A review of the francophone academic literature on peacebuilding and statebuilding[1]

DFID Research & Evidence Division

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[1] DFID's Research & Evidence Division produces, commissions or quality assures four types of evidence 'product'. These are: Rapid Reviews, Literature Reviews, Evidence Papers and Systematic Reviews. The current paper is a Literature Review. It has been subjected to some internal, departmental peer review. However, this paper makes no claim to have systematically reviewed the francophone academic literature on this subject.

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PART I – Introduction, Key Findings and Methodology

Introduction

Aim & Purpose

1. The current survey identifies a number of dominant themes in francophone academic considerations of state fragility, state-building and peace-building. It also offers a general evaluation of the quality of research from which these themes are drawn. The survey includes a brief summary of key policy statements on state fragility from France. The paper will enable DFID researchers, policy planners and Conflict/Governance Advisers to frame their own knowledge of this field in the context of the francophone academic approach to it, and familiarise themselves with the basics of France's policy on state fragility.

2. The current report makes no claim to be a 'systematic review' of the francophone literature. Moreover, because the paper does not systematically position the concepts it identifies in the French-language literature in relation to those prevalent in the English-language literature, it ought not to be considered a true 'comparative work'. The scope of this study enables the identification of ideas and themes prevalent in the francophone literature, but does not enable us to state whether or not these themes are unique to the francophone literature.

Value and reliability as an Evidence Product

3. The current study helps readers build a general understanding of francophone academic concepts and theories in the academic field of state fragility and state-building. It considers the evidence underpinning these concepts and theories. Principally owing to the nature of the literature identified and evaluated, but also to the time and resource allocated to the study, the paper is ill-suited for the interrogation of specific state-building interventions or programme designs as currently outlined in UK policy. Instead, its value is likely to be greatest at a more strategic level, as a tool for informing the shape of future DFID research programmes, helping to ensure that critical concepts have not been overlooked.

Key Findings

4. The following summary identifies three transversal themes emerging from the current analysis. In addition, owing to the diversity of literature surveyed, it presents an extensive set of questions and hypotheses. The literature evaluated is of a quality that allows the *posing* of these questions, but not necessarily their resolution. As such, these questions and hypotheses are likely to be suitable for interrogation through alternative evidence products, such as systematic reviews.

Overarching themes

5. The current study evaluates the quality of evidence presented in research according to criteria set by the Government Social Research Service's Rapid Evidence Assessment framework. This framework privileges researchers' use of empiricism and the scientific method, but does not privilege any specific research methodology (e.g. quantitative vs. qualitative). Using this framework, the quality of the evidence behind specific concepts, as presented in those items of francophone literature surveyed, is evaluated as being almost universally low. DFID's ongoing enquiries into assessing evidential quality should, in time, indicate whether or not this issue is also common to Anglophone enquiries in this subject domain.

6. This study calls into question the notion of a distinct francophone literature, at least one that has developed in isolation from anglophone research. Basic bibliographical analysis demonstrates that francophone researchers draw heavily from anglophone enquiries.

7. An additional feature of the francophone literature surveyed is its insistence upon the importance of context specificity. A large number of studies evaluated in the current report locate the causes of conflict in specific, local, political economy causes, and express concerns about the presentation of universal theories of conflict or fragility onset. A similar insistence regarding the importance of context specificity is made with reference to state-building and peace-building interventions. This aspect of the literature raises questions regarding the applicability of research findings reached in one country or region to another, and indeed further discussion of the appropriate balance of low-level case studies and over-arching, thematic analyses, covering multiple countries.

Questions and hypotheses for further investigation

8. In addition to these general points, the current analysis enables the positing of a number of hypotheses and the posing of a number of questions which may be suitable for testing and resolution by future evidence products. These hypotheses and questions reflect a wide range of possible explanations for the onset and resolution of conflict. They are listed at the end of the thematic analysis sections of this paper, and can be used to help interrogate and shape DFID's existing research programme in this domain.

Methodology

9. This study has been conducted on the basis of an adaptation of the Government Social Research Service's Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) methodology. The principal phases of the study are listed below, together with the approximate amount of time taken to complete each of them:

Task	Time spent (days)
Methodological design/consultation:	1
Consultation of English-language papers (to determine search terms):	2
Consultation with *Agence Francaise de Developpement*:	0.5
Formulation of final list of search terms:	0.25
Literature search (inputting search terms into Google Scholar/FR)	1.75
Screening & evaluation of returned literature:	19
Thematic analysis & reporting:	5
TOTAL:	29.5

Table 1: REA methodology phases, and time allocated

Search Terms

10. In drafting a set of search-terms for the current literature survey, the following English-language sources were used:

   a. DFID/Governance & Social Development Resource Centre (2007). *Literature Review on State-Building*.
   b. DFID (2010). *The Politics of Poverty: Elites, Citizens & States*.
   c. DFID (2010). *Building Peaceful States and Societies*.

11. More than 80 concepts and themes associated with state-building and peace-building were returned. A more systematic review of the francophone literature would involve a translation and web search of all 80 of these concepts. Given the constraints of the current study, the following shortlist of 'capping' concepts was translated. They are 'capping' terms in that they describe key phenomena, but do not specifically name the multiple factors posited (in the English-language literature) as causing these phenomena:

Conflict resolution – instability – peace negotiation – post-conflict reconstruction – state-building – state (collapsed) – state (developmental) – state (embryonic) – state (failed/failing/failure) – state (fragile) -- state (informal) – state (quasi) – state dissolution – state formation – state insecurity – state-building – sustainable peace – warlord economies.

Résolution de conflit – l'instabilité de l'état – négociations de paix – reconstruction après-guerre – construction étatique – effondrement de l'état/état effondré – etat développementiste – état embryonnaire – état faille/défaillant/échec de l'état – état fragile/faible – état informelle – quasi-état – dissolution de l'état – formation de l'état – insécurité de l'état – construction étatique – paix durable – economies guerrieres.

12. In addition to these search terms, guidance on key concepts and renowned academics working in this field was sought from the *Agence Française de Developpement*. Specific researchers' names added to the search term listing included:

Bertrand Badie; Richard Banégas; Jean-François Bayart; Severine Bellina; Nicolas Bouchet; Jean-Marc Châtaigner; Dominique Darbon; François Gaulme; Yvan Guichaoua; Béatrice Hibou; Hervé Magro; Roland Marchal; Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardin; Jérôme Tubiana; Jean-Bernard Véron.

Search Returns

13. Inputting these terms <u>only</u> into google.fr/scholar, and trawling <u>only</u> through the first ten internet pages of search returns, some 131 papers of apparent initial interest were returned. These 131 papers formed the basis of the survey and assessment subsequently conducted.

Screening & evaluation

14. Using the REA methodology, these articles were subsequently subjected to a manual process of 'screening'. On the basis of the author's initial, rapid assessment of each paper's presentation of its research goals, and thereby an assessment of the potential importance and relevance of the paper to the research question[2] 50 of these 131 papers were selected for further evaluation. This further evaluation covered not only a more substantive consideration of the findings presented, but also consideration of the methods through which the findings were delivered (see Table 2, below). The findings of the remainder of this study are based on the 50 papers reviewed to date. The bibliographical references at the end of the current document list those sources consulted.

15. Using the REA framework as its principal reference point, a number of evaluation criteria were selected in order to evaluate the literature identified. This evaluation was focussed on gauging the evidence upon which presented findings were based. The bulk of the evaluation criteria selected were best suited to evaluating qualitative studies, with a final measure, the Maryland Scale of Scientific Methods selected in order to gauge the validity of results generated through quantitative methods. The evaluation criteria, with some supplementary

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[2] The research question being: "Are those factors considered by the Anglophone literature as being critical to state-building and peace-building also considered critical by the Francophone literature?"

guidance questions, are presented below. A discussion of the utility of these evaluation criteria follows in paragraphs 46-50.

Overarching evaluation criteria	Subordinate considerations	Marking criteria
1) Does the paper/study provide a clear statement of research aims?	Is there a stated research goal?	
	Is this research relevant to the REA question?	
2) Is a qualitative methodology used and/or appropriate?		
3) Does the paper consider previous research?		
4) Is the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?	Is the use of this research design justified?	
5) Is the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?	How have participants in the study/subjects of it been selected?	
6) Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?	What method was used to collect data?	Excellent / Good / Moderate / Poor
	Was the collection method justified?	
7) Has the relationship between the researcher and participants been adequately considered?	Is reflexivity covered?	
9) Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?		
10) Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?	Was the process of data analysis described? Was a thematic analysis conducted?	
	Is there sufficient data to support the findings?	
11) Is there a clear statement of findings?	Is the statement made explicit? Is it followed by discussion? Are the findings credible?	
12) How valuable is the research?	Does it fill a research gap? Does it look to the future?	
13) Maryland Scale of Scientific Methods[3]		1 – 5

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[3] For an explanation of the Maryland Scale of Scientific Methods, see: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/my-civil-service/networks/professional/gsr/resources/REA-how-to-resources-for-appraising-studies.aspx.
The scale runs from 1-5, with 1 being the lowest, and 5 the highest research quality/validity score. The score 5 is typically only allocated to research effectively using Randomised Control Trial methodologies.

Table 2: Evaluation criteria template

For each of the criteria 1-12, studies were graded 'Excellent/Good/Moderate/Poor'. Thereafter, an assessment of the combined values of these categories was used to grade research papers as providing evidence of a given concept or relationship that was 'Strong/Medium-Strong/Medium-Weak/Weak.' A specific, numerical aggregation method was not used. In addition to these criteria, a free-text log was kept of the principal hypotheses, findings and arguments adopted by each of the papers studied. Where studies are referenced below, the quality of the evidence supporting the findings presented is denoted by the following symbols: [↑↑] = strong; [↑] = medium-strong; [↓] = medium-weak; [↓↓] = weak. Where a work is referenced but not accompanied by one of these symbols, it is because a full REA evaluation was not carried out on that study.

Thematic analysis

16. A thematic analysis was subsequently conducted. This analysis drew on the completed evaluation template for each paper reviewed in order to list key concepts discussed by the researchers. The thematic categories discussed in this paper have been generated by the author on the basis of the francophone literature observed: they may sometimes match thematic categories in anglophone state-building literature, but have not been drawn from the latter.

17. In addition to the concepts that can be usefully grouped into themes, this paper also identifies a significant number of concept 'orphans' (i.e. concepts that are discussed in only one or two papers). This is particularly the case in sections 2 and 3 of the thematic analysis. It is especially difficult to assess the validity and reliability of each of these concepts, precisely because they are discussed in only one or two of the papers assessed.

PART II – Evidential Analysis

A distinct francophone literature?

18. Although it is beyond the scope of the current study to position the Anglophone literature in relation to francophone concepts (a task which would require comprehensive coverage of *both* literature sets), it is nevertheless the case that the current study question is built on the assumption that there will be observable differences between the Anglophone and francophone academic literature on state-building. This assumption rests on the premise that the two bodies of literature are likely to have developed in relative isolation, separated by the linguistic divide. The validity of this assumption is explored below.

19. A rudimentary bibliographical analysis of 35 of the 50 (French language) papers studied so far was conducted. These 35 papers cite 1128 sources. Just 476 (or 42%) of these references were to other works written in French. The vast majority of the remainder were to works written in English. With less than one half of their references drawn from francophone sources, the Francophone academic community has demonstrably not developed concepts, theories and evidence in complete isolation from the anglophone literature. A comparable analysis of the anglophone literature was not conducted as part of this study.

20. Moreover, the 'francophone academic literature', being an invented concept, does not speak with one voice. An academic writing in French is unlikely to see him- or herself as representing a particular linguistic or cultural tradition, any more than an academic presenting findings in English would claim to speak for the entire anglophone academic community. As such, readers ought not to expect there to be a neat alignment of the numerous arguments presented below simply because their proponents share the same mother tongue. Though it is used in the current study, the term 'francophone literature' should be considered as the very loosest of categories.

Type and quality of research and evidence

How we know what we know - a note on epistemology[4]

21. An extensive discussion addressing 'how we know what we know' in social science in general, and peace-building and state-building in particular, is beyond the scope of this

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[4] Epistemology is the 'theory of knowledge', seeking to address the questions "What is knowledge?"; "How is knowledge acquired?" and "How do we know what we know?"

study. Nevertheless, it is important to note the origins of the evaluation criteria used in this study to assess the papers reviewed.

22. The evaluation criteria in Table 2 (both those designed for the assessment of quantitative data and qualitative data) assess research on the basis of its employment of the scientific method. The criteria assume that researchers seek to construct accurate (reliable and consistent) representations of specific phenomena (in this case, state formation, state-building, and peace-building). It assumes that they construct these representations by testing hypotheses against data gathered from the real world (i.e. through empirical methods). The hypotheses tested should themselves be based upon observations and descriptions of natural (i.e. real world) phenomena.

23. Though their basis lies in the scientific method, the evaluation criteria do not discriminate against qualitative (as opposed to quantitative) methodologies: indeed, the bulk of the questions are designed specifically for the evaluation of qualitative studies, accepting that data may be observable without necessarily being quantifiable. Where the evaluation framework results in the quality of specific pieces of research being queried or criticised, it does so principally on the basis of a study's failure to present hypotheses, describe a specific methodology, or present adequate data which can be used to interrogate the hypothesis. The precise method in which data is gathered (be it quantitative or qualitative means, or tailored for the use of physical or social scientists) is not in itself reason for the quality of evidence to be questioned. As such, findings presented in the absence of the use of any particular method, or based on deductive logic alone, on common-sense 'belief', and without the presentation of specific data, are not graded highly as part of the current study.

Quality of the francophone research assessed

24. On the basis of the REA evaluation criteria selected, the strength of the evidence behind the findings put forward in the research papers reviewed was almost universally low, with the vast majority of papers assessed falling into the 'weak' or 'medium-weak' quality and evidence categories. Few of the findings presented in any of articles were demonstrably based directly on long-term primary field research, a trend partly, though not entirely, owing to risks associated with accessing fragile states.[5] Only two studies were suitable for grading according to the Maryland Scale of Scientific Methods scale, and these were based on the methods of a prominent Anglophone economist. Many researchers declined or omitted to present specific research aims at the beginning of their papers. Hypotheses, posited for interrogation, were few. Frequently, no explicit research methodology was used, and the manner in which data was collected and analysed was rarely transparent. Often, research findings required deduction on the part of the reader, as opposed to being explicitly put forward by the researcher.

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[5] Ongoing DFID research will explore whether or not such issues also affect the Anglophone literature in this subject domain.

25. The papers were primarily discursive and theoretical in nature. Research typically drew on an extensive range of secondary sources, A number of the theories proposed are 'empirical' in that they focus on 'observed phenomena' (particularly those with a historical bent). However, their analysis of such phenomena is invariably subjective and un-systematic. The best studies reviewed leveraged case studies, but only superficially, frequently developing theory on the basis of claims of observed phenomena (without substantially describing or illustrating these phenomena). The credibility of such observations, in the absence of (or non-reference to) primary fieldwork, is questionable. In summary, many of the papers are best described by the term 'intellectual enquiries'. Very few were 'quantitative' in their approach, and many of the remainder did not adopt a strongly qualitative research method either.

26. With all of these caveats established, readers may legitimately question the reliability of the literature surveyed, and consequently its value to policy-makers, for example. Without presenting an alternative assessment framework (one that draws more extensively upon theories of knowledge less rooted in the physical sciences), a task beyond the scope of the current study, only three additional sources of reassurance can be given. The first comes in the form of some general rules of thumb relating to research. For example, the bulk of the papers assessed featured in peer-reviewed journals. Those that did not were doctoral theses (reviewed by academic panels) or papers presented at conferences. A number of the authors have been widely cited, or have had their work translated into English.

27. The second qualification is the observation that with additional time and resources, the secondary and primary sources *cited* in the various works reviewed could themselves have been evaluated. A major reason why the evidence analysed in the current enquiry is considered to be of 'low fidelity' is because it merely summarises findings presented by other research, without directly interrogating the methodology behind that research. If it could be demonstrated that the sources cited were themselves based on rigorous methods and presented reliable evidence, the concepts and arguments developed in the (mainly secondary) literature surveyed would assume greater credence.

28. The last source of reassurance is found in the general 'coherence' of the research. Notwithstanding the absence of clear research aims or methodologies, many of the theories, models and interpretations appear, simply, to 'make some sense'. At the risk of patronising a number of revered researchers who have extensive field experience (even if their work does not always cite it extensively), many of the papers were carefully crafted, intelligently written, and internally coherent, demonstrating an ability to navigate amongst, and engage with, a number of complex concepts. Whilst a policy-maker ought not be prepared to write a new strategy based on a theory that has not, or cannot be tested, such work nevertheless remains a useful tool for thinking. Box & Draper's comment is instructive here: "[e]ssentially all models are wrong, but some are useful" (1987: p. 424). In that sense, many of the high-level models, themes and concepts described below remain useful in framing thinking about

state formation, state fragility and state-building. They may be particularly useful in informing the shape, nature and boundaries of future research in this domain.

PART III: Thematic Analysis

Principal themes

29. The thematic analysis process, described above, resulted in the identification of the following themes:

Section 1: Overarching Themes

 i. Context specificity, historicity, and the inadequacy of the nation state as a universal concept;

Section 2: State formation, state fragility and conflict onset

 i. Criminality, neo-patrimonialism, and the 'bankruptcy' of the state;
 ii. The politics of identity;
 iii. Economic inequalities and conflict;
 iv. Governance, legitimacy, rights and conflict;
 v. Other, miscellaneously suggested causes of conflict;
 vi. State fragility and terrorism.

Section 3: State-building and peace-building interventions

 i. Interventions in general: the art of the possible;
 ii. The effectiveness of aid after conflict;
 iii. Security Sector Reform and conflict prevention;
 iv. Participatory approaches to state-building and peace-building;
 v. Education and conflict;
 vi. Addressing war economies;
 vii. Microfinance initiatives.

Section 1: Overarching Themes

Context specificity, historicity[6] and the inadequacy of the nation state as a universal concept

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[6] Meaning simply the quality or state of being historic, as opposed to fictitious or legendary. An object's historicity is conditional upon its being placed within a wider historical context.

30. A feature of the current inquiry into francophone considerations of state formation and state fragility is the insistence on context specificity and historicity. This characteristic is not unique to francophone literature, but it is nevertheless a prominent one. The following section highlights some of the most deliberate attempts to tackle this subject directly, but the notion of context specificity is one to which the current paper returns frequently.

Badie & Birnbaum (1979, [↓↓]) argue specifically for the reintroduction of history into sociology, part of an expansive thesis seeking to demonstrate that modern states emerge in a manner consistent with their historical past, and not because of the inherent qualities of the state as a construct (see also Genet: 1997, [↓↓]). As such, they make a clear case for the multiplicity of possible trajectories for successful state formation (see also Bedin & Fournier, 2009, [↓↓] and Severino & Charnoz, 2003, [↓]). This theme is further refined in Badie's *L'État Importé* (1992), in which he explores the conflictual effects of the transplantation of the western state model around the world, into localities where, he argues, it had no historical basis (see also Englebert, 1995, [↓↓]). A comparable point about historicity (though as part of a very different argument) is made by Bayart (1989, and particularly 1996), who sees the failure of post-colonial states in Africa not in their imported nature, but rather in the manner in which they were appropriated by African elites, and grafted onto pre-existing political structures: in short, he traces their incapacity and failure to their *own* historicity.

31. An extension of the historicity and context specificity thesis emerges in the form of arguments questioning the very universality of the nation-state paradigm. The theme is explored by Larbaud, as early as 1927 (Larbaud: 1958) and expanded and refined (not always consciously) by Clastres (1974), Tshiyembe (1998, p. 109-110, [↓↓]), Sur (2005, [↓↓]) and Gaulme (2007, [↓↓]). Taken together, these theses begin to seek alternatives to the nation-state paradigm. Mbembe (2000, p. 264-265, [↓↓]) in particular advocates a consideration of territory and space in a much more nuanced form (and taking into account the historicity of multiple African societies, identities and traditions) than is allowed by the nation-state construct.

32. Addressing the subject of intervention in failing states more directly, more pragmatically, and at a much more local level, Gaulme (2007, p. 227, [↓↓]) offers donors five key principles for their activities in fragile states. Three of these principles strongly advocate intervening actors generating a highly nuanced appreciation of local conditions and risk factors in order to ensure that any intervention is suitably tailored to the specifics of local context. This follows from his own commentary on the failures of the 'imported state' and recognition that elections are frequently the outcome of, rather than a necessary precondition for state formation (p. 220). A comparable note of caution on the state-building enterprise is offered by Caplan & Pouligny (2005, p. 125, [↓↓]), who argue that all too often state-building interventions are over-ambitious, and fail to note the typically slow and painful process of state formation (i.e. without due reference to the historicity of state development).

33. Considered together, these disparate pieces of research outline a clear emphasis in the francophone literature on the importance of case-specific treatment of state formation processes, and interventions in the same. There appears to be a strong scepticism not necessarily of all models, but specifically of universal models that can explain the state formation process in all of its global settings.

Summary and implications of thematic Section 1

34. There will remain a requirement for regional, country and context-specific research, as well as over-arching and thematic explorations of conflict-related phenomena. The preceding analysis notes that francophone literature makes a particularly strong case for the former, but also implicitly raises the question of how researchers and practitioners can satisfactorily extract more general lessons from such enquiries. For the commissioners of research, and DFID is a significant actor in this arena, the challenge is to balance research portfolios such that findings are clearly empirical, and based on local reality, but also offer wider perspectives on phenomena likely to be occurring elsewhere.

Section 2: State formation, state fragility & conflict onset

Criminality, neo-patrimonialism[7] and the 'bankruptcy' of the state

35. In a debate that shares a similar space to the 'context-specificity and historicity' field, explored above, a significant body of the francophone literature considers the state not as a supreme (and independent) arbiter, or redresser of imbalances, but rather as a resource, frequently used as a means of enrichment by the political classes able to dominate it.

36. Particularly prominent are the works of Médard (1991), Bayart (1996; 2004 [↓↓]), and Pourtier (2007, [↓↓]). Bayart, in particular, insists upon the critical role that criminality has traditionally played in the formation of the state, and the degree to which it has weakened it, particularly in Africa. Pourtier (2007, p. 99, [↓↓]) discusses the issue of 'zero sum' politics, prevalent where power is concomitant with wealth, both of which are, in turn, accessible exclusively through possession of the state. In such contexts, one or other elite's loss of 'possession' of the state almost inevitably leads to fragility: the state becomes 'bankrupt' [my term] because it fails to represent anything other than a resource.

37. Literature covering this theme provides specific examples of how the state's 'historicity' (discussed above) is regarded as critical to emerging forms of political organisation. Whilst recognition of the *symptoms* of underperforming states (in Africa) is relatively uncontested

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[7] Whereby patrons, in this case political leaders, use state resources to secure the loyalty of key clients in the general population. Neo-patrimonial political systems typically enable individuals to access public goods via personal links, rather than through impersonal rules and processes.

amongst the literature reviewed, the reasons *why* the state has come to be bankrupted and regarded only as an exploitable resource are fiercely disputed. A spectrum of arguments consider the degree to which corrupt, neo-patrimonial states are a result of underlying characteristics of African political organisation (Médard, Bayart), the result of the way in which an exogenous political paradigm (the nation state) was grafted onto, and appropriated by African elites (Bayart, Badie), or the result of the fundamental unsuitability of the nation-state paradigm to non-Western contexts (Badie, Englebert, Tshiyembe etc.). Tshiyembe (1998, [↓↓]), notably, is particularly critical of the arguments of Médard and Bayart, suggesting that they are founded "against all evidence" (p. 112-113), and frequently stray into ethnocentrism. For Tshiyembe, the nefarious practices observable in African states are not particular to them, and are in any case reflective of the failure of the state concept, as opposed to the failure of African forms of political organisation.

38. In their treatment of the under-performance of the state, its bankruptcy, and the apparent reasons for both, the aforementioned works open the window onto a fiercely contested francophone debate regarding the relationships between state and society, governance, and, indirectly, state fragility and state formation.

39. The current study evaluated comparatively little highly case-specific or country-specific literature on the topic of the 'bankruptcy of the state' (though Bayart's work is based on extensive field research in Western Africa, albeit that the works of his assessed as part of the current study rarely cited specific results). An exception is Parmentier's 2006 study of Transdniestria, an internationally unrecognised territory in eastern Moldova. In contrast to Bayart's work on Western Africa, Parmentier's study of Transdniestria argues that whilst this state is 'delinquent', and indeed highly criminalised, it is *not* failing. In fact, the state's ability to appropriate illicit means of trade has enabled it to claim a new form of sovereignty and legitimacy, albeit amongst Transdniestrian elites rather than Transdniestrian citizens (Parmentier: 2006, p. 146, [↓]).

40. Considered together, these various enquiries into the bankruptcy of the state, and its degradation to a mere 'resource' provide insights into the location of the state in relation to society, and indeed its power as a function of this location. Much of the research notes the weakening of the nation-state, particularly since the end of the Cold War. The works cited above enable a distinction between different forms which this 'withering' of the state has taken. In different contexts, the state may be 'absent' or failed (owing to its critical incapacity), may be in 'retreat' (in contexts where it is capable, but has deliberately chosen to cede ground to the private sector) or may itself be in the process of being privatised or criminalised. In this last case, the state is partially capable (such as in the case of Parmentier's Transdniestria) but chooses to eschew expedition of its full range of public and institutional capabilities, instead becoming a source of rent for elites. As a means of bolstering an understanding the multiple trajectories not just of state formation, but also of state failure, these perspectives are of value.

The politics of identity

41. The francophone literature is not original in noting the apparent rise of identity politics in the post-colonial and post-Cold War eras. However, some of the theoretical explanations that it provides for the rise of such politics are elegant and persuasive, and are of particular note given the attention that this subject has received in the Anglophone literature (Huntington: 1993; Kaplan: 1994) on state instability and conflict.

42. Francophone literature considers identity variously as genuine, and primordial, or illusory, and instrumentalist (i.e. invented, as a tool of politics). Bayart's works are complex in that they appear to variously argue the instrumentalist nature of identity (see Bayart: 2005, [↓↓] and Milbrandt: 2007, [↓↓]), but also appear to trace the failings and fragility of African states to very 'real' underpinning cultural characteristics (see Bayart: 1989, 1996; Englebert: 1995, p. 771, [↓]; Tshiyembe: 1998, [↓↓]) meaning that his work does itself take on 'culturalist' overtones. Banégas (2006, p. 537, [↓]), for his part, argues that identity politics is not purely instrumentalist, and that political appeals to primordial identities in African states must necessarily carry some deeper meaning amongst the people at whom they are targeted in order to attract the following that they have done.

43. Beyond these 'instrumentalist/primordial' discussions however, the same body of literature considers the *reasons* behind the apparently recent emergence of identity politics in its various forms (nationalism, ethnocentrism, Pentecostalism etc.). Albeit that they are arguing to rather different ends, Badie (2001, p. 50-51 [↓↓]), Bayart (2005, [↓↓]) and Banégas [↓] (2006) each trace the most aggressive rise of identity politics to the post-Cold War period. Bayart charts this trend to the 'second wave' of democracy in African states, arguing that with prior, post-colonial appeals to national projects of modernisation discredited in many states, but facing the imperative of securing legitimate, democratic support, politicians of the 1990s saw in primordial identities a new source of political capital. For some (Réseau IMPACT: 2007, p. 83, [↓↓]) this marks the decline of political organisation along social class lines, and its re-emergence around primordial identities. Badie (1992, [↓↓]; 2001, [↓↓]) places slightly greater emphasis on the impact of international forces in the rise of identity politics, seeing the (sometimes violent) stirring of local identities as a response to the 'de-differentiating'/homogenising forces of globalisation.

44. Banégas (2006, [↓]), writing with specific reference to Côte d'Ivoire, also notes a greater virulence of identity politics and ethnic tensions in the 1990s, though for him, this is a result of the artificial postponement of an Ivorian debate on nationalism and identity (p. 549). He argues that the post-colonial regime, which stretched from 1960-1993, adopted an artificially close relationship with former colonial power France, voluntarily positioning the country at the heart of *la françafrique*. In so doing, it suppressed legitimate questions about Ivorian identity. These emerged much later, and played a very significant role in the outbreak of war in Ivory Coast in 2002 (and remain integral to its continuing instability).

45. The consideration of Banégas, above, opens the door to a number of studies focussing more explicitly not just on the role of identity in state formation, but on the role of identity and ethnicity in conflict onset. Two of these studies in particular remain circumspect as to the centrality of identity (and specifically ethnicity) to state fragility and conflict. Considering repeated outbreaks of political violence in Burundi in the 1990s, Simbare (2008, [↓↓]) notes the importance of structurally vital social and economic factors, the salience of which have been somewhat masked by 'ethnic dimensions', whilst Pourtier (2007, [↓↓]) charts violence in the Great Lakes region in particular to over-population in Rwanda, rather than the ethnic dimensions that conflict typically assumes in this location.

46. Moreover, in an historical study of Benin, Bako Arifari (2006, [↑]) notes how the deliberate stigmatisation of the language of regional identity and autochthony has enabled a country of multiple identities (and multiple 'out-groups') to avert forms of factionalism before they become violent. Bako Arifari's analysis of the way in which cross-regional representation in political parties and state ministries have been established demonstrates the opportunities afforded by political compromise in spite of diverse concepts of identity.

47. Lastly, it is perhaps of note here that whilst the academics cited above stress the negative aspects of identity politics, some actually see in the wider recognition of ethnicity the roots of a legitimate, endogenous process of African political organisation, one which was emerging with some success even before the foisting of the nation state upon African societies (Tshiyembe: 1998, p. 521, [↓↓]).

48. Considered as a whole, and at the most basic level, these various studies present a mixed view as to the primordial or instrumental nature of identity. However, each acknowledges the importance of the concept in state formation and state fragility. It would appear that the more these studies focus on particular case studies, the less satisfactory is the mere (primordial) 'existence' of diverse forms of identity as an explanation for state fragility, though Banégas and Badie's analyses in particular advocate a challenging, and subtle treatment of 'identity'.

Economic inequalities and conflict

49. The consideration and treatment of the relationship between economics, economic inequality and conflict in the francophone academic literature is, unsurprisingly, diverse. Although the current study does not systematically compare francophone approaches to the various works of Collier & Hoeffler, Fearon & Laitin, and Sambanis, the salience of these researchers in the wider debate is recognised, and used as a reference point where useful.

50. A research team operating under the Réseau IMPACT banner (2007, [↓↓]) considers the particular role of (economic) inequality as a driver of conflict. Whilst insisting on the importance of context-specificity, they note that inter-state inequalities appear not to be a source of conflict (p. 77), but that intra-territorial inequalities ('horizontal inequality') are

much more problematic (p. 85).[8] The state's inability to regulate inequalities and guarantee at least a minimal level of sharing of public goods (and security) will lead to potentially conflict-inducing grievances, although these will require manipulation (instrumentalisation) in order to lead to conflict onset (p. 84). Réseau IMPACT's bibliographical references are impressively extensive, but the exact route through which they arrive at the study findings is unclear.

51. Without offering any specific evidence, Hugon (2006, [↓↓]) notes the likely importance of internal and external shocks, the resultant collapse of markets, and low popular resilience to such shocks as likely conditions in which conflict will emerge (p. 35). Moreover, whilst noting that the Collier & Hoeffler (2000b) 'greed and grievance' thesis (in which individuals' appetite for personal gain is a more powerful motivator for violence than is collective action prompted by popular grievances) is contested, he nevertheless adopts a relatively uncritical 'opportunity cost' approach to explaining the *continuation* of conflict (p. 38). This argument holds that conflict will continue so long as it remains profitable for its fomenters.

52. In a study aiming to build, and test a theoretical model of state failure, Clément (2004, [↓↓]) makes reference to Collier's (2000a; 2003) work amongst several other sources, and posits economic transformation (either acceleration or stagnation) as one of four necessary conditions for state collapse. However, the analysis itself is based on only three case studies, and the final presentation of findings lacks clarity.

53. Considering the collapse of the state in Iraq after 2003, Brun (2007, [↓]) shapes an argument that spans some of the key conclusions of the early Collier (2000a; 2000b) thesis but also considers a number of socio-political factors. Brun locates the particularly violent eruption of inter-communitarian tensions after 2003 in a competition to secure oil rights (citing the salience of Collier's 'greed' thesis in the process [Brun: 2007, p. 111]). However, he also considers the degradation of Iraq's social fabric as a factor in its inability to resolve inter-communitarian tensions peacefully, a degradation that can, he says, be traced to the economic decline caused by the international sanctions regime of the 1990s (p. 114). The final 'trigger' for Iraq's catastrophic collapse was the rapid dissolution of the Ba'ath Party, the only political organisation able to maintain order (p. 117). Brun's argument, then, pulls in economic, social and political concepts: it is pragmatic and realistic in recognising diverse causes of conflict, of which economics is but one.

54. The most direct, but also the most critical treatment of economic explanations for state failure is taken by Marchal & Messiant (2002, [↓]). In a paper fiercely sceptical of Collier's (2000) dismissal of 'grievance' as a motivation for conflict (a position from which Collier has, in any case, withdrawn somewhat in recent years), they accuse Collier of 'expert manipulation' of his data (p. 59), lament his willingness to 'bury history without hesitation' (p.60), and challenge a number of key assumptions he makes in his analysis.

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[8] The RESEAU Impact study references some of Frances Stewart's earlier (2000) findings on horizontal inequalities, but is not informed by her 'Major findings and conclusions on the relationship between horizontal inequalities and conflict', Chapter 13 in, Stewart, F. (2007) (ed.) *Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict: Understanding Group Violence in Multienthnic Societies*.

55. Marchal & Messiant's criticisms are of note not simply because they cast doubt upon the importance of economic causes of conflict, but also because they raise doubts about econometric approaches to determining the causes of state fragility. Their work is not alone in questioning the validity and value of universal 'grand theory', particularly when the latter is based on individualism and rational choice. Véron (2008, p. 20 [↓]) is suitably sceptical of Collier's work, and doubts the existence of robust 'grand theories' of conflict (derived from econometric methods). Severino & Charnoz [2003, [↓]) express similar concerns about the reliability of 'grand theory'. The insistence of a number of francophone academics on the importance of context-specificity and historicity has already been noted, and further reference to Badie (2001, p. 56) is instructive. He observes that the uncertainty and unpredictability of forms of political organisation in the post-Cold War era have significantly weakened 'paradigmatic visions' and explanations of social phenomena (presumably including conflict), and that instead, the importance of history, sociology and political-economy are re-emerging.

56. Taken collectively, the treatment of economic causes of conflict as discussed in the studies assessed presents a mixed picture. None of the studies present compelling evidence for or against the primacy of economics or inequality in conflict onset. Several appear to recognise its importance, but only when paired with other aggravating factors, or when economic grievances are instrumentalised.

Governance, legitimacy, rights and conflict

57. A small number of studies assessed during the current study treat the issues of governance, legitimacy, human rights and conflict.

58. The role of governance in conflict is treated cursorily by Lavoix (2007, [↓↓]), who notes the growing interest in the World Bank's CPIA rankings as indicators for the likelihood of conflict onset [p. 57]. The paper provides no evidence which could be used either to challenge or support Fearon's 2010 in-depth study of this subject.

59. Taking 'legitimacy' as its principal point of enquiry, an OECD (2010) study, largely based on the work of Darbon, Bellina, Eriksen and Sending (2009, [↓]), considers four aspects of this concept. These are: (i) input/process legitimacy (i.e. the legitimacy a state enjoys owing to its respect for formal, national institutions); (ii) output/performance legitimacy (the legitimacy a state enjoys owing to the public goods that it provides); (iii) shared beliefs legitimacy (the legitimacy a state enjoys owing to popular perceptions that it is representative of the culture and society that it rules) and (iv) international legitimacy (conferred by a state's formal, legal recognition internationally) (OECD: 2010, p. 8). In an argument that (once again) stresses the importance of context-specificity, the authors argue that a donor-led quest to secure state legitimacy simply through 'Type (i)' input/process legitimacy (through the blind imposition of 'rational-legal' political institutions, themselves

based on western, Weberian models) is unlikely to be an effective mechanism for state-building in non-Western contexts (p. 11). Instead, a much greater recognition is required of 'Type (iii)' shared beliefs legitimacy (p. 27-8). Such recognition may in fact require donor acceptance that individuals are likely to engage with, and confer legitimacy on sub-statal and local institutions, as and when it suits them to do so (p. 37). Donor efforts to contribute to this formation of legitimacy should be inspired by the concept of bottom-up, or 'grounded' legitimacy (p. 39-43), and should be confined to a facilitative research role, rather than a direct interventionist role (p. 46). A note of particular caution is sounded by Châtaigner (2006, [↓↓]), who observes that external assistance for security sector reform has merely resulted in the strengthening of *illegitimate* regimes.

60. In a rights-based approach to state stability, Eugene (2007, [↓↓]) argues for a greater consideration of the relationship between a state's respect for human rights, its development record, and indeed its propensity to instability and conflict. In a paper that draws extensively on an English-language (and, incidentally, a World Bank) work (Kaufman *et al*: 2005), Eugene traces the development of socio-economic rights to the presence of civil and political rights, and notes that corruption and the absence of the state are typically linked to a violation of fundamental human rights… or could lead to the same. Following from this, her rights-based model for state fragility places (a) levels of state engagement in international norms and processes, (b) a state's record of following through on its commitments, and (c) measures of human rights at its core (p. 48)..

61. Taken together, the research assessed provides limited evidence to demonstrate links between poor governance, corruption, and the absence of rights and the onset of conflict. It does provide some mixed evidence in support of the salience of legitimacy in state fragility.

Other, miscellaneously suggested causes of conflict

62. The following section rapidly summarises a number of 'miscellaneous' factors identified (usually from secondary sources) by the francophone literature as having some explanatory power for the onset of conflict.

63. Without presenting the evidence upon which they are based, Hugon (2006, [↓↓]) identifies the following four domains from which the causes of conflict are likely to emerge: (i) *structural* causes, including the collapse of markets, the limited resilience of populations to market forces, an absence of rights, and ineffective mechanisms for the reallocation of resources; (ii) *shocks*, either internal or external; (iii) *institutional and political causes*, including an absence of conflict prevention mechanisms, and the instrumentalisation of a number of grievance-inducing factors, specifically youth unemployment, religion and ethnicity; (iv) *informational* causes, including inconsistencies in information distribution, and the varying power or impotence of the media. (p. 35).

64. Lavoix (2007, p. 66-7, [↓↓]) provides an extensive listing of domains likely to be useful in tracking state propensity to instability or conflict, arranging them under the headings 'security and protection from external aggression', 'security and protection from internal unrest', 'provision of material security' (i.e. human development), and 'state authority and legitimacy'. The specific factors and metrics used to illustrate these domains are drawn from well-established conflict databases (e.g. the Uppsala/PRIO databases, and USAID's C/FACTS framework).

65. Lastly, in an argument that echoes Badie's (1992) thesis, we note Réseau IMPACT's observation of the conflictual effects of globalisation on southern peripheries, observing that the failure of the nation state to 're-conquer the local' at the same time as globalisation has few difficulties reaching into the periphery (often with unpredictable outcomes) is a particularly problematic inequality-related issue.

The link between state fragility and terrorism

66. A single study assessed (Antil & Leboeuf: 2007, [↓]) questions the frequently-made assertion that fragile, failing or failed states provide a haven for terrorists, and therefore present a significant threat to Western security. In an analysis which is clearly empirical, but nevertheless suspect in some areas, Antil & Leboeuf demonstrate that state fragility is not the best predictor of the likely presence of terrorist agents (there are a number of other factors that terrorist agents will consider when establishing new bases), and that there is increasing evidence that the discourse of state fragility is increasingly being instrumentalised and conflated with that of terrorism to justify external interventions.

Summary and implications of thematic Section 2

67. Based on the analysis conducted in 'Section 2' above, the current researcher poses the following questions for further consideration. This question set can be used as a basis for 'gap analysis', in particular to inform the shape of the current DFID research portfolio on fragile states, or establish where 'good' evidence already exists.

   a. What is the evidence that… corrupt, neo-patrimonial states are more prone to instability?

   b. What is the evidence that… improved governance reduces the risk of state instability?

   c. …that development programmes aimed at building a sense of national identity are likely to reduce the risks of instability?

   d. …that economic inequality increases the likelihood of conflict?

e. …that external (usually economic) shocks increase the likelihood of conflict onset? What are the options for increasing popular resilience to such shocks?

f. …that societal cohesion (e.g. in the form of trades unions) or resilience reduces the likelihood of internal conflict?

g. …that illegitimate regimes are more likely to witness fragility and conflict?

h. …that states that observe and promote human rights are at reduced risk of fragility and conflict?

i. …that state fragility is associated with media freedom and popular informational access?

j. …that fragile states are more likely to develop into terrorist havens, or present other risks to Western security?

Section 3: State-building and peace-building interventions

Interventions in general: the art of the possible

68. Of the studies that were reviewed, there appears to be significant circumspection with regards the likely success of state-building (and peace-building) interventions. Caplan & Pouligny's observation that externally-driven state-building processes are over-ambitious (2005, p. 125, [↓↓]) has already been noted. Taking 'the long view' of state formation (in a further echo of the 'context-specificity' and historicity school of thought, described above) Lavoix (2007, p. 63, [↓↓]) adds to this note of scepticism through reference to a particular paradox: "If wars are essential in the state formation process, how can action taken by the international community, purportedly favouring fragile states, and aimed at preventing the onset of conflict, actually contribute to the strengthening of the State?" [my translation]. Moreover, Lavoix seeks to differentiate between illegitimate, but progressive regimes, and illegitimate and unprogressive regimes (p. 67), the implication being that western, liberal conceptions of legitimacy are, themselves, inadequate as an explanation and driver for the 'building of the state'.

69. Discussing the historical evolution of the state-building enterprise, Véron (2008, [↓]) considers how international interventions into fragile states have become progressively more ambitious, particularly in the last 15-20 years, ramping up from mere peace-keeping operations and 'post-conflict reconstruction', to stabilisation and state-building missions. Noting the securitization of development paradigm, and the UK's significant involvement in the emergence of the 'liberal peace' ideal, with 'comprehensive' or 'integrated' approaches

to state-building at its core (p. 17), Véron observes some of the principal tenets of stabilisation operations: (i) restoration of security; (ii) economic re-development; (iii) rehabilitation of the state apparatus; (iv) the reformation of the political and judicial systems and (v), the re-engineering of civil society. In addition, he posits some key causes for the failure of peace-building and state-building missions, notably (i) the absence of a significant peace dividend; (ii) the absence of effective state governance and (iii) failures of the international community.

70. Further messages of caution and scepticism as to the 'art of the possible' are offered by Tessier (1999, [↓↓]). In a review of several *anglophone* works which dealing specifically with peace-keeping operations (PKOs, admittedly just a single aspect of the conflict resolution space), Tessier argues that the limitations of PKOs are more apparent than their achievements (p. 145). Specifically, he notes Paris' 1997 assessment of eight PKO case studies, which demonstrates that peace-building initiatives do not succeed with any regularity (p. 141). Advocating a 'realist' approach to PKOs, Tessier argues for recognition of several factors likely to determine the success or otherwise of the operation, namely: (i) the equilibrium of forces emerging from civil war; (ii) the degree to which moderate elements among the belligerent parties have been eliminated; (iii) the presence of peace-spoilers; (iv) the presence of fractures among parties to the conflict; (v) the degree to which violence has been psychologically acculturated by belligerents (p. 142). To these, we may add a set of challenges to peace processes identified by Nelson Alusala (unpublished, [↓↓]), which includes (i) the risks of 'mission creep', making the metrics for success in a peace-keeping mission more difficult to attain; (ii) financial and resource constraints on the peace-keeping mission; (iii) a lack of coordination between local actors, military actors and NGOs; (iv) a lack of political will, or sudden changes in political will; (v) the (il-)legitimacy of intervening actors; (vi) the unbalancing second-order effects of a large, moneyed military/civilian force on the local economy (Alusala, p. 41).

71. Considering the state-building and peace-building agenda more optimistically than some of the works cited above, Châtaigner & Magro (2007, [↓↓]) accept the broad assumption that war is preventable if action is taken early enough (p. 9), and Gaulme (2007, [↓↓]) cautiously welcomes the coordination of security interventions, humanitarianism and development aid in order to prevent, or alleviate violent conflict (p. 225, see also Véron: 2008, [↓], p. 17). Consistent with the current paper's recurring theme, both studies insist upon the inadequacy of 'one size fits all' approaches to intervention (Gaulme: 2007, p. 218-219; Châtaigner & Magro, p. 13), with the latter arguing for the criticality of popular consent and popular participation in any peace-building/state-building strategy.

The effectiveness of aid after conflict

72. The literature surveyed presents some evidence regarding the effectiveness of aid in post-conflict environments, albeit that this draws heavily from anglophone approaches to the same topic. Notwithstanding their scepticism of the value of universal models of

economic growth, Severino & Charnoz (2003, [↓]) note Burnside & Dollar's (1997 & 2000) findings that the majority of aid distribution performs favourably, particularly when targeted at countries practising 'good governance'. They also cite Collier & Hoeffler's (2002, and therefore pre-Iraq, and pre-Afghanistan) research finding that aid appears to be twice as effective in 'post-conflict' countries than in other poor countries.

73. The effectiveness of technical aid as opposed to non-technical aid (for example direct budgetary support) is the focus of Collier & Chauvet's 2007 paper, published in French [↑]. The paper presents findings based on a clear methodology and employment of Polity IV and World Bank CPIA data, though the current analyst does not have the econometric background required to fully interrogate that methodology. The research finds that in fragile states where a programme of reform has been initiated, the provision of technical aid (e.g. for capacity building) will boost the incentives for elites to prosecute that reform in the first four years after its initiation (p. 449). During this same timeframe, the provision of non-technical aid (direct budgetary support, or project financing) will actually reduce incentives to support that reform (p. 447). These effects are based on the phenomena that aid can both reduce the financial cost of reform, thus supporting it, and reduce the need for reform thus undermining it (p. 436).

74. In a study drawing heavily upon the methodological approaches of Dollar & Burnside, and Collier & Hoeffler, Esso (2006, [↑]) provides evidence for the positive, short- and long-term effects of aid on economic growth in Ivory Coast in the period 1960-2002, observing both that reform of the financial sector and of governance are associated with positive economic growth, and that aid for reconstruction and development in post-conflict conditions will be particularly beneficial.

75. The studies assessed in this section score favourably in quality terms because of their preparedness to express specifically the methodology adopted. A note of caution, should, nevertheless be sounded, given that the fidelity of the datasets upon which such econometric studies are based has been called into question by several researchers.

76. The current section on the effectiveness of aid after conflict concludes with the listing of a number of factors identified as being determinants of successful growth in fragile states. Collier & Chauvet (2007) suggest that the success or otherwise of reform programmes will be dependent upon (i) the degree to which elite interests coincide with those of the remainder of society; (ii) the degree to which power structures enable elites to actually enforce their will over the rest of society; (iii) the degree to which those with a 'controlling stake' in the state have sufficient information to determine whether or not the decisions they make are indeed in their own interests, and (iv) the degree to which administrators and civil servants have sufficient capacity to implement the reforms designed (p. 436-7). For his part, Esso (2006, [↑]) suggests, with reference specifically to Ivory Coast, that the following economic policies are likely to be crucial in fragile environments: (i) prioritisation of social cohesion; (ii) provision of finance to bolster internal security; (iii) administrative restructuring; (iv) investment in human capital (particularly job creation); (v) improvements

in governance and (vi) investment in civil and judicial liberties (p. 11). The degree to which his findings can be applied to other country contexts is unclear.

77. The extent to which these hypothesised determinants of growth and post-conflict recovery, or reduced instability requires verification.

Security Sector Reform and conflict prevention

78. Several studies considering the importance of Security Sector Reform (SSR) in conflict-prevention or post-conflict stabilisation were assessed as part of the current study. Taken together, these studies are circumspect with regards the impact of SSR on peace-building.

79. Vircoulon (2007, [↓]) for example, notes that SSR has become a standard response of the international community to state fragility (p. 171), and has often been undertaken as a largely technical exercise, without due regard for local conditions. The establishment of security sectors designed to support Western-style, Weberian states may be counter-productive in situations where polities and societies are not operating along such state-centric lines. Vircoulon's thesis is complementary to that of Sartre (2007, [↓↓]) who argues that SSR is a particularly hazardous technique for conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction because it risks the establishment or reinforcement of an apparatus partially or entirely beyond the control of the other organs of state: conflict prevention requires security, but security itself will not prevent crises (p. 161-2). Châtaigner (2006, [↓↓]), argues strongly for a greater consideration of the end goals of SSR, and in particular recognition of the danger that SSR may accidentally, in seeking to reinforce some of the core 'regalian' powers of the state, simply bolster illegitimate regimes (p. 108-109).

80. Moreover, Vitalis (2004) notes the apparent tendency of western powers to under-estimate the importance of mechanisms to bolster internal security, in favour of external, border security issues, precisely in a period (since the end of the Cold War) in which inter-state conflict is less prevalent.

81. Although the evidence base upon which these arguments are based is limited or vague, there is (again) a common insistence on the importance of context specificity. Echoing the criticisms of technocratic prescriptions to peace-building, Châtaigner, notes the very mixed success of SSR in Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Haiti, demonstrates that 'superficial' reforms in the instruments of security are unlikely to affect the underlying, structural causes of violence (p. 109). In short, it is risky to assume that SSR will automatically result in more stable states in the long-term.

Participatory approaches to state-building and peace-building

82. In the only study so far reviewed that considers 'popular participation', Melloul (2007, [↓]) seeks to chart the role of accountability, community-driven development and

governance in the strengthening of the social contact and in state-building. The research is not primary, but it is at least clearly case-study based, and uses comparative references to Brazil, India and Sierra Leone to tentatively conclude that state-building strategies built from the bottom up, involving the citizenry, are likely to achieve above-average levels of success. Noting the success of municipal participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre (p. 272-4), of anti-corruption citizen performance cards in Karnataca, and popular involvement in the sharing of a 'peace dividend' in Sierra Leone, Melloul also observes the crucial importance of a thorough analysis of political groups and actors prior to the design of any engagement strategy (p. 284-7).

Education and conflict

83. The evidence regarding the relationship between education, violence and armed conflict is mixed (Lenoue, 2006 [↓]). The relationship is complex, and depending upon the specific context, education can be a cause of conflict, a victim of conflict and indeed a mechanism for peace. For example, there is some evidence that the ethnicization of education in Rwanda, Burundi and Serbia had conflict-producing effects (p. 4). However, in some cases, the ethnicization of education has been the result, rather than the cause of conflict (p. 4). Moreover, the content of curricula is not the only potential source of conflict: in a number of African countries, exclusion from higher educational opportunities, or from job opportunities following the receipt of education can generate political violence (p. 5). In yet other cases, it is the debasing or devaluation of academic qualifications (the issuing of diplomas and qualifications based on limited learning or achievement) which produces dynamics of violence (p. 6). In none of these cases are the relationships simple or universal. Again, context-specific analysis is vital.

Addressing war economies

84. A single study assessed as part of the current review considered interventions in war economies (Véron, 2007, [↓↓]), in this case referring to those economies and industries that flourish in fragile or conflict-affected environments. The study does not offer strong evidence on any single aspect of war economy interventions, but generally offers a cautionary note on standardized, 'off the shelf' interventions. The study's principal argument is that the boundaries between war economies and legitimate peace economies are invariably blurred (p. 146). Instead, all economies are situated somewhere along a war/peace and legitimate/illegitimate spectrum. The analysis considers a number of typical post-conflict war economy interventions: (a) the outlawing of criminal activities, and the strangling of conflict financing sources; (b) the establishment of alternative livelihoods; (c) the boosting of state capacity so that it can better regulate economic activities (p. 148-9).

85. With these typical interventions in mind, however, the study offers a number of 'best practice' lessons: (i) strategies which are punitive and exclusive are likely to fail: the microeconomic impacts of interventions at the local level must be considered; (ii) there may

be a serious risk of re-igniting conflict if an intervention seeks to take on powerful criminal economic interests too directly; (iii) economic growth is the best mechanism for weaning people off the shadow economy: as such, pro-growth policies (rather than punitive crackdowns) are likely to be most effective (Véron, p. 149).

Micro-finance initiatives

86. A review of the literature on the microfinance initiatives in post-conflict situations (Agbodjan, 2007, [↓])suggests that there is only very weak evidence that such interventions have conflict-reducing effects.

Summary and implications of thematic Section 3

87. Based on the analysis conducted in 'Section 3' above, the current researcher poses the following questions for further consideration. This question set can be used as a basis for 'gap analysis', in particular to inform the shape of the current DFID research portfolio on fragile states, or establish where 'good' evidence already exists:

a. What is the evidence that… the establishment of security is a necessary precondition of the wider aspects of successful state-building and peace-building interventions?

b. What is the evidence that… economic recovery and 'peace dividends' are preconditions for lasting security and stability?

c. …that either 'narrow' or 'expansive' security sector reform interventions are critical to state-building and peace-building?

d. …of the stability-enhancing effects of 'good governance' development interventions?

e. …that negotiated peace settlements (where conflict has reached stalemate) can be effective?

f. …that the psychological acculturation of violence by belligerents poses an enduring threat to state stability after the cessation of conflict?

g. …that the success of state-building and peace-building interventions is correlated with their magnitude (i.e. size of external donor investment).

h. …that the local legitimacy of external actors is a significant determinant of the success of state-building and peace-building interventions?

i. …that aid is effective after conflict? If it is, specifically what types are effective?

j. …that participatory approaches to state-building and peace-building are effective?

k. …that the dynamics of education are associated with conflict?

l. …that 'forgiving', inclusively-styled policies towards war economies in the aftermath of conflict are more effective than punitive policies?

m. …that micro-finance initiatives in post-conflict environments are effective?

PART IV: France's policy on state fragility and state-building

Introduction

88. The current paper has focussed principally on francophone academic approaches to state fragility and state-building. The following section considers the institutional and administrative context to these concepts, specifically in France.

89. The key themes which emerge are as follows: first, an emphasis on the importance of context specificity in conflict and instability analysis, second, an insistence upon the importance of 'the social' (as distinguished from the political, the institutional and the economic) in state-building and peace-building, and third, a tendency to consider standard social developmental interventions that are 'conflict/fragility-sensitive', rather than necessarily designing interventions that have state-building/peace-building as their principal objective.

Organisation

90. France's development priorities are determined by the Inter-ministerial committee on international cooperation and development (CICID). The implementation of these priorities is shared across the French Ministry for Foreign & European Affairs (MAEE), the Ministry for Economy, Industry & Employment (MINEIE), and the Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Interdependent Development Ministry (MIIIDS). Administration of French ODA is delegated to the Agence Française de Développement (AFD). MAEE, and specifically its Department for Global Affairs, Development and Partnerships (DGM) retains the policy lead for fragile and conflict-affected states, with AFD increasingly responsible for informing the shape of this policy.[9] In political-military crises, the critical role of the French Ministry of Defence is also recognised.

91. According to one analysis, "[t]here is no single focal point within the French foreign policy apparatus to coordinate strategy and planning for fragile states" (Patrick & Brown, 2007, p. 96). According to the same analysis, and notwithstanding the CICID, "an enduring obstacle to whole of government collaboration on fragile states is the strong tendency within the French government for ministries to remain vertically stove-piped rather than horizontally integrated. In contrast to most other governments, France has few real permanent structures of inter-ministerial coordination, much less any common pooled funds" (p. 96).

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[9] See: http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/rubrique_imprim.php3?id_rubrique=7400. Organisation also based on consultation with AFD official, 16 February 2011.

Geographical presence

92. France's ODA 'footprint' is largely defined by the Zone de solidarité prioritaire (ZSP), itself determined by the CICID and MAEE. The ZSP comprises the following countries, identified as being states where development aid is likely to be particularly beneficial, and where France has a stated interest in building greater cooperative links:

   a. **Middle East**: Lebanon, Palestinian Territories, Yemen;

   b. **North Africa**: Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia;

   c. **'French' sub-Saharan Africa**: Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo-Brazzaville, Ivory Cost, Cameroon, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Chad, Togo;

   d. **Sub-Saharan Africa (other)**: Angola, Burundi, Cape Verde, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Gambia, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, São Tomé-et-Príncipe, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Zimbabwe;

   e. **Far East**: Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam;

   f. **Caribbean and Latin America**: Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Surinam;

   g. **Pacific**: Vanuatu

Theoretical positioning

93. Chronologically, France's first specific attempt to develop a formal discourse on fragile states appears to have been Châtaigner and Gaulme's 'Beyond the Fragile State' working paper (AFD: 2005). Taking a part analytical, part policy positioning approach, the paper notes how the role of the state (specifically its strength and capacity) gradually re-occupied international aid and development debates in the late 1990s (AFD: 2005, p. 5). Indeed, Châtaigner and Gaulme argue that among French development assistance theorists and practitioners, it had maintained this position all along (p. 10).

94. Yet notwithstanding their recognition of the importance of the state to development and stability, Châtaigner and Gaulme insist on the inadequacy of the term 'state fragility'. They suggest that the term tends to imply structural failings in the formal state construct, and does not adequately cover sources and drivers of instability that fall outside this construct, namely localities, sub- or trans-national 'regions', as well as societies and peoples. Specifically, the paper argues for state-building interventions that emphasise the 'social'

(rather than merely the political, institutional, and macro-economic) (p. 4). Explicitly, the authors say that "if states are fragile, it is because their societies are fragile as well" and that this societal fragility must be addressed.

95. Developing this theme, Châtaigner and Gaulme argue for the development of analytical tools that can provide "rapid assessments of local social realities" (p. 18), a practical recommendation consistent with the insistence on context specificity noted elsewhere in this paper. They suggest that on the basis of such analyses, the "social bond" within and across societies should be re-built through interventions engaging variously with "local realities" (p. 18), "networks of microeconomic relationships (if necessary extending across borders)", and "regional and sub-regional dynamics" (p. 19).

Policy Declarations

96. In more deliberate and concrete policy declarations, AFD (operating on behalf of MAEE) declares itself committed to the administration of upstream preventative treatment (AFD & Groupe URD: 2008, p. 25; AFD: 2010) for crisis-threatened or conflict-affected states, noting that at least 14% of the global population (or 870 million people in 46 countries) live in fragile environments (AFD/DEC: 2010, p. 2), and the deleterious effects of such fragility on development activities. More than one third of the countries in which AFD now operates are conflict zones or are at potential risk of conflict (AFD: 2010). Assistance to crisis-affected or crisis-threatened states (be it as a result of natural disasters or political dynamics) now ranks among MAEE's four strategic objectives for ODA.[10]

97. After the generation of economic growth, AFD places the establishment of social links (part of a greater social 'contract') right at the core of all of its ODA activities, effectively a formal framing of the Châtaigner & Gaulme insistence upon 'the social', outlined above. For Véron, the implications for state-building and peace-building are represented by a simple objective: "… to produce economic and social development whilst simultaneously addressing causes of fragility" (AFD: 2010).

98. To date, it appears that AFD has focussed on designing conflict- and instability-*sensitive* development interventions rather than distinct state-building and peace-building interventions (AFD & Groupe URD: 2008, p. 26; AFD: 2010).

Additional policy guidance and recommendations

99. In addition to the theoretical positioning and policy declarations outlined above, France's institutional literature also proposes a number of miscellaneous policy and action recommendations. These include Châtaigner and Gaulme's (2008) generic list of areas and

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[10] See: http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/entrees-thematiques_830/aide-au-developpement-gouvernance-democratique_1060/dispositifs-enjeux-aide-au-developpement_20515/index.html.

action points likely to require consideration in contexts of state fragility. These are: (i) ethnic minorities, particularly where they have been denied political responsibility and where they straddle international borders; (ii) marginalised people and social groups; (iii) forced migration; (iv) land and property ownership (points [i] – [iv] all noted for their destabilising potential); (v) economic organisations, such as trades unions, guilds and chambers of commerce, noted as being a crucial, and potentially stabilising contact point between civil society and the political order or state, particularly given the privatisation or criminalisation of the state; (vi) local government infrastructure (p. 20).

100.   In a general discussion, AFD's Crisis and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit Head identifies three key factors for successful development and peace-building strategies: the first is close and careful analysis of any context to ensure that at the very least, interventions 'do no harm'. He calls for 'patience' since fragile situations can be complex, drawing in multiple historical, geographical, economic and social factors, ancient and modern. The last laments the emergence of 'aid orphans' and issues a deliberate call that donors continue to assist fragile states (AFD: 2010).

101.   A further set of broadly 'institutional' recommendations is issued jointly in a paper by AFD and one of its development partners. In addition to calling for greater coordination across the various ministries, and for an improved 'early warning capability' (AFD & Groupe URD: 2008, p. 31-40), the paper identifies the following concepts as being crucial for conflict prevention or post-conflict recovery:

a. Job creation to ensure marginalised populations and demobilised combatants notice an obvious peace 'dividend';
b. Engage with 'war economies', a term which covers economic activities far beyond simple 'predation';
c. Regulate access to natural resources, particularly those necessary for rural activities;
d. Provide for basic needs, such as health and education;
e. Leverage private sector development;
f. Consolidate the 'social fabric' (AFD & Groupe URD: 2008, p. 26).

102.   In a recommendation designed to provide a practical solution to calls for greater consideration of context specificity, the same paper recommends the 'upskilling' of AFD staff in the fields of historical, geographical, sociological and political-economy analysis (p. 27).

103.   At the most 'tactical' level, AFD has also drawn on evaluation of its programmes to develop a set of practical recommendations for intervention in fragile states (AFD-DEC 2010). Again, understanding of local context features prominently here.

PART V: Conclusions

104.   The current study concludes with some general observations and points for further discussion, the principal findings of each section having been summarised in 'Part I', and at the end of each of the subsequent parts and sections.

105.   The assessment of evidence and quality of evidence is a contentious issue. The current study adopted a well-established methodology to interrogate research. The evaluation criteria favoured those studies adopting empirical approaches and the scientific method. Using these criteria, the vast majority of studies assessed were evaluated as being of low evidential quality. There are a number of potential implications of this finding: first, we might reasonably take the view that the francophone social science literature on state formation, state fragility, state-building and peace-building is evidentially week, and consequently unreliable.

106.   However, it should also be noted that the use of a similar evaluation framework on a similarly-generated sample of Anglophone literature (or indeed that written in other languages) might expose similar weaknesses. Social and political sciences are particularly vulnerable to accusations of dubious methodological rigour. Ongoing DFID research into evidential quality is likely to offer further insights in this area.

107.   There will inevitably be some that will question the value and applicability of evaluation methodologies which have their origins in the physical sciences. The view may be taken that the current methodology for assessing evidence is ill-suited to social science research, and should be rejected in favour of alternative epistemological approaches to evidence assessment.

108.   Nevertheless, it is evident that efforts to consider the evidence underpinning reported conflict and state-building phenomena must adopt some kind of explicit evidential evaluation framework so as to avoid subjective assessment practices. Following from this, DFID might reasonably assess the mechanisms for monitoring the quality of research it commissions, for example ensuring it follows more rigorously the principles of the scientific method.

109.   The paper illustrates an overwhelming insistence upon the importance of context-specificity and 'historicity' in conducting research, and designing interventions. This emphasises the importance of ensuring that research portfolios are adequately balanced to ensure both the commissioning of context-specific, regional, country or local research, as well as over-arching thematic studies. Given these different formats and styles of research, practitioners are also likely to require additional support in understanding how to best apply both.

110.   Lastly, the paper, and the research assessed within it, does not allow for the formation of firm conclusions about what causes conflict, or what state-building or peace-building interventions are likely to be successful. Instead, it allows for the drawing up of more specific, 'answerable' questions, which can be used to shape DFID's research programme portfolio on conflict and fragility.

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