

DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE

POLICY COHERENCE AND WHOLE GOVERNMENT APPROACHES IN FRAGILE STATES

Draft Concept Note Prepared by Australia and France

The Fragile States Group (FSG)

This Note, prepared jointly by Australia and France, sets out the initial concept for the work stream on Policy Coherence and Whole of Government Approaches in Fragile States. Australia and France propose to jointly lead an FSG work stream and invite participation by other DAC members and observers. FSG participants were asked to REVIEW and provide their comments. It is hoped that this version accurately reflects the views expressed.

Note: At the last Learning and Advisory Process on Difficult Partnership (LAP) meeting participants proposed to change the name of the LAP to the Fragile States Group (FSG).

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PROPOSED WORKSTREAM ON POLICY COHERENCE AND WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACHES

Background

1. The Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States identify the importance of international actors working in a coherent way across diplomatic, security, development and financial agencies. The Principles also emphasize the importance of coherent engagement with international actors by partner country agencies. This can be characterized as the need for a ‘whole of government’ approach ‘at both ends’.

2. In 2005 and 2006 the Fragile States Group (FSG) will pilot these Principles in a range of countries. An important element of the success of these pilots, and ultimately of the principles themselves, will be the extent to which they truly reflect the lessons learned by all international actors in fragile states – diplomats, those engaged in rule of law and security sector reform (defense, justice, police, prisons, etc.), and finance – as well as development practitioners. Achieving coherence in the ways that different agencies within each government engage in fragile states requires shared objectives which include development and issues of security and stability. Donor countries have different experiences in forging whole of government approaches to fragile states, reflecting the complex interrelationship between agencies, and the variety of conceptual frameworks, vocabulary and instruments for engagement that these agencies use.

3. Achieving policy coherence on both the donor and the partner government side may be one of the most critical components for successful outcomes. It is also critical that at partner country level political, economic, security and development actors are engaged in a coherent and mutually reinforcing way so as to maximize the potential impact of development efforts. Critical to underpinning whole of government approaches in fragile states is the recognition that long-term stability, support to state-building and development will only be achieved when governance and institutional capacity-building is built in to the approach. Approaches must be both timely (not waiting, for example, for conflict to end before becoming involved) and flexible (adjusting to circumstances as they arise).

4. The topic of Whole of Government approaches – in particular coordination between agencies and ministries dealing with development, security, and civil and political rights - is high on the international agenda at present. Given the importance of this, the Fragile States Group has agreed to undertake a work stream on whole of government approaches, in close liaison with the working party on aid effectiveness, the CPDC and GOVNET. Throughout this process, the OECD’s work to date on policy coherence will be an important point of reference. This includes analytical studies undertaken by the Development Centre, work ongoing in Peer Reviews and the recent “Policy Coherence for Development” initiative. Other existing work in this area from bilateral donors and the UN system will also be taken into account.

Objectives and scope

5. The work stream will aim to inform on-going efforts to improve coherence in approaches to fragile states within bilateral donors by evaluating existing practice in whole of government initiatives, and

identifying useful approaches and new directions for the future. It will cover both a general stock take and more detailed country evaluations.

Approach

6. Phase 1 of the study will include three components, as outlined below:
 - 6.1 A discussion note on the theoretical underpinnings (meaning, definition -in particular the terms Whole of Government and Policy Coherence- and scope) of a whole of government approach as applied to fragile states.
 - 6.2 Guided by the discussion note (6.1), a study of existing whole of government approaches within bilateral donors, examining inter alia the objectives of different agencies engaged; coordination and organizational structures established and their functions; legal and political authorizing environments; funding arrangements; relationship of headquarters to field level; methods of engaging external partners coherently including in particular funding to multilateral organizations; obstacles encountered; lessons learned and new directions.
 - 6.3 Guided by the discussion note (6.1), the development of case studies of initiatives to improve coherence outcomes in specific countries (where possible in countries which are already pilots for the OECD DAC Fragile States Group). Australia, for example, will evaluate its whole of government approach in the Solomon Islands and France will evaluate its approach in the Democratic Republic of Congo. These studies will focus particularly strongly on: country-specific plans and sectors of intervention (e.g. security sector where the work of the CPDC will be of particular relevance); how to engage *partner countries* coherently across their ministries and agencies; coordination in the field and between field and headquarters; methods of coordinating engagement with partner countries and other international actors; obstacles encountered; lessons learned and new directions.

Preparatory seminars may be held with different stakeholders as these studies progress

7. Phase 2 is likely to include one or more seminars to review drafts of phase 1 reports with case study sponsors and other international partners. Drafts will then be disseminated to the full FSG for review and comment. In particular, Phase 2 will be an opportunity to bring together and analyze linkages between findings from the study of existing whole of government approaches within bilateral donors (6.2) and the field perspectives from the case studies (6.3).
8. Phase 3 will complete the work stream by producing a summary report focusing on lessons learned and good practice for a practical approach to coherence in fragile states. The work will culminate with presentation of findings at an international conference, to be held in Europe.

Timing

9. Phase 1 will take place between July 2005 and March 2006, with a target to complete the work stream in the latter half of calendar year 2006.

Outputs

10. Framework or guidance on good practice for Whole of Government approaches in fragile states, informing practice among international actors at the country level. Once completed, the framework or guidance could be used to inform DAC Peer Reviews on the topic of Fragile States.

11. International conference to share good practice, resulting in increased ownership amongst the range of actors involved in Whole of Government approaches.

Next steps

12. Formation of FSG task-team on Whole of Government approaches.

13. Drafting and review of detailed terms of reference for Phase 1 studies.

14. Discussion with other DAC groups and networks, including CPDC, GOVNET and aid effectiveness (likely to be virtual discussion, culminating in a joint bureau meeting on the margins of the “Chairs of the DAC Subsidiary Bodies” meeting in November).