



Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Strategy for SDC's work in fragile and conflict contexts



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Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

List of Abbreviations

BOGs	Basic Operational Guidelines
CS	Country Strategy
CSPM	Context/Conflict-Sensitive Program Management
FCS	Fragile and Conflict affected Situations
FDFA	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
HR	Human Resources
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
HSD	FDFA Human Security Division
ICS	Internal Control System
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
INCAF	International Network on Conflict and Fragility
IDPS	International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding
LRA	Local Risk Assessment
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MERV	Monitoring System for Development-Relevant Changes
NPTF	Nepal Peace Trust Fund
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECD/DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee
OMR	Office Management Report
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PoC	Protection of Civilians
PSGs	Peace- and Statebuilding Goals
SCO	Swiss Cooperation Office
SECO	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
WDR	World Development Report
WoGA	Whole of Government Approach

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People's movement for democracy, 2006, Nepal («Jana Andolan II»)

1. Purpose and Rationale of the Strategy

This strategy outlines the contribution of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) to peacebuilding and statebuilding in contexts of fragility and conflicts. It spells out the strategic principles, thematic priorities, working modalities, institutional set-up and aid modalities that guide the work of SDC and its partners in these contexts. The strategy builds on the following rationale: supporting countries in their path out of fragility and situations of violent conflict is highly relevant for development cooperation and humanitarian aid. As such, this strategy contributes to an overall Swiss foreign policy, which aims at contributing to positive change against structural violence in an era of an unprecedented level of crises, and at reducing global risks and challenges (such as “terrorism” and radicalization).

Around half of SDC’s partner countries are considered to be fragile. According to the OECD, “a fragile region or state is weak in its capacity to carry out basic governance functions, and lacks the ability to develop mutually constructive relations with society. Fragile regions or states are more vulnerable to internal or external shocks such as economic crises or natural disasters.” In contrast, states that are more successful in peacebuilding and statebuilding, have the capacity and legitimacy to govern effectively, and “manage and adapt to changing social needs and expectations, shifts in elite and other political agreements, and growing institutional complexity.” According to OECD, around 50 states are considered fragile (combining data from World Bank, Regional Banks and the Fragile States Index). “There is a complex relationship between fragility and conflict. Fragility may be caused by conflict and conflict may be exacerbated by fragility. There is a wide variation in the causes and dynamics of fragility: countries ex-

periencing ongoing civil war, such as Syria and Iraq; countries, such as Nepal, Timor-Leste and Sierra Leone that have emerged from long-term violence and instability; countries with endemically weak institutions (Haiti, Republic of Congo); and others where uncertain transitions to democracy are unfolding (Myanmar)”. The international trend is to look at fragility beyond fragile states, and to include regional and local pockets of fragility. As in the World Development Report 2011, SDC’s focus is on Fragile and Conflict affected Situations (FCS). Many fragile states lag far behind in terms of attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Recent crises caused by Ebola, or as happening today in South Sudan or the Ukraine show that without addressing the root causes of social and political marginalization while strengthening governmental structures as well as inter-community relations, development agencies provide only technical answers to political challenges. The concept of fragility thus encompasses insufficient statebuilding and peacebuilding efforts on national as well as local levels. If these statebuilding and peacebuilding efforts are not integrated as an overall objective into development and humanitarian efforts, poverty and fragility cannot be sustainably reduced.

In 2012, the Swiss Parliament decided to strengthen the Swiss engagement in fragile contexts. According to the Message to Parliament on international cooperation (2013–2016), SDC is mandated to make a relevant contribution to improved living conditions; to the reduction of causes of conflicts; to the increase of crisis resistance; and to the respect for human rights in selected fragile contexts. This strategy outlines the strategic and operational dimensions of this policy commitment.

Girl with ICRC jerry can in the near Renk, South Sudan © SDC/Christian Scherer



2. Areas of Application

This strategy applies to SDC's work in Fragile and Conflict affected Situations. It is applicable to country strategies, policies, programs and projects, SDC engagements in International and Regional Organizations as well as for SDC funded civil society organizations. As such, it puts forth SDC's positioning within a Whole of Government Approach (WoGA). The principles, priorities and working modalities defined in this strategy are applied systematically, but according to the particularities of the context. Many examples from different countries show the

relevance of understanding fragility before violence erupts, and demonstrate that fragility is not limited to SDC's traditional geographical areas of development cooperation and humanitarian aid. The situation of marginalized groups in Middle Income Countries will demand a rethinking of SDCs interventions in order to fulfill its mandate (see also World Bank Report "Inclusion Matters"). SDC therefore applies a dynamic understanding of fragility and clusters contexts as fragile as a result of regular context analysis.



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3. International and Swiss Policy Context

- › According to the World Development Report 2011, the number of people living in fragile countries globally exceeds 1.5 billion people. People in these situations are more than twice as likely to be malnourished compared to other development countries. The number of children who do not attend school is more than three times higher. Up to a few years ago, the answer to conflict and fragility was to mainstream conflict-sensitivity, conflict prevention and other topics into international cooperation. A new approach was reached when the OECD/DAC Ministers in 2007 endorsed the 10 Fragile States Principles (see annex V); and again with the endorsement of the 'New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States' (New Deal) at the OECD High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan in 2011. With these commitments, supporting countries in their efforts to overcome fragility and violent conflict has become a policy priority of international cooperation. The international community, including all multilateral partners have recognized that implementing this priority includes, but goes beyond 'Do no harm' and 'conflict-sensitivity' and puts emphasis on supporting the reduction of conflict causes, on fostering of state and community resilience and on promoting respect for human rights. With the establishment of the 'International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding' (IDPS), the international community and a number of recipient governments negotiated the approach of the New Deal. At the heart of the New Deal are five Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs):
- › To orient country engagements along context-specific indicators for each PSG that will allow progress to be tracked at the global and country level.
- › To focus on new ways of engaging and supporting inclusive, country-led and country-owned transitions out of fragility.
- › To establish trust by providing aid and managing resources more effectively and aligning these resources for results.

Globally, progress of the New Deal implementation since 2012 is remarkable in terms of changes in policies in donor and multilateral agencies, whereas progress on the ground is quite slow. But the effort to focus attention on monitoring aid to fragile states appears to be paying off. More aid is now allocated to fragile states than to non-fragile states. However, geopolitically significant countries receive the lion's share, while most 'aid orphans' are also fragile states (see annex VI). SDC builds its engagement in fragile contexts on these international policy commitments as well as on the findings of the 2011 evaluation of SDC's work in fragile contexts. As a result, in June 2012, SDC's Directorate set up an implementation plan for strengthening SDC's institutional and management responses in fragile contexts.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) plays a role in FCS as well. It governs the rights of civilian populations in armed conflicts. The Swiss Protection of Civilians strategy (PoC) applies to situations of armed conflict which expose civilian populations to certain risks (e.g. forced displacement) and which fall under the IHL. This strategy may also apply to fragile contexts that may potentially lead to an armed conflict as well as to post-conflict situations where the after-effects of hostilities persist.

- › Legitimate politics;
- › People's Security;
- › Justice;
- › Economic Foundations;
- › Revenues and Services.

The IDPS, which is comprised of the g7+ group of 20 fragile countries, development partners, and international organizations, sets out three main goals:



Graffiti art in the streets of Tegucigalpa, Honduras © SDC/Thomas Jenatsch

4. Strategic Principles

According to the 2013 DAC Peer Review, Switzerland is well positioned to work effectively in fragile and conflict contexts. Switzerland is a neutral country without a colonial past, a medium size humanitarian and development actor with a wealth of experiences in fragile contexts, including active Swiss presence on the ground. SDC bases its engagement in FCS on the following core strategic principles:

4.1 Policy priority on fragile countries and regions

SDC's decision on priority countries and regions shall be guided by Switzerland's commitment to strengthen its engagement in fragile contexts with a focus on sustainable poverty reduction; humanitarian assistance and relief; contributions to keep development and humanitarian spaces open; reduction of conflict causes; strengthening of state and community resilience; and respect for human rights and IHL. SDC considers it important to deliberately take controlled risks and prepare response strategies for inevitable setbacks.

4.2 Staying engaged with a long-term perspective

Strengthening SDC's engagement in fragile and conflict-affected contexts requires long-term commitments. In such situations of "contiguum", different aid modalities –humanitarian, development, diplomatic - are present in parallel, are managed comprehensively under a common strategy and are activated according to the changes in the context or the actual scenario respectively (to avoid the so called "transition gap"). Building state and societal structures and relationships takes time, as does winning people's trust. The World Bank estimates that it takes between 15 and 30 years for countries emerging from a lengthy period of conflict to establish a functioning government.

4.3 Switzerland's development and humanitarian objectives require political engagement

Violent conflict is often a symptom of deep-rooted structural discrimination, and social and economic exclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups. Any intervention that ignores political dimensions in favor of purely technical answers risks leaving the fundamental causes of conflict unaddressed. Therefore, the nexus between peace and development has to be addressed as early as possible within the framework of Swiss country strategies as a means to contribute to both, *out of fragility* and *out of poverty*. SDC's political engagement in fragile contexts has different dimensions:

Policy Dialogue:

Building peace and increasing state responsiveness requires a political process for transforming power dynamics and economic relationships. Resistance and setbacks are to be expected. Supporting champions of reform is crucial and requires adept political dialogue to build trust and manage risks. SDC actively participates in donor coordination (in FCS a bottom up-approach in donor coordination is often more suitable for SDC, given the highly politicized context on national level), established international processes, as well as international organizations. On the global level, SDC has a number of priority multilateral organizations, of which it is among the top ten donors. It takes an active and recognized part in their steering, as shareholder, and brings its field perspective into global discussions. For a country specific example of an aid-for-peace-guided program, SDC is part of the Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF), a joint funding mechanism to support constructive collaboration between the parties of the armed conflict and the implementation of the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement . A specific contribution in FCS can be for SDC to insist that, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human rights is represented in Development Fora.



Labour-based road construction programme (DRSP) of SDC in Nepal. As a result of a conflict sensitive programme management, the work could be continued also during the armed conflict.

Human Rights, International Humanitarian Law, Protection of civilians

Humanitarian aid is in general guided by the normative principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. The respect for these principles is particularly essential to guarantee access to all the victims of an armed conflict. A careful and constant monitoring of the context, including its political dimensions, is therefore key to avoid political instrumentalisation of humanitarian aid and with it an undermining of its normative principles in armed conflicts and disasters. Protection of civilians seeks to protect people who are not or are no longer participating in hostilities by limiting the effects of armed conflict. It falls under a specific normative framework, in particular IHL, refugee law and human rights. Contribution to peacebuilding and statebuilding can only take place if IHL and human rights violations, such as systemic violence, discrimination and exclusion, are addressed. Thus, the international human rights framework guides both the aim and the approach of SDC's engagement in fragile contexts. For example, in Afghanistan, SDC strengthens the work of the Ministry of Justice, the National Human Rights Commission, as well as civil society organizations to enhance national capacities for human rights protection.

Development Sector Policies Supporting Changes out of Fragility:

SDC has a multi-dimensional approach:

- › Identifying entry points for changes out of fragility within traditional development sectors; for example, in Nepal, SDC supports fragility- and conflict-minimizing national infrastructure policies by ensuring that selection criteria for projects include marginalized social and political groups as both beneficiaries and decision makers.
- › Focusing on fragility relevant sector policies; for example, in Honduras SDC puts emphasis on justice and security sector reform as a relevant contribution out of fragility.
- › Supporting new, different ways of collaborating with donors and government, for example SDC contributed to the Somalia New Deal compact, by contributing to the World Bank multi-donor trust fund amongst other means.

“No weapon” sign at the entrance of a shop in Kabul, Afghanistan © SDC/Christina Stucky





Open gate. Dushanbe, Tajikistan © SDC/Harald Schenker

- › At the multilateral level, putting emphasis on conflict prevention, access to justice and coordination. SDC has contributed to a more political and conflict sensitive engagement of UN Resident Coordinators, as well as to a more coherent engagement in rule of law through the establishment of a single rule of law team in Headquarters and in countries such as Somalia and Mali. By creating an ad-hoc trust fund, it has fostered the partnership between the World Bank and the UN in fragile contexts, thus effectively changing practices and culture.
- › In Colombia SDC is taking the opportunities presented by the peace agreement between the government and the FARC. SDC is strengthening the central, departmental, local governments and community level to develop a model of integrated management of water and sanitation to facilitate the flow of public budget in four municipalities that have been and are affected by armed conflict. Although the areas where the project takes place have serious problems due to the presence of armed groups, there is a level of governance within the authorities that allows commitments and building trust between them and the local communities for gradually developing out of fragility. From the perspective of the human right to water, bridges between institutions and communities are facilitated through the project.

4.4 People-centered Development and Humanitarian Action

SDC puts people, both women and men, at the heart of its engagement and it adheres to the principles of accountability, non-discrimination, participation, empowerment, transparency and efficiency. Working with state institutions to make them more accountable and responsive is as important for SDC as direct support to local communities and civil society organizations. The human rights based approach and principles of good governance contribute to this focus. In the Occupied Palestinian Territories, for example, SDC contributed to the Palestinian Bureau for Statistics' indicators on children's rights and supported NGOs who contributed to the reinstatement of teachers unlawfully dismissed by authorities. Notwithstanding these efforts, Swiss objectives have to be modest and realistic, acknowledging geo-strategic realities.

4.5 Linking operations with politics

SDC's political engagement benefits and derives from its activities in the field or its partners. This presence on the ground yields reliable information and allows the testing of innovative approaches. In return, feedback from the field is used to inform SDC's policy work as well as the policy dialogue with SDC's multilateral partners at the field and head office level. SDC's Conflict and Human Right Network provides space for exchange and learning about good practices and failures. The scaling up of successful projects in cooperation with larger donors, multilateral organisations and governments maximizes the impact of these activities. For example, in Mali, during the crisis, the World Bank scaled up a long-term Swiss approach to decentralized budget support, therefore strengthening institutions through the country system and extending the area of intervention to the whole country.

4.6 Working together

SDC country strategies are elaborated jointly with diplomatic, humanitarian, development and other actors present and make use of the available mandates and capacities for the common out of fragility objective (comprehensive aid approach). In many contexts, Switzerland develops joint country and regional strategies in a Whole of Government Approach, and cooperates with other donors, governments and multilateral actors either through joint country systems, donor pooling, or comprehensive aid approaches (see more under working modalities). Whole of Government collaboration in FCS is not a goal itself, but a means to achieve more towards peacebuilding and statebuilding than the individual actors could achieve on their own.



5. Thematic Priorities for SDC in Fragile and Conflict affected Situations FCS

5.1 Inclusive Development, Peacebuilding and Statebuilding

SDC's broad understanding of Statebuilding includes, apart from government and administration, the parliament, the judiciary, the civil society, traditional and informal structures and institutions (if applicable) and private sector. It comprises, according to the context, all, in particular also bottom-up efforts, to foster collaborative building of inclusive structures at community, intermediate and national level. To gain the trust of the civil society is a crucial process to build sustainable states and nations. According to the context this can mean a variety of practical approaches e.g. to support local governance, district sector plans/planning processes, institution building, rule of law and democracy building contributions or more direct support to government. By endorsing the New Deal, development partners and g7+ countries committed to use and strengthen country systems. However, it is clear that this has a context specific meaning and cannot be reduced at all to budget support. A human rights based approach to development empowers citizens and develops government capacities to protect, respect and fulfil human rights. SDC supports improved state-society relations not only with the aim of contributing towards a legitimate state and better governance more responsive to citizens' needs,

but also towards the active participation of excluded or marginalized groups in social, economic, and political decision making on the local, national and regional levels. This applies to SDC strategies and programs as well as to the composition of local staff in the field. For example, the manual of the SCO Chad – like that of many other SCOs - puts forth that the composition of national staff shall reflect the diversity of Chadian society as well as gender equality principles.

5.2 Human Rights and Access to Justice

SDC supports the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, which are often under threat in fragile contexts. Access to justice helps overcome conflict and fragility by enabling people to access remedies and redress for injustice and by holding perpetrators accountable. SDC supports activities that address the legacy of conflict, contribute to the restoration of justice, and rebuild trust between state institutions and citizens. In Kyrgyzstan, for example, SDC has supported land reform efforts as well as legal awareness and services for the rural population with the aim of enhancing land ownership rights and preventing land-related conflicts.

Boy selling local newspapers on a commuter ferry in Yangon, Myanmar © SDC/Christina Stucky





5.3 Gender, Conflict and Fragility

Women experience conflict and fragility differently from men. In fragile and conflict-affected contexts and even in the aftermath of violent conflict, women and girls, but also boys and men, are at increased risk of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). In line with the Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security, SDC supports activities that increase the protection of women and girls in fragile contexts and supports their full participation in key decision-making processes, as well as promoting their role as peacebuilders. SDC is also engaging men and boys in contributing to a sustainable transformation of gender relations. In Afghanistan, for example, SDC contributes to ongoing police reform efforts by supporting the recruitment of female officers and the sensitization and training of the police force on SGBV.

5.4 People's Security is essential for sustainable development processes

In fragile and conflict affected contexts, SDC has to deal increasingly with the conditions of the individual insecurity. People are threatened through violations of rights, be it by regular security forces, armed groups or terrorist acts. People are affected by gender based violence, criminality and violence in the context of illicit drugs or the fight for precious natural resources and human trafficking. They are exposed to discrimination, legal uncertainty, bad governance and lack of accountability, corruption and intimidation in the exercise of their political, personal and community rights. It is essential for sustainable development processes in fragile contexts to improve the individual security of the people towards freedom from fear. This is also reflected in the draft formulation of the Sustainable Development Goal 16 "peaceful and inclusive societies". SDC addresses the people's insecurity with development and humanitarian instruments and with the instruments of the security sector reform, according to the context analysis. This means working on access to justice, protection of civilians, accountability of law enforcement bodies, to strengthen oversight mechanisms, e.g. by parliament, media and civil society. The aim is to strengthen the social fabric and cohesion and improve the functioning and legitimacy of the state and its institutions. In line with ODA guidance, SDC does not invest in training and equipment of security forces. As an actor of international cooperation, however, it may engage in enhancing democratic oversight and accountability of security forces as well as their compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law obligations.

5.5 Conflicts related to natural resources (land, water and climate change)

Sound conflict analysis guides SDC's contribution to the reduction of conflicts around natural resources. In Honduras, SDC supports a watershed program that serves as a vehicle to address underlying causes of violence such as social exclusion, lack of state legitimacy and local economic development. The program contributes to local ownership and the strengthening of the legitimacy of state entities and additionally to disaster risk reduction. With the Blue Peace project, SDC contributes to building the foundations for the future cooperative management of the Orontes basin's water resources at local, national and transboundary level. The project is based on the assumption that if water can contribute to conflict, for instance in Syria, it can also be a source of reconciliation and that concerted water management can contribute to peacebuilding. In Colombia, through the IAPRE project (do no harm in land restitution), SDC contributes to the mitigation of conflicts that are generated by the transitional justice policy that seeks to return the land to the people who have been dispossessed by armed conflict. Through the institutionalization of instruments that enhances the context analysis, the awareness of public officials and judges, the project aims to reduce the negative effects of land restitution during the armed conflict.



Bangladeshi police men preparing for their mission during political strikes, Dhaka © SDC (Carole Lauener)



South Sudanese returnees from Khartoum fetching water in Renk, South Sudan © SDC/Christian Scherer

6. Working Modalities: Context/Conflict-Sensitive Program Management (CSPM)

Core to SDC's work in FCS are country or regional cooperation strategies that identify the nexus between peace and development with joint Swiss contributions to development out of fragility. SDC implements the aforementioned strategic principles and thematic priorities with a Context/Conflict-Sensitive Program Management (CSPM) approach as its principal working modality in FCS. This new and different way on how SDC works in fragile contexts was defined in the fragility and conflict implementation plan 2012–2016 of the SDC directorate (2012). It does not include new instruments. There are now however specific new steps to be taken in the elaboration and monitoring of the country program in FCS. These are now part of the new SDC Guidelines for Elaborating Cooperation Strategies (CS). The SDC Conflict & Human Rights Network will constantly reflect on these working modalities, with horizontal exchange of best operational experience, in order to assure thematic quality as well as sustainability of SDC's contributions to positive change and avoidance of negative side effects.

CSPM is comprised of the following elements (the operational details are described in annexes I–IV, in the form of visualization/graphics of the CSPM, the risk management spheres and the steering matrix for country programs, as well as the specific steps to be undertaken in the 7 chapters of the elaboration of Country strategies in FCS):

6.1 Specific context analysis and work with future scenarios

Fragility and conflict analysis form the basis of all SDC interventions, enabling SDC to design realistic programs and to flexibly adapt to changing contexts. Fragility and conflict analysis is undertaken with reference to the five New Deal PSGs and includes inter alia an assessment of political conditions in a country such as the governance system and respect for human rights; economic, socio-cultural, personal security and environmental conditions; as well as an analysis of drivers of fragility and conflict. SDC contributes to joint fragility assessments, e.g. with other donors, if the context permits a specific contribution (for instance local context know how) and the process is inclusive.

6.2 Defining relevant contribution to context and conflict change

A second element is identifying relevant entry points for SDC programs to contribute to ways out of fragility. SDC has to make a relevant contribution to the improvement of the living conditions, the reduction of causes of conflicts and the increase of the crisis resistance in selected fragile contexts, in order to help concerned states to more effectively overcome internal and external crises. Therefore, according to the specific context, the strategy and the result framework statements on impact and change have to be formulated taking into account three fields of observation: a) reduction of conflict causes, b) state and society capacities to withstand crisis, and c) human rights.

6.3 Strategic results-based frameworks

Results-based frameworks in cooperation strategies help to achieve results in fragile contexts and define the implementation modalities. The programs are systematically adapted to the actual scenario. The result frameworks are key in order to comply with the principles of downward- and upward-accountability. Specific management and performance results have to be defined in the Result Framework 1) one on CSPM Implementation (e.g. work force diversity or specific contribution to donor coordination), and 2) one on the policy contribution aid for peace.



Woman walking in the streets of Kabul, Afghanistan
© SDC/Christina Stucky

6.4 Monitoring fragility, conflict and results out of fragility

SDC is tasked to make a relevant contribution to improved living conditions; to the reduction of causes of conflicts; to the increase of crisis resistance, in selected fragile contexts in order to help concerned states to more effectively overcome internal and external crises. In cooperation strategies, statements on outcome and change are made against three fields of observation: conflict causes, crisis resistance and human rights. Specific sub-fields of observation are linked to the hypothesis of change in fragile contexts, formulated within the cooperation strategy and addressed in the result framework. SCOs conduct regular country monitoring through the monitoring system for development-relevant changes (MERV). The scenarios are checked regularly against those changes, and the programs are adapted accordingly in order to achieve the projected country strategy outcomes in a changing context. Progress towards achieving the outcomes is documented in the annual reports.

6.5 Enlarge and protect the space for development and humanitarian aid

SDC aims to widen the space for development and humanitarian aid as a crucial condition for staying engaged. The presence of SDC and its partners in the field has had positive effects on protection of the population in rural areas. The Sustained Humanitarian Presence Initiative in South Sudan for example allows partners to stay and deliver humanitarian assistance in a conflict environment. Enlarging the space enables SDC in general to transfer local information to the national and international levels. Whilst access in humanitarian aid is based on a clear legal base (IHL), practical access to the beneficiaries has proven to be crucial as well for development programs to be able to stay engaged in difficult situations. For instance the Conflict Sensitive Working Group Afghanistan, including SDC, has developed "Principles of Access".

Dealing with the Past in Cambodia: exhibition of Pol Pot victims at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Phnom Penh © SDC/Christina Stucky



6.6 Comprehensive risk management

In FCS the risk considerations are usually more in the center than in other contexts, in particular security issues and reputational risks. In order to use entry points and opportunities for the achievement of country strategy overall goals, SDC systematically conducts risk assessments oriented along the “Copenhagen Circles” referring to institutional, programmatic, and contextual risks (see Annex I). The combined SDC processes and tools regarding steering, planning, controlling, analysis and security enable SDC to adapt and react as needed, as well as to engage with its local and international partners and to contribute to a dialogue on risk analysis and management where possible.

6.7 Geographic cluster approach

In fragile contexts SDC works, where possible, with geographic clusters to maximize the context knowledge and the impact of its work. Clustering allows for better context knowledge, understanding of the political dynamics and security assessments. SDC programs and partner projects concentrate in a certain geographical area where a coherent Swiss approach is applied accompanied by local risk assessments and actor mapping. These analysis also feed into the MERV and inform the policy dialogue on other levels.

6.8 Psychosocial approach

In fragile and conflict-affected contexts, the impact of violence, trauma, threat, fear, destruction and loss exerts enormous pressure on individuals. The psychosocial approach takes into consideration the well-being of individuals in relation to their environment, deals with consequences of violence for men and women, supports reconciliation processes and contributes to the re-establishment of social belonging and social fabric. Such an approach has to be complementary to a more holistic approach of dealing with the past. Additionally, an increased engagement in fragile states requires enhanced psychosocial support for staff members. In Rwanda, for example, SDC has been promoting a multisectoral community intervention for rape victims. The intervention aims at combining comprehensive care with awareness-raising among the population and authorities.

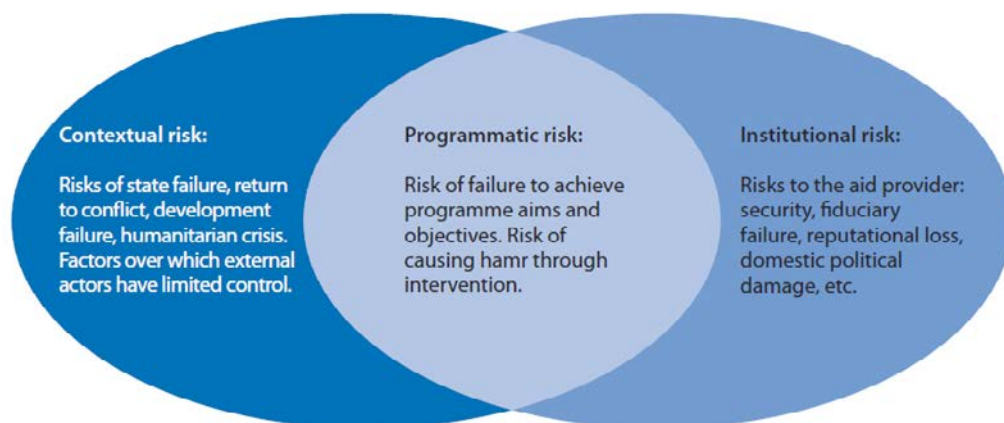
6.9 Human Resource and Security Policy

This strategy corresponds with the respective human resource and security policies in place. In both areas the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, with very substantive inputs from SDC, has been updating and renewing the respective regulations in parallel to Switzerland’s shift to put a much stronger focus on fragile and conflict affected contexts. SDC needs staff and partners that are able to apply this strategy. CSPM and work in FCS is therefore a core competence for SDC staff. The SDC Conflict & Human Rights Focal Point is charged with providing the necessary training and coaching as well as an enabling environment within SDC’s Conflict & Human Rights Network for exchange about best practice and necessary tools for practitioners.

Annex I: Comprehensive Risk Management – Three risk spheres (“Copenhagen Circles”)

Risk taking and management of risks is of utmost importance in fragile and conflict affected situations. The SDC’s directorate decided on November 28, 2013 to orient SDCs risk management according to the international risk management standards as described by the three risk spheres (“Copenhagen Circles”). The application of this standard does not require the introduction of new instruments, but

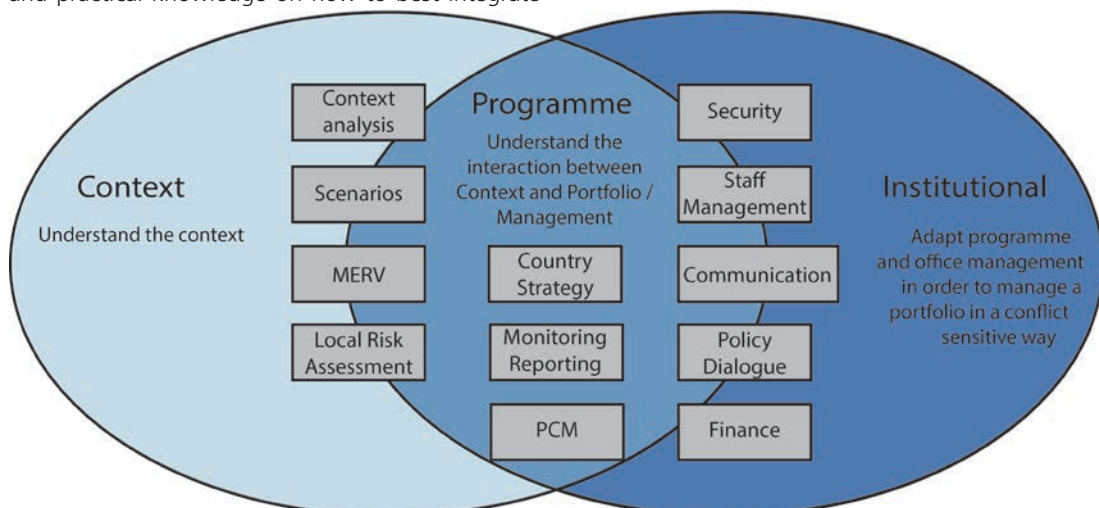
the application of the three spheres when using the existing SDC instruments. (Source: SDC Field Handbook, Core Area 5, PCM Planning and Implementation, 5.1. Planning, normative documents, SDC Guidance for Credit Proposals, annex 3, “Key messages for risk assessment of SDC financed interventions”)



Annex II: Overview of SDC’s instruments used with a CSPM approach on context, program / portfolio, and management levels

The aim of this platform is to provide information on how to mainstream conflict sensitivity on context, program and management levels. The platform collects basic guidelines, How-to-Notes and background information for each component of SDC’s instruments and aims at sharing good practices from various contexts. This platform offers two major opportunities: Firstly, to acquire deeper understanding and practical knowledge on how to best integrate

CSPM at the different levels. Secondly, the possibility to share best practices or start discussions and by this to contribute to exchange and learning about good operational practice. The documents are available by clicking on the different components. Link: https://www.itdoc.eda.admin.ch/shareeda/SouthAsia/CHRnetCSPMTools_Docs/SitePages/CSPM%20Tool.aspx



Annex III: Overview of Planning and Steering steps and instruments of Country Strategies in fragile and conflict affected contexts

This matrix summarizes the planning and steering (including monitoring) steps and instruments of Country Strategies in fragile and conflict affected contexts as described in this strategy and in the field handbook. It shows in a nutshell how SDC works with context/conflicts sensitive program management (CSPM) on the strategic level in fragile and conflict affected situations. (Source: SDC Field Handbook, Core Area 3 (Country Level), Working Aids, Management Matrix for Fragile and Conflict affected countries)

	Context	Country Program	Portfolio	Management
Phase	Conducting context analysis Defining scenarios (min. 3) Reviewing Security Plans	Conducting evaluation of past CS (see Guidelines for CS, 6.5 – 6.6) Developing a Results Framework with corresponding intervention logic (hypothesis of change) Elaborating new CS (joint strategy)	End of phase report Review (if mandated, not compulsory for each phase) Planning and CP	Conducting internal audit FDFA
Annual	Validating working scenario for n +1 Up-dating Security Plans	Conducting annual self evaluation for HR / HID Based on CS Results Framework assessing results achievement and preparing annual report (shared with HO, HO delivering a Management Response) and conducting annual planning (Field office level)	Progress report (by partners) in support of strategic steering and yearly plan of operation including adaptations where needed (see Fieldhandbook)	Preparing ICS and OMR Conduction and preparing MR to Audit Report Preparing HID plan n+1 FDFA security missions
Semester	Conducting Merv Conducting decentralized Local Risk Assessment and Actor Mapping	Where a geographical focus exists, conducting WS with partners for each CH geographical focal area	Operational steering including programme adaptation if needed Reporting	FDFA security missions
Trimester	In highly insecure contexts, it is recommended to conduct MERV / LRA more frequently	Based on the annual planning matrix reviewing and planning Knowledge management plan	Monitoring	Conducting financial monitoring

Annex IV: Steps for the elaboration of Cooperation Strategies in fragile contexts (annex 7 of the SDC Guidelines for Elaborating Cooperation Strategies (CS))

Introduction

For the development of a new cooperation strategy in a fragile context - or in a context in danger to become fragile - the following specific planning and elaboration steps are recommended. These differ from the usual continuation of an existing country program: They focus on analysis of the fragility, its causes and its handling. For support, working tools are developed and made available via the SDC Field Handbook or SDC thematic websites. If need be, the Focal Point Conflict and Human Rights can be consulted.

The **frame of reference** for CS in fragile and conflict affected contexts are:

- partner country/region needs and potential for tackling fragile or critical humanitarian situations;
- corresponding lead documents of the donor community (such as among others basic operational guidelines, access principles, compacts and roadmaps for out of fragility);
- Switzerland's Message to the parliament obligations to have impact in these contexts with contributions to the reduction of conflict causes, to strengthening of states and societies resilience's to withstand violent crisis and to better respect human rights;
- as well as international agreements such as OECD DAC / INCAF and New Deal Standards.

The **contribution to the "pathway out of fragility"** must be defined as follows:

- it must be rooted in the context analysis (Chapter One) and linked with foreign-policy objectives.
- Chapter Four of the CS must bring information for the discussion about the relevance and the potential of cooperation with others, and outcomes achieved in the previous period of the Swiss contribution for the transition and the positive change out of the fragility.
- On the basis of this reflection Chapter Five will explain with clear objectives and impact hypothesis (Chapter 5) important outcomes/results regarding the CS management in fragile contexts (How does SDC work in a CSPM approach? / How do we contribute to stability / peace / policy results?).
- This will lead to clear management objectives for the CS in fragile contexts such as for instance human resource requirements (Chapter Six).

"Steps for the elaboration of a cooperation strategy in fragile contexts" (annex 7 of the SDC Guidelines for Elaborating Cooperation Strategies)

Chapter 1¹ (Context Analysis, conflict analysis)

- Context and conflict analysis: main issues and main causes of the conflict are analyzed. This includes political conflict. Joint fragility assessments (donors, partner country) shall be used.

- Development of scenarios: A most likely, a worst and a best scenario to be identified.

Chapter 2 (CH foreign-policy objectives in the country/region, contribution by other donors)

- Reference to the country-specific fragility framework (New Deal), if available
- Reference to international fragility framework
- Donor mapping

Chapter 3 (Results of Swiss contributions in the country to date)

- Evaluation of previous Swiss contributions to stabilization and reduction of fragility

Chapter 4 (Implications of Chapters 1 to 3)

- Description of how Switzerland, in the light of the analysis of the previous chapters, can contribute - in addition to the contribution to poverty reduction - to the stabilization and reduction of fragility. Consequences for the new CS: How can development interventions contribute to a reduction of conflict and fragility? To peace and state-building goals? How should underlying social conflicts and political conflicts be addressed? How can Switzerland contribute to this?

Chapter 5 (Priorities, objectives and impact hypothesis)

- Description of the Swiss contribution to the overall objective of the country towards a reduction of conflict and poverty. This description takes into account what other actors (national and international) contribute (who is doing what, in which strategic alliances should we engage and what is our overall goal)
 - Poverty reduction as an important contribution to stabilization
- Definition of the domains and the domain outcomes with corresponding indicators, description of the contribution of domain outcomes to the overall goal (impact hypothesis concerning transformation of fragile contexts)
- Determination of specific management and performance results: please include into the RF 1) CSPM Implementation, and 2) Policy contribution aid for stability/peace
- Key management and performance results are subject of monitoring and reporting
 - Conflict and context-specific transversal issues

Chapter 6 (Management of the implementation of the strategy)

- What kind of portfolio mix contributes to stabilization and reduction of fragility and allows to continue working in all scenarios (risk mitigation)

Chapter 7 (Strategic Steering)

- Periodical MERVs with context-relevant fields of observation
- Adaptation to scenarios: How will the CS implementation change along scenarios? Adaptation of domain activities and aid modalities / implementation modalities in each respective scenario

1 „chapter“ refers to the chapters of a cooperation strategy

Annex V: Glossary: Conflict, Fragility, Human Rights, Peacebuilding, Statebuilding.

Access to Justice	Access to Justice is the ability of people to obtain a remedy through formal or traditional institutions of justice, and in conformity with human rights standards. Access to justice involves legal protection, legal awareness, legal aid and counsel, adjudication, enforcement, and civil society oversight. (UNDP, 2004)
Conflict	Is a relationship between two or more parties (individual or groups) who have, or think they have, incompatible goals, values, interests or claims to status, power or resources. Conflicts are a fact of life, inevitable and often creative. Conflicts are usually resolved peacefully and often lead to an improved situation for most or all of those involved. (Chris Mitchell, 1981) A conflict becomes violent when (1) there are inadequate channels for dialogue and disagreement and/or (2) dissenting voices and deeply held grievances cannot be heard and addressed and/or (3) there is instability, injustice and fear in the wider community and society. (Norbert Ropers)
Conflict-affected situations	Conflict- affected (conflict or post-conflict, national or subnational) situations are those in which significant social and economic disruptions lead to weak governance, extensive damage to infrastructure, and disruption of service provision. (Working Differently in Fragile and Conflict-affected Situations: The ADB Experience. ADB, 2012)
Conflict Analysis	Is the analysis of actors, issues and dynamics of a conflict as well as the identification of (possible) entry points for peaceful conflict resolution and transformation.
Conflict Sensitivity	Conflict sensitivity is an overall term to describe different efforts, methods and tools for working in conflict-prone and conflict-affected areas, with the aim of (1) reducing the risk that aid unintentionally contributes to the escalation or sustaining of violent conflict ('Do no harm'); and (2) contributing to de-escalation of existing conflicts instead. Conflict sensitivity is looking at how donors and NGOs work but also at what they are doing and whether this is making a contribution to conflict prevention, state- and peacebuilding.
Context/Conflict-sensitive programme management (CSPM)	CSPM is SDC's principal working modality in fragile contexts. CSPM is comprised of country strategies, sound context/ conflict analysis, development of future scenarios, an Aid for Peace relevance assessment identifying entry points for change out of fragility, strategic results frameworks, Monitoring (MERV), enlarging and protecting the space for development and humanitarian aid, comprehensive risk management, geographic cluster and a psychosocial approach. CSPM is applied on policy, strategic, management, program and project level.
Conflict Transformation	Is a complex process of constructively changing relationships, attitudes, behaviours, interests and discourses in violence-prone settings. It addresses underlying structures, cultures and institutions that encourage and condition violent political and social conflict. (Lederach 1998)
Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA)	The CPIA is a diagnostic tool initially created by the World Bank to measure the extent to which a country's policy and institutional framework supports sustainable growth and poverty reduction, and consequently how effectively the country is using its development resources. The CPIA consists of 16 criteria grouped into four equally weighted clusters: (a) economic management; (b) structural policies; (c) policies for social inclusion and equity; and (d) public sector management and institutions. For each of these criteria, countries are rated on a scale of 1 (low) to 6 (high). (World Bank (2011). The African Development Bank uses the "CRFA" diagnostic tool (Country Resilience and Fragility Assessment)
Discrimination	The distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference, made on the basis of a person's ethnicity, race, religion, social status, sex, language, origin, political opinion, membership of a group, birth, or other status (such as disability, age, sexual orientation), which results in the denial of a person's human rights.
Do No Harm	Is an assessment and programming method for analyzing the effects of International Cooperation interventions on a conflict situation and generating options for modifying the interventions towards conflict sensitivity. Do no harm analyses whether project elements unintentionally support factors contributing to tensions or factors reducing conflicts. (Mary B. Anderson, 1999).
FOCUS (New Deal)	Defines engagement modalities to support inclusive country-led and country-owned transitions out of fragility. It is, based on a country-led fragility assessment developed by the g7+ with the support of international partners, a country-led one vision and one plan, a country compact to implement the plan (using the PSGs to monitor progress), and supporting inclusive and participatory political dialogue. As part of the engagement to support pathways out of fragility, a compact is a key mechanism to implement one vision, one plan. A compact is drawn upon a broad range of views from multiple stakeholders and the public, and reviewed annually through a multi-stakeholder review. Recognizing differences in fragility and national contexts, and that a compact may take different forms at different points in transition out of fragility, a compact will ensure harmonization and donor co-ordination, reduce duplication, fragmentation and program proliferation (A New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, 2011)
Fragility	A fragile region or state has weak capacity (organizational, institutional, and financial) to carry out basic governance functions, and lacks the ability to develop mutually constructive relations with society. Fragile regions or states are also more vulnerable to internal or external shocks such as economic crises or natural disasters. (OECD, 2011)

<p>Fragile States</p>	<p>There is no uniformly accepted or internationally agreed definition of the term “fragile states” or “fragility”. The differing mandates and regions/areas of focus have led multilateral and bilateral development agencies to use different terms and definitions, identifying different list of countries. The table below provides the definitions or classifications used by major multilateral development agencies or bilateral donors. (IFAD, 2014)</p> <p>Summary of definitions of fragile states and situations</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="389 264 501 293">Organization</th> <th data-bbox="1161 264 1262 293">Definition⁶⁰</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="389 315 443 338">ADB⁶¹</td> <td data-bbox="580 315 1262 450">ADB utilizes recent country performance on country performance assessment (CPA) rating as basis for determining fragility. 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<p>Geographic Cluster</p>	<p>The geographic cluster approach implies a geographic concentration of programmes in selected areas that enable focus and synergies while generating concrete local field experience that can feed into the national policy dialogue.</p>																
<p>Human Rights</p>	<p>The set of norms and standards inherent to all human beings without which people cannot live in dignity. Often expressed and guaranteed by law, human rights protect individuals and groups against unlawful interference with their freedoms and dignity. They also lay down obligations on States to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all individuals. Thus, human rights regulate the conduct of States and other entities with direct impact on the enjoyment of human rights towards citizens and other persons.</p>																
<p>Human Rights Based Approach</p>	<p>A conceptual approach for development that integrates the norms, standards and principles of the international human rights framework into development plans, policies, and programs. Key principles include: empowerment; non-discrimination; participation; accountability; and focus on vulnerable and marginalized groups. This approach is used to help people (“rights holders”) to exercise and demand their rights. At the same time, it assists states and non-state institutions (“duty bearers”) in their efforts to adhere to their obligations and responsibilities to ensure respect for and the protection of human rights.</p>																
<p>Human Security/People’s Security</p>	<p>A concept that focuses on people’s needs to live without fear. It complements the traditional understanding of state security – the protection of territorial integrity – with citizens’ need for safety and security. The promotion of human security includes mediation, the provision of good offices, conflict transformation, as well as human rights promotion.</p>																
<p>New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States</p>	<p>The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States was signed in 2011 in Busan by the members of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding. It shapes a new development architecture and working modalities that are better tailored to fragile situations, in order to build peaceful states and inclusive societies. The New Deal builds on the vision and principles articulated from the Millennium Declaration to the Monrovia Roadmap, proposes key PSGs, focuses on new ways of engaging, and identifies commitments to build mutual trust and achieve better results in fragile states. It formulates five Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals, which are :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Legitimate Politics - Foster inclusive political settlements and conflict resolution 2. Security - Establish and strengthen people’s security 3. Justice - Address injustices and increase people’s access to justice 4. Economic Foundations - Generate employment and improve livelihoods 5. Revenues & Services - Manage revenue and build capacity for accountable and fair service delivery <p>(A New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, 2011)</p>																

Peacebuilding	Actions and policies aimed at reducing the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict and creating the necessary conditions for sustainable peace by building trust and addressing the deep-rooted structural causes of violent conflict in a comprehensive manner (UNSG 2009; OECD 2011)
People's Security:	With this term SDC is focusing on the individual security of people, in accordance with Article 3 of the Universal declaration of the Human Rights "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person". The notion refers to freedom from fear as one part of the concept of Human Security (freedom from want and freedom from fear) which includes Personal Security, Community Security and Political Security.
10 Principles for Good Engagement in Fragile Situations	The 10 Principles are intended to help international actors foster constructive engagement in fragile situations. They are intended to support existing dialogue and coordination processes and aim at complementing the partnership commitments set out in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. As experience accumulates, the Principles will be reviewed periodically and adjusted as necessary. These 10 principles reflect a long-term vision to help national reformers to build effective, legitimate, and resilient state institutions, capable of engaging productively with their people to promote sustained development. Take the context as the starting point. Do no harm. Focus on state-building as the central objective Prioritize prevention Recognize the links between political, security and development objectives Promote non-discrimination as a basis for inclusive and stable societies. Align with local priorities in different ways in different contexts Agree on practical coordination mechanisms between international actors Act fast ... but stay engaged long enough to give success a chance Avoid pockets of exclusion (Based on Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States, OECD, 2007.)
Protection of Civilians	International humanitarian law governs the rights of civilian populations in armed conflicts. Human rights, refugee law, international criminal law and the legislation of various countries complete this protection framework. The Swiss Protection of Civilians strategy applies to situations of armed conflict which expose civilian populations to certain risks and which fall under a specific legal framework, international humanitarian law. This strategy may also apply to fragile contexts that may potentially lead to an armed conflict as well as to post-armed conflict situations where the after-effects of hostilities persist. The strategy is built on to a) achieve greater compliance with the normative framework, b) consolidate actions taken in favour of persons to be protected, c) lend support to international peacekeeping missions.
Risk Management	The orientation of SDC to analyse and manage risk is based on the "Copenhagen Circles" (Annex I). Not only the institutional, but also the programmatic and the contextual risks (i.e. risk of not doing anything) are taken into account. A carefully balanced portfolio mix (more and less risky components), together with a sound communication strategy enable risk management. Joint risk assessments: if possible, such assessments are conducted together with other actors (donors etc.).
Rule of Law	A principle of governance in which all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, including the State itself, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated, and which are consistent with international human rights norms and standards.
Development scenarios	SDC elaborates development scenarios to define the possible evolution of the context and to steer the portfolio accordingly. Cooperation strategies outline a highly probable base-line scenario, based upon current economic, political, and social and security trends (as monitored in the MERV). Two moderately probable scenarios outline respectively a degradation of the context (e.g. through a possible political crisis) or progress (e.g. through strong economic performance). Scenarios help to foresee possible programmatic adaptations as a result of context changes.
Statebuilding	An endogenous process that enhances capacity, institutions and legitimacy of the state, driven by state-society relations (OECD, 2011). State capacity is achieved through: political processes of constructive state-society bargaining, which in turn require legitimacy; capacity and legitimacy can then become mutually reinforcing, and contribute to state building
TRUST (New Deal)	TRUST is created by providing aid and managing resources more effectively and aligning these resources for results.. An essential pre-condition for progress in all of the New Deal's commitments is to foster confidence between people, communities, the state and international partners. This involves delivering visible results quickly and on a continuous basis. To achieve Trust, use and strengthen of country systems is one of the main priorities. Identify oversight and accountability measures required to enhance confidence in and to enable the expanded use and strengthening of country systems. Recipient governments, with support from international partners, have to take all reasonable measures to strengthen their public financial management systems from the ground up and be transparent in this process. (A New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, 2011)
Violence Prevention	Includes action undertaken to reduce tensions and prevent the outbreak or recurrence of violence. It consists of operational prevention (i.e. immediate measure applicable in the face of crisis) and structural prevention (i.e. measures to ensure that crises do not arise in the first place or, if they do, that they do not recur. (OECD, 2009)

Annex VI: Fragile and non fragile states and situations (OECD DAC Fragiles States Report (2015, draft))

The OECD's policy to focus attention on monitoring aid to fragile states appears to be paying off. More aid is now allocated to fragile states than to non-fragile states. Aid has peaked to fragile (and all other) states and will stabilise into 2017 at higher levels than previously seen. However, there are imbalances in aid allocations across fragile states. Geopolitically significant countries receive the lion's share of resources, while most aid orphans are also fragile states. Fragile states have made absolute progress against the MDGs, but achieving the proposed post-2015 goals and targets will be very challenging for countries that are vulnerable to major risks unless they are able to transform institutions more rapidly, and to build resilience to risks.

A new approach to building peaceful societies for sustainable development needs to monitor and address resilience and risk on a universal level, and offer a diversified, risk tolerant and time-sensitive menu of aid and 'beyond aid' instruments in support of international, regional and nationally-owned and led processes for addressing fragility.

According to the OECD, "a fragile region or state has weak capacity to carry out basic governance functions, and lacks the ability to develop mutually constructive relations with society. Fragile regions or states are also more vulnerable to internal or external shocks such as economic crises or natural disasters." ⁱⁱⁱ This definition is contrasted with resilient states, which have the capacity and legitimacy to govern effectively, and which "manage and adapt to changing social needs and expectations, shifts in elite and other political agreements, and growing institutional complexity."

There are fifty states on the 2015 fragile states list. The list is generated by combining the harmonised list of fragile situations produced by the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and the African Development Bank,^{iv} with countries scoring 90 or above on the Fragile States Index produced by the Fund for Peace.^v Changes to the list are modest from previous years. Rwanda is now reflected in the list, Angola and Burkina Faso are no longer included.

There is a wide variation in the causes and dynamics of fragility as reflected in the 2015 fragile states list: countries experiencing **ongoing civil war**, such as Syria and Iraq; countries, such as Nepal, Timor-Leste, and Sierra Leone that have **emerged from long-term patterns of violence and instability**; countries with **endemically weak institutions** (Haiti, Republic of Congo); and others where **uncertain transitions to democracy** are unfolding (Myanmar).

These fifty countries are home to 1.4 billion people or 20% of the world's population (2015). Their population is projected to grow to 1.9 billion in 2030 and 2.6 billion in 2050. 43% of the world's people are living on less than \$1.25 a day live in these countries. 35.8% of those living on less than \$2.00 a day reside in fragile states (2013).

Progress Against the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Given the varied drivers and symptoms of fragility faced by fragile states, they continue to fall behind non-fragile developing countries on most of the MDGs:^{vii}

- **Poverty.** The rate of poverty reduction within fragile states has been more volatile than in non-fragile states, marked by reversals during periods of heightened instability and conflict. According to World Bank projections, one third of countries on the OECD fragile states list are expected to see poverty halved, compared to nearly two thirds of non-fragile states.
- **Child survival.** Infant mortality has fallen by 53% in fragile states compared to 64% in other developing countries.
- **Education.** Nearly half of non-fragile developing countries are on track to achieve universal primary schooling, compared to just a fifth of fragile states.
- **Water.** 61% of non-fragile countries have halved the number of their citizens who do not have access to safe water. No fragile state has met this target.

However, the picture is starting to look brighter. According to the United Nations, "the world reached the MDG target – of halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty – five years ahead of the deadline."^{viii} While this reflects unprecedented success reducing poverty in some major economies like China and India, all regions have seen substantial reductions in poverty rates. ^{ix} Focusing on absolute improvement offers greater cause for optimism:

- **Poverty.** Fragile states have achieved an average reduction in poverty only two percentage points below non-fragile states.
- **Child survival.** Fragile states have made slightly greater absolute progress on reducing infant and under-5 mortality than non-fragile countries, and far greater progress reducing maternal mortality.
- **Education.** Fragile states have increased primary completion rates by nearly 25%, compared to fewer than 15% among non-fragile developing countries.
- **Water.** Fragile states have improved access to clean water at twice the rate of non-fragile developing countries. And while non-fragile states have backslid on improving access to sanitation, fragile states have improved access by an average of nearly 20%.

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