The post-Cold War Evolution of State Building and Fragility in the International and British Policy Agenda

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Introduction

Post-war recovery is a recent and multifaceted field of research that has its foundations in recently developed subjects such as peace and conflict studies and development, and overlaps consistently with more traditional disciplines such as political science, international relations, history, economics, anthropology, architecture, sociology and psychology (Barakat & Zyck, 2009). As a confluence of manifold subjects, post-war recovery studies received inputs and enjoyed a lively debate among scholars from different backgrounds. The multifaceted interventions and practises of post-war recovery – from disarmament to infrastructure rehabilitation, from education to health to mention only few of them – further widened the number of actors involved in the recovery of a society from war, introducing new and disparate disciplines such as medicine, education or gender studies in the debate. Likewise, the blurred boundaries between relief, recovery and development in a post-conflict environment implied the sometimes difficult encounter and interaction between short-term oriented humanitarian relief and longer-term oriented development actors, agencies and practitioners, de facto spurring the debate on the possible strategies of post-war recovery and long-term development (Barakat & Zyck, 2009).

While bearing in mind the breadth, the difficulty, and the main debates characterising the discipline, this paper aims at understanding and explaining the reasons why and the ways in which some particular concepts and notions - in this case those associated with fragility and state building – start entering into the mainstream of the literature and the policy agenda in specific periods of time. In the course of the last two decades indeed, post-war recovery scholarship and policy started identifying fragile states as a threat for security and development. At the same time, internationally–led state building emerged as the main policy answer to tackle state fragility overseas. The paper will thus focus on the notion of fragility and the one of internationally-led state building, trying to clarify why and how these two concepts have progressively shaped the

post-Cold war discourse on post-war recovery. In order to understand the reasons (the 'why') of the emergence of the concepts of fragility and state building in the academic and policy agenda, the paper will show how contemporary historical events impacted on the evolution of these concepts since the end of the Cold War. In order to analyse the ways in which fragility and state building became in the last years the main international post-war recovery policy (the 'how'), the paper will underline how this evolution has been reflected in the literature on post-war reconstruction, and how this has been incorporated into the contemporary international and, particularly, British policy agenda.

The paper is divided in four main parts. After a first introductory part defining the main concepts of state building and fragility, the second part of the paper takes an historical perspective to briefly introduce the evolution of the post-war recovery agenda from the aftermath of World War II up to the end of the Cold War. The third part of the paper deeply examines the recent evolution of the concepts of externally-led state building and fragility, arguing that this progressive reconsideration of the role of the state in post-war reconstruction and development followed three main phases. In sketching this three-phase evolution, the paper examines how contemporary historical events have played a role in shaping the current academic discourse as well as the policy agenda at international and British level. Finally, the last part of the paper recapitulates three main trends characterising the recent evolution of the British policy agenda in post-war recovery and development. Such analysis underlines how British understanding of post-war state building actually evolved in line with the policy agenda of other international donors and with the recent academic literature, shedding a light on the convergence between research and policy in the field of post-war reconstruction and development.

Essential Definitions

The concept of fragility emerged in the last decade to better describe countries that in the course of the years had been already designated as 'weak', 'failed', 'collapsed' or 'rogue'. In the definition of the United Kingdom (UK) Department for International Development (DFID), fragile states are countries "where the government cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor" (DFID, 2005a, p. 7). Fragile states have received increasing attention from donors, particularly after 9/11, as fragility has been identified as the main obstacle to security and development. Since the definition of a state as fragile is a highly politicised issue, donors and scholars have developed and used different definitions of fragility (Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP), 2006, OECD, 2008, Stepputat & Engberg-Pedersen, 2008, Stewart & Brown, 2010, USAID, 2005, World Bank, 2005), and there is not a definitive and

internationally-agreed list of fragile countries. In general, most development agencies understand state fragility as the inability to ensure basic security, maintain rule of law and justice, or provide basic services and economic opportunities for the citizens, including in this definition different poor and conflict affected countries. Post-conflict environments are therefore a particular category of fragile states which are recovering from conflict, and a high proportion of post-conflict countries fall into the definition of fragile states.

The term 'state building' refers to "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, p. 5). This "construction of legitimate, effective governmental institutions" (Paris & Sisk, 2007, p. 1) usually entails a long term, non-linear and historically rooted process of endogenous change and ongoing negotiation. As the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) (2008) indicates, state building in fragile, post-conflict environments is first and foremost "an endogenous process to enhance capacity, institutions and legitimacy of the state driven by state-society relations" (p. 1) that should take place "at all levels of state-society relations" (p. 3) and be "founded on political processes to negotiate state-society relations and power relationships among elites and social groups" (p. 2). The current understanding of state building therefore presupposes a continuous, non-linear and asymmetrical process, distinct from peacebuilding, nation building and institution building for aims and priorities (Belloni, 2007, Call & Cousens, 2007, Call & Wyeth, 2008, Lun, 2009, Paris & Sisk, 2007, 2009, Rocha Menocal, 2010), but seen as necessary to achieve a long-lasting peace. This "internally-led and externally-supported" (Interpeace, 2010, p. 6) process is usually considered as positive by donors and the international community, which try to support inclusive state building dynamics in fragile, post-conflict countries. Donors' approach to state building aims at exporting frameworks of good governance (Chandler, 2010), fostering capable, accountable and responsive states through inclusive political settlements, improving a state's capacity to provide core functions and enhancing its ability to meet the expectations of the population (DFID, 2010b).

The practice of (re)building states in fragile, post-conflict environments gained prominence since the end of the Cold War and has become an important subject for donors and scholars working in post-war recovery. Despite the fact that the practice of state building is not necessarily confined to fragile states, and that state building can be only one of the many possible responses to state fragility, in the course of the last decade the international community has identified state building as the main answer to post-conflict fragility. (Re)building a state in the aftermath of a conflict implies a long-term process of political, social, economic, and judicial

reform, usually led by international actors. Ghani, Lockhart and Karnahan (2005), and Ghani and Lockhart (2008, pp. 124-166) identified ten different functions characterising the modern sovereign state. These functions are a legitimate monopoly on the means of violence; administrative control; sound management of public finances; investment in human capital; the delineation of citizenship rights and duties; the provision of infrastructure services; the formation of the market; the management of the assets of the state (including the environment, natural resources, and cultural assets); the authority over international relations (including entering into international contracts and public borrowing); and the maintenance of the rule of law. Fragile, post-conflict states are usually unable or unwilling to ensure one or more of these functions, thus (re)building the capacities of a state in the aftermath of a war is a complex and challenging task aimed at (re)establishing one or more of these state functions. This complexity is mirrored in the literature on post-war state building, which has in these years explored, analysed and prioritised the manifold policies and activities of state building. Different international agencies and donors have pointed out how state building practices encompass and focus on diverse activities and priorities, such as security, participation, political settlements, public expectations, state legitimacy, justice, rule of law, bottom-up approaches, institution building, governance, accountability, democratisation and elections, rights, service delivery, local and national ownership, decentralisation, public administration, civil service reform, public finance, macro-economic reforms and stability, political economy and private sector involvement, taxation and corruption (Call & Wyeth, 2008, Chesterman, Ignatieff & Thakur, 2004, Fukuyama, 2004, Zoellick, 2008).

Cold War Approaches: State-Led Reconstruction versus Washington Consensus

State-led reconstruction and development efforts are not indeed a new policy in the field of post-war recovery. Whilst rebuilding states in post-war contexts has a long history, the international thinking and practices regarding the role of the state in fragile, post-conflict environments have waxed and waned throughout the past 50 years.

Following the mandates system and the transitional administrations of the League of Nations in the aftermath of World War I (Chesterman, 2004, pp. 11-47), the bulk of post-conflict recovery policies at the end of World War II were state-led reconstruction and development efforts. Such policies were often supported by funding from the United States (US) or the Soviet Union, as the emblematic examples of the reconstruction of war-torn West Germany and Europe through the Marshall Plan (Barakat, 2010, Diefendorf, 1990, Ellwood, 1992) or the post-war recovery of Japan demonstrate. Such a state-led approach to post-war

recovery was in line with a state-led model of development in vogue in the same years. This model of development, emerging from the birth of new independent states in Africa and Asia, was indeed encouraged and supported by the international community through the birth of regional member states-based organisations such as the United Nations (UN) Economic Commission for Latin America in 1948 and the UN Economic Commission for Africa in 1958.

This state-led approach to recovery and development changed by the late 1970s and early 1980s. In the light of state capture phenomena, growing debt, macroeconomic instability, and strategic Cold War interests, Western capitalist nations started embracing a set of neo-liberal policies to post-war recovery and development. The premise for this new market-oriented model was the liberal assumption that "the surest foundation of peace […] is market-democracy, that is, a liberal democratic polity and a market-oriented economy" (Paris, 1997, p. 56). Economic liberalisation policies were for example promoted in the reconstruction, recovery and development processes of Sudan, Egypt, Mozambique and several Latin American countries. The support from the international community – particularly the Bretton Woods institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – to post-conflict and developing countries was based on aid conditionalities, structural adjustment loans to develop infrastructure and adjust the local economies for export. Economic liberalisation programmes were based on the promotion of macroeconomic stability through the control of the inflation, the reduction of fiscal deficit, the trade and capital liberalisation and privatisation and deregulation of the domestic markets (Gore, 2000).

This new neo-liberal approach, also known as Washington Consensus, presupposed structural adjustments designed to reduce the size, reach, and control of the state upon its economy. Deregulation and a minimal role of the government were also envisaged in the 1991 World Bank's *World Development Report*, a key text affirming that "governments need to do less in those areas where markets work, or can be made to work, reasonably well" (World Bank, 1991, p. 9) and "need to let domestic and international competition flourish" (p. 9), while at the same time doing "more in those areas where markets alone cannot be relied upon" (p. 9). These adjustments, often seen as a sign of loyalty to the liberal democratic model, actually had detrimental consequences on state capacity, *de facto* heightening the risk of conflict reversion in several countries in Latin America (El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala to mention few of them), and West and North Africa (Sudan and Zambia). Furthermore, these structural adjustments could not ensure the provision and delivery of basic social services to the most vulnerable. As a consequence, more flexible international non-governmental actors stepped in trying to fill this vacuum and to provide previously state-controlled services. A new and more

people-centred paradigm emerged in these years and "envisioned a consensual partnership between international organisations, donor agencies, recipient governments and 'grassroots' civil society" (Barakat & Zyck, 2009, p. 1074). As part of this paradigm, new social funds were distributed by quasi-public agencies and involved donor contributions to community groups or non-governmental organisations (NGO) for community-improvement projects. The neo-liberal and the people-centred approach, though apparently complementary, proposed indeed completely different and sometimes incompatible solutions to the development challenges faced by post-conflict environments. The end of the Cold War, and the subsequent increment of conflicts in the early 1990s, showed the limits of both the private sector and the NGO paradigms and paved the way for a more unified approach to post-war reconstruction and development.

Post-Cold War Evolution

The end of the Cold War resulted in the emergence of at least four different trends: the first was an increase in the number of intrastate armed conflicts across the globe. As shown by the data of the Uppsala Conflict Database Programme reported in Figure 1, this increment was particularly marked in the first years of the 1990s, when the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the lack of external support to local power struggles, the weakening of state power in several countries and the calls for autonomy and self-determination increased the number of intrastate conflicts.

Figure 1: Armed conflicts by Type[1]
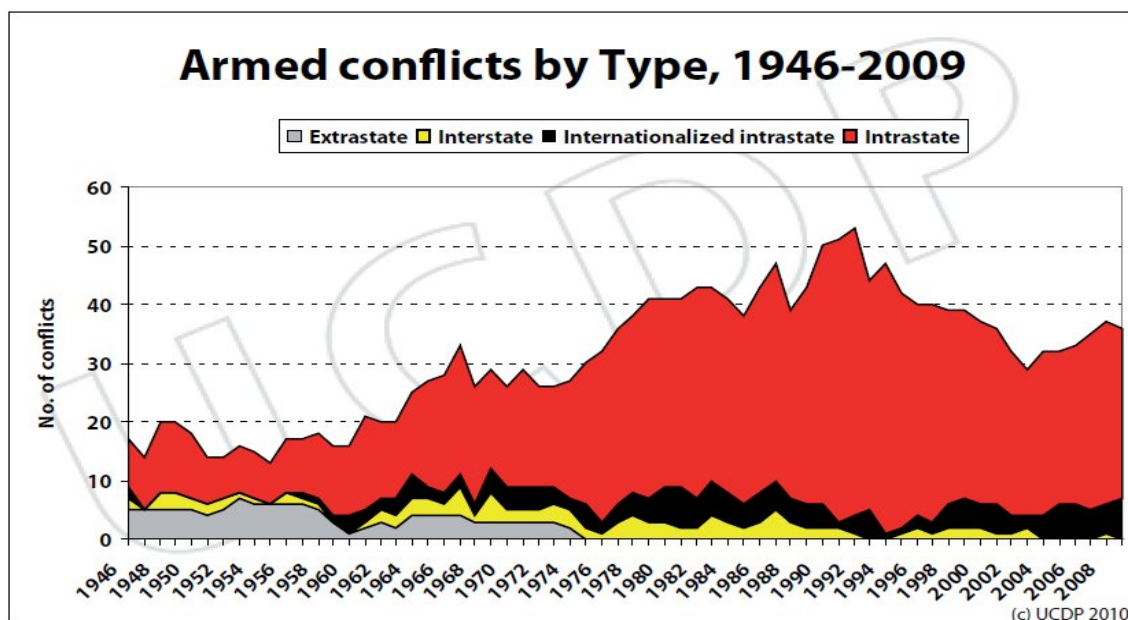
The same UCDP data also underline a major second trend in post-Cold War armed conflicts, namely their shorter length. Some of the conflicts erupted at the end of the Cold War lasted indeed for only few years, and, as the number of conflicts peaked in the early 1990s, the 1989-2000 period also witnessed the end of 56 conflicts (Barakat, 2010).

The third trend characterising the early post-Cold War period was a growth in the number of states. Numerous and smaller countries replaced the former Soviet and Yugoslavian blocs, nationalism remained a strong ideal for people in conflict, and the number of states rapidly increased, as witnessed by the access to the UN of 26 new countries in a period of only three years from 1991 to 1994.[2]

Fourth and finally, the first years of the 1990s saw a progressive increment of international activism in post-war recovery. The vanishing of the bipolar order also allowed the dissolution of the mutual vetoes which paralysed the UN during the Cold War. As a result, the UN not only multiplied its Security Council Resolutions, but it also increased the number of its peace operations as shown in the following figure.

Figure 2: The Growth in Peacekeeping, 1948-2008
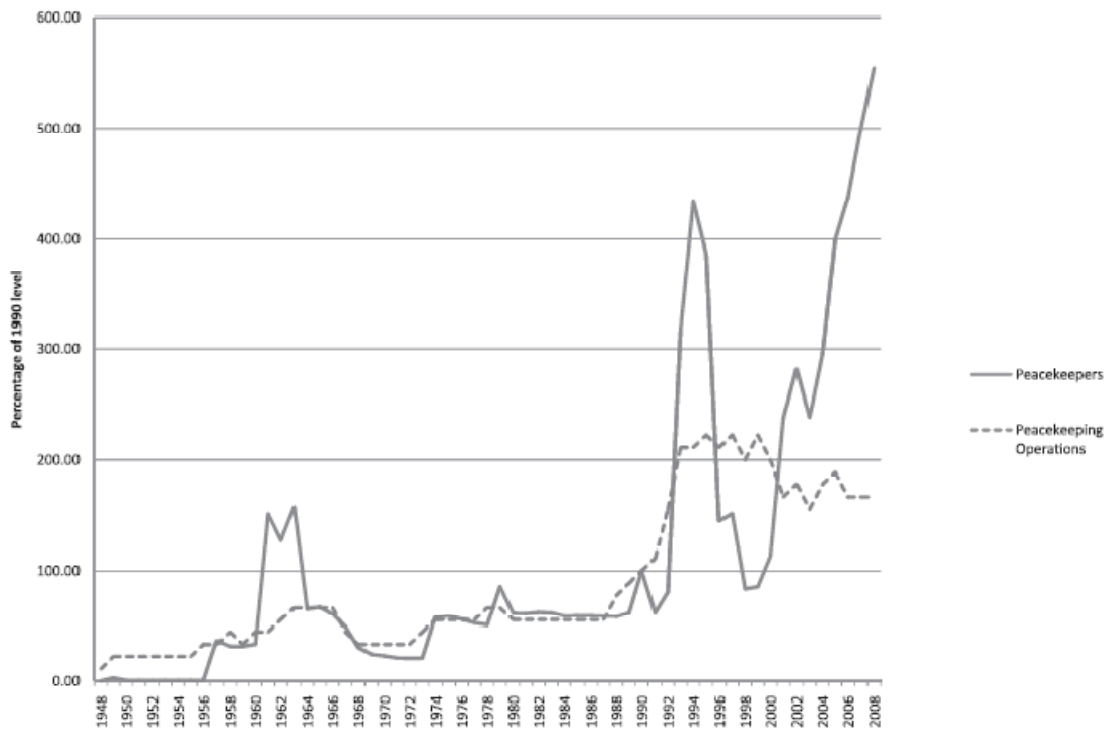
Source: Gleditsch, 2008, p. 695

As a consequence of the increment in the number of conflicts and of a changed international order ensuring more resources and possibilities for peace operations, peacebuilding activities and post-war reconstruction and development interventions became more sophisticated and expanded in number and scope. In a short time span of only four years between 1989 and 1993, the UN launched eight different peacebuilding operations in countries emerging from civil conflicts (Namibia, Nicaragua, Angola, Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique, Liberia and Rwanda). The tasks and responsibilities of these peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions multiplied in the years, and post-conflict efforts became broader and more varied, with an increasing toward new activities such as disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of ex combatants or the reform of the security sector. Furthermore, these security-related policies were gradually seen only as a part of a more multifaceted approach which also included humanitarian, political and economic elements and was eventually aimed at (re)building the structures and capacities of a post-conflict state. Resettlement of refugees, monitoring and administration of elections, human rights investigations and economic reform became part of these new and more comprehensive efforts toward peacebuilding and post-war recovery. While initially maintaining limited mandates and "quick and dirty" approaches (Paris & Sisk, 2007, p. 2), these first post-Cold War interventions have been retrospectively seen "as early statebuilding operations" (Roberts, 2008, p. 537). This specific approach characterised the whole post-Cold war period, started in Namibia in 1989 - where the activities of the UN Transition Assistance Group involved police training, disarmament, elections preparation and constitution assistance tasks -, and evolved in Cambodia - where "an early manifestation of contemporary statebuilding became clearer" (Roberts, 2008, p. 539).

Following these trends and this mutated international scenario, the scholarship in the field and the international and British policy agenda started to progressively reconsider the role of the state. While it is debatable and always difficult to draw artificial boundaries to explain a dynamic, ongoing evolution shaped by events and by the interactions between policy and research, nevertheless this paper argues that this reconsideration of the state followed three main phases:

- A first phase of early reflection lasting from the early 1990s to 2000;
- A second phase of post-shock recovery starting in 2001 and ended approximately in 2004;
- A third, current phase of proactive engagement with fragility and internationally-led state building.

Phase 1: Early reflection (1990s-2000)

The tensions between a marked-oriented approach to post-conflict and a more people-centred paradigm persisted in the early 1990s. If on the one hand the "end of history" (Fukuyama, 1992) indicated the world that market economy, liberalisation, privatisation and democracy were the only models to be followed, on the other hand the NGOs maintained the control of several of the new post-conflict activities and multiplied their number and tasks. Nevertheless an increasing debate on the role of the state started emerging in the early 1990s among practitioners in the academia and policy-makers at international level. A watershed document was the 1992 UN Secretary General (SG) Report An Agenda for Peace (Boutros-Ghali, 1992), a document which, in analysing the political and ideological changes in the post-Cold War context and the role of UN in post-conflict peacebuilding, recommended comprehensive efforts "to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict" (Boutros-Ghali, 1992). The same report indicated the wide array of activities a post-conflict peacebuilding operation should entail, ranging from disarmament to the repatriation of refugees, from support and training for security personnel to the monitoring of elections, from the protection of human rights to the reform and strengthening of governmental institutions and the promotion of formal and informal processes of political participation. Without directly identifying these activities with the practices of (re)building a state, an Agenda for Peace however indicated the need of solid structures to consolidate and reinforce post-conflict peacebuilding efforts.

By the end of the 1990s, the neo-liberal model and the informal activities of the NGOs were no longer seen as sufficient approaches for the recovery and development of post-war environments, and scholars and practitioners in the field started questioning the political, economic, and developmental orthodoxy of that time. The 'good governance' agenda with its emphasis on transparency, accountability, and the need to control the state rose in prominence and overlapped to some degree with the 'developmental state' agenda and its focus on the effectiveness of the state (Fritz & Rocha Menocal, 2006). Likewise, the presumed link between democracy and economic growth was enquired. Leftwich (1993) argued that "non-consensual and non-democratic measures may often be essential in the early stages of developmental sequences" (p. 616), whereas Brohman (1995), Ahmed and Green (1999) promoted traditional models of governance over imported Western blueprints. At the same time, successful state-led development experiences of the four East 'Asian Tigers' and the increasing economic growth of the Indian subcontinent, China and Vietnam moved to a re-evaluation of the role of the state in supporting rapid economic growth and radical socioeconomic transformation. By the end of the

1990s, not only post-war international administrations started to be seen as temporary and short term transition solutions to 'bring the state back in' (Evans, P.B. et al., 1985), but also the role of the state in development was radically reconsidered. The 1997 World Bank's World Development Report is an emblematic publication testifying this change of approach. In evaluating the role and effectiveness of the state in a changing world, the Report affirmed that "state-dominated development has failed. But so has stateless development" (World Bank, 1997, p. iii) and envisaging a rethinking of the state reaffirmed that "the state is central to economic and social development" (p. 1). Likewise, other international organisations such as the IMF played an important role in the promotion and imposition of the good governance agenda. In 1996 for example, the Interim Committee of the IMF stressed in its *Declaration on Partnership for Sustainable Global Growth* the particular importance of "promoting good governance in all its aspects, including by ensuring the rule of law, improving the efficiency and accountability of the public sector, and tackling corruption" (IMF, 1996). One year after, the IMF's Executive Board adopted the *Good Governance – The IMF's Role* guidance note to foster good governance, public sector transparency and accountability (IMF, 1997).

Starting from the late 1990s, the international community has therefore reconsidered the role of the state, recognising the importance of governance, state capacity, and institutional quality for effective post-war recovery and development. The conventional wisdom of the end of the century re-evaluated the importance of the state, and expressions like 'institutions matter' or 'getting to Denmark' - as a model of developed country with functioning public sector and state institutions - became common recommendations in the development world. Academic literature emphasising the importance of institutions and good governance flourished (Grindle, 1997, 2000, Klitgaard, 1995, Tendler, 1997), together with a reconsideration of the role of the state in post-war recovery and development by donors and international organisations (World Bank 1997, 2000). At the same time, the mixed results of the international efforts in the early 1990s, with relative successful missions such in El Salvador accompanied by failures such in Rwanda, imposed a reflection about the complexity of post-conflict transitions. In particular, the international community started recognising that "(re-) building or establishing at least a minimally functioning state was essential to undertake political and economic reforms and maintain the peace, especially in the long term" (Rocha Menocal, 2010, p. 3, Call & Cousens, 2007, Paris & Sisk, 2008) Such trend toward increased efforts in post-war recovery and development continues at international level in the following years, as more expensive mandates for UN operations and the introduction of the IMF/World Bank Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers approach in 1999 demonstrate. A new wave of international interventions in Burundi,

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, East Timor and Sierra Leone adopted a new and longer-term approach to post-war recovery, characterised by efforts toward (re)building effective formal institutions and performing states. These efforts to promote state effectiveness were also echoed within the humanitarian world, as the international community claimed on the wake of Kosovo its right of military intervention in another sovereign state whenever this state does not fulfil its 'responsibility to protect' its own citizens from serious harm (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, 2001).

British policy agenda:

This early evolution of the academic and policy discourse was also reflected in the UK policy agenda. Whilst UK's role in assistance can be dated back to the first activities of the Ministry of Overseas Development in the 1960s (Barder, 2005), the Labour Government's establishment of DFID as a separate ministry in 1997 marks the recent engagement of Britain with state building interventions in fragile, post-conflict environments. "Charged by the British government with fostering international efforts in support of poverty" (OECD DAC, 2001, p. 11), DFID has led British efforts in the field of post-war recovery and development in the last decades. However, its joint activities and programmes in collaboration with other British ministries and with international donors increased in the course of the years, in line with a 'whole of government' and multilateral approach which characterised the post-war recovery efforts of Britain in the new Century. The first activities of DFID show how the Department agenda moves in line and in convergence with the international policy agenda of other international donors and institutions. The early international reflection on weak and ineffective states is indeed mirrored by an increasing initial commitment toward state weakness in the first two DFID White Papers (WP) and speeches of the then Secretary of State Clare Short. However, these papers and speeches contain most of the concepts and principles emerging in the subsequent years at academic and policy level, but lack a clear policy response to weak states.

UK recent engagement with fragility and post-conflict state building starts in the late 1990s and gains momentum with the Labour government of Blair and the establishment of DFID as a separate ministry. Yet, as the concept of fragility is not part in those years of the literature on post-war recovery, so the first official WP of DFID, *Eliminating World Poverty: A Challenge for the 21st Century* (1997), does not contain any explicit references to state building and fragility. Nevertheless, in line with the general donors' approach of the same years, the WP recognises the problems of state weakness and corruption and the importance of good governance and accountability to development. In stating that political stability is "a necessary

pre-condition for the limitation of poverty" (p. 67), it envisages a system-wide response with UN and other international donors as central. However, beside this call for multilateralism, the WP offers vague domestic commitment and lacks an articulated national policy response to the challenges of development. Furthermore, it gives the responsibility for progress on governance to developing countries, an approach in contrast with the more proactive and interventionist state building agenda promoted by the same DFID in the successive years. The following year, the speech *Security, Development and Conflict Prevention* of the then Secretary General for International Development Claire Short (1998) contains some of the issues that will shape the DFID and UK post-war state building agenda in the following decade. The speech re-echoes the analysis of state-led development of the 1997 World Bank's *Development Report* (World Bank, 1997, pp. iii, 1) acknowledging the failure of "the old models – both statism and laissez faire" (Short, 1998). Furthermore, it suggests the importance of state and institutions declaring that "rival communities may perceive that their security [...] can be ensured only through control of state power" (Short, 1998), recognising that "supporting the reintegration of ex-combatants can be one of the most effective ways for outsiders to assist with the reconstruction of states torn apart by civil war" (Short, 1998), and promising a strengthened support for institution-building and good governance. This initial attention toward foreign weak states also appears in the *Strategic Defence Review* published in the same year by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) (1998). The document points out how "the break-up of states seems likely to be as much as a security problem as traditional expansionism" (p. 14), further identifying "the failure of state structures" (p. 95) as one of the new challenges for Britain outside Europe.

As the international community increases its efforts in post-war recovery and development, Britain and DFID follow this evolution of the international agenda, and the UK government launches in 2000 the conflict prevention pools, a whole of government initiative jointly managed by MOD, DFID and Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to reducing conflict and promote joint analysis, long-term strategies and improved co-ordination with international partners. An Africa Conflict Prevention Pool and a Global Conflict Prevention Pool become therefore operational in 2001, whereas in the same years the speeches of the then DFID Secretary of State Clare Short suggest an increasing engagement of the Department with post-war state building. Short acknowledges DFID role in "strengthening national parliaments to exercise oversight over the security apparatus of the state and ensure their accountability to the wider public" (Short, 1999, p. 4). Moreover, the Secretary of State commits the Department to "provide more support to countries coming out of conflict to rebuild and move forward" (Short, 2000, p. 3). These rhetorical vows are accompanied by an increased attention of DFID on

conflict and fragility. The Department increments the number of its staff, expands its Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department and starts relying on the expertise of the Centre for Defence Studies at King's College London as a resource centre (OECD DAC, 2001, p. 38). Moreover, it publishes in 2000 the WP *Eliminating World Poverty: Making Globalisation Work for the Poor* (DFID, 2000). The 2000 WP recognises that "conflict prevents development and increases poverty" (p. 28) and refers for the first time to "weak and ineffective states" (p. 23) as a barrier to globalisation. The WP has a whole section on 'promoting effective governments and efficient markets' and focuses on the need to promote inclusive political institutions at local as well as at multilateral level. The 2000 WP contains most of the concepts and principles emerging in the subsequent academic literature on state building and fragility, however, it does not articulate a clear policy response to weak states, and DFID assistance seems to be designed to strengthen already functioning states rather than to build them from failure or fragility.

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

This early evolution of thinking ushered in a second, post-shock recovery phase, direct consequence of some contemporary events such as the attack to the Twin Towers in September 2001 and the problematic process of reconstruction following the international intervention in Afghanistan. 9/11 and, particularly, the reconstruction of post-war Afghanistan showed the limits of the imposition of liberal values and of an externally defined recovery agenda in fragile environments, boosting indeed a thorough post-shock investigation on the role of the state among scholars and policy-makers.

Addressed in the course of the years as 'weak', 'rogue', 'failed' or 'fragile' states, unstable and non-performing countries were progressively seen by the international community as a potential threat for global security (Barakat, 2009, pp. 107-108, Fukuyama, 2004). The impact of state fragility on security and stability was reconsidered, and addressing this fragility became consequently one of the top priorities of the international community to prevent conflict, terrorism, human and drug trafficking and organised violence both at domestic and international level. Also, from a development perspective, the fragility of a state was seen as the major barrier to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with one third of the people living in extreme poverty to be found in fragile states (DFID, 2005a). The academic literature on state fragility start flourishing in these first years of the new century; at the same time, Western donors start stressing the importance of legitimate states and effective institutions in fragile, post-conflict environments and to consider states as "the front-line responders to today's threats" (UN, 2004, p. 22).

From a scholarly point of view, the 'good enough governance' agenda (Grindle, 2004) reformulated the concept of good governance to focus on those areas that matter the most for a state's development process. At the same time, scholarship in the field starts an attentive reflection on how to effectively and comprehensively address state fragility, and the academic literature sees the burgeoning outgrowth of studies and books on post-conflict state building, particularly toward 2004 (Chesterman, 2004, Fearon & Laitin, 2004, Fukuyama, 2004, , Krasner, 2004, Paris, 2004). As scholars reflect on the role of the state in security and development, so the international and British donor agendas evolve to reconsider and incorporate states in their post-war recovery and development strategies.

This increasing reconsideration of the role of the state for security and development progressively permeates the rhetoric of the policy discourse at international level: the 2002 World Bank's World Development Report recognises for example the importance of institutions for reinforcing the markets and promoting development (World Bank, 2002a). Furthermore, this reflection elicits the first policy answers to state fragility, as state weakness finds its way in the international policy agenda. Early in 2002 for example, the World Bank sets up a Task Force to address the special needs of Low-Income Countries Under Stress (LICUS), a particular group of countries with unstable government and institutions and weak economic structures (World Bank, 2002b). A weak state is therefore seen as part of the security and development problem; at the same time, donors promote programmes and studies to improve their understanding of this state weakness, and to tackle it effectively to prevent or redress conflict. The state thus (re)gains an important role into the policy discourse, and understanding and engaging with state instability becomes the best international policy answer to the challenges of post-war reconstruction and development.

British policy agenda:

Britain's policy discourse is characterised by a progressive convergence with the international policy agenda and an increasing reflection on the role of the state. In the post-9/11 years, DFID progressively engages with the role of the states in development, as the then Secretary of State Hilary Benn incorporates the terminology on state building and state fragility in some of his official speeches. Without explicitly using the words state building and fragile states yet, Benn refers extensively to the challenge for development and security represented by weak, failing, broken-down, collapsed or crisis states (Benn, 2004a, 2004b). He defines these states as "unable or unwilling to carry out their basic functions" (2004a, 2004b, p. 2), de facto anticipating of one year DFID official definition of fragile states. The then Secretary of State for International

Development notes how weak states usually have fragile institutions (2004a, 2004b, p. 2), reiterating the need to "act earlier to prevent state crisis" (Benn, 2004a) and to "do something to promote more effective states" (2004a, 2004b, p. 3). Finally, Benn recognises "that no agency can act alone" (2004a) reveals how DFID works closely with MOD, FCO, and the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit "to create a common framework for supporting effective states" (2004a) in an increasing cross governmental effort.

This rhetoric commitment is followed by increasing efforts at policy level. Stemming from the joined-up experience of the conflict pools, the UK government sets up the Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit in 2004 – renamed in 2007 Stabilisation Unit –, a joint DFID-MOD-FCO unit to provide through a civil-military partnership targeted assistance in countries emerging from violent conflict where the UK is helping to achieve a peaceful and stable environment. At the same time, DFID reinforces its engagement with post-war recovery: it launches the Drivers of Change approach (DFID, 2003), publishes the first evaluation of the conflict prevention pools mechanism (Austin et al., 2004) and establishes the Poverty Reduction in Difficult Environments (PRDE) team, successively renamed fragile states team. In particular, the PRDE publishes seven Working Papers between 2004 and 2005 which do not reflect DFID or the UK Government policy but introduce for the first time the concept of fragility in the British policy-making discourse (Anderson et al., 2005, Leader & Colenso, 2005, Moreno-Torres & Anderson, 2004, Vallings & Moreno-Torres, 2005), paving the way to a new phase of proactive engagement toward fragility and post-condlift state building.

Phase 3: Proactive engagement (2005-today)

The third and current phase represents the natural evolution of the precedent increasing reflection on the role of the state in post-conflict recovery and sees the concepts of state building and fragility permeating the contemporary literature and policy agenda. This progressive reflection was actually fostered by recent historical events: the complexity of the current post-war reconstruction process in Iraq and Afghanistan, for example, force scholars and policy-makers to further understand, study and evaluate the most effective ways of internationally-led engagement with these fragile and war-affected countries.

From a scholarly point of view, the academic literature broadens its reflection on what an increased role of the state in post-war reconstruction and development entails for fragile, post-conflict environments. Academics and practitioners emphasise the importance of institutions in sustaining economic growth, arguing that "improvements in institutions are essential preconditions and determinants of growth" (Fritz & Rocha Menocal, 2006, p. 3). New concepts

such as inclusiveness, ownership and legitimacy to internationally-led state building efforts enter into the academic debate (Rocha Menocal, 2010). Scholars re-evaluate and promote infrastructures and political commitment as ways to promote the legitimacy of a state, arguing that the state control over a territory and its capacity to deliver policies should be matched by a degree of inclusion and an institutional, long-term perspective (Ghani, Lockhart & Carnahan, 2005). Starting from the early work of Cliffe, Guggenheim and Kostner (2003), other academics emphasise the importance of community-driven models of recovery and development, whereas the reflection on good governance is enriched by the more inclusive approach of 'collaborative governance' (Evans, M., 2010).

Researchers try to better understand the theoretical and practical implications of (re)building a fragile, war-affected state, merging in this way the state building and peacebuilding agendas. Scholars and practitioners publish new and more articulated studies on the practices and dilemmas of post-war state building, analysing for example how (re)building states in the aftermath of a war entails a difficult mediation between the long-term goals of state building and the short-term objectives of peacebuilding (Call & Cousens, 2007). This overlap between the peacebuilding and state building agendas is for example underlined by the former UN diplomat Brahimi (2007), who argues that "the concept of statebuilding is becoming more and more accepted within the international community and is actually far more apt as a description of exactly what it is that we should be trying to do in post-conflict countries" (p. 5). As peacebuilding has been defined by the UN as involving "a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management" (Conceptual Basis for Peacebuilding for the UN System adopted by the Secretary General's Policy Committee in May 2007, 2007), state building becomes crucial for building sustainable peace and development. Yet the priorities of the two agendas, while overlapping and somehow complementary, also pursue different goals: if the aim of state building is creating self-sustaining, legitimate, and effective states, the main goal of peacebuilding is a self-sustaining peace (Call & Wyeth, 2008). This apparently minimal difference could actually result in tensions when post-war programmes are designed around the different goals and time frames of the two agendas (Call & Wyeth, 2008, pp. 365-387).

On the policy side, international organisations and donors closely follow – and sometimes anticipate – this academic evolution, progressively polishing their policy answers to state weakness. The international community embraces the notion of fragility; at the same time, (re)building the capacity of a state in the aftermath of a conflict arises as the main policy answer to tackle post-conflict fragility. Starting from approximately 2005, the notions of state fragility

and post-conflict state building become prominent in the international policy agenda. Following the UN High Level Panel report A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility (UN, 2004), the UN establishes in 2005 the UN Peacebuilding Commission, whereas the OECD DAC drafts in the same year its Principles for Good Engagement in Fragile States to complement the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. At the same time, the peacebuilding agenda, reinforced by the establishment of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, the UN Peacebuilding Fund and the UN Peacebuilding Support Office in 2005, merges progressively with state building efforts; (re)building states became the priority to build peace (Call & Wyeth, 2008, Call & Cousens, 2007), and addressing their fragility was identified as the main goal for international interventions in a post-conflict scenario. Post-conflict state building thus becomes the main and most supported policy answer to the dilemma of post-war recovery, and donors as well as international actors increasingly show a more proactive engagement with state fragility.

The increasing engagement of international donors with state building in post-conflict environments grows in the following years, with the OECD DAC publishing its Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States & Situations in 2007, and several studies and practical policy guidance on state building in fragile and conflict situations (OECD, 2008, 2010a, OECD DAC, 2008, 2011). Likewise, the World Development Report of the World Bank (2011) stresses the importance of transforming institutions to deliver security, justice and jobs. This progressive engagement with state fragility not only results in a rhetoric increment of studies and policy papers on fragility but it also entails practical economic consequences, as the two following figures from the OECD demonstrate:

Figure 3: Official Development Assistance (ODA) to fragile and non-fragile states 1995-2007
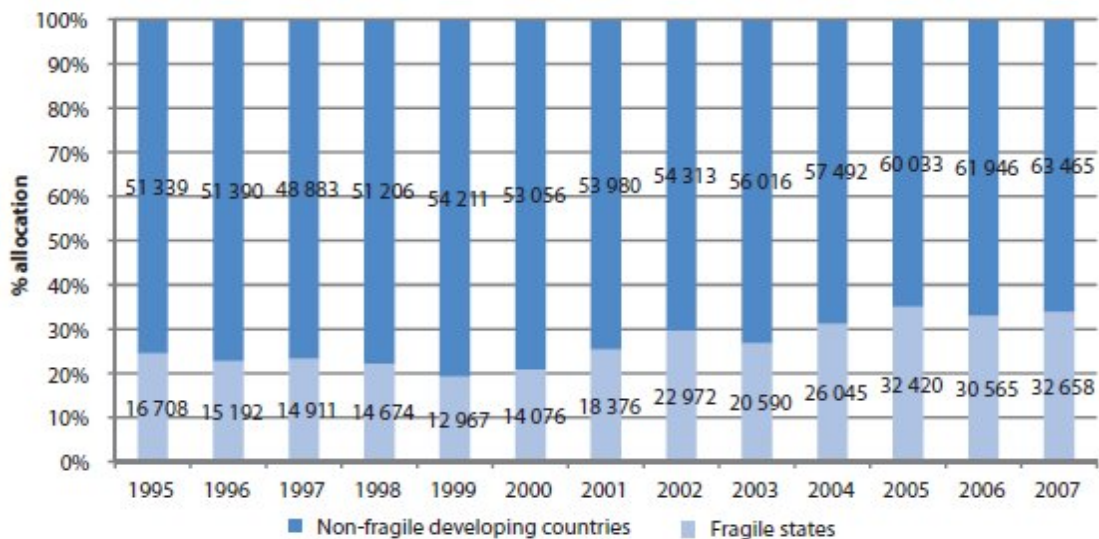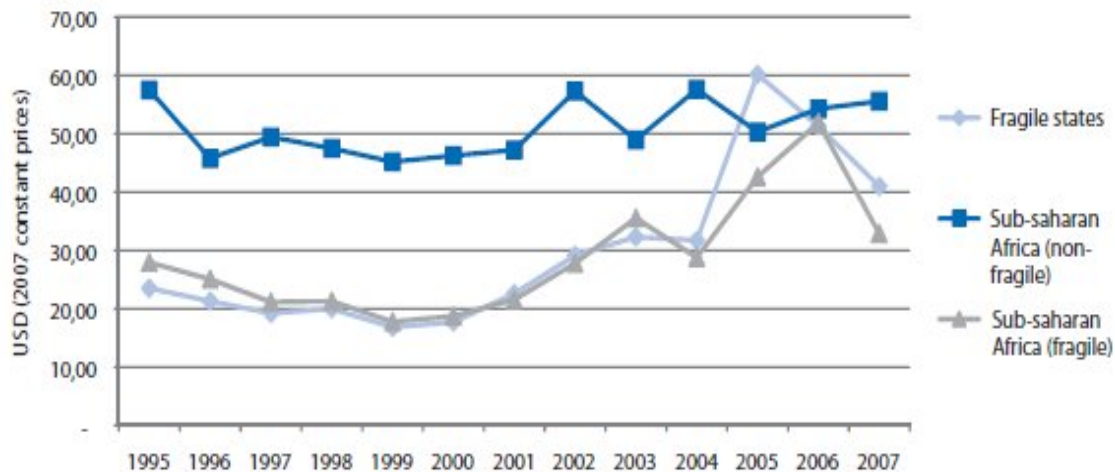

Source: OECD, 2010b, p. 36

Figure 3 shows how from 2001 – the starting date of the second phase of post-war recovery evolution, according to the three-phase division of this paper - the yearly amount of ODA to fragile states was always higher than in the precedent years. The figure actually increases in the most recent years and starting from 2004 - the starting date of the third phase of evolution presented in this paper -, this amount has been always more than 30% of the total ODA expenditure, for a total of more than $ 32 000 million in 2007.

These data are actually confirmed by the following Figure 4:

Figure 4: Per capita ODA to fragile and non-fragile states: 1995-2007 (USD)

The light blue indicator in Figure 4 shows how the allocation of aid from all donors to fragile states started increasing in 2001, at the beginning of the second phase of this paper's evolution. The amount of aid to fragile states skyrocketed between 2004 and 2005, at the beginning of the third evolutionary phase underlined in this paper. Despite a recent re-allocation of aid toward Iraq and Afghanistan, the data of figure 4 show how the current level of per capita aid to fragile states is higher than in every year before 2004.

Yet an increased engagement with post-conflict fragility is not the only trend characterising the third phase of this post-Cold War evolution of post-war reconstruction and development intervention. While proactively engaging with policies to create performing and effective states and institutions to ensure peace, recovery, and development, international donors refine on the other hand their approaches toward state fragility, incorporating some of the reflections emerged in the same years in the academic literature. International actors become for

example more cautious in imposing external and radical modernisation agendas, and emphasise the importance of non-state actors and bottom-up approaches to building sustainable peace. In this framework, the leadership and ownership of the national government over the international efforts to promote reconstruction gain prominence throughout the years, as "recovery and longer-term development will not be sustainable if the national government is bypassed" (Barakat, 2010, p. 31). The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) which gives to partner countries ownership to "exercise effective leadership over their development policies and strategies and co-ordinate development actions" (Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, 2005), the launching in 2008 of the Accra Agenda for Action (Anon., 2008) to strengthen and implement the Paris Declaration and the recent establishment of the g7+ - a group of self-defined fragile states which try to influence the burgeoning international agenda on fragility - are examples of steps toward this increasing efforts toward this more articulated and refined model of post-war recovery and development.

British policy:

British policy evolution proceeds together with – and sometimes anticipates – the general policy trend in post-war recovery at international level. Britain's recent reflection on post-conflict state building and fragility becomes more articulated, as demonstrated by the publication of several policy papers and studies on state building and peacebuilding. UK emerges in these years as a global player in the field of development; at the same time, DFID confirms its proactive engagement with fragility and post-conflict state building, locating more than 30% of its programmes in fragile states, incrementing its aid budget of 42% between 2011 and 2014 (DFID aid budget from the 2011-2014 period reaches £ 14,700 million, starting from £ 2,900 in 2011 to £ 4,122 in 2014/15)[3] and channelling the majority of it in fragile states.

Early signs of a more proactive UK engagement toward fragility can be already found in 2005, when the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit produces a Background Paper on Countries at Risk of Instability (Yiu & Mabey, 2005). In the same years, DFID also publishes its Strategy for Security and Development (DFID, 2005b) – a document explicitly stating that "security and development are linked" (p. 7) –, and, more importantly, the policy paper Why we need to work more effectively in fragile states (DFID, 2005a). This last document represents a leap toward an increased engagement of DFID in fragile states, a change of policy which, according to the foreword of the then DFID Secretary of State, has emerged on the wake of the Afghan campaign. The policy paper recognises fragile states as "one of the biggest challenges for the UK and the international

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[3] Data available from The Guardian Online (2011), UK aid review: which countries is DFID cutting?: http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2011/mar/01/uk-aid-review-cuts-dfid?intcmp=239#data.

community" (p. 3), it sets out DFID objectives and commitments about the Department's work in fragile environments and gives a first proxy list of fragile states derived from the World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment ratings (pp. 27-28). DFID response to fragility appears more articulated and in line with the growing state building agenda: the document stresses the importance of good enough governance, focuses on service delivery, and prioritises governance reforms in fragile states to protect people and property, reform the security sector and ensure effective financial managing. DFID promotes multilateral efforts in closely cooperation with the UN, the European Union and the G8 countries. Likewise, the World Bank and the OECD DAC are indentified as main partners "to build on the research base for better policy" (p. 25). *Why we need to work more effectively in fragile states* thus represents the first explicit DFID policy commitment toward fragile states. In the foreword of the then Secretary of State for International Development, this initial policy paper is far from having all the answers, but it represents a starting point upon which building the future engagement of the Department with state building in post-war environments (p. 3).

The foreword of the then DFID Secretary of State is actually implemented in the following years, as British commitment toward fragility and post-war state building continues in 2006 with the presentation to Parliament of the FCO White Paper *Active Diplomacy for a Changing World* (FCO, 2006). In sketching the challenges for the future decade and delineating the UK's role in the international system, the document recognises as an increasingly important task the need to help fragile states "become more effective and legitimate" (p. 22). In the same year, the OECD DAC Peer Review (2006) acknowledges that the "UK offers a powerful model for development co-operation" (p. 10), with DFID designated as lead department and institutional core of the system to permit "a unified government approach and coherent policy direction" (p. 10) around its leadership. The Peer Review confirms DFID engagement with fragile states, pointing out how "roughly 30% of DFID programmes are located in fragile states" (p. 42), and that the Department is pledged to increase the number of staff working on fragile states despite a planned reduction of its total personnel. Finally, the OECD DAC document underlines the UK whole of government and multilateral approach toward aid and reconstruction: it does not only mention the creation of a DFID-FCO unit in Sudan (p. 48), but it also underlines DFID's role within OECD DAC, chairing the OECD DAC's Conflict Prevention and Development Network, co-chairing the Fragile States Group, and piloting the draft "Piloting the Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States" in Nepal, Yemen and Somalia.

DFID on the other hand reinforces its leading role in post-conflict and fragility through the words of its then Secretary General Hilary Benn. Benn explicitly uses the term fragile states

(Benn, 2006a) and state building (Benn, 2006b) in two of his official speeches in 2006. Moreover, he repeatedly underlines in his speeches DFID commitment to build country capacities and capable and effective states through supporting good governance and "building strong, responsive and accountable institutions" (2006b, 2006a). The Department accompanies the words of its Secretary General with the publication of the policy paper *Preventing Violent Conflict* (DFID, 2006a) and the WP *Eliminating World Poverty: Making Governance Work for Poor People* (DFID, 2006b) in 2006. In particular, the 2006 WP contains the first explicit references to fragile states and state building in a DFID WP. For the first time in a WP, DFID makes explicit its commitment to help "fragile states, especially those vulnerable to conflict" (DFID, 2006b, p. xi), "ensuring security, achieving sustainable growth, and delivering health and education for all" (p. xi). The WP also has a whole section entitled "Building states that work for poor people" (pp. 17-42), and the chapter "Building effective states and better governance" suggesting a move toward more explicit state building objectives and programmes. In particular, DFID identifies capability, accountability and responsiveness (CAR) as the three main requirements for good governance. Finally, the WP has a chapter on peace and conflict which identifies security as a precondition for development and reaffirms the Department's work on conflict prevention. The 2006 WP therefore makes clear the commitment of DFID to work in fragile states. This does not only entail a change in rhetoric, but it also means a new and more proactive engagement of DFID in fragile and post-conflict environments. Moreover, the document contains a more explicit reference to state building in fragile contexts; it re-articulates in the CAR framework ideas of governance already emerged in previous WPs and policy documents, taking in this way forward DFID's commitment to good governance, a commitment further underlined by the Report of the House of Commons International Development Committee *Conflict and Development: Peacebuilding and Post-conflict Reconstruction* (2006).

As the OECD DAC and other international donors increasingly engage with state building in post-conflict environments, the UK National Security Strategy recognises fragile states as a threat for security and envisages the country support "in strengthening their governance, their development and their security capabilities, and to improve the capacity of the international community to act to stop states degenerating" (Cabinet Office, 2008, p. 7). Moreover, the strategy contains explicit references to state building in fragile, post-conflict environments. It indicates "building the capacity of weak states and regional organisations to prevent and resolve conflicts" (p. 43) as a future UK priority and acknowledges that "building stability out of conflict or state failure is a complex undertaking which requires concerted,

sustained, and integrated effort across security, politics and governance, and economic development" (p. 37).

In the same year, DFID publishes the Working Paper States in Development: Understanding State-building (Whaites, 2008), a study part of an initial learning process on the language and concepts of state building that does not represent UK policy but that proves to be extremely influential in the following years. Whaites recognises state building as "a national process, a product of state-society relations that may be influenced by external forces [...], but which is primarily shaped by local dynamics" (p. 4). He affirms that the UK has "explicit commitments to encourage state-building that ultimately brings benefit to the poor" (p. 6) and sees responsive state building as "essential to the process of developing the capable, accountable and responsive (CAR) states" (p. 6). Whaites (2008) also proposes a state building model involving three necessary areas of progress: the development of political settlements, the presence of the three survival or core functions of security, revenue and law, and the delivery of expected functions to fulfil public expectations in the field of infrastructure, social provision, policing and others. A "negotiating process surrounding expectations" (p. 10) helps mediate these processes, drive the dynamic of state building and "enable a constant evolution of the political settlement" (p. 11). The working paper concludes with an agenda of five does and don'ts for international actors working in state building aimed at influencing the UK and DFID practice of (re)building fragile and post-conflict states.

Whaites' model of responsive state building shapes the rhetoric discourse on post-war recovery and influences the successive British policy literature on state building in fragile states. At rhetorical level, the three areas of political settlements, core and expected functions characterising Whaites' understanding of state building are explicitly mentioned by the then DFID Secretary of State Douglas Alexander in his speech DFID Afghanistan: From Stabilisation to State Building (Alexander, 2008). The successive speeches of the then DFID Secretary of State are permeated by the analysis of Whaites and by the contemporary attention on state building and fragility. If in the speech The Future of Aid Alexander mentions the need to help "states to build the core functions they need to survive" (Alexander, 2009a), concepts such as fragile states and commitments toward building effective, peaceful and accountable states are recurrent themes in the then DFID Secretary General's speeches (Alexander, 2008, 2009a, 2009b). Furthermore, Alexander's speech The Future of Aid sees "tackling conflict and dealing with fragile states" (2009a) as a way to promote peace, indirectly suggesting that merging of the peacebuilding and state building agendas characterising the academic literature of those years.

The concepts and analysis of Whaites' do not only have a rhetoric influence on the speeches of the then DFID Secretary General, but they are also incorporated in successive policy papers written by British policy-makers. The 2008 *Stabilisation Unit Guidance Notes* (Stabilisation Unit, 2008) for example reiterate the UK engagement in fragile states and propose a model of state building based on the three elements of political settlements, survival and expected functions introduced by Whaites (2008). The following year, DFID publishes the Policy Paper *Building the State and Securing the Peace* (DFID, 2009b), which re-utilises Whaites' model of state building, presents a framework to understand peacebuilding (pp. 9-14) and develops an integrated approach to state building and peacebuilding (pp. 15-17), merging for the first time state building and peacebuilding at a policy paper level. At the same time, the drive toward a whole of government approach to post-war recovery is reinforced by the creation in 2009 of the Conflict Pools, a new DFID-FCO-MOD joint mechanism of funding which merges the funds of the Africa and Global Conflict Prevention Pools with the Stabilisation Aid Fund. This new mechanism is aimed at increasing the influence of British policy in post-conflict countries, requiring collaboration among DFID, FCO and MOD to conduct joint analysis, establish shared priorities and design and implement joint conflict prevention and management programmes on the ground.

DFID engagement to state building in fragile, post-conflict states is reaffirmed in the 2009 WP *Eliminating World Poverty: Building our Common Future* (DFID, 2009a). The need to work in fragile states is seen as a necessity for both security and development, as "common security depends on the emergence of stable and effective states around the world" (p. 16) and "development is not only morally right, it is wise" (p. 17). Building states and engaging with local societies are therefore considered by DFID as the best ways to tackle the effects of conflict and state fragility: the Department reiterates the need for "alternative mechanisms and deeper partnerships with civil society organisations and faith groups" (p. 18), "for helping to build institutions and for holding those institutions to account" (p. 18) where an effective state does not exist. In particular, chapter 4 is entitled "Building peaceful states and societies", re-echoing the terminology of the 2009 Policy Paper *Building the State and Securing the Peace* and anticipating the title of a DFID Practice Paper published in 2010 (DFID, 2010b). The chapter explicitly identifies peace and state building as DFID priorities, envisaging an increasing commitment to fragile and conflict-affected states and a joined-up approach to work on the security, justice and economic needs of these countries. The language of the WP builds on the 2006 WP, highlights the convergence between the peacebuilding and state building agenda and incorporates the work of Whaites (2008) using concepts such as inclusive political settlements and core functions

essential to the survival of the state. Furthermore, in supporting a more coordinated international approach in partnership with the UN and other international organisations and donors, the 2009 WP confirms working in fragile states as a firm part of UK developmental policy, and state building as a central priority of DFID engagement with post-conflict countries.

British understanding of state building in fragile, post-conflict environments evolves in line with the international donors' literature on the topic. The OECD DAC Peer Review (2010) recognises the UK as an "international leader in development" (p. 13), with a strong legal and institutional framework where DFID "manages most aspects of UK international development policy and 86% of the aid programme" (p. 26) and a strengthened whole of government approach. In particular, the Peer Review acknowledges DFID's role and innovative approaches as a "key driver of the DAC work on fragile states" (p. 31) and underlines how the Department co-chairs the International Network on Conflict and Fragility task team on peacebuilding, state building and security. This synergy between OECD DAC and DFID is confirmed by the DFID publication of a series of Briefing Papers based on the OECD DAC *Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations* (2007) and entitled *Working Effectively in Conflict-affected and Fragile Situations*. Published in 2000 and accompanied by a Summary Note (DFID, 2010a), the Briefing Papers provide practical guidance on Analysis conflict and fragility; Do no harm; Links between politics, security and development; Promoting non-discrimination; Aligning with local priorities; Practical coordination mechanisms; Act fast … but stay engaged; Risk management; and Monitoring and evaluation.

In 2010 DFID also publishes the practice paper *Building Peaceful States and Societies* (DFID, 2010b), which echoes the title of a chapter of the 2009 WP and re-elaborates the work of Whaites in 2008 and the 2009 policy paper *Building the State and Securing the Peace* in a new integrated approach to state building in fragile states. In building on the 2006 WP and its CAR framework, the paper defines state building as "a long-term, historically rooted and internal process driven by a wide range of local and national actors" (p. 12). The paper's understanding of state building refines Whaites' (2008) early definition and presupposes the three inter-related elements of political settlements, core and expected functions. This definition of state building, when combined with the one of peacebuilding in the context of a fragile, post-conflict environment, gives birth to a new integrated approach to building peaceful states and societies. This new approach has four main and inter-related objectives: addressing the causes and effects of conflict and fragility; supporting inclusive political settlements; developing core state functions and responding to public expectations. In DFID's understanding, these four mutually reinforcing objectives create a 'virtuous circle' of positive dynamics which eventually contribute to the

creation of strong state-society relations. Defined as "interactions between state institutions and societal groups to negotiate how public authority is exercised and how it can be influenced by people" (DFID, 2010b, p. 15) such strong and positive state-society relations underpin effective and durable states and are key to build peaceful states and societies. The integrated approach to state building presented in the document tries to incorporate in a practical policy paper the implications of the academic converging of the peacebuilding and state building agenda. In line with the literature on state building and peacebuilding, the paper recognises the possible tensions between the short-term goal of peace and the longer-term process through which building state capacities. Furthermore, the paper practical focus proposes six operational implications for DFID practitioners working in fragile or post-conflict situations, a series of practical ways to address causes and effects of fragility, a typology with questions for different fragile, conflict-affected situations as well as a list of examples on how to apply the integrated approach to different sectors of intervention (justice, education, job creation, political institutions and processes). The integrated approach developed in 2010 in *Building Peaceful States and Societies* is UK's last and most advanced framework for understanding peacebuilding, state building, and the interactions of the two agendas in fragile states, an attempt to incorporate in a single policy paper the recent development of research and international policy in fragile, post-conflict states. As an ideal ending point of the current British reflection on conflict and fragility, the paper has already informed "analysis, DFID country plans and the development of UK strategies" (DFID 2010b, p. 38) in some counties. Moreover, DFID's framework to building peaceful states and societies, the six operational implications, as well as the other typologies and practical suggestions envisaged by DFID are being tested in different environments and situations.

Yet the year 2010 also witnesses a change in the governing coalition of the UK, as the new Conservative-Liberal Democrat government of David Cameron appoints the new DFID Secretary of State Andrew Mitchell. This change of coalition also results in a change of rhetoric in the speeches of the DFID Secretary of State. Fragile, weak, dysfunctional and under-developed states still remain a priority in the DFID security and development discourse (Mitchell, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, 2011). Likewise, the DFID Secretary General emphasises the unaltered UK commitment to help building stable, functioning, capable and effective states, "open and responsive political systems" (Mitchell, 2011) and "peaceful and stable societies overseas" (Mitchell, 2010a). In particular, Mitchell's analysis stresses the importance of building accountable states, as "in some countries the state may well be part of the problem" (Mitchell, 2010c). Nevertheless, Mitchell's rhetoric seems to diverge from his predecessor when speaking about how to build states in fragile, post-conflict environments. If Alexander's speeches reflected

the Whaites' model and its attention on political settlements, core and expected functions, Mitchell's discourse never mentions this model or the derived integrated approach to state building and peacebuilding, preferring to refer instead to the "three policy pillars of development, defence and diplomacy" (Mitchell, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c).

It is too early to understand whether and how this apparent change of rhetoric will be incorporated in policy papers and, more importantly, will be then reflected into policy. However, this shift toward a growing emphasis on the so-called 3D approach seems to be confirmed by recent publications such as the 2010 *Strategic Defence and Security Review* (HM Government, 2010) and the DFID-FCO-MOD joint *Building Stability Overseas Strategy* (Cabinet Office, 2011). The *Strategic Defence and Security Review* for example recognises the security and development need to tackle conflict and fragility overseas building and supporting the local capacity of fragile states. However, the integrated approach to endure stability overseas does not mirror the previous integrated approach to state building introduced by DFID in 2010, but relies instead on bringing together the UK "diplomatic, development, defence and intelligence resources" (HM Government, 2010, pp. 44, 66). Likewise, the *Building Stability Overseas Strategy* seems to confirm this change of policy too, as the document, while encouraging "a more joined-up approach to peacebuilding and state building" (Cabinet Office, 2011, p. 30), only mentions the importance of political settlements without referring to the other two aspects of Whaites' model of responsive state building, namely the provision of core and expected functions, and refers only vaguely to the elements of the integrated approach developed by DFID in 2010 (p. 24). Conversely and in line with Mitchell's speeches, the new strategy stresses several times the importance of diplomacy, development work and defence engagement as part of the UK efforts to strengthen its integrated approach to tackling instability and conflict.

Trends in British policy in fragile, post-conflict environments

In line with the recent expansion of the international policy agenda on post-conflict and fragility, Britain's efforts in post-war recovery and development followed a three-phase evolution which found its zenith in the current proactive engagement with post-conflict state building and fragility and in the publication in 2010 of the practice paper *Building peaceful states and societies*. In particular, the analysis of the main speeches, reports, policy, strategy and white papers published by the UK in the last decade and dealing with post-war reconstruction and development shows the emergence of at least three major trends.

The first is the UK's increasing engagement with fragility and post-conflict state building, a trend which is actually in line with the recent evolution of the international policy agenda. At

international level, the concept of fragility has become predominant in the policy literature in the wake of 9/11 and particularly after 2004. Fragile states have been increasingly seen as a threat for security and development, and studies on fragility have flourished among international donors in line with a burgeoning academic literature on the topic. As a consequence, a proactive engagement with internationally-led state building has progressively become the most supported policy answer to post-conflict and fragility. At British level, the country emerged as a major global player in development, with DFID increasingly becoming the leading Department across government in the field of post-war recovery. This engagement resulted in an intensified rhetoric and proactive attention to fragile states and post-conflict environments, an increasing allocation of funds to programmes in fragile states, as well as an emerging global leadership of DFID in the field of development, with the Department piloting some of the OECD DAC programmes and seen as a trend setter in the field of fragility.

The second trend is a progressive promotion and emergence of whole of government and joint DFID-FCO-MOD approaches. As DFID emerged as a global player in the field of development, this leadership in UK post-war recovery needs to be progressively seen in a framework of cooperation with other ministries and bodies. This joined-up approach can be found for example in the creation of the Stabilisation Unit and of the Conflict Pool mechanism, and it is confirmed by joined-up publications, such as the recent DFID-FCO-MOD *Building Stability Overseas Strategy* (Cabinet Office, 2011). Indeed, these efforts for a better coordination among Departments became in the last decade a common feature in the donors' response to fragility and conflict. Similarly to the UK, the US created in 2004 the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilisation, an office responsible for coordinating federal government efforts relating to countries at risk of or in conflict, integrated since 2011 with the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilisation Operations. Likewise, Canada created in 2005 the joint Department of Foreign Affairs-International Trade's Stabilisation and Reconstruction Task Force, whereas the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) created in 2009 the Crisis Prevention, Stabilisation and Recovery Group. While pointing out the increment of joined-up and cross government efforts at British and global level could seem at first sight a hollow and uninteresting academic exercise, in reality something else lies behind the emergence of this second trend. This second British and global trend toward joint and cross-governmental approaches to post-conflict recovery and development actually denotes that, following the recent reflection on conflict and fragility, the international community started in the last decade seeing the problems associated with fragility as necessitating a more comprehensive response, namely the (re)building of the state. This new

response to conflict and fragility would thus no longer necessitate only separate efforts in the fields of security, development, economy, or foreign policy, but it would progressively require an overarching and cross-government response, entailing a joined-up work of every Department to (re)build the structure and the functions of an effective state.

The third and final trend characterising the British policy agenda in the field of post-conflict and development is an increasing synergy with the academic literature and research. As the scholarship on state building, conflict and fragility mushroomed during the course of the last decade, similarly British policy documents, practice papers and strategies on post-war state building and fragility grew exponentially in the recent years, progressively incorporating into the policy agenda the main themes emerging in the academic literature. This third trend and emphasis toward research is demonstrated by an increasing expenditure in and uptake into policy of DFID internal and sponsored governance research (in the 2008 DFID Research Strategy (DFID, 2008a), the Department pledges to invest £ 1 billion in research from 2008 to 2013; DFID states that it spent over £10 million on social and political research in 2006-07 (DFID, 2007), whereas the Department proposed in 2008a commitment of £26 million devoted to research on governance in challenging environments (DFID, 2008b)). Furthermore, several scholarly themes have been progressively incorporated in policy and white papers and in the UK development agenda. The idea of political settlements found for example its way into policy documents; likewise, the academic studies on the convergence between the peacebuilding and state building agenda have been translated into DFID recent development at policy level of an integrated approach to state building and peacebuilding.

Conclusion

The paper underlined how the recent emergence of the concepts of fragility and post-conflict state building within the academic literature and the international and British policy agenda on post-war recovery and development is the result of a three-phase evolution in thinking which characterised the whole post-Cold war period. In giving an account of the reasons and the drivers behind this evolution, as well as of the way in which the concepts of fragility and post-conflict state building entered into the current research and policy agenda, the analysis underlined how contemporary events shaped the theoretical reflection on post-war reconstruction and stability, and how the themes emerging in academia have gradually been absorbed and incorporated by the international and British donors' policy agenda.

The paper investigated the reasons why some concepts and notions – in particular those associated with state fragility and post-conflict state - building have become in the last decade

part of the mainstream of the literature and policy agenda on post-war recovery. In understanding these reasons of change, the analysis argued that political or economic drivers such as the early change toward Washington consensus, different examples of successful recovery or development such as those of the East Asian Tigers in the 1990s, historical convergences or sudden events such as 9/11 have showed in peculiar periods of time how old post-war reconstruction and development visions, remedies and policies are no longer sufficient to face a mutated international environment. Likewise, the paper also analysed the ways in which these new concepts, visions and models of development start shaping the research and policy agenda. Rhetoric and policy changes usually emerge as a consequence of a new and more articulated reflection on different concepts and solutions at academic and policy level, as it happened for example when the state-led development model was disregarded in favour of the liberal Washington Consensus agenda, or when in the course of the 1990s the Washington Consensus model was progressively abandoned in favour of a re-consideration of the role of the state in development. This increased reflection usually brings to an introduction of new approaches to post-war recovery and development or, more often, to a re-evaluation, re-tuning, re-shaping and modification of old notions and policy answers, as it could be noted in the emergence of the concept of state fragility from the early ideas of rogue, failed and weak states. Finally, this process of change has been recently characterised by a progressive convergence, synergy and exchange between the academic literature and policy-making, as it can be particularly noted in the recent evolution of the British policy agenda on post-war reconstruction and development.

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