

An urgent call to action: tracking progress toward delivering effectively in fragile and conflict affected situations

Tackling fragility will be one of the most pressing challenges of the 21st century. Recognising the need to reach populations at risk of being left behind, the international community has begun to adapt and scale-up targeted efforts. While effective development co-operation is fundamental in all contexts to achieve lasting development results, it is particularly crucial in fragile situations. Creating a climate of mutual accountability, between the international community and governments, as well as ensuring coherent humanitarian-development-peace efforts, will be an integral part of effectiveness in fragile contexts. Relevant data are urgently needed to inform these scaled up efforts and reinforce mutual accountability of all partners. Cutting-edge evidence will enable robust, timely policy decisions to ensure that development co-operation is effective, achieves maximum impact and yields lasting development results to realise the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

Tackling fragility will be one of the most pressing challenges of the 21st century. More than 1.6 billion people, or 22% of the global population, live in fragile situationsⁱ. While the overall number of people living in extreme poverty is falling globally, the number of extremely poor people living in contexts affected by fragility, is set to increase from 480 million in 2015 to 542 million in 2035. Preventing conflict and sustaining peace is central to reducing poverty and achieving shared prosperity. Working coherently across humanitarian, development and peace efforts, in ways that are consistent with national ownership and leadership, is critical to delivering on the universal aspiration to leave no one behind and reach the furthest behind first. This means that, to some degree, all development actors will have to become sensitive to and experts on fragility in the SDG-era. Without building resilience and investing in prevention to guard against the adverse consequences of fragility, the ambition of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will not be met.

Recognising the need to reach populations at risk of being left behind, the international community has begun to adapt and scale-up targeted efforts. During the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) era, when it became clear that countries affected by fragility were falling behindⁱⁱ, the international community in partnership with countries affected by conflict and fragility, responded with Helping Prevent Violent Conflict (2001), OECD Fragile States Principles (2007) and the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile Statesⁱⁱⁱ (2011). Since then, the 2030 Agenda has signalled a groundbreaking shift in approach and global commitments to support peace, notably: [SDG16](#) for peaceful, just and inclusive societies and effective institutions; and, the [twin UN resolutions](#) on sustaining peace. In parallel to the USD \$68.2 billion Official Development Assistance (ODA) that was channelled to countries in fragile and conflict affected situations in 2016^{iv}, renewed emphasis on tackling fragility is reflected in the UN-WB [Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Conflict Prevention](#) report (2018); the UN report on [Sustaining Peace](#) (2018); [Fragility Commission](#) report (2018); and, the OECD's States of Fragility 2018 (forthcoming). Concrete initiatives have also been rolled out, including the UN Secretary General's core focus on prevention, and the development of a New Way of Working between development, humanitarian and peace actors towards collective outcomes, over multi-year timeframes, based on the comparative advantage of development, humanitarian and peace actors^v. These commitments and initiatives reaffirm the need for country owned and country-led pathways toward peace and prevention with the assistance of the international community emphasize that implementation will be best achieved through inclusive partnerships.

While effective development co-operation is fundamental in all contexts to achieving lasting development results, it is particularly crucial in fragile and conflict-affected situations. Delivering effectively is more complex, yet arguably more crucial, in these contexts. In addition to high ODA dependency, volatile flows, and an often narrow donor base, fragile and conflict affected situations are typically plagued with higher and multiple factors of risk, greater complexity due to the number and different types of actors present, and the dual challenge of addressing immediate needs and the underlying causes of fragility in addition to anchoring state legitimacy. This is often coupled with limited institutional capacity and unstable political settlements. In addition, gender-

specific burdens are heightened in fragile situations with women and girls facing increased risk of inequality. Humanitarian, development and peace actors must work coherently in these challenging environments if the overall co-operation effort is to be effective. Development assistance in fragile situations that does not adhere to effectiveness principles, is not only a missed opportunity to strengthen statebuilding efforts, build institutional capacity and accountability between government and their citizens, as well as between governments, citizens and international actors, but also it can be detrimental to the country’s long-term development^{vi}. Tracking progress toward delivering effectively in fragile and conflict affected situations must reflect these nuances, complexities and limitations, while also even-handedly promoting mutual accountability between all partners – government, civil society and the international community.

Compelling data on effectiveness in fragile situations are urgently needed to inform ongoing efforts, reinforce mutual accountability of all partners, and enable the right decisions at the right time. The international community has demonstrated its resolve to do things differently, with high-level commitments and initiatives providing the blueprint. To deliver on these ambitions by 2030, there is a need to strengthen mutual accountability in these contexts, and identify underlying determinants of success – to track in real time what works and what does not. The renewed attention in the SDGs context on data and review responds to a key lesson from the MDGs era – that real time tracking of progress is essential to ensure that collective action generates results. With 12 years left to reach the SDGs, this feedback loop of data and evidence must be put in place now.

Responding to the need for data to inform action, a tailored approach to monitoring effectiveness of development co-operation in fragile situations will be collaboratively developed under the auspices of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation^{vii}. This work will benefit from close engagement from diverse stakeholders, together with relevant policy networks including the members of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding^{viii}. Drawing on the Partnership’s established methodology to track effective development co-operation, experts, representatives from developing countries, key development partners, and civil society will convene in an open working group (see Annex I). Within the context of adapting existing Global Partnership monitoring, the open working group will map key challenges and actions for delivering effectively and coherently in fragile and conflict affected situations. Where current monitoring efforts do not suffice and data are needed to inform scaled efforts, a tailored approach to monitoring effectiveness in fragile situations will be developed and finetuned based on open consultation and light country testing. The result will be shared with the international community at the 2019 Global Partnership Senior Level Meeting, to be held in the margins of the 2019 HLPF in July, which will have a focus on SDG16.

Draft timeline



ⁱ The OECD 2016 States of Fragility report defines fragility as the combination of exposure to risk in five areas – economic, environmental, political, social and security – and the insufficient capacity of the state or system to manage, absorb or mitigate those risks. Since their inception in 2005, the States of Fragility Series has helped underpin better understanding of the relationship between fragility and development, and to provide data on resource and financial flows that exist to address fragility’s underlying drivers.

ⁱⁱ Centre for American Progress, Save the Children (2015) *Fragile Progress: The Record of the Millennium Development Goals in States Affected by Conflict, Fragility, and Crisis*.

ⁱⁱⁱ International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (2011) *A New Deal for engagement in fragile states*.

^{iv} Obtained using 2016 OECD data and the 2016 States of Fragility list of countries in fragile and conflict affected situations.

^v OCHA (2017) *New Way of Working*.

^{vi} Dan Honig, Sarah Louise Cramer (2017) *Strengthening Somalia's Systems Smartly: A Country Systems Risk Benefit Analysis*. World Bank Group, United Nations.

^{vii} The Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation is a multi-stakeholder platform to advance the effectiveness of development efforts by all actors, to deliver results that are long-lasting and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. The Global Partnership tracks progress on effective development co-operation through 10 indicators that are based on established effectiveness principles. The last monitoring round of the Global Partnership attracted the participation of 81 partner countries, more than 125 development partners as well as hundreds of civil society organisations and private sector representatives and others. In addition to driving behaviour change at country level, Global Partnership monitoring is the global data source for SDG17.15, SDG17.16, and SDG5c.

^{viii} The International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding is the first forum for political dialogue to bring together countries affected by conflict and fragility, development partners, and civil society. The International Dialogue is composed of members of the International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF), the g7+ group of fragile and conflict affected states, and the Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS).