

Drivers of Change: Refining the Analytical Framework

Part 1: Conceptual and theoretical issues

'If we don't as donors understand the politics of the places where we work, then our task will be all the more difficult ... I think making progress is about making politics work. Politics determines the choices we make. Politics determines what kind of society we wish to live in and create and hand on to the next generation. And it will be politics that will help to make poverty history'. (The Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn, 2nd February 2006).

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Summary

A *THE DRIVERS OF CHANGE STUDIES*

- 1 In recent years it has become widely recognised that paths and outcomes of development policies are profoundly, if not primarily, influenced by political processes and practices. The ‘Drivers of Change’ (DoC) work within DFID was an initiative started in the early 2000s to sharpen understanding of the deeper structural and institutional factors which frame the political context within which individuals and organisations act. Commissioned by country offices, more than 20 studies have been completed and more are being prepared. This present paper is the first of three which have been commissioned by The Effective States Team in Policy Division to evaluate, refine and extend the analytical framework for this work and, in particular, to deepen the *political* understanding and analysis of development processes.
- 2 The DoC studies were not undertaken in terms of a consistently deployed methodology or set of conceptual categories. Rather, each developed its own approach but most sought to explore the relations between structures, institutions and agents in order to identify the possibilities and room for manoeuvre for reformers.
- 3 Despite the absence of a consistent approach, the studies have yielded rich and textured detail of the broad economic, social and political characteristics of each country. Though there is inevitably great variety in each of the substantive accounts, together they reveal that some or all of the following features were common in most.

- Pervasive forms of patrimonialism, patron-client relations, crony-ism and *caciquismo*, understood collectively as the prevalence of personalized politics and personalized relations of power.
- ‘Corruption’, state capture, elite domination and various forms of ‘shadow states’.
- Personalistic political parties; weak, divided, deferential or impotent civil society organizations (though some show potential for exercising pressure).
- Limited political ‘demand’ for far-reaching reform to improve conditions for growth, governance and service delivery.
- Limited or non-existent ‘political will’, though this was not further defined.
- Weak, superficial or dubious commitment to any clear overarching national economic strategy, project or set of socio-economic goals for the promotion of growth and the elimination of poverty.
- Low levels of ‘stateness’ (Fukuyama, 2004) with often demoralised and politicised bureaucracies, dubiously independent judiciaries and militaries.

4 Given these characteristics, few of the studies gave reason for surprise at the slow, stalled or compromised programmes of reform and often weak growth and poverty reduction performance.

5 The implications of these findings tend to confirm strongly the primacy of politics in development and the need to encourage the emergence of political institutions, processes and practices through which developmentally progressive programmes and policies can be devised, implemented and sustained.

6 Nonetheless, despite the considerable structural and institutional constraints, a number of the studies identified possible and potential ‘drivers’ or agents of change in the form of some groups and organized interests in civil society, NGOs, pockets in the mass media, religious

groups, trades unions and reform-minded elements amongst the political, bureaucratic and professional elites.

- 7 However, what is required is a more intensive focus on the *political dynamics of change* (both positive and negative). And although rich in detail, not many of the studies deployed conceptual and theoretical tools to analyse the political practices and trace their pathological relations with economic activities and institutions. Only a very general understanding of ‘political economy’ was employed.
- 8 It is therefore important to develop a much clearer understanding of the kinds of socio-political and economic circumstance which would help agents of change, including donors, to prosper. In order to develop this side of the work, greater attention in future studies will need to be given to conceptual, theoretical and comparative understandings of the political factors which shape change and development - and the commitment to change and development.

B *EXTENDING AND DEEPENING THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK*

In taking this work forward, the next phase of DoC will require an analytical framework built around the following key points:

- 1 It is important to recognise that, historically, the politics of development has not followed a single path. Different historical and structural contexts – economic, social, political, regional and international – have led to different trajectories and different paces of change, driven by different kinds of agent deploying different institutional arrangements.
- 2 But in all, the primacy of politics in shaping developmental paths and outcomes has been clear. Whereas earlier work in the field of institution building and governance has often had a strong technical or administrative flavour to it, DoC work needs to be understood as part of an inextricably connected set of *political* questions.
- 3 At the core of these questions is the central issue concerning the distribution and control of the sources and forms of formal and informal

power, and how they interact across different institutional spheres to promote or hinder developmental policies and practices.

- 4 Politics in this context needs to be understood as consisting of *all the activities of cooperation, negotiation and conflict in the use, production and distribution of resources* through the interaction of formal and informal institutions and distribution/circuits of private and public power. While formal decision-making in public policy, around public institutions, *may* be the most important expression of politics (especially in established, stable and modern polities), politics is nonetheless a process found much more widely, in families, farms, firms and factories; in churches, NGOs, aid and other bureaucracies; in state and stateless societies; across sectors (whether agriculture or banking); in international agencies and in refugee camps – and in the relations between them.
- 5 However, both conceptually and in practice, politics needs to be understood to operate at two distinct but related levels.
 - The first relates to the ‘rules of the game’, that is the agreed institutional arrangements through which politics happens. Formal institutions specify the rules governing competition for, distribution, use and control of power and the procedures for decision-making and accountability. But these are usually sustained by supportive informal institutional rules. For example, a cardinal informal rule is that where power is determined through elections, *winners* do not use their power to undermine or threaten the interests of the losers so much that either the losers do not abide by the result or withdraw from the underlying electoral contract. Equally the *losers* must accept the outcome, knowing they can try again later. Without consensus about such rules, formal and informal, politics is prone to instability, conflict and violence and, as a result, developmental processes are compromised, to say the least.
 - The second relates to the ‘games within the rules’, that is the competitive interaction of interests and ideas, parties and programmes, within the established institutional rules of the game.

A central problem revealed in the DoC studies, and in comparative work more generally, is that many developing countries do not have such sets of agreed and legitimate institutional rules, but often competing and inconsistent sets of rules, some formal and some informal, which undermine development processes.

6 Political scientists have developed a variety of frameworks of analysis, each anchored in a particular conception of politics and the political process. Many (but not all) of these understandings of politics presuppose stable rules of the game and stable polities. It is important, however, to recognise that the *politics of development* is a special case of politics. This is politics concerned with establishing the fundamental institutions for development and this means *transformative* processes, whether fast or slow. The real challenge for the politics of development is therefore about how *stable* political institutions can be formed and maintained which can at the same time generate economic institutions which promote and sustain difficult economic *change*.

7 This understanding of the politics of development can be stated more simply. If politics in general is understood as being constituted by all the processes of conflict, negotiation and cooperation in the use, production and distribution of resources, the *politics of development* is perhaps best understood as the set of processes whereby people *change the way they use, produce and distribute* resources to enhance growth and improve welfare. It may be fast and it may be slow, but one should never underestimate the complexity – and likely turbulence – of this. This idea boils down to two simple propositions which summarise usefully the way in which political and economic institutions and activities overlap and interlock:

- *When people change the way they use, produce and distribute resources, they also change their (social and political) relations – relations of power - with each other.*
- *When people change their political and social (power) relations with each other, they usually change the way they use, produce and distribute resources.*

These causal processes can flow in both directions and loop back to impact on each other, so that economic change has political effects and political change (specifically, change in the distribution of power) has economic effects. There are plenty of examples of both, but it is the dynamic of their interaction that needs most attention. And it is not difficult to see, therefore, why the political processes of development are so contentious. Deeper understanding of these relations should help to clarify why ‘political will’ is best understood not as a virtue possessed by some and not others, but an institutional question and a function of urgency or crisis, often brought about by internal or external threat.

8 If future DoC work is to capture the dynamics of how these processes happen, may happen or may be helped to happen in developmentally progressive ways, an extended and refined framework of analysis is

required. This will need to draw on and adapt both the developmental lessons of comparative history and the conceptual and theoretical insights of political science.

The attempt to develop such a framework will constitute the next phase of this work. It is a hugely challenging task. But it is hoped that such work will also help DFID to adopt more robust theories and understandings of the politics of development which can inform policy and practice and facilitate engagement with the political drivers of change.

Introduction

Given the Secretary of State's comments, above, the critical question is: *how* can donors understand better and help to promote the politics that will facilitate the emergence of the economic institutions and circumstances that will make poverty history, and what can be done to hasten the process?

In the light of that central question, this paper is the first of three reports commissioned by The Effective States team within DFID which aim to deepen and refine the political analytical underpinnings for the Drivers of Change work (see Terms of Reference in Appendix 1). This present document has four central objectives:

- To explore, evaluate and develop the assumptions, concepts and theoretical approaches deployed in the DoC work thus far.
- To deepen and extend thinking about politics as a central aspect of developmental processes.
- To explore approaches to the analysis of the politics of development as a special case of politics in general.
- To provide a conceptual and theoretical platform for designing a usable analytical framework for DoC work. This will be the focus of the next paper.

The two subsequent papers will (a) suggest in greater detail a theoretical and analytical framework to help inform DoC and other governance work in DFID; and (b) provide notes of guidance for practitioners and policy-makers.

This study draws on the existing stable of DoC studies¹ and ancillary reports (such as Unsworth, 2005; Evans, 2004 and 2004a; Moore, 2003 and 2005; Grindle, 2004 and 2005; Khan, 2005), on-going work on Drivers of Change, discussions with Effective

¹ To date these include Ghana, Pakistan, Zambia, Kenya, Bangladesh, India, Nigeria, Georgia, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malawi, Kyrgyzstan, Uganda, Yemen, Colombia, Bolivia, Russia, Peru, Ukraine.

States Team members and authors of some of the DoC reports,² and on a wider literature in political science, especially on the politics of economic development. Throughout, the central purpose of the paper is to suggest that:

- Thinking politically about development is one of the necessary conditions for donors to assist in promoting the conditions for growth, poverty reduction, institutional enhancement and improved patterns of governance.
- The drivers of change work is best understood as an emerging discourse and broad methodology for analysing and understanding the essentially contested and unavoidably *political* nature of development.
- We need to work towards a clearer theoretical framework for analysing and engaging with the political dynamics of development and change.
- It is important in this work to recognise that the modern politics of development and change is a special and complex form of politics in general.

By its very nature, this work is therefore neither an empirical country study nor a comparative cross-country analysis. Rather, it is aimed essentially at preparing the ground for developing conceptual and analytical tools which will enhance ways of thinking politically about development processes, and which will provide pointers for operational strategies derived from such analyses.

² I have benefited greatly from discussions and communications with David Booth, Diana Cammack, Alex Duncan, Alison Evans, Chris Pycroft and Sue Unsworth, and also with Ann Freckleton and Piers Harrison (of the Effective States team). I am very grateful to them all for their time and thoughts. However, the usual disclaimer applies and I remain solely responsible for the contents of this paper.

Background

.1 The ‘Drivers of Change’ (DoC) work had its roots in the late 1990s and early 2000s in a growing interest within DFID (and beyond) in the *politics of development* in emerging economies (Unsworth, 2005). It is important to see this as part of a wider and evolving concern in both academic and policy communities with an inextricably connected set of questions about governance, institutions, democratization and state-building in the processes of development. Interest in these questions was not altogether new. Concern with governance can be traced back to the World Bank’s report on Africa which argued that ‘(U)nderlying the litany of Africa’s development problems is a crisis of governance’ (World Bank, 1989: 60). This was interpreted mainly to mean that institutions were weak. But concern with improving institutions - largely through ‘institution-building’ programmes of various kind – tended (in the words of the initial DFID ‘Approach Paper’ on DoC) ‘to be fairly technical’ (DFID, June 2003: 15). A similar point is made by Thomas Carothers (2002: 17) in his discussion of the related matter of governance reform.

However, it was becoming clear that governance and institutional weaknesses were not simply matters of technical or administrative deficiency and could not intelligently or sensibly be evacuated from the politics and political processes which established and sustained them. This realisation has led to a growing recognition of the *centrality, if not primacy, of politics, power and the state*³ in shaping the institutional environment which in turn shapes development outcomes (Kenny and Williamson, 2000; IMF, 2005: 126-127; Levy and Manning, n.d; Dahl-

³ As I shall suggest later, one of the areas for future work in the DoC discourse is to enhance clarity about these central concepts, so as to deepen understanding about the forms, particulars and relations of each in different developmental contexts.

Østergaard, et al, 2005: 21).⁴ Work on *The Future State* at IDS, on *Crisis States* at the LSE, plus the new Research Programme Consortium on *Improving Institutions for Pro-Poor Growth*, is indicative of the gathering momentum of interest in questions which had largely been extruded from development policy concerns through much of the post-war era.⁵ Moreover, informal discussions with practitioners about slow or weakly performing aid instruments in all continents has almost inevitably turned to the political constraints affecting projects and programmes. So, in addition to policy and academic work, there was also a widespread intuitive understanding that making sense of the politics of a country was increasingly important.⁶

- .2 The DoC activity, which can be traced to the first study on Bangladesh (Duncan, et al, 2002)⁷, was thus an initiative within DFID that sought to formalise and take forward this line of thinking. It did so by encouraging country offices and others to commission and undertake analytical and explanatory work which would enable them to take better account of the historical and political contexts which have a bearing on the outcomes of plans and programmes. Whatever may be the limitations of these studies,

⁴ As Douglass North observes in his new book (North, 2005: 6): 'The political-economic structure of the society and the way it evolves is the key to whose choices matter and how they conspire to shape policies'. This view is echoed, indeed amplified, in the recent work by Acemoglu, Robinson and Johnson (2006) who emphasise 'that a theory of why different countries have different economic institutions must be based on politics, on the structure of political power, and the nature of political institutions'.

⁵ This extrusion of the political dimension was in large part a consequence of the global confrontation of the Cold War from the 1950s onwards, with donors not wishing to antagonise or lose friends, followers and allies, irrespective of their politics, just when 'development' issues were emerging on the international agenda. In effectively acknowledging this form of patron-client relationship in geo-political terms, one post-war American President (reputedly Truman) is alleged to have said of some of the more odious regimes which the US was supporting: 'They may be sons of bitches, but they are *our* sons of bitches'. There were, of course, other reasons why politics has been left out of the analysis of development and the calculations of aid effectiveness. Sensitivities about issues of sovereignty, the domination of economists in donor agencies, scepticism about how political questions could be operationalised and, perhaps, a rather narrow interpretation of the World Bank's Articles of Agreement – which forbade political criteria being deployed in lending decisions – are some of the reasons.

⁶ This was certainly the view of many of those involved in writing the DoC studies and of those who were interviewed in the course of those studies.

⁷ It was in the context of preparing this study that the phrase 'Drivers of Change' was first deployed (Personal communications with Sue Unsworth and Alex Duncan).

it is important to state that together they constitute a formidable body of work that provides very valuable insights into the political constraints and opportunities in a range of countries.⁸

- .3 The DoC initiative is best thought of as a discourse and, like all discourses, entails a broad set of assumptions, a broad method of enquiry and a range of implications for action with plenty of internal variety. As the three initial background papers, the substantive DoC studies themselves and subsequent reviews of the studies have shown (DFID, June 2003; DFID April, 2004 and DFID, July 2004Dahl-Østergaard, et al, 2005; McLeod, May 2005: Annexes), no specific hypotheses were established, no theoretical orthodoxy or fixed methodology was prescribed and no conceptual consistency required.⁹ On the contrary, given the decentralized structure of DFID and the absence of an agreed theoretical view within it, the DoC initiative adopted the principle: ‘let a hundred flowers bloom, let a hundred schools of thought contend’. The terms of reference for each study and the direction taken were thus left very much up to those involved at country level. So, for instance, the authors of the Pakistan study stated that the ‘overall purpose of the Drivers of Change exercise is to determine the principal levers of and impediments to pro-poor policy change in Paktistan’ (Nadvi and Robinson, March 2004: 1),¹⁰ whereas the Ghana study team insisted that it was *not* about ‘identifying “change agents”’, but about ‘the relationship between agents, institutions and features of the structural context that countries face’ (Booth, et al, May, 2004: viii). Despite this diversity of understanding and purpose, there is much to be said for this non-directive approach which, as

⁸ The full set can be found at <http://www.grc-dfid.org.uk/>

⁹ This lack of methodological consistency was given as the reason why some reviewers considered that the studies varied ‘considerably’ in quality (Khan, 2005: 5).

¹⁰ The Kyrgyzstan study has also sought to identify possible drivers of change, which it suggests include the media, civil society, some elements in the private sector and some line ministries (Lewis, March 2006), as did the Bangladesh study (Duncan, et al, June 2002) and the first Nigeria study (Oxford Policy Management, May 2003).

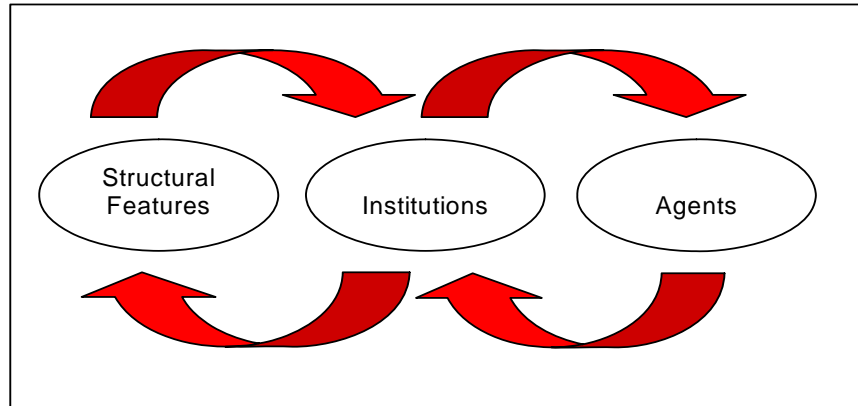
indicated earlier, yielded some very useful and valuable information on individual countries for DFID offices.¹¹

.4 Nonetheless, although there were no explicit guidelines, a broad set of assumptions *did* inform and influence the DoC work and a broad analytic or conceptual framework (better thought of as a set of useful conceptual starting points) was set up from early on. These consisted of three main elements:

- First, it was thought conceptually useful to distinguish between two broad sets of factors which were collectively called ‘drivers of change’.¹² They were conceptualised as: (i) deep, long-term structural or institutional processes of social, economic, technological change (the context); and (ii) ‘reform minded organizations and individuals’, the agents or champions of change (DFID, June 2003: 20). The Ghana study (Booth et al, 2004) was particularly clear in emphasising and illustrating the importance of distinguishing between the influence of ‘deep institutional patterns’ in Ghanaian society and politics, on the one hand, and the room for manoeuvre and change by agents, on the other hand.
- Second, a stylized diagrammatic framework was formulated, which crops up visually (though not always analytically) in a number of the studies. It sought to offer three main conceptual categories (structural features, institutions and agents) for organizing information, with causal relations running in both directions between these categories, thus:

¹¹ One of the reviews of the DoC/Power analyses, commissioned by the OECD, suggested that one of the main functions of the studies was to ‘promote internal learning’ (Dahl-Østergaard, et al, 2005: ii).

¹² Although the phrase ‘drivers of change’, and the work associated with it, has a strongly practical and operational focus, it echoes what is known more widely in social theory as the ‘agency of change’ and ‘structure-agency’ debate. Two good studies in this latter field are Callinicos (1987) and Hay and Wincott (1988). Callinicos, in particular, offers three useful forms of agency, ranging from individual action through to collective transformative social action, the latter being also a theme also in Mushtaq Khan’s review (2005) of the Governance Target Strategy paper.



Structural features in this diagram were understood as natural and human resources, economic and social structure and other non-institutional factors; *institutions* were understood in standard Northian terms (North, 1990) as rules of the game structuring behaviour; and *agents* were understood as organizations or individuals pursuing particular interests.

- In addition, the DoC work sought to deepen understanding of ‘the political economy of change’. (DFID, April 2004). Though never defined clearly and seldom made explicit in the studies¹³, an early DFID paper suggested that ‘political economy’ meant ‘vested interests and power in a given country and the incentives that exist for powerful groups to act in ways that will lead to poverty reduction’ (DFID, April 2004: 2).

1.5 There is much to be said for these as a set of starting points for diagnostic narratives of the predicaments and problems of individual countries, and the studies yielded some useful empirical generalization about political and institutional factors. These have been well summarised in a number of reports (for instance, see Dahl-Østergaard, et al, 2005; McLeod, May 2005; Conway and Rosser, 2002) and so there is no need to repeat those here. But, almost without exception, in the studies ranging from Bangladesh to Bolivia and from Kyrgyzstan to Zambia, all stress the prevalence in the politics of those countries of the following features.

¹³ The first Nigeria DOC study provided a useful summary of the contending schools of analysis within political economy (Oxford Policy Management, May 2003: 19-32).

- A variety of forms of patron-client relations, neo-patrimonialism and prebendialism, systemic patronage or cronyism and ‘big manism’ (the Tanzanian study is particularly clear on this). These, along with the Latin American phenomenon known as *caciquismo* (Pansters, 2005), are pronounced in the politics of these societies.¹⁴
- ‘Corruption’, state capture, wealthy and/or dominant elites determined to hold on to state power, the politicization of businesses and the phenomenon of ‘shadow states’ (or polities).
- Personalistic political parties (80 registered in Kyrgyzstan, 30 in the 2003 Nigerian election, for instance); weak, divided, deferential (Malawi) or impotent civil society organizations, (though some show potential for exercising pressure).
- Limited political ‘demand’ for rapid or realistic institutional reform to improve conditions for growth, governance and service delivery.
- And limited or non-existent ‘political will’ although the notion of ‘political will’ is not adequately defined.
- The relative absence of any clear overarching national economic strategy, project or set of socio-economic goals (other than in rhetoric) (especially noticeable in the Bangladesh, Pakistan, Malawian and Ghanaian studies)
- Low levels of ‘stateness’ (Fukuyama, 2004), with demoralised and politicised bureaucracies, dubiously independent judiciaries and (sometimes) militaries.

1.6 It is important to qualify these somewhat bleak generalizations by pointing to the many internal ‘drivers’ of change and reform which are identified in the studies and which include a varying mix of media, churches, civil

¹⁴ They represent a cluster of comparable personalized political practices, characterised by personalized leadership and personalized power (Clapham, 1982). The essence of these relations - sometimes in a more less extended chain – is that a superior person (patron) provides some good, service, protection or opportunity to an inferior person (client, follower) who in return gives support (votes, labour, loyalty). This was the essence of what was described as ‘pork barrelling’ in the US South. It is very important to stress that it is extremely unhelpful to see or think of this cluster of political institutional arrangements as in some sense a set of aberrations, as uncivilised or immoral practices which deviate from some universal norm. In one form or another, such practices have been the dominant form of politics through most of human history, were pervasive in pre-modern European and other polities and both pre-date and parallel the formal characteristics of the modern state. Moreover, few modern political systems have entirely eliminated all aspects of such practices from their procedures, though their political forms and extent vary considerably.

society organizations, trade unions, business and professional associations, bureaucratic reformers and dedicated commissions (such as anti-corruption agencies) to mention but a few. But, despite these, the net and cumulative effect of all the studies is to underline and emphasise a point which has for some time been well-understood off-agenda. Almost irrespective of which economic policies and strategies have been adopted or urged upon developing countries (for instance concerning property rights, transaction costs, regulation, privatization and marketization, tariff reduction), they all commonly appear to founder on the rocks of politics and governance. Moreover, even despite the formal ‘ownership’ of poverty-reduction strategies, many of the reports (especially from Africa, South Asia and Latin America) are profoundly sceptical not only about the level of *demand* for growth, but also about the *authenticity* of such claims to ownership and the *reliability* of commitment to it by political and bureaucratic elites. This is explained with reference to the prevailing coalitions and patterns of interest, ideas and power in the politics of these societies.

Evaluating the Conceptual Framework

- 1.7 The approach also raised a number of difficulties which will need to be addressed in future work. Perhaps the major problem with the framework - at least from the point of view of analysing the politics of change and development - is that, in general, the studies do not identify any obvious or immediate *dynamic* or dynamics of change (developmental or not). As a set of country studies, the DoC reports offer full and rich detail, but do not as yet provide us with a sense of what fundamental factors, singly or together, or in what order of priority or combination – ideas, interests, agents, incentives, institutions, material conditions and level of economic development, culture, external or internal threat – drive change, especially developmentally positive change. Rather, they tend to focus on agents or

potential agents who might help to bring it about. But the socio-economic and political circumstances which might be conducive to the emergence and success of such agents and agencies receive less attention. To that extent, the *recommendations* of the studies tend to be more *agent-centric*¹⁵ than institutional or structure-centric. Moreover, future work will need to develop greater conceptual clarity and consistency, more robust but nuanced conceptualizations, or political theories, of what change is, how change has happened and how it might happen and, in particular, how different historical, structural and institutional circumstances establish the varying possibilities and constraints within which agents in different polities have to work, thus generating different developmental paths (a point I return to later). It is worth elaborating the various aspects of this general point in a little more detail in order to indicate the areas which require development in future work.

- The absence of broadly consistent aims, as expressed in the various terms of reference, produced rich descriptive variety without contributing coherently to comparative generalizations or deepening theoretical understanding.
- Although they represented good starting points, the initial specification of the meaning of the central concepts (change, drivers, agents, structural features and institutions, to cite the main ones) was perhaps inadequate for the complexity of the tasks involved (DFID, n.d. but possibly 2004?).
- In giving less attention to possible *dynamics of change* the recommendations in the studies but tended to focus more on specific agents or agencies as possible sources of change (media, civil society organizations, parts of the bureaucracy, private sector, etc), without always tracing their origins or links back to structural features and without explaining how and where they would act to alter institutional arrangements. It is thus not clear from the diagram, for instance, how structural features give rise to institutional ones, without human agency interposing. And while the implied circular interaction between institutions and agents

¹⁵ Many of the studies conclude by listing possible agents, or drivers, of change, such as churches or unions, or NGOs etc.

starts to make sense, the distinction between ‘structures’ and ‘institutions’ may lay a false explanatory trail. For where a category called ‘structural features’ include material resources, social structures and regional influences, there is bound to be confusion. In the otherwise deeply informative Pakistan study, for instance, ‘social discrimination’ is categorised as a ‘structural feature’, not an institutional one.

- Despite the wealth of historical and descriptive detail in the studies, the absence of a consistent methodology and common conceptual structure created problems when it came to deriving comparative generalizations for theory and further analysis. As a result, those who were tasked with reviewing the whole stable of studies have had obvious (perhaps insuperable) difficulties in drawing wider conclusions of a theoretical, comparative or analytical kind (McLeod, 2005; Dahl-Østergaard et al, 2005). An example of this is reflected in an Annex in one of the overall reviews where specific ‘drivers of change’, referred to in the studies, have been distributed into the three broad categories mentioned above (Structure, Institution and Agent). In the Annex, *Structural* drivers include ethnicity, colonial legacy, HIV/AIDS, war on terror; *Institutional* drivers include taxation, limited access to land, social sector spending and political disenfranchisement. And *Agential* drivers include diasporas, elite capture, media and female empowerment (McLeod, 2005: 29). It is very hard to see the rationale for these distributions, but the problem arises, I think, from inadequate initial specification of the meaning of these central organizing concepts and the consequential conceptual stretching and drift which then occurs. Effective analysis only happens when conceptual boundaries are sharp and clear.
- As a result of the inadequate specification and refinement of the concepts, it is not always clear how the three main categories are to be distinguished from each other, nor which empirical factors should go in each category. It is sensible, for example, to place natural and human resources, geographical factors and the like in a ‘structure’ box (though preferably understood and labelled as context rather than structure, for structure implies a set of relations between parts, and relations implies rules and that is what we mean when we talk of institutions). But then, in one of the reviews (McLeod, May 2005) ‘external actors’ are situated within the ‘Structure’ category, not the ‘Agents’ category, which is not immediately plausible. Elsewhere, ‘social’ structures are, unusually, considered as ‘non-institutional’ aspects of ‘structural features’ when it is probably more useful to see social structures as essentially institutional since all forms of social structure are

essentially sets of rules and procedures governing relations and interactions between groups (whether of gender, class, caste or ethnicity). But my central point here is that conceptual ambiguity, present from the start, came to be extended and amplified through the proliferation of understandings, aims and foci of the studies, as they unfolded from Bangladesh to Bolivia, and future work will need to address these conceptual issues.

- But it is not only these specifically DoC categories and concepts (agents, structures, drivers, institutions) that need attention as the work moves forward. If we are to develop skills in analysing and promoting the *politics* of development, then it will be necessary to work through and think through how the central concepts of political science can be adapted and deployed to understand, promote and ease the inevitably difficult transformative processes of growth, development and change, especially since those are goals which the DoC work seeks to promote. It may be useful here to expand this point a bit more.

In general, economists work with widely understood (though not always uncontested) concepts – supply, demand, transaction costs, public goods, property rights, externalities and the like. A comparable conceptual armoury (also contested in similar ways) exists amongst political scientists. These include the state (and its various forms), power (and its sources and forms), legitimacy (in its various dimensions), regime (as a set of more or less consistent institutional arrangements), participation, ideology, institutions, checks and balances, accountability, bureaucratic impartiality, separation of powers and many more, including the very notion of politics itself (there is considerable debate within the discipline, for instance, as to what is and what is not ‘politics’), and the relations between them. Deployed as a set of analytical tools, these concepts enable us to explain how different and often distinctive patterns of the phenomena and processes they describe generate stable, developmentally positive institutional arrangements and effective states in some polities, but not in others – whether democratic or not.

One striking feature of the DoC studies, however, is that little attention is given to these concepts and they are not systematically unpacked in the explanatory themes. Many of these standard political science concepts are of course used mainly in the analysis of politics in generally stable polities. But if we are to develop a stronger political analysis of the problems and processes of economic development and change, we shall need to be creative and adaptive in how these concepts can be applied to enhance

understanding of the inevitably turbulent politics of development. As I shall suggest later, such politics need to be understood as a complex and special case of politics in general.¹⁶

- Throughout the studies, the term ‘political economy’ is widely used. Yet what is meant by this is seldom explored or spelled out. It is hence not clear which ‘school’ or approach is being used. ‘Political economy’ appears commonly to have been interpreted in the very general sense to mean the linkage of ‘features of politics and power to underlying economic issues’ (Robinson, et al, September, 2005: 3). Thus there appears to be some ambiguity as to what ‘political economy’ actually refers. (i) Is it a method? (ii) Is it a theory and, if so, what is it? (iii) Is it simply an acknowledgment that it is difficult (and perhaps unwise) to detach economic issues from political ones? (iv) Is it a description of a particular pattern of links or relationships in given countries between ‘economic’ and ‘political’ factors? If the latter, what is the significance of the links and what dynamics drive or shape those relations? (v) Or is it just a polite and economically respectable way to introduce ‘politics’ to the analysis?

[In social theory there are, very broadly, two main understandings and applications of ‘political economy’. Simplifying greatly, the first is the radical tradition going back to Marx which asserts that political power and the (economic and other) policies and institutions of states basically reflect and sustain the imperatives and structure of economic life in general, and of the dominant economic interests (classes) in particular.¹⁷ ‘The mode of production of economic life conditions the social, political and intellectual life processes in general’, observed Marx (1859/1958:

¹⁶ One example will help to make the point. It is generally recognised that the major responsibility of modern states is to provide (at least) certain key political public goods (which include, peace, stability, security, equitable settlement of disputes and – for some – greater equality of opportunity). This is certainly the thrust of both the DFID Governance Target Strategy Paper, *Making government work for poor people* (DFID, 2001a: 9), and the *World Development Report 2006* (World Bank, 2005). Many would argue that the state should also provide or ensure other social goods such as health care and education, infrastructure and sound money. If provision of such goods is a criterion of effective ‘stateness’ (Fukuyama, 2004) or state effectiveness, then most if not all the countries covered by the DoC studies have states which fall more or less into the ‘failing state’ category. Why they fail, and the extent to which they fail, requires explanation which draws on the central concepts used in standard political science. This – the adaptation and application of major concepts for the analysis of the politics of development or non-development - is an area which future work will need to address.

¹⁷ The old gentleman, now pushing up the daisies in Highgate cemetery, would not be surprised in the slightest at recent studies by economists and others who point to the structure of economies and the distribution of economic power within them as having a profound effect on the structure of political power – and what is done with it (Acemoglu, et al, 2006; Engerman, et al; 2000; and Aron, 2000). The Pakistan DoC study, illustrates precisely how the structure of land-holding and the power associated with it, constitutes a major influence on politics and policy (Nadvi and Robinson, 2004).

363). It follows that analysing power, politics, policies and the state is fundamentally a matter of analysing class relations and exploring tensions between the modes of production (the economic system, crudely) and the social-political institutions which organize and reflect them ('social relations of production'). To illustrate, in South Africa, before 1990, the capitalist economic system might be seen to have been both twisted and held back by the socio-political institutions of *apartheid* which entailed huge interventions in, and distortions of, the labour market (amongst other things). But such policies and institutions expressed the interests of, initially, white capital and labour,¹⁸ especially in agriculture and mining, and later of the emerging industrial class. Over time, however, these 'social relations of production', that is the institutions of *apartheid*, became a 'fetter' on capitalist growth and political stability (which is so crucial for it), and hence had to go (and human agency had to do it).

On the other hand, much contemporary mainstream political economy comes out of the neo-classical economics stable and is essentially 'the economic study of non-market decision-making, or simply the application of economics to political science' in a context where 'rational' agents pursue their interests by assessing the costs and benefits of any particular action or interaction, and do so in response to prevailing incentives and disincentives (Mueller, 1979: 1; Staniland, 1985). It is an approach that offers '.. the micro-foundations of macro-processes' (Levi, 1997: 23). In the South African context, mainstream political economists might argue that as the *costs* of *apartheid* began to outweigh its benefits, and political change was the consequence (though there were clearly other factors as well).

Though both these broad approaches have been challenged and modified by developments in Institutional Economics and 'The New Institutionalism' in Political Science, neither are consistently or explicitly deployed in the studies.]

- In many of the studies the absence of 'political will' or 'political commitment' is frequently mentioned when referring to developmental failure and slow or inadequate reform. In some studies (particularly the excellent Bangladesh, Malawian, Ghanaian and Pakistan studies) this comes out very clearly. In the Malawian study, for example, 'political will' is, in effect, the

¹⁸ A slogan used in the Rand Revolt of 1922 by white workers was 'Workers of the World Unite and Fight For a White South Africa' (a slogan with which the Communist Party of South Africa was associated for a while).

dependent variable that is to be explained: ‘Drivers of change is the name being given to a learning exercise at country level that explores the factors underlying the “political will” problem and how they can be taken more centrally into account in country assistance plans’ (Booth, et al, 2006: vii). I return to this in Section 5, below, but it is worth flagging here, for if ‘political will’ (or its absence) is what needs to be explained, then we need a far sharper conceptualisation of what we are to mean by that term and how it comes about. Is it, for example, to mean a virtue possessed individually by some agents or agencies? Is it to mean their capacity to get their way or, in short, power? Or is it to be understood as an *institutional* reaction to economic and political adversity or crisis? Or is it a combination of them all?

- Though a number of the studies (Kyrgyzstan, Zambia and Pakistan especially) refer to regional or external factors, including donor influence - the Zambian case is notable in that respect (Duncan, et al, 2003: 49-51) - not many situate these factors in the context of wider geo-politics, shifting balances of power, security issues and intellectual/ideological orthodoxies. This would of course have expanded the frame considerably, perhaps even unmanageably. Yet it is clear that not only regional influences but wider geopolitical factors will have some influence on agents and agencies of change and hence on the politics of development and governance. These include not only the formal requirements of the WTO, the IMF, World Bank conditionalities and bilateral donor influences (as the Zambian case); but they also reflect increasingly strong security concerns of western powers, as expressed in a DFID publication on *The Causes of Conflict in Africa*, which argued for a ‘greater coherence between foreign policy, security and development objectives’ (DFID, 2001: 20). This is precisely the theme taken up in a recent report of The Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit, entitled *Investing in Prevention* (2005), which identifies very similar requirements for improving security (mainly political and state focussed) as are identified in many DoC studies as being necessary for growth and poverty reduction. Where and how such external influences work, the options they encourage or exclude, the forms of pressure they bring to bear, will be something any new framework for further DoC work will need to be able to accommodate.
- Though the explicitly country-specific focus of the DoC studies did not encourage it, there is room for future studies to draw insights from the comparative political analysis of earlier periods and processes of change in recent modern history in Europe and elsewhere. Although time and circumstance are much changed, it

is important to recognise that what is at issue in contemporary development practice is a transformation in developing countries which is just as great as that which Polanyi sketched for the west in his *The Great Transformation* (1944/1957).¹⁹ Only by linking contemporary comparative studies with historical understandings will we begin to elaborate the kinds of theory which will better inform our analyses of the politics of change and development. But the task is immense.

These general points are worth illustrating more concretely and I do so in relation to the Nigerian DoC study, in Appendix 1, below.

- 1.8 These DoC studies, full and informative as they are, thus take us to a point where new work needs to begin, especially in defining, developing and deploying the concepts and theories which might reveal more fully the opportunities for change, the potential internal agents and oppositions, and hence where and how external agents might be able to act. A more comprehensive view of the politics and paths of development is needed. But if we are to do this seriously, what are we to understand ‘politics’ to be?

¹⁹ It is worth noting in this connection that contemporary use of the concepts of patrimonialism and neo-patrimonialism are derived directly from the comparative historical studies of pre-industrial European and other states by Max Weber at the end of the 19th century. Neither the concepts nor the processes to which they refer are new, and Weber’s account of what he referred to as ‘traditional authority’ bears a very close relationship to all the modern descriptions of these practices and phenomena in the DoC studies (Weber, 1964, pp 341-358).

2 What is Politics?

The question may seem simple, if not simplistic, but it is deceptively so. If we are to think about the central role of politics in development (and also explore possible donor strategies and policies for engaging with such political processes) it is important to have a clear idea of what politics is, and what activities, practices and institutions constitute it. Inevitably, there are many different about this. Most have been advanced in the context of stable traditional or modern polities and few direct attention to the much more complex political processes which both drive and reflect the politics of change and development. As I shall explain in Section 5, the politics of development is a special case of politics in general and requires an adaptation and refinement of the conventional concepts and categories used in the analysis of politics. But, first, it will be useful to situate different methodologies of political analysis in the context of a more general understandings of ‘politics’ as an activity. This section therefore first outlines some popular conceptions and goes on to suggest a more encompassing understanding of politics and in particular the two different levels at which political contestation occurs.

2.1 *Popular understandings of politics*

For illustrative purpose only, I offer a sample of common notions of politics in popular circulation.

- **Politics as extraneous nuisance**

‘For Forms of Government, let fools contest;
Whate’er is best administered, is best’. (Alexander Pope, in ‘An Essay on Man, 1734).

Pope’s somewhat technical view of government expresses well the common notion (sometimes held by some economists) that politics is a

distractive and messy nuisance, that it gets in the way of the straightforward and common-sense administration of things, that it distorts the logical application of sound economic principles and hence is best 'kept out' - of health, sport, education or developmental matters.

- **Politics as dishonest manoeuvring**

Often associated with the former view, politics viewed in this perspective is often cast as a dishonest, self-seeking and manipulative activity, with politicians not really to be trusted in word or deed.²⁰

- **Politics as a discrete and isolable field of human activity**

Also associated with both the above, politics in this view is seen as something which takes place only in certain fixed and specifically political sites and venues, in parliaments or congresses, in and around the ministries of state, local government departments and in and through political parties and their engagement with non-public organizations, such as NGOs and pressure groups. It is a highly formal view of politics and has the effect of denying the existence of politics in societies without more or less formal and differentiated institutions of governance, or in contexts other than officially 'political' ones. On this view, then, there is no politics in the BBC, the Church of England or the IMF.

While there may be some superficial attraction in such views, they do not constitute anything that would pass muster as providing the basis for a framework for understanding politics or political processes. For something more conceptual and which enables one to interpret politico-economic processes more analytically and comparatively, one needs to turn to professional approaches. Before doing so, it may be helpful to suggest a general approach to conceptualising politics before looking at the different ways in which different schools within the discipline engage with it analytically.

²⁰ Such a view – and I exaggerate to make the point – is sometimes expressed by those who should know better. 'In an ideal world', writes Jeremy Paxman of the BBC, 'we wouldn't have any politicians at all'. He regards politicians as 'a strange bunch', who are 'overwhelmed by a sense of their own importance, energetic, driven and wholly without a sense of proportion' (Paxman, 2002:x and 7).

2.2 A useful set of starting points for conceptualising politics involve the following essential elements:

- First, politics is best understood as a *process* which is not confined to certain sites, venues or specialists (such as princes, politicians or civil servants). It is, rather, a universal and *necessary* process entailed in all collective human activity and does not presuppose formal institutions of rule and governance. While formal decision-making in and around public institutions *may* be the most important expression of politics (especially in established, stable and modern politics), it is nonetheless a process found in families, farms, firms and factories; in churches, NGOs, aid and other bureaucracies; in state and stateless societies; across sectors (whether agriculture or banking); in international agencies and in refugee camps – and in the relations between them. It is a necessary feature of collective human activity and the idea that politics or politicians can be dispensed with is both naïve and dangerous.²¹
- Second, therefore, politics consists of *all the activities of cooperation, conflict and negotiation involved in the use, production and distribution of resources*, whether these activities are formal or informal, public or private, or a mixture of all. Such a basic conception facilitates ways of integrating both conventional ideas about *politics* (power, authority and decision-making) and *economics* (allocation of scarce resources) into a broader understanding of their relations.
- Third, the *forms and particulars of political activities and processes in different societies (or parts of them) vary widely*. These forms and political outcomes are both shaped by, and shape, the distributions and balances of power,²² ideas, ideologies, interests and, crucially, the formal and informal institutions through which they work.

²¹ The Marxist notion, associated initially with Engels and later especially with Lenin is that socialism and communism entail the end of politics, for class conflict ends with the abolition of private property. In the place of politics and the state there will emerge ‘the administration of things’ (Polan, 1984; Callinicos, 2004).

²² Mick Moore provides a useful account of some forms of power that can influence the formal executive practices in his ‘Practical Framework’ for DFID (Moore, August 2002).

2.3 *Levels of politics*

In the light of this general approach to politics as an activity in human societies,²³ it is important to recognise that there are *two distinct levels* at which politics and political contestation can occur (Lindner and Rittenberger, 2003).

- (a) The level which concerns *rules* of the game (institutions); and
- (b) The level at which *games* within the rules occurs.

Rules of the game

- The rules of the game, and agreement about the rules, are fundamental for any on-going political activity.²⁴ Stable polities are characterised by lasting agreement about the central rules of politics (which have seldom been established without intense contestation over long periods of time). In the modern world, these are normally expressed in *formal* institutional agreements, that is in constitutions, which specify formally the rules governing competition for, distribution, use and control of power and the procedures for decision-making and accountability.²⁵ These may be federal or unitary, presidential or parliamentary, they may specify terms of office and timing of elections, and may include Bills of Rights and the like. But all such *formal* institutions are always sustained by wider *informal* institutional aspects expressed in the culture, political culture and ideology which can have a critical part to play in maintaining the consensus about, and adherence, to the rules.

The rules and processes need not be formal or stipulated in written constitutions. Before the emergence of modern states, most human societies - from hunting and gathering bands through to complex feudal and imperial systems – had stable if often undifferentiated polities, for long periods, based on agreed and understood processes, embedded in

²³ There are those who suggest that some other species have the rudimentary elements of politics in their collective life. For a delightful and amusing ethological account, see *Chimpanzee Politics. Power and Sex Amongst the Apes* (de Waal, 1982).

²⁴ As one study point out, a ‘consolidated democracy’ is a political regime in which a ‘complex system of institutions, rules and patterned incentives and disincentives has become, in a phrase, “the only game in town’ (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 15).

²⁵ This agreement about the rules of the game is the most fundamental source of legitimacy for a state and regime. Two other critical forms are (a) geographical legitimacy (that people are content to live within a country and don’t seek secession or promote irredentism); and (b) rule application legitimacy (when people accept, for instance, that an election has been fairly contested according to the rules).

structures of power, expressed in cultural institutions and legitimated by a variety of ideologies and beliefs.

- Moreover, in stable polities – whether modern or traditional - consensus about the *political* rules of the game has normally been integrated with a more or less explicit consensus about socio-economic practices, goals or policies. Reaching such consensus has seldom been easy or conflict free, as struggles in Europe between left and right through the 20th century illustrate precisely. Moreover, each ‘settlement’ and its institutional form has differed interestingly between various democratic capitalist societies, as well as in the East Asian developmental states, as the studies on ‘varieties of capitalism’ have shown.²⁶ Even in some developing societies where political and economic consensus has been reached, and sustained growth has occurred as a result – such as Mauritius in the last 25 years – it has usually happened after periods of intense and threatening conflict (Bräutigam, 1997). Nor is it to suggest that settlements about socio-economic goals and institutions are unchanging, but that the agreement about political rules of the game enables change to occur without a fundamental challenge to the stability of politics. Indeed, under-girding democratic politics is an un-written political contract which consists of two balancing elements. The first is that losers accept the outcome (provided legitimate), knowing that they can try again 4 or 5 years later (which winners acknowledge, too). But the second, and just as important, is that winners know that they cannot use their power (where allowed to do so by the constitution) to so undermine or threaten the interests of the losers that they (the losers) would not abide by the contract as a result. Of course there is more to the democratic compact than this implied zero-sum game. There are probably only degrees of winning and losing,²⁷ but although outright winners can, in theory, ‘take all’, they would in practice be ill-advised to do so to the extent that losers’ fundamental interests or opportunities are eliminated.
- One consequence of this, over time, is that the developmental shift to formally democratic capitalist politics is also a move to an increasingly consensual structure of economic and political relations in which both the *benefits of winning* and the *costs of losing* are both steadily decreased. But early on that is not the case and hence the stakes are high and the politics can be more confrontational and, often, violent.
- For these and other reasons, and paradoxical as it may first sound, the institutional rules which sustain stable polities actually make democracy into a largely conservative system of power. Radical, rapid and far-reaching change is unusual in democratic polities. For consolidated

²⁶ See the work by Hall and Soskice (2001) on this and Haggard (2004) on varieties of East Asian institutional arrangements in developmental states.

²⁷ I owe this point to Chris Pycroft.

democratic politics is characteristically the politics of accommodation, compromise and the centre; and its political logic is generally therefore necessarily consensual, conservative and incremental in the change it brings about. For many that is its virtue: for others, it is its vice. The problem is that development, fast or slow, is a transformative process. It is, both by definition and in practice, commonly a radical and turbulent transformation (especially where urgency requires that it be rapid) which is concerned with often far-reaching change in the structure and use of wealth and power, and which - if successful - must transform it. That makes it quintessentially political and potentially deeply conflictual. This links directly to the debate about the relative merits of democratic and non-democratic regimes as promoters of development. But the issue here is *not* which is 'better' at it (the evidence is quite inconclusive and outcomes seem to depend more on character and capacity of the *state*, not the type of regime). Rather the issue for present purposes in relation to this discussion about the rules of the political game is that there may be a very profound tension between the political institutions which enable and sustain *stable* democratic politics, on the one hand, and the political institutions which engender *transformative* development and change, on the other.²⁸

- Fundamental problems of politics and governance therefore arise where and when there is no set of agreed rules, or when rules (formal and informal) are in conflict or incompatible, or where institutional consistency across political, economic and social domains is weak, or where social values and cultural institutions do not support (or actively undermine) the formal arrangements and practices, and the values they embody,²⁹ and where socio-economic goals are unclear or deeply contested. This is commonly the case in 'typical' developing countries (though is not the only source of unstable politics) and was a regular feature of what Polanyi (1944) referred to as 'the great transformation' in the west. The Kyrgyzstan DoC demonstrates clearly what happens when one set of rules (the old Soviet ones) are suddenly dismantled and a new set of rules cannot be agreed and put in place – or cannot be *enforced*. Many of the studies (notably the Ghanaian, Malawian, Nigerian, Pakistan and Bangladesh ones) also illustrate nicely how two sets of institutional arrangements - formal, 'Weberian' bureaucratic arrangements in

²⁸ I have developed this point more fully in 'Democracy and Development: Is There Institutional Incompatibility?' (Leftwich, 2005).

²⁹ Representative democratic politics, for instance, presupposes electoral processes which entail the principle of one person, one vote. Such a notion in turn rests crucially on assumptions and values about individuals and *individualism*, at least to the extent that all those who are entitled to vote have the right and ability to express their private electoral opinion through the ballot box. In addition, many developing societies are faced not only with lack of agreement about the basic rules, and hence low legitimacy, but also with instances of low geographical legitimacy (where secessionist or irredentist aspirations are strong) and rule application legitimacy (unfair elections).

representative democracy, on the one hand, and varieties of patronage and patrimonial relations, on the other hand - overlap each other, and how one (the latter) tends to prevail in practice, distorting the other.³⁰ A similar process has been at work in Mexico where the local form of patron-client relations, *caciquismo*, appears to have adapted itself effectively to democratic processes and, in some respects, undermined them (Hernández, 2005).

Games within the rules

- This second level of politics – which might be understood as the level at which ‘normal’ politics happens - is where the daily debates and contestations over policy and practice occur. By ‘normal’ I do not mean that such politics is morally correct, proper and appropriate, and that other forms of politics are abnormal or ‘wrong’, but only that ‘normal’ politics is in some sense *predictable* in that outcomes are very unlikely to produce radical shifts in the structure of wealth or power,³¹ and is only *unpredictable* within a limited but acceptable range of possibilities. In ‘normal’ politics in stable polities, the fundamental rules of the game are seldom seriously threatened (as indicated above), even when they are changed (devolution, constitutional reform). Disagreement, debate and change occurs – both in political and economic terms – but through the medium of the institutional settlements and operating procedures which remain stable while changing.
- In many developing countries, however, where agreed and enforceable formal rules of the game are less common, or where there are multiple sets of overlapping or conflicting rules (formal and informal), ‘normal’ politics seems less likely. The absence or conflict of rules, the fear of serious loss by some interests and the control of military power by others can induce an unpredictability that has at times the appearance of the political equivalent of the physicist’s notion of ‘chaos’.

In the light of this distinction between the levels of politics and the forms of contestation associated with each, it is important to recognise that the critical and

³⁰ It is this overlapping which is referred to as neo-patrimonialism in much of the political science literature, especially in relation to Africa (Medard, 1982; Bratton and van de Walle, 1997; van de Walle, 2001).

³¹ There are of course times when big policy and institutional shifts occur, as in the creation of welfare states in the North, but normally this has occurred when there has been wide recognition that problems and anomalies have been building up within society and some consensus that action need to be taken. Peter Hall’s account of the shift in British economic policy from Keynesianism to monetarism in the 1970s is another example (Hall, 1992).

fundamental level of politics is the first, that pertaining to the formation, maintenance and enforcement processes of the institutions and standard procedures for conducting politics, for setting socio-economic goals, and for establishing the economic institutions which will facilitate growth and development. ‘Normal’ politics can not be played out where there is no effective consensus about the legitimacy of established institutions, just as a game of, say, hockey is unintelligible, unpredictable (and difficult to play) without established rules.³²

Thus if politics may thus be said to consist of all the activities of conflict, negotiation and cooperation in the use, production and distribution of resources, it needs to be understood and analysed in terms of contestations at each of the two levels outlined above, and in terms of the interactions between them in different societies. However, finer and more detailed frameworks of analysis engage with and interpret these processes in different ways, and each brings a distinctive methodology to bear. The next section explores these more fully and draws out their implications and limitations for the analysis of politics in developing societies and the politics of development in particular.

³² In passing, this is one of the reasons why new or born-again democracies in many developing countries have been so shaky or cosmetic, because democratization has happened ‘backwards’ (Rose and Shin, 2001). The ‘game’ of electoral politics has been encouraged and introduced (or re-introduced) not only *before* the fundamental institutions of the state, rule of law, relations with civil society and the principle and practices of accountability have been put in place and consolidated, but also before they have been understood (in some cases) or fully accepted by the players.

3 Concepts and frameworks in political analysis

In seeking to interpret these activities of conflict, negotiation and cooperation, political scientists have developed a variety of frameworks of analysis, with associated assumptions and methodologies, each of which is anchored in a particular conception of the political process. In what follows, I sketch some of the more familiar ones. In doing so, I shall try to show the possibilities and limitations of these not only for understanding politics in diverse developing societies but, more challengingly, for making sense of the politics of change. But discussion of these analytical understandings of politics is also used in what follows to introduce some ideas and problems about politics in developing countries and hence also serves to stimulate thinking about them.

3.1 *Some major frameworks for political analysis*

- **Politics as a form of rule**

This elegant, normative and essentially peaceful conception of politics is associated with the work of Bernard Crick (1962 and 2004). Politics is regarded here as a distinctive form of *rule*, different to other forms of rule, ‘whereby people act together through institutionalized procedures to resolve differences, to conciliate diverse interests and values and to make public policies in the pursuit of common purposes’ (Crick, 2004: 67). War and the use of violence, in Crick’s view, is not the extension of politics or policy by other means (as Von Clausewitz held), but the *failure* or abandonment of politics. This view fits quite neatly into the assumptions and methods of plural analysis (see below) and its preconditions are both *sociological* (that societies are inherently pluralistic) and *moral* (that people recognise that it is normally preferable to reconcile interests than to oppress or coerce them) (ibid, 70).

Though Crick has in mind mainly modern and developed industrial societies, characterized by a strong undercurrent of liberal beliefs and institutions, it is important to recognise that politics as a means of rule of this kind is not confined to modern western democracies. Lorna Marshall’s account of the !Kung of the Kalahari (1976) and

Colin Turnbull's (1962) description of 'political' practices amongst the BaMbuti of the Ituri forest both illustrate precisely how generally peaceful and deliberative methods are used to make collective decisions and maintain order in even the most simple of societies. This is true of many non-modern societies and polities.

Implications for politics in developing societies

The problem with such a 'moral' view of politics, appealing as it may be, is that the institutional circumstances in many developing countries often make it very difficult for people to conduct politics in a peaceful and conciliatory manner. To pick up a point from the previous section, where fundamental rules of the game are not agreed and established, the political processes are much more likely to turn to violence and open conflict. Reasonable discussion and resolution of conflict presupposes a set of principles, criteria and procedures that all accept. Moreover the common and pervasively plural social structures of many developing countries (where cleavages of ethnicity, culture or religion, for example, are sharp and deep) makes establishing the fundamental rules of the game very difficult because the principles, beliefs and interests of different groups may not be compatible. Moreover, formulating public policy in a manner that accommodates and conciliates such incompatibilities becomes even more difficult. Yet the 'Nehruvian consensus' (Herring, 1999: 306) in India, at least for 30 years after independence, could be said to have reflected this commitment to conciliation, even though some groups (especially the propertied and professional elites) have manifestly enjoyed a degree of influence and power which far outweighed that of the mass of the population (Bardhan, 1984). And one consequence of this has, arguably, been the slow or 'Hindu rate' of growth, as memorably described by Raj Krishna.

Only when people regard themselves first and foremost as citizens of the state, in the broad republican tradition, and consign their ethnic or religious identities and cultural preferences to the private domain, will politics as a conciliatory form of rule be able to emerge. But at that point, it is likely that new collective loyalties – perhaps those of class – will emerge, generating an entirely different set of challenges and differences, especially in societies where inequality of income, wealth and opportunity may be profound. And where cleavages of class, culture and ethnicity overlap, the problems can be even more acute.

- **Pluralism and politics**

The pluralist approach to politics (Smith, 1995; Held, 1996) presupposes representative democracy of some kind and starts from the assumption that democratic politics in such institutional arrangements is as much about the interaction of *groups* and group interests as it is about formal electoral politics and party competition. It is assumed that all groups have *some* power or influence which they can use to advance their interest or curtail the interests of others and help to shape policy and institutional outcomes. Democratic politics is concerned with how these interests are able to exercise legitimate ‘voice, not vetoes’ (Gerring et al, 2005: 570) and be accommodated in and through the formal institutions of an allegedly ‘neutral’ state. More recent versions of pluralism recognise that states are seldom ‘neutral’ and that they have interests of their own, and that some wider interests, notably corporate ones, have more power than others).

Moreover, this view of politics is associated with ideas to do with policy communities or networks. This is the idea that clusters of interested organizations, both public and private – within the departments of state, the private sector and research communities - form communities in which policy issues are discussed, beyond and outside formal legislative institutions or political parties (though representatives of these might be involved). These communities may deal with issues in, say, agriculture or higher education, overseas aid, defence or the environment. Participants in each community are unlikely to participate in others, so the defence and security policy network is unlikely to have much overlap with networks concerned with, say, primary education.

As should be clear from the above, the focus of pluralism is on the groups, their power, how they aggregate and articulate their interests and how they interact with other groups. It is assumed that outcomes are negotiated. These political processes (‘games within the rules’), however, presuppose fundamental agreement about the rules and, normally, a stable polity. Indian democratic politics, for instance, since 1947, for all its complexities and limitations, can be interpreted in pluralist terms, as can the politics of Canada or New Zealand. There is no specific theory or direction of change under pluralism, merely the steady and contingent outcome of political interaction within a broadly accepted framework.

Pluralism and the politics of development

In many developing societies, however, the relatively low level of socio-economic differentiation has not always given rise to a wide range of independent or discrete functional, economic or issue-based interest groups (certainly not particularly well organised ones). Some (trades unions, for instance) remain closely integrated with or dependent on the ruling party or state. And as many of the DoC studies show, key players in the private sector are often very closely associated with state elites (and state contracts).

Furthermore, the mix and overlap of basic institutional rules for politics can generate what Thomas Carothers (2002: 10-11) has described as ‘feckless pluralism’. By this he means a situation (graphically portrayed in the Bangladesh DoC, but also clear in Bolivia) in which dominant elites – in coalition, in competition or one after each other – circulate at the apex of power (maybe rural and regional power as well), collaring and siphoning scarce state and social resources in a vacuum of pervasive societal poverty. Firmly institutionalised and *open* consultative procedures, involving independent, legitimate and organized interests, through the medium of policy networks are, as a result, not well developed.

This, as much else in the present section, re-introduces quite sharply the question raised earlier as to whether democratic politics, good governance (in part or in whole) and institutional reform are not so much the cause of growth and development but more its outcomes. Carothers observes that the recent successful cases of democratization in Central Europe, the Southern Cone of Latin America and East Asia seem to indicate that ‘relative economic wealth, as well as past experience with political pluralism’ contributes to such success (Carothers, 2002: 16). If democratic practices – and especially those which instil accountability – are held to be amongst the conditions which promote good governance, effective states and institutional reform, then the broad structural preconditions in economy and society do need to be seen as having a critical role. And although there is no dynamic of change inscribed in the theory of pluralism, it may well be that in those developing societies where industrialization and socio-economic differentiation is advancing the fastest, there is a better prospect for encouraging the emergence and interaction of interest groups in policy and political processes in the conventional and not feckless pluralist tradition so as to generate a wider and encompassing development commitment.

- **Marxism and politics**

I have already indicated the central assumptions of Marxist political analysis and so there is no need to repeat it here. However it is important to note that, along with ideas associated with modernization theory, Marxist conceptions of politics do have a strong dynamic of change at their core. The central tenets are: (i) that political power is essentially an expression and function of economic power; (ii) that class and class structures are direct expressions of the economic structure of societies; (iii) that class conflict is the essence of politics and *drives* change; (iv) that capitalism and capitalist development is a necessary (if cruel) and ‘progressive’ stage in human development, raising the level of the forces and means of production in the form of technology, science and knowledge; and (v) that separate disciplines of politics, economics and sociology – and history – make no sense for understanding societies and their development. Marxism asserts that there is only one science for the study of society and it calls it by the name of ‘historical materialism’ for it is impossible to understand, say, contemporary British, Bolivian or Bangladeshi politics without a full engagement with their economic and social history. Interestingly, that is implicitly but precisely the broad approach adopted in a number of studies (Pakistan and Bangladesh, for instance) and the study of Bolivia’s political party system makes that very clear (NDIIA, October 2004; but see also Wiggins, et al, 2006).

What is also important to see here is that the Marxist approach to politics (at least in its the classical form) is unreservedly committed to modernization and modernity. Rural and peasant society is treated with some disdain if not contempt (‘the idiocy of rural life’); technology, industrialization and the emergence and spread of secular values and principles are regarded as critical factors in shaping class forces and hence promoting progressive development and change; popular participation is seen as a necessary and effective outcome of these processes,³³ and even imperialism (‘vile’ as its motives may have been, in Marx’s language) was perceived as a necessary means of injecting the dynamic of capitalist change into what he saw as otherwise stagnant Asian societies.³⁴ Socialism presupposes industrialism and, as the American economist, Paul A. Baran, put it, ‘socialism in backward and underdeveloped countries has a powerful

³³ This kind of view is summed in Lenin’s definition of communism as electrification plus the soviets.

³⁴ This view is best elaborated in Bill Warren’s *Imperialism .Pioneer of Capitalism* (1980).

tendency to become backward and underdeveloped socialism' (Baran, 1957: viii).

Marxism and the politics of development

Despite its official association with some of the more odious regimes of the 20th century, it would be unwise to dismiss some of the analytical and explanatory insights of the theory and methodology and particularly its focus on the way in which the distribution and control of economic power yields political power. But, as with all frameworks, there are inevitably limitations. Certainly the kind of change expected in Marxist approaches to industrial societies has not occurred, and the central agency of change, the industrial working class, has been far less revolutionary than expected. Moreover, the way in which democratic politics in the twentieth was used by workers and their organizations, political and industrial, to extract benefits and help shape stability in the polity was not anticipated in the theory. Another anomaly in the approach, pointed out many years ago by Richard Sklar, is that in many African polities, especially, it is not economic power that has given rise to political power, but the other way around, where those in control of state power, that is political power, have been able to use that control to expand their wealth and that of their followers. In Africa, as Sklar argued, 'class relations, at bottom are determined by relations of *power*, not production' (Sklar, 1979: 537, my emphasis, AL).

The point is important, for it indicates a number of things. The first is that under the circumstances of many developing societies, political power can be used to generate economic power which in turn can be used to consolidate political power (through both electoral and patronage politics) and this has far-reaching implications for the analysis of class power and class relations. Second, it should therefore be no surprise why those in control of state power are reluctant to lose it and resist the formulation and, especially, the enforcement of rules of electoral competition that might bring that about. This notion is already widely expressed by researchers in the World Bank, for instance, studying what is referred to as 'state capture' (Hellman, et al, 2000). Third, it suggests that in many developing countries there is probably a much more complex and probably two-way diachronic (over time) relationship between control of economic power and control of political power (formal and informal). For just as control of economic resources can generate informal political power and influence, likewise the control of political power in formal

institutions enables those who have it to shape economic institutions and modify economic power, as Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson have recently argued (2006). Fourth, the very different degrees of economic development and social differentiation in different societies means that class formation, class awareness and class relations will vary greatly, especially where ethnic, cultural or religious loyalties cut across those of class. Hence there may be some contexts where focus on class structure and class relations will, as yet, be less useful than others.

- **Politics as Rational or Collective Choice**

Aspects of this were discussed above when referring to the two main schools of political economy, so only some brief further comments are necessary here.³⁵ The theory is based on the assumption that human behaviour is motivated primarily by the rational pursuit of self-interest. Applied to collective contexts, the central problem is not only how to make public policy that will accommodate a wide range of interests and needs, but also about the collective consequences of individual rational behaviour. How, if it is ‘rational for people to act so as to protect their self-interest in everyday private life, can it turn out that acting to protect their interests in some collective situations leads them to be worse off? How is it that what is rational for each is not rational for all?’ When understood as the problem of ‘collective choice’, politics revolves round a single critical question which has far-reaching implications for development and which is implicitly touched on in almost every DoC study: how and ‘*whether everyone can be protected from the effects of self-defeating rational behaviour*’ (Weale, 2004: 87 and passim, my emphasis, AL).

Rational choice and the politics of development

The developmental implications of this are important and complex. The central question boils down to this: under what circumstances will incumbent (and challenging) predatory elites alter their self-interested behaviour (or be ‘encouraged’ to do so) in their own as well as the wider ‘encompassing interest’ of the society? (Olson, 1993: 569). The problem in emerging economies, and *especially* poor ones, is that it may be entirely rational to maintain a strategy of self-interest (for oneself, at least, and also one’s clients – ‘friends and followers’) in the short term (which seems always to

³⁵ A more detailed account of the methodology of rational choice approaches in comparative and historical political analysis is in Levi (1997).

be short-term) because to adopt a more cooperative or encompassing approach actually will yield less.³⁶ If the ‘prisoner’s dilemma’ is the problem of how people can learn to cooperate, and capture the gains from cooperation, this problem is best thought of as the ‘refugee camp dilemma’ where there is always insufficient food to go round and the rational strategy is to grab as much as one can for oneself and one’s followers (the politics of exclusive – and predatory – patronage). In a developmental context, this approach can, at least, help to explain how and why it may be difficult for the institutions of patronage and patrimonialism to be shifted in the direction of more inclusive institutional rules which leave you worse off in the short run, when the short run seems to run and run.

- **Politics and the new institutionalism**

The two main currents in the ‘new institutionalism’ in political science are *rational choice institutionalism* and *historical institutionalism* (though there are other sub-schools, such as sociological institutionalism).

(i) The main contribution of *rational choice institutionalism* has been to modify the earlier and somewhat context-free notions of rationality in rational choice theory by recognising that, in politics as in all other social activities, the rational pursuit of self interest is framed by institutional contexts, and that the solution to the pervasive collective choice problems (see above) can be resolved by aligning the incentive structures of players so that a stable outcome, agreeable and beneficial to all (a political equilibrium) may be reached. There nonetheless remains a strong flavour in rational choice institutionalism of what may be termed ‘incentive reductionism’, which tends to ignore values, ideas, culture and especially prevailing distributions of power and the legacy of historical processes and practices.

Rational choice institutionalism and the politics of development

The DoC studies on Bolivia, Pakistan, Ghana, and Malawi, for instance, all illustrate sharply the persistence of uneven distributions of power, partly anchored in cultural institutions and partly anchored in the structure of ownership and control of

³⁶ Mushtaq Khan explores this point in a different context (Khan, 2005).

economic and political resources.³⁷ All of these constitute serious obstacles to change and it is hard to see what alignment of incentives would enable change to occur, in a context of low growth and high poverty, and especially – as noted before – where changes in the incentive structure would actually mean change in the institutional rules from which incumbents and their followers benefit and which they would be averse to changing.

(ii) In its treatment of politics, *historical institutionalism*, on the other hand, is much more sensitive to the relationship of structures and agents, recognising that deep institutional arrangements (in culture and politics) and the games within these rules are influenced by ‘path dependency’. Moreover, historical institutionalism is closely attuned to the distributions of *power* and resources, not only in the formation of institutions but in the very structure and implications of the rules. Historical institutionalists tend to recognise that *all* institutional arrangements (political or other) favour some and disadvantage others, just as the rules of badminton favour the agile and the slim, while the rules of *sumo* wrestling manifestly do not. To borrow a famous phrase of Schattschneider’s (1960:71), all institutional arrangements are the ‘mobilization of bias’ in one particular way or another.

Historical institutionalism and the politics of development.

In the context of the politics of development, therefore, it matters crucially in what direction policy is aimed, what goals it seeks to achieve and what means it intends to use, for these objectives will have to shape the institutional arrangements (the mobilization of the particular bias) designed to meet them. In the historical institutionalist view of politics, there is the recognition that – short of ‘critical junctures’ such as war, external or internal threat, revolution, economic crisis - long-standing institutions are often hard to shift. The DoC studies provide ample evidence of this phenomenon of path dependency. Moreover, but in brief, whereas rational choice institutionalists are interested in the micro-foundations of macro processes, historical institutionalists are interested in what Tilly memorably described as ‘Big structures, large processes, huge comparisons’ (1984) and are sensitive, too, to ideas, values and norms. To that extent, given the general purpose of the DoC studies to improve understanding of the ‘processes of economic, social and cultural change that impact on development outcomes’ (DFID, 2003: 5) or the ‘underlying political systems and mechanics of pro-poor change’ (DFID, n.d),

³⁷ Two recent studies by the World Bank (2003 and 2005), on inequality in Latin America and the *World Development Report* for 2006 on equity and development are excellent sources of data on this.

the analysis of the formation, interaction and change of institutions – political and other – will need to be central to the framework of analysis.

- **Systems theory and politics**

Finally, there is a tradition in political science, associated primarily with the work of David Easton (1965a and 1965b) which conceptualises politics as one of many related and overlapping sub-systems of a society or of a social system. I will be dealing with this more fully in the next paper so a brief account will suffice here.

The political system is conceptualised as that set of interactions by which values are ‘authoritatively allocated’ in a society and is *not* confined to the formal institutions of the modern state and governance. A group of villagers, in a stateless society, sitting round a campfire come to constitute the political system when they turn to making decisions about where, for instance, they will hunt the next day. Basically, then, the *concept* of the political system refers to those processes in a society which shape authoritative outcomes. The concept of the political system thus refers not to a specific and isolable empirical or institutional domain (like ‘the government’), but to a framework of analysis which can be used to track and trace the way political and policy outcomes occur in any society, irrespective the level of its complexity and differentiation.

There are a number of key features of the framework. (i) First, any political system operates in its own national, economic and social environment and also in its wider regional or international *environment*. These need to be specified. (ii) Second, authoritative decisions are motivated by *demands* coming into the political system from the local or wider environment. Such demands may also be balanced or countered by oppositions. So Vice-Chancellors of universities may have ‘demanded’ top-up fees, while students’ associations demanded that they should not be imposed. Importers may prefer/demand a strong currency and exporters may demand/prefer a weaker exchange rate. (iii) Third, not all political systems are sustained simply (or at all) by a monopoly of legitimate force, but also by legitimacy, that is by *support* involving, amongst other things, acceptance that the process whereby decisions are made are proper and appropriate. (iv) Fourth, these two factors – demands and supports – represent *inputs* to the political system. (v) But – certainly in modern political systems – those engaged in the making of policy and

decisions (politicians and civil servants) may themselves have interests, ideas, proposals and preferences which they want to advance or implement. These are best thought as *within-puts*. (vi) The decisions which emanate from the political system are *outputs* and feed back into the social environment. If popular, successful or beneficial, they will in turn help to boost *support* not only for the system but for the decision-makers. But equally, if not popular, successful or beneficial, they may generate further *demands* and lower support.

There is more to the model of the political system but it can offer a starting point for the analysis of political processes and can be used (i) to identify, track and trace inputs or *demands* by agents on the decision-making process from within (such as interest groups, parties or patrons), or from without (such donor agencies, foreign governments, international organizations); (ii) to analyse how these demands are ‘processed’, and how *withinputs* (ie state or incumbent elite goals and interests) are added to the process; (iii) how these are translated into ‘outputs’ (laws, decisions, allocations); (iv) how various factors, influences and pressures may impinge on the implementation of outputs; and (v) what the net effect of these outputs are in terms of (a) generating support (legitimacy) for the political system, or not as the case may be, and (b) stimulating new demands.

For instance, policies and institutions which promote (and achieve) rapid growth may give rise to the emergence of social, economic and political interest groups which in turn demand further change, perhaps in the form of civil rights or better service delivery or tax reform, from the state. It is in the course of these interactions that effective states emerge.³⁸ The non-democratic developmental states, such as Korea, have illustrated that process and it is more than probable that a similar politics is emerging in China.

Systems analysis and the politics of development

Despite its limitations (and I have summarised it very simply here), the Eastonian systems framework for political analysis is less a theory of how change happens, and more a framework for identifying and analysing the political processes whereby it occurs. It suggests a framework for identifying the institutional arrangements, maybe overlapping ones, in which and through which decisions are made; it offers ways by which ‘drivers’ of change (understood in the model as agents or ‘demands’) can be

³⁸ Mick Moore’s work on the ‘fiscal sociology’ of the state is relevant here (Moore, 2004). A wider comparative European analysis is contained in Tilly (1992).

identified; and it helps to locate and map the various sources and forces of resistance, where they have power or influence on policy-making and on policy implementation. Moreover, the framework of analysis is one that can incorporate class or ethnic factors, formal and informal processes and sources of power, as well as internal and external variables. Given the often obscure processes – hidden, for instance in the interstices of shadow states – it can become a useful explanatory tool for identifying and tracing the relations between the various factors mentioned above. And I shall return to a fuller elaboration of its utility in the next paper.

This section has sketched some of the distinctive and, in places, overlapping ways in which politics as an activity is conceptualized and analysed. And it has indicated some of their internal limitations and their degree of relevance for comprehending politics in developing societies. One thing which has become clear was touched on at the start of this paper. Many (but not all) of these understandings of politics presuppose more or less stable polities, whether modern or traditional. And that in turn presupposes a more or less consensual set of institutional rules of political and economic governance, within which agents compete and operate. Such institutional arrangements of course reflect and sustain particular distributions of power and, even in stable developed polities, they may hinder, sustain or enhance developmental processes.

However, the problem in many developing countries (and certainly in many of those covered by DoC studies) is precisely that the prevailing institutions of political and economic governance do *not* promote growth and development. As a consequence, the politics that is needed is not ‘normal’ politics, as I have described it above, but a *transformative* politics concerned with establishing the fundamental (and often entirely new) institutions for development, that is a politics of progressive change, not stability. The politics of development is thus inescapably about change – economic growth, social transformation and political transition. The key question for the DoC work thus remain as to what social, political and economic circumstances are conducive to the formation of the political and economic institutions of development and the associated emergence

and success of drivers or agents of change. To begin to answer this we need to turn to comparative studies, models and theories of what has driven the politics of development, historically, and what insights might be derived from those.

4 The politics of development

Before trying to conceptualise what we mean by the term ‘politics of development’ and what happens when it is occurring, there are some preliminary and fundamental points that should be made.

- First, what is important to emphasise is that, historically, the politics of development has not followed a single path. Different historical and structural contexts – economic, social, political, regional and international – have led to different trajectories and different paces of change, driven by different kinds of agent deploying different institutional arrangements, some from above and some from below.
- Second, the contemporary politics of development – where it happens - is a *special case of politics in general*. National commitment to rapid, urgent ‘catch-up’ growth and development, whether state encouraged or state led, is relatively new in human history. Chang (2002) and others have demonstrated that the state in many of the now developed and industrialized societies, in the West, used a variety of measures to promote and protect industrialization, and 19th century Germany offers good evidence of this. But by far the first and clearest instance of concerted and state-directed development was Japan after the Meiji restoration in 1868. The Soviet Union after the revolution in 1917 was a further and different example of ‘forced march’ industrialization, driven by the leadership of a party-state in fear of being overwhelmed.³⁹ Later in the 20th century the more familiar stories of Singapore, Korea, Malaysia and Taiwan are all illustrations, to different degrees, of politically-driven transformative objectives, processes and patterns of the politics of development.

³⁹ This is Stalin, in 1931: “No, comrades,...the pace (of industrialization) must not be slackened! On the contrary, we must quicken it as much as is within our powers and possibilities... To slacken the pace would mean to lag behind; and those who lag behind are beaten. We do not want to be beaten... The history of old... Russia... she was ceaselessly beaten for her backwardness. She was beaten by the Mongol Khans, she was beaten by Turkish Beys, she was beaten by Swedish feudal lords, she was beaten by Polish-Lithuanian *Pans*, she was beaten by Anglo-French capitalists, she was beaten by Japanese barons, she was beaten by all - for her backwardness. For military backwardness, for cultural backwardness, for political backwardness, for industrial backwardness, for agricultural backwardness.... We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this lack in ten years. Either we do it or they crush us” (Deutscher, 1966: 327).

- Though there are many others – some more and some less successful – the key point to note, for all the reasons explored earlier and deployed at great length in many of the DoC studies, is that a politics committed to steady growth and development cannot be had to order, especially when so much coordination and institutional innovation is required and where so many interests may be threatened by it.
- Moreover, even when initiated, the politics of development is a complex on-going process in which a difficult balance has to be struck between promoting profound socio-economic (and often ideological) change, on the one hand, and maintaining stability on the other.

4.1 If politics in general is therefore understood as being constituted by all the processes of conflict, negotiation and cooperation in the use, production and distribution of resources, the *politics of change* is perhaps best understood as the set of processes whereby people *change the way they use, produce and distribute* resources, and the *politics of development* occurs when things improve (according to given criteria), for changing the way resources are used may not only or always have positive outcomes. This suggests two simple but closely related propositions about how we might want to think about the implications of this and why development is best understood as an essentially political process.

4.2 The first proposition is that *when people change the way they use, produce and distribute resources, they also change their (social and political) relations – relations of power - with each other.* This proposition helps to provide a practical and straightforward ‘political economy’ starting point for the recognition of the ‘political’ implications of ‘economic’ change, and the closeness of the relations between them. The implication in this case is that the causal chain runs from economic to political change. While technological change (eg agricultural technology) has been one source of such social and political change, there are many others. The expansion of trade, the emergence of an independent entrepreneurial class investing capital in new ways are but some. And land reform

is an obvious example of how changed use and distribution of resources can alter the balance of not only rural wealth but also rural power (Lipton, 1974). Herring's account of the failure of land reform in Pakistan offers a salutary reminder of the intimacy of rural wealth and power and politics in that country, a view endorsed by the DoC study of 'The Land Question' in Pakistan (Gazdar, December 2003) in which the author effectively links landed power to social power.

4.3 The second and linked proposition is that *when people change their political and social (power) relations with each other, they usually change the way they use, produce and distribute resources.* The obvious examples here include, for instance, the extension of the franchise, the abolition of slavery, the recognition of the rights of trades unions, the provision of formal legal equality for women and the formation of the European Union. These are all examples of how political institutional change has led to economic change in the way resources are used and distributed, and certainly to social change as well. The more extreme example here is revolutionary change, when state power is seized by one group or class from another and political relations are transformed. This is usually followed by a radical shift in how resources are used, produced and distributed through wholesale institutional transformation of economic and social relations as the 20th century history of Russia, China and Cuba illustrate.

4.4 Moreover, causal processes can flow in both directions and often loop back and re-enforce each other over time.⁴⁰ That is to say that political change can affect the distribution of economic power and resources and that economic change can, in turn, induce political change. There are plenty of examples of both, but it is the dynamic of their interaction that commands most interest. To illustrate, industrialization has generally given rise to organized labour movements which

⁴⁰ In its *World Economic Outlook* for 2005, the IMF makes essentially the same point in a slightly different language. 'Economic institutions are, of course, closely related to political institutions. Political institutions shape the incentives of the political executive and determine the distribution of political power. Which includes the ability to shape economic institutions and the distribution of resources. In turn, economic institutions, by determining the relative affluence of various groups of society, also help to shape political institutions. A groups grow wealthier, they can use their economic power to influence political institutions in their favour' (IMF, 2005: 126). A similar argument can be found in Acemoglu, et al (2006).

(along with middle class interests) have been active in demand for political change, in the form of democracy (Rueschemeyer, et al, 1992). Where successful, such demands have established the democratic space which has enabled labour and other organized political pressures to push for welfare provision – and so the institutions of social democracy emerged.

However there are other and more detailed models of historical change that have occurred in the making of the modern world which provide some illustration of the varying paths and trajectories of development, the structural contexts in which they have occurred, the vital ‘triggers’ which have initiated the processes and the agents involved who shaped the institutions. An example will help to illustrate the point.

4.5 In his study of *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, Barrington Moore Jr. (1966) outlined four major paths of development to the modern world which I summarise briefly here.

- The first, he suggested, was the ‘bourgeois’ path in which the development of a powerful group in society, with an *independent* economic base,⁴¹ attacked over time the institutional conditions and arrangements which hampered the further expansion of their activities and wealth.⁴² None of the major examples of this – England, France and the United States – achieved this breakthrough without violence and bloodshed at some point, as in the English Civil War (or Puritan Revolution) of the 17th century; the French Revolution, and both the American Revolution and subsequent Civil War).

⁴¹ It is important to recognise the significance of their ‘independence’ in Moore’s account, which has seldom been the case in many developing societies where the emerging bourgeois class has often been highly politicized in the sense of being dependent on state favours, discretion and rent-yielding contracts – something illustrated in one of the DoC supporting papers on ‘Bringing Class Back In. Why Do Middle Classes Matter for Drivers of Change in Ghana’ (DFID, nd).

⁴² An interpretation of the origins of this process is provided in the classic paper by North and Weingast (1989).

- The second path was what he referred to as ‘revolution from above’.⁴³ Here, where the ‘bourgeois’ class was small and weak, varying coalitions of bureaucrats, modernising militaries and intellectual reformers pushed through radical political and especially economic change from above, *actively using state instruments to promote rapid development*. The classic model is that of Japan, after the Meiji restoration of 1868/1870. A more recent and similar path, perhaps representing a sub-category of the pattern, has been expressed in the form of the ‘developmental state’ (Woo-Cumings, 1999). Examples of this are of course Taiwan and South Korea. One key trigger in all these countries was external threat, or the perception of it, and an articulated nationalist determination to ‘catch up’, especially with the west, or to protect themselves from possible loss of independence.
- The third path which Moore identified was ‘revolution from below’ and the empirical examples of this are of course the Russian and Chinese revolutions which unleashed a developmental determination by modernising radicals. Here both commercial classes and bureaucratic-military reformers were unwilling, too weak or non-existent to push through modernising change, and it was left mainly to the peasantries, led by vanguardist parties, with limited working class support to topple the intransigent ‘agrarian bureaucracies’ in the end.
- The fourth path pattern, argued Moore, accounts, for the ‘weak impulse toward modernization’ (Moore, 1966: xvi) and hence slow rates of transformative growth. This path was characterised by neither a thorough-going capitalist transformation nor by revolution from above or below because the appropriate agencies of change (independent bourgeoisie, revolutionary peasants or a modernising military-bureaucrats were simply not present). The ‘failed developmental state’ in India (Herring, 1999) remains a good example of this path in the first 40 years of independence, conceptualised recently by Kohli as a ‘fragmented multi-class state’, and characterised by a ‘considerable gap’ between the leadership’s promises and fulfilment, given the inability of the state to deliver them (Kohli, 2004: 399 and passim).

⁴³ See also the excellent study of *Revolution from Above* (in relation to Japan, Turkey, Egypt and Peru) by Ellen Kay Trimberger (1978).

4.6 *Implications*

- Moore's account is aimed primarily at sketching paths to democracy and dictatorship, but it serves well to illustrate broad models or paths of development, too. Of course, they are not the only ones and there are variations within each. But they are useful reminders of the deep and historically specific socio-economic and institutional circumstances which have given rise to different agencies or drivers of change and hence to distinctive paths to the modern world. This suggests, again, that transformative change which can lift poverty can not be had to order, for if we consider Moore's paths, it is probable that few developing societies have had or, as yet, have the strong and independent bourgeoisies,⁴⁴ the determined modernising military bureaucrats or the revolutionary social forces which served as the critical agents of change in the macro-transformations described by him. If that is the case, where do some of the successful contemporary performers fit? What explains their paths?
- In order to answer this we need to recognise that the twentieth century gave rise to new agencies and to a new politics of development, also rare, and in particular the agency of *politically and nationalistically driven elites* who built and commanded developmental or quasi-developmental states of varying strength, capacity and endurance. Turkey in 1923 and Thailand in 1932 and, later, Singapore, Malaysia and even Botswana and Mauritius are examples where Moore's agencies were not really in evidence at all. But even in those cases – of politically and nationalistically driven elites – some serious external or internal threat or anticipated threat has always been a major factor galvanizing developmental political momentum, and in all cases the role played by the state was fundamental.
- The circumstances - both national and international – which have attended the emergence of such paths and models may now be both rare, and the relevant agencies are not easily found. Yet in all developing countries there *are* emerging social forces, agencies and potential 'drivers' of change that are beginning to push for change, whether in the political and bureaucratic elite, in the private sector or in the space created in civil society by democratization more generally, or in a combination of them all. The level and form of economic development and the nature of the social structure will be instrumental in shaping what they are and who they are. In future DoC work it will be important to maintain focus on these agents and potential agents and how they may be supported. But

⁴⁴ Epitomised in the United Kingdom by individuals and organizations involved in mounting The Great Exhibition of 1851.

focus on agents – whether media, churches, unions or private sector business – evacuated from their relationship with social, economic and political processes within and beyond their states and societies may lead to a somewhat voluntaristic approach to the politics of development, hinging on a simplistic notion of ‘political will’.

So, in order to take the DoC work further it will therefore be necessary to try to develop a more elaborate analytical framework which will help to identify, for the medium and longer term, the most likely and emerging agents of change in the context of the prevailing distribution of both economic and political power and the institutional arrangements which shape and reflect it. In the final analysis, the politics of change and development is about the possibilities for, and limits on, action by agents in very different circumstances. People make their own history but not in circumstances of their own choosing. What these circumstances are and what opportunities they present for agents, internal or external, is what a framework will need to try to identify.

In the final section which follows, therefore, this paper will try to outline the elements that need to be taken into account in developing such a theory and framework.

5 What is to be done?

This section is divided into two main parts. The first deals with the central assumptions, guiding principles, precautions and elements which need to be built into an analytical framework for extending and deepening DoC studies. The second briefly suggests some areas of research that will be valuable to develop as part of this wider strategy of engaging with the drivers, agents and more generally the politics of change.

5.1 *Elements of a framework*

In taking the DoC work forward, and building on the work already done, there are a number of factors that will need to be addressed, some theoretical, conceptual and methodological, and some substantive.

(i) *Situating An Analytical Framework*

- The first and most important element is the explicit recognition that DoC is about *politics* as a necessary condition for economic growth, development and the reduction in poverty. The SoS has already made this clear in his speech, but the idea needs to be embedded.
- But it will be important to recognise that the politics we are dealing with are the politics of development, a special case of politics which is both different to, and more challenging than, ‘normal’ politics. ‘Normal’ politics presupposes the legitimacy of standard, established and largely consolidated institutions and operating procedures in relatively stable polities. However, the *politics of development* is about how development can be mobilized and how this particular developmentally progressive bias can be institutionalised in new rules and procedures that will help to achieve the goals. In short, the politics of development is about how *stable* political institutions can be established to generate and sustain difficult economic *change*.
- The DoC discourse and its analytical framework should therefore be firmly located within wider concerns to do with governance, institutions, democratization and state-building. They are inseparable. To that extent, DoC work needs to be sensitive to, and deploy effectively, critical central

concepts in political science – however contested they may be – especially those to do with the forms of *power, the state, legitimacy and consensus*, to mention but some. States, institutions, governance – are all institutional and therefore political questions, and not technical matters of state construction as if by Institutional Leggo. Rather, the concern with drivers of change signals the recognition of the influence and importance of a variety of political factors in state formation, governance and development.

(ii) *Conceptual, theoretical and methodological*

- In the light of some of the conceptual ambiguity referred to in Section I, one of the crucial tasks for future work will be to rethink, entirely, and reconfigure the meaning (or abandon the use) of the central analytical categories that have been used – drivers, structures, institutions and agents – as part of the exercise to formulate a more coherent conceptual and theoretical approach to the politics of change and development.
- Therefore, particular attention will need to be devoted to the clarification and the adaptation of central concepts in political science and to how they may be brought to bear on the analysis of the politics of development in different countries.
- In focusing on these questions, the framework will need to clarify and revisit a number of theoretical issues, such as: (i) what is a political economy approach and how is it to be deployed? (ii) How is the relationship between political processes and developmental economic activity to be explored? (iii) Can the rich detail from the DoC studies be used to help generate a more robust comparative theory of the politics and paths of development? (iv) For instance, Moore’s account (above) shows clearly how paths to the modern world have been very different, and hence that the idea or model of a single universal path of ‘modernization’ is naïve. But does a modified and qualified version of modernization theory help to grasp the kind and variety of transformative trajectories that may be involved in the politics of development?

Substantive and empirical issues

- Whatever might be the value of the broad theory, conceptualisation and framework for the analysis of DoC, future work will still need to anchor itself firmly anchored in the unique political experiences of *individual countries* in order to identify which drivers in which institutional contexts are the most likely agents or agencies of change and reform.

- The framework will also need to be able to accommodate both synchronic (contemporary and existing) institutional relations and also diachronic (over time) processes. How do they interact?
- The framework will need to be able to help show in dynamic fashion how changing *geo-political* factors help to shape possibilities and constraints for agents of change, for it is important to recognise that the contingent and historical circumstances, and theoretical/ideological orthodoxies, both broadly international and regional, are very different in the 2000s than they were in the 1960s.
- A framework of analysis for DoC will also need to be able to explore the varying forms and relations of both *formal and informal* institutional features of a polity.
- Likewise, the framework should enable us to identify the sources, forms, distribution, flow and interaction of various forms of *power*, both internal and external, formal and informal,⁴⁵ legitimate and other.
- And it will need to be able to show how *political* factors interact with *economic* ones, over time, in the structure of politics and especially in the processes of decision-making and decision implementation.
- It will need to identify institutions which might be ‘slow moving’ or ‘fast moving’ and the sources and agents (drivers) of such change; which are superficial and which are deep.
- It is probably true to say that current donor orthodoxy is to promote a mode of development and society, globally, whose barely submerged structural model is that of liberal (and/or social) democratic capitalist development. There may be much to be said for that. After all, liberal democracies do not go to war with each other (Doyle, 1983; Fukuyama, 1989). But it is important to recognise that there is no liberal democratic path to liberal democracy and that a series and sequence of necessary conditions – economic, social and political – may be required. Quite distinct forms of politics, governance and state involvement may thus be appropriate for different levels and stages of economic development and different policy purposes and goals in different societies. And different agents may be appropriate for different levels and stages.
- It seems clear, too, that the DoC discourse and its implications for both analysis *and* policy is, essentially, about how, over time, one ensemble of interacting institutional arrangements and rules – formal and informal; political, economic, social and ideological – is replaced by another. Any

⁴⁵ Acemoglu et al (2006) refer to this as *de jure* (formal) and *de facto* (informal) power.

such set of interacting institutions and procedures constitutes what we generally understand as a *regime*. Hence the politics of development as understood within the DoC discourse is essentially about regime change, by any other name. And even if, as Merilee Grindle (2004 and 2005) and Mushtaq Khan (2005) rightly suggest, there may be sequences, stages and priorities of institutional change, one should not under-estimate the medium to long term complexity and turbulence that it will inevitably involve.

- The idea of *political will* (or commitment) is perhaps best not conceptualised as a virtue, like probity or trust, but rather as an institutional question. It may be better to think of it as a capacity or function, generated by a range of factors which include historical legacies, external and internal ‘threat’, nationalism, elite consensus about national policy goals and above all that of political power, embedded in and around the institutions of the state. In short, though human agency and attributes are fundamental, political will is perhaps best thought of as a dependent variable, almost in Darwinian sense, shaped by a mixture of threat and competitive dangers, constraints and opportunities, ideas and interests, in the structure of choices faced by an elite.
- The framework for DoC work should be one that is suitably adapted for application not only to whole countries and the macro-political context but also to local, regional and sectoral spheres, which are often critical areas for the politics of change and development. Bates’ work (1984) in the 1980s on marketing boards in west Africa illustrated the importance of analysis of sub-national political, economic and sectoral institutional arrangements, and their links to national political processes, as Boone’s (2003) recent work on the ‘topography of the African state’ has done too.
- Finally, though it will be contentious – for it is essentially contested terrain – it would be important to see DoC work contributing generally to generating a more elaborated theory or set of theories about the politics of development which can enhance how DFID thinks strategically, and practically, about its work. There is no conflict between this as a goal and country-specific concentration. For empirical findings in relation to individuals countries will contribute to theory building and testing in new studies.

This is a large agenda and a challenging task. But it is worth starting.

In conclusion, although DFID staff have been active in commissioning, shaping and working on the DoC studies, the evolution and elaboration of more detailed frameworks

of analysis may provide the opportunity to deepen and extend in-house political analytical interests and skills. The interest in, and spread of, DoC work may thus help to encourage DFID staff to interpret and conceptualise their wide and rich practical developmental and programmatic experience in terms of wider political analytical and explanatory terms.

5.2 *Research*

Reviewing the DoC materials has raised a number of issues which call for further in-country and cross-country research and dialogue in order to strengthen some of the basics for Doc work. I mention briefly just a few.

- In general it would be extremely useful to encourage discussion and dialogue amongst donors to refine, develop and deploy more consistent conceptual usage, theories, approaches and methodologies for the analysis of the politics of development and change. Seminars, conferences, working groups – modelled on, say, the World Bank’s ABCDE meetings, perhaps on a regional as well as international basis - bringing southern and northern political scientists together, would be a huge step forward.
- It will be very useful to have work which can unpack, distinguish, classify and analyse the *many forms and dimensions of patrimonialism* (forms of patron-client relations, prebendalism, *caciquismo*, corruption). We need to know much of the forms and particulars in each country, how they interact with new democracies. For example, the Big man phenomenon in Africa, or the ethnic patron-client chain, are different to the party-based and cross-class party patronage systems in Jamaica or Bangladesh. How do they all work? Or *caciquismo* in Mexico. Does democratisation deepen or dilute all such patrimonial forms? Does it emasculate possible agencies of change? Do those at the bottom get anything? If not why sustain the chain? Is it more rational, given scarce resources, than cross community issue-based parties? Or is it locked deeply into the culture and political culture and is hence a path-dependent process, difficult to shift or transform. Just as there may be both a good and a ‘dark side’ of social capital (*mafia*), so there may be ‘good’ and ‘bad’ patrimonialisms. If it is so slow and difficult to eliminate from political processes, can any forms of patrimonialism be employed or harnessed to promote pro-poor growth?
- One of the abiding themes of the DoC studies is that in few of the countries was there any clear and coordinated demand for reform and pro-

poor growth. DoC work would be enriched by both country and cross country research on the sources and possible sources of *demand*. Where is it coming from? In the light of the paths of development spelled out earlier, for example, where might it come from? Within bureaucracy (some corners?), trade or agricultural associations, businesses, media, intelligentsia? Can coalitions be encouraged? How, where?

- We need studies of countries with relatively *successful* records in order to understand better how the drivers and *coalitions of drivers* were convened and how they cooperated there. The case of Mauritius would be one such example

Appendix 1: THE NIGERIAN DRIVERS OF CHANGE STUDY.

The Nigerian DoC report (Heymans and Pycroft, 2005) provides a comprehensive, detailed and devastating critique of the Nigerian situation. The central claim of the paper is that the Nigerian predicament (political-military elite domination, market distortions, poor service delivery, high dependence on oil revenues, pervasive patronage, embedded corruption, widespread poverty, superficial but potentially usable democratization) is ‘structurally induced and institutionalized’ in three ‘deep-rooted constraints: mismanagement of public revenue (particularly from oil); weak formal accountability mechanisms; and the absence of non-oil sector economic growth’ (ibid, 59). In a wide-ranging and forensic review, the DoC report argues that only far-reaching institutional change – built on Nigerian-led coalitions around specific issues, which donors should both encourage and support – will help to reshape these institutional patterns, but it is will have to be on a scale comparable to the ‘undoing of *apartheid* in South Africa and Communism in the Soviet Union’ (v). A number of possible agents and agencies of change are identified, within the political system and beyond it in civil society, ranging from modernisers in the government to NGOs in civil society, including some parts of the media and the private sector.

It would be difficult to dissent from the sharp diagnostic thrust of the report. But the explanatory basis is less clear and the theory upon which the analysis and policy implications rest requires development. Many issues would need to be explored in subsequent follow-up work. For instance:

- I. The central claim of the paper is that the Nigerian predicament is ‘structurally induced and institutionalized’ in those three major problems (see above: mismanagement of oil revenues, an accountability deficit and slow growth in the non-oil economy). But how are they structurally induced? What is the *agency* and process by which this happens? What are the dynamics that have shaped those problems? The jump from structure to institutional pathology appears to be without agent or subject. This is the kind of area where (as in many of the DoC studies) there is need for closer attention to the conceptual tools and causal processes and, in particular, for

greater clarity in defining and deploying the concepts of structure, institution and agency, in order that the causal relations or interactions between them can be better traced and mapped.

- II. If the South African and Soviet cases are examples of the kind and extent of change required, then a clearer explanatory framework of how change might happen in Nigeria would need to be developed. In the SA and Soviet cases, profound and burgeoning economic crises, associated with escalating costs (economic and human) to the supporters of the regime, were amongst the factors that created pressure for change. Those are real structural factors (brought about and maintained by human agency and institutional arrangements, not independent of them) which posed profound choices for agents, namely the leaderships of the National Party and private sector interests in South Africa and the Communist party and state bureaucracy in the USSR. Moreover, in the South African case, the level of industrialization and urbanization had generated powerful inter-ethnic urban political and politicized trade union movements, pushing for radical change over many years. Recognition of these structural factors has been the theoretical starting point for explaining why the elites in those two cases made critical decisions that initiated far-reaching reform. And there is a clear causal line running from (a) structural tensions in the economy and polity occasioned by the long-term effects of prevailing institutional arrangements and external pressure upon them, to (b) concrete agents and agencies facing real choices and challenges. But is Nigeria in a comparable situation? Are the circumstances (or comparable ones) under which those changes in SA and the USSR came about also present in Nigeria? In short, are the structural features of the Nigerian economy and society conducive to the emergence and persistence of social and political forces which could mount an effective challenge for reform, from below? If not, what are the possibilities of reform, initiated from above, as in Japan in the 1860s, Turkey in the 1920s, Thailand in the 1930s and Korea in the 1960s? Or does the evidence suggest a slow middle-road, muddling through between top-down and bottom-up led reform?
- III. The Nigerian DoC is certainly one of the most comprehensive, penetrating and detailed of the many studies. Even then, further work would be needed to understand the relations of the potential drivers of change to the underlying structural features. To take just one example, one of the central claims of the paper is that Nigerian trade unionism has a long history and, despite its fractured history and divided nature, it is identified as a possible agency of change. But what is the size, potential and character of the union movement in the oil dominated economy, and if growth in the *non-oil* economy is slow, how widespread and powerful is non-oil unionism in Nigeria? Is it comparable in size, experience and political ideology to the South African movement? In short, what is the relationship between the

Nigerian economic structure and its oil dependency, on the one hand, and the trade union movement on the other?

- IV. Furthermore, for political scientists one critical issue of concern must always be the sources, forms and distribution of *power* and this would need to be explored much more fully in further work on Nigeria. Where dominant elites compete for control of state power (national and regional), what are the sources, forms and organizational expressions of countervailing power? Do pro-reform elements in the society deploy economic, political or ideological resources? So long as the private sector is state-dependent, it is hardly likely to make persistent and far-reaching demands for reform. So more would need to be known about size, composition, structure and organizational features of the private sector, its ideology, ideas, interests and role in the Nigerian economy, and its relations with the state.
- V. In a context such as this, what explains the persistence of pervasive patrimonial politics? Is it, as Weber might have argued, a reflection of the tenacity of the principles and institutions of 'traditional' politics and authority? If so, in what structural circumstances are those rooted? Has socio-economic development in Nigeria reached the point where this can be transformed? And is this why political parties (substantial in number) have remained so personalized? And how have such personalized parties and patrimonial politics adjusted to recent democratization? The Nigerian DoC rightly stresses that democratization has not been, and is unlikely to be, a magic wand that will initiate the automatic unraveling of patronage politics. It may only promote a diversification and transformation of patronage into different spheres, as has happened in the case of *caciquismo* under Mexican democratization which provided 'new niches in which they (*caciques*, or local leaders, big men) can reproduce themselves' (Hernández, 2005: 273). It may have done just the same thing in the Nigerian context, but we would need to know a great deal more about how it works. And if democracy is unlikely to induce the rapid and far-reaching institutional change which the report calls for, what will? To be able to answer these kinds of question, some theory of change is needed.
- VI. Thus, finally, what theory of political change, or constraints on change, underpins the central thrust of the DoC that Nigerian-led coalitions organized around issues are the most promising agencies of and for reform? There are a number of contenders, though none are referred to explicitly. (a) The most likely candidate is that associated with theories of 'pacted democracy' (Rustow, 1970), for instance, which suggest that developmental strategies and the necessary reforms to bring them about may emerge from agreements (pacts) amongst previously uncoordinated and often conflicting parties where there are incentives to encourage such cooperation, as occurred in Venezuela in 1959 (Karl, 1986). But what

incentives are available for that and how would such coalitions stack up against prevailing distributions of power, and especially state power, in Nigeria? (b) Secondly, and contrariwise, 'resource curse' theories (Ross, 1999; Moore, 2004) suggest that it is very difficult if not highly unlikely that such coalitions could overcome the developmental governance deficits which state access to revenues from a single resource appears to induce. Comparative evidence suggests strongly that only an intense and direct external threat could galvanize the Nigerian elites to forge such coalitions into united agencies for developmental reform to ensure national defensive capability. This external threat is widely regarded as having been a necessary condition in the formation of developmental states of different degrees of developmental commitment (Doner, et al, 2005). (c) Finally, there is increasing support for an older theory which holds that not only democratic accountability but also improvement in governance (and hence developmental governance) is not necessarily a *cause* of growth and development, but a *consequence* of it. Such theory suggests that only when the levels of economic development and diversification, education and communication (amongst other things) have reached a given point will the possibility – indeed the requirement - of substantial reform become realistic, though small-scale and incremental reforms are both possible and probable. Classic work by Lipset (1959, 1994) and more recent work by Carothers (2005) explains this more fully.

Appendix 2: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Drivers of Change – Defining & Refining the Analytical Framework

Background

1. Drivers of Change as a methodology has had two primary objectives:
 - to analyse the context of the country to understand the long-term structural and institutional factors which enable or constrain reform in different countries
 - to improve policy-making and programming by identifying short and medium-term opportunities to support strategic change

2. Twenty DFID country offices have engaged with the Drivers of Change approach; the majority by commissioning a study undertaken by external consultants.⁴⁶ Country offices report that they are using the findings, and increasingly the process of undertaking the study, to:
 - Inform the planning process, i.e. to feed into Country Assistance Plan or Joint Assistance Strategy processes.
 - Improve the quality of engagement with partner governments.
 - Define influencing strategies for use with partner governments.
 - Analyse the risk of interventions and to suggest ways of mitigating these.
 - Strengthen harmonisation processes with other donors.
 - Promote cross-Whitehall and joint working, particularly with the FCO.

3. However, the goals laid out by the Permanent Secretary are more ambitious than this. He said ‘Despite our three-year planning framework, we need to base our programmes on a vision of change over the next 10-15 years.’ The Permanent Secretary wanted the studies to unpack the ‘black box of political will’ that is important to improving DFID’s effectiveness.

4. The review of the uptake of the Drivers of Change approach produced insights on the ‘larger narratives concerning the political nature of the development process in general, and about the political economy of development assistance’, as well as the ‘country specific narratives about historical processes of change and the nature of political power’. The review confirmed that DoC can improve policy-making and programming by identifying the factors which might significantly alter the political environment.

5. To improve the policy-making and programming, DFID needs to refine the conceptual framework that exists. DoC work to date has been an approach – not a prescriptive tool. A number of conceptual frameworks underpinned by different academic disciplines and varying methodologies have evolved through practice. This variety has enabled the analysis to be appropriate to the country context. The challenge for DFID is to retain the

⁴⁶ Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Georgia, Ghana, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Ukraine, Yemen, & Zambia.

flexibility to cope with the diversity of different contexts but embed the studies in a robust conceptual framework with a clear methodology.

Purpose

6. The Effective States Team is commissioning this study to refine the conceptual framework and methodology to make a greater impact on DFID's programming and policy-making.

Scope of Study

7. The scope of the study will be to:

- I. assess the existing framework of structures / institutions / agents to determine the degree of consistency across existing DoC studies; identify which academic disciplines have been used and the corresponding strengths and weaknesses of the analysis.
- II. develop a conceptual framework with a common understanding of the levels of emphasis on politics, economics, international affairs and governance – including if possible clear and coherent theories of change; define the academic arguments underpinning the model.
- III. develop practical guidance which will include a standard set of questions that country offices can use as a starting point; the areas of analysis that anyone undertaking a Drivers of Change study should explore to answer these questions;
- IV. provide an understanding of when to use Drivers of Change and under what circumstances the assumptions of the conceptual framework do and do not hold
- V. devise a mechanism for periodic updating of the analysis to assess future events in terms of continuity and change in the political environment

Methodology

8. The steps will include to:

- I. Familiarise him/herself with the existing studies and guidance material. This will include speaking with those who have done Drivers of Change Studies to understand fully the academic underpinnings and reasons for conducting the type of analysis they did.
- II. Establish a peer review group, in consultation with DFID, to refine the conceptual framework.

- III. Establish a practitioners' review group, in consultation with DFID, to refine the practical guidance note.
- IV. Observe inputs to ongoing studies to inform the formulation of the framework and practical guidance.
- V. Have continuous engagement with the Effective States Team in the development of the conceptual framework and practical guidance note.
- VI. Hold workshops with stakeholders on the conceptual framework and / or practical guidance note, if it is agreed with DFID to be necessary or beneficial.

Reporting

9. The consultant will submit the following reports:
 - Short assessment of the current framework and methodology
 - A draft conceptual framework
 - A report of the major theoretical and practical issues that were raised in consultation with a peer review group about the conceptual framework.
 - A draft final report setting out the conceptual framework
 - A draft practical guidance note that country offices can use as a starting point for their Terms of Reference for a DoC study setting out how best to achieve their objectives
 - A report of the issues raised in consultation with a practitioners' review group about the practical guidance note
 - A draft final practical guidance note
 - A final report including conceptual framework and practical guidance note after final comments from DFID.

Duration and Timeline

10. The duration and timeline will be to deliver:
 - The assessment of the current framework by 31/03/06
 - o 15 days
 - Engagement with ongoing DoC studies
 - o 5 days
 - The draft conceptual framework by 30/04/06
 - o 20 days
 - The draft practical guidance by 16/05/06
 - o 10 days
 - Option for workshops for peer or practitioner review groups
 - o 5 days
 - Final report including conceptual framework and practical guidance note two weeks after final comments received from DFID.

Skills Required

11. The Effective States Team will require an individual with a sound understanding of political science and political economy as well as long-standing experience of governance and development issues. They will need to:

- I. to understand the major approaches and perspectives in the modern analysis of politics
- II. set out the conceptual framework in an accessible manner for non-specialists and specialists alike
- III. make the findings operationally relevant within the context of DFID
- IV. facilitate engagement with the multiple stakeholders of Drivers of Change
- V. engage constructively with DFID and its partners

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