need to act differently in LICUS, but the Bank and other donors have yet to identify precisely how to do this.' (p.54)

3. Reviews of coherence in conflict affected and fragile states

3C Conference, 2009, '3C Roadmap: Improving Results in Conflict and Fragile Situations', 3C conference, 19-20 March, Geneva, Switzerland
http://www.3c-conference2009.ch/en/Home/media/3C%20Roadmap.pdf

This roadmap, from the 2009 3C (coherent, coordinated and complementary) conference, aims to guide donors towards a 3C approach to improve the effectiveness of support to countries and communities affected by conflict and fragility. It argues coherence, coordination and complementarity require both Whole of Government and Whole of System approaches. 3C is understood as collaborative and mutually reinforcing approaches by international actors and partner countries, including civil society, to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their support to peace, security, and development in situations of conflict and fragility.

The conference agreed that the following principles should be given particular attention, and makes recommendations on how to operationslise them (see pp. 2-4):

➢ Strengthen national ownership and national capacities: By bringing together partner country authorities, civil society, and relevant stakeholders at all levels to jointly assess needs, analyse root causes of conflict, identify priorities to strengthen national and local ownership, and contributing to confidence building and reconciliation. Give priority to strengthening partner countries' institutions and capacities at all levels, including the local level, to enable the state to fulfill its core functions. Support to these areas will in turn strengthen citizens' confidence, trust and engagement with state institutions.

➢ Respond in a timely and appropriate manner to the evolving situation in country: By encouraging regularly updated joint assessments and analysis of challenges and trends, including crisis and risks dynamics. Joint assessments should initially be light and rapid, and should involve those responsible for security, political and economic affairs, as well as those responsible for development and humanitarian assistance. A critical path of priority actions, their sequencing and how they mutually reinforce each other should be identified.

➢ Strengthen the mutual accountability of partner countries and the international community: By maintaining a continuous dialogue between the partner country and the international community to ensure shared objectives are reflected in appropriate mutual accountability mechanisms, associated with mutually endorsed benchmarks, and submitted to regular mutual reviews.

- ➢ Reduce the burden of aid management on partner countries capacities: By simplifying and harmonising aid management to the extent possible, reducing the number of aid coordination mechanisms and aid channels, and agreeing common business practices. Each donor should try to adapt its representation in the field in line with partner countries' needs, and define clear lines of authority for its various activities. Practical approaches could take the form of joint offices, agreed divisions of labour, delegated cooperation agreements, multi-donor trust-funds and common reporting and financial requirements.

- ➢ Make efficient use of limited resources, to avoid duplication and funding gaps: By providing flexible, rapid and predictable long-term funding, including pooled funding where appropriate. Develop and maintain a clear understanding of all commitments and investments made with a view to optimizing their utilization based on comparative advantages. Avoid duplication of efforts and bridge critical gaps.

- ➢ Improve and deepen joint learning and increase our capacities: By promoting more systematic joint learning, training and capacity development activities across agencies within donor governments, as well as among the various international organizations operating in conflict and fragile situations. Carry out joint monitoring and evaluation of activities, including real-time evaluations, more systematically, to the extent possible. These joint efforts should involve all relevant departments/ministries/agencies of both the international community the partner country and civil society.

Patrick, S. and Brown, K., 2007, 'Greater Than the Sum of Its Parts?: Assessing "Whole of Government" Approaches to Failed States', International Peace Academy, New York http://www.cgdev.org/doc/books/weakstates/GREATER_THAN_THE_SUM%20E-Book2.pdf

This study examines efforts to promote policy coherence toward fragile and conflict-affected states by seven donor Governments: the UK, the US, Canada, Australia, France, Germany and Sweden. It finds that coherence is a 'work in progress', and makes the following recommendations to donors:

- ➢ Commit to open dialogue, both internally and with other donor governments, about how to balance the multiple goals and objectives involved in working in fragile states.

- ➢ Develop a unified country strategy for each fragile state in which engagement is planned. This strategy should drive a comprehensive assistance strategy, with flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances.

- ➢ A starting point for policy coherence must be an institutionalised, integrated system for early warning and assessment, and an evaluation of the impact of donor interventions.

- ➢ Give high-level political commitment, guidance and departmental leadership to advance this agenda within donor governments. Without buy-in at senior levels, even well intentioned co-ordinating units or mechanisms can be sidelined and prove ineffective.

- ➢ Devote a greater share of foreign assistance to fragile states, and create common pools to stimulate cross-departmental co-operation.

- ➢ Ensure that the development of integrated fragile state policies within donor governments does not preclude harmonisation of international efforts and alignment with host government priorities.

4. Guidance on evaluation methodology

OECD DAC, 2008, 'Guidance on Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities', OECD, Paris
http://www.oecd.org/secure/pdfDocument/0,2834,en_21571361_34047972_39774574_1_1_1_1,00.pdf

This OECD guidance offers some principles and criteria for evaluating policies, programmes or projects in conflict-affected and fragile states. It advocates for evaluation at the strategic level looking at the interconnections between strategies, policies, programmes and projects. Overall, conflict prevention and peacebuilding policies, programmes and projects lack coherence with each other, as well as with an overall country strategy.

The following evaluation criteria are put forward for evaluating policies, programmes or projects:

➢ Relevance: The extent to which the objectives and activities of the intervention(s) respond to the needs of the peacebuilding process.

➢ Effectiveness: Whether an intervention has reached its intended objectives, with respect to its immediate peacebuilding environment, in a timely fashion.

➢ Impact: Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by an intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. For country strategies, policies, multi-programme or joint evaluations: What are the combined and cumulative effects, primary and secondary, direct and indirect, positive and negative, intended and unintended, immediate and long-term, short-term and lasting, of the multiple efforts? How do these relate, in non-trivial ways, to the conflict or peace process and its key elements?

➢ Sustainability: The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major assistance has been completed. This includes the probability of continued long-term benefits and resilience to risk over time.

➢ Efficiency: This criterion is used to assess how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results. An evaluator might ask: How does this particular programme or policy approach compare in costs to other options for achieving the same goals?

➢ Coherence (and co-ordination): In the conflict prevention and peacebuilding contexts, a policy, programme or project cannot be assessed in isolation. What may seem appropriate from the point of view of one activity may not be appropriate from the point of view of the system as a whole.

➢ Linkages: The connections between activities and policies at different levels and across sectors.

➢ Coverage: The coverage criterion may be used for assessing policy-level conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. It can be assessed within the conflict in question (by looking at the coverage of a target population or geographical area) or global level (by looking at how much attention is being paid to various conflicts). An evaluator might ask: Do donor policies effectively cover all (potential) conflicts? How do contributions to one particular conflict region or country – as opposed to another – relate to need? Are there "hidden or forgotten conflicts" that receive little or no international attention? (pp. 40-44).

5. Additional resources

Donor policy papers

CIDA, 1996, 'Policy for CIDA on Human Rights, Democratization and Good Governance', Public Works and Government Services, CIDA, Gatineau, Quebec
http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/acdi-cida/acdi-cida.nsf/eng/REN-218124821-P93

GTZ, 2002, 'Peace-Building, Crisis Prevention and Conflict Management: Technical Cooperation in the Context of Crises, Conflicts and Disasters', Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH, Berlin
http://www.gtz.de/de/dokumente/en-crisis-prevention-and-conflict-management.pdf

MOFA 2006, 'Efforts Aimed at Peace and Stability in the International Community', (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan Diplomatic Bluebook, MOFA, Tokyo
http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/2006/10.pdf

NZAID, 2005, 'Preventing Conflict and building Peace', New Zealand's International Aid and Development Agency, Wellington
http://www.nzaid.govt.nz/library/docs/nzaid-peace-policy.pdf

Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004, 'Peacebuilding: A Development Perspective, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo
http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/UD/Vedlegg/Utvikling/peace-engelsk.pdf

SDC, 2003, 'Peacebuilding: SDC Guidelines', SDC, Bern
http://www.sdc.admin.ch/en/Home/Themes/Conflict_prevention_and_transformation

USAID 2005, 'Fragile States Strategy', USAID, Washington, DC
http://www.usaid.gov/policy/2005_fragile_states_strategy.pdf

6. Further information

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Websites visited
ALNAP, USAID Evalweb, UNDP Evaluation, OECD Evaluation Resource Centre, UN Peacebuilding Commission, Aideffectiveness.org, OECD DAC, CIDA, SIDA, USAID, GTZ, NZAID, NORAD, World Bank, JICA, SDC, MandE, Accra 3rd High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, GSDRC, Google.