

# Working Effectively in Conflict-affected and Fragile Situations **Summary Note**





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## Introduction

Conflict and fragility present some of the most urgent challenges facing the developing world. They are threats to global and regional stability, and major obstacles to poverty reduction and the achievement of the MDGs.

Working effectively in conflict-affected and fragile situations requires us to be flexible and innovative. Faced with insecurity, weak state capacity, difficult political environments and acute humanitarian crises, conventional approaches to aid delivery will often be inadequate. Responding to such challenges tests our ability to understand complex environments and adapt our objectives, modalities and partnerships accordingly. It requires a deeper understanding of the processes by which states 'exit' conflict and fragility, including state-building and peace-building processes, and how these can be supported from the outside. It also requires working with an adequately equipped international system as no single actor can tackle this agenda on their own.

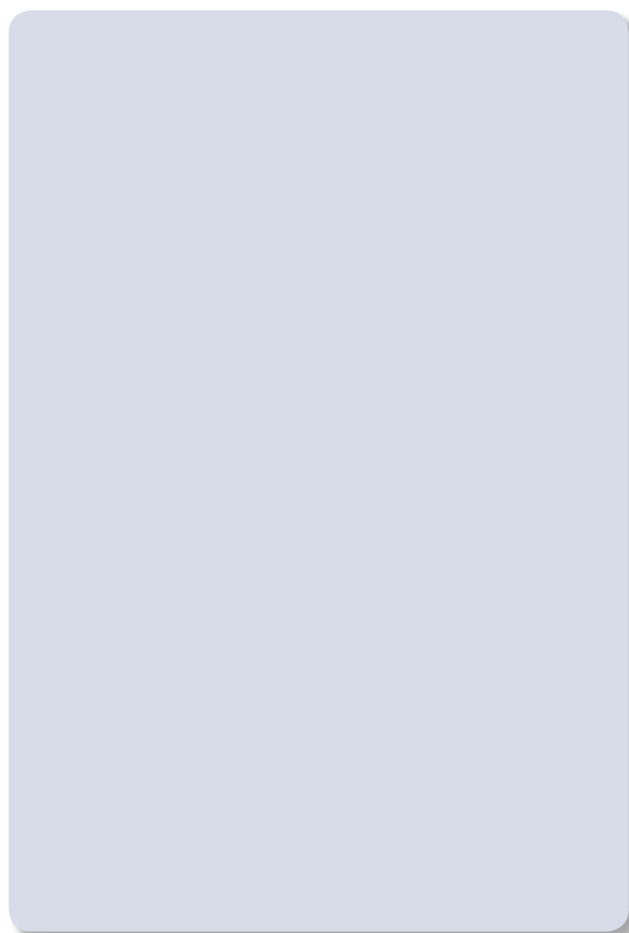
Wherever possible, the international community should address potential causes of conflict and deteriorating situations early. The UK's international commitment to the Responsibility to Protect civilians from suffering the worst excesses of violent conflict is, in the first instance, about helping states before crises and conflicts break out.

In recognition of these challenges, the OECD-DAC developed a series of **Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations** in April 2007 to complement the commitments set out in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. It is anticipated that new objectives for working in fragile and conflict-affected contexts will be agreed at the Seoul High Level Forum in 2011.

DFID has produced a series of briefing papers in line with the DAC principles, to help country offices to develop more effective responses to the challenges they face. Each of the briefing

papers can be read individually as a guide to a particular topic, or they can be read collectively as more comprehensive guidance. These papers, together with the practice paper *Building Peaceful States and Societies* (which develops principles 3 and 4) bring together our current understanding of how to work more effectively in fragile contexts. To access the papers, go to: [www.gsdrc.org/go/fragile-states](http://www.gsdrc.org/go/fragile-states) and click on '**DFID guidance on working effectively in fragile states**'.

We have included two additional papers that do not directly refer to the DAC principles – on Risk Management and Monitoring and Evaluation – because we know these are issues of concern to many offices. The papers are not intended to be prescriptive. Rather, given the complexity of the challenges in different contexts, the papers flesh out the issues, and present some lessons and case studies to illustrate what can and is being done at the moment. We will update them regularly as new lessons emerge.



This Summary Note provides an overview of the Briefing Papers, to give the reader a sense of the main issues that should be borne in mind when

engaging in situations of conflict and fragility. It should also help the reader choose which papers they wish to read in full.

### **The Briefing Paper Series:**

- A** Analysing conflict and fragility
- B** Do no harm
- C** Links between politics, security and development
- D** Promoting non-discrimination
- E** Aligning with local priorities
- F** Practical coordination mechanisms
- G** Act fast ... but stay engaged
- H** Risk management
- I** Monitoring and evaluation

## Analysing conflict and fragility

Getting our analysis of context right in conflict-affected and fragile situations is a critical starting point for developing effective responses. Analysis enables us to direct interventions accurately towards the sources of conflict and fragility and improve the conflict sensitivity of all our activities. It helps us to develop a shared view of the context and appropriate responses with our partners.

The Briefing Paper discusses the importance of careful analysis in situations of conflict and fragility, and the risks that come from a lack of analysis. It surveys the analytical tools and approaches used by DFID, including political economy analysis, strategic conflict assessment, gender and exclusion analysis, the Countries at Risk of Instability framework and the Critical Path method. Examples are provided of where these tools have been used by country offices and how analytical findings have been translated into operational decisions. Different approaches to joint analysis with partners are described, including governments, multilateral organisations, other donors and Whitehall partners.

Achieving a shared understanding with partners is as much a political as a technical challenge given the varying pressures and incentives facing

different agencies. At the same time, agencies such as the UN and the World Bank can also have significant capacities and resources to contribute. Transaction costs can be high, but it is key to achieving coherence at the strategic level. Effective joint analysis requires careful attention to process issues, including timing, ownership, legitimacy and audience.

The Paper notes that combining more than one analytical approach – for example, social exclusion with political economy analysis – may produce the most robust results in complex situations. We should also complement analysis at the national level with an understanding of regional and international issues, and of local and sectoral dynamics. Analytical exercises must be timed to feed into country planning as well as programme design, implementation and monitoring if they are to have impact.

The importance of analysis underlies all of the DAC Principles. Analysis should be viewed as a continuing, dynamic process, rather than a static output. Only by keeping our analysis fresh can we be confident that our programming choices are robust.



In **Nepal**, conflict and exclusion analysis between 2000 and 2003 revealed that DFID assistance was inadvertently mirroring the dynamics of exclusion that sustained the conflict, with the benefits concentrated among urban elites. This led to a major reorientation of the programme, towards excluded groups. DFID maintains a flexible approach, based on scenarios and options, using regular analysis and adapting the programme to changes in the environment.

## Briefing Paper B: Do no harm

In situations of conflict and fragility, donors can do harm in almost as many ways as they can do good. Any intervention, policy or position can have unintended consequences. We need to take care to maximise our positive and minimise our negative impacts.

This Briefing Paper surveys the ways in which donors can inadvertently do harm – for example, by upsetting delicate balances between groups, reinforcing inequalities, introducing resources to be fought over or legitimising warmongers and the values of war. It recognises some of the constraints on donors seeking to minimise harm, including existing programming, relationships and high-level commitments.

Conflict sensitivity, based on careful monitoring of conflict dynamics and our impact on them, is critically important. The Paper describes the Conflict Auditing approach now being piloted by a number of DFID country offices. It notes the particular risks of undermining state-building – for example, by substituting instead of developing capacity, or by enabling or ignoring corruption.

Harm is not always avoidable. In fragile situations, we may face multiple competing imperatives, particularly between short- and long-term objectives – for example, between rapid restoration

of services and the development of state capacity, or between delivering an immediate peace dividend and adopting sustainable approaches to development. Strategies such as paying salary top-ups to government officials may support rapid programme delivery, but can undermine local labour markets and create dependencies. Quick Impact Projects can provide ‘quick wins’ in post-conflict settings, but can easily generate tensions as well as political benefits. A focus on rapid economic growth may increase inequalities and risks exacerbating conflict. While trade-offs are inevitable, we should work with partners to achieve the best balance between short-term positive impacts and credible long-term approaches.

Budget support arrangements carry specific risks in situations of fragility, where periodic crises and setbacks are common. If budget support is withdrawn precipitously – especially if many donors act in concert – it risks undermining state capacity, damaging its relationship with citizens and causing additional suffering. Suspension of support should therefore be a last resort. The Paper highlights an example of how – with a sensitive application of DFID’s Conditionality Policy, which resulted in an adjustment to the form of assistance but not the volume – DFID Ethiopia was able to minimise the harm caused by suspension of budget support.



In **Sudan**, DFID is supporting UNICEF to deliver a rapid school-building and education programme in the conflict-affected area of Abyei. By benefiting both sides of a divided community – the Dinka and the Misserya – the programme is making education a ‘connector’ between the communities, reducing tensions and increasing support for peace on both sides

## Links between politics, security and development

Politics, security and development are interdependent. Conflict and insecurity lead to heavy development costs, stagnating incomes and increasing inequality. Poor people consistently cite better security as key to improving their lives. Conversely, development assistance can risk feeding conflict, corruption and predatory behaviour by elites. The political objectives of local, national and international actors influence whether development interventions have impact. Faced with this complex interplay of politics, security and development, we need an appropriate balance of interventions, coordinated with other donors and Whitehall partners. Given the centrality of the UN and other regional bodies in these fields, we must continue implementing our commitment to work through the international system.

This Briefing Paper discusses the importance and the challenges of Whole-of-Government Approaches (WGA). It looks at joint funding instruments such as the Conflict Prevention Pools and Stabilisation Aid Fund as platforms for joint planning. It explores the difficulties that can arise from differences in mandate, time frames, terminology, incentives, geographical location and funding sources. It discusses the challenges that emerge where the UK has several types of engagement in a conflict-affected environment – for example, humanitarian assistance, security operations and stabilisation activities. The Paper

also looks at the particular challenges of WGAs in stabilisation contexts, where cross-government working was a response to the specific contexts of Iraq and Afghanistan, but lessons are proving applicable to many other fragile and conflict-affected environments.

The Paper notes the importance of joint analysis to WGA. It suggests practical measures for facilitating joint approaches, such as shared services, cross-departmental secondments, compatible IT systems and recognition of WGA in staff appraisals. But it notes that transaction costs of these processes can be high.

It cautions against neglecting sectors such as security and justice, which can directly address political and security issues. It also suggests that programmes in traditional sectors such as education and employment generation can be designed with political and security objectives in mind – for example, tackling youth unemployment and alienation.

The Paper notes that WGA does not require all departments to be involved in every activity in situations of conflict and fragility. Rather, the right knowledge, assets and experience should be brought to bear, regardless of departmental provenance. We need to work out appropriate division of labour, and recognise when mandates make a joint vision untenable.



In 2007, DFID, MOD and FCO reviewed their support to the security and justice sector in **Iraq**. This led to a decision to combine all UK support to the Ministry of Interior and the Iraq Police Service into one integrated programme. The programme is led by FCO, with joint strategic management with DFID on key decisions. The combined approach has enabled a more efficient project in terms of management and delivery



This Briefing Paper sets out why discrimination matters in contexts of fragility, conflict and violence and provides some practical advice on how DFID and other donors can address discrimination as part of efforts to support peace-building and state-building.

Addressing issues of discrimination, inequality and human rights is a core challenge of the state-building and peace-building process. It is at the centre of the negotiation of state–society relations and in all countries there are national and local actors who are working to defend these principles on their own terms.

It is critical for donors to address discrimination from the outset: in taking decisions about prioritising and sequencing, it should not be assumed that responding to discrimination can be left ‘until later’. It is also important for donors to recognise that interventions aimed at supporting peace-building and state-building will not effectively address discrimination and its impacts unless they are specifically designed to do so. Donor interventions that are not based on a strong understanding of discrimination risk doing harm, through programmes that mirror and therefore strengthen existing patterns of discrimination and exclusion.

The Paper sets out what we understand by discrimination, drawing on human rights principles and on DFID’s and others’ work on social exclusion. Where there is a failure to protect the rights of different groups in society, as well as to fulfil them, prospects for peace and development can be seriously undermined. Grievances of groups that suffer from discrimination and exclusion are strongly associated with conflict and violence. ‘Horizontal inequalities’ refer to inequalities between groups defined by identity, such as ethnicity, religion, caste or region. Such groups may initially try to mobilise peacefully, but if this has no effect, they may turn to violence.

Gender inequality is not usually a key cause of conflict, but responding to gender inequality early is crucial for addressing the legacy of violent conflict (which often disproportionately affects women), building an inclusive society and



*Women in Afghanistan show they have voted*

increasing the prospects of a durable peace by maximising the contribution that women can make. Ignoring gender equality issues does not mean that we being neutral – on the contrary, it means that we are reinforcing the position of those in society who discriminate against women.

Inclusive political settlements are critical to reducing conflict and fragility. The paper looks at how the formal and informal processes that underpin the political settlement can be inclusive and representative (recognising that elite agreements may be necessary as a first step). The results from these processes should address the key causes of discrimination and be acceptable to both elites and the wider population.

Programmes that aim to address causes of conflict, such as disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) and transitional justice, offer critical opportunities to address past discrimination and promote greater equality in the future.

The paper discusses how building a peaceful state and society requires functions, particularly services, to be delivered in a way that is non-discriminatory, fair and responsive to the expectations of different groups of the population. Support to both enhancing security and improving access to justice should address any discriminatory policies and practices (formal and informal) by security and justice institutions and actors.

## Aligning with local priorities

Aligning with a partner country's strategies and priorities, and using country systems for aid delivery, is very challenging in states affected by conflict and fragility. Yet, even in the most difficult environments, alignment (with local priorities, not necessarily defined by government) is still an essential principle. If we disregard country policies and systems, however weak or fragmented, we risk undermining the capacity and legitimacy of the state. Conversely, early progress on alignment can help a fragile state re-establish its core functions and legitimacy.

This Briefing Paper discusses the challenges of alignment in difficult environments, including conflicting incentives among donor organisations and the reluctance of some partner governments to open up their policies and systems to donor influence. It notes that the extent and type of alignment that is possible, and the selection and sequencing of aid instruments, depends heavily on the country context. To avoid blueprint approaches, DFID places strong emphasis on in-depth analysis and regular monitoring.

The Paper discusses a range of different approaches and instruments for alignment, noting the differences between aid delivered through the state, with the state and outside the state. Budget support is the preferred option where government has a demonstrated commitment to reducing poverty, upholding

human rights and improving financial management. Experience suggests that both the benefits and the risks of budget support in fragile contexts may be high.

Multi-Donor Trust Funds, the majority of which are managed by the UN and the World Bank, have become an increasingly important instrument, particularly in post-conflict situations. They can promote alignment by creating a joint forum between government and donors for decision making and policy dialogue, and provide a means for disbursing straight into the national budget on a reimbursement basis, even in very weak fiduciary environments.

In post-conflict environments, there may be trade-offs between rapid restoration of services (possibly through non-state actors) and building state capacity. The Paper advises that taking the time to build ownership and re-establish local institutions usually results in more rapid progress and sustainable outcomes.

Where government legitimacy is in question or political relations are strained, an alternative is 'shadow alignment' – that is, providing aid in such a way as to mirror national systems, to enable a rapid shift to 'real' alignment when conditions allow, but leaving government in a policymaking and supervisory role over non-state service delivery. The decision on whether and



In **Burma**, where direct assistance to government is not possible, DFID channels most of its health sector funding through a humanitarian fund to UN and NGOs, in support of national disease control programmes, and in some cases supporting public health service delivery. The fund has made a significant contribution to containing three diseases. It has succeeded because it is clear to everyone that it is a humanitarian fund.

how to pursue shadow alignment in difficult partnerships may have wider political implications, and should be taken in consultation with HMG and other donor and international partners.

An additional option is bottom-up alignment, through Community Driven Development approaches that channel funds directly to communities while building local capacity through participatory approaches. Bottom-up approaches can help rebuild linkages between communities and the state.

The type and degree of alignment possible in situations of conflict and fragility is likely to change over time, and not always in a linear fashion. DFID Nepal's experience suggests that the most effective approach to alignment may be to accept the volatile nature of the environment, deploy a range of instruments and partnerships to manage risk and respond quickly and flexibly to change.



*Community meeting in Sudan*

## Practical coordination mechanisms

Donor coordination has traditionally been poor in situations of conflict and fragility, due to differing donor motivations and interests. The need for rapid disbursement can work against coordination, and the transaction costs can be high. However, the donor community is increasingly aware that uncoordinated assistance may be harmful to early recovery, peace-building and state-building. No single actor can tackle this agenda on their own and we are strongly committed to working through the international system to lay the foundations for peace (see DFID White Paper 2009, chapter 4).

Our preferred option is for coordination to be led by the partner government. However, the nature of the partnership with government varies considerably in situations of conflict and fragility. Our objective is to work with our international partners to develop structures that enable national authorities to participate to the extent that they are willing and able, and to strengthen their leadership over time. Where government leadership is too weak or not an option, we seek to strengthen the coordination capacity of our multilateral partners.

This Briefing Paper discusses some of the instruments and structures for coordination that have emerged in recent years. The choice is not just a technical one, but a matter for negotiation between the various political and strategic interests. Working to improve or build on existing mechanisms is often required.

Joint needs assessments are used to develop a common understanding of the country context, and to generate a 'common narrative' for international engagement. Various common strategic frameworks have emerged to support coordination of complex recovery operations. Post-Conflict Needs Assessments (PCNAs) – such as the Darfur Joint Assessment Mission or the PCNA in Pakistan – are multi-stakeholder exercises, often coordinated by the UN and the World Bank in collaboration with the national government and with cooperation of donor countries and regional institutions. Transitional Results Frameworks set out a programme of activities in pursuit of an agreed set of outcomes, describing a critical path for transition processes and helping to establish a division of labour. An alternative is the Country Assistance



The Country Assistance Framework in **DRC** was jointly initiated by the UN and World Bank. It brought 14 donors together around joint analysis, five high-level objectives, a results matrix and a risk management strategy. It has helped achieve strategic coherence and has identified gaps in assistance (e.g. roads), but achieving a clear division of labour has been more difficult. The DRC government has used the results matrix as the basis for its own PRSP monitoring tool.

Framework approach (see box), through which multiple donors can share analysis and agree on a common set of objectives and a results matrix. To be successful, such frameworks must be simple, accessible, prioritised and nationally owned (if not government led).

Multi-Donor Trust Funds (MDTFs), generally managed by the UN or the World Bank, have become an important tool for coordination, enabling donors to share political and fiduciary risk as well as pool their funding. MDTFs have been created both at central level as system-wide funds, and at country level. Where they include a basket of untied funds for allocation through a joint planning process with government, they can be an effective platform for policy dialogue. However, while they are also intended to minimise transaction costs for recipient governments over the short to medium term, their use over a long time frame can delay the adoption of 'normal' budget processes. DFID is often heavily involved in the setting-up of these funds and in ensuring their effective functioning. We are committed to put more money through pooled funding mechanisms, and are working at the global level with international and bilateral partners to improve MDTFs overall effectiveness.

Approaches to harmonisation used in other development contexts, such as joint country strategies, sectoral coordination mechanisms and programme-based approaches, may also have their place in situations of conflict and fragility. However, in volatile contexts donors tend to spread their risk by engaging in multiple sectors, making a rational division of labour difficult to achieve. At the operational level, a range of joint implementation arrangements are available, including shared advisers and joint donor offices, although it is important to assess whether they are worth the high transaction costs.

The Paper describes a range of efforts by the UK at the international level to strengthen the coordination role of the multilaterals, and how country offices can engage. These include reform of the international peace and security architecture, humanitarian system reform, work with the World Bank to improve its engagement in fragile contexts, and developing a more coordinated 'One UN'. Where multilateral partners have a limited presence in-country, DFID has boosted their capacity by funding additional posts, but it is important that incentives for multilaterals to staff their offices adequately are not reduced.

## Act fast... but stay engaged

In situations of conflict and fragility, assistance must be fast enough to take advantage of windows of opportunity and flexible enough to respond to changing conditions on the ground. At the same time, we need to be willing to make a long-term commitment where the trajectory of change is positive, in recognition of the scale of the challenges involved.

This Briefing Paper discusses the kinds of engagement that are appropriate for ensuring a rapid response when dealing with conflict and fragility. This may include humanitarian assistance, which DFID provides in accordance with the Principles for Good Humanitarian Donorship. Humanitarian assistance should complement and pave the way for other forms of engagement, and avoid undermining development by distorting the incentives and livelihood strategies of beneficiaries.

It may also include 'early recovery', a term used to refer to a suite of activities that seek to create a conducive environment for early peace-building and state-building, such as securing stability, implementing peace agreements, resuscitating markets, livelihoods and services, and building core state capacity. The Paper notes that there are significant weaknesses in international support for successful early recovery, including gaps around strategy, capacity and financing instruments, which need to be overcome.

The Paper considers which funding instruments are available when we need to act fast. An Emergency Response Fund is a rapid, flexible instrument under UN administration, providing small grants to UN agencies and NGOs for unforeseen humanitarian needs. The UN Peacebuilding Commission has established a



**South Sudan** has been a laboratory for funding mechanisms, including a World Bank-administered MDTF, which proved slow, and parallel trust funds for humanitarian response, capacity development and early recovery, as well as a separate DFID-run instrument for supporting NGO service delivery. We have learned a huge amount about what works for quick delivery and transferring responsibilities to the local authorities.

Peacebuilding Fund to support the early stages of peace-building, before regular donor finance becomes available.

The UN Consolidated Appeals Process is the traditional mechanism for supporting humanitarian action, but it tends to be better at fundraising for quick-onset disasters than for chronic ones. It often lacks a robust needs assessment, and donor earmarking can undermine its coherence. Common Humanitarian Funds were developed to address these shortcomings, by providing a pool of funding at country level that can be allocated by the UN Humanitarian Coordinator according to an agreed Action Plan.

The Paper discusses the relative merits of UN- and World Bank-administered Multi-Donor Trust Funds, noting that there may be a call for both. It also describes the World Bank's State and Peace-Building Fund, which allows for more rapid and flexible disbursement than normal Bank lending operations. Finally, it notes that

direct funding through UN agencies offers the possibility for rapid disbursement, provided the agency is already operational in-country.

The Paper also discusses the use of Development Partnership Arrangements as commitments to long-term engagement in fragile contexts. They can have an important signalling function, helping to encourage stability and engagement by other international and bilateral actors, and also make DFID's conditions for engagement transparent, allowing for a graduated response to situations of deteriorating governance.

We need to be realistic about the time frames involved in establishing new instruments, to ensure we anticipate and cover gaps. We must also remember that none of these funding mechanisms should be left on autopilot. Their success often depends upon the level of supervision and political support provided by bilateral donors.

## Risk management

Risk management is basic to our ability to operate effectively in situations of conflict and fragility. Fragile states are more volatile, with weaker capacities and political agendas often divergent from our own. The impact of risk is also higher, threatening not just individual projects, but the viability of a country engagement and the security of staff, partners and beneficiaries. As an organisation, we have a relatively high appetite for risk when tackling conflict and fragility. However, we are also required to use our resources responsibly. Risk management is therefore essential.

This Briefing Paper analyses the types of risk that affect our programmes, including country risk (environmental risks, including the political and security spheres), partner risk (the capacity and will of our partners, and accompanying fiduciary issues), operational risk (factors impacting on programme implementation) and reputational risk (potential opposition or criticism from groups in-country, in the UK or internationally).

The Paper presents some of the tools that DFID uses to analyse and monitor risk. For example, the Middle East and North African regional team has used a portfolio risk management approach, which includes a monthly analysis of portfolio performance, risk summaries for each country programme and individual monitoring of underperforming projects. Scenario and contingency planning have become increasingly important tools for risk management. Thinking through possible futures for a country, and identifying drivers that may bring these about, can help country offices identify interventions that increase the likelihood of positive scenarios, while preparing fallback options in the event that negative scenarios eventuate.

DFID has four basic responses to risk: tolerate, transfer, terminate or treat. DFID is willing to tolerate high levels of risk where the potential benefits are commensurate. This includes providing budget support in fragile situations, where capacity is low and fiduciary risk high (but improving). The transfer of risk is a common response in insecure situations, and is typically done by redirecting funding through UN agencies or NGOs. These organisations may be better

equipped to work in insecure areas, and may draw some protection from their perceived neutrality.

Termination of risk occurs when another partner is persuaded to take over responsibility for a certain activity, or where an activity is abandoned as not worth the risk. However, the latter is a last resort that must be weighed against the risks of not proceeding. The most common response is to treat risk by trying to reduce either the likelihood of its occurrence or its impact. All programmes in situations of conflict and fragility include elements designed to mitigate risk, including policy dialogue, targeted capacity-building and performance monitoring.

The Paper observes a tendency to respond to risky environments by diversifying sectors, partners and instruments. Spreading our risk reduces the impact of individual project failures, while allowing resources to be quickly reallocated to more effective uses. The Paper notes, however, that diversification is associated with other risks to aid effectiveness, including reduced focus and higher transaction costs. It also notes a tendency to become accustomed to high levels of risk, which may lead to a certain discounting, particularly where all engagements are essentially risky. It also emphasises the importance of staff being encouraged to present honest 'warts and all' risk assessments, even when there are strong imperatives and incentives around programmes proceeding, which a negative assessment may undermine.

During the **Nepal** conflict, DFID established a Risk Management Office to provide regular security assessments and train staff and partners to operate safely in conflict situations. It also developed Basic Operating Guidelines setting out principles for aid programmes in conflict-affected areas. These were widely distributed to combatants and helped reduce risk by protecting the 'development space' from politicisation.



Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is often neglected in situations of conflict and fragility. In a volatile environment, programme objectives can be fluid, data scarce and impacts complex and difficult to measure. However, the case for a well-structured approach to M&E is just as pressing in situations of conflict and fragility. M&E enables us to assess whether our programmes are achieving their objectives, including whether they are contributing to peace-building and state-building objectives, and whether they are conflict sensitive. M&E is also critical for lesson learning and accountability purposes.

This Briefing Paper discusses various levels of M&E. Regular monitoring at the national level is required to determine whether the country programme is helping to reduce conflict and fragility, and to enable country offices to reassess their goals, priorities, aid modalities and partnerships in the light of changing country conditions. Many country offices monitor a set of indicators covering the political, security, economic and social contexts, such as the Stability Indicators in Nepal, which are updated jointly with FCO.

At the project level, projects should also be monitored and evaluated to test whether assumptions and approaches are valid. In addition, all activities in situations of conflict and fragility should be monitored for inadvertent negative impacts. When working through NGO partners, we need to ensure that NGOs and other implementing partners are aware of the importance of conflict-sensitive M&E, and that they have sufficient capacity.

The Paper notes that monitoring at national and project levels can be mutually reinforcing, through a cascading set of objectives and monitoring arrangements. Joint M&E with partners at sectoral

level can help to strengthen partnerships with national authorities in low-capacity environments, by creating a platform for dialogue and building a shared understanding of priorities.

The Paper presents a range of practical measures that can be taken to improve M&E in situations of conflict. They include developing explicit theories on how our activities will impact on conflict and fragility to test through evaluation, identifying conflict-sensitive indicators (positive and negative) and establishing baselines.

Where data collection is restricted by security conditions, it suggests various strategies for collecting 'good enough' data for monitoring purposes. Involving beneficiaries and communities in monitoring can also offer multiple benefits, particularly in high-corruption environments. Such benefits include triangulation of data and strengthening the accountability of local services providers and institutions to communities.

**In Zimbabwe, DFID and its partners have aligned monitoring of their pooled funding for HIV/AIDS with the National HIV/AIDS M&E System. The funding allows UNAIDS to support the national system, including improvement of data quality and verification. This aligned approach has limitations in terms of accuracy of monitoring, but it is helping to build mutual understanding and cooperation between the national authorities and donors in a difficult political environment.**





## What is Development?

## Why is the UK Government involved?

## What is DFID?

### **International development is about helping people fight poverty.**

This means people in rich and poor countries working together to settle conflicts, increase opportunities for trade, tackle climate change, improve people's health and their chance to get an education.

It means helping governments in developing countries put their own plans into action. It means agreeing debt relief, working with international institutions that co-ordinate support, and working with non-government organisations and charities to give communities a chance to find their own ways out of poverty.

### **Getting rid of poverty will make for a better world for everybody.**

Nearly a billion people, one in 6 of the world's population, live in extreme poverty. This means they live on less than \$1 a day. Ten million children die before their fifth birthday, most of them from preventable diseases. More than 113 million children in developing countries do not go to school.

In a world of growing wealth, such levels of human suffering and wasted potential are not only morally wrong, they are also against our own interests.

We are closer to people in developing countries than ever before. We trade more and more with people in poor countries, and many of the problems which affect us – conflict, international crime, refugees, the trade in illegal drugs and the spread of diseases – are caused or made worse by poverty in developing countries.

In the last 10 years Britain has more than trebled its spending on aid to nearly £7 billion a year. We are now the fourth largest donor in the world.

### **DFID, the Department for International Development, is the part of the UK Government that manages Britain's aid to poor countries and works to get rid of extreme poverty.**

We work towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals - a set of targets agreed by the United Nations to halve global poverty by 2015.

DFID works in partnership with governments, civil society, the private sector and others. It also works with multilateral institutions, including the World Bank, United Nations agencies and the European Commission.

DFID works directly in over 150 countries worldwide. Its headquarters are in London and East Kilbride, near Glasgow.

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Published by the Department for International Development. Printed in the UK, 2010, on recycled paper containing 80% recycled fibre and 20% totally chlorine free virgin pulp.