

# *Reframing Fragility and Resilience*

Reframing State Fragility and  
Resilience: The Way Forward

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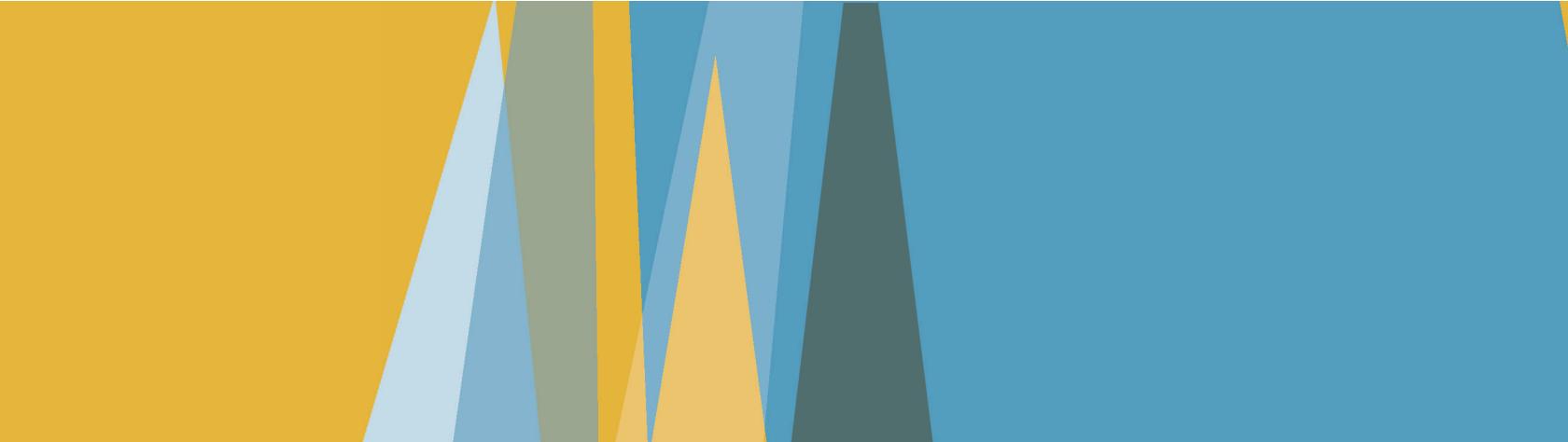


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*Series: Reframing Fragility and Resilience*

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## SECTION I: THE FRAGILE STATE CHALLENGE

Concern over the problem of fragile, failing, and failed states arose in the decades following World War II as colonial empires began to dissolve and new nations were born. However, state fragility was not widely regarded as a security threat or a significant development challenge until September 11, 2001, when al-Qaeda launched the biggest terrorist attack in U.S. history from its base in Afghanistan, a fragile state that provided a safe haven for jihadists.

Despite decades of debate, there is still no consensus among academics or policy makers on the definition of state fragility or state resilience. Nor is there agreement on the most effective policy responses. Military action has a role in fighting terrorism, but it is ineffective in rebuilding states. Development programs can do good, but they generally aim at promoting economic growth, protecting human rights, alleviating

poverty, and fostering democracy—goals that apply to poor states generally and which may have a different impact on states experiencing severe inequality or violent extremism. Significant progress has been made in one major goal: reducing global poverty. However, extreme poverty persists, with about forty percent of it in weak and fragile states. The OECD estimates that approximately 1.4 billion people live in fragile states; by 2030, that population could grow to 1.9 billion.

Part of the reason that international responses have not been more successful is that assumptions that underlie conventional policies have not been questioned sufficiently and alternative approaches not explored as they apply specifically to weak and fragile states. It was in the spirit of exploring new approaches that this project to reframe state fragility and resilience was undertaken.

## SECTION II: THE FRAGILITY/RESILIENCE MODEL

The Fragility/Resilience Model views a society holistically, encompassing both sides of the equation—vulnerabilities and strengths—and not fragility alone, as in most models of state fragility. (See figure 1)

It depicts fragility and resilience on a continuum, with influencing factors impacting simultaneously, not sequentially. This creates internal tensions and contradictions. The more strengths within the society, the better off it is, enabling it to tolerate pressures, overcome shocks, and manage positive transformation. The significance of the influencing factors varies by country, time, and context.

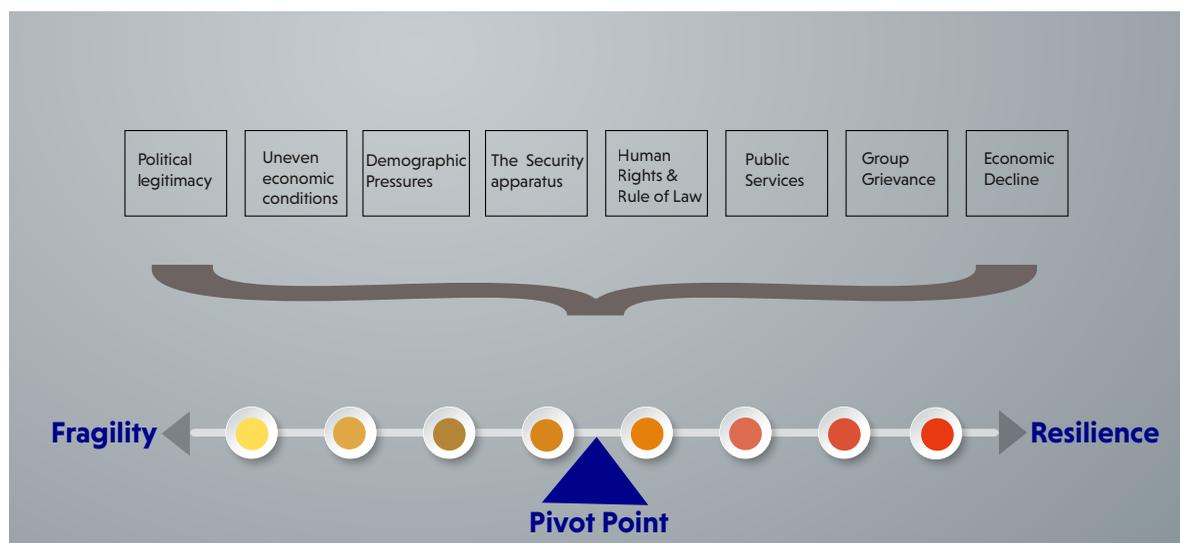
State resilience does not mean simply the capacity to bounce back from a shock to a pre-existing status quo, for that would mean returning to conditions which helped create fragility in the first place. In this model, resilience means the capacity of a society to do better than before, able to transform itself toward a stronger state than it was previously.

The mid-way pivot point refers to an unstable

equilibrium, in which a state teeters or balances between fragility and resilience—which is where most fragile states are. It is an intermediate juncture, which suggests that a state could go in either direction. This situation could last for a long time, either in authoritarian regimes that block avenues of non-violent change or in democratic regimes burdened with overwhelming challenges, such as corruption, factionalism, ethnic rivalry, or economic misfortune. In either case, the pivot point suggests long-term uncertainty and ambiguity about the country's future.

The rate of change is important. While the pivot point is depicted mid-way on the continuum, it could shift in either direction in individual cases. For example, a country may remain fragile for years without large scale violent conflict (wherein the left pole in the continuum would tilt upward), but face critical crises from natural disasters, regime change, security threats, or economic disasters that could bring it to the point of collapse. Alternatively, a relatively resilient society could confront

FIGURE 1. THE FRAGILITY/RESILIENCE MODEL INFLUENCING FACTORS



growing fragility and internal conflict in the face of unanticipated political or economic upheavals. The pivot point, in sum, is movable, depending upon the rate of change in the influencing factors. The faster the rate of change, particularly in a trajectory toward fragility, the greater the chance of conflict.

Some influencing factors are more significant than others. Individually, the eight major indicators examined, in order of importance, are: political legitimacy, demographic pressures, uneven economic conditions, the security apparatus, human rights and the rule of law, public services, group grievance, and poverty and economic decline. However, the most significant impact derives from precise combinations of these factors.

The likely fault line for state decline, for example, rests on three critical factors: the loss of political legitimacy, growing group grievance, and poor macroeconomic performance. This cluster correlates with a high risk of conflict; collectively, they represent early warning signs of impending instability.

The likely route of recovery is based on six factors: improved political legitimacy, better public services, decreased demographic pressures, reduced inequality, good macroeconomic growth, and respect for human rights and the rule of law. This confirms the conventional wisdom that state recovery is more complex and harder to achieve than state decline.

The influencing factors can have different impacts over different time spans. For example, economic growth, though important, has less impact on long-term stability than usually thought. Reducing uneven economic development is more important for long-term stability and conflict prevention, for it is tied to political legitimacy and group grievance. This explains why middle income and rapidly growing economies often remain fragile states.

The original objective was to examine the economic correlates of state fragility in conflict affected states. To accomplish this goal, a broader range of social and political variables that impact economic life had to

be included. It placed economic issues—specifically, macroeconomic growth and inequality—in the context of wider factors affecting conflict risk, defined as large scale, violent civil unrest or armed confrontation among communities, groups, or factions within a society. Moreover, this broader approach permitted investigation into one of the biggest gaps in the literature among the various approaches assessing state fragility: the lack of weighed indicators.

In this respect, the project paved new ground by probing the relative influence of major drivers of state fragility and recovery. Far more research is needed. But gathering empirical data to weigh the major indicators of conflict risk, combined with the shift toward a more balanced assessment of fragility and resilience, as described below, reframes the fragility/resilience dialogue.

This activity yielded significant insights. It showed, for example, that macroeconomic growth and inequality tend to operate differently at different times in a conflict's life cycle, the former being more important at the beginning of recovery while reducing the latter is necessary to attain sustained recovery. A fault line of fragility and a promising route of recovery were also identified. The primary importance of political legitimacy and group grievance was another striking finding, examined in detail in three case studies. An additional finding concerned the promotion of gender equality: while in most societies, women's advancement tends to promote development and security, it can also promote violent conflict by triggering a backlash in conservative societies with strong religious constituencies. This suggests that women's programs should be designed not only to advance women, but to anticipate and mitigate negative reactions among traditional male opponents of women's rights.

Based on these and other results discussed below, the study suggests that conventional development goals and traditional measures of development may



not be sufficient for evaluating fragility or promoting resilience. Surely, they may promote improvements in many sectors, such as health, education, housing, etc., but in fragile societies that typically have mixed populations, experience violent upheavals, and suffer from crippling poverty, progress must aim at addressing more than national statistical improvements. It must address fundamental inequities, legitimacy deficits, group grievance, and political polarization. To become truly resilient, most fragile states must change social structures that have been based on exclusion to ones based on inclusion. The political, economic, and social life of the nation must be opened up to allow more public participation, particularly by the poor, the young, women, ethnic and religious minorities, and indigenous peoples.

Methodologically, the research was conducted in three phases, employing both quantitative and qualitative methods. In the first phase, two sets of regression analysis were conducted to test correlations between conflict risk, as the independent variable, and eight social, economic, and political variables selected from the Fragile States Index (FSI) as the dependent variables. The research covered 91 countries from 2006 to 2012, inclusive. Additional quantitative data was collected from the World Bank Governance Indicators and 66 other statistical sources to measure goals of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, comparing the results of the different sets of data and testing them in selected countries.<sup>2</sup>

The results of the quantitative analysis are contained in the first paper in this series: “Exploring the Correlates of Economic Growth and Inequality in Conflict Affected Environments: Fault Lines and Routes of Recovery.” In the second phase, three in-depth case studies were conducted on Egypt: “Fragility and Resilience in Revolutionary Egypt”; Pakistan: “An Unfinished Project”; and Honduras: “From Oasis of Tranquility to Killing Field”. The third phase, summarized in this paper, contains the principal findings, implications, and recommendations.

## SECTION III: CLARIFYING CONCEPTS

Before proceeding to the findings, it is important to clarify five key concepts that are often misunderstood or not fully addressed regarding fragility and resilience:

### 1. *Fragility and resilience are part of a continuum.*

Scholars and practitioners have given disproportional attention to state fragility over resilience. The study of fragility gets considerable interest, while state resilience as a concept is not well developed. It is usually associated with economically well-off states that are stable and reasonably well-governed. In fact, the distinction between fragile and resilient states is a false duality, since no state (other than those that have entirely collapsed or descended into full scale civil war) has entirely “failed.” And no state—not even the much admired Scandinavian countries that rank among the least at-risk states in the Fragile States Index (FSI)—is entirely “resilient,” with no internal problems or vulnerabilities. Many established liberal democracies with strong economies have weaknesses (witness the surprise vote in Great Britain to exit the European Union and the lingering controversy over whether Scotland should declare itself independent), while many shattered societies have unrecognized strengths (such as the entrepreneurial spirit of Somalis, and pockets of peace returning to Mogadishu, despite two decades of war).

In recognition of the need to avoid stereotyping, the OECD in 2015 moved away from a state-centric approach, choosing to focus instead on “states of fragility,” or the circumstances that promote state weakness.<sup>3</sup> The OECD struggled to reframe the concept of fragility, but its approach undervalued the importance of the state. Using its own rating system, it rejected the use of a list of failed states, per se, and instead provided an updated list of “states of fragility,” a distinction that, in the end, did not make much of

a difference. Rather than spending time debating the value of lists, we should recognize that fragility and resilience are contained within the same unit. If they are based on sound analysis, lists, however they are constructed, can be useful measures of how states balance the two tendencies. Measured over time, lists can track trends, and show whether states are improving or declining. In any event, using the fragility/resilience lens is perhaps a more productive and accurate way to understand the complex dynamics of distressed states.

### 2. *No state is too rich, too powerful, or too big to fail.*

Most people tend to believe that state fragility is confined to small and/or poor states. Yet, the Soviet Union, a former superpower, split into 15 states without a civil war, an invasion, or a coup d'état. Yugoslavia, after a horrific civil war, broke into five states. Czechoslovakia peacefully divided into two states. India, the world's second largest country, has been twice partitioned, both times with violent upheavals. The lesson, borrowing from Tolstoy, is that many states can fail, but each fails in its own way.

States can “fail” or exhibit extreme fragility without violent conflict or they can decay slowly through poor governance and economic decline. Venezuela has been deemed a failed state by some commentators because its economy has been so badly mismanaged that its people have been driven into hunger, even though there has not been large scale violent unrest. Based on the IMF's 2016 projections, Venezuela in that year evidenced the “world's worst economic growth, worst inflation and ninth-worst unemployment rate... It also has the second-worst murder rate and an infant mortality rate that's gotten 100 times worse the past four years. Its currency, going by black market rates, has lost 99 percent of its value since the start of 2012. And this happened despite Venezuela having the

world's largest oil reserves.”<sup>4</sup>

3. **Some states have sustained fragility.** Ultimately, the core measure of fragility is the extent to which a state fails to fulfill its obligations to its own citizens, as measured by the breakdown of security, the implosion of the economy, delegitimization of the state, fragmentation of elites, massive human rights violations, loss of the monopoly of the use of force, and/or the disintegration of the territory as a single physical unity. The precise time when a state is deemed to have failed may vary, but there is little question that a number of states, while not immersed in violence, are nonetheless “spinning into chaos and collapse.”<sup>5</sup> In the summer of 2016, these ranged from Syria, the most violent active conflict, to Venezuela, the most economically stressed, with many cases in between. But it is important to recognize that some states may be able to sustain a level of “fragile equilibrium” for years, if not decades, if some of the pressures are relieved through brain drain, emigration, repression, human rights violations, external support, military dominance, economic safety nets, and the reluctance of outside parties to intervene for fear of making matters worse or getting embroiled in local conflicts. From North Korea to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, such states may maintain the status quo for decades, but they are not resilient in the positive sense used here. To the contrary, they are brittle states that loom as potentially explosive hotspots once their leaders are removed and their coping mechanisms fail.
4. **Regional fragility is becoming more common.** Some analysts talk of the “contagion” of state fragility, as if it were a disease carried across borders. The better explanation is that neighboring states tend to share common geographies, histories, social traits, environmental characteristics, and political attributes.

Often there are interlocking networks that ignore borders, refugees pouring across boundaries seeking safety, or talented individuals opting out of society in a brain drain. These phenomena reflect vulnerabilities that can also set off reactions in other regions that had not previously been deemed vulnerable, including those that are not party to the internal conflicts, such as the European migrant crisis caused by people from the Middle East and Africa escaping violence and poverty. Over a million people sought asylum in Europe between July 2015 and May 2016, pouring into the continent from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and multiple countries in Africa, significantly changing the demographics of the receiving states and testing European unity as never before.

But some states exhibit extraordinary resilience. Botswana is an example of a country that has remained peaceful and prosperous in the midst of regional turmoil, especially throughout the latter 20th century, with conflict raging over apartheid, civil wars occurring in Mozambique and Angola, and political dictatorship and economic decay in Zimbabwe. A representative democracy, Botswana was once poor. It has not only remained democratic, but boasts one of the highest economic growth rates in the continent and one of the highest rankings within sub-Saharan Africa in the Human Development Index.

5. **Resilience in conflict affected states requires systemic transformation, not merely recovery from a shock.** In physics, psychology, and environmental studies, resilience is defined as a process of bouncing back from a shock and returning to an original condition, or the ability to absorb stress. An analogy is a stretched elastic band returning to its normal size after being let go. However, the notion of resilience as a “bounce back” is not an apt description of what is required in fragile states, for that would mean returning



to the conditions which led to fragility in the first place. Instead, state resilience should be viewed as the capacity to transform the state in its capacity to serve its citizens and fulfill its obligations as a sovereign entity, a process that is often uneven, subject to setbacks, and can take decades or even generations to complete.

Development programs need to understand the distinction between economic development to promote prosperity, on the one hand, and institutional resilience that promotes sustainable security and equitable growth, on the other. Building health clinics in one locale may help save lives, but it does not mean the health care system has been transformed to benefit everyone. Training some police units to be more effective in fighting crime does not mean that the force serves and protects civilians and respects human rights. A number of institutional pillars of society, such as the educational system, the judicial system, the bureaucracy, the military, and the legislative and executive branches of government will need to

be more representative of society and serve it more effectively.

Building resilience does not have to be confined to the state sector. Encouraging leadership in civil society, the private sector, academia, the media, labor, entertainment, sports, and other facets of society strengthens social capital, building resilience from the ground up. In fact, there may be greater receptivity at the local government level or in the non-governmental sector than at the central government. By asking where the reservoirs of resilience are in a society—whether it comes from ethnic bonding, women’s organizations, market traders, small scale entrepreneurs, rural farmers, innovative young professionals, or pockets of good governance at the municipal or provincial levels—one may identify opportunities in unexpected places. Nigeria’s health system is not known for being very effective, for example, but the Lagos State government, one of the most efficient and prosperous in the nation, was key to the country’s effective response in controlling the spread of the Ebola virus.

## SECTION IV: PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

With these clarifications in mind, we can proceed to highlight the principal findings. The sequence in which they are listed does not indicate an order of importance.

- **Ranking of fragility indicators:** Measured individually, the rank order of the eight FSI indicators correlated with conflict risk, in descending order with their coefficients, is: State Legitimacy (7.13), Demographic Pressures (6.81),<sup>6</sup> Uneven Development (6.58), Security Apparatus (6.29), Human Rights and the Rule of Law (5.93), Public Services (5.72), Group Grievance (5.18), and Poverty and Economic Decline (4.42). Their importance, however, is best understood when joined in combination with other indicators.
- **Fault line of fragility:** Measured collectively, a cluster of three main factors—the lack of political legitimacy, growing group grievance, and poor macroeconomic performance—create a slippery slope for fragility and violence. The intensity and pace of change varies considerably in each country, but an increase in the intensity of all three factors in any one state, particularly over a short period, is an early warning sign of trouble coming.
- **Route of recovery:** The pathway to recovery is enabled by a cluster of six factors—improved political legitimacy, better public services, decreased demographic pressures, reduced inequality, good macroeconomic performance, and better human rights protection. This combination of six factors, in contrast to the three factors driving fragility, confirms the convention wisdom that it is much easier to bring a state down than it is to build it up.
- **Gender and conflict:** The status of women is an important hallmark of state fragility and a key measure of whether a state is on a path of resilience. However, one of the surprising results of this

research is an exception to the generalization linking women's advancement to a lowering of conflict risk. The academic literature has shown that women's empowerment tends to reduce conflict, a conclusion that held in Egypt and Honduras. However, in Pakistan, greater female empowerment, as measured by female labor force participation, was correlated with heightened conflict risk. Pakistan's conservative Muslim clerics resist the advancement of women's rights; it is more difficult to promote women's rights in that country than in many others. Gender-based development strategies should anticipate such reactions in deeply religious states and shape programs that educate men, as well as women, on the benefits of advancing women's rights, protecting women against violence, and promoting women's labor participation.

Another observation concerns the pivotal role of gender in state fragility. In all three case studies, women's leadership was tied to other issues, such as corruption, land disputes, drug trafficking, gang warfare, and inequality. Women were in the forefront of the revolutionary protests in Egypt's Tahir Square, they have resisted the takeover of indigenous land in Honduras, and they have asserted their right to education in Pakistan. These women are transformers pushing for change; they and others could play a central role in building resilience if they and their rights are protected.

- **Primacy of political legitimacy:** Political legitimacy is a fundamental “driver of drivers” in fragile states, one that can pull other variables in its direction. One of the most significant findings in this research is the primacy of political legitimacy, individually or in combination with other factors. In Egypt and Honduras, of the eight variables examined, delegitimization of the state was the variable that was most closely linked with conflict risk. In Egypt,

there were three changes of government in as many years following the 2011 revolution. In Honduras, lingering conflicts over the 2005-2006 election of President Zelaya and the 2009 coup d'état created open political wounds in the body politic that have not healed. In both cases, the quest for political legitimacy is an ongoing struggle. One common thread that appears to be common to many fragile states lacking legitimacy is a high level of corruption. When it becomes endemic, political delegitimization grows and conflict risk rises.

Not enough attention is spent on identifying the multiple sources of legitimacy. In addition to elections, legitimacy can be gained from charismatic leadership, improved security, good economic performance, provision of public services, cultural pride, ethnic or religious affinities, political inclusion, traditional practices, and an active civil society, among others. Several possibilities are available to policy makers in fragile states to build social trust, lower political tensions, and promote peaceful settlements.

- **Importance of group grievance:** The second most important variable in the aggregate analysis is group grievance. However, in the Pakistan case, it was the primary factor linked with conflict risk, reflecting the highly fragmented social, economic, religious, and political divisions in that society. Lack of political legitimacy was a close second in Pakistan, a function of weak national identity, the prominent role of the military in government, the high level of violence, and rampant corruption. Overall, political legitimacy and group grievance were closely linked throughout the study with conflict risk.
- **Differential impacts of economic growth and inequality:** Much has been written on the relationship between violence, poverty, inequality, and poor

macroeconomic growth. The prevailing view is that economic growth and job creation are vital to alleviate poverty and reduce conflict risk. This study sheds some further light on the differential impact of growth and inequality. First, macroeconomic growth was one of the six most important variables in driving fragility and resilience in conflict affected societies. But growth is not as important as usually thought for long term stability. Reduced inequality is more important for long term resilience, in large part because it is linked to group grievance and delegitimization of the state. Secondly, the research tends to support growing skepticism about the link assumed between joblessness and extreme violence. Mercy Corps, for one, has asserted that “youth do not participate in violence because they are poor or could not find a job. They do it because they are angry.”<sup>7</sup> This research tends to support the Mercy Corps view. It suggests that relative deprivation—the perception that others are getting rich at the expense of the poor—is what drives the deep anger that produces extreme violence. That narrative is also consistent with the narrative of jihadists which depicts Islam as an embattled religion, whose adherents have been oppressed and are justified in seeking revenge.<sup>8</sup>

Societies with extreme inequality tend to have high levels of group grievance, low levels of political legitimacy, and extensive corruption, despite economic growth. Violent conflicts erupt when there is a widespread public perception of deep and enduring economic and social injustice, with little chance of a future in which the have-nots could hope to change their fortunes. This was seen in different ways in Egypt, Pakistan, and Honduras, all of which experienced political protests framed in terms of calls for social justice. Notably, in all three countries, redress of injustices was not forthcoming despite

radical political upheavals, such as coups, popular uprisings, organized protests, revolution, electoral upsets, or assassinations. The ousting of political leaders did not redirect the countries from a path of fragility to resilience because their social structures remained intact, while only the elites rotated at the top. In some instances, this made matters worse, leaving deep scars of resentment in the aftermath of violence that could re-emerge down the road.

- **Demographic factors and conflict risk:** Demographic pressures constituted the second most important conflict driver in the aggregate research, and a reduction in demographic pressures was identified as an important ingredient for resilience. Demographic factors, however, reflect many things, including natural disasters, disease, environment, pollution, food scarcity, malnutrition, water scarcity, population growth, youth bulge, and mortality trends. Nearly all fragile states suffer from one or more of these problems, with the youth bulge being among the most prominent. In most fragile states, at least 40-50% of the population typically is under the age of 25. Combined with rapid urbanization, social media, geographical mobility, and rising expectations, a youthful population could present an enormous political challenge or an enormous opportunity. Failure to meet expectations can expose state vulnerability, intensify group grievance, and contribute to the loss of political legitimacy. However, some observers believe that if properly channeled, the youth bulge can constitute a wave of middle class innovation that can catapult poor societies into middle income ones.

It is worth noting, at this point, that of the three cases studied, Pakistan suffers the most from demographic pressures. With a population of approximately 180 million, it is the sixth most populous country in the

world. It has approximately three million Afghan refugees and internally displaced persons. Repeated natural disasters, such as devastating earthquakes, floods, droughts, and cyclones, have plagued the country for decades. Pakistan bears the dubious distinction of having the second highest rate of children out of school worldwide, just behind Nigeria. Tax collection is notoriously inadequate with only about 1% of the adult population registered in the tax system and a mere 9% of the country's wealth taxed, one of the world's worst examples of tax evasion. One positive sign of progress was Pakistan's ability to reduce its poverty rate in the mid-2000s, raising nearly 15 million people out of poverty. However, its population grew by 40 million over the same period, diluting economic gains and worsening other problems, such as child labor, discrimination against girls, and a shortage of jobs, housing, health, and educational opportunities.

## SECTION V: IMPLICATIONS

### COMMONALITIES AMONG THE CASE STUDIES

One of the objectives of this study was to see if there were commonalities among the diverse countries that would deepen our understanding of fragility. Specifically, was there a common social structure that impedes resilience? Would it be discoverable in countries as geographically, culturally, and politically diverse as Egypt, Pakistan, and Honduras?

At first glance, one is skeptical about countries as different as these. However, there were some striking similarities among them. All had legitimacy crises brought on, in large part, from forcible changes in leadership. In all three, corruption was endemic. And in all three, the military was the strongest institution of the state, its power rooted not only in control of the armed forces but in ownership of substantial portions of the economy. In all three, at critical turning points, the military exerted strong political influence in determining the outcome of leadership struggles, while protecting its own interests.

In Egypt, the army stood back and did not intervene to stop the popular overthrow of an established leader. However, it did intervene to overthrow the next democratically elected leader, ousting him in a coup. The coup leader, who was subsequently elected president, co-opted other state institutions, bending the legislature and the judiciary to his will. In Pakistan, the army has been the power behind the throne for decades. In the latest iteration, the army forced a hybrid style regime on an elected leader who was facing popular demonstrations. The army struck a bargain in which the Prime Minister was allowed to stay in office if he shared power, especially over national security and foreign affairs. In Honduras, the army overthrew an elected leader as well. Ever since, Honduran politics have been in turmoil from contested elections, financial scandals, human rights abuses, drug trafficking, gang warfare, and land disputes. Another commonality is the treatment of women. In all three countries, a patriarchal culture and political turmoil have resulted in further

repression and violent abuse of women, with high levels of impunity for offenders.

The most salient feature common to all three countries is a tight-knit power structure, a network of elite politicians, military officers, bureaucrats, and business moguls that operate a closed political system. Some people describe this as a “deep state” or shadow government. North, Wallis, and R. Weingast described it more generically as a Limited Access Order (LAO).<sup>9</sup> Power resides in a small set of interconnected personalities linked by familial ties, administrative positions, social backgrounds, personal status, and asset control. A LAO contrasts with other autocratic or hierarchical regimes, such as patrimonial systems where power comes from one leader, or prebendal systems that rest on patron-client relationships. Although there may be some overlap among the different models, particularly with regards to the use of patronage, in a LAO, the key to power lies in the monopoly of resources: land, the armed forces, education, wealth, control of trade, credit, property rights, legal institutions, access to employment, and social mobility. Poverty is structural, pervasive, and persistent; competition over resources is intense; affinity group relationships are the key to individual advancement; and violence is common.

By contrast, in an Open Access Order (OAO), there may be a hierarchical social structure but the public has greater access to key resources, such as the educational system, the military, and the private sector.<sup>10</sup> There is more political and economic mobility and less winner-take-all competition. In an OAO, political legitimacy is enhanced, group grievance is reduced, and conflict risk diminished. Change is more likely to occur with minimum violence.

Not all fragile societies fit this model. However, it is a useful way to explain the type of social structure that operates in many fragile states that experience extreme violence and extreme poverty. They are not all dictatorships; some may even be dominated by rival sets of competitive elites or even be electoral democracies. Typically, however, they all have

widespread corruption, weak enforcement of the rule of law, severe inequalities, deep seated grievances, and lingering political divisions over the legitimacy of the government.

Therefore, to make progress toward resilience, there must be transformation from an exclusive LAO, or a closed society, toward an inclusive OAO, a more open society. Donors and development practitioners could encourage that kind of change over time by making distinctions between projects that may alleviate poverty, curb corruption, and contain violence in selected communities or sectors, on the one hand, but which have limited impact on transforming the underlying structure that permits elites to monopolize resources and keep marginalized populations from accessing them, even if that change is incremental, uneven, and have uncertain outcomes.

South Africa is an example of a country that underwent a dramatic, but still unfinished transformation in 1994, when a new constitution was enacted, the black population was enfranchised, and Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress were elected. That political shift occurred against a legacy of apartheid, a system in which the economy, health care, housing, land ownership, and the educational system were designed specifically to keep the majority down. While political power was transferred to the majority, less progress has been made in other sectors, such as the educational system, though more schools have been built and more black children enrolled. The country still lacks a well-educated workforce that is internationally competitive, the concentration of wealth remains largely in the hands of whites, and hundreds of “service delivery” protests from the masses occur on a regular basis, objecting to joblessness, lack of basic services, and corruption. Still, the constitutional foundations of the country, including independent courts, a free press, and electoral integrity are likely to endure.<sup>11</sup> In short, the country has made a significant but incomplete transformation from a LAO to an OAO. Its resilience in the long term will depend on how well, and how soon, it completes the process.

## PREVENTING AND COUNTERING EXTREME VIOLENCE

Meager research has been done on delineating the various types of violence that plague fragile states apart from global terrorism, genocide, ethnic cleansing, insurgency, and coup d'états. Alex de Waal pointed out that there is a frequent tendency in the popular media and academia to overclassify events into single issue narratives that take on a life of their own, becoming “morality plays with clear heroes and villains, in which we play the role of saviors.”<sup>12</sup> In reality, “there is never only one story that can be written about a war or a massacre.”<sup>13</sup> It is obvious that the labeling of one source of violence, such as a genocide or a coup d'état, may not convey the full complexities and fluidities of violence occurring in the country as a whole, leading to misguided policies based on false or distorted understanding of what is stake and what outside intervention can or should do. Getting the picture right is the first task of dealing with conflict affected societies.

Putting aside foreign invasions, military occupations, global terrorism, and forcible regime change—types of international violence that are beyond the scope of this paper—one may identify five basic categories of extreme violence in fragile states that primarily emanate from internal sources. In many instances, a fragile state is dealing with more than one type of violence at the same time:

1. Organized insurgencies, counter-insurgencies, and civil wars fueled by strong ideological, religious, or sectarian identities led by personalities with a particular political agenda;
2. Citizen-based rebellions, revolts, popular protests, and revolutionary upheavals motivated by deep internal grievances, such as endemic corruption, brutal oppression, and social marginalization;
3. Criminal violence and thuggery from urban gangs, drug cartels, corrupt syndicates, and other illicit networks (e.g., piracy, kidnapping, warlordism), usually driven by profit, protection of turf, and power struggles;

4. State-sponsored violence by praetorian guards, death squads, intelligence operatives, or state security agencies against political opponents, dissidents, activists, indigenous peoples, and other perceived enemies of the regime; and
5. Communal clashes among differentiated populations (e.g., herders vs. pastoralists), often backed by irregular local militias, ethnic nationalists, and “self-defense” vigilantes.

The security environment is further complicated by secret cults, radical sects, nihilistic rebels, religious zealots, and local disputes, such as cattle raids, which sometimes spiral into larger conflicts. Terrorist organizations originally motivated by religious objectives, for example, have often turned to criminal activities for financial survival. The leadership, resources, and motivations of these groups vary, and strategies to counter them must be tailored to the particularities of each threat or combination of threats. Interventions—whether they are military, humanitarian, developmental, diplomatic, or political—not only need to take account of these complexities, but be mindful of the harm that can be done by ignoring, downgrading, or mischaracterizing any of them to achieve larger outcomes. That is another reason why reframing the debate over fragility to include identifying elements of resilience is so important. Without the more balanced view, opportunities for peace may be missed and the pitfalls and weaknesses of violent organizations may be overlooked.

From a developmental point of view, one feature common to all violent power structures in fragile states that needs to be addressed more directly is recruitment. The ability to replenish forces is vital for the survival of violent organizations. Several methods are used, including kidnapping, intimidation, promises of employment and marriage, and other material, spiritual, and psychological rewards. Recruits range from “true believers” who adopt the group’s cause as their own and internalize its ideology,

to marginalized youth looking for a sense of belonging, a higher purpose, protection from a violent environment, or a means to empowerment.

Recruitment is generally aimed at 15 to 29 year olds, a demographic that constitutes roughly half of the population in most fragile states. Since many of these countries have soaring population growth rates, extremist groups have an endless pool of potential recruits.

The struggle against extreme violence will depend not only on battlefield victories, winning the hearts and minds of the public, and cutting off financial resources to extremists. Each of these strategies plays a role, but in the long term, success in countering extreme violence will rest on the ability of the threatened governments to attract youth in making their life choices and on their ability to provide avenues through which youthful aspirations can be fulfilled.

At its core, then, the battle against extreme violence is an existential battle for the youth. This not only applies to radical Islamic organizations, such as ISIS, al-Qaeda, al-Shabaab, and Boko Haram, but to insurgent groups, such as the Pakistani Taliban, Uganda’s Lord’s Resistance Army, and urban gangs in Honduras. If recruitment falters, radical groups and gangs will weaken; fragmentation and in-fighting will grow. This is already happening in some organizations. Lagging recruitment could also provide an opportunity to kick start peace negotiations, especially if combatants are offered a way out (e.g., amnesty; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) support; job training; and political participation).

For the true believers, the appeal to radicals to defect may require higher order incentives that reference sacred values or moral imperatives, such as religious values; a promise of airing grievances through a truth and reconciliation commission or compensation to a marginalized population; or a commitment to end



impunity for those in government that are engaged in systemic corruption.<sup>14</sup> Strategies must also counter the tight-knit, band-of-brothers loyalty and solidarity that is generated among fighters in the front lines. Male bonding might also be used to turn around entire units, with officers getting their units to defect together.

Most important of all, efforts to prevent or counter extreme violence must be seen as legitimate in the eyes of the affected communities with mechanisms available through which to express and redress their fundamental grievances. That means including key stakeholders in the design of post-conflict political settlements and state-building efforts, from the provision of public services to the content of peace agreements that involve new constitutions, fresh elections, amnesties, restitution, land reform, and DDR.

El Salvador's experience is a good example of how a settlement that was initially successful can unravel. The peace settlement that ended the civil war in 1992 included agreements on security sector reform, professionalization of the justice system, and demobilization of rebel forces. It resulted initially in a significant reduction of the murder rate, but success was short lived because it was not seen as legitimate by most Salvadorans. By 2000, low income communities remained marginalized, and local gangs surged back to fill the empty spaces left by state neglect. In 2003, the government instituted *Mano Dura* (Iron Fist), a militaristic campaign to eliminate the resurgent gangs. In response, the gangs intensified their activities and expanded their territory. Death squads re-emerged and homicide rates increased: "Technical reforms did not suffice to truly transform the culture and practices with the state security apparatus... Its own members...joined death squads and used extrajudicial violence."<sup>15</sup>

El Salvador's settlement collapsed for three basic reasons. The political order lacked legitimacy due, in part, to a badly divided and ineffective government.<sup>16</sup>

The grievances of poor, marginalized communities that represented roughly forty percent of the population were not sufficiently addressed in the aftermath of the agreement. And while major reforms were adopted, they did not eliminate gangs; the state vowed to wipe them out, leading to a vicious spiral of violence. By 2015, El Salvador had again claimed the highest homicide rate in the world. Most of all, the opportunity to sway youth away from radicalization was squandered. Many wanted to be political engaged or were willing to consider alternatives, but lacked the means of doing so. Reversion to the gang culture appeared to be the only other alternative.<sup>17</sup>

## SECTION VI: CONCLUSIONS

What does this study tell us about the way forward? It is probably best to break down this question into three parts: What is different? What is new? And what is most important?

### WHAT IS DIFFERENT?

- **Reframing the concepts of fragility and resilience:**

One of the major innovations introduced in this research is the conceptual reframing of state fragility. We changed the concept in three ways.

First, we employed a holistic view which treats fragility and resilience as part of a single continuum; this reshapes the analysis to include evidence of both phenomena. Currently, the emphasis in the literature is on fragility, while comparatively little attention is focused on resilience.

Second, we expanded the meaning of resilience. The conventional definition defines resilience as the capacity to “bounce back” after a shock to the system. We found this to be too narrow. Instead, we define resilience as a set of qualities or traits that transform the economic, social, or power structure of the society so that it does not recreate the conditions that led to fragility in the first place. Resilience can coexist with fragility; societies are not all “fragile” or all “resilient.”

Third, the challenge of transformation is that it consists of more than actions that are fundamentally humanitarian, palliative, or reformist in nature. These may all be good practices that are worthy of support. However, transformation must be systemic in nature, exhibiting change in an institution, power structure, or societal sector that makes society more inclusive. For example, constructing more schools may increase literacy, but it will not necessarily raise the quality of education, generate social cohesion, or promote social mobility.

This distinction has important implications for development. Policy makers, donors, and practitioners need to be able to distinguish programs that do some good and/or are humanitarian in nature from those that are genuinely transformative. Such assessments must be done at all levels. This requires long-range thinking, clear benchmarks and guidelines, reliable data that reveals trend lines over time, and—most of all—convincing evidence that local populations are benefiting from the interventions.

Dramatic transformations have already been made in several states. India suffered from chronic famine for decades. In the 20th century, it was widely predicted to be facing catastrophic starvation. However, the Green Revolution, economic liberalization, and democratization made India one of the fastest growing economies and the largest democracy in the world by the 21st century.

Similarly, South Africa also defied common predictions. While most people felt the country was careening toward a race war in the 1960s, at the height of apartheid, the white minority government negotiated a transition to majority rule with anti-apartheid forces in the 1980s and 1990s, without an outside mediator or international peacekeeping mission overseeing the process. For many years, Colombia was also widely thought to be losing its five-decade old war with leftist rebels in the 1990s; now the conflict is winding down with a peace agreement that promises land ownership for poor farmers, rural development, political participation of rebels, and transitional justice. South Korea, Taiwan, Poland, Japan, and Germany, while taking very different paths under very different conditions, nonetheless experienced radical political and economic transformations.

Transformative thinking needs to occur not only in countries of concern, but also among donors, intergovernmental institutions, and developed countries,

including organizations that work in the development and security communities. The particular histories, cultures, and social compositions of individual states also need to be factored in. The debate that emerges and the ideas generated should yield innovative options about how to move from a state of fragility to resilience. Even if a consensus remains elusive on precise definitions and alternative methodologies, progress can still be made.

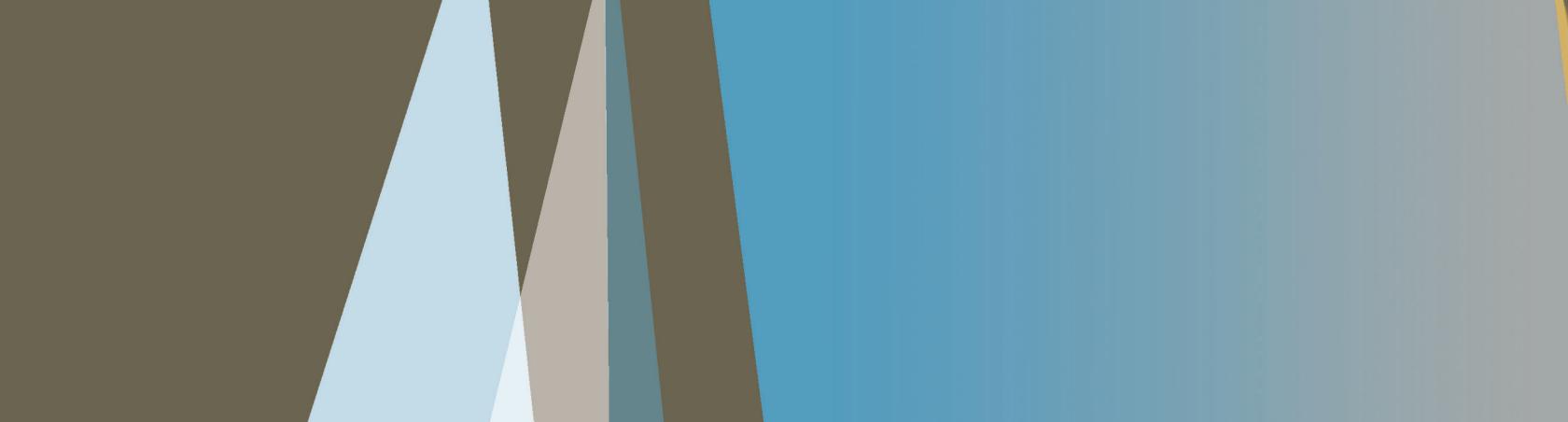
- **Questioning common assumptions:** Is urban employment the only way to integrate and de-radicalize unemployed youth and ex-combatants? Is macroeconomic growth the best way to end extreme poverty? Are elections the best way to build political legitimacy? Should the promotion and protection of women's rights be advanced in the same way in fragile states? Should traditional identities, such as ethnicity, religion, and origin, be entirely removed as bases of political representation in a democratic state?

Over the last 25 years, the development and security communities have discovered that the assumptions inherent in these questions have not always been valid. In truth, we know very little, for example, about how to de-radicalize youth who are prone to extreme violence. Substantial progress has been made to reduce global poverty, with the assumption that will also result in de-radicalization of youth, but that has not yet been proven. Elections seem to be favored by donors but, time after time, we have witnessed violence erupting before, during, and after elections when key constituencies reject the legitimacy of the outcome. Increases in women's rights have produced severe backlashes in conservative societies, many of which resist giving up traditional sectarian and ethnic identities that have defined their families for centuries. It is time to ask if existing approaches and methodologies are sufficient to meet these modern challenges.

## WHAT IS NEW?

- **Weighing the indicators:** Most studies of fragile states identify major indicators of fragility, but few assign a weight to those indicators based on empirical research. The Fragile States Index (FSI), the most widely cited index of its kind, deliberately treats each of its twelve indicators equally because there is no widely accepted empirical evidence that shows which ones should be given more weight over others.<sup>18</sup> This study is a pioneering effort to fill this gap. It used eight of the most relevant FSI indicators, combined with other data from the World Bank and several other sources, to run regression analyses to determine which were more correlated with conflict risk. The result was a rank order of the indicators and insights from a clustering of the indicators. These are, respectively, a tentative roadmap for early warning of conflict risk, and a preliminary strategy for moving states toward resilience. Weighing the indicators also gave rise to two important insights: the primacy of political legitimacy and seeing macroeconomic growth in a wider context.

- **Recognizing the primacy of political legitimacy:** In a lecture at the London School of Economics, Paul Collier and Tim Besley, two prominent scholars on state fragility, commented that one of the least understood issues in fragile states was how to generate political legitimacy.<sup>19</sup> Scholars have always known that legitimacy matters. However, this study shows that it matters far more than usually thought. It is the main factor, with group grievance as a close second, that correlates with conflict risk, and it tends to drive other indicators as well.<sup>20</sup> But where does legitimacy come from? Not always from elections. In fact, Paul Collier described the practice of holding quick elections in shattered societies as “disastrous.”<sup>21</sup>



Legitimacy can come from several factors: government performance, ethnic affinities, religious affiliation, geographical origin, age groups, and social norms and values rooted in history and culture. Figuring out how to convert these multiple sources of legitimacy into a common sense of loyalty to the state and a larger citizen identity is probably the greatest challenge in building state resilience.

One way to do this that holds promise is to focus on building institutions that can deliver better justice. The inability to redress grievances through peaceful means underlies many rebellions, protests, and outbursts of violence. Positive public reaction to the unprecedented conviction of a former African head of state by a domestic Africa court in 2016 illustrates how powerful this factor can be. At a time when African states were pulling away from the International Criminal Court (ICC), Senegal invoked the principle of universal jurisdiction, which holds that war criminals can be held accountable in any country. A Senegalese court convicted Chadian dictator Hissene Habre of crimes against humanity committed during his eight-year reign (1982-1990). With the concurrence of the African Union, the Senegalese court made history; it was the first time that an African court successfully prosecuted a former African head of state outside his own country.

The verdict was widely applauded throughout Africa, showing that local prosecution by an indigenous court carried more legitimacy than the international court in The Hague. Similar ad hoc tribunals had been created to deal with mass atrocities in the former Yugoslavia (which has convicted more than 80 criminals since its inception in 1991) and in Rwanda (which has convicted 61 criminals since 1994).<sup>22</sup> But the ICC has convicted only two Congolese rebels since it was created in 2002. The Senegalese precedent shows that there are potentially large gains to be derived from strengthening

domestic courts as a route to promoting resilience.

- **Macroeconomic growth seen in a wider context:**

The development debate over the relative importance of macroeconomic growth versus equality has been conducted mostly by economists. They tend to invoke economic models and standard IMF-driven formulas for getting economies back on track, based largely on the experiences of developed states. Relatively little attention is paid to the context of conflict affected states. Collier gave the example of the typical donor and IMF advice to weak states: raise revenue by imposing a Value Added Tax (VAT), which requires payment and rebate of revenue.<sup>23</sup> Authorities are supposed to make rebates by sending collected tax revenue to their superiors to give back to the sellers. However, they may have stronger loyalties to family and friends than to the state, particularly if they believe that their superiors will pocket the money themselves. It is not surprising that the VAT has resulted in the loss of state revenue in several states, due to subnational loyalties that generated what people might otherwise deem as corruption. Yet, international advocacy of the VAT remains strong.<sup>24</sup>

In similar fashion, donors often stress the importance of macroeconomic growth as a way to revive flagging economies and get wealth to the poor by trickling down into society. However, we found that while growth is vital for recovery, it is less relevant for building long term stability and genuine resilience. Equality matters more in the long term as it affects group grievance, youth alienation, and political legitimacy, among other things. Since it takes time to redress disproportionate wealth, especially in states with extreme poverty, the process of reducing inequality should start as soon as possible after the end of a conflict. Moreover, equality should not be seen simply as a function of income redistribution. It is mainly a function of a closed society. Allowing the

public to have greater access to key resources, like education, housing, land, water, electricity, and credit will go far to alleviating extreme poverty as well as mitigating extreme violence.

This research also reminded us of the fact that the debate over macroeconomic growth versus reduced inequality is not solely an economic one. Like other major policy debates in fragile states, it is, at the core, political in nature. Unless systemic change in the political structure is made, and economic equality is stressed as much as growth, it is unlikely that macroeconomic dynamism will be sufficient to build long term political stability.

#### WHAT IS IMPORTANT?

In “The War Within,” a special report on the Arab World, *The Economist* wrote that “the collapse of the post-colonial Arab system is, at its heart, a crisis of legitimacy.”<sup>25</sup> Most analysts have not appreciated the historical and geographical breadth of the wisdom of that statement, for it relates to situations beyond the Arab world and beyond the present timeframe. A crisis of legitimacy was at the heart of the fall of the Roman and Ottoman Empires, just as it was in the collapse of the USSR, the dissembling of Yugoslavia, and the downfall of Somalia.

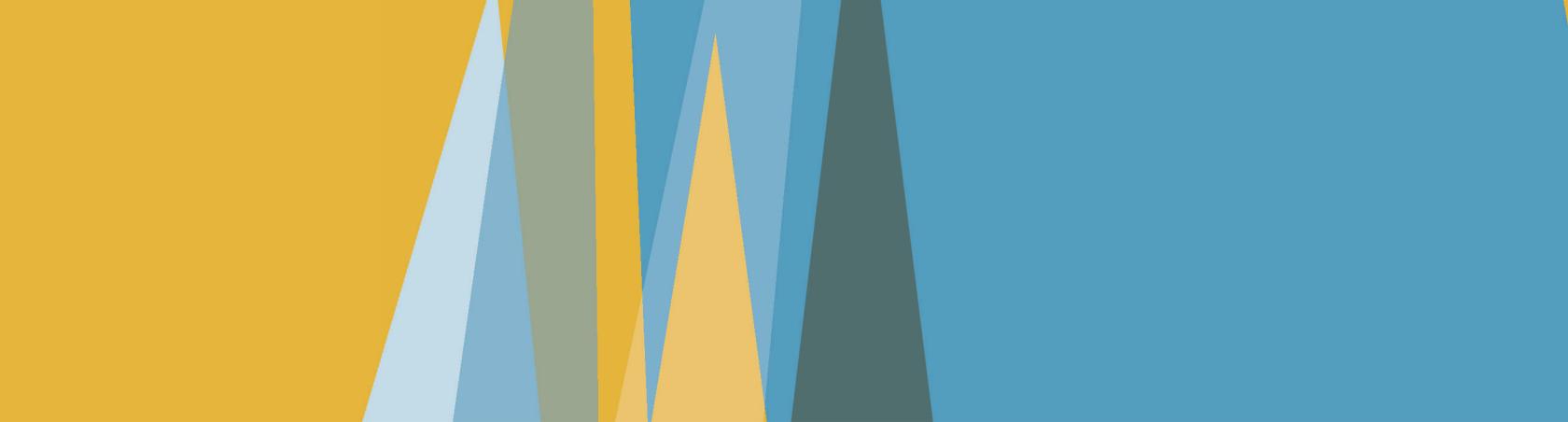
The final denouncement of some of these political entities occurred after foreign military conquest. However, that does not negate the fact that they also displayed deep internal weaknesses that collectively weakened their ability to resist military onslaughts, contain local revolts, and curb palace intrigue. While some modern states, such as Iraq and Libya, fragmented after outside military intervention, their collapse exposed the central weakness of strongman states: without strong institutions to fall back on, chaos follows decapitated leadership, providing fertile ground for civil conflict and

the spread of violent extremism.<sup>26</sup>

Some commentators belittle the notion of fragile states, calling them “tribes with flags,” artificial entities whose borders were drawn by colonial powers as opposed to “‘real countries,’ with long histories in their territory and strong national identities (Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Iran).”<sup>27</sup> But some of those “real countries” have seen upheavals of their own. And the colonialism card only goes so far in explaining current fragility. Other countries that experienced colonialism have not experienced similar breakdowns. Indeed, *The Economist* noted that “the world is full of countries with bleak histories and odd borders. Arab countries will have to regain the trust of their citizens.”<sup>28</sup>

To be legitimate and effective, resilience strategies promoted by donors must have as little foreign imprint as possible. This means that they need to be designed, led, implemented, and owned by local forces with support of the general population.<sup>29</sup> The transformation being sought is not one that can, or should be, led by the U.S. or any outside power. It must come from within. In many societies, that means building societal consensus, not simply by a single event such as an election or a leader’s dictate, but through open and inclusive consultations and dialogue that engages major segments of the population. Citizens’ perceptions need to be regularly probed and taken into account.<sup>30</sup> The role of spoilers—conflict entrepreneurs, warlords, criminal networks, fundamentalist religious groups, militia leaders, kleptocrats, and die-hard traditionalists—who fear the loss of their power and wealth also need to be anticipated to avoid a violent backlash. This is particularly so for programs that advances the role of women in society. The goal is not merely to manage fragility, but to pave a path toward genuine and lasting transformation.<sup>31</sup>

Is this too ambitious? Actually, it is less ambitious than what many experts are calling for at this point. We



need a “comprehensive, U.S. government-wide ‘fragile states’ strategy,” advocated Stewart Patrick of the Council on Foreign Relations.”<sup>32</sup> Jennifer G. Cooke and Richard Downie of CSIS argued that “fresh thinking is required” but it “should not be straightjacketed by unhelpful attempts to categorize fragile states into a group toward which a common set of activities can be directed.”<sup>33</sup> Their recommended alternatives are still focused on old controversies, such as how the U.S. can or cannot change fragile states, whether there should be lists or not, or how to devise better definitions. The recommendations did not provide much that was new or specific. They called on the U.S. to diversify partners, understand informal structures of authority, build social cohesion, take risks, and start small and scale up. In yet another initiative, a high-powered, independent study group on U.S. foreign policy toward fragile states was launched in January 2016 “to get ahead of crises that routinely emerge from these states.”<sup>34</sup>

Consistent with the perspective outlined in this paper, the more productive endeavor would be a U.S. strategy for building resilience in fragile states. It could include, among other things:

- **Better targeting of hot spots and neighborhoods that are the real sources of violence.** Experts have noted that there are usually just a few people who are actively engaged in violent behavior in crime ridden neighborhoods. Often a wide net is cast when rounding up gangs and identifying extremists that includes innocent civilians and criminalizes communities that, until that point, were not radicalized.
- **Place substantial focus on the young.** To lure the younger generation away from violence, there must be better life choices available that allow them to participate in social and educational programs that provide the skills for them to stand on their own feet. A wide range of incentives needs to be offered, such as guaranteed employment, business skills development, or support for mechanisms that enable them to be economically self-sufficient.

- **Build programs at the local government and community levels.** Lower tiers of government are closer to the people; they can be more sensitive to their needs and better able to identify grievances. Trust can be cultivated with people who live in and are known by, the community. Community governance can be a training ground for up-and-coming future leaders, a laboratory for incubating innovative ideas, and a learning environment for fostering fiscal responsibility.

- **Focus on successful enterprises.** We overlook activities such as the entrepreneurial successes in film, fashion, music, technology, and finance centers springing up in booming cities from Jakarta to Lagos. Cultivate the private sector in developing countries, including making it easier for local businesses to start up. Engage those in the informal economy in ways that can allow them to be incorporated into the formal economy.

- **Weigh the relative costs and benefits of developing different sectors and institutions, so priorities can be set.** For example, it might make more sense to invest in the justice system in a state where the courts have collapsed than build a national health system with advanced medical personnel and equipment. Could an organization, such as “Justices without Borders,” be created to permit foreign judges to preside during a post-conflict transition period until local courts are established? Should elections be held as soon as possible after the end of civil conflict or postponed until the end of an interim period? These are the kinds of questions that should be asked to determine priorities, recognizing that no one formula fits all.

- **Probe citizens’ attitudes and perceptions more vigorously.** Afrobarometer, a well-respected, non-partisan research network that conducts face-to-face interviews, found some useful insights in a survey on recruitment of extremists across 36 African countries in 2014-2015.<sup>35</sup> Overall, poverty and religious beliefs were cited by African citizens most frequently as the main reasons for the successful recruitment of extremists. But in the sub-regions where citizens have experienced high levels of extremist activity (specifically, the Sahel, Lake Chad, and the Horn), respondents said that personal gain was a far stronger motivator than poverty for joining extremist groups. Are we

overemphasizing religion as a motivator and underrating material incentives? Tracking citizens' attitudes and perceptions is crucial to understand the phenomena of violent extremism and devise efforts to counter it.

- If study groups are to be created, one should be established on building resilience in fragile states. It should consist of a broad number of experts from the development, humanitarian, security, private sector, and foreign policy communities as well as representatives from international organizations. It should examine how to integrate the fragility/resilience lens into the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and coordinate diplomatic, development, humanitarian, and security strategies at national and local levels.

The reframing of fragility and resilience is a paradigm shift in thinking that will require far more research, debate, field testing, and strategic planning. It should involve challenging existing assumptions and exploring new hypotheses. Not all fragile states are ready for the effort; not all states are good candidates for external assistance. However, failure to reframe the approach and address the problem will simply make the problems stemming from fragility even worse, as violent extremism, severe poverty, and mass migration continue to pose moral and security challenges that the world has not witnessed since World War II.<sup>36</sup>

Ben Rhodes, the Deputy National Security Advisor of the administration of President Barack Obama noted that “preventing fragile and conflict affected states from getting worse...cannot be the sole marker of a successful development enterprise... In addition to managing instability, we need to prove that effective models work in other places, because those become essentially the magnets for progress globally.”<sup>37</sup>

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, *States of Fragility 2015* (Paris: OECD, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Other data sources included the UN, the World Bank, Transparency International, Freedom House, Polity IV, Uppsala USDP, and the Political Instability Task Force on State Failure Problem Set. A detailed list of the data and the indicators that were used is contained in Appendix B of the first “Correlates” paper in this series.

<sup>3</sup> [www.oecd.org/dac/states-of-fragility-2015-978926422699-en.htm](http://www.oecd.org/dac/states-of-fragility-2015-978926422699-en.htm).

<sup>4</sup> Matt O’Brien, “How Can a Nation with Such Riches Be So Poor?” *Washington Post*, May 20, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> David Ignatius, “The Right Way to Meddle in Venezuela,” *The Washington Post*, June 13, 2016. Ignatius wrote that the formula to nudge the country toward political change was a plan for a recall referendum of President Nicolas Maduro, an option advocated by the Organization of American States’ Secretary General, Luis Almagro. Otherwise, he warned, the country could be headed toward civil war.

<sup>6</sup> Demographic pressures include natural disasters, environmental problems, youth bulges, diseases, food and water scarcity, population growth, and mortality.

<sup>7</sup> *Youth and Consequences: Unemployment, Injustice and Violence*, Mercy Corps, 2015.

<sup>8</sup> This was the argument made by David Ignatius to explain why the appeal of a caliphate is so powerful for alienated adolescent recruits. Citing David Kenning, a British counter-radicalization expert, Ignatius argues that the Islamic State brand is empowering because an alienated Muslim is cast as a victim, and this victimization provides a “license for revenge.” See David Ignatius, “How to help the Islamic State,” *The Washington Post*, June 3, 2016.

<sup>9</sup> Douglass C. North, John Joseph Wallis, and Barry R. Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2009).

<sup>10</sup> It is noteworthy that the Pakistan army, once a reserve for aristocratic families and elites, has opened up recruitment to middle and lower classes and to a wider diversity of ethnic groups. As a respected institution nationally, this is one route of personal mobility that could offer an opportunity to improve social integration.

<sup>11</sup> See John Campbell, *Morning in South Africa*, Council of Foreign Relations, 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Alex de Waal, “Writing Human Rights and Getting It Wrong,” *Boston Review*, June 6, 2016,

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Insights into some of the motivations of extremists and strategies to counter radical groups can be gained from the Daily Digest for Political Violence @ a Glance, a blog that reports on social science research. Of particular interest to this discussion are two posts: 1) Thomas Zeitzoff, “Why the Method Matters,” on *Political Violence @ a Glance*, on May 27, 2016, and 2) Gaelle Rivard Piche, “La Mano Dura: Lessons from El Salvador’s Security Sector Reform,” on *Political Violence @ a Glance*, June 1, 2016. <https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/author/politicalviolenceataglance/>

<sup>15</sup> Piche, *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Alberto Arce, “El Salvador Throws Out Gang Truce and Officials Who Put It in Place,” *The New York Times*, May 20, 2016.

<sup>17</sup> Fred Strasser, “In Fragile States, Put Citizen Involvement First, Panel Says,” United States Institute of Peace press release, June 2, 2016. Several references were made in this report to research that confirmed the need for broad political inclusion for lasting peace agreements.

<sup>18</sup> For full disclosure, this author led the team at The Fund for Peace which developed and published the FSI while she was President of the organization from 1995 to 2010.

<sup>19</sup> Tim Besley and Paul Collier, “Growth Challenges in Fragile States,” Lecture at the London School of Economics and Political Science, June 2, 2016.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.lse.ac.uk/newsAndMedia/videoAndAudio/channels/publicLecturesAndEvents/player.aspx?id=3519>

<sup>21</sup> For a contrary view, see Xavier Marquez, “The Irrelevance of Legitimacy,” *Political Studies*, April 2016, Vol. 64, No. 1. [http://psx.sagepub.com/content/64/1\\_suppl/19.short](http://psx.sagepub.com/content/64/1_suppl/19.short). Marquez’ argument is a narrow one. He advocates that social science abandon the concept of legitimacy because it “conceals[s] widely different (and often inconsistent) accounts of the mechanisms involved in the production of obedience to authority and submission to norms.” However, that is just the point made in this paper. Western notions of legitimacy may differ from non-Western ideas. The social science norms Marquez’ applies are based on academic methodological standards rather than common sense realities. Like the concept of fragility itself, the fact that there is not a consensus definition should not impede scholars from drilling deeper into the concept, exploring both the meaning of the concept and the mechanisms through which it is earned in different contexts. Otherwise, methodological

orthodoxy becomes a barrier to substantive understanding.

<sup>22</sup> Besley and Collier, *op. cit.*

<sup>23</sup> In addition, in 2002, Rwanda instituted a village-based system of justice dating back to pre-colonial times, called *gacaca*, to try thousands of suspects involved in the 1994 genocide. Of the 110,000 suspects in detention, 6,000 were tried in regular courts. Charges against the rest were adjudicated at the community level in public sessions presided over by approximately a quarter of a million judges elected for this purpose. *Gacaca* was widely criticized by international human rights advocates because it did not conform to widely recognized standards of due process and rules of evidence. Some alleged that people abused the process to settle old grudges. However, it succeeded in clearing overcrowded jails, achieving some form of justice that otherwise would have taken decades to complete in regular courts, and was seen as legitimate in the eyes of the general public, allowing the country to move on.

<sup>24</sup> According to Wikipedia entry from 2016 "A value-added tax (VAT) or goods and services tax (GST) is a popular way of implementing a consumption tax in Europe, Japan, and many other countries. All OECD countries except the United States have a value-added tax. It differs from the sales tax in that taxes are applied to the difference between the seller-purchased price and the resale price. This is accomplished by taking full tax on all sales, but refunding the tax difference to the sellers."

<sup>25</sup> Collier, *op. cit.*

<sup>26</sup> *The Economist*, May 14, 2016.

<sup>27</sup> In the case of Iraq, there was a vestige of state institutions after the downfall of Saddam Hussein, but the de-Baathification process destroyed them. Government workers who were members of the Baathist party were fired, even though party membership was required to get a government job under Hussein's rule, and was not necessarily a reflection of their ideological or political commitment.

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, Thomas Friedman, "Tribes with Flags," *The New York Times*, March 22, 2011. Previously, experienced journalist Charles Glass made the same point in *Tribes with Flags: A Dangerous Passage Through the Chaos of the Middle East*, (New York: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1990)

<sup>29</sup> *The Economist*, *op. cit.*

<sup>30</sup> The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, an initiative launched in 2011 between a group of fragile states and their international partners, was intended to do this, putting the fragile states in the lead, focusing on five Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs).

Not much has happened since then and the process appears to have slowed.

<sup>31</sup> In addition to elections, or a referendum, consent can be expressed through such measures as a sovereign national conference, a constitutional convention, public debates, polling, press debates, legislative approval, judicial review, and multiparty negotiations. In South Africa, the new post-apartheid constitution was not adopted until it was debated widely, down to the community level, by all arms of the majority party, the African National Congress, and by the ruling National Party. At first criticized as a dangerous tactic that could allow spoilers to disrupt the process, the extended debate was one of the wisest processes in the transition for it forged a consensus on the constitutional framework that later proved to be a prime factor in resolving political conflicts and partisan disputes.

<sup>32</sup> A good example is Bosnia-Herzegovina, where a 1995 peace settlement has not produced unity or a functional state. Its multiple parts remain separate and the Bosniaks (Muslims), Croats, and Serbs agree on little except that the war is over.

<sup>33</sup> Stewart M. Patrick, "States of Failure and Disunion, at Home and Abroad," *The Internationalist*, Council on Foreign Relations, January 13, 2016.

<sup>34</sup> Jennifer G. Cooke and Richard Downie, "Rethinking Engagement in Fragile States," Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 2015.

<sup>35</sup> The study group, led by William J. Burns, a former Deputy Secretary of State, Michele Flournoy, a former Undersecretary of Defense for policy, and Nancy Lindborg, President of the U.S. Institute of Peace, has not released its report as of the time of this writing. It was due the summer of 2016.

<sup>36</sup> See Afrobarometer Policy Paper No. 32, "Violent Extremism in Africa: Public Opinion from the Sahel, Lake Chad, and the Horn"; and Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 100: "Threat of Violent Extremism from a 'Grassroots' Perspective: Evidence from North Africa." [www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org).

<sup>37</sup> See, for example, the essay by James Traub, "The Death of the Most Generous Nation on Earth," *Foreign Policy*, February 10, 2016.

<sup>38</sup> Michael Igoe, "Ben Rhodes on the Future of U.S. Development Policy," *Inside Devex*, June 16, 2016.

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