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THE SECURITY-POLITICS-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS:
THE LESSONS OF STATE-BUILDING IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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EUROPEAN REPORT ON DEVELOPMENT

The Security-Politics-Development Nexus:
The Lessons of State-Building in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Abstract

How can development policy support weak, dysfunctional or fragile states? What constitutes state fragility and what are the appropriate instruments for state-building? After reviewing two recent quantitative indexes (The Index of State Weakness in the Developing World and The Ibrahim Index of African Governance), this paper cautions against the current tendency to categorise a large number of countries as weak, fragile or failing states. Drawing upon country case studies on Namibia, Somalia and Guinea-Bissau, the paper argues that state-building is fundamentally a political process and external "state-builders" need to develop greater understanding of the internal dynamics of individual societies in order to provide appropriate support to address state fragility. Current strategies for state-building are heavily weighted in favour of technical, institutional and formal arrangements. Moreover, since 9/11, the international state-building agenda has increasingly focused on state weakness as a challenge for international peace and security, rather than as an issue of national governance. As a result, many preferred policy prescriptions risk weakening the very states that they hope to strengthen.

Keywords

1. Introduction<superscript>*</superscript>

Since the end of the Cold War, development actors have paid growing attention to the interlocking problems of poverty, intra-state conflicts, complex emergencies and human insecurity. There has been heightened appreciation of the interplay between security and development as the costs and consequences of violence, conflict and insecurity on development outcomes have become apparent. Conversely, there has been increasing understanding of the role of development processes and strategies play in generating insecurity and conflict. Importantly, the strong correlation between low levels of economic development and conflict has been convincingly established. The countries that are at the bottom of the human development index also tend to be the countries that face persistent violence, conflict and human security challenges. As a result, there is a strong trend towards introducing greater conflict-sensitivity to development policies, and greater search for integrated security and development policies. However, it is still not fully clear how development and security policies should be integrated in order to address entrenched socio-economic problems for conflict prevention as well as for post-conflict peace-building.

The causal connections between security and development are difficult to establish, since they are intermediated through a country's evolving social and political processes and institutions. Current research does not lead to definitive findings on the role of such factors as poverty, demographic pressures and environmental stress on conflict and insecurity.[1] These developmental "risk factors" do not provide a necessary or a sufficient explanation of why some countries are more resistant to violence than others, and how certain countries facing grave developmental pressures are able to maintain a relatively steady course, while others succumb to violence and conflict. The burgeoning literature on the security-development nexus, as well as on conflict prevention and peace-building, falls short of offering conclusive answers, and necessitates further examination of the sources of fragility and resilience.

One particularly promising line of inquiry has been the growing interest in the role of the state and in the appropriate strategies to support state-building in developing countries. In the last few years, a large body of policy literature has developed on the so-called weak, fragile, failing, at-risk or failed states. While much of this literature is produced by policy analysts and practitioners, and often lacks strong theoretical or historical bearings, it has served to catapult the nature of the state to the forefront of policy debates. Given the theme of the forthcoming European Report on *Overcoming Fragility in Africa – Forging a new European Approach*, this paper examines the current research on state-building in the light of the parallel literature on the security-development nexus.

The paper argues that recent research on state-building provides important insights on the links between state capacities, and security and development outcomes. However, the paper also cautions against the current tendency to categorise a large number of countries as weak, fragile or failing states, and to promote state-building as part of the global development agenda. The renewed focus on state-building not only blurs important differences among countries, but also leads to policy prescriptions that overlook the specificity of internal political processes within each state. State-building is fundamentally a political process, and external "state-builders" need to develop greater understanding of the internal dynamics of individual societies in order to be able to provide appropriate support to

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[1] For a detailed examination of the links between security and development, see Necla Tschirgi, Michael S. Lund and Francesco Mancini, *Security & Development: Searching for Critical Connections* (Boulder, CO.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2010).

address state fragility. However, the development assistance tool kit is particularly weak when it comes to dealing with domestic politics. Current strategies for statebuilding are heavily weighted in favour of technical, institutional and formal arrangements. Perhaps more ominously, since 9/11, the international state-building agenda has increasingly focused on state weakness as a challenge for international peace and security, rather than as an issue of national governance. As a result, many preferred policy prescriptions risk weakening the very states that they hope to strengthen.

The rest of this paper is divided into four sections which are designed to move the discussion from the quantitative analysis of state performance across a large number of countries to an examination of the diverse trajectories of state formation in three African countries. The second section reviews the profile and patterns of "state weakness" in developing countries based upon a recently released quantitative index on state performance and state capacities. The third section examines a more extensive index of governance performance in sub-Saharan Africa with a view to identifying evolving trends. The fourth section presents insights from a forthcoming study on the politics of state formation in Somalia, Guinea-Bissau and Namibia. The final section offers concluding insights and draws out policy recommendations. It is hoped that the paper will contribute to a larger discussion about the appropriate strategies for addressing state fragility as well as the development and governance challenges in sub-Saharan Africa.

2. State Weakness in the Developing Countries

There are numerous conceptual efforts to define state weakness and state fragility.[2] These terms encompass a large number of countries with widely-varying conditions. Moreover, these countries pose different challenges to a wide range of actors, including their own populations, development agencies, NGOs, international organisations, as well as government agencies such as foreign and defence ministries. As the ERD background paper "*Millennium Development Goals at Midpoint*" points out, international actors employ multiple approaches to defining and responding to the complex development conditions in countries variably labelled as "weak and failing states", "poor performers", "low-income countries under stress", "countries at risk of instability", or "fragile states".[3] Different entities may even use the same terminology to refer to a diverse group of states which might be poor performers or unresponsive aid recipients or conflict ridden or autocratic — each implying a different set of assumptions and policy implications. However, as will become apparent in the discussion that follows, the definitional issue is important.[4]

Despite the lack of consensus on a definition of state fragility, the universe of so-called weak or fragile states has now grown quite large. Various lists identify some 40-50 countries as weak, failing, or fragile states which share certain common characteristics in terms of their capacity and/or willingness to provide for the basic socio-economic and security needs of their citizens. Recently, there have been numerous efforts to produce quantitative measures or indexes that rank states according to concrete criteria and indicators. These indices serve to highlight the similarities, as well as the differences, between countries in terms of their viability as states. They also provide an interesting window into examining whether state-weakness is a dependent or an independent variable.

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[2] See, for example, Simon Chesterman, Michael Ignatieff & Ramesh Thakur (eds), *Making States Work: State Failure and the Crisis of Governance*, (Tokyo: United Nations University, 2005); For a policy-oriented study, see Center on International Coooperation, *Concepts and Dilemmas of Statebuilding in Fragile Situations* (OECD, 2008). For a recent survey, see *Literature Review on State-Building* by Zoe Scott, May 2007.

[3] Francois Bourguignon, *etal.*, "Millennium Development Goals at Midpoint: Where Do We Stand and Where Do We Need to Go?" (A paper prepared for the DG Development of the European Commission for the 2009 European Report on Development, October 2008) The paper provides a useful survey of the range of definitions used by different actors, which is included in Appendix 1.

[4] Participants at the Florence workshop in April strongly urged greater definitional clarity as part of the European Report on Development. Such an endeavour, however, falls outside the scope of this paper.

Are states weak because their key security-political-socio-economic indicators are negative, or are these indicators negative because the state is weak? Should policies aim to strengthen states as a way to improve their socio-economic and political-security performance, or should the strategy aim at improving a country's socio-economic and political-security conditions to strengthen the state? These questions lie at the heart of the current interest in state-building. Accordingly, it is important to take a closer look at the methodology and findings of two different indexes to assess the extent to which they bring greater clarity to our understanding of the role of the state in developing countries and its implications for policy.

The two indexes, *The Index of State Weakness in the Developing World* and the *Ibrahim Index of African Governance,* are quite different in nature. As their titles reveal, the former is global, while the latter is Africa-specific. Moreover, they approach the issue from somewhat different perspectives even though there is a considerable overlap in their methodology. The following section reviews *The Index of State Weakness in the Developing World* by Susan E. Rice and Stewart Patrick in order to identify the key features of state weakness across the world, and to examine how the relationship between the state and security/development outcomes is postulated. The next section does the same with the *Ibrahim Index of African Governance.*

The Index of State Weakness in the Developing World is one of several similar efforts ranking states in comparative perspective in order to provide policy-makers with a tool to understand the unique dynamics and drivers of state performance. Other similar studies include the *Failed States Index* by the Fund for Peace and published annually in *Foreign Policy* magazine; the Center for Global Development's 2004 report *On the Brink: Weak States and US National Security*; *The State Fragility Index* at George Mason University; the Peace and Conflict ledger produced by the University of Maryland's Center for International Development and Conflict Management.[5] In reviewing various quantitative indexes and differentiating among them, Rice and Patrick note that each index approaches the problem from a slightly different angle, and that each has certain limitations. Nonetheless, collectively, these efforts have served to highlight the multi-dimensional nature of the development and security problems facing a large number of countries, while, at the same time, identifying the most vulnerable states as the focus of concerted international attention. Ultimately, the expectation is that understanding certain patterns within and across states will enable policy-makers to develop more appropriate policy responses and to inform the allocation of scarce resources. Interestingly, although the various indexes use different terminologies and methodologies, there is a remarkable degree of overlap in their quantitative analysis and broad conclusions.

The Index of State Weakness in the Developing World reviews 141 developing countries and ranks them upon the basis of performance. The study defines weak states as:

> "countries lacking the capacity and/or will to foster an environment conducive to sustainable and equitable growth; to establish and maintain legitimate, transparent and accountable political institutions; to secure their populations from violent conflict and to control their territory; and to meet the basic human needs of their population." (p. 8)

The definition seeks to capture government responsibilities which are considered core functions of statehood — at least in an ideal type of a state. However, this formulation is theoretically, as well as historically, not well-founded, since few states (be they developing or developed) come close to delivering on all four core functions. Nonetheless, the *Index of State Weakness* is not unique in taking such an inclusive view of state functions and applying them to all 141 developing countries at various stages of state formation.[6]

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[5] For a mapping of the field and a good comparison of the various indexes, see Susan E. Rice & Stewart Patrick, *Index of State Weakness in the Developing World*, (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 2008) p. 9.

[6] Much of the current policy debate takes place without reference to the rich body of academic literature on states. Social scientists — especially political scientists — have long had a strong interest in the nature of the state although academic research has gone through many distinct waves. Following decolonization, and building on the work of theorists like

Corresponding to these core functions, *the Index* identifies four baskets, each with five indicators that are used as proxies for core aspects of state function, as outlined in the Table 1 below. Constrained by lack of data on a range of indicators such as crime rates, the study relies heavily on the data available from the World Bank, the IMF, and other established data-sets. Based upon their quantitative ratings on the 20 indicators across the four key baskets, the Index divides the 141 developing countries into distinct quintiles in terms of each state's capacity and/or will to deliver on the four core functions of a state. The countries falling into the bottom quintile are labelled as "failed states/critically weak states" and in the second lowest quintile as "weak states". Meanwhile, the top three quintiles include a number of "states to watch", based upon critical indicators.

Table 1: The 20 Indicators and related data sources used within the 4 baskets[7]

Economic	Political	Security	Social Welfare
GNI *per capita*, 2006 (World Bank, World Development Indicators)	**Government Effectiveness, 2006** (World Bank, Governance Matters VI)	**Conflict Intensity 1992-2006** (Center for Systemic Peace, Major Episodes of Political Violence Political Stability and Absence of Violence (World Bank, Governance Matters VI)	**Child Mortality 2005** (UNICEF, State of the World's Children)
GDP growth, 2002-2006 (World Bank, World Development Indicators)	**Rule of Law, 2006** (World Bank, Governance Matters VI)	**Incidence of *Coups*, 1992-2006** (Archigos 2.8 and Economist Intelligence Unit)	**Primary School Completion 2005** (World Bank, World Development Indicators)
Income inequality, 2006 (World Bank, World Development Indicators)	**Voice and Accountability, 2006** (World Bank, Governance Matters VI)	Gross Human Rights Abuses 1992-2006 (Political Terror Scale)	**Undernourishment 2004** (FAO) **% of population with Access to Improved Water Sources and Sanitation Facilities** (WB, World Development Indicators)
Inflation, 2002-2006 (IMF, International Financial Statistics)	**Control of Corruption, 2006** (World Bank, Governance Matters VI) Freedom Ratings, 2006 (Freedom House)	**Territory Affected by Conflict 1991-2005** (Political Instability Task Force)	**Life Expectancy 2005** (WB, World Development Indicators)
Regulatory Quality, 2006 (World Bank, Government Matters VI)			

The *Index* reveals patterns of state weakness based upon a comparative quantitative ranking of states along the 20 socio-economic, security and political indicators above. The most important is, perhaps, the least surprising: there is "a strong positive relationship between countries' scores on many individual indicators and their overall performance on the Index" (p. 10). The strong positive relationship does not hold with respect to four indicators: *coups*, inflation, GDP growth and inequality. However, one of the stronger relationships is between poverty and overall state weakness.

> "Thus, a substantial majority of the world's failed and critically weak states are also the world's poorest, with GNI *per capita* in the bottom quintile of developing nations. Conversely, none of the countries in the top performing quintile of developing countries have incomes that place them in the bottom two quintiles of GNI per capita." (p. 10)

This conclusion corresponds closely to other quantitative studies that show a strong correlation between low income and conflict.

(Contd.)

Weber and Marx, modernisation theory posited that newly-emerging states would follow in the footsteps of western states. With globalisation, the state was seen as retreating in the face of global markets. Subsequently, there were serious efforts "to bring the state back in". Despite changing perspectives, as J.P. Nettl argued in *The State as a Conceptual Variable*, "the thing exists and no amount of conceptual restructuring can dissolve it". (*World Politics*, 20, July 1968, p.559).

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 9. The purpose of this section is not to examine the suitability of the indicators and/or data sources used in the study, but its main assumptions and conclusions.

A second general observation is more puzzling, namely, "the weakest countries on the Index tend to be the least democratic" since the five selected indicators cited above do not necessarily measure democracy. Nonetheless, based upon these indicators, the following conclusion seems reasonable:

> "Most notably, developing countries that are more successful at political governance also tend to be better providers of social welfare. There is a similar, moderately strong relationship between political governance and the ability to ensure the security of citizen. Not surprisingly, the countries that perform better economically also tend to be better providers of social welfare. Though country performance in the economic and political baskets is not as strongly related, countries with high government effectiveness are generally also strong performers."

None of relationships are found to be "water-tight", and there are significant exceptions. Nonetheless, the study goes on to argue that:

> "across the developing world as a whole, poor performance in maintaining security or providing social welfare tends to be associated with a lack of democratic governance, whereas stronger economic performance goes hand in hand with more adequate social welfare provision." (p. 12)

Indeed, the study finds the existence of relationships across the four baskets to be significant, leading to the conclusion that "state weakness is better conceived as a function of *all four core areas of state responsibility*, not just one or two spheres". The only three failed states (Somalia, Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo) "register strikingly low overall weakness scores compared with the other states". (p. 12) However, beyond the threshold for failed states, there are no clear-cut categories, which leads to authors to conclude that "state weakness varies along a rather smooth continuum", and can be "characterized as a relative phenomenon that evades rigid categorization". Nonetheless, they also argue that:

> "overall, the Index suggests that there are multiple typologies of weakness…. Many of the critically weak states exhibit across-the-board weakness in all four core sphere of state performance. Yet a minority of developing countries exhibit extremely low scores in just one or two areas." (p.14)

Interestingly, these range from insecurity and conflict (as in Algeria, Colombia, Russia, Sri Lanka and Indonesia) to social welfare (such as in Mozambique) and to political and social welfare (in Equatorial Guinea), all of which affect their overall rating.

The study identifies the following features of the critically weak states:

- They cover most of sub-Saharan Africa, encompassing more than 480 million people;
- Out of 25, only five critically weak states are located outside sub-Saharan Africa (Iraq, Haiti, North Korea, Burma and Nepal);
- Extreme poverty is a predominant characteristic of critically weak states; nine out of ten of poorest countries in the world are critically weak states (with Malawi as the only exception);
- All but 4 of the 28 critically weak states are low-income countries (the exceptions being Iraq, the Republic of the Congo, Angola and Equatorial Guinea, which are all oil producers with uneven distribution of wealth);
- More than 85% of the critically weak states have experienced conflict in the past 15 years;
- The international community has intervened militarily in many failed and critically weak states, which tends to improve the scores of these countries artificially.

As with "critically weak" states, "weak" states share common features:

- More than half of them (15 out of 28) are in Africa;
- Like the critically weak states, most of the 28 weak states are impoverished;
- 21 out of 28 are low-income countries with a per capita GNI below $905;

- However, there are notable exceptions, in which some states under-perform (for example, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Columbia) and others over-perform (Gambia, Malawi and Tanzania) in relation to their levels of incomes;

- Weak states tend to exhibit more variable scores across all four areas of state functions than the critically weak states; some score poorly in one or more areas, while others demonstrate mediocre performance across the board;

- A number of weak states are plagued by insecurity (especially recent or ongoing conflict), which lowers their overall scores despite their above-average performance on other baskets.

Like earlier quantitative studies on the security-development nexus, the above findings confirm several important correlations, but do not provide a consistent or causal explanation with regard to the relationship between the various factors that define state weakness. The *Index*'s four baskets and the twenty indicators roughly correspond to the socio-economic and political-security dimensions of a state's functions. In measuring these indicators, the *Index* offers a quantitative analysis of how well a country is performing on the socio-economic and political-security front. In other words, the *Index* suggests that it is the state's poor performance along these indicators that defines state weakness. This, however, is a circular argument, which equates the state with its performance.

Yet, the state is also a political construct. What are its political attributes? Beyond the narrow economic and bureaucratic efficiency indicators, drawn largely from the World Bank data sets, what are the political indicators that capture state capacity and/or will? The *Index* inevitably leaves these questions unanswered. Instead, it equates statehood with the performance of basic security and development tasks. To the extent that it fails to deliver on these core functions, the state is characterised as weak. Thus, it is still not clear which comes first: an effective state to deliver higher levels of performance, or improved socio-economic, political and security conditions to enable a state to perform its core functions. As a general policy principle, should donors invest primarily in improving development and security conditions as a pre-requisite for more effective states, or should they invest in strengthening weak states to improve their performance across the four core areas?

The study provides a series of policy recommendations which skirt around the issue. Instead, the authors argue for a package of responses including:

- poverty alleviation;

- the targeting of specific areas of weakness in individual countries;

- increased assistance to the weakest states;

- a special focus on sub-Saharan Africa; and

- multilateral approaches to building state capacity.

In short, the *Index* makes a strong case for taking weak states seriously by demonstrating their interlocking weaknesses across the socio-economic, political and security spectrum. However, it does not help to provide insights into the little black box of the state in the developing countries or how state capacities can, or should, be built. While no index can be expected to engage in the larger debates about what makes a state, the initial lack of definitional clarity about state weakness inevitably leads to an outcome in which resource-rich and previously stable Iraq is ranked much weaker than chronically poor and unstable Guinea-Bissau. This is, of course, an inevitable by-product of constructing an index that is based upon quantitative data at a particular point in time without reference to a country's historical trajectory. However, as with other similar indexes, given the ambition of the *Index of State Weakness* to influence policy, their effort to provide a useful framework to rank and to classify fairly dissimilar cases into broad categories, such as "failed", "critically weak" and "weak states" raises more problems than it solves. On the other hand, some of the broader patterns that the *Index* highlights allows for more in-depth examination of the similarities and differences among states both within and across the various categories.

3. A closer look into state performance in Africa

As the *Index of State Weakness* notes, 2 out of 3 failed states, 20 out of 25 critically weak states, and 15 out of 28 weak states are in sub-Saharan African. This adds up to 37 out of 48 sub-Saharan states. With some variations, this is also confirmed by other similar indexes. While this finding is significant within the global context, it does not provide a sufficiently meaningful portrait of what is at play in sub-Saharan Africa, or how best to support weak states in the continent.[8] For this, it is useful to turn to the *Ibrahim Index of African Governance* produced at Harvard University's School of Government.

As the *Ibrahim Index* notes, in recent years, there have been numerous efforts to measure different aspects of governance performance. There are indexes to measure happiness, global peace, economic freedom, competition, corruption, political freedom, and many other index offerings. What distinguishes the *Index of African Governance* is its attempt to be comprehensive across a broad range of data for all 48 sub-Saharan African countries. Only the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators is as comprehensive. Other studies tend to focus upon limited aspects of governance, such as Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, the UNDP's *Human Development Report*, and Freedom House's *Freedom in the World* report. However, the UN Economic Commission for Africa's *African Governance Report* and the *Afrobarometer* surveys are more limited in its country coverage.

Released in October 2008, the second annual *Ibrahim Index* encompasses all sub-Saharan countries and multiple dimensions of governance. However, its focus is on good governance, rather than on state weakness.[9] Nonetheless, its definition of good governance closely parallels the core functions of the state covered in the previous section. The *Index* defines good governance as the delivery of key "political goods whatever the culture and whatever else the government might undertake". These are grouped into five categories, fourteen sub-categories, and fifty-seven sub-sub-categories or indicators. The five categories are: Security and Safety; Rule of Law and Corruption; Participation and Human Rights; Economic Opportunity; and Human Development. The study's authors argue that their definition is comprehensive and common to all countries, and that the delivery of the core political goods can be measured by basic figures and statistics, such as those on poverty, infrastructure, the fairness of elections, the absence of war, *etc.*

The fifty-seven variables or indicators used by the *Index* range from rates of crime, judicial independence and levels of corruption, to the quality of national elections and respect for human rights. These 57 assessments are aggregated into five overall measurement categories, weighted equally. The *Ibrahim Index* measures the differences, and then ranks each of sub-Saharan Africa's nations overall, according to the five over-arching categories, as well as each of the 57 sub-sub categories or indicators.

Before turning to the findings from the *Index of African Governance*, it is important to underscore the variation in terminology used by the two Indexes despite the overlap between the basic categories that they employ. Does poor governance imply a weak state? Is a strong state a well-governed state? Are bad governance and weak states two sides of the same coin? How do they differ from other

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[8] This paper does not attempt to address the larger issue of the application of the European state system in the African continent with the creation of over 50 states. Nor does it address the appropriateness of the development models promoted by Africa's former colonial rulers and current aid partners. These questions also merit special attention as part of the larger query about the preponderance of weak states in Africa. See, for example, Pierre Englebert, *State Legitimacy and Development in Africa*, (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000), and Tobias Debiel & Birgit Pech, "State Formation and Persistent Hybridity in Africa: Reflections from a Development and Conflict Perspective", in: Denisa Kostovicova & Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic (eds), *Persistent State Weakness in the Global Age*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, forthcoming)

[9] See, http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/the-index.asp. The first *Ibrahim Index*, named after its sponsor businessman Mo Ibrahim, was published in September 2007 and included data from 2000, 2002 and 2005. As in the previous case, this paper is primarily interested in the study's assumptions and conclusions.

similar categories, such as fragile or unstable states? The two indexes do not attempt to address these definitional questions — undoubtedly partly for political reasons. However, it is obvious that avoiding the issue generates its own problems — especially for policy-makers. Statehood implies *de facto* and *de jure* identity which has domestic, as well as international, ramifications, while good governance is primarily a domestic attribute. Thus, it is not surprising that, generally, external analysts and international actors tend to focus more on statehood, while local analysts and actors, shying away from sensitive political issues, are more concerned with governance. Inevitably, the differences in perspective have important implications for the policy recommendations that follow. Indeed, the *Index of African Governance* takes African states as given, and focuses on their domestic functions and performance as evidenced by the core functions and sub-categories of good governance cited below:

Table 2: Core Political Goods and Sub-Categories of Good Governance[10]

Security and Safety	Rule of Law & Corruption	Economic Opportunity	Participation & Human Rights	Human Development
- National Security - Public Safety	- Ratification of Critical Legal Norms - Independent & Efficient Judicial Systems - Corruption	- Wealth Creation - Macro-economic Stability & Financial Integrity - Environ'al Sensitivity - Arteries of Commerce - Climate Change	- Participation in Elections - Respect for Civil and Political Rights	- Poverty - Health and Sanitation - Educational Opportunity

Unlike the *Index of Weak States*, the *African Governance Index* is not simply designed to classify African countries, but to track their performance over time and to rank them. The study's approach is different from other similar indexes. While seeking to generate quantitative measures of governance, the study explicitly posits that:

> "objective standards of good governance may be reached in different ways in different countries. What matters is that some basic political goods are provided: there is no cookie cutter template for good government beyond solid performance."

For example, in public participation, which is one of five core political goods, according to the *Ibrahim Index*, "good government may naturally reflect variations in the specific objectives and traditions of its citizens in terms of its specific policy strategies".[11] In other words, the study acknowledges that country heterogeneity with respect to their performance across the various core areas requires a more nuanced explanation based upon a complex combination of specific country characteristics and initial conditions.

The authors recognise that their definition of governance "plows new ground". They note that others often limit governance to rule of law and participation, and that their critics argue against using all five categories to measure governmental delivery of political goods, and to equate such delivery with governance. Indeed, methodologically, it is problematical to establish a causal relationship between the actions of a government and the *Index*'s outcome indicators, since the outcomes may be caused by other factors, such as underlying resource endowments, levels of wealth, ethnic heterogeneity, the actions of previous governments, *etc*. Nonetheless, the authors believe that citizens tend to measure governmental performance more broadly, and along the lines reflected in the *Index*

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[10] The Table does not include the sub-categories or the indicators and data sets since these are quite large. Instead, Appendix 2 provides a schematic outline.

[11] The Ibrahim Index provides a useful overview of other definitions of governance in the African context. It also offers a good explanation of its differences from other existing indexes which tend to be either limited in their geographic or thematic coverage.

even though they recognise that government policy is not solely responsible for these outcomes. Thus, the *Index* is intended to correspond to citizens' expectations that their governments provide security, rule of law, economic opportunities, educational opportunities, health care, and social safety nets while promoting political participation and respect for basic rights. These are, of course, high expectations - especially in states with limited capacities and/or political will. However, since the *Ibrahim Index* is designed to make governments more responsible to their citizens, the focus on measuring outputs serves to draw attention to the potential for government action despite other factors that might constrain effective outcomes. Indeed, the authors argue that measuring and comparing outcomes across countries can stimulate further examination of the range of factors that might be at work beyond government action.

In this light, the results from the *2008 Ibrahim Index* are quite encouraging. The *Index* shows that African governance is, in fact, getting better, with 34 out of 48 sub-Saharan African governments delivering improved results to their citizens. The top performers in the *Index* are countries that have been well-managed since achieving independence from colonial rule. They include Mauritius (with the highest score for the second year) followed by the Seychelles, Cape Verde, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Gabon, Ghana, Sao Tome and Senegal. Their populations are comparatively wealthy and have greater safety and security (except for South Africa). They are largely free of domestic conflict and enjoy the rule of law with moderate corruption. Gabon is the outlier in this group, with low scores for participation, but high scores for security.

The African countries with internal conflicts constitute the bottom 10, with descending order: Nigeria, Guinea, Liberia, Eritrea, the Ivory Coast, the Central African Republic, Angola, Sudan, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Somalia. These are identified as countries that do not provide their citizens with security and safety, have low GDPs, poorly-maintained roads, insufficient health and educational opportunities, weak human rights records, massive corruption, and unfree elections. Liberia emerges as the most improved country in sub-Saharan Africa — having moved up in rank from 44th to 38th place with a new score of 48.7 (an increase of 10.4 points).

The *Index* points to other important patterns. For example, a number of countries within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) demonstrate strong performance, with five members of SADC ranking in the top ten and another seven members ranking in the top half. 14 members of SADC have improved their scores compared to last year, with Zimbabwe the only SADC country to fall in both score and rank.

Participation and Human Rights is the category with the largest improvements, with 29 countries demonstrating progress. Many of these have demonstrated improved participation in elections, which were considered free and fair by international observers. However, many issues still remain across the whole continent in this area - particularly with regard to women's rights. In addition, between 2005 and 2006, a majority of countries recorded improvements in the categories of Rule of Law, Transparency and Corruption; Human Development; and Sustainable Economic Opportunity.

The *Ibrahim Index* is clearly an evolving tool that is designed to take into account the ongoing changes in the governance context in sub-Saharan Africa. Its goals are to provide a tool for both civil society and citizens to hold governments to account, to stimulate debate on governance by providing information about performance, and to provide a diagnostic framework to assess governance in sub-Saharan Africa. In other words, the *Index* is intended to enable African governments to pinpoint the areas needing improvement, to allow donors to distribute their assistance funds to those sectors which need help the most, and to give investors a window into a nation's strengths and weaknesses.

Like the *Index of State Weakness*, however, the *Ibrahim Index* focuses on a government's degree of performance rather than the pre-requisites of effective performance. Leaving aside the definitional issue of whether the focus is on "states" or "governance", neither index comes any closer to exposing the sources of weakness, vulnerability or frailty among so many African states. Why, in other words, are so many African countries in serious trouble across such a wide range of socio-economic, political

and security indicators? What accounts for their poor record in such high numbers both within the continent and in relation to other developing countries? What is the role of states and/or governments in their consistently poor performance? How does quantitative analysis translate into appropriate policy recommendations?

4. Determinants of State Performance

In line with the particular concerns of their respective sponsors, the two indexes covered above approach the role of the state and state performance from different angles. In fact, they use different terminology for what they are measuring: the first is concerned with state weakness primarily as an issue of international concern, while the second focuses on good governance mainly from the perspective of African countries and their populations. As quantitative tools that measure and compare the performance of a large number of countries, neither index is designed to provide an answer to the question of why some states perform better than others, or how state performance can be improved. While quantitative indexes can serve as important diagnostic tools by displaying particular risks as well as changing trends, they are not intended to go beyond a quantitative measure of governance/state performance. Yet, what accounts for a state's performance is a critical question. Stepping back from the findings of the two quantitative indexes in the preceding sections, this section examines findings from three case studies on Somalia, Guinea-Bissau and Namibia. The purpose of this section is to extract some answers to this question based upon the diverse trajectories of these three countries on the spectrum of good governance and state weakness in sub-Saharan Africa. The discussion draws from a forthcoming multi-country comparative study entitled "*The Security-Development Nexus: Searching for Critical Connections*",[12] and hopes to advance current policy discussions about how to address state performance and/or state weakness.

4.1 Diverse Trajectories and Varied Achievements

The three countries examined below are to be found at very different points on the two indexes. On the *Index of State Weakness*, their rankings are 1 (lowest — Somalia), 18 (Guinea-Bissau) and 82 (Namibia) out of 141 states. On the *Ibrahim Index*, their rankings are 6 (highest - Namibia); 30 (Guinea-Bissau) and 48 (Somalia) out of 48 states. In other words, between them they represent different gradations of governance-quality and/or state weakness. Having gained its independence in 1960, Somalia is one of the oldest African states; today, it is the epitome of a failed state. Guinea-Bissau became independent in 1974 and has consistently been wracked by political instability. Finally, Namibia is one of Africa's youngest countries, having gained its independence only in 1990. However, it is also one of the most stable, enjoying a relatively high performance across various indicators, as shown above. These countries' relative rankings are emblematic of the significant variations across countries in terms of their ability to provide the range of political, security and socio-economic public goods covered by the two indexes discussed in this paper. Their diverse rankings also provide an opportunity to investigate the sources of their relative success and failure.

Table 3: Ratings of the three countries on the *Ibrahim Index* (over 100)

	Security & Safety	Rule of Law & Corruption	Participation & Human Rights	Economic Opportunity	Human Development	Total Score/Rank
Somalia	38.8	8.2	6.4	26.0	15.2	18.9/48
Guinea-Bissau	80.5	34.6	75.2	23.2	45.8	51.9/30
Namibia	83.3	76.7	75.3	57.4	61.6	70.9/6

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[12] Tschirgi *etal*., *The Security-Development Nexus*.

As the above ratings confirm, Somalia has a dismal record across the five areas, while Namibia has a consistently high record across the same five areas. Guinea-Bissau's record is mixed, with fairly poor showing in three out of the five areas. This accounts for their respective rankings on the *Ibrahim Index*. It also corresponds to qualitative assessments of their divergent trajectories as independent countries.

After obtaining its independence in 1990, after a long armed struggle, Namibia is considered a relative development success despite its abysmal wealth and income inequality, its heavy reliance on primary commodities, its shortage of key natural resources, such as arable land and water, its ongoing struggles against poverty and disease, as well as the ongoing challenges of democratic transition and consolidation. Nonetheless, relative peace and security have been maintained in spite of the country's involvement in two regional wars, an attempted secession by an armed rebel movement, border disputes with Botswana and South Africa, and an influx of refugees from Angola. Various factors have contributed to Namibia's ability to address pressing domestic problems without conflict: the geo-political transitions in Southern Africa with the end of the Cold War, the international community's close involvement in Namibia's independence struggle and peace process, generous donor assistance following independence, and increased Southern African regional co-operation following South Africa's democratic transition. Today, overcoming its recent violent history, Namibia stands out as a "functioning state with sufficient extractive, coercive and symbolic capacity to incorporate all significant groupings and to suppress potential violent challenges to state and nation if and when they arise".[13]

Somalia stands in sharp contrast to Namibia in its trajectory as a state.[14] Its economy and security deteriorated to the point of civil war and state collapse 30 years after its independence in 1960. Lacking a central state since 1990, the country has been ruled by shifting coalitions of clans, clerics, and businessmen. They have operated their own courts, security forces and locally-administered infrastructure and services. In the meantime, an urban-based private commercial economy has emerged out of the economic hubs under the control of particular clans and warlords. It has generated export diversification, small-scale manufacturing, roads, ports and other infrastructure, communication facilities, and health and social services, supplemented - where feasible - by humanitarian aid from international agencies and NGOs. In parallel with the privatisation of its economy, Somalia has also witnessed the "continuing devolution of warfare to lower and lower levels of clan lineage". This fragmentation of power has created additional challenges to peacebuilding and state-building. The situation in Somalia currently remains extremely fluid and precarious following successive efforts by various groups (including the union of Islamic Courts and the Transitional Government) to establish and expand political control. In the meantime, insecurity has been exacerbated both by its growing exposure to terrorist activity as well as by the counter-terrorist strategies of the U.S. and Somalia's regional allies.

Guinea-Bissau provides a case study of the interlocking nature of chronic development problems, political instability and diminishing state capacities. The country's problems have long been in the making. Following its independence in 1974, Guinea-Bissau made little progress towards development while it struggled with multiple *coups* and a short civil war in 1998-99. Already an extremely poor country, Guinea-Bissau was never able to recover from the devastation wrought by its civil war. However, more than the war, the country's recurrent political instability hampered efforts to address chronic socio-economic problems, generated migration, urban food shortages, infra-structural inefficiencies and led to growing budget deficits and excessive debt which eventually paved the way for Guinea-Bissau's current predicament. After thirty years as an independent state, it is still one of the world's poorest countries and it is now facing the threat of narco-trafficking, the estimated proceeds of

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[13]   The discussion on Namibia draws from *"Namibia: A Success Story?"* by Gretchen Bauer & Cristiaan Keulder.

[14]   The discussion on Somalia draws from *"Beyond the Conflict Trap in Somalia"* by Ken Menkhaus. This chapter does not cover Somaliland.

which are estimated to exceed the country's total GDP. As a result, Guinea-Bissau's chronic problems have been exacerbated by the risk of state capture by criminal networks.[15]

4.2 Explaining Diversity

What accounts for the sharp differences between these three African states? To what extent are states or governments responsible for the current situations of these countries in terms of the socio-economic and political-security goods covered in the quantitative indexes? The answers to these questions hold important clues for tailoring of differentiated policy responses to address their unique circumstances. Findings from the larger comparative study identify three sets of factors that merit attention in terms of their situations in comparative perspective. The first pertains to the initial conditions in each country at the time of its independence and its long-term ramifications. It includes such factors as physical endowments, demography and socio-cultural characteristics, including ethnicity. The second set of factors relates to the political and institutional characteristics of the new state while the third deals with external factors. A closer look at comparative findings from the three African countries covered in the larger study provides insights into the inter-connections between these factors and their impact on both state performance and state fragility.

Not surprisingly, each country's initial conditions helped to shape its future prospects in terms of both development and security. None of the three countries is landlocked, and each has temperate climates conducive to agriculture. Their natural resource bases vary, with Namibia owning rich diamond resources. All three countries have heterogeneous populations — divided by race, ethnicity or clan. They are predominantly rural and have low population densities. Namibia has a declining population growth due to the impact of HIV/AIDs. All three endured extended colonial rule and conflicts with neighbouring states. They all had armed conflicts with very different outcomes. However, these fall short of explaining the significant differences between them in socio-economic development and in security.

Instead, the case studies point to another set of explanatory factors which relate to each country's political arrangements and social institutions. All three countries are relatively new states, with Somalia and Namibia at two ends of the spectrum. Yet, more than longevity, each state's initial formation and subsequent ability to consolidate and to expand its capacities and scope in order to be able to engage effectively with sub-state actors and dynamics appear to correlate closely with its level of stability, security and performance. Because political factors loom large in all cases, both their similarities and their differences deserve closer attention. From a comparative perspective, the three countries followed very different paths in their transition to self-rule.

Following its long armed struggle, Namibia had a gradual, managed transition from colonial rule to democratisation, while Guinea-Bissau and Somalia had prolonged and incomplete state formation. Namibia, which was institutionally better prepared for self-rule, was able to conduct its domestic political competition through non-violent means, while beginning the difficult task of addressing post-independence development and security challenges. Even before power was handed over to Namibians, there was agreement on the core features of the political system. Despite regular elections since 1989, Namibia has functioned as a single party state ruled by the nationalist movement SWAPO under Sam Nujoma. When the constitutional term of office of President Nujoma was due to expire, the ruling party amended the constitution in 1998 to allow him a third term of office. In retrospect, it is suggested that "this may have been a prudent move as presidential successions are often a crisis point in nascent democracies".[16] When power was eventually transferred to Nujoma's handpicked successor in March 2005, the handover was peaceful. With strong political control, the government was able to

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[15] The discussion draws from *Anatomy of State Failure—The Case of Guinea-Bissau*, by Joshua Forrest.

[16] Bauer & Keulder, *Ibid.*

pursue a national development framework to address potentially volatile problems, such as widespread poverty, inequitable land distribution, and grave income inequalities without risking violent conflict.

Somalia and Guinea-Bissau had different paths to independence than that of Namibia. Although it gained its independence almost three decades before Namibia, Somalia had to deal with the consequences of being divided between two colonial powers and unresolved political rule among local actors. British Somaliland (northern Somalia) differed from Italian colonial rule in the centre-south of the country. The British exercised indirect rule, which allowed traditional structures to survive, while the Italians largely displaced or corrupted traditional authorities. When Somalia achieved independence in 1960, its newly established multi-party system proved dysfunctional. Under Siad Barre, Somalia quickly degenerated into a police state and was not able to create a cohesive political system. Nonetheless, Somalia's repressive regime was propped up by the patrons of the Cold War and by foreign aid. When the Cold War ended and foreign aid was frozen on human rights' grounds, the Somalia state could not survive on its own. The continuing difficulty of establishing a centralised state in Somalia is largely due to the fact that, historically, Somalia has always been a mediated state. During the colonial and post-colonial periods, governments ceded authority over the judiciary and public sector to clan elders. Once the central authority of the state collapsed, it has proved difficult to re-create an effective mediated state.

The Portuguese followed a crude mercantilist policy in Guinea-Bissau while exercising direct rule. Although colonial administration did not extend much beyond the towns, it generated nationalistic reaction and a protracted struggle for liberation. Despite national unity during the twelve-year anti-colonial struggle, Guinea-Bissau's post-independence history has been characterised by continuing political instability, multiple *coup* attempts, and a short civil war in 1998-99. Upon independence from Portugal, Guinea-Bissau was united under the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde) – a political outgrowth of the liberation movement. However, because the rules of the political game were not institutionalised, rivalries soon broke out between the ruling élite of the army and the PAIGC. These factional struggles have continued since then, alongside recurrent political violence and a tendency towards authoritarian centralisation of executive power. They help to explain the fragility of the post-independence state as well as the country's inability to overcome its chronic poverty through sustained socio-economic policies.

From a comparative perspective, the extent to which a country was prepared for self-rule under colonial administration, the nature of the inherited political institutions and the subsequent domestic political competition to achieve effective consolidation of central political authority emerge as powerful explanations for each state's ability to manage its structural socio-economic problems and security threats.[17] In short, the experiences of Namibia, Somalia and Guinea-Bissau attest to the centrality of a country's political regime (including leadership, formal and informal political institutions and constitutional arrangements) in terms of its ability to provide services across the range of public or "political" goods, including socio-economic development and security.

The lessons from the three countries are in line with the extensive literature on the origins and nature of the African state and the subsequent crisis of governance in Africa.[18] It is generally agreed that the crisis of the African state can be traced to the legacies of colonial rule and the institutions imported by colonial powers, which distorted indigenous political culture and political institutions, and led to political regimes which were often propped up by external actors. Thus, there developed a serious disconnection between state viability and effective political authority in many independent states. Achieving an effective internal system for political rule proved particularly difficult in states in

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[17] These correspond roughly to the sources of "legitimacy" of post-colonial African states. As Englebert argues, a state is legitimate when its structures evolve endogenously to its society and there is continuity in its institutions. See, Pierre Englebert, *State, Legitimacy and Development in Africa*, (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

[18] A recent contribution to that literature is by Frances Deng titled *Identity, Diversity, and Constitutionalism in Africa*, (Washington DC: USIP, 2008).

which the ruling governments relied on external support in the absence of an endogenous socio-economic and political base or adequate financial resources. Ruling élites saw the state as a source of personal power and wealth. Cold War politics were primarily concerned with maintaining stability rather than providing support for state consolidation.[19] Internal *coups*, localised conflicts and recurrent crises merited international attention only to the extent that they threatened the regional or global balance of power. Thus, the Cold War significantly delayed Namibia's independence due to its centrality to the balance of power in Southern Africa. Despite their long armed struggle, ultimately, Namibians had to await the end of the Cold War to achieve their independence. Even then, Namibia's transition was a product of extensive negotiations among external actors, including the United Nations.

5. Conclusions and Policy Implications

The above analysis has sought to go beyond the global phenomenon of state weakness in order to investigate its sources as well as its consequences on security and development outcomes, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. While acknowledging the importance of the ongoing research on state fragility and the search for more effective strategies for international support to state-building, the paper's main conclusion is the imperative to pay closer attention to the historical and context-specific dynamics of state-building. If state-building is to become an increasing goal of development assistance, development agencies have to develop more effective tools to monitor, assess and address state weakness, not simply as a development outcome, but as a pre-condition for the provision of security and development. Current approaches to state-building are not well-tailored to do so.

Countries vary widely in terms of their state formation, political economy and institutional arrangements, which contribute directly to the quality of their governance. Thus, it is misleading and counter-productive to classify a diverse group of states as fragile and to buttress them through externally-designed policies and programmes. In this light, international assistance programmes such as constitution-building, accountability and transparency, rule of law and security sector reform (which are often provided as technocratic solutions to deeper political problems) need to be better tailored to individual country contexts, rather than follow standard templates.

The cases of Namibia, Guinea-Bissau and Somalia provide interesting lessons for state-building. The international community played an important role in establishing the constitution and the founding institutions of Namibia. However, the end of regional and global rivalry with the demise of the Cold War allowed internal actors (and especially SWAPO) to institute effective political rule in order to begin addressing the country's pressing socio-economic problems. In the case of both Guinea-Bissau and Somalia, the role of international actors in engaging with domestic politics has, at best, been erratic and contradictory - vacillating between sporadic engagement and neglect. Both countries currently face profound political instability -.with Somalia continuing as a "collapsed state" and Guinea-Bissau as a "shadow state". Until these societies are able to address their domestic political struggle and settle the question of effective political authority, they will continue to grapple with state failure both as a product and as a source of their dismal socio-economic and security conditions. It is increasingly evident that they need external non-partisan, neutral political support. However, the international community, and particularly aid agencies, is not well-placed to provide effective support for domestic peacemaking, as part of a strategy of conflict prevention or state collapse. Although external actors have come a long way in terms of synchronising their development, diplomacy and defence policies through 3-D or "whole of government approaches", they face serious challenges in translating these policies into effective responses in specific country contexts.

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[19] For a summary of the post-colonial state system, its political economy and evolution through Cold War politics, see Martin Doornbos, "Fragile States or Failing Models? Accounting for the Incidence of State Collapse", in: *Failing States or Failed States: The Role of Development Models*: Collected Works (FRIDE Working Paper, February 2006).

Equally seriously, fragmented international efforts and continuing lack of common strategies by external actors, including the UN, member states, the international financial institutions and bilateral development agencies, often lead to duplicate, if not conflicting, responses. In order to address the interlocking problems of state weakness, internal conflict and the lack of progress in development, the international community has to strengthen its tools for playing a constructive and effective role in domestic "diplomacy", which is different from than traditional "peacemaking". It is worth recording that the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union have already begun to strengthen their capacities to serve as mediators in domestic conflicts and power struggles, as recently displayed in Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Somalia. However, this is an area of international action that requires sustained and sizeable investment. The international community has traditionally invested heavily in elections in transitional states. It also provides extensive assistance for democracy promotion and institution-building, including through support to political parties, parliaments, and constitutions. As recent cases, such as Kenya, amply demonstrate, consolidating political rule is an ongoing process that requires continuing engagement, as well as effective tools and instruments, by a range of external actors based upon their comparative niche and capacity. The real question is not whether external actors should support state-building. Instead, the issue is what type of support is appropriate. As Englebert and Tull rightly point out:

> "Post-conflict state reconstruction has become a priority of donors in Africa. Yet, externally sponsored reconstruction efforts have met with limited achievements in the region. This is partly due to three flawed assumptions on which reconstruction efforts are predicated. The first is that Western state institutions can be transferred to Africa. The poor record of past external efforts to construct and reshape African political and economic institutions casts doubts on the overly ambitious objectives of failed state reconstruction. The second flawed assumption is the mistaken belief in a shared understanding by donors and African leaders of failure and reconstruction. Donors typically misread the nature of African politics. For local élites, reconstruction is the continuation of war and competition for resources by new means. Thus, their strategies are often inimical to the building of strong public institutions. The third flawed assumption is that donors are capable of rebuilding African states. Their ambitious goals are inconsistent with their financial, military, and symbolic means. Yet, African societies are capable of recovery, as Somaliland and Uganda illustrate. Encouraging indigenous state formation efforts and constructive bargaining between social forces and governments might prove a more fruitful approach for donors to the problem of Africa's failed states."[20]

In reality, international efforts to strengthen weak states and to support political stability in fragile contexts confront other serious challenges that are related to the broader international context. State-building came to centre stage in international affairs only after 9/11. From departments of defence and foreign affairs to bilateral aid agencies, from the World Bank to the OECD-DAC, many institutions are examining ways of supporting state-building. However, the current policy focus on state-building is largely motivated by externally-driven security interests. It is important to note that OECD-DAC's path-breaking 1997/2001 Guidelines *Helping Prevent Violent Conflict* does not make any reference to state-building. Although the document refers to "failed or collapsed states" or "states in crisis" and "crisis of state legitimacy", these were specifically in the context of preventing or recovering from violent conflict. When the word "stabilisation" appears in the document, it is used to refer to economic or macro-economic stabilisation. The *Guidelines* repeatedly call for strengthening the state, engaging with the state, and co-operating with the state and national authorities. However, it does not call for state-building, or for stabilisation as a political or security agenda.

The new focus came after 9/11. Just as Cold War imperatives led to strategies in support of regime stability at the expense of state consolidation, current state-building strategies risk buttressing states to serve as useful security allies irrespective of their domestic credentials or performance. The adoption

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[20] Pierre Englebert & Denis M. Tull, "Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Africa: Flawed Ideas about Failed States", in: *International Security* 32:4, pp. 106-139.

by the OECD-DAC of the *Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States & Situations* in April 2007 represents an important policy development. The ten principles are intended to maximise the positive impact of international engagement in fragile states, while minimising unintentional harm. The principles explicitly recognise the links between political, security, and development objectives, and focus on state-building as an objective. However, as the OECD-DAC has noted:

> "The challenge for governments involved in fragile states is to establish clarity on and coherence in objectives. These objectives are likely to differ among the departments involved. For instance, the promotion of sustainable development is not the primary mandate of all government departments. Therefore, ministries may promote national interests rather than the interests of a partner country, which, from the perspective of development co-operation, is problematic. When dealing with the problems of precarious statehood – and in particular the wide range of potential threats emanating from them – the issue therefore is how governments determine their priorities for engagement in fragile states. From the perspective of the OECD-DAC, the question more specifically is where development outcomes should rank *vis-à-vis* trade, counter-terrorism, national defence and other political objectives of donor countries."[21]

Thus, the state-building agenda faces multiple challenges, not the least of which is the prospect of rapid deterioration of materials conditions in developing countries due to the global financial crisis — possibly leading to political instability in hitherto relatively stable middle or low income countries which were not considered "states-at-risk" by earlier indexes. The latest *Global Peace Index*, which was released on 1 June 2009, noted that rising fuel and food prices, followed by the dramatic economic slowdown in the global economy, contributed to making the world a "slightly less peaceful place".[22] According to the *Global Peace Index,* economic troubles have dragged down the index performance of some previously high ranked countries, including Iceland and Ireland. In short, it appears that state fragility in its multiple aspects will continue to occupy policy-makers in the years to come. It is essential that more rigorous qualitative and quantitative analysis is generated to investigate the many dimensions of state fragility and to propose appropriate strategies for state-building.

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[21] OECD, *Whole of Government Approaches in Fragile States*, www.oecd.dac/dataoecd/15/24/37826256pdf

[22] For the third annual *Global Peace Index*, see http://www.visionofhumanity.org/.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Definitions of "fragile states" extracted from the European Report on Development background paper on "Millennium Development Goals at Midpoint" by Francois Bourguignon, et al.

"1) *Fragile, failed, or crisis states*: these approaches are based on the assessment of a state's strength around issues of capability, sovereignty and conflict. The USAID's Fragile States Strategy is an example of this approach.

2) *Poor performing countries*: by taking into account the quality of governance and policy choices, most of the international financial institutions (IFIs) focus their approach to difficult environments around how well a country performs in terms of developmental outcomes. The World Bank's Low-Income Countries Under Stress is the best-known of these initiatives.

3) *Difficult aid partners*: in this approach, the emphasis is placed on the poor aid relationships between donors and recipient states, due to a combination of:

a)   lack of political interest in poverty reduction; and

b)   weak state and non-state institutional capacity to implement policy.

The OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and DFID have been pioneers of this approach. It is important to note that definitions and approaches inevitably depend on a variety of endogenous factors originating from the organizations who are trying to come up with them. These range from national interests, views on sovereignty and international jurisdiction and stances on impartiality through to effectiveness, institutional mandates and incentives, tools and practices and regional scope. Yet, the fact that the list of fragile states differs substantially at any one time from one agency to another (see the following paragraphs) suggests that subjectivity features significantly in appraising whether or not a state is "fragile".

Some formal definitions of fragile states:

OECD-DAC

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee refers to a continuum of countries considered "difficult partnerships" due to a combination of:

1.   lack of political interest in poverty reduction; and

2.   weak state and non-state institutional capacity to implement policy.

DFID

Fragile states are those countries where the government cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor. The most important state functions for poverty reduction are territorial control, safety and security, capacity to manage public resources, delivery of basic services and the ability to protect and support the ways in which the poorest sustain themselves. DFID does not limit its definition of fragile states to those affected by conflict.

USAID

The US Aid Agency has recently come up with a "Fragile States Strategy" that offers three operationally relevant definitions for failing, failed and recovering states. This approach to assessing state fragility focuses on a state's effectiveness (the degree of administrative capacity and resources) and legitimacy (the degree of perceived justice or fairness in the exercise of power), and relies on measuring four key dimensions: political, economic, social, and security.

This approach provides a dynamic explanation for state crisis, and points to the need for linkages between integrated sector analyses (in a so-called "Fragility Framework") and decision-making. However, the emphasis seems to be focused on security, conflict management and state capacity-building. Additionally, integrating legitimacy into the assessment model, allows for inclusion and equity to be brought to the forefront of attempts to try and address causes and incentives. Nonetheless, a disadvantage of this approach lies with the fact that effectiveness does not seem to be sufficiently disaggregated to understand the difference between ability and willingness.

The World Bank

The World Bank's LICUS initiative (Low-Income Countries Under Stress) defines fragile states as characterised by very weak policies, institutions and governance. Aid does not work well in these environments because governments lack the capacity or inclination to use finance effectively for poverty reduction. There are distinct degrees of severity within the LICUS initiative. The classification is based on the Bank's own Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) scores.

CPIA scores divide low-income countries into five performance-based categories, the lowest two of which are useful proxies for state fragility. They rate countries against a set of 16 criteria grouped in four clusters:

1. Economic management;
2. Structural policies;
3. Policies for social inclusion and equity
4. Public sector management and institutions.

These indicators are reported on by local World Bank staff, based on their own knowledge and understanding of the economic functioning of the country. There is a separate group of unranked countries, also deemed fragile. This provides a list totalling 46 fragile states, containing some 870 million people or 14% of the world's population.

Fragile states according to World Bank Definitions (CPIA 2007):

Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Lao PDR, Liberia, Mauritania, Myanmar, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Uzbekistan, Zimbabwe, Territory of Kosovo

Small states (less than 2 million population):

Comoros, the Gambia, Sao Tome and Principe, Solomon Islands, Timor Leste, Tonga, Vanuatu."

<u>*Appendix 2:*</u> *Indicators and indicator data extracted from the Ibrahim Index of African Governance 2008*

Category I: Safety and Security
    Sub-Categories:
        1)   *National Security*
        2)   *Public Safety*

        Indicator Data:
        Government Involvement in Armed Conflicts;
        Number of Battle-Deaths in Armed Conflicts;
        Number of Civilian Deaths Due to One-Sided Violence;
        Refugees and Asylum Seekers Originating From each Country;
        Internally Displaced Persons;
        Ease of Access to Small Arms and Light Weapons;
        Level of Violent Crime.

Category II: Rule of Law, Transparency, and Corruption
    Sub-Categories:
        3)   *Ratification of Critical Legal Norms*
        4)   *Existence of Independent and Efficient Judicial Systems*
        5)   *Corruption*

        Indicator Data:
        Ratification of Core International Human Rights Conventions;
        International Sanctions for Human Rights Violations;
        Property Rights;
        Judicial Independence Using Freedom House's:
        "Rule of Law" Sub-Score;
        Efficiency of the Courts;
        Number of Days to Settle a Contract Dispute;
        Public Sector Corruption.

Category III: Participation and Human Rights:
    Sub-Categories:
        6)   *Participation in Elections*
        7)   *Respect for Civil and Political Rights*

        Indicator Data:
        Free and Fair Executive Elections;
        Opposition Participation in Executive Elections;
        Free and Fair Legislative Elections;
        Opposition Participation in Legislative Elections;
        Respect for "Physical Integrity Rights";
        Respect for Civil Rights;
        Press Freedom;
        Women's Economic Rights;
        Women's Political Rights;
        Women's Social Rights;
        Women's Rights.

Category IV: Sustainable Economic Opportunity:

Sub-Categories:

8)   *Wealth Creation*
9)   *Macro-economic Stability and Financial Integrity*
10)   *The Arteries of Commerce*
11)   *Environmental Sensitivity*

Indicator Data:
GDP per Capita;
GDP per Capita Growth;
Inflation;
Deficits/Surplus as a Percent of GDP;
Reliability of Financial Institutions;
Number of Days to Start a Business;
Density of Road Network;
Electricity Capacity;
Telephone Subscribers;
Computer Usage;
Internet Usage;
Environmental Performance Index.

Category V: Human Development:

Sub-Categories:

12)   *Poverty*
13)   *Heath and Sanitation*
14)   *Educational Opportunity*

Indicator Data:
Poverty Rate at $1 per Person per Day;
Poverty Rate at National Poverty Line;
Primary Education;
Pupil-Teacher Ratio, Primary;
Progression to Secondary School;
Ratio of Girls to Boys in School;
Inequality (Gini Index):
Life Expectancy at Birth (Years);
Child Mortality;
Maternal Mortality;
Undernourishment;
Immunization, Measles, DPT;
HIV Prevalence;
Incidence of Tuberculosis;
Access to Health Care Workforce;
Access to Drinking Water;
Adult Literacy Rate.

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