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About this topic guide supplement

GSDRC Topic Guides aim to provide a clear, concise and objective report on findings from rigorous research on critical areas of development policy. Rather than provide policy guidance or recommendations, their purpose is to signpost policymakers and practitioners to the key debates and evidence on the topic of focus, to support informed decision-making.

Statebuilding and peacebuilding, while conceptually distinct, are becoming more closely integrated in academic and policy circles. This publication is one of two supplements to the GSDRC's series of Topic Guides that explore this development:

- *Statebuilding and Peacebuilding in Situations of Conflict and Fragility* looks at the links (and tensions) between statebuilding and peacebuilding, how these activities interact, and how they can be approached in practice. gsdrc.org/topic-guides/statebuilding-and-peacebuilding/
- *State-Society Relations and Citizenship in Situations of Conflict and Fragility* looks at concepts of state-society relations, civic trust, citizenship and socio-political cohesion in relation to statebuilding and peacebuilding.

The publications highlight key issues and debates for each topic covered and identify relevant references. They are to be read in conjunction with the GSDRC's Conflict and Fragile States Topic Guides, in particular the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding chapters. See: gsdrc.org/topic-guides/conflict/ and gsdrc.org/topic-guides/fragile-states/

These supplements were written by Huma Haider (GSDRC). The GSDRC appreciates the contributions of Alina Rocha Menocal (Overseas Development Institute); Alex Stevens (DFID) and Anna Miles (DFID). Comments, questions or documents can be sent to Huma Haider: huma@gsdrc.org

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About GSDRC

GSDRC is a partnership of research institutes, think-tanks and consultancy organisations with expertise in governance, social development, humanitarian and conflict issues. We provide applied knowledge services on demand and online. Our specialist research team supports a range of international development agencies, synthesising the latest evidence and expert thinking to inform policy and practice.

International Development Department, College of Social Sciences
University of Birmingham, B15 2TT, UK
www.gsdrc.org

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Introduction

The impact of violent conflict and fragility on a country's society, economy and political governance is devastating and encompassing. The effects can be tangible and visible, including killed and injured civilians; destroyed or derelict infrastructure; and poor and inadequate public service facilities. They can also be intangible, such as lack of confidence and distrust in government; weak social cohesion and the destruction of norms and values; pervasive sense of fear, disempowerment and insecurity; and pessimism about the future. Addressing both types of effects is essential in conflict-affected and fragile contexts. Statebuilding and peacebuilding processes have often focused primarily, however, on the tangible aspects – demobilising soldiers; improving and restoring physical infrastructure, buildings and institutions; drafting laws and constitutions; and providing technical assistance and training (Pouligny, 2010).

Until very recently, efforts undertaken by the international community to promote statebuilding have focused on the state, resulting in a top-down approach centred on formal institutions. Those working in peacebuilding, on the other hand, have often advocated a bottom-up civil society approach. Increasingly, however, statebuilding and peacebuilding concepts and strategies have evolved in ways that have brought them closer together. Establishing strong public institutions is now considered essential in the promotion of peace; and developing institutions that are responsive to the demands of citizens and inclusive processes that treat members of society as active agents are considered important to statebuilding. The concept of state-society relations and efforts to foster positive, mutually constructive relations has thus received greater attention. The OECD DAC has emphasised the importance of looking beyond the mere forms of institutions in statebuilding processes to state-society relations, state legitimacy and the political and social fabric of society.

This supplement focuses on these crucial intangible aspects of statebuilding and peacebuilding: promoting positive state-society and intra-society relations; restoring or generating trust in government and public institutions and trust among citizens; and fostering notions of citizenship and socio-political cohesion. Left unaddressed, statebuilding and peacebuilding efforts are unlikely to succeed.

Marc, A., Willman, A., Aslam, G., & Rebosio, M. with Balasuriya, K., 2013., 'Understanding state-society connectedness', chapter 2 in *Societal Dynamics and Fragility. Engaging Societies in Responding to Fragile Situations*, World Bank, Washington, D.C.

<http://issuu.com/world.bank.publications/docs/9780821396568/1?e=1107022/2829928>

The Weberian model of state-building, in which the state is viewed as the primary set of institutions that should be supported to perform certain functions, has dominated international state-building efforts. In contrast, much less emphasis has been placed on understanding society. This chapter addresses the significance of societal dynamics for understanding fragility. It explores how the state evolves in relationship with society, the state and forces in society share power and responsibilities, and the state operates through individuals who are influenced by social dynamics. In this way, states and societies are both mutually dependent and mutually constitutive.

Pouligny, B., 2010, 'State-Society Relations and the Intangible Dimensions of State Resilience and Statebuilding: A Bottom Up Perspective', EUI Working Paper, no. 33, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute (EUI), Florence

http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/13855/RSCAS_2010_33.pdf;jsessionid=669E517DE74ED82FEA1FEF93BC5809A1?sequence=1

Crucial social and cultural elements underpin state institutions and ensure that they function. This is especially important to understand in 'fragile' settings. This paper argues that conventional perspectives need to be broadened beyond tangible dimensions of state resilience, institutions and statebuilding to include intangible dimensions. International actors need to gain an understanding of the relationships, structures and belief systems that underpin institutions, and of the multiplicity and diversity of political institutions, cultures, and logics through which statebuilding processes may be supported.

Interpeace, 2010, 'Voices of Civil Society Organisations on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding', Background Paper, prepared as an input into the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, Interpeace, Geneva

<http://www.interpeace.org/resource/background-paper-voices-of-civil-society-organizations/>

What are the views of civil society organisations (CSOs) on statebuilding and peacebuilding? This report presents the findings of a consultation designed to input into the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (Timor-Leste, April 2010). CSOs argue that the way that peacebuilding and statebuilding processes are undertaken is critically important: there is a need to focus not only on what is done, but how things are done. Inclusive and participatory processes are essential in order to address conflict and to ensure that statebuilding and peacebuilding can be complementary.

World Bank, 2011, 'From Violence to Resilience: Restoring Confidence and Transforming Institutions', in *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development*, World Bank, Washington DC, ch.3

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDRS/Resources/WDR2011_Chapter3.pdf

How can countries escape the vicious cycle of fragility and move toward a virtuous cycle of confidence-building and institutional transformation, especially in the areas of citizen security, justice, and jobs? This chapter sets out the Report's framework as an expanding spiral because these processes repeat over time as countries enter and exit multiple transition moments. Even as one set of immediate priorities is resolved, other risks emerge and require a repeated cycle of action to bolster institutional resilience. This process takes at least a generation. Societies undertaking this endeavour face a legacy of pervasive and enduring mistrust, which makes collective action to address challenges or provide public goods difficult. Outsiders cannot restore confidence and transform institutions for countries because these processes are domestic and must be nationally led. But to help countries restore peace and reduce regional and global instability, international actors can provide external support and incentives and help reduce external stresses.

World Bank, 2011, 'Restoring Confidence: Moving Away from the Brink', in World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development, World Bank, Washington DC, ch. 4

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDRS/Resources/WDR2011_Chapter4.pdf

This chapter reviews lessons from national experience in restoring confidence by mobilising 'inclusive-enough' coalitions of stakeholders and by delivering results. Collaborative coalitions often combine government and nongovernmental leadership to build national support for change and signal an irreversible break with the past. Restoring confidence in situations of low trust also means delivering some fast results, since government announcements of change will not be credible without tangible action.

World Bank, 2011, 'Conflict, Security and Development: Practical Country Directions and Options', in World Development Report 2011, World Bank, Washington DC, ch. 8

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDRS/Resources/WDR2011_Chapter8.pdf

How have different countries recovered from episodes of violence? What practical tools exist for confidence-building? This chapter provides basic principles and a toolkit of options emerging from country lessons, showing how these can be adapted to different contexts. Key principles for sustained violence prevention and recovery are: inclusion (although coalitions need not be 'all inclusive'); early results to help build citizen confidence; establishing the basic institutional functions that provide citizen security, justice, and jobs; and embracing pragmatic, best-fit options to address immediate challenges. Within these general principles, each country should tailor their own strategy based on: the types of violent threats faced; institutional challenges; combinations of international and external stresses; stakeholders who need to be involved to make a difference; and transition opportunities.

See the contents list of the full *World Development Report 2011* at: <http://go.worldbank.org/QLKJWJB8X0>

State-society relations

State-society relations are defined by DFID as 'interactions between state institutions and societal groups to negotiate how public authority is exercised and how it can be influenced by people. They are focused on issues such as defining the mutual rights and obligations of state and society, negotiating how public resources should be allocated and establishing different modes of representation and accountability' (DFID, 2010, p. 15).

The focus is not on particular institutional forms but rather on the relations and relational functions of state and society institutions. Neither the state nor civil society is seen as acting in isolation. Rather, the state derives its legitimacy through its interaction with citizens¹ and an organised and active civil society. The Citizenship Development Research Centre views a citizen as 'someone with rights, aspirations and responsibilities to others in the community and to the state. This implies a relationship among citizens, and between the state and all those living within its borders' (Benequista, 2010, p. 4). Citizenship confers various benefits, including the right to enjoy a nationality; to vote, hold office and participate in political processes; to access education, health and other goods; to access the labour market beyond the informal sector; to own businesses, land and other forms of property; and to security of residence and freedom of movement.

The nature of the political settlement can greatly impact upon state-society relations. In many fragile and conflict-affected states, relations are based on patronage and lack of accountability. The prominence of informal institutions and relationships and unofficial processes result in divergences between formal systems and rules and actual practice. Political elites, who benefit from patronage and income from natural resource rents and criminal activities, often have little incentive to engage with citizens and to build effective public authority. The concentration of power in a few elites also limits the participation of citizens from public life. In some situations, citizens may be excluded from public life through state repression and violence. This results in a legacy of negative and weak state-society relations. Efforts to promote an inclusive political settlement can re-shape relations and contribute to political and social transformation.

¹ The use of the term 'citizen' instead of 'the poor' gives more emphasis to the relationship to government and to others persons and groups in society.

Much of the focus in statebuilding has been on building the capacity of central state institutions. Attention must also be paid to supporting civil society and citizen engagement such that they can hold the state accountable and make it responsive to society. Where donor policy and funding has been directed at both state and civil society institutions, these interventions have often been compartmentalised based on a traditional state-civil society divide. Strategies and policies are needed that focus on the interaction between institutions and citizens at all stages of war-to-peace transition, from peace negotiations and implementation of agreements to post-conflict peacebuilding. The challenge is to build peace alliances that stretch horizontally and vertically between different levels of society.

Greater attention also needs to be paid to questions of power and to altering elite incentives. External actors will find it difficult, though, to directly influence internal political dynamics. It may thus be more effective to target international behaviour and initiatives that affect incentives, such as management of extractive industries, international tax evasion and corruption. Statebuilding approaches also need to go beyond modelling the relationship between state, elites and an undisaggregated 'society', and ask who is represented by each group, who participates in state-society negotiations, and whose demands are being expressed? For example, donor approaches to statebuilding typically have not engaged with existing knowledge about gender power relations and how statebuilding processes impact women and men differently.

Marc, A., Willman, A., Aslam, G., and Rebosio, M., with Balasuriya, K., 2013, 'Understanding state-society connectedness'. Chapter 2 in Societal Dynamics and Fragility. Engaging Societies in Responding to Fragile Situations. World Bank, Washington, D.C.

<http://issuu.com/world.bank.publications/docs/9780821396568/1?e=1107022/2829928>

The Weberian model of state-building, in which the state is viewed as the primary set of institutions that should be supported to perform certain functions, has dominated international state-building efforts. In contrast, much less emphasis has been placed on understanding society. This chapter addresses the significance of societal dynamics for understanding fragility. It explores how the state evolves in relationship with society, the state and forces in society share power and responsibilities, and the state operates through individuals who are influenced by social dynamics. In this way, states and societies are both mutually dependent and mutually constitutive.

Benequista, N., 2010, 'Putting Citizens at the Centre: Linking States and Societies for Responsive Governance - A Policy-maker's Guide to the Research of the Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability', Prepared for the DFID Conference on 'The Politics of Poverty, Elites, Citizens and States' 21-23 June, Sunningdale, UK

<http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/PDF/Outputs/CentreOnCitizenship/Citizenship-DRC-Policy-Findings-Paper-2010.pdf>

How does citizen engagement contribute to responsive governance? This paper summarises ten years of research from the Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation, and Accountability, presenting the key findings of more than 150 case studies of citizen engagement. It argues that existing donor programmes fail to recognise the full potential of citizen engagement, resulting in lack of understanding of the complex relationship between citizens and the state that shapes governance outcomes. Citizens need greater political knowledge and awareness of rights and of agency as a first step to claiming rights and acting for themselves. Involvement in associations has been an effective way of strengthening notions of citizenship and citizen engagement, which can contribute to more responsive states.

Cornwall, A., Robins, S. and Von Lieres, B., 2011, 'States of Citizenship: Contexts and Cultures of Public Engagement and Citizen Action', Working Paper 364, IDS, Brighton

http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.2040-0209.2011.00363_2.x/pdf

What is the nature of the citizen-state relationship and how do different kinds of states make different kinds of citizenship possible? Drawing on case studies from the Citizenship Development Research Centre, this paper contends that mechanisms aimed at enhancing citizen engagement need to be contextualised in the states of citizenship in which they are applied. It calls for more attention to be focused on understanding trajectories of citizenship experience and practice in particular kinds of states. It suggests that whilst efforts have been made by donors to get to grips with history and context, less attention has been given to exploring the implications of the dissonance between the normative dimensions of global narratives of participation and accountability, and the lived experience of civic engagement and the empirical realities of 'civil society' in diverse kinds of states. By exploring instantiations of citizenship in different kinds of states, the paper reflects on what citizen engagement comes to imply in these contexts. In doing so, it draws attention to the diverse ways in which particular subject-positions and forms of identification are articulated in the pursuit of concrete social and political projects.

See also a two-page IDS research summary of this paper: <http://www.ids.ac.uk/files/dmfile/Rs363.pdf>

Castillejo, C., 2011, 'Building a State that Works for Women: Integrating Gender into Post-Conflict State Building', FRIDE, Madrid <http://fride.org/publication/896/building-a-state-that-works-for-women-integrating-gender-into-post-conflict-state-building>

What role do women play in statebuilding? How do statebuilding processes affect women's participation? Support for statebuilding has become the dominant model for international engagement in post-conflict contexts, yet donor approaches lack substantial gender analysis and are missing opportunities to promote gender equality. This paper presents findings from a research project on the impact of post-conflict statebuilding on women's citizenship. It

argues that gender inequalities are linked to the underlying political settlement, and that donors must therefore address gender as a fundamentally political issue.

DFID, 2010, 'Building Peaceful States and Societies: A DFID Practice Paper', Department for International Development, London

<http://www.gsdr.org/docs/open/CON75.pdf>

Initiative for Peacebuilding, 2008, 'State-Society Analytical Framework', Democratisation and Transitional Justice Cluster, Initiative for Peacebuilding

http://www.initiativeforpeacebuilding.eu/resources/State_Society_Analytical_Framework.pdf

Rowland, N., and Smith, C., 2014, Rebuilding State-Society Relations in Post-War States: Assessing a Theory of Change approach to local governance reform in Timor-Leste, Justice and Security Research Programme, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), London, UK

<http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/Output/196852/>

This paper analyses the Theory of Change underlying The Asia Foundation's local governance reform programme in Timor-Leste. It highlights a number of tensions between programme approaches and the development of state-society relations. For example, the goal of raising village activism and therefore potential criticisms of central government projects and activities for some widens rather than reduces the state-societal gap, creating conflict not consensus. Reforming state-society relations cannot be achieved via a solely technical approach to local governance, but requires both deeper and wider political engagement across society and state as a whole.

Additional resources

For discussion and resources on **weak state-society relations** as a characteristic of fragility, see Chapter 2 (Causes and characteristics of fragility) of the fragile states topic guide. <http://www.gsdr.org/topic-guides/fragile-states/>

For discussion and resources on **strengthening citizen engagement** in statebuilding processes, see strategies for external engagement in Chapter 5 (Statebuilding in fragile contexts) of the fragile states guide.

Further discussion on **gender and citizenship** is available in the gender guide.

<http://www.gsdr.org/topic-guides/gender/gender-and-citizenship/>

For discussion and resources on **political settlements**, see:

- **Inclusive political settlements and peace processes** in the 'Statebuilding and peacebuilding in situations of conflict and fragility' supplement: <http://www.gsdr.org/topic-guides/statebuilding-and-peacebuilding/>
- **Political settlements** in Chapter 5 of the fragile states guide <http://www.gsdr.org/topic-guides/fragile-states/>
- **Peace agreements** in Chapter 3 (Preventing and managing violent conflict) of the conflict guide <http://www.gsdr.org/topic-guides/conflict/>

State legitimacy

State legitimacy is a key aspect of state-society relations. State repression and violence, which occurs in many conflict-affected contexts, results in negative experiences of citizens with the state, a legacy of mistrust, and rejection of the legitimacy of state institutions. In situations of fragility, the inability or unwillingness of states to provide for the welfare of citizens and to improve standards of living has also undermined trust between the state and society and legitimacy. The development of state capacity to manage competing interests and to be responsive to citizen's needs thus has the potential to improve legitimacy.

State legitimacy can derive from a range of sources, including the effectiveness of public institutions in their performance of various functions, such as service delivery, taxation and social protection systems; and their degree of representation and accountability. Legitimacy does not derive solely from effectively functioning institutions, however. Such institutions must also resonate with societies in order for them to be considered legitimate and to become embedded in society. This involves the penetration of the state into society such that citizens take the presence of the state and its rules for granted; they accept the state's right to rule and its position as the highest political authority.

While international development actors can assist in developing state capacity such that they can be responsive to society, their ability to directly affect legitimacy is limited. State institutions advocated by external actors often correspond with Western state practices. These may not fit with local context and historical processes and may not be socially, politically or culturally appropriate. In such cases, the institutions are unlikely to be perceived as legitimate and to contribute to positive state-society relations.

Donors should invest more in understanding socio-political contexts, how local societies relate to the state and how historical and cultural factors shape public perceptions. They should seek to engage with communities and non-state institutions. This would contribute to an awareness of institutions that resonate with the population and the conditions in which state legitimacy is likely and unlikely to develop.

Mcloughlin, C., 2014, 'State legitimacy: Concept Brief', Developmental Leadership Program, University of Birmingham. <http://www.dlprog.org/publications/state-legitimacy.php>

This brief offers a concise introduction to the core elements of the concept of state legitimacy. It addresses four questions: How is the concept of legitimacy best understood? Why is it important? How do states accrue legitimacy? And what policy implications follow from this?

OECD, 2010, 'The State's Legitimacy in Fragile Situations: Unpacking Complexity', Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/governance-peace/conflictandfragility/docs/the%20States%20legitimacy%20in%20FS.pdf>

State legitimacy provides the basis for rule by consent rather than coercion, but in fragile situations multiple, conflicting sources of legitimacy co-exist. How can the complex interactions between these different sources be better understood and constructively combined? Donors should pay particular attention to: (a) legitimacy deriving from shared beliefs and traditions; and (b) the processes of state-society interaction that nurture state capacity and legitimacy. Trying to strengthen state capacity and legitimacy in very fragile environments by supporting the creation of rational-legal political institutions will not work.

Lemay-Hébert, N., 2009, 'Statebuilding without Nation-building? Legitimacy, State Failure and the Limits of the Institutional Approach', Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding', vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 21-45

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17502970802608159>

What is state collapse and how should external actors address it? This essay reviews the literature, outlining the 'institutional' and 'legitimacy' approaches to the state and statebuilding that emerge. It argues that to be effective, statebuilding needs to consider both the efficiency of state institutions and their legitimacy, (and in terms of the latter, the impact of external intervention on socio-political cohesion, or 'nation-building'). Statebuilding and nation-building should thus be understood as a single process, in which local ownership and perceptions are vital.

Roberts, D., 2008, 'Post-conflict Statebuilding and State Legitimacy: From Negative to Positive Peace?', Development and Change, vol. 39, no. 4, pp. 537-555

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2008.00495.x/abstract>

What is the potential for statebuilding interventions to foster domestic legitimacy? This article advocates a shift in current approaches to statebuilding. Rather than inserting modern institutions that create external legitimacy, statebuilding should focus on closing the gap between civil society and the state. More emphasis should be placed on building domestic legitimacy by fulfilling basic welfare needs. This approach would stimulate local-level state legitimacy while formalising social justice and positive peacebuilding.

HelpAge International, 2011, 'Strengthening State-Citizen Relations in Fragile Contexts: The Role of Cash Transfers', Briefing no. 3, HelpAge International <http://www.pension-watch.net/download/4dc156c8e9b94>

What is the role of cash transfers in strengthening state-citizen relations in the context of long-term development in fragile states and situations? Using examples based on 18 months research consisting of desk study in London and field work undertaken in Sierra Leone, northern Kenya and Sudan, the report argues that social protection programmes in the form of cash transfers, if well designed, could play a significant role in strengthening state-citizen relations. The nature of programme design and programme ownership is critical to shaping this relationship, which is of crucial importance in fragile contexts.

Prichard, W., 2010, 'Citizen-State Relations: Improving Governance through Tax Reform', OECD, Paris

<https://www.oecd.org/dac/governance-peace/governance/docs/46008596.pdf>

How can tax reform enhance citizen-state relations? This report examines the role of taxation in building more responsive and accountable government, and in expanding state capacity. It finds that the specific character of tax systems and of tax reform is very important to strengthening connections between taxation and broader governance gains. Governments and donors can strengthen tax-governance links through three types of actions: 1) specific measures to enhance and re-orient the dominant tax reform agenda; 2) support for civil society actors to engage in debates about tax issues; and 3) managing the provision of aid in ways that maximise positive revenue-raising incentives and local accountability.

Additional resources

- Chapter 5 (Statebuilding in fragile contexts) of the fragile states topic guide.
<http://www.gsdrc.org/topic-guides/fragile-states/>
- GSDRC topic guide on the **Legitimacy of states and non-state armed actors**
<http://www.gsdrc.org/topic-guides/the-legitimacy-of-states-and-armed-non-state-actors/>

Interaction of formal and informal institutions

While formal state institutions may be weak or deemed illegitimate in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, there are often informal institutions that persist and retain legitimacy. These institutions are diverse and may include community mechanisms or customary local governance institutions. Often, they fulfil some of the functions expected of the state.

Statebuilding initiatives have often focused primarily on formal institutions and their capacities at the central level, sidelining sub-state and informal institutions. This has prevented the evolution of an organic process of reform driven by local actors that could allow for greater resonance and legitimacy with citizens. There is a growing awareness of a need to pay attention to existing informal institutions. This may stem from pragmatic acceptance of their existence; a recognition that they represent local culture and practice; and/or the view that they can provide a bridge between state and society. Informal institutions may improve public service delivery; help stimulate investment; facilitate the transition to more inclusive, rules-based governance; and promote social reconciliation in situations of conflict.

In some cases, informal local governance institutions can work synergistically with formal institutions. In other cases, however, they may compete with formal institutions in negative ways and undermine them, particularly in the case of patronage networks. Critics view such informal institutions as undermining norms of governance and citizenship. Further, local and informal institutions may not necessarily function better than the state and can in some cases be discriminatory, particularly towards women and youth. Working with informal actors does not necessarily mean endorsement though if donors can engage in dialogue with them with a view to securing inclusive rights. The key to adopting an institutionally diverse approach in statebuilding and peacebuilding processes is to avoid competition between informal and formal state institutions. It is important to understand the conditions in which they can be beneficially linked.

Unsworth, S., 2010, 'An Upside Down View of Governance', Institute of Development Studies, Brighton

<http://www2.ids.ac.uk/futurestate/pdfs/AnUpside-downViewofGovernance.pdf>

How can effective, accountable public authority be increased? This paper synthesises research findings from the Centre for the Future State. It explores how public authority is created through processes of bargaining between state and society actors, and the interaction of formal and informal institutions. Findings highlight the need for a fundamental reassessment of existing assumptions about governance and development. Informal institutions and personalised relationships are pervasive and powerful, but they can contribute to progressive as well as to regressive outcomes. Rather than focusing on rules-based reform, policymakers should consider using indirect strategies to influence local actors.

Marc, A., Willman, A., Aslam, G., and Rebosio, M. with Balasuriya, K., 2013, 'Social Cohesion and interactions between institutions'. Chapter 5 in Societal Dynamics and Fragility. Engaging Societies in Responding to Fragile Situations, World Bank, Washington, D.C.

<http://issuu.com/world.bank.publications/docs/9780821396568/1?e=1107022/2829928>

The interaction between institutions in society is a crucial aspect of social cohesion. This chapter focuses on interactions between formal, state institutions and customary institutions. These institutions can, in practice, operate in conflict or in synergy. Sometimes the relationship between customary and formal institutions can be unproductive - for example, where customary leaders transfer their accountability from local people to state institutions, or where customary institutions are completely co-opted by the state. The cumulative effect of unproductive interactions is increased fragmentation in society, whereas positive interactions have been shown in some cases to improve social cohesion, particularly where civil society organizations have been able to act as mediators between the state and society.

Heathershaw, J. and Lambach, D., 2008, 'Introduction: Post-Conflict Spaces and Approaches to Statebuilding', Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 269-289

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17502970802436296#.Vw0HcyZC2kA>

What can an analysis of 'space' in post-conflict situations tell us about existing theoretical approaches to statebuilding and peacebuilding? This article argues that post-conflict spaces have to be understood as fields of power where sovereignty is constantly contested and negotiated among global, elite and local actors. Understanding these spaces

means breaking out of the dominant liberal peace model and 'single sovereign' framework. It requires recognition of the resilience of local space and importance of elite-subordinate dynamics of patronage and informal structures of authority. This makes it possible to discern some of the logics that govern how power and space shape each other in post-conflict settings.

Giovannetti, G. et al., 2009, 'Statebuilding and Social Cohesion', Chapter 7 in European Report on Development: Overcoming Fragility in Africa – Forging a New European Approach, European Communities, Brussels, pp. 90-103
http://erd.eui.eu/media/fullreport/ERD%202009_Chapter%207_EN_LowRes.pdf

How can the international community help national reformers to build effective, legitimate and resilient states in post-conflict settings? This chapter discusses the complex intangible dimensions of state-building – state-society relations and negotiation processes. It argues that building the capacity of formal institutions needs to be complemented by actions that take into account the roles of perceptions and expectations, of bottom-up consultations and of the degree to which populations feel represented by public institutions. It recommends a gradual, long-term and socio-culturally engaged approach to state-building, which external actors may support but not lead.

Additional resources

For further discussion and resources on **non-state actors**, see:

- **Working within local contexts and institutions** in Chapter 5 (Statebuilding in fragile contexts) of the fragile states topic guide. <http://www.gsdrc.org/topic-guides/fragile-states/>
- **Non-state actors and peacebuilding** in Chapter 4 (Recovering from violent conflict) of the conflict guide. <http://www.gsdrc.org/topic-guides/conflict/>

Statelessness

'Statelessness', in a strictly legal sense, refers to individuals or groups who are not considered nationals by any state. Such persons have few rights in a state-driven international system. Individuals and groups may become stateless through forced migration, during periods of violent conflict and/or political transition. Their statelessness may persist from the absence of rule of law in weak states with poor governance. Citizens can also lose citizenship through revocation or withdrawal. This can stem from exclusive nationalist ideologies during periods of political unrest and can be used as a tool of war.

Statelessness can also result from the denial of 'effective' exercise of citizenship rights even where individuals and groups hold legal citizenship. Discrimination against specific minority groups through exclusionary state rules, norms and practices can deny them from accessing their rights. Ethnic identity or gender, for example, rather than citizenship identity, can determine access to state entitlements and social rights.

The irregular distribution of citizenship and the failure of the state to represent the interests of all citizens is likely to impact upon societal stability and the probability of conflict. Denial of citizenship and exclusion deprives the stateless and marginalised from key goods and may result in lack of trust in state institutions. It may also result in a sense of humiliation and alienation that can transform into group mobilisation and fuel violent conflict.

Sub-state level institutions can also be exclusionary. In some cases, citizenship may be inclusive at the national level while local-level governance may remain exclusive – resulting in a multi-tiered citizenship structure. In many African countries, for example, women have little contact with the formal state and are constrained in their exercise of citizenship rights. Many aspects of their lives are governed instead by local, customary systems that often limit their rights. They are unable to hold the state accountable in these areas.

Statebuilding and peacebuilding processes in situations of conflict and fragility can allow for changes in power relations, state structures and institutions, and the relationship between the state and citizens. In order to achieve peace and stability, it is important to ensure that specific groups are not deliberately and unfairly excluded from citizenship or from exercising their right to citizenship. It is necessary to understand and address not only the mechanisms that create statelessness but also those that perpetuate deprivation. In the shorter to medium-term, donors need to ensure that stateless groups are not neglected in assistance programmes.

Blitz, B. K. and Lynch, M. eds., 2009, Statelessness and the Benefits of Citizenship: A Comparative Study, Oxford Brookes University, UK http://www.udhr60.ch/report/statelessness_paper0609.pdf

Statelessness undermines the promotion of human security understood not only as violent threats to individuals but also in the context of vulnerabilities caused by poverty, lack of state capacity and various forms of inequity. Yet,

statelessness and the value of acquiring or re-acquiring citizenship has received minimal attention from scholars, development agencies and monitoring bodies. This book presents research on the benefits of citizenship as a means of countering human rights violations and social, economic and political instability. It stresses that if stateless groups are not given particular attention by donors in social assistance programmes and if issues of citizenship are not addressed, it is unlikely that aid policies will reach them.

Adejumobi, S., 2001, 'Citizenship, Rights, and the Problem of Conflicts and Civil Wars in Africa', *Human Rights Quarterly*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 148-170 <http://muse.jhu.edu/article/13753>

How central has the issue of citizenship and rights been to internal conflicts in Africa? This article moves away from political and economic explanations of conflict and argues that underlying most of the civil wars in Africa are issues of citizenship and rights. Often the state institutionalises ethnic differences and privileges through a divided and exclusionary definition of citizenship. Negotiating peace and stability will require reframing citizenship from a group to a national or 'universal' perspective.

Castillejo, C., 2008, 'Strengthening Women's Citizenship in the Context of State Building: The Experience of Sierra Leone', *Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior (FRIDE)*, Madrid

<http://fride.org/publication/558/strengthening-womens-citizenship-seminar>

How can women's citizenship in developing countries be strengthened? In many African countries women have little contact with the formal state and their lives are governed by customary governance systems that seriously limit their rights and opportunities for political participation. This is particularly true for women in fragile states, where the formal state is weak and inaccessible. Based on field research in Sierra Leone, this paper examines how processes of post-conflict statebuilding have redrawn the boundaries of authority between the formal state and customary governance systems, and thereby provided new citizenship opportunities for women. The paper explores the changes that are taking place in women's rights, women's political participation and women's mobilisation in Sierra Leone, in the context of statebuilding. It also makes recommendations on how donors can support the strengthening of women's citizenship within their support for statebuilding in Africa.

Case studies

The project, '**Citizenship and Displacement in the Great Lakes Region**', run by The International Refugee Rights Initiative in partnership with Rema Ministries and the Social Science Research Council, has published a series of case studies on citizenship and belonging in the Great Lakes region and forced displacement:

Hovil, L. et al., 2009, "'Two People Can't Share the Same Pair of Shoes": Citizenship, Land and the Return of Refugees to Burundi', Working Paper no. 2

<http://www.refugee-rights.org/Publications/Papers/2009/TwoPeopleCantWeartheSamePairOfShoes.111009.pdf>

Hovil, L. et al., 2010, 'Who Belongs Where? Conflict, Displacement, Land and Identity in North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo' Working Paper no. 3

<http://www.refugee-rights.org/Publications/Papers/2010/Who%20Belongs%20Where.EN.March2010.pdf>

Hovil, L. et al., 2010, 'A Dangerous Impasse: Rwandan Refugees in Uganda', Working Paper no. 4

<http://allafrica.com/download/resource/main/main/idadatcs/00020187:8e216155a19bfd8b58039d1bc7e03045.pdf>

Additional resources

For discussion and resources on **social exclusion and inclusiveness**, see:

Exclusion, rights and citizenship in the social exclusion topic guide.

<http://www.gsdr.org/topic-guides/social-exclusion/causes/exclusion-rights-and-citizenship/>

Inequality, exclusion and marginalisation in Chapter 1 in the conflict topic guide.

<http://www.gsdr.org/topic-guides/conflict/>

Social capital, social cohesion and inclusiveness in Chapter 4 in the conflict topic guide.

Social exclusion and horizontal inequalities in Chapter 2 in the fragile states topic guide.

<http://www.gsdr.org/topic-guides/fragile-states/>

Civic trust and socio-political cohesion

Social and political fragmentation and weak civic and inter-group trust are often characteristics of situations of fragility and violent conflict. Such divisions can contribute to and be an outcome of fragility and conflict. In situations of fragility, political identity, fragmentation and weak state institutions reinforce each other. They undermine state legitimacy and the formation of strong nation-wide governance systems; weaken interpersonal trust; and divide citizens. In situations of violent conflict, processes of 'othering' and dehumanisation destroy social relations and networks and leave a legacy of deep mistrust and fear of others. Persistent divisions in the aftermath of conflict result in an unstable peace and the possibility of renewed violence.

Weak social cohesion and distrust also impact negatively on perceptions of political community and on civic action. People are reluctant to engage with the 'other', hindering the development of civic engagement and collective action. In addition, fear and insecurity and feelings of powerlessness and marginalisation from conflict can also weaken a sense of individual civic agency. Where the state is involved in violence and repression, whether as a perpetrator, by active complicity or passive omission, such sentiments can be more pronounced.

In addition to withdrawing from citizenship, citizens may also respond to or cope with violence by establishing parallel governance or security structures. These can further weaken the legitimacy of state institutions and exacerbate inter-group divisions where such parallel structures cater solely to specific groups.

It is important for statebuilding and peacebuilding efforts to take into account and to understand the role of state weakness and state and private violence in limiting civic agency and undermining socio-political cohesion. Efforts are needed to ensure that citizens can relate to each other in civil or non-violent ways and to foster a national identity that transcends divisions.

Kaplan, S., 2009, 'Identity in Fragile States: Social Cohesion and State building', *Development*, vol. 52, no. 4, pp. 466-472 <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/development/journal/v52/n4/pdf/dev200957a.pdf>

What role does identity play in determining a state's robustness? This article argues that the relationship between identities, institutions, social cohesion and state legitimacy is critical to understanding social and political progress in fragile states. States that lack a common identity will fail to progress. International actors should support fragile states to develop their own development and state-building strategies, and build on their own capacities for good governance.

Marc, A., Willman, A., Aslam, G., and Rebosio, M., with Balasuriya, K., 2013, 'Designing policies and programmes to build social cohesion', Chapter 8 in *Societal Dynamics and Fragility. Engaging Societies in Responding to Fragile Situations*, World Bank, Washington, D.C.

<http://issuu.com/world.bank.publications/docs/9780821396568/1?e=1107022/2829928>

Viewing fragility through a societal lens means opening up aid beyond the state and addressing social fractures. It requires understanding how groups perceive fairness and justice and developing programmes that are sensitive to those norms. Donors must avoid bringing their own bias about what is fair and just. Interventions that have better connected states and societies have targeted inequality, promoted tolerance, addressed healing and trauma, restored the livelihoods of conflict-affected communities and supported community-driven development. None of these are straightforward or always successful.

Carter, R., 2013, 'Interventions to increase levels of trust in society', GSDRC Helpdesk Report no. 941, Birmingham

<http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/hdq941.pdf>

This report presents illustrative cases of interventions that have involved building and/or measuring trust levels in society in four areas: 1) social accountability, 2) community driven development, 3) tax-related interventions and 4) transformative social protection.

Browne, E., 2013, 'State Fragility and Social Cohesion', GSDRC Helpdesk Report no. 1027, Birmingham

<http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/hdq1027.pdf>

This report reviews the relationship between social cohesion and state fragility – focusing on literature from 2010 onwards. There is no clear empirical understanding in the literature of how social cohesion contributes to state resilience or fragility, as it is very difficult to measure, and to assess independently other variables that affect state fragility.

See also: Pearce, J. and McGee, R., eds., 2009, 'Violence, Social Action and Research', *IDS Bulletin*, vol. 40, no. 3, Institute of Development Studies: Brighton

<http://www.ids.ac.uk/go/idspublication/violence-social-action-and-research>

Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability, 2011, 'Blurring the Boundaries: Citizen Action Across States and Societies', Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton

<http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/PDF/Outputs/CentreOnCitizenship/cdrc.2011-blurring.pdf>

This report synthesises the findings of ten years of research from the Development Resource Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability. Findings suggest that governments often become more capable, accountable and responsive when state-led reform to strengthen institutions of accountability and social mobilisation occur simultaneously. Further, change happens not just through strategies that work on both sides of the governance supply and demand equation, but also through strategies that work across them: it is important to link champions of change from both state and society.

Additional resources

For further discussion and resources on **social fragmentation** and **identity politics**, see Chapter 1 (Understanding violent conflict) of the conflict topic guide: <http://www.gsdrc.org/topic-guides/conflict/>

Intra-society relations

When violence and fragility destroy 'social fabrics', it is essential to understand how people can begin to interact again and how inter-group relationships can recover. This is also critical for the prevention of violent conflict and fragility. Developing institutions that can mitigate inter-group conflict by focusing on individual protections and peaceful resolution of conflict are important but insufficient areas of reform. The persistence of intense divisions and hostilities can prevent these institutions from functioning properly. Efforts to transform hostile relationships into more positive and constructive ones (often referred to as coexistence and 'reconciliation') are long term processes that require specific attention. They should be integrated into political, economic and other dimensions of peacebuilding and statebuilding. Actions and processes must be designed to break down, rather than reinforce, the dynamics of inter-group hostilities and divisions. This often entails the promotion of multiple identities instead of a narrow focus on one salient feature prominent during conflict.

In many situations of violent conflict, there was a history of coexistence. This indicates that identities were created and politicized rather than inherent; and that relationships can be transformed. Transformation requires sustained interactions across divides, rehumanisation of the 'other', and the renewal of trust and cooperation across groups. Various strategies have been adopted, including dialogue and inter-group exchange, problem-solving workshops, working together to achieve shared goals, peace education, artistic performances, and media campaigns designed to reframe the 'other'. These should take place alongside efforts to combat exclusion and to ensure inclusive access to and participation in political, economic and social opportunities and benefits.

Initiatives to promote coexistence and reconciliation processes can be undertaken by a variety of institutions and actors – local, national, international, at all levels of society. They include religious, business, and political leaders; artists and media personalities; local and international NGOs and donors. Although interventions in post-conflict and fragile environments often focus on reconstructing or aiding the government, many coexistence and reconciliation activities come not from the 'centre', but from the 'periphery' of societies. The participation of civil society organisations, for example, can broaden spaces for interaction without violence, connect people and restore plurality. It is important to support initiatives at the periphery, while addressing structural changes at the centre.

It is also critical to recognize, however, that civil society actors may not necessarily be dedicated to reconciliation and peace processes. Civil society groups may be linked with political groups, and there have been cases where academics, media, diaspora groups and religious leaders have contributed instead to violent conflict. Development actors should consider the composition of civil society in their support to the periphery.

Blagojevic, B., 2007, 'Peacebuilding in Ethnically Divided Societies', Peace Review, vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 555-562

http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10402650701681186#.Vw0J_CZC2kA

How can peacebuilding be effective in contexts with a legacy of ethnic wars, ethnic hostilities, and ethnic intolerance? This study argues that 'reconciliation' must be incorporated into peacebuilding efforts in order to achieve post-conflict development in ethnically divided societies and advocates a 'Peacebuilding through Reconciliation' approach. It views reconciliation as the transformation of relationships. This involves creating alliances for the benefit of the common good; and appealing to individual and group rationality to overcome destructive emotions for the sake of development. Whether peacebuilding is taking place at political, economic, social or infrastructural levels, it is important that peacebuilding processes are designed to break down, rather than reinforce, the dynamics of ethnic hostilities and ethnic intolerance.

De Weijer, F. and Kilnes, U., 2012, 'Strengthening Civil Society? Reflections on international engagement in fragile states', ECDPM Discussion Paper No. 35.

<http://ecdpm.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/DP-135-Civil-Society-International-Engagement-Fragile-States-2012.pdf>

Recognition of the importance of civil society has risen on the international agenda in recent years. Within the area of international development cooperation, fragile states have emerged as a particular point of attention, with explicit recognition that different approaches are necessary to support these countries in a transition towards increased resilience. This discussion paper addresses a number of issues related to this changing landscape. It aims to contribute to knowledge on the specific characteristics and challenges of engaging with civil society in fragile states, as well as on the changing role of northern CSOs. Its insights will be of particular relevance for donors and civil society in the North.

Corkalo, D. et al., 2004, 'Neighbors Again? Intercommunity Relations After Ethnic Cleansing', in eds. E. Stover and H. M. Weinstein, *My Neighbor, My Enemy: Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, pp. 143-161

<http://ebooks.cambridge.org/chapter.jsf?bid=CBO9780511720352&cid=CBO9780511720352A018>

Additional resources

See Chapter 4 (Recovering from violent conflict) of the conflict topic guide for discussion and resources on: **reconciliation, social renewal and inclusiveness** (including on traditional approaches, social capital and social cohesion, coexistence programming and peace education); and **non-state actors and peacebuilding**.

<http://www.gsdrc.org/topic-guides/conflict/>

Civic trust and citizenship

Efforts to promote coexistence and inter-group reconciliation processes have generally been more prominent in peacebuilding. They are equally important in statebuilding; trust is necessary for political and economic development as it facilitates cooperation. Trust and confidence are necessary not only at interpersonal and inter-group levels, but in terms of shared norms and values and trust in the state and its institutions ('civic trust'). In this view, reconciliation is the condition under which citizens can once again trust one another as citizens; and trust that the 'other' will abide by the norms and institutions of society.

Distrust of the 'other' and internalised feelings of powerlessness, prevalent in situations of conflict and fragility, is a constraint on collective action. Initiatives designed to facilitate civic action can be aimed not only at restoring societal relationships but at developing active citizenship. Bringing individuals together across divides to discuss shared problems can help to re-establish social relations and networks, promote a collective awareness of prevailing problems and uncover possibilities for collective action.

Such cross-cutting activities and cooperation, often facilitated through local associations and by non-governmental organisations, are considered effective and legitimate means of restoring trust. Associational life and other examples of social organisation often survive and persist in situations of conflict and fragility and can be drawn upon. Improvements in daily life through participation in local activities can strengthen people's understanding of agency and prepare them for opportunities of engagement with state institutions.

It is important to recognise, however, that civic engagement may not be equitable. It involves power relations among citizens, between citizens and the state and other powerful actors, and between varying state levels. Efforts should be made to determine whose voices are heard and to foster inclusive, effective participation.

To date, there have been limited efforts to link coexistence and reconciliation activities and local development initiatives to citizenship. It is important for actors in these areas to consider in which situations they can link their peacebuilding activities to citizenship building. Support to conflict-affected and fragile settings should extend to fostering awareness of citizenship and agency, referring to citizens as members of a wider socio-political community. Strategies and projects that increase a population's sense of shared interests, mutual obligations and common aspects of identity should be prioritised.

Oosterom, M., 2009, 'Fragility at the Local Level: Challenges to Building Local State – Citizen Relations in Fragile Settings', Working paper prepared for the workshop 'Local Governance in Fragile Settings: Strengthening Local Governments, Civic Action or Both?', 24 Nov., The Hague

<https://www.hivos.org/sites/default/files/publications/fragilityatlocallevelworkingpapernovember2009.pdf>

How does state fragility affect citizen-state relations at the local level? How can development agencies seek to promote citizen participation? This paper outlines the key issues and challenges in building local citizen-state relations

in fragile settings. It argues that strengthening citizen voice and agency through support for local civil society institutions is just as important as building the capacity of the state to respond to citizens' needs. Development agencies should focus more on 'citizenship-building' in fragile settings and on fostering a sense of socio-political community.

Poulligny, B., 2010, 'State-Society Relations and the Intangible Dimensions of State Resilience and Statebuilding: A Bottom Up Perspective', EUI Working Paper, no. 33, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute (EUI), Florence

http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/13855/RSCAS_2010_33.pdf;jsessionid=669E517DE74ED82FEA1FEF93BC5809A1?sequence=1

Crucial social and cultural elements underpin state institutions and ensure that they function. This is especially important to understand in 'fragile' settings. This paper argues that conventional perspectives need to be broadened beyond tangible dimensions of state resilience, institutions and statebuilding to include intangible dimensions. International actors need to gain an understanding of the relationships, structures and belief systems that underpin institutions, and of the multiplicity and diversity of political institutions, cultures, and logics through which statebuilding processes may be supported.

Benequista, N., 2010, 'Putting Citizens at the Centre: Linking States and Societies for Responsive Governance - A Policy-maker's Guide to the Research of the Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability', DFID

<http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/PDF/Outputs/CentreOnCitizenship/Citizenship-DRC-Policy-Findings-Paper-2010.pdf>

How does citizen engagement contribute to responsive governance? This paper summarises ten years of research from the Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation, and Accountability, presenting the key findings of more than 150 case studies of citizen engagement. It argues that existing donor programmes fail to recognise the full potential of citizen engagement, resulting in lack of understanding of the complex relationship between citizens and the state that shapes governance outcomes. Citizens need greater political knowledge and awareness of rights and of agency as a first step to claiming rights and acting for themselves. Involvement in associations has been an effective way of strengthening notions of citizenship and citizen engagement, which can contribute to more responsive states.

Hilker, L. et al., 2010, 'Broadening Spaces for Citizens in Violent Contexts', Citizenship DRC Policy Briefing, Institute of Development Studies, Brighton

http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/PDF/Outputs/CentreOnCitizenship/Violent_Contexts_Briefing.pdf

How can people be directly involved in finding solutions for their security and livelihood needs? Research suggests that, although violence deters citizens from taking action, external actors in violent contexts can help to facilitate citizen action that is non-violent and socially legitimate. To do this, donors need a locally nuanced understanding of the complex relationship between violent and non-violent actors, and between forms of everyday and political violence.

Shabbir Cheema, G. and Popovski, V. (eds.), 2010, 'Building Trust in Government: Innovations in Governance Reform in Asia', United Nations University, Tokyo

http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/democracy-and-governance/building-trust-in-government_150b5a32-en

How have some countries and institutions managed to maintain higher degrees of confidence and what measures have played an important role in strengthening trust once it has faltered? This book seeks to answer many of the questions raised in reference to means of strengthening trust in government within the Asia Pacific region. Through analyses of trends within North-East Asia, South-East Asia, South Asia and the Pacific Islands and specific innovations and reforms at the country level, the contributors have provided various perspectives on the causes of the decline in trust and specific innovations and reform measures that have influenced the process of building trust in government.

Mansuri, G. and Rao, V., 2013, 'Does Participation Strengthen Civil Society?' Chapter 6 in Localising Development. Does Participation Work? A World Bank Policy Research Report.

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTRES/Resources/469232-1321568702932/8273725-1352313091329/PRR_Localizing_Development_ch6.pdf

Can projects that attempt to induce participation and build 'social capital' help repair civil society failures? The evidence on this important question is weak, for several reasons. Keeping these important caveats in mind, there is some evidence, mainly from self-reports of participants, indicating a higher incidence of trust and cooperative activity in treatment than in control areas. Projects tend to have very limited impact on building social cohesion or rebuilding the state. They tend to exclude the poor and be dominated by elites. However, evidence from Africa suggests people emerging from civic conflict have a strong desire to participate. Repairing civic failures requires reducing social inequalities. One way of doing so is to mandate the inclusion of disadvantaged groups in the participatory process. In particular, when the central and local governments recognize the legitimacy of deliberative forums and are responsive to them, they can transform the nature of civil society and state interactions.

Additional resources

For discussion and resources on the **role of civil society** in peacebuilding and community-based peacebuilding, see **non-state actors and peacebuilding** in Chapter 4 (Recovering from violent conflict) of the conflict topic guide. <http://www.gsdrc.org/topic-guides/conflict/>

Socio-political cohesion and nationhood

Unifying disparate peoples at national and local levels and promoting cohesion in conflict-affected and fragile states are important intangible aspects of statebuilding and peacebuilding. A legitimate political order needs to be based on some agreement about the boundaries of the political community, national priorities and collective identity. In addition, a shared over-arching identity can focus attention away from ethnic and sectarian identities that may have become the source of divisions in violent conflict. This leads to ideas of nationhood. A 'nation' implies a shared sense of political community and elements of identity. Nation-building as defined by DFID is 'the construction of a shared sense of identity and common destiny, to overcome ethnic, sectarian or religious differences and counter alternative allegiances' (DFID, 2010, p. 18).

Citizenship and nationality cannot be conflated. In some cases, citizenship may be conferred based on belonging to a particular ethnic group, or may be effectively exercised only by dominant groups (see 'statelessness' section). Thus, nationals of a country may still be denied citizenship and rendered stateless. In other cases, nationality is defined solely in ethnic terms, whereas citizenship is seen as broader, encompassing various ethnic groups living within a country.

Statebuilding and peacebuilding may enable nation-building but do not necessarily guarantee it. Effective state institutions may not result in a sense of nationhood; and a sense of nationhood may not improve the likelihood of strong institutions. There is a growing body of literature that argues, however, that the line between statebuilding and nation-building is not clear-cut. State structures permeate through to societal structures and statebuilding processes affect socio-political cohesion.

Constitution drafting and elections, state policies on language and educational systems, for example, can have a profound impact on nationhood. They address and shape fundamental questions related to nationality, citizenship, identities, trust and values. They also impact on the degree to which a state is politically inclusive. Participatory and inclusive deliberation in constitution drafting can provide a forum and process to bring divided groups together to negotiate controversial issues and to think about a common vision of the state. A constitution serves as a symbol that disparate groups have agreed to live together.

It is thus important for external actors to address the reality that statebuilding can bring them into the realm of nation-building, instead of avoiding it. Trying to build institutions without linking them to shared values and inclusive notions of citizenship and political community can result in the persistence of divisions. Perceptions of nationhood and state legitimacy are fostered through a sense of belonging and connection to the state and to wider society. In addition to attention to inclusive institutions, this can be fostered through educational, cultural and sports programmes.

It is also important to recognize that nation-building is a long-term indigenous process and that, similar to issues of legitimacy, there is a limit to which external actors can play an active role. In many cases, legitimacy and nationhood require that central institutions engage with local, community and customary governance. This can give people a stronger connection to the state and a greater sense of belonging.

Lemay-Hébert, N., 2009, 'Statebuilding without Nation-building? Legitimacy, State Failure and the Limits of the Institutional Approach', *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 21-45

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17502970802608159>

What is state collapse and how should external actors address it? This essay reviews the literature, outlining the 'institutional' and 'legitimacy' approaches to the state and statebuilding that emerge. It argues that to be effective, statebuilding needs to consider both the efficiency of state institutions and their legitimacy, (and in terms of the latter, the impact of external intervention on socio-political cohesion, or 'nation-building'). Statebuilding and nation-building should thus be understood as a single process, in which local ownership and perceptions are vital.

International IDEA, 2011, 'Constitution Building After Conflict: External Support to a Sovereign Process', Policy Paper, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, Stockholm

<http://www.idea.int/publications/constitution-building-after-conflict/upload/CB-after-conflict.pdf>

This paper examines the challenges and nuances of external support to constitution building, which can, it argues, be both constructive and problematic. It calls for a restrained approach to such support, based on 'invitation points' rather than 'entry points'. The quality of the process used is crucial to successful constitutional design, and the choice of process needs to be left to national actors.

Kausch, K., 2011, 'Constitutional Reform in Young Arab Democracies', Policy Brief, FRIDE, Madrid

http://www.fride.org/download/PB_101_Young_Arab_Democracies.pdf

Revolutionary Tunisia, Egypt and Libya are about to embark on drafting new constitutions as a clean break with their authoritarian past. Challenges include sequencing constitutional reform with elections; ensuring broad legitimacy; preventing polarisation via inclusion; and the deconcentration of political and economic powers. A look at constitutional reform experiences from around the world sheds light on how similar challenges were confronted.

Brown, A. M., 2009, 'Security, Development and the Nation-building Agenda—East Timor', Conflict, Security and Development, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 141-164

<http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/routledg/ccsd/2009/00000009/00000002/art00002>

State-building has been seen as the path to both security and development in East Timor. However, this article argues that this approach neglects situating key government institutions within a social context. There has been little effort on the part of central institutions to engage with local, community and customary governance. A nation-building agenda needs to support the emergence of networks of communication and exchange between government, social institutions and people and between different levels and kinds of governance. Building deep connections between different forms of governance, and so grounding government in communities, is slow and difficult, yet essential.

Thida Lun, M., 2009, 'Reconnecting Joined-up Approaches: Nation-building Through Statebuilding', SPIRU Working Paper 25, Strategic Policy Impact and Research Unit (SPIRU), Overseas Development Institute, London

<http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/4255.pdf>

How can sustainable peace be built in fragile states? This study shows that while donors have largely focused on statebuilding, stability requires a deeper process of nation-building. External actors are restricted to using statebuilding as a means of enabling nation-building. They can assist in the establishment of rule of law, create a fertile investment climate for economic regeneration and agree an exit strategy. However, only the partner country can take the lead role in nation-building.

Helling, Dominik, 2009, 'Anatomy of a 'Political Chameleon': Re-examining Fluid Shapes and Solid Constants of Nationalism and Nation Building', Discussion Paper No. 17 (series 2), Crisis States Research Centre

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/internationalDevelopment/research/crisisStates/download/dp/dp17.pdf>

Why has the number of 'failed' states increased in spite of international intervention? This paper argues that this is in part attributable to the neglect of 'nation-building'. The social and cognitive processes of creating a common national identity during post-conflict reconstruction are paramount. Capacity-building and institutional reforms are important activities. However it is the ability of people, and mainly elites, to use such structures to construct a 'nation' that prevents a state from collapsing.

Samuels, K., 2008 'Postwar Constitution Building: Opportunities and Challenges', Chapter 8 in eds. R. Paris and T.Sisk, The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations, Routledge

<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=EDod8-kqEslC&printsec=frontcover>

What role does constitution-building play in post-war statebuilding? This chapter looks at the political dynamics, choices and implementation challenges that confront constitution-building. It suggests that the process can provide a key opportunity to shape the institutional and governance framework, and opens the door to societal dialogue. However, ensuring that such a process supports the establishment of a peaceful and legitimate state requires careful balancing of the compromises needed to maintain the peace and the people's involvement in deciding the future of their country.

Additional resources

For discussion and resources on power-sharing, see **peace agreements** in Chapter 4 (Recovering from violent conflict) of the conflict topic guide.

<http://www.gsdrc.org/topic-guides/conflict/>

For discussion and resources on **state legitimacy** and **non-state institutions**, see the 'state-society relations' section of this supplement.

For discussion and resources on cultural heritage preservation in conflict contexts, see Chapter 4 of the conflict guide:

<http://www.gsdrc.org/topic-guides/conflict/>