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Working Effectively in Conflict-affected and Fragile Situations

Briefing Paper C: Links between Politics, Security and Development

DAC Principle 5: Recognise the links between political, security and development objectives

- The political, security, economic and social spheres are interdependent: failure in one risks failure in all others.
- There may be tensions and trade-offs between objectives, which must be addressed when reaching consensus on strategy and priorities.
- Within donor governments, a 'whole-of-government' approach is needed, involving those responsible for security, political and economic affairs, as well as development aid and humanitarian assistance. The aim is for policy coherence and joined-up strategies where possible, while preserving the independence, neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian aid.
- Partner governments also need to ensure coherence between ministries in the priorities they convey to the international community.

Introduction

Politics, security¹ and development are interdependent. Understanding the interplay between politics and security provides insights into how a country functions and addresses development at local and national level. It also influences the way in which the UK and other international actors engage. Conflict-affected and fragile states are often led by political elites who use the security sector to remain in power, and do not necessarily view security as a basic right or service for citizens. Public security institutions can be ineffective or predatory; and a culture of corruption and impunity can thrive.

The degree to which people's daily lives are inhibited by insecurity can be an important indicator of fragility. This can emerge through the gradual deterioration of a situation, such as in Zimbabwe or the Niger Delta, or as the sudden venting of frustration, such as the violence following the 2007 elections in Kenya or the 'migration' riots in Johannesburg.

¹ This refers primarily to the security situation in country, including the security of states, the physical and human security of populations and security-related interventions. The security of DFID staff, equipment and programmes is considered in *Briefing Paper H: Risk Management*.

Whole-of-government/comprehensive approaches and whole-of-system approaches

When political, security and development interventions from one country are combined, this is often referred to as a *whole-of-government approach* (WGA) by development actors or as a *comprehensive approach*, by political and security actors. When this approach is implemented by a wider group of actors in the international community this is often called a *whole-of-system* approach (WSA). WSA is often viewed as the optimum approach, bringing in relevant departments within bilateral governments as well as multilaterals (e.g. EU's development, diplomatic and defence arms). The OECD DAC has produced a paper to assist with developing WGAs, to which the UK contributed.²

The UK's National Security Strategy recognises the importance of working together, and states that "our response to global instability, conflict and failed and fragile states brings together a wide range of government activity, from diplomacy to development to overseas military operations".³ The Strategy outlines how future steps include capacity-building and integration of UK military, civilian, security and development capabilities, encouragement of our partners and allies to do the same, and greater effectiveness in the UN, EU and NATO to enable more timely integrated responses to conflict and fragility.

UK's experience shows that difficulties in achieving WGAs arise from:

- different mandates of government departments, leading to different priorities (some of which may be in tension);
- tensions between short-term and long-term approaches (with development approaches typically being longer term than security or political ones);
- use of different terminology by government departments, leading to communication problems and lack of mutual understanding;
- differences in where decisions are made (i.e. London or in country);
- definitions of ODA (Official Development Assistance) and non-ODA financing, leading to challenges around funding the security sector.

DFID's Security and Development Strategy (2005) sets out our intention to address security and conflict issues as an integral part of development. Security and justice should be seen as a basic service and a necessary part of an enabling environment for poverty reduction. The Strategy lists ten 'We Wills' to integrate security work into DFID's programmes. DFID has made progress in some areas but less in others, the main reasons being:

² OECD DAC, *Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States* (2006). Available at: www.oecd.org/dataoecd/15/24/37826256.pdf

³ The National Security Strategy of the United Kingdom – Security in an Interdependent World (March 2008). Available at: http://interactive.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/documents/security/national_security_strategy.pdf

- other competing, high-profile objectives set for and by country offices;
- human resource limitations relating to expertise on security and justice in country offices;
- perceptions that these are only issues for countries in conflict;
- the political nature of the security and justice sectors;
- high transaction costs of cross-Whitehall coordination; and
- a need for clearer success criteria.

A WGA does not mean that all parts of government should always be engaged in all fragile or conflict-affected states, or that all activities should be jointly implemented. It means agreeing strategic objectives through joint analysis and strategies. Sharing perspectives, tools, knowledge, assets and experience can help to achieve greater impact.

Operationalising key elements of WGAs

- **Joint analysis**

Joint analysis across departments is crucial to ensure that development, diplomacy and security objectives do not pull in different directions. Even where understanding is achieved it will not automatically translate into joint action. But developing a common understanding of political, social and economic dynamics (and their interrelationships) is the foundation for WGAs.

There are a number of tools and sources of expertise that can help⁴. The box below outlines the process of developing a joint analysis and strategy for the security sector in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe: Drivers and tools leading to a joint security and justice strategy

Security and rule of law in Zimbabwe underpin all other current and future development investments in the country and will be critical for recovery. DFID, FCO and the Ministry of Defence have worked together on a joint security and justice strategy; this cooperation is based on multiple inputs:

- Regional Conflict Adviser – ongoing regional analysis and input;
- Review of civil society support funded by the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP) (2006) – established good cross-HMG working practices and recommended a Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA);
- SCA – bolstered understanding and confirmed the importance of security issues (2006);
- Scenario planning exercise (2007) – highlighted the security dimension and continued the development of a cross-HMG understanding of the issues;
- DFID expertise on security sector reform and justice suggested options in different political scenarios and the need to target support (2007);
- Network established including Security Sector Development Advisory Team, Stabilisation Unit and Whitehall-based stakeholders in the three main departments to support cooperation in Zimbabwe;

⁴ See *Briefing Paper A: Analysing Conflict and Fragility* for a list of tools and their comparative strengths.

- Ministerial engagement – gave top-level cover;
- Cabinet Office meeting on security and justice in Zimbabwe inaugurated cross-Whitehall network and galvanised participation and interest;
- ACPP-funded S&J Adviser added to the DFID team (October 2008) – to take forward review recommendations and coordinate work with other donors.

The implications for the rest of the DFID Zimbabwe programme are currently being explored through its Country Assistance Plan process and the ongoing support of the Regional Conflict Adviser and ACPP-funded Security and Justice Adviser.

- **Joint strategies**

The 2009 DFID White Paper made a clear commitment to develop new joint HMG strategies in all fragile countries where DFID has a significant programme and where no strategy currently exists. This commitment, which was strongly supported by other Whitehall departments, including the FCO, MOD and the Cabinet Office, is a clear statement of will. Delivering on it requires the agreement of joint objectives within the framework of individual departmental mandates and capacities.

The case for joint strategies is strong. Situations of conflict and fragility are of critical concern across HMG for a range of reasons - regional security, economic stability, migration and terrorism – as well as acute poverty and deprivation. Effective responses to conflict and fragility require diplomatic, development, security and humanitarian interventions, which cut across the mandates of HMG departments. A single joint strategy provides the basis for synergy, a single script to communicate UK aims, and the possibility of strengthened UK international influence and leadership.

Agreeing joint strategies across departments, or indeed with other donors, can be difficult and take time to develop. This can be easier where there are clearly agreed policy areas – such as conflict prevention, security sector reform or access to justice - but is likely to be difficult where there is no common mandate, such as on migration or the return of failed asylum seekers. Informed decisions have to be made on the benefits and drawbacks of working together. If there is no common interest, there is likely to be little added value.

The UK Stabilisation Unit (SU), through its experiences in the field in Afghanistan and Iraq, has been able over time to refine its understanding of the linkages and to draw some general lessons. Central among these is that mutually supportive lines of operation require agreement on the hierarchy of objectives, joint assessment and analysis of constraints, and joint planning of the activities to overcome these. Without common understanding of what needs to be done, how, when and by whom, there is a risk that activities not only fail to support one another, but may even be contradictory.

The SU has developed and published guidance on *Planning for Stabilisation* which outlines a process for developing an HMG joint strategy, relevant for conflict contexts as well as stabilisation situations.⁵

⁵ Available from Stabilisation Unit

WGA in Afghanistan: The Helmand Plans

In late 2005, the UK government initiated a joint planning process in advance of a significant military deployment to Helmand province in Afghanistan. Representatives of the military Preliminary Operations Team were joined by representatives of DFID and FCO to agree a joint plan for Helmand. This was facilitated by the Stabilisation Unit, and agreed overarching objectives, identified critical obstacles to success, and defined the types of activities that might be required to overcome the obstacles. The final product was a critical path analysis that demonstrated the interdependencies, priorities, and desirable sequencing of activities.

Although this was a laudable attempt, its value was constrained by the fact that insecurity and a lack of air transport precluded a visit to Helmand itself, thus excluding the opportunity to consult with local actors. In addition, although the critical path analysis identified the importance of policing and rule of law, the team was unable to go further to define what would be needed to deliver these in the province. Perhaps more significantly, the participants were unable to ensure that the departments they represented would – or indeed could – actually deliver what was necessary. The plan was never genuinely operationalised, and interdepartmental ‘buy-in’ was thus tentative.

By 2008, the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Helmand was well established, with significant civilian participation to complement the large military contingent. In 2008, the PRT requested assistance with the development of a refreshed strategy – the Helmand Road Map. This is a substantial and detailed document, which clearly articulates the extent to which all activities must demonstrate support for stabilisation, and promote a better political settlement between the population of Helmand and the Afghan government.

The Road Map was based on extensive consultations in Helmand and enjoys broad buy-in. Departmental ‘lines of operation’ are mutually supportive. The military provides security, which will enable the provincial government (supported and encouraged by FCO representatives) to consult with, and respond to, popular demands funded from development budgets. These in turn are either drawn down directly or from national development programmes in the province. Development expertise ensures that projects are sustainable, and all parties now strive to ensure that improvements are – and are seen to be – delivered by the Afghan government. The Road Map includes clear indicators and a requirement for frequent review, to ensure that activities continue to contribute to the overarching objectives. More detailed district level stabilisation plans underpin the provincial plan. If the first Helmand Plan was somewhat ‘theoretical’ and had little impact on departmental plans, the Helmand Road Map represents a genuinely integrated approach, which is strongly supported by all players.

- **Joint funding**

The Conflict Pool⁶ brings together DFID, FCO and MOD, and is the principal cross HMG mechanism to prevent and manage overseas conflicts that impact on UK national security, broader strategic interests or our ability to achieve wider foreign policy and development objectives. All decisions and activities delivered through the Pool are based on joint analysis and tri-departmental strategies. Many programmes have benefited from this tri-departmental approach. For example, in Sudan and DRC, the three departments work together on support to disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) and army integration (joint units).

⁶ Formerly known as the Conflict Prevention Pool.

However, recent financial pressures, and the expansion of the Pool's remit to cover stabilisation activities in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as discretionary peacekeeping, has inevitably meant less funding is available for conflict prevention work. In spite of these pressures, the Conflict Pool has enabled HMG to maintain a significant contribution to international peacekeeping, and to fund essential conflict prevention and stabilisation activity in priority regions.

- **Division of labour**

A clear division of roles and responsibilities between departments based on their comparative advantages should reduce transaction costs, as illustrated in the box about Iraq below.

Iraq: Merging FCO and DFID security sector support

HMG has been supporting the Iraqi Police Service (IPS) and Ministry of Interior (MOI) since 2005. FCO managed a Civilian Policing Authority Transition Team (CPATT), led by a senior serving police officer and staffed by a combination of seconded serving police officers and contracted policing advisers. CPATT has focused on building capability in anti-corruption (internal affairs), forensics, leadership development and operational planning. DFID, meanwhile, had a team of consultants working with middle- and senior-ranking officials to strengthen civilian oversight and management of the IPS through improved policy development and implementation capacity.

In autumn 2007, DFID, MOD and FCO undertook a joint review of their support to the security and justice sector in Iraq. One outcome was a decision to combine all UK support to the MOI and IPS into one integrated programme. Although staff under both projects worked closely on the ground, in practice it was agreed that a unified project would allow a fully coherent HMG approach and enable improved coordination and flexibility. The project is now led by FCO, with joint strategic management with DFID on key decisions. This combined approach has enabled a more streamlined, efficient project, in terms of both management and delivery.

Division of labour issues are equally important across the donor community. Addressing security issues poses challenges that can lead to gaps in assistance, or to duplication. The following example from DRC highlights the implications of failing to coordinate between governments.

DRC: Failure to act together to support defence reform

The DRC government committed in the peace agreement to create an integrated national army from the factions in the civil war. A number of partners have provided support including the USA, France, Belgium and the Netherlands, as well as some non-traditional partners such as South Africa, Angola and China. DRC also has an EU defence reform mission.

Differences of view among international partners and competing political interests have made it difficult for the DRC authorities to agree with partners on the basics, such as the right size of the army and what its mission should be, let alone tackle long-standing problems relating to the chain of command and management of on- and off-budget funds. There is no clear

lead partner for defence reform⁷: the UN and the EU have both tried and so far failed. No other partner has showed a willingness to take this on.

Provision of training and equipment without ensuring adequate payment of soldiers or provision of food has led to mutinies, in which the benefits of support have been lost. Small-scale provision of equipment for political reasons, together with donor rivalries competing for influence, has deflected attention from tackling the underlying problems. Renewed conflict in the east of the country has led to a government focus on short-term equipment needs.

- **Joint working arrangements**

There are some other basic ways of facilitating WGAs within single governments including single-site locations, shared services and management, cross-departmental secondments, compatible IT systems and joint evaluations and reviews of WGAs. Practical ways to enhance UK WGAs have been implemented in both Burundi and DRC.

Burundi: Cross-DFID/FCO staffing

The DFID Burundi programme (£30 million over three years) is staffed by three UK staff in Bujumbura, a Swedish-funded adviser and three national staff. FCO has a British Embassy Liaison Office (BELO), reporting to the British Embassy in Kigali, in neighbouring Rwanda, which is staffed by a Political Secretary, who is responsible for political reporting and influencing, supported by a locally engaged officer, who also works to implement and protect the recent UK/Burundi memorandum of understanding on the return of failed asylum seekers and immigration offenders. The Ambassador visits from Kigali roughly once a month, and other FCO staff from London, Nairobi and Kigali visit Bujumbura to back up BELO's efforts. The Head of DFID Burundi post has previously been filled by an FCO officer on loan to DFID, and now performed by a DFID manager. The current set-up works well. It is consistent and commensurate with the level of UK interest in and assistance to Burundi, and its flexibility allows us to boost staffing during critical periods, such as elections.

DRC: One Government, One Embassy, One Peace

The team at the British Embassy has shown that joined-up government can deliver important benefits. In Kinshasa, the DFID, FCO and MOD team has pushed the boundaries for joined-up work, not just by working as a joint team, but also by creating joint management functions and a joint Communications Unit to handle our press and public affairs work. The 108 FCO, MOD and DFID staff of the embassy work to one set of objectives, under one roof and as one team.

The joined-up government team has already had an impact:

- Coordinated military analysis, diplomacy and development funding contributed to the successful elections in 2006. The UK earned a reputation for speaking with one voice and linking strong analysis, political pressure and programmes to help keep the process on track.
- Working together to deliver our contribution to security sector reform involved the pooling of analysis, ideas and problem solving across the three departments, and helped shift funding flexibly to take advantage of opportunities and to influence partners.

⁷ At the time of writing in March 2010.

- During fighting in Kinshasa in August 2006 and March 2007, all embassy staff worked together, across traditional departmental divisions, to ensure staff safety and an effective response to the political and consular consequences.

UK engagement in the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts provides additional lessons for using WGAs in highly insecure environments. This engagement has included the deployment of the UK military tasked with supporting international efforts to strengthen newly elected but fragile governments. In Afghanistan, the military is deployed to help address the deep-rooted and violent political instability which has continued to threaten the prospects for peace and development. However, it is acknowledged that military activity alone will not be able to address this insecurity, and these experiences highlight the need to develop mechanisms for delivering an integrated approach on the ground. In Afghanistan, the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) was an early attempt at such a mechanism, and was subsequently adopted in Iraq. Although initially dominated by the military, PRTs included civilian advisers tasked with ensuring attention to the political, economic and developmental aspects of security and stability.

- **Adapting programmes to take account of the interdependence of political, development and security objectives**

Including other departments in the review and evaluation of programmes or in the design of new ones can be a useful way of adding value, especially enabling a pooling of expertise and analysis from different perspectives. For example, existing programmes can be assessed for their political awareness, and the results used to inform new design.

Politically informed programming in Nigeria

The design of the new Nigeria Access to Justice Programme (£30 million over five years) is based on an analysis of the political factors that made reform possible during the previous programme. The desire of the previous President, General Obasanjo, to improve Nigeria's international reputation explains in part why his endorsement was central to the introduction of community policing – as long as this did not undermine the police's ability to support the regime. In Lagos State, judicial and land registration reforms have been associated with the state government's responsiveness to the business elite – including the need to create an enabling environment for private sector growth (through reducing court delays) and increasing revenue generation (by improving land registration). It was also important to demonstrate democratic legitimacy, through a new Citizens Rights Directorate.

Programmes which have primarily development objectives may be reviewed to identify whether they can also address security or political issues. The box below is an example of how education and governance programmes can help address violent extremism.

Pakistan and Bangladesh: Understanding radicalisation

DFID has used a rigorous examination of the evidence base to deepen understanding of the social, economic and political grievances that can turn people away from peaceful political activism towards support for violent extremism. The new Pakistan Country Plan (2008–2013) includes:

(i) An increased budget for education over the next five years of up to £250 million, focused on the content and quality of teaching as well as skills training. Our recent findings show that it is not just about going to school but also how you are taught.

(ii) A new civil society programme which will focus on addressing the grievances associated with exclusion, poor governance, insecurity and lack of access to services in areas bordering Afghanistan.

(iii) Support for better economic management and growth will help to create jobs for the four million young people entering the labour market annually, and a contingency fund of £50 million has been allocated to allow for work on a new Border Areas programme.

In Bangladesh, DFID has been pursuing activities in critical areas of governance, including police reform, security and justice. The new Country Plan is being developed with contributions from the Home Office, Cabinet Office and FCO and will prioritise political governance.

Security, development and political dimensions should be brought together in an integrated approach to programming. A UK-funded project in Rio, Brazil (see the box below) adopted a sector-wide approach to achieve security benefits for people and the state.

Improving slum security in Rio

Rio de Janeiro suffers from extreme income inequality and high levels of armed violence, which are concentrated in its illegal slums, or *favelas*. These suffer from social exclusion and stigmatisation, a lack of state services and protective presence, and *de facto* control by heavily armed drug factions. The main perpetrators and victims of armed violence are drug traffickers, gang members and the police, with some one million citizens caught in the crossfire.

Viva Rio, a local NGO founded in 1993, initiated a programme with a fairly narrow focus on raising awareness, public mobilisation and gun control. This initiative eventually broadened out to include gender issues and specifically targeted programmes directed at youth, legislative campaigns, policing reforms and community development work in the *favelas*. By 2005, Viva Rio was active in 82 municipalities, and partnered with educational institutes, community associations, community radio stations, NGOs, churches, police units and prisons.

In 2003, Viva Rio's disarmament campaign helped to push through a new gun law (the Disarmament Statute). This law, in combination with a voluntary gun turn-in campaign, is considered largely responsible for a 12% drop in the number of gun-related deaths in Brazil between 2004 and 2006.

Viva Rio attests that no single programming focus, by itself, would have worked. Instead, it was the combination of ten years' work in community development, youth programming, policing reform, legislative change and political mobilisation that together contributed to the reduction in armed violence.

Process is as important as product. We must never assume that ‘development projects’, however well re-designed, will deliver security and a more positive attitude to the state, or win over ‘hearts and minds’. Indeed, poorly designed projects can have unintended consequences, including perceptions of favouritism or exclusion, or of ‘unfair’ allocation of contracts. Investing in broad consultation and local participation in project selection, management and implementation can help us to avoid ‘doing harm’.

Key Lessons

- **Effective responses to conflict and fragility must include an appropriate balance of political, security and development activities.** Development interventions alone cannot deliver state-building and peace-building.
- **Transaction costs of working across government departments are likely to be high** – but experience shows that it is invariably worth the effort. The resources required must be factored into planning cycles, budgets and yearly appraisals to ensure they are allocated, implemented and monitored.
- **Joint analysis can help departments develop a common understanding,** which is the foundation of better WGAs. Tools exist to help support this process. This analysis must be used to inform joint strategies and planning.
- **Joint funding mechanisms can help create the incentives for better WGAs and joint working,** but they require a commitment from all departments to maintain predictable funding over the long term.
- **Whole-of-government approaches are just the first step towards wider bilateral and multilateral coordination.** Developing ‘whole of system’ approaches should be the ultimate goal.
- **Do not underestimate the time required** to reach a joint approach – this can take a number of years, and is likely to be an ongoing process, as reflected in Afghanistan and Iraq.
- **Recognise when different mandates can and cannot work** towards a joint vision. Elements of every government department’s operations are best carried out individually. This does not prevent an overall joint vision and strategy, but realism is required to protect core mandates.
- **Do not forget the core reason for WGAs: to improve impact on the ground.** The process is important, but it should not be an end in itself. Evidence shows that informing development programmes with a better understanding of political and security factors makes our interventions in situations of conflict and fragility more effective.

Further Information and Links

HMG

- DFID Security and Development Strategy (2005) - www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/securityforall.pdf
- DFID Explanatory Note on Security and Access to Justice for the Poor (2007) - www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/security-access-justice.pdf
- DFID Fragile States Policy (2005) - www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/fragilestates-paper.pdf
- DFID White Paper 3 (2006) – highlighted the importance of security to poor people and committed DFID to addressing the global drivers of bad governance.
- DFID White paper 4 (2009) – stressed the need for joint strategies to deliver peace-building and state-building approaches.
- DFID Conflict Policy (2007) - www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/preventing-conflict.pdf
- UK Conflict Policy (forthcoming 2010) – will also refer to the interdependence of politics, security and development.

Academic

- Stewart, F. (2004) *Development and Security*, Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity (CRISE) Working Paper 3, Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford University.

Other

- United Nation Secretary General's report (2004) – www.un.org/secureworld
- OECD DAC (2006) *Whole of Government Approaches in Fragile States* – www.oecd.org/dataoecd/15/24/37826256.pdf
- Patrick, S. and Brown, K. (2007) *Greater Than the Sum Of Its Parts? Assessing "Whole of Government" Approaches to Fragile States*, Center for Global Development – <http://www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/13893>
- Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (GSDRC) security and development papers – www.gsdr.org/go/topic-guides/security-and-development
- Eldis security and development papers – www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides