# (Re)building fragile, post-conflict states: evolution, dilemmas and the role of research

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RECONSTRUCTION &
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UNIT

# Outline

1. The three-phase evolution of the concepts of fragility and post-conflict state building

2. The theoretical and practical dilemmas of this international agenda

3. Which role for research?

# 1. Three-phase evolution

Essential Definitions:

State Building:

- "Actions undertaken by international or national actors to establish, reform, or strengthen the institutions of the state and their relation to society" (Call & Wyeth, 2008)

Fragile States:

- "Countries where the government cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor" (DFID, 2005)
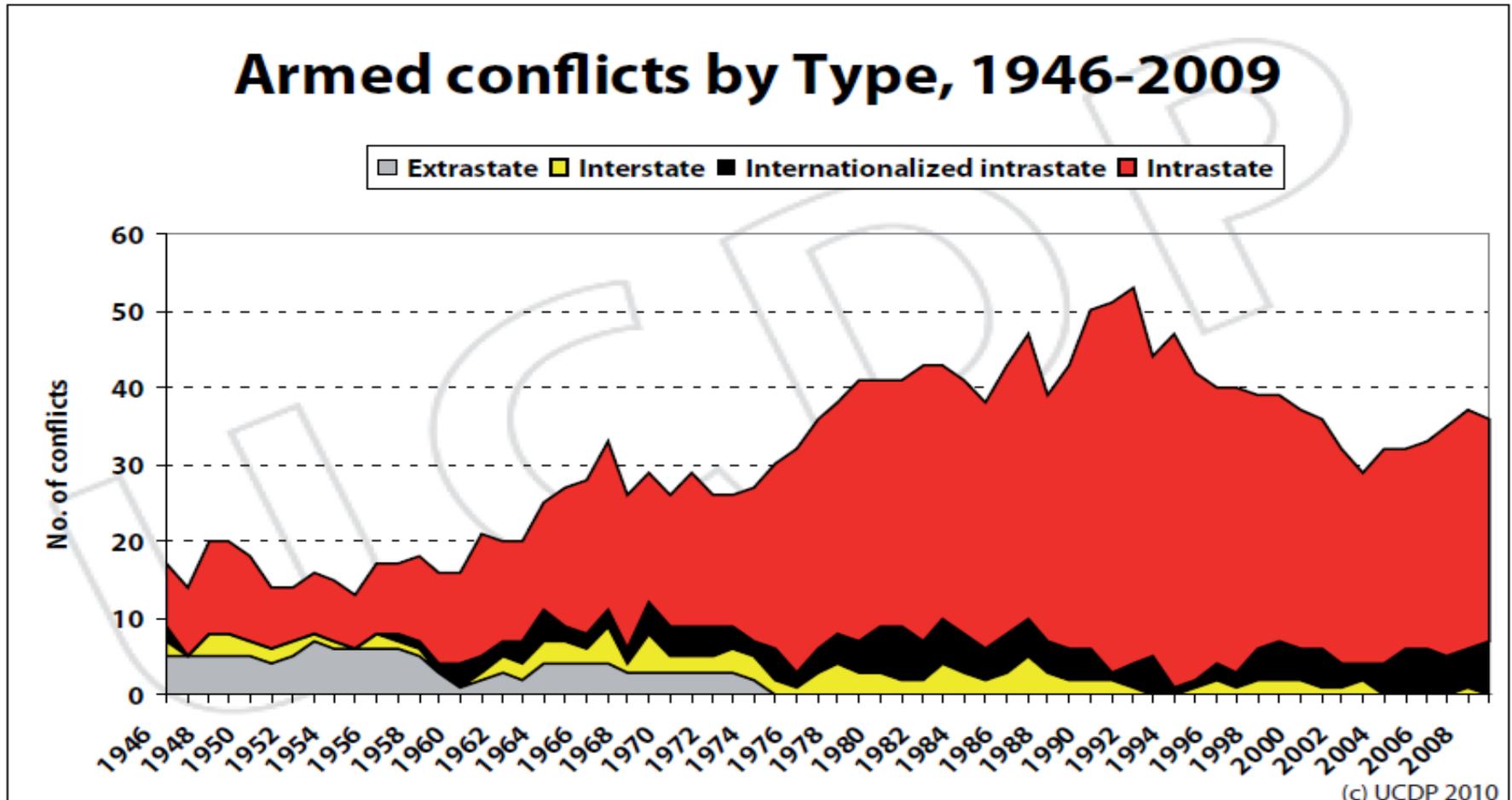
# Pre-1990 evolution

End of World War II:

- State-led reconstruction and development efforts (West Germany, Europe, Japan)

From late 1970s – early 1980s:

- Washington Consensus:
Deregulation, minimal role of the government, neo-liberal policies supported by Bretton Woods institutions

# End of the Cold War



Armed conflicts by Type, 1946-2009

# Reconsidering the state

- Phase 1: Early reflection (1990s – 2000)

- Phase 2: Post-shock recovery (2001 – 2004)

- Phase 3: Proactive engagement (2005 – today)

# Phase 1: Early reflection (1990s-2000)

## *Historical events*
- State-led development of the Asian Tigers
- Longer-term approach to post-war recovery (Cambodia, Kosovo, Sierra Leone)

## *Academic literature*
- Criticism to the orthodoxy of that time (Leftwich, 1993)
- Good governance agenda (Grindle, 1997)

## *International policy agenda*
- First reconsiderations of the role of the state (An Agenda for Peace, World Development Reports, Promotion of good governance)

## *British policy agenda*
- Initial commitments to weak and ineffective states in DFID WP and speeches

# Phase 2: Post-shock recovery (2001-2004)

*Historical events*
- 9/11
- Interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq

*Academic discourse*
- Good enough governance agenda (Grindle, 2004)
- Burgeoning literature on state building (Fukuyama, 2004, Paris, 2004)

*International policy agenda*
- State weakness sees as a threat to security and development
- First policy answers to tackle state weaknesses (LICUS)

*British policy agenda*
- PRDE team (later fragile states team) uses the concept of state fragility

# Phase 3: Proactive engagement (2005-today)

## *Historical events*
- Post-war reconstruction in Afghanistan and Iraq

## *Academic literature*
- Inclusiveness and legitimacy (Ghani, 2005, Rocha Menocal, 2010)
- Merging of state building and peacebuilding (Brahimi, 2007, Call & Cousens, 2007)
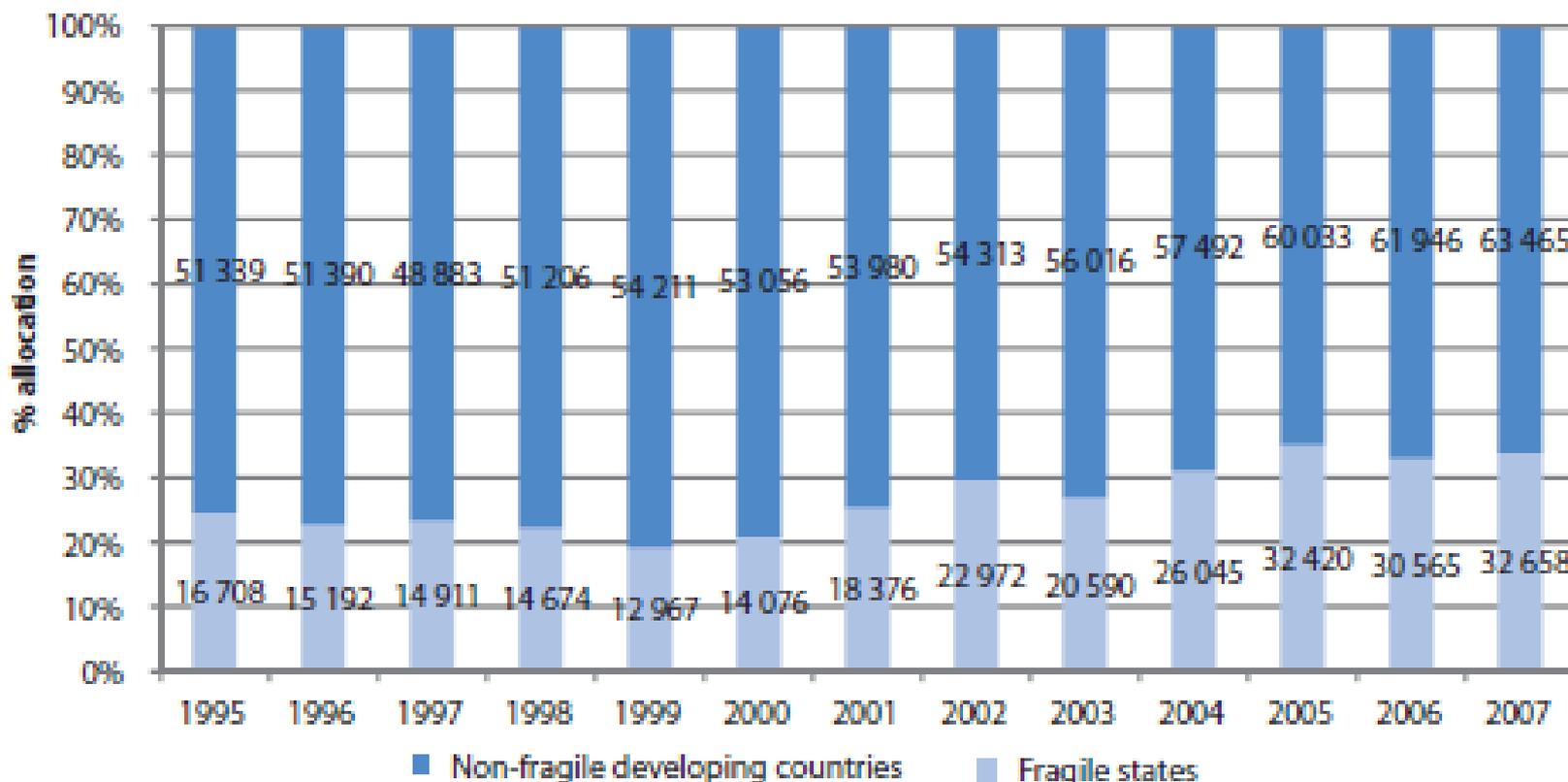
## *International policy agenda*
- State building as policy answer to fragility (OECD DAC)
- Capacity development, bottom-up approaches (Paris Declaration, g7+)

## *British policy agenda*
- Proactive engagement with state building and fragility (more articulated answer to post-conflict state building, more funds to fragile states)
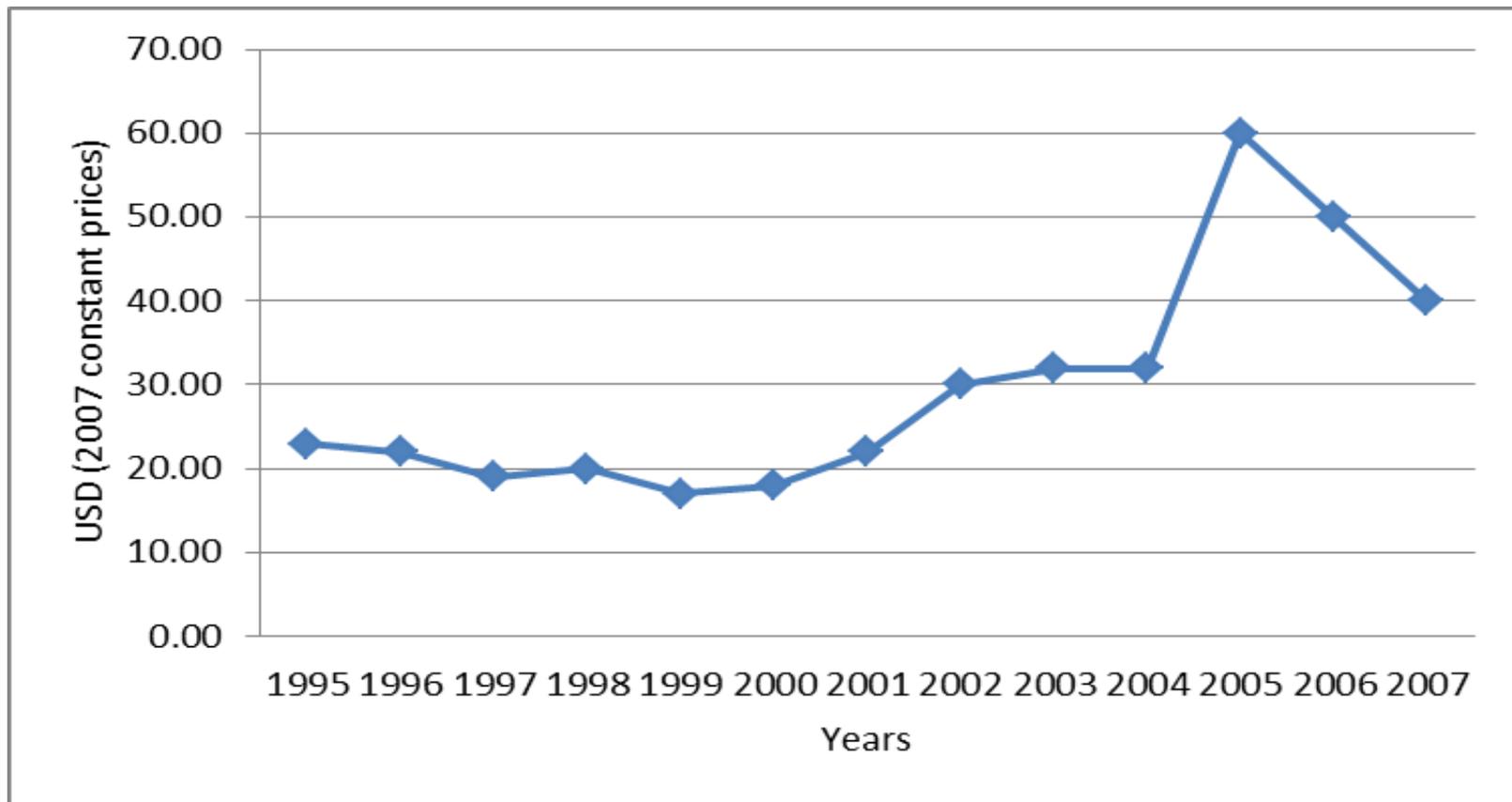
# Phase 3: Proactive engagement (2005-today)

*ODA to fragile and non-fragile states 1995-2007 (Source: OECD DAC)*

# Phase 3: Proactive engagement (2005-today)

*Per capita ODA to fragile and non-fragile states: 1995-2007 (Source: OECD DAC)*

# Phase 3: Proactive engagement (2005-today)

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# British policy in fragile environments

Increased engagement with fragility and post-war state building
- UK global leadership of the in the field of development (OECD DAC)


Whole of government approaches
- Comprehensive response to fragility (Stabilisation Unit, Conflict Pools)


Increasing synergy with the academic literature
- Promotion of a better reflection on fragility and state building (Integrated approaches, increased funding to governance research)

# Three-phase evolution

## Reasons of change (why)

- Triggers: political or economic drivers, different examples of successful recovery or development, historical convergence or sudden events
- Old visions, remedies and policies no longer sufficient to face an international mutated environment
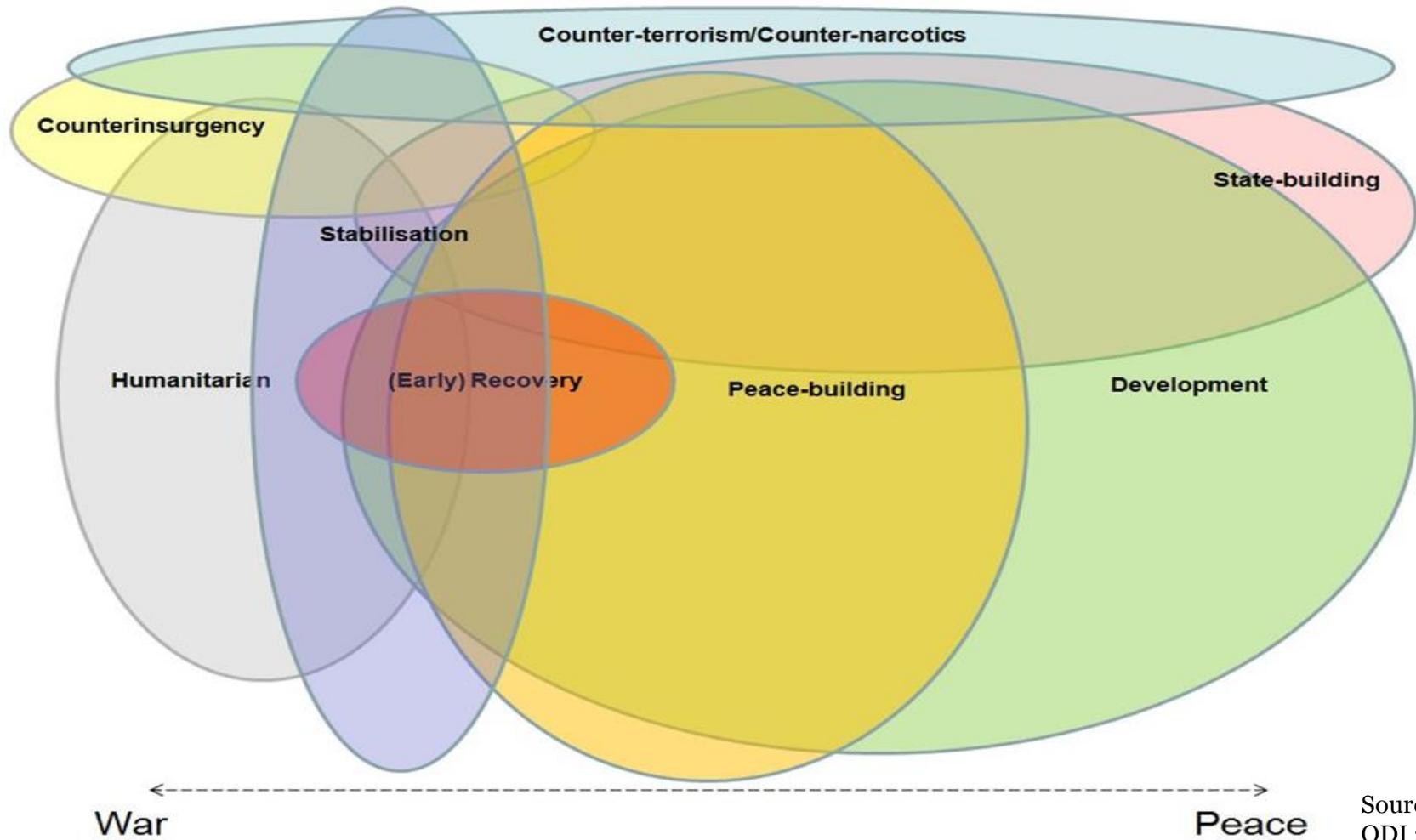
## Processes of change (how)

- Reflection on different concepts and solutions at academic and policy level
- Re-evaluation or modification of old notions and policy answers
- Introduction of new approaches
- Progressive convergence, synergy and exchange between academic literature and policy-making

# 2. Theoretical and practical dilemmas
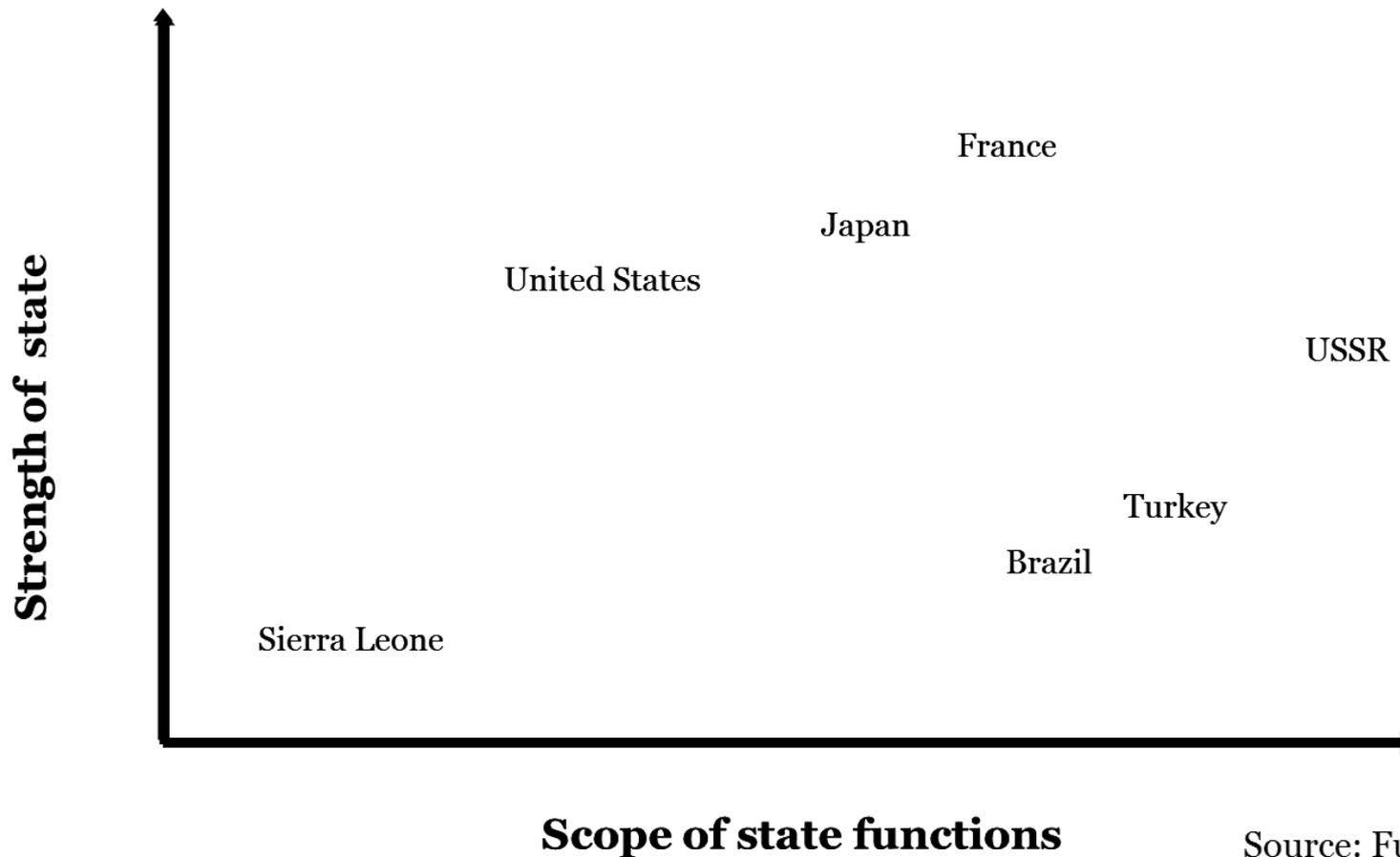
Paris and Sisk (2009):

- *Footprint dilemmas:* Scope, size, scale, role, assertiveness of international actors

- *Duration dilemmas:* Length of international presence

- *Participation dilemmas:* Central political actors vs all local groups

- *Dependency dilemmas:* Level of dependence on international actors. Dependency and long-term sustainability

- *Coherence dilemmas:* Organisational (coordination) and normative (mismatch and inconsistency between values and actual policies)
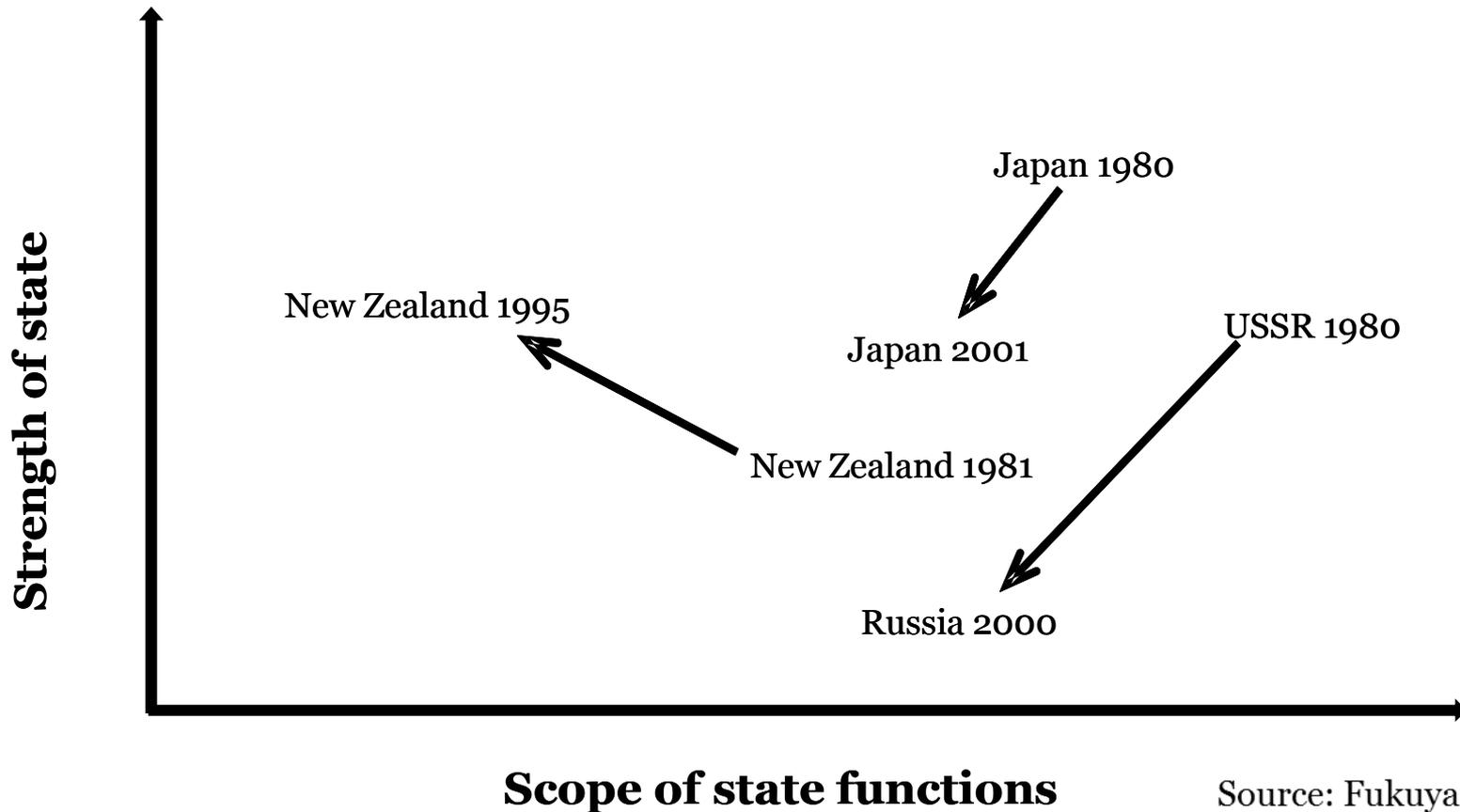
# 2.1: Policy coherence



Source: ODI 2011

# 2.2: The complexity of the aim



Source: Fukuyama 2004

# 2.2: The complexity of the aim



**Strength of state** (vertical axis)

**Scope of state functions** (horizontal axis)

Japan 1980 → Japan 2001

New Zealand 1995 ← New Zealand 1981

USSR 1980 → Russia 2000
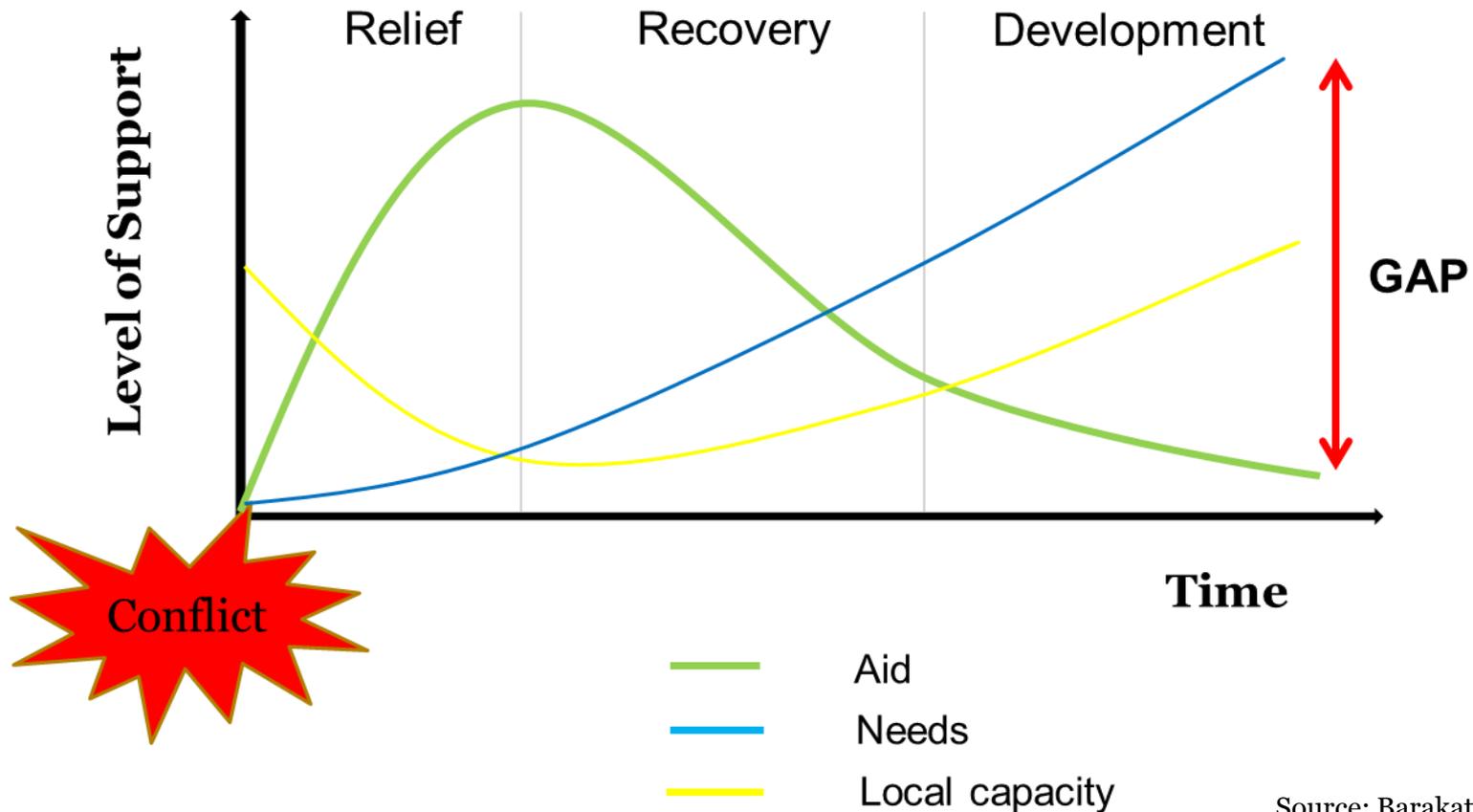
Source: Fukuyama 2004

# 2.2: The complexity of the aim

- Fukuyama (2004):
  *Scope:* Different functions and goals taken by governments
  *Strength (capacity):* Ability of states to plan and execute policies and to enforce laws

- Fragile, post-conflict states: limited strength and scope

- International state building: the liberal state model (democracy, representation, market economy).
  Getting to Denmark?

- Willingness and capacity

- Which legitimacy and acceptance among the local populations?
  Hybrid political orders, informal economy, traditional justice
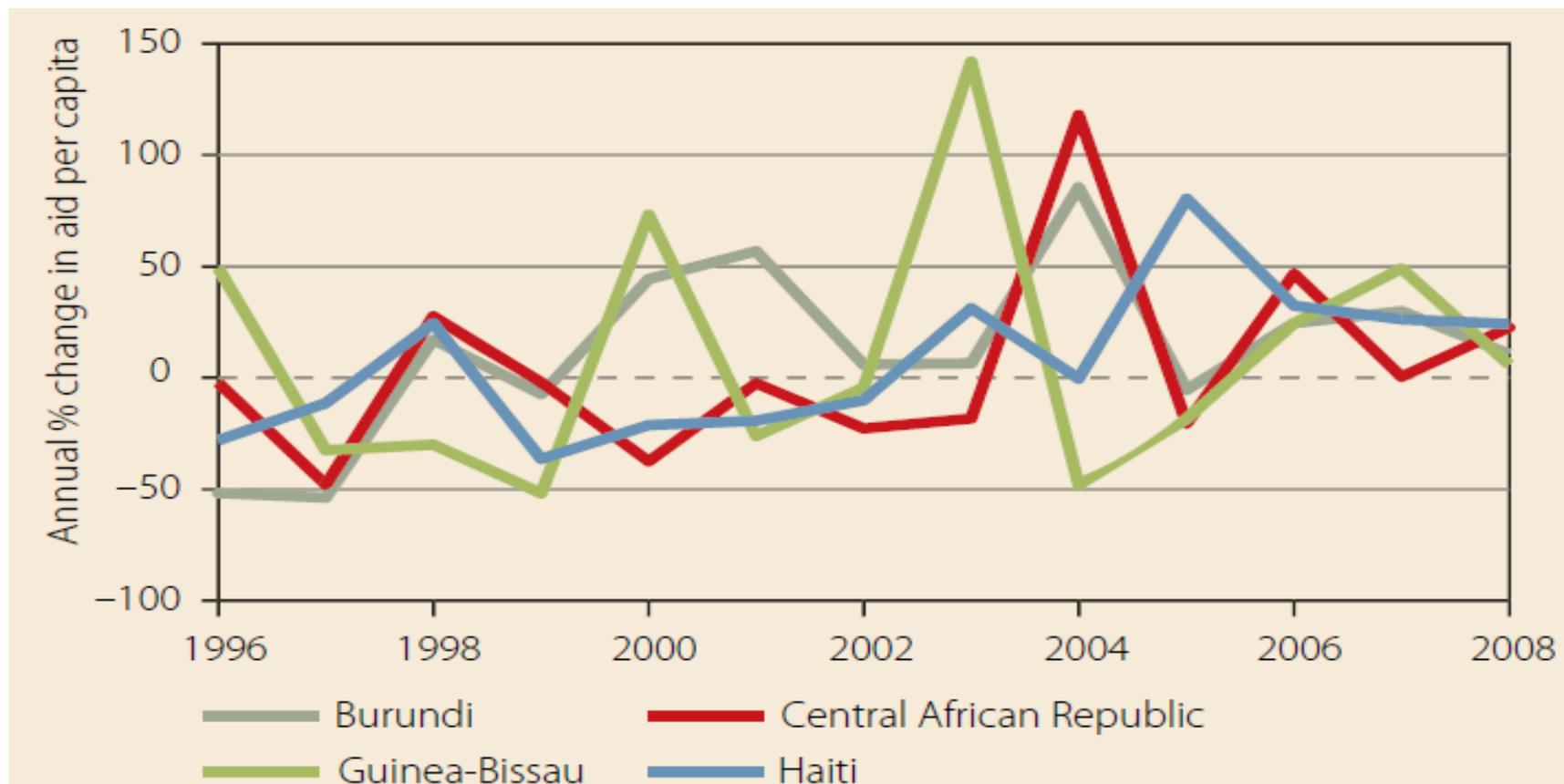
# 2.3: The nature of the enterprise

- State building as an external intervention in another country - challenge to sovereignty and state legitimacy

- Outside intervention to foster self-government: mismatch between ends and means

- "Universal" values vs local practices and traditions – 'Big-bang' approach

- Empowering locals vs urgency and funds limitations

- Aid dependency, aid volatility, imports

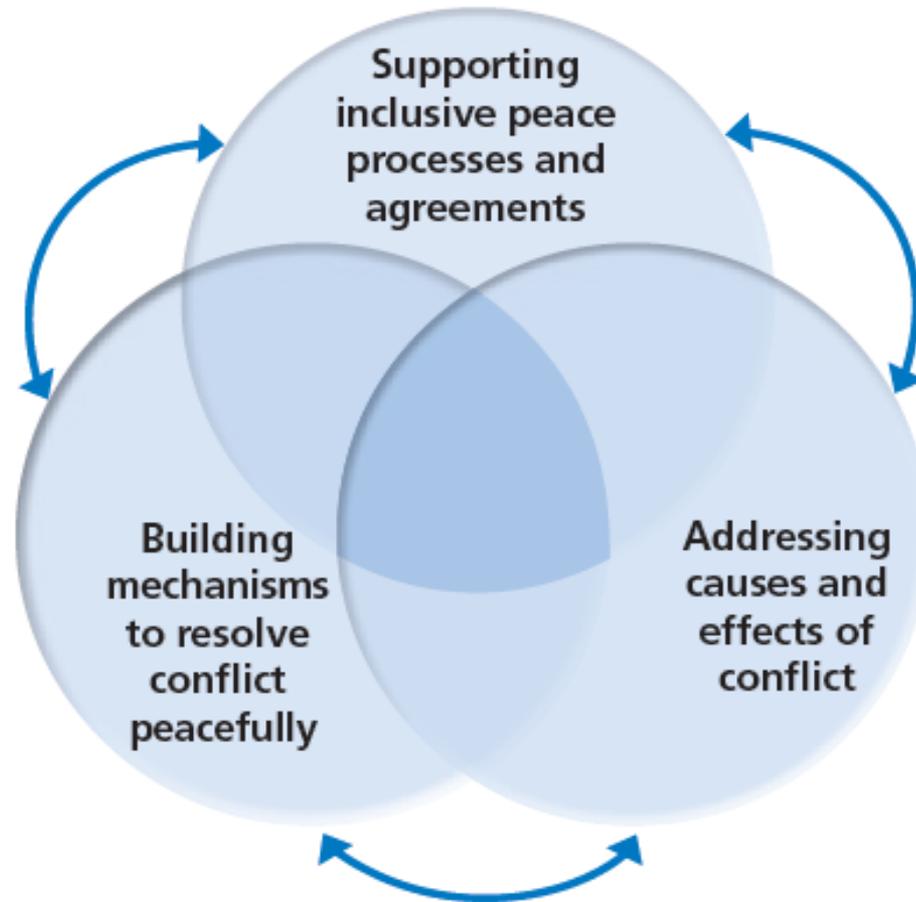# 2.3: Aid dependency



Source: Barakat 2011

# 2.3: Aid volatility



Source: WDR team calculations based on OECD 2010d.

# 2.4: Peacebuilding and state building



**Building durable, positive peace**

Supporting inclusive peace processes and agreements

Building mechanisms to resolve conflict peacefully
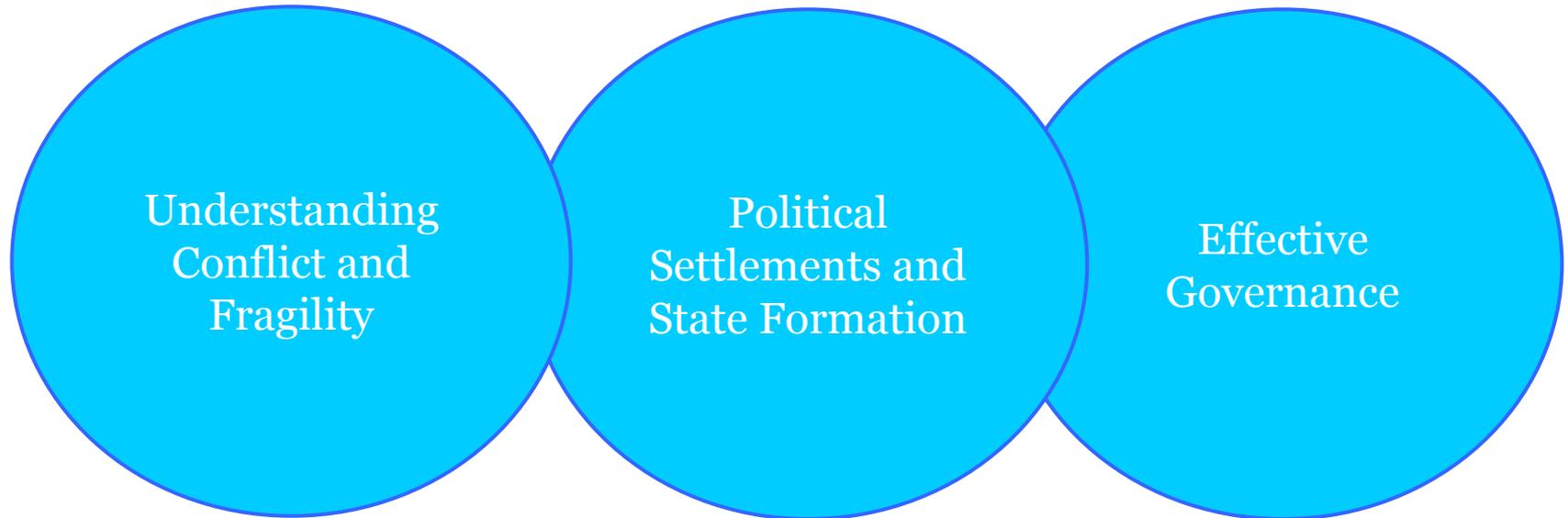
Addressing causes and effects of conflict

Source: DFID 2010

# 3. Which role for research?

- The Influence of DFID-Sponsored State Building-Oriented Research on British Policy in Fragile, Post-Conflict Environments

- Project, programmes, documents on R4D; Ad hoc research; Evaluations and assessments

- Three clusters, three country case studies (Afghanistan, Nepal, Sierra Leone)

# The role of research



Understanding Conflict and Fragility

Political Settlements and State Formation

Effective Governance

- *Understanding conflict:* CRISE and Stewart (Horizontal inequalities)
- *Political settlements:* Crisis States Programme
- *Effective Governance:* Centre for the Future State and Moore (Taxation)

# Questions?

(Thank you very much for your attention!)