

Foreword

State fragility and violent conflict are among the most daunting challenges that face us today in reducing poverty and human suffering – and achieving the development goals we have all signed up to. While there is increasing recognition that functioning states matter for development, international engagement in situations of fragility and conflict has often neglected the foundations upon which strong and legitimate states are built.

Supporting Statebuilding in Situations of Conflict and Fragility: Policy Guidance addresses this challenge. It gives actionable guidance, underpinned by a robust conceptual framework, for development actors to inform strategies, programme development and delivery, and ways of operating at headquarters and in the field.

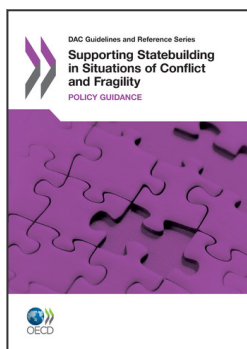
This report challenges us to fundamentally review and reorient the way we engage in fragile and conflict-affected situations. Providing support to statebuilding with a focus on strengthening state-society engagement requires a major shift in the way we think, act and work together. Supporting statebuilding demands the end of business as usual. It requires development agencies to review and strengthen their own capabilities and to work differently in today's most challenging development contexts.

Several recommendations are given to development actors. First of all, to engage better and more effectively, they need to rethink their role and move towards being moderators and facilitators of domestic processes, not implementers of outside “fixes”. Second, they must focus their support on strengthening state-society interaction and accountability by working with a broader range of actors and at all levels of government, not just the central executive. Finally, they must ensure that they have the right people with appropriate skills and experiences working on statebuilding in fragile situations, as well as the right incentives to promote new ways of working and collaborating.

This book lays out how to achieve these and other objectives. It represents a milestone in the ongoing effort to improve international engagement in situations of conflict and fragility. The challenge now lies in translating these recommendations into action and generating the high-level support such a change of course requires.



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