

Fragile States

State fragility is a contested concept. After presenting attempts to define fragile states, this background document identifies policy options for donors. It discusses the issue of human security in terms of justifying neo-colonial interventions and empowering local populations. Finally, it assesses the responsiveness of Spanish development aid towards states in crises and provides recommendations.

Defining Fragile States

A fragile state is a state that cannot execute control over its sovereign territory, which fails to perform the basic functions of statehood such as taxation or provision of public infrastructure, or fails to provide the population with basic services and needs, and protect its political rights. As the World Bank puts it: 'LICUS (Low-Income Countries Under Stress) are countries with weak policies, institutions, and governance'.¹ There are a number of initiatives which aim at defining state fragility and elaborating lists of countries that are perceived as 'failing', 'weak', 'difficult partnerships' or 'under stress':

- The Failed States Index (FSI) of the Foreign Policy magazine defines state failure according to 12 components, including social factors (demography, refugees, migration); economic factors (inequality, economic decline); and political factors (state legitimacy, public services, human rights record). These are weighted and transferred to a colour-coded list according to a traffic-light system: in 2006, 29 countries entered in the dark-red top of the list, headed by Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Cote d'Ivoire. At the bottom of the list, there are a number of Nordic countries and the usual good performers in terms of human rights and social inclusion such as Canada and the Netherlands. Spain comes 125th of 146 countries analysed with the 146th being the most stable.²
- The World Bank has championed the concept of Low-Income Countries Under Stress (LICUS), of which 25 were identified in 2005. A LICUS country is one which has a low per-capita income and ranks low in the World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) rating. The CPIA Ranking is a rating of state performance in 16 dimensions, reflecting economic management, structural policies, policies for social inclusion and equity, and public sector management and institutions. It is composed by undisclosed expert opinions against a questionnaire. The LICUS status is distinguished in severe, core and marginal.³
- The Department for International Development of the UK government (DFID) – in a communication on fragile states in 2005 – came up with a list of 46 countries compiling various indicators of social development.⁴
- A compilation of various indicators and again a neat visualisation in the traffic-light system is the BICC Index on security, armament and development. It is a compilation of various other indicators and gives an overview in the dimensions

¹ World Bank Independent Evaluation Group: [Engaging with Fragile States](#), Washington, 2006.

² [FP Failed State Index](#)

³ To enter into the [LICUS list](#) the per-capita income has to be below the lending threshold of the Bank's soft-loan branch IDA. CPIA performance has to be of 3.0 or less on both the overall and on the CPIA rating for Public Sector Management and Institutions. Some low-income countries without CPIA data are also included. For the [CPIA, see here](#). For a critique on the CPIA rating, see [Brettonwoodsproject.org: Analysis casts doubt on Bank scorecard: CPIA numbers made public for first time](#); 7 November 2006.

⁴ DFID: [Why we need to work more effectively in fragile states](#), London, 2005.

of international arms embargoes and export controls, adherence to human rights, governance, internal conflict, and military involvement in internal affairs. It is meant to inform (Northern) governmental policy on arms exports.⁵

- The quality of democracy could also be considered an element of fragility. There have been a number of attempts to measure and compare the quality of democratic systems, amongst which the Freedom House ranking is the most renowned. Recently, *The Economist* developed an indicator that tries to “thicken” the capture of ranking of political systems by including – beyond political freedom – the dimensions of participation and political culture. Likewise, another list, headed by Sweden, has been drawn, with Chad, Central Africa and North Korea at the bottom.⁶

Currently, there are a number of lists circulating amongst donor agencies, foreign affairs departments and strategic planning units of Defence ministries. Listing fragile states, however, has a number of risks and methodological challenges:

- First, the framing of state fragility is necessarily subjective given the highly contested character of concepts like governance, stability and democratisation. Thus – particularly with the discovery of ungoverned spaces as a menace to Western security – the definition of state fragility serves rather to legitimatise interventionism than to prevent or end human suffering.⁷
- Second, a seemingly objective statistical cross-country comparison – as practiced for example by Paul Collier et al – has serious limitations because it neither explains trajectories for state collapse nor prescribes options for smart donor interventions. Even its statistical correlations are highly dependent on sampling. A more historically focussed political economy approach seems to be more adequate to understand the root causes of conflict and state decline and could, thus, avoid single ready-made solutions. Responding to these concerns, in the last decade a very meaningful set of conflict-analysis and conflict-sensitive programming tools emerged.⁸
- Third, to know where the fragile states are and to know where to put your money are two different pairs of shoes. Not only do donors in multi-donor conferences for country reconstruction programming pledge far more than they later actually disburse; the problems lays deeper. A comparison of aid allocation and state fragility shows no relation; rather, there are donor orphans and darlings. Additionally, the necessity criteria must be counterweighted with the criteria of absorption capacity and the necessary political environment for aid

⁵ [BICC Index on security, armament and development](#)

⁶ Freedom House: [Freedom in the World](#), Washington, 2006; Laza Kekic: [The Economist Intelligence Unit's index of democracy, in The Economist \(Ed.\): The World in 2007](#), London, 2006.

⁷ For a discussion on global threats see Chris Abbott, Paul Rogers and John Sloboda: [Respuestas Globales a Amenazas Globales. Seguridad Sostenible para el Siglo XXI](#), FRIDE Working Paper 27, Madrid, 2006. The authors argue that global terrorism in terms of losses of human life is a relatively minor threat compared to global warming, resource competition, global inequity and militarisation.

⁸ As a main example for cross country econometric comparison, see Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler and Mans Soderbom: [Aid, Aid, Policies and Risk in Post-Conflict Societies](#), Oxford, 2006. For a critique on Collier, et al, see Astri Suhrke, Espen Villanger and Susan L. Woodward: [Economic Aid to Post-conflict Countries: A Methodological Critique of Collier and Hoeffler](#), CMI Working Paper WP 2005: 4, Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2005. For an example of critical political economy analysis, see Martin Doornbos: State Collapse and Fresh Start, in: *Development and Change* 33/5, and Martin Doornbos: [Transición y legitimidad en los Estados africanos: Los casos de Somalia y Uganda](#), FRIDE working paper 17, December 2005. On conflict-sensitive aid programming see International Alert et al.: [Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peace-building: A Resource Pack](#), London, 2004.

effectiveness. The latter are recurrently – nearly by definition – not given in fragile states.⁹

- Fourth, there is a race on defining governance indicators within the donor community. They have the twin-purpose of informing aid allocation and entering in a dialogue with recipient governments by benchmarking their performance against international standards. Depending on the context of its utilisation, and ultimately its users, they are more or less useful. And their usefulness often differs according to context. Whereas a senior aid manager in headquarters might consider these indicators helpful, for a diplomat or a head of a country office negotiating a critical engagement with a difficult partnership it might be counterproductive. For the illiterate rural poor, it is irrelevant to know at what score his or her county ranks.¹⁰
- Fifth, what is good for one person does not necessarily have to be desirable for others. Moore investigated a widely used indicator that is employed primarily to inform private investors about the country situation – the International Country Risk Guide. His findings were that, statistically, countries that scored high on providing low investment risk, scored rather poorly in turning their respective resources into social development.¹¹

Leaving all these considerations apart, there are some good reasons to make up these lists as a signalling tool in order to direct the attention of the general public and policy makers towards the human suffering generated by state failure and conflict. To underline this, Save the Children has calculated that, of the 115 million primary-aged children not in school, at least 43 million – one in three – live in fragile states affected by armed conflict. Similarly, a DFID study estimates that ‘fragile states are home to 16 percent of the world’s population, but 35 percent of the world’s poor, 44 percent of maternal deaths, 46 percent of children out of school, and 51 percent of children dying before the age of five’. In other words, reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) means tackling state fragility.¹²

Although state fragility and conflict are not the same, they frequently interact. Thus, a recent evaluation by the World Bank admits that there is ‘significant duplication and confusion surrounding the roles and responsibilities’ of the two units focussing on post-conflict and state fragility.¹³

⁹ See Mark McGillivray: [Aid Allocation and Fragile Status](#), WIDER discussion paper 01-2006, Helsinki, February 2006.

¹⁰ On governance indicators see for example Christiane Arndt and Charles Oman: [Uses and Abuses of Governance Indicators](#), OECD Development Centre, Paris, 2006; or the [UNDP Governance Indicators project](#). See also the consideration in the latest [DFID White paper](#) and the successive methodological considerations: Julius Court: [Governance and aid effectiveness: Has the White Paper got it right?](#) Odi Opinion Paper 73, London, 2006.

¹¹ The [International Country Risk Guide](#). Mick Moore: Polity Qualities – How Governance Affects Poverty, in Houtzager/Moore: *Changing Paths – International Development and the New Politics of Inclusion*, Ann Arbour, 2003. An [earlier version](#) of this document has been published by the World Bank.

¹² Leader /Colenso: [Aid Instruments in Fragile States](#), PRDE Working Paper, 2005; Save the Children: [Rewrite the Future - Education for children in conflict-affected countries](#), London, 2006. On trends about conflict-affected populations see [Human Security Brief](#), 2006. The evidence of the link between poverty and conflict seems obvious, the mechanics are, however, poorly researched, see: Patricia Justino: [Violent Conflict and Chronic Poverty: How Much Do We Really Know?](#), HICN working paper, Brighton, 2006.

¹³ World Bank Independent Evaluation Group: [Engaging with Fragile States](#), Washington, 2006.

Why Focus on Fragile States? How?

Why focus on fragile states? In the nineties a consensus emerged that aid is only effective in 'good policy environments'. Aid was increasingly channelled only to the best performers to ensure the greatest possible aid effectiveness. Recently, donors have been questioning this approach and are trying to find ways to engage effectively in fragile states. Generally, three reasons are put forward to support engagement in fragile states. First, the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals depend heavily on progress made in fragile states. Second, fragile states are a threat to regional and therefore international security. Third, international political and economic collaboration is easier if there are fewer fragile states.¹⁴

How to focus on fragile states? Unfortunately, the new consensus on aid delivery – that donors should be harmonised, that ownership by recipients should be ensured, ideally by giving budgetary support, that programmes should be aligned behind national priorities and procedures – all this contemporary wisdom does not apply to fragile states. The latest research focuses on aid programming that can either evade or transform institutions in fragile states. A very basic distinction, to that end, is to know if poor performance in serving the needs of the poor is caused by a lack of capacity or willingness. This draws a long list of tools for country analytic work with it that has to be done before even considering the past record of failed interventions that did rather more harm than good.¹⁵

The second step is to identify entry points for aid programming. The World Bank proposes a highly strategic approach, which consists of two elements. The first element is to promote 'zero-generation' reforms that are highly-focused reform agendas on selected policy issues that are likely to have immediate success and are achievable in political terms. These are accompanied by attempts to foster a domestic reform coalition. A second line is the delivery of basic services. The World Bank advocates supplementing weak central governments by strengthening multiple alternative channels such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), private businesses and independent service authorities.¹⁶ Examples are the rapidly proliferating models of ring-fenced multi-donor funds administered by independent commissions. These are funds that bypass national governments by applying procedures of Community Driven Development (CDD) whereby communities have direct access to funds to undertake social development projects. These approaches are criticised for installing parallel structures to government services and, thus, preventing the development of state capacity.¹⁷

Along the same lines, the practice of 'shadow alignment' was developed by donor agencies in order to harmonise donor practices within country-specific sector strategies and administrative procedures when a government is unwilling to fulfil this task.

¹⁴ In January 2005, a [senior level conference on aid effectiveness in fragile states](#) comprising the World Bank, OECD, the European Commission and DFID took place in London. In the annex, there is an exhaustive documentation of a series of policy approaches towards fragile states.

¹⁵ Mark McGillivray: [Aid Allocation and Fragile States](#) Background Paper for the Senior Level Forum on Development Effectiveness in Fragile States 13-14 January 2005, Lancaster House, London, 2005; Nicolas Leader and Peter Colenso: [Aid Instruments in Fragile States](#); DFID, London, 2005; DFID: [Why we need to work more effectively in fragile states](#), London, 2005. See also the [Do-No-Harm Project](#) of the CDA Collaborative Learning Projects.

¹⁶ See [World Bank Task force on LICUS](#), 2002; and James Manor (Ed.): *Aid that works - Successful Development in Fragile States (Directions in Development)*, Washington, 2006.

¹⁷ World Bank: [Community-Driven Development in the Context of Conflict-Affected Countries: Challenges and Opportunities](#), Washington, 20 June 2006, and the documentation of the World Bank [Workshop on Social Funds in LICUS Contexts](#), 26 April 2005.

Similarly, joint needs assessment in post-conflict situations prepare the ground for harmonised and aligned interventions before a government is capable to do so.¹⁸

‘Human security’: Panacea or Trojan Horse?

The concept of ‘human security’ has rapidly gained prominence in the development discourse and has been adopted as a key concept in a number of international summits. It originated as a post Cold War concept, considering security in its post-realist dimension above and below state-centred security. Thereby, security above sovereignty would refer to a system of global governance of state actors tamed by international law. Security below the state would refer to the fulfilment of basic needs - such as food security, job security, security from crime, environmental security, amongst others - as a right of citizens. Two streams could be identified that led to the definition of ‘human security’:

- Right to development: In 1994, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) published its Human Development Report preparing the agenda for the Copenhagen Social Summit in 1995. It claimed a broad concept of security including political, social and economic rights. These were enshrined in International Development Targets in the Copenhagen Summit Declaration on Social Development that were later transformed into the Millennium Development Goals.¹⁹
- The responsibility to protect: The experiences of the genocides in Bosnia and Rwanda raised the concern that state sovereignty should not prevent the international community – namely the United Nations – to intervene to prevent genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity in states that are not capable or are unwilling to do so. After an investigation of these events – and the visible failing of the UN apparatus – a commission was installed to define the concept. Canada has been a main supporter of this process. Unfortunately, however, the commission report was launched on 10 September 2001 and got both run over and twisted by the events of the following day. The ‘war on terror’ has discredited interventionism, mainly where unilateral action was covered with humanitarian rhetoric. In 2005 at the UN summit, the responsibility to protect – and the need to intervene when the state fails to do so – was accepted, even though a decision to trigger intervention depends on the Security Council.²⁰

‘State fragility’ is a concept of intervention. Declaring a state as fragile, means proclaiming it is incapable and unwilling to protect the social and political rights of its citizens or unable to control its territory, and insinuating the need for external action to solve these problems. Obviously, the pivotal point is the legitimacy of first defining ‘fragility’ – up to its excesses of genocide – and, secondly, furnishing the mandate of an intervention within a multilateral framework.

¹⁸ See World Bank /UNDG: [Guide to Post-Conflict Needs Assessments \(PCNA\)](#), Washington / New York, 2004; and World Bank /UNDG: [Operational Note on Transitional Result Matrix](#), Washington / New York, 2005.

¹⁹ The [Copenhagen Summit](#) ; The [Millennium Development Goals](#) ; UN Secretary General declaration ‘[In Larger Freedom](#)’; On right to development see OHCHR: [Human Rights and Poverty Reduction - A Conceptual Framework](#), Geneva, 2004.

²⁰ The Report of the Independent International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty: [A Responsibility to Protect](#), International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada, 2001; For more information on the human rights dimension see Jessica Almqvist / Carlos Esposito (Eds.): [Building a New Role for the United Nations: the Responsibility to Protect](#), FRIDE Working Paper 12, Madrid, 2005.

The concept of human security has been accused to both securitise the development agenda and to militarise the humanitarian practice. Whereas the 'securitisation of the development agenda' claims that bilateral aid is being abused to combat terrorist threats, the 'militarisation of humanitarian practice' upholds that military solutions and actors are invading the neutral space of provision of humanitarian aid. Nonetheless, human security could potentially become a battlefield on which both multilateral mechanisms for global governance and individual and communal entitlements to development and certain minimal standards of living are defended. A report commissioned by UNDP claims that country-specific uptakes of the concept could help to shift the focus from military and top-down approaches towards an empowering perspective that takes the capabilities of vulnerable and the perceived threats to their subjective security – be it food, health, justice or violence – into account.²¹

On a more critical note, Duffield accuses the new interest in fragile state to be a reinvention of the colonial Native Administration and indirect rule, where small local elites are domesticated to pacify large ungoverned areas, in which nobody wants to take on the task to ensure proper welfare systems and in which states are perceived only as regulators of largely self-reliant, social-entrepreneurial populations. Hence, he criticises the concept of 'good enough governance'. It accepts abusive regimes by setting the threshold for intervention to high and allows donor engagement with states of dubious human rights records by naively anticipating eventual betterment.²²

Dimensions of Donor Engagement

There are a number of concepts and activities in which donor responses to state fragility have acquired new knowledge and skills:

- **Conflict cycle:** In the mid-nineties the phenomenon of the 'new wars' were defined, referring to the increasing significance of civil wars as opposed to inter-state wars, and conflicts with unclear political agendas, motivated by identity rather than ideology, with the manifestation of extreme violence and a blurring of the lines between political and criminal rationales. It was then when development aid discovered that it cannot work 'around conflict' but has to accept working 'in conflict' and in the best case scenario, work 'on conflict'. The incidence of state collapse and protracted complex emergencies proved that the clear-cut idea of a linear project cycle, where one could identify subsequent phases of increasing tensions, hot war, and post-conflict reconstruction after peace agreements and elections, were no longer applicable to reality. Instead, donors and their agencies realised that long-term (institution building) and short term (humanitarian aid) have to work simultaneously. 'Bridging the gap between relief and development' is not so much a sequence in time, but a shift in gears, the application of different modes of interventions, the presence with distinctive mandates *at the same time*.²³
- **Integrated missions and whole-of-government approaches:** Mandated UN peacekeeping missions have evolved from observing over peacekeeping missions, to complex stabilisation forces and have become increasingly multi-functional. Nowadays, their mandates expand from immediate stabilisation and

²¹ Richard Jolly and Deepayan Basu Ray: [National Human Development Reports and the Human Security Framework: A review of Analysis and Experience](#), UNDP, New York, 2006.

²² Mark Duffield: [Fragile States and the Return of Native Administration](#), concept paper presented at the 1st International Congress on Human Development in Madrid, 14-16 November 2006.

²³ For an interpretation on a linear model of the conflict cycle and conflict transformation see Veronique Dudouet: [Transitions from Violence to Peace Revisiting Analysis and Intervention in Conflict Transformation](#), Berghof Report 15, Berlin, 2006.

human rights monitoring to the support of institution building. There is a need for a united organisational response from the multilateral organism. The UN, however, faces some serious dilemmas which erupt in the clash of their various branches. First, humanitarian agencies claim space against robust peace keepers. Second, human rights agencies reject cooperation with local actors with dubious human rights records that are often considered necessary by those negotiating a settlement. And, third, the whole UN machinery that moves from conflict to conflict clashes with the idea of local ownership. Besides these dividing views, there is a strong view that complex emergencies require comprehensive and integrated responses and that the UN has to act as one.

Similarly, there is a need for bilateral donors to be coherent on policy level. Whole-of-government approaches request that the three Ds – Diplomacy, Development and Defence – are coordinated and present a comprehensive response that integrates the respective instruments. The challenge lies in reconciling organisational and professional cultures beyond government departments, without referring every discrepancy to the prime minister's office. Civil intervention capacities to project 'soft power' could be perceived as a trademark of European policy. Spain, given its departmentalised structure and its protective administrative culture, is far from reaching the requirements of a whole-of-government approach.²⁴

- **Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR):** As a particular skills-set of development agencies, aided more and more by expertise of military personnel these two areas have developed as a default intervention after civil wars. Ample experiences have been gained in reconciling security concerns after negotiated peace agreements with the economic viability of reinserting large numbers of – mainly young – people that used to make a living from the 'barrel of their gun'. The challenge in DDR programmes is the interfacing between RR and D, whereby in the first security concerns overweight, and in the second rapid responses to economic recovery have to be given. Similarly, the democratic control of armed forces has become a focus of development aid that, thus, enters in influencing one of the core functions of statehood – the legitimate use of force. In as much as the intrusion of the military in humanitarian spaces has been criticised, the relevance of technical knowledge and aptitude assisting to organise effective and democratically controlled security forces – military, policy and penitentiary service – cannot be overstated. Military advice is urgently needed in developing countries with ample track records of *coups d'etat* and systemic human rights violations by security forces. These are, however, other skills as proposed by the latest Spanish exposition of the armed forces.²⁵
- **Resource curse:** Although the reason for the brutal wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone, DRC, Angola and many other places cannot be ascribed to the existence of mineral resources, the endurance of the conflict there relates to the establishment of war economies, stable systems of extraction on a highly violent level. The existence of mineral resources does not necessarily have to decay in

²⁴ On integrated missions see Barth Eide / Kaspersen / Kent Hippel: [Report on Integrated Missions](#), UN ECHA, New York, 2005; On the UN as one UN, see the [Report of the High-level Panel on System Wide Coherence 'Delivering as one'](#), New York, 2006; On whole of government approaches, see OECD: [Whole-of-Government Approaches to Fragile States](#), Paris, 2006; On European civil intervention capacities, see Jakobson: [EU Civilian Rapid Reaction – trouble ahead!](#), Copenhagen, 2006; On Spanish civil intervention capacities, see Luis Peral: [Marco institucional y medios civiles de gestión internacional de crisis en España: compromisos, alternativas y ventajas](#), CITpax document N° 5, Madrid, February 2006.

²⁵ See on DDR the pages of [UNDP](#) and the [World Bank](#). GTZ has published a [handbook for DDR](#). The page of [GSDRC](#) is a good place to start. The [University of Cranfield](#) has an excellent portal for SSR.

civil war and un-governability. There is, however, a link between the erosion of democratic institutions and resources. Some development actors have understood that breaking this linkage means mainly 'promoting good governance at home', that is, controlling the extractive industries and the financial transactions *in the donor countries*. Amongst the noteworthy initiatives on that, is the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).²⁶

What Spain is Doing

The Spanish Master Plan identifies seven sector strategies. Two of them – (1) democratic governance, citizen participation and institutional development and (7) conflict prevention and peace building – could capture responses to fragile states. In the Plan, however, there is no explicit reference to the concept of 'fragile states'. This might be a deliberate rejection of this stream of thought and action. The lack of engagement with the international discourse in both the administration and the academic development community, however, points rather to an omission.

The Master Plan 2005-08 for the first time defined conflict prevention and promotion of peace as a strategic objective of Spanish development cooperation policy. The Plan clearly puts emphasis on preventive action, long-term planning and civil capacities. It advocates a shift from poverty reduction to a more comprehensive concept of human security and calls for inter-ministerial coordination. This represents a significant shift on the policy level from realist foreign policy to a commitment to multilateral global governance and the aspiration for a whole-of-government approach. Two years later, action on these commitments, however, has been slow. The announced strategy for conflict prevention has not been presented in 2006. The promised early warning system is not in place. The foreseen reporting and analysis in the annual planning documents and the country strategy papers are poor. The project to increase civil capacities for peace has not been advanced. The follow-up report of the 2005 annual planning merely mentions the objective of conflict prevention. Progress has been made only lately in a significant increase to multilateral bodies, namely UNDP. This does not, however, go along with analytical capacities to strategically influence their agendas.²⁷

The whole-of-government approach of responses to environmental disasters and complex emergencies has been discussed in the working group on coherence in the Spanish Development Council. It particularly touches on the role of the armed forces in humanitarian settings and on roles of engagement with development actors. This working group seems to have achieved a consensus on respecting a number of international doctrines, particularly the so-called Oslo Guidelines on the use of military assets in humanitarian activities. It first presents a stocktaking of the international agreements and guidelines for good humanitarian donorship. It then refers to the legal frameworks of Spanish foreign policy, including development and defence. It ends with the rather timid recommendations to take into account the Oslo Guidelines, to continuously monitor the accomplishment of these principles within the Development Council and to embark on a further process of lessons learning. Although this might

²⁶ See on the resource curse the research summary by Andrew Rosser: [The Political Economy of the Resource Curse](#), Brighton, 2006. [Chapter 3 of the DFID White paper 2006](#) makes the point of supporting good governance internationally. On EITI see the latest [Oslo meeting](#) and the work of [Global Witness](#)

²⁷ All the planning documents of the [Spanish Development Cooperation](#) can be found at the website of the Development Cooperation Planning Directorate. See also the working papers that informed the drafting of the Master Plan by Jesus Nuñez Villaverde: [El enfoque de la construcción de la paz y la prevención de conflictos violentos en el Plan Director de la Cooperación Española \(2005-08\)](#), 2006, and Francisco Rey: [Informe propuesta para la elaboración del apartado de Acción Humanitaria del Plan Director de la Cooperación Española \(2005-2008\)](#), 2006.

serve as a framework to submit the humanitarian activities of the Spanish armed forces under verifiable criteria, the meagre effort to disseminate the report and the poor uptake by the general public foster concern about the practicality of this oversight function. Interestingly, the role of the armed forces as development actor – providing technical assistance to security sector reform – is not mentioned.²⁸

What Spain Should Do

- **Engaging with the discourse:** The concept of state fragility and the means of intervention are merely discussed in the Spanish aid community, be it official, academic or non-governmental. It could be a prime task for the Secretary of State or the Spanish International Cooperation Agency to facilitate spaces of reflection on a position towards state fragility between neo-colonial interventionism and a citizen-based concept of human security.
- **Country Analysis:** Engagement in fragile states is heavily dependent on in-depth country knowledge. One-size-fits-all approaches have a proven track record of failure. Therefore, focussing on a small number of intervention countries, empowering the country offices to conduct country analyses (or participate in joint programming exercises) and engage the academic community and civil society in Spain, as well as in the recipient country, is paramount.
- **Delegation to field offices:** Coordination between donors is key to aid effectiveness, even more so in countries with weak state capacities. Staff in country offices has to have decision-making power to negotiate and fine-tune the particular role of the Spanish aid within a transitional planning framework. However, delegation for better harmonisation 'on the ground' often contradicts with cross-departmental coordination at headquarters level.
- **Division of labour:** Motivations to engage with fragile states might differ between donors and range, amongst others, from security concerns, to poverty reduction, conflict prevention and peace building to tackling impunity. Although in the long-term these objectives might be in line, on the short term, they often contradict. Sometimes the call for coherence is unrealistic, when, for example, anti-corruption values clash with attempts to foster local capacities or prosecution of human rights violations affects peace negotiations. Surrounded by regional actors, UN organisations and international financial institutions, bi-lateral donors have to clarify their particular mandate and the specific focus they pursue.
- **Long-term engagement:** Aid volatility is higher in fragile states. It makes it difficult for administrations and populations in fragile states to foresee the aid influx and, thus, menaces the emerging of stable institutions. Hence, long-term engagement with foreseeable aid allocation. If aid allocation is put under the condition of performance benchmarks in governance – such as democratisation, adherence to human rights, transparency of public finances, amongst others – these benchmarks should be explicit.
- **Whole-of-government approach:** the proceedings in the Development Council, establishing the norms and legal frameworks on which armed forces shall be involved in humanitarian assistance, are a start to create a common understanding. This has to be followed up and put under public scrutiny. The discussion on how the Ministry of Defence should become involved in tasks of state building seems to be far less advanced.

²⁸ Consejo de Desarrollo: [Informe El cumplimiento del principio de coherencia de políticas](#) - Aprobado por el consejo de cooperación al desarrollo, 18 July 2006; For the details of the development of the humanitarian aid in 2005-2006, see IECAH: [La acción humanitaria en 2005 - un año de desastres naturales y mucho más - Informe del Observatorio de la Acción Humanitaria](#), Madrid, 2006.



- **Civil intervention capacities:** In order to develop civil intervention capacities for reconstruction and state building in fragile states the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has to coordinate and train domestic public actors such as judges, police forces, public administration experts and others. A number of Northern European countries have successful models of these training institutions.
- **Prevention before intervention:** The contemporary discussion stresses the need to tackle conflict upstream by civilian means rather than engaging in conflict once it has gone off – where military means often seem to be the only instrument. That means three things for cooperation policies. First, they have to integrate conflict sensitivity into their programming, going beyond mere criteria for poverty reduction. Second, they have to analyse what role they play in the arsenal of foreign policy instruments from diplomacy over defence to development, and how they interlink with the other government departments. Third, they have to work horizontally with other government departments– such as trade, internal affairs (migration), environment and others – detecting and alleviating their impact on the root causes of conflict.
- **Resource curse:** Spain engages in some countries with large mineral resources and the typical adverse circumstances on governance that go along with it. Under the framework of the European Union, in cooperation with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and in a learning partnership with other European aid agencies, Spain should develop strategies to go beyond the mere servicing of the population neglected by their governments and strive for transformative interventions that focus on using resource revenues for equitable public services. Then Spain could take the lead in raising these issues in Equatorial Guinea.

Foroaod – Spanish Development Aid

FRIDE organised the project “Spanish Development Aid - Mid-term Review and a Proposal for a Participative Consultation” between June 2006 and April 2007. This project aims to develop a consultation process about the current Spanish government’s development cooperation policy. We have created a forum for participation and debate, in order to assess the Spanish development cooperation reform agenda and to identify the main achievements and shortcomings in operationalising the initiatives based on the principle of “More Aid, Better Aid”. A set of recommendation guidelines were developed, through participative methods, with the objective of putting into practice the aspirations of the Spanish development cooperation policy.

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Annex

Indicators of Priority Countries of the Spanish Cooperation					
Priority countries	FP	LICUS	DFID	BICC-mil	Economist
Angola	43	Core	X		authoritarian (151)
Algeria	61	-			authoritarian (132)
Bolivia	56	-			flawed (81)
Cape Verde	n.a.	-			flawed (39)
Equador	63	-			hybrid (92)
El Salvador	77	-			flawed (70)
Philippines	68	-			flawed (63)
Guatemala	51	-			flawed (77)
Haiti	8	Core	X	n.a.	hybrid (109)
Honduras	75	-			flawed (69)
Morocco	76	-			authoritarian (115)
Mauritania	41	-			authoritarian (133)
Mozambique	80	-			hybrid (96)
Namibia	91	-			flawed (59)
Nicaragua	59	-			hybrid (89)
<i>Palestinian territories</i>	n.a.	Core		n.a.	flawed (79)
Paraguay	87	-			flawed (71)
Peru	69	-			flawed (75)
Dominican Republic	48	-			flawed (74)
<i>Sahauri, population</i>	n.a.	-		n.a.	n.a.
Senegal	99	-			hybrid (94)
Tunisia	100	-			authoritarian (135)
Vietnam	70	-			authoritarian (145)
Special attention					
Afghanistan	10	Severe	X	n.a.	authoritarian (135)
Albania	94	-			hybrid (83)
Bosnia Herzegovina	35	-			hybrid (84)
Cambodia	47	Core	X		hybrid (105)
Colombia	27	-			flawed (67)
Congo (DR)	2	Core	X		authoritarian (144)
Cuba	62	-			authoritarian (124)
Ethiopia	26	-	X		hybrid (106)
Guinea Bissau	46	Core	X		authoritarian (158)
Equatorial Guinea	n.a.	-		n.a.	authoritarian (156)
Iraq	4	-		n.a.	hybrid (112)
Lebanon	65	-			hybrid (85)
Siria	65	-			authoritarian (153)
East Timor	n.a.	core	X	n.a.	flawed (65)

The data refers to the documents quoted in the text. In all indexes, the year 2006 has been taken as reference year. The BICC-mil indicator is the seventh dimension measuring unproportionate military capacities impairing upon development. Countries in bold have more than three rankings indicating 'state fragility'