

**DOUBLE DIVIDENDS:** EXPLORING HOW WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE PROGRAMMES CAN CONTRIBUTE TO PEACE- AND STATE-BUILDING



## Foreword by Saferworld

**The impact of violence and insecurity on people's lives is tragic enough. Recent years have seen a growing consensus that they also have a corrosive effect on poverty reduction.**

Weak governance and damaged relationships between state and society undermine countries' ability to manage conflict without resorting to violence. Development and protracted humanitarian relief do not simply operate against a backdrop of conflict and weak governance: development too can have a profound effect on these dynamics.

Tearfund's research takes a frank look at the role of development agencies in such contexts, and builds on many years' work to understand 'conflict sensitivity'. Importantly, it argues for a step change in the way both donors and INGOs conceive, implement and assess the success of their programming in fragile and conflict-affected states.

This comes at an opportune moment.

Donors and the governments and societies of many countries affected by conflict are working to make a reality the ambitions set out in the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, endorsed in 2011 by 42 states and multilateral institutions at the Busan High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness.

At the same time, development professionals around the world are debating the shape of a global framework to succeed the Millennium Development Goals in 2015. This is a crucial opportunity to ensure international development efforts best contribute to the peace and security that so many poor people desperately want.

Development agencies such as Tearfund have an important role to play in this. This research is an urgent call to action for both donors and INGOs concerned with the well-being of people facing the twin challenges of poverty and violence. We hope it catalyses a response.

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Tearfund is a UK-based Christian relief and development agency working with a global network of churches to help eradicate poverty. Tearfund supports local partners in more than 50 developing countries and has operational programmes in response to specific disasters.

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## Introduction and summary of key recommendations

It is a pressing question for donors and NGOs alike: is funding development and humanitarian work in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) the equivalent of pouring money into a bottomless pit, if achievements are only going to be undone by further cycles of violence? There is, of course, a strong humanitarian imperative to meet the needs of those caught up in violence. However, if the long-term aim of humanitarian and development efforts is the reduction of poverty, it begs the question: what contribution can these programmes make to building peace and stability – and thus increase their own effectiveness and sustainability?

Development and humanitarian efforts have tended to operate independently of peace-building and state-building (PBSB)\* concerns. At best, it has been assumed that simply delivering basic services will contribute in some way to building a peaceful and stable society. For that reason, an equally common assumption has been that interventions should leave PBSB to others and should simply ensure that programmes 'do no harm'. However, more recent thinking, prompted by the question we posed at the start, has challenged these assumptions. Indeed, it has now been suggested that establishing peace and stability is so important that all programmes in FCAS can and must contribute to achieving that goal.<sup>1</sup>

However, the evidence base for precisely *how*, and to what extent, basic service delivery, and in particular water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), can contribute to PBSB is extremely limited. To address this lack of evidence, DFID funded Tearfund and ODI to assess the implications of this new thinking for Tearfund's WASH work in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and South Sudan. Although Tearfund has more than 30 years' experience of delivering WASH programmes, a large proportion of them within FCAS, our focus is on meeting basic needs or reducing poverty, rather than on addressing directly the root causes of fragility and conflict. We wanted therefore to assess whether Tearfund WASH programmes were in fact doing all they could to contribute to improving the long-term prospects of those they aimed to support, which included considering whether they could contribute to PBSB in the future.

We found that, while WASH programmes will never (re-) establish peace and security on their own, there are opportunities to *contribute* towards PBSB at a local level. There is some earlier evidence from Tearfund projects that this is already happening, although not in any systematic way.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, there is some evidence that projects could potentially undermine PBSB objectives. Although the impact of each individual programme may seem insignificant, the impact of the combined efforts of NGOs, and their funders, can be sizeable. In 2009, donors

spent US\$ 46.7 billion in FCAS, with US\$ 20.4 billion of this spent on social infrastructure and services.<sup>3</sup> If this money could be used not only to deliver basic services, *but also* to help build peaceful and stable societies, then this research suggests we should give this serious consideration. Of course, expectations about the contribution any one programme can make must be realistic. Yet, given the scale of opportunities across basic services, programmes in FCAS should not consider it an 'optional extra' to take into account – or, where possible, address – conflict and fragility.

We found that WASH programmes could be designed to achieve local-level 'double dividends' of both service provision and peace- and/or state-building outcomes, *but only if these outcomes are included as explicit objectives or dynamics to be monitored within service delivery*. Our research identified five possible 'intermediate entry points'\*\*\* which could lead to PBSB in future programmes:

- Strengthening capacity for *collective action* between and within groups
- Strengthening systems of *accountability*
- Addressing *inclusion* and marginalisation in relation to services
- Ensuring citizens have *opportunities* to participate in the economic, political and social activities of 'normal life'
- Balancing the *visibility* of NGOs with that of state actors

In order for WASH programmes to contribute to PBSB, we argue the need for a shift in mindsets and working practices. Our default assumption must be that programmes *can* contribute and that we should identify *how* that might happen, based on thorough and ongoing conflict analysis. We conclude that it should fall to all those involved with programmes in FCAS to explain how they are seeking to contribute to sustainable peace and stability – and, if not, why not.

\*In this briefing we use the term 'PBSB' but recognise the need to distinguish between PB and SB and acknowledge that the approaches to build them differ.

\*\*This report uses the term 'entry point' to refer to aspects of WASH delivery around which programmes could be designed to build in contributions to PBSB. These 'entry points' will then open up a 'route for influence'.



Maduany transition camp on the outskirts of Aweil town, South Sudan. The influx of people returning from Sudan places significant strain on water points where women queue for hours (2011). Layton Thompson/Tearfund.

## Implications for donors:

- In line with the Busan New Deal, donors should support FCAS governments and communities to develop an inclusive national vision and plan for progressing towards stability.
- Donors would benefit from commissioning more pilot programmes with both service delivery and PBSB objectives, to use and test the five intermediate entry points identified by this research.
- Donors could amend project proposal requirements, asking NGOs to show how they will take account of PBSB considerations, including through ongoing conflict analysis.
- Donors need to allow NGOs the flexibility to respond to changing conflict dynamics, by implementing longer-term and more adaptable funding mechanisms which support approaches that are hybrids of humanitarian and development aid.
- When choosing to invest in delivering services through NGOs, donors should plan for the eventual handover of the strategic management of service delivery to the national or local government, as should NGOs.

## Implications for NGOs:

- NGOs should make it standard procedure to take into account peace- and/or state-building dynamics, rather than considering them as an 'optional extra' which is generally ignored.
- It is essential that NGOs undertake thorough and ongoing conflict analysis for all programmes; they should also monitor their impact on, and any changes in, these dynamics and adjust programmes accordingly.

- For NGOs, this requires a fundamental shift in culture and routine working practices, as well as greater knowledge and skills in peace- and state-building; it also creates the need to monitor local political dynamics.
- NGOs would benefit from more joint working. Collaboration is necessary both to coordinate support to state authorities in the role they wish to play in service delivery, but also to create partnerships with organisations specialising in conflict analysis or peace- and/or state-building.
- NGOs need to challenge their own assumption that any peace- and/or state-building within humanitarian or development programmes will compromise access or affect perceptions of impartiality.

## Implications for fragile and conflict-affected state governments:

This research did not include an indepth analysis of government programmes, but some implications for governments do emerge nonetheless.

This research highlights that people's perceptions of *how* service delivery is distributed matter almost as much as the distribution itself. Governments should ensure that national WASH and other sectoral strategies prioritise fair and equitable access to services across different groups in society; they should also make provision to communicate this priority to the public effectively.

When funding NGOs to deliver basic services there is a danger of parallel systems of governance and accountability, outside of the state, becoming embedded. However, NGOs often play a vital role in meeting capacity shortfalls in essential basic services. National governments should therefore prioritise building on constructive partnerships with NGOs, to transition from *ad hoc* arrangements towards more strategic stewardship or delivery roles.



## Background and methodology

This research emerged out of a five-year DFID-funded programme (2007–2012) implemented by Tearfund to support improved access to water, sanitation and hygiene across seven countries/areas – Darfur (Sudan), South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Afghanistan, Haiti, Myanmar and Liberia. The programme's focus was on increasing the capacity of Tearfund operational teams, local partner projects and local government departments. Peace-building and state-building objectives were not included within the project aims, but some peace-building and state-building outcomes were observed nonetheless. These included increased community cohesion, enlarged capacity for local conflict resolution, and improved capacity of local government.<sup>4</sup> As a result, and in response to UK policy commitments (outlined in the next section), DFID's humanitarian team (CHASE) and Tearfund decided to explore what opportunities exist to include more explicit peace- and state-building objectives in future WASH programming. This policy briefing draws on research undertaken by the Overseas Development Institute, based on Tearfund's work and funded by DFID.<sup>5</sup> Following a literature review, two countries were chosen for field investigation – the DRC and the Republic of South Sudan, where three analytical methods were employed:

- Political economy – analysis of key institutions, actors, and incentives towards peace-building and state-building, as well as drivers of conflict for eastern DRC and South Sudan.
- Modality of WASH service provision – assessment of the 'what, who and how' of WASH service delivery in the project sites.
- Routes for influence on peace-building and/or state-building – investigating the potential relationship between WASH service delivery and peace- and state-building through five 'intermediate entry points' (see *Diagram 1 on p.9*).

For the purpose of this briefing, the following definitions of key concepts are used:

**Peace-building** (*DFID definition*): The notion of 'positive peace', which is 'characterised by social harmony, respect for the rule of law and human rights, and social and economic development... supported by political institutions that are able to manage change and resolve disputes without resorting to violent conflict'. This implies that peace-building must tackle 'structural forms of violence, such as discrimination, underlying grievances or lack of avenues for challenging existing structures in a peaceful way'.<sup>6</sup>

**State-building** (*DFID definition*): 'Concerned with the state's capacity, institutions and legitimacy and with the political and economic processes that underpin state-society relations.' It is therefore a 'long-term, historically rooted endogenous process, and can be driven by a range of local and national actors'.<sup>7</sup>

**Conflict-sensitive approach** (*Conflict Sensitivity Consortium definition*): 'Gaining a sound understanding of the two-way interaction between activities and context and acting to minimise negative impacts and maximise positive impacts of the intervention on conflict, within an organisation's given priorities/objectives'.<sup>8</sup>

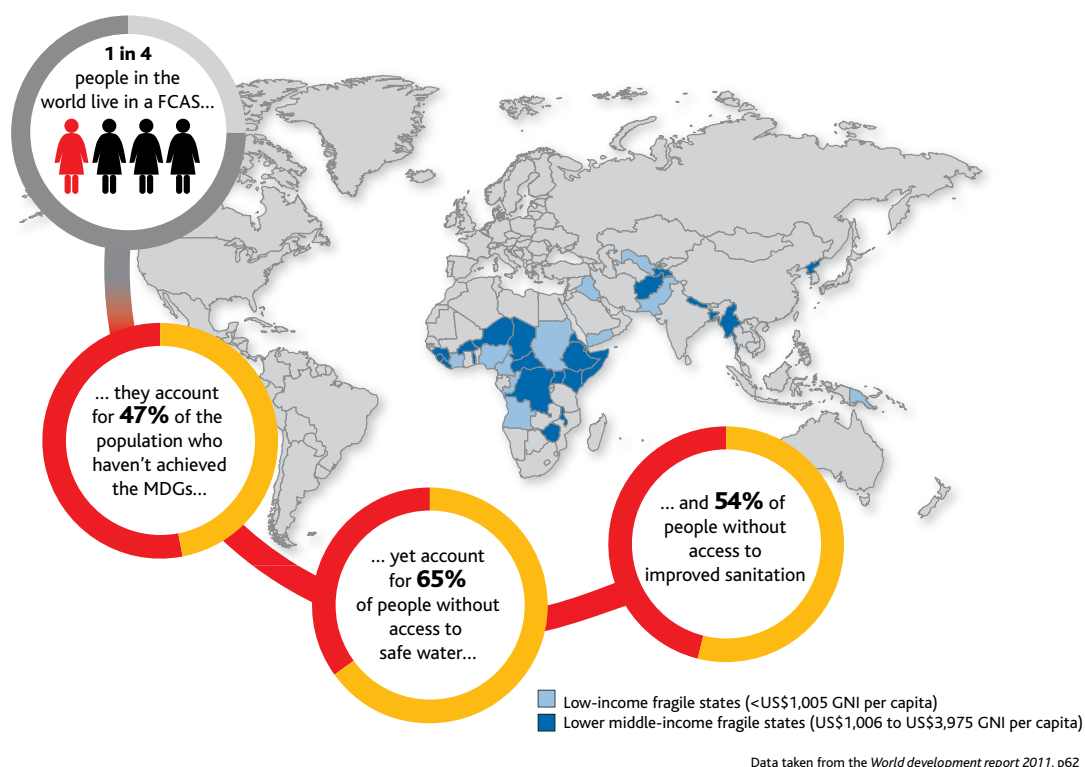
## A new era for engagement in fragile and conflict-affected states?

Conflict and fragility impede development and humanitarian efforts, with the poorest and most vulnerable people bearing the brunt. Despite the current investment of 35 per cent of OECD bilateral aid into FCAS,<sup>9</sup> development progress in FCAS lags behind that in more stable countries (see *Graphic 1 opposite*). Results are being achieved, but not on the scale and at the pace needed, and achievements are often undone by further cycles of violence or subsequent natural disasters.



A woman draws water for her goats and cattle near Omdurman, South Sudan. The water is dirty; she and her friends drink from the same water (2011). Layton Thompson/Tearfund.

### Graphic 1 – The disparities of development



The stark developmental gap between FCAS and other developing countries, and the desire to escape cycles of fragility and violence, have made some FCAS governments more determined to see progress. This is not an easy task: it can take a generation to escape fragility.<sup>10</sup> The G7+ launched a New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States in 2011, to 'reform and reinvent a new paradigm for international engagement'<sup>11</sup> and move towards change on the scale and at the pace required. Previously, in 2010, DFID had recognised that 'simply increasing the volume of aid will not be enough without tackling the underlying causes directly' and committed to use development and humanitarian efforts – including service delivery – to contribute to peace- and state-building.<sup>12</sup> The OECD also maintains that service delivery can play a role in peace- and state-building efforts, by 'strengthening governance and reducing fragility'.<sup>13</sup>

These commitments are welcome, as is DFID's willingness to fund research to explore the practicalities of those commitments. The first step towards this is an exploration of the political dynamics at play in humanitarian and development work.

## The politics of humanitarian and development interventions

The principles that guide the work of humanitarian agencies, whether they are responding to complex, rapid or slow-onset emergencies, include neutrality, impartiality and operational independence. These guard against NGOs taking sides politically at the expense of the humanitarian imperative to provide assistance wherever it is needed. However, historically, this resulted in NGOs being wary about engaging in peace-building and state-building; quite rightly, NGOs do not want to (in reality or in perception) legitimise corrupt governments, take sides between political parties, resource government militia indirectly etc. If the state were involved in a civil conflict, humanitarian NGOs would be particularly concerned about losing access to the conflict-affected populations if they were perceived to be partnering with one side – even in cases where the state in question is potentially

an effective and reliable partner. NGO staff safety will also be a key consideration affecting their decision to get involved in 'political' matters.

However, the work by NGOs is inherently and unavoidably *political*, even if NGOs do not consider themselves to be political actors. Similarly, we must be honest about whether it is still appropriate to take a strictly humanitarian approach in programmes that have been running for three, five, ten or 30 years or more. Long-term programming can not only alter the humanitarian situation but also have an impact on the social, political and conflict dynamics. Therefore, understanding the political dynamics of the operational context, and when it is appropriate to consider peace-building and state-building, is crucial to alleviate suffering in the short term or reduce poverty over the longer term.

## Transitioning from humanitarian to development approaches – when is peace-building and state-building appropriate?

The transition from humanitarian to development provision rarely, if ever, happens in a linear fashion; instead, it is often 'messy'. The supply-driven nature of humanitarian projects can make it difficult to introduce longer-term, community-led development approaches – especially if the programme has been running for a number of years. Often the same agencies provide, or support, both humanitarian assistance and longer-term development, and many countries experience a resurgence of violence or a natural disaster that set them back on their journey out of fragility.

At what stage, then, is it appropriate to introduce PBSB aims? PBSB arguably lends itself more to long-term development, but some humanitarian programmes can take a developmental approach to relief, particularly from the early recovery phase. Given that humanitarian and development responses can run for a number of years, it is essential that they incorporate ambitions for longer-term impact and sustainability, including peace- and/

or state-building. To do this, the transition between development and humanitarian activity needs to be improved, with greater flexibility, hybrid approaches (to implementation and funding) and better coordination within the international community. For example, NGOs which suddenly find themselves having to move from development 'back' to humanitarian work need to have the flexibility to retain PBSB aims; likewise, NGOs working in long-term 'humanitarian' programmes could have the flexibility to include PBSB aims by using more developmental approaches.

It is unwise to stipulate precisely when peace- and state-building objectives can be included in service delivery programmes in any FCAS. This briefing argues that, through thorough and ongoing conflict analysis, all programmes should take better account of – and where possible contribute to – peace- and state-building objectives.

## How can WASH contribute to peace- and state-building?

As already noted, recent policy discourse highlights the relationship between service delivery and PBSB. It is often described as reciprocal: conflict and fragility disrupt services; reinstating services can enhance the prospects for peaceful, stable societies and states.<sup>14</sup> Yet, the small number of reviews carried out so far means that there is limited evidence regarding the extent to which services can yield peace- or state-building dividends.<sup>15</sup> There is, however, increasing research into how local-level efforts towards peace-building can support those at the national level (see Box 1 below).

In isolation, WASH service delivery does not present the best opportunity for delivering PBSB dividends. There is evidence that investment in security, justice and education, for example, provides greater transformative possibilities.<sup>17</sup> But the research for this briefing identified *local-level opportunities* for WASH programmes to make an important *contribution* to state-building and, to a lesser extent, to peace-building, particularly in terms of *how* they are implemented.

To examine these local-level impacts, the research identified five 'intermediate entry points' for WASH service delivery to contribute to PBSB – the 'mediating factors' (*the second footnote on p. 4 and Diagram 1 on p. 9*).<sup>18</sup> These five factors show potential intermediate entry points between WASH and PBSB within the broader 'conditioning factors' of citizens' expectations and state capacity and legitimacy, to frame the context for WASH programming.

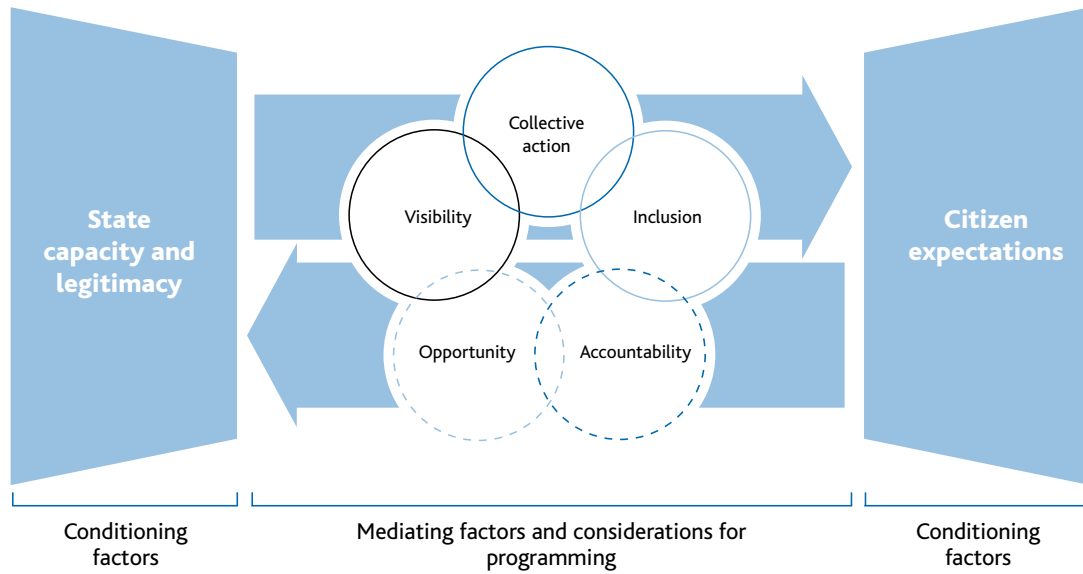
WASH programmes in DRC and South Sudan were measured against the five entry points to identify which entry points existed in practice and could therefore be best exploited in future programming. The next section outlines some examples of findings for each entry point, depicting the interactions between WASH programmes and PBSB at a local-level. The highly contextualised nature of FCAS means that it is impossible to use this research to create a PBSB 'programme blueprint'. However, in the final section of this paper, we draw on these findings to make some recommendations.

### Box 1: Impacts of peace-building at local and national level<sup>16</sup>

When peace-building is articulated in donor policy commitments, it commonly refers to ushering in wider societal peace – addressing the main causes of the conflict at a country level, or what Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) refers to as 'peace writ large'. There is little awareness of how efforts towards peace-building at local and sub-national levels ('peace writ little') can influence wider societal peace, or of what the links between the two might be. This is an important area to explore as people's day-to-day experiences of violence or insecurity in FCAS can be viewed as being separate from the national level. Addressing local-level conflicts and building 'capacities for peace' at all levels will – at the very least – be complementary to establishing 'peace writ large'.



Diagram 1: Five intermediate entry points for peace- and state-building



## The interactions between WASH programmes and local-level peace- and state-building in DR Congo and South Sudan: five intermediate entry points

The examples below show how WASH programmes can link with wider PBSB processes through the five intermediate entry points. It is important to note that more evidence was found for 'collective action' and 'visibility' than for the other three entry points. Further rigorous research is needed to gather evidence for all five entry points and to consider their applicability to other basic services.

**Collective action:** *Identifying capacities for collective action and collaboration between and within different groups for the delivery of service. For example, how can state-society relations be improved, community cohesion be strengthened and communities' capacity for collective action be increased?*

In Goja village in Central Equatoria state, South Sudan, greater stability has enabled longer-term development.

Here, Tearfund's partner, Across, has adopted Tearfund's Church and Community Mobilisation (CCM) approach.<sup>19</sup> This involves local community members and church leaders acting as facilitators to empower the local population to identify their own needs and the steps they can take as a community to meet them. WASH needs are frequently identified through this process. The key strengths of using a CCM approach, in terms of a contribution towards PBSB, include its potential to strengthen societal structures, build the resilience of communities to meet their own immediate needs and establish links with a range of local actors including church leaders, chiefs and local government officials. Through this process, there is the potential to support localised peace-building. Box 2 (on p. 10) summarises how collective action dividends could be further increased through CCM (or similar approaches).



Maper, on the outskirts of Aweil town, is a host community in South Sudan under stress from the influx of returnees from Sudan. Women return home after collecting water (2011). Layton Thompson/Tearfund.

## Box 2: Potential ways in which PBSB could be incorporated within Tearfund's Church and Community Mobilisation approach

- Help communities to realise their own resources as this can provide for stronger societal structures. The local church can add value as an entry point for peace-building if the state has not been present historically. Also, help communities set their own objectives and monitor progress towards them.
- Begin by working with communities with greater capacity for self-mobilisation, as they are likely to achieve quicker results and could act as an incentive for other, less engaged communities, although this is not guaranteed.
- Increase the engagement of state officials and help communities to recognise the state as a resource they should draw on. This will involve improving the state's visibility and helping strengthen state-society relations. For example, increase local government involvement in planning and facilitate improved dialogue between communities and government officials.
- Identify and work with influential local leaders who have convening power – eg traditional, government and faith leaders. Ensure marginalised sections of communities (not necessarily represented by leaders) are progressively involved in activities and decision-making.
- Use the strong knowledge and networks of staff and carry out conflict analysis with regular monitoring and risk assessment. This can help avoid a situation where programme design exacerbates marginalisation and heightens existing tensions. However, the potential biases of programme staff must also be taken into account.
- Support the development of advocacy skills: to enable community needs to be better articulated; to hold government to account for implementing policies and budgetary expenditure; and to support improved dialogue and collective action between communities and local authorities. Tearfund is working to incorporate advocacy into CCM to challenge the commonly held view that the state is irrelevant. One villager in South Sudan said: 'We are not much bothered with the current government; Across has opened our eyes to be self-empowered.'
- Facilitate individual communities to collaborate so that together they become a civil society network that is empowered and articulate and, ultimately, a movement that can act as a 'capacity for peace'.

**Visibility:** *Examining the relative visibility of different stakeholders delivering services, and assessing the risks for the state if non-state actors have high visibility. For example, who is visible in delivering services and what is the impact on state-society relations?*



Potential tensions and trade-offs can arise when NGOs and donors are seen as most visible in delivering services. Aweil town, South Sudan (2011). Layton Thompson/Tearfund.

In DRC, it is widely accepted that the government has a very poor track record in providing services and respondents were openly exasperated with the government. As one said: 'Who is the government? Who are they? I have never seen them. They have not brought schools or clinics to the village.' While some local leaders did acknowledge that Tearfund was working with local government, they still gave credit only to Tearfund. 'The government shouldn't be providing more development, because then there would only be more corruption. It is better that Tearfund is here.' NGOs provide an estimated 95 per cent of services in DRC and 75 per cent in South Sudan, so the high visibility of NGOs is unsurprising. Yet, this has wider implications for state-building and therefore presents a challenge for NGOs. There was no evidence that Tearfund's work was further *undermining* state authority but its collaboration and capacity-building of government did not necessarily *improve* the communities' perceptions of the government's ability and authority to delivery or oversee service provision.

In South Sudan, communities had higher expectations of government, which is perhaps reflective of the fact that the government is still relatively new and enjoying a period of 'grace', buoyed by independence. Yet, all those interviewed identified NGOs as responsible for the majority of service delivery. Participants acknowledged that NGOs need to



Temporary latrines at Apada transition camp on the outskirts of Aweil town, South Sudan (2011). Layton Thompson/Tearfund.

be visible, partly to be accountable for their work. But it was clear that NGOs are not always perceived to be responsive, fully consultative and accountable to local communities. This was a common complaint, although not one levelled directly at Tearfund's work. There were, for example, instances of boreholes being poorly sited, without consultation with local stakeholders.

Although 'visibility' can be linked to the use of logos and branding (for donors and NGOs), it is also about communities' perceptions. Promoting the visibility of government should be made more of a priority – although there also needs to be careful consideration of how to avoid promoting predatory states. Potential tensions and trade-offs can arise when NGOs are seen as most visible in delivering services – and these need to be assessed and, if they threaten to undermine institution- and state-building, they need to be mitigated. NGOs and donors need to consider how to foster ownership by *both* communities and the state, and how to support improved state-society relationships.

**Accountability:** *Identifying accountability relationships for service delivery between different groups (including local chiefs and faith leaders). For example, what opportunities are there for the state to improve its accountability within society?*

Fewer examples of this entry point were found, although it is closely linked to 'collective action'. Building on collective action, made possible through strengthened societal relations, communities can find that they feel more confident about engaging with local leaders and government officials and, potentially, about holding them to account.

Respondents in DRC said they did not necessarily expect the government to be accountable to them. 'We do not depend on the government. The government does nothing. We prefer the NGOs. You see the state of the roads... the government sees this and does nothing.' There was, however, accountability between Tearfund and the communities; while not a negative thing in itself, this did not help state-building as it reinforced a community's distrust of the state.

Importantly, in both countries, some Tearfund programmes worked through a range of groups who did have some roles linked to accountability (whether formally or informally), including local chiefs and faith leaders. Mapping the realities of accountability relationships in a particular context, and identifying entry points to work with or build on these relationships, may be a useful approach to support longer-term institution- and state-building.

**Inclusion:** *Mapping groups who are marginalised from accessing or using services and identifying potential conflict risks. For example, what are the risks of marginalising some members of, or stakeholders within, the community?*

In North Kivu, DRC, equal access to clean water was a problem in some of the communities visited. For example, in Tongo, there was clearly resentment towards military wives, who did not contribute to the cleaning or maintenance of a water source but claimed priority of access. This resentment was clearly felt towards the military camp in general, whose residents used (and appropriated) a water tap but did not contribute to community labour during construction or support maintenance. Interestingly, in this case, it was the majority (the non-military community) who felt excluded by a minority group (the military).

In some areas of South Sudan, there are high levels of insecurity and tension between returnee and host communities and a lack of interaction between them; there is also a lack of interaction between both these communities and the government. Expectations of what the government should do were found to be higher in returnee communities than in host communities. Returnees also expressed feelings of marginalisation, such as this comment made in Apada returnee camp, Northern Bahr el Ghazal: 'The government has forgotten the returnee communities.' Similarly, host communities expressed resentment and there were examples of competition such as clashes in queues for the water pump in the host village. The local *payam*\* office was accused of favouring certain communities and tensions flared into disputes over usage and payments for maintenance.

\*South Sudan consists of ten states which are sub-divided into first counties, then *payams*.



**Opportunity:** *Identifying any entry points where broader links can be made to open up economic or other opportunities. For example, how can WASH service delivery help citizens participate in the economic, social and political activities of 'normal' life?*

No concrete examples of this were observed during the field research. In economic terms, the time-saving and health benefits of water supply and sanitation services outweigh the costs according to WHO research. These same benefits may increase citizens' ability to participate in economic and social opportunities of 'normal life'.<sup>20</sup> However, the way services are delivered (the 'how' question) may also open up opportunities, potentially breaking persistent poverty cycles that have been linked to fragility. For example, in Afghanistan, Tearfund has supported the growth of a local, small-scale private sector by increasing access to clean water and improved hygiene practices. Local artisans were trained in how to construct a home-based water treatment product and supported in social marketing to create demand for the product and achieve specific changes in attitudes and behaviours in target communities. Subsidies were only given to the most vulnerable community members; as a result, 17,069 home-based treatment products were sold across 94 villages over a three-year period.

These programmatic examples demonstrate the potential to contribute to PBSB. They show how the design of WASH programmes (the 'what, who and how' of delivery) do not always contribute to building a peaceful and stable society. Conversely, when local-level and intermediate entry points for PBSB are taken into consideration, there is the opportunity to achieve small 'double dividends'. Our research findings, and wider experience, have a number of policy and practice implications for donors, NGOs and governments of FCAS, which are discussed next.

## Implications for donors

In line with the Busan New Deal, **donors need to support FCAS governments and communities to develop an inclusive national vision and plan for progressing out of fragility towards stability.** In the short to medium term, it is perhaps unrealistic, and sometimes undesirable, to expect governments of FCAS to implement or even fully oversee all basic service delivery. But even in the short term, a joint vision is needed to identify the route to lead them out of fragility – a vision which includes reference to service delivery.

In order to see innovation in programming, **donors would benefit from commissioning more pilot programmes which have both service delivery and peace- and/or state-building objectives, to use and test the five entry points identified in this research.** This seems prudent given the different interpretations of 'conflict sensitivity' and the complexity of the relationship between service delivery and peace- and/or state-building as highlighted in preliminary findings from ODI's Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium.<sup>21</sup> This would strengthen the evidence base further and help increase donor and implementing agency confidence to address directly causes of conflict and instability through service delivery.

A current truism in development is that 'what gets measured gets done' and, conversely, what does *not* get measured does not tend to get done. **Donors could amend project proposal requirements so that NGOs are asked to show how they will take account of peace- and/or state-building considerations, including ongoing conflict and context analysis, and how they will monitor project effectiveness.** Funding frameworks should acknowledge that it will not always be appropriate to include explicit peace- and/or state-building elements, but they could make clear that bids and proposals are expected to demonstrate a good reason why they will *not* do so. DFID's 'Business Case' model currently requires programme designers to state how programmes will mitigate the effects of climate change. Their proposals are also passed to a climate change adviser who can comment on their feasibility and request further refinements. For programmes taking place in FCAS, a similar mandatory conflict sensitivity review could be added to the Business Case. To this end, donors could consider pooling recent conflict or political economy analysis, and making these available to NGOs. Alternatively, donors could provide seed funding and extra time for agencies to develop a thorough contextual understanding before designing programmes.

**Donors need to allow NGOs the flexibility to respond to changing conflict dynamics, by implementing longer-term and more adaptable funding mechanisms which support approaches which are hybrids of humanitarian aid and development.** Once a conflict analysis has identified which conflict dynamics a WASH programme can engage with constructively, the programme needs the flexibility to respond to changes in these dynamics (while ensuring core service delivery objectives are met). There also needs to be a realistic acknowledgement that the transition between development and humanitarian work is usually 'messy' and non-linear. It is therefore important to step back from prescriptive models of what can or cannot be funded in FCAS. With this flexibility will come both greater potential opportunities as well as risks.

**When choosing to invest in delivering services through NGOs, donors should plan for eventually handing over strategic management of service delivery to the national government – as should NGOs.** This is to prevent parallel systems set up by donors and NGOs, due to low capacity of governments, becoming entrenched.<sup>22</sup> If these systems become fixed, not only do they contribute little to building the government's longer-term capacity, but also they can actually hinder state-building and undermine progress towards stability and out of fragility.

One way to avoid this could be to fund NGOs via the government, as early as appropriate; another way could be for NGOs to support the government to provide services. The ability of communities to meet their own needs can also be incorporated, making use of traditional and faith leaders and institutions such as the local church, to help foster development as well as peace- and state-building.

## Implications for NGOs

This briefing calls for NGOs to seek out opportunities to work 'on', rather than just 'in', situations of conflict and fragility. This means **NGOs making it standard practice to take into account peace- and/or state-building dynamics rather than considering them as an 'optional extra', which is generally ignored.** Any specific objectives to incorporate peace- and/or state-building would need to stem from a detailed analysis of the context and conflict dynamics.

As a minimum requirement, NGOs need to implement fully their own procedures for taking a conflict-sensitive approach in all programmes within FCAS. This means their **undertaking thorough and ongoing conflict analysis for all programmes, monitoring programmes' impact on these dynamics and adjusting them accordingly.** All responsible humanitarian and development NGOs will have already made this commitment, and yet this study suggests that this commitment is not always upheld in practice. All too often, conflict and context analyses are either not done at all – or left to 'sit on the shelf'; rather, they should be a core process that is reviewed, and any risks should be monitored and any positive or negative impacts checked. Ensuring that the analysis conducted is participatory can have a peace-building impact, garnering greater buy-in from stakeholders and providing a forum for them to begin to examine critically their own conflict issues.<sup>23</sup>

To achieve this, **a deep shift in culture and routine working practices is required; there is also a need for greater knowledge and more advanced skills in peace- and state-building, and for monitoring local political dynamics (and a willingness to recognise programmes' place within this).** NGO staff need to recognise peace-

and state-building dynamics as 'part of their job' when working in FCAS, alongside service delivery. The field research suggests that most peace- and/or state-building opportunities stemming from service delivery will go unrealised if they are not turned into explicit objectives. New skills related to peace- and state-building will also be needed, acquired internally or through working in consortium or partnership with other NGOs/ specialist agencies. It is important to institutionalise that knowledge to prevent it being lost. There must be caution with regard to relying on the local knowledge of staff, who might well have a nuanced understanding of local dynamics and/or biased opinions.



A water supply provided by a Tearfund partner in an IDP camp in Minova, eastern DRC. An estimated 95 per cent of services are provided by NGOs in DRC (2009). Layton Thompson/Tearfund.

**NGOs would benefit from more joint working. Collaboration is necessary both to coordinate support to state authorities in the role they wish to play in service delivery, but also to create partnerships with organisations specialising in conflict analysis or peace- and/or state-building.** NGOs can tend to compete, rather than collaborate, often due to limited donor funding. Better coordination or partnership between NGOs could help develop hybrid humanitarian-development approaches and ensure that entry points for peace- and state-building are maximised across different sectors.

Finally, given the case set out for peace- and state-building, **NGOs need to challenge their own assumption that any peace- or state-building within humanitarian or development programmes will compromise access or undermine perceptions of impartiality.** Rather, the consequences of particular peace- and state-building work should be evaluated in light of a context-specific political dynamic and conflict analysis. NGOs should also give careful consideration to the potential damage that they can do by institutionalising a parallel service provision i.e. outside the state.



## Implications for fragile and conflict-affected state governments

This research did not include an indepth analysis of government programmes, but some implications for governments do emerge nonetheless.

This research highlights that people's perceptions of how service delivery is distributed matter almost as much as the distribution itself. Governments should **ensure that national WASH and other sectoral strategies prioritise fair and equitable access to services across different groups in society and they should also make provision to communicate this message to the public effectively.**

While it is important to avoid entrenching parallel systems for service delivery, NGOs and other non-state providers can often play a vital role in meeting capacity shortfalls in essential basic services. National governments should therefore **prioritise building on constructive partnerships with NGOs, to transition from *ad hoc* arrangements towards more strategic stewardship or delivery roles.**



A young boy enjoying clean water in eastern DRC (2010). Sue Yardley/Tearfund.

## Concluding remarks

The rallying cry sent out from FCAS themselves through the Busan New Deal calls for a change to the status quo. Ninety per cent of conflicts within the last decade have occurred in countries that had already experienced a civil war, so this cycle is going to be hard to break. But, given that civil war costs the average developing country 30 years' worth of GDP growth, it is a cycle that must be broken.<sup>24</sup> To achieve this, both NGOs and donors need to make a step change both in mindset and working practice.

This briefing, and the accompanying ODI research, set out to focus the discussion on how WASH service delivery can contribute to peace- and state-building. As is often repeated by researchers, NGOs and policy-makers alike, more research is needed into the causality and relationship between service delivery and peace- and state-building. But there are steps that can be taken now. For Tearfund, this exploration of how our WASH programmes could better contribute to peace- and state-building has been a challenging process. Although more organisation-wide discussion and change are both necessary and likely to be gradual, there have already been positive responses from field staff. For example, in DRC, there is now a commitment to include and review conflict analysis in the overall programme, to ensure it is systematic; in South Sudan, field staff have integrated peace- and state-building into the new long-term strategy for the country programme.

Donors and NGOs working in FCAS need to pursue a more comprehensive and distinct humanitarian and development approach which does not shy away from addressing the root causes of fragility or from opportunities to build positive state-society relationships. Although WASH may not have the same 'transformational' impact on peace- and state-building as some other interventions, such comparisons miss a fundamental point. Given the prominence of WASH needs in FCAS, such programmes will remain essential and therefore should be designed to take advantage of these opportunities. They should *not only* deliver basic services, *but also* contribute towards building peaceful and stable societies.

NGOs, governments and donors have a duty to those communities living in FCAS to ensure that peace- and state-building benefits – of whatever size – are maximised wherever possible. If all actors, in all sectors, adopted this maximising approach, then the overall impact on peace- and state-building could be significant.

WASH is, of course, only one area of basic services. We hope that this briefing and research help stimulate others to look at how best to incorporate peace-building and state-building most effectively into their own work. We look forward to opportunities to do so more effectively ourselves by working in partnership with others.

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