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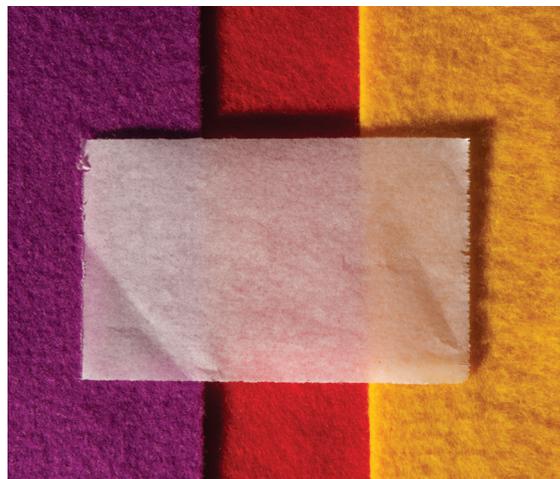
Moving From Conflict: the Role of International Actors in Transition Management

Jago Salmon

This research draws on the PA-X Peace Agreement Database
(www.peaceagreements.org), a database of all peace agreements
at any stage of the peace process from 1990 to 2019. The database
is fully searchable and supports both qualitative and quantitative
examination of peace agreements.

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Contents

This report focuses on the role of international actors in transition processes.

Peace and transition processes are often managed by putting in place interim governance arrangements. These arrangements are tasked with administering the country on a provisional basis until a new government can be appointed by a regular political process. They provide the space for ongoing brokerage between opposing parties within defined limits.

Key Findings

Not all transitions are highly internationalised, but when coinciding with the risk of large-scale protracted conflicts they are likely to be. Faced with the many dilemmas facing international actors, key conclusions of this report are:

► That international actors cannot determine the outcome of transitions, but are a critical source of political support, technical assistance and resources to interim governments.

► International actors are equally sources of deterrence, through sanction, military action or withdrawal of support, against actors seeking to defect from transition agreements or reform frameworks.

► International actors are therefore stakeholders in national political settlements, with responsibility to advocate that transitions are conducted in line with international law, standards and 'the national interest'.

► In this negotiation, international actors must navigate the 'primacy of politics', balancing ownership between interim governments, international partners, and the population, and managing tensions between political and technical priorities.

► The most constructive role of international partners has usually been to create space for negotiations and, in some cases, safety nets: fiscal, security, and otherwise.

► International instruments, e.g. financing instruments, are not always fit for purpose for supporting transitions.

Introduction

Interim governance arrangements have always existed, whether as de facto arrangements or as legal projects in accordance with international law and norms.[1] The legal fashioning of such arrangements ranges across different transition contexts from political upheaval to internationalised constitution-making and restructuring processes that have succeeded international military interventions, for example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq.[2]

During the period between the end of the Cold War and the 9/11 attacks when most civil wars worldwide ended in negotiation, governance arrangements were frequently a result of 'comprehensive' peace agreements. These agreements included detailed roadmaps and milestones for interim power-sharing governance prior to elections.[3] In recent years, an increasing number of 'expert', 'provisional' or other forms of interim governance arrangements have emerged, often after complex political transitions or civil unrest. The changing nature of armed conflict and challenging experiences of international administration in East Timor, Kosovo, and Iraq, have made 'domestically-driven, internationally supported transitional governance ... the preferred response to major conflicts'.[4]

Interim governments are set up as a transitional device, and in almost all cases have two limits placed on them. Firstly, time, in that modalities are put in place for a specified transition period with a clear end-moment; and secondly, subject-matter, in that transitions are tasked with specific responsibilities related to restoring legal order, the stability of the economy, and instituting and overseeing reform processes for government institutions.[5]

International actors are rarely able to determine the outcome of a transition, but the level, type, and timing of international support can improve chances of a lasting settlement.[6] International confidence in an interim government is critical in determining how much support and what kind of support is made available. International actors also offer some of the clearest deterrents to those seeking to defect from transition agreements.

In exchange for this support, international actors seek to ensure that transitions are conducted in line with international law and 'the national interest' (often defined as stable pro-democracy outcomes). At the same time, through brokerage and negotiations with interim governments, international partners become active stakeholders in the form and content of the political settlements underpinning transitions.

This poses a dilemma for international action. In contexts with fragile institutions, weak civil societies, and divided populations, international interveners must navigate questions of ownership by whom, for what reasons and for how long. They must also adapt models of international assistance to the specific nature of transitions, defined by volatility, short-term decision making, and disagreement on long-term objectives. Where transitions are highly internationalised, external influences can inadvertently undermine or purposely fragment the underlying political settlement. Yet where transitions are entirely within the hands of elites, there is the risk that transitions do little more than consolidate state capture by the more powerful set of actors.

This report reviews the types of international actors, types of support and priority sectors of international action. It concludes by offering some brief reflections on dilemmas and trade-offs related to the ownership, burden-sharing, coordination and sequencing of international action. The report emphasizes the duality of international support for transition management – both technical and political – underscoring the significant tensions and trade-offs between building short-term confidence in a political settlement, and addressing longer-term institutional reforms. The report concludes by highlighting the primacy of politics in transition management.[7] The most constructive role for international partners has usually been to create space for negotiations and, in some cases, safety nets – fiscal and economic, security, human and social capacity, and/or political – to protect nascent political settlements from shocks and enable them to move forward.

This report draws on a wide number of examples of transitions and peace agreements from the PA-X Peace Agreements Database.[8] It also draws on reflective practice-based case material, rather than a conceptual discussion or rigorous comparative analysis of a set of cases. As a grounding for the analysis, examples of transitions and responses are presented throughout.

Example One: Transition in Guinea-Bissau

In 1998, a civil war in Guinea-Bissau was triggered following an attempted coup by Brigadier-General Ansumane Mané against longstanding president, João Bernardo Vieira.[9] On 26 August, a ceasefire agreement was signed between the parties, followed by the Abuja Accords, signed between Vieira and Mané on 1 November 1998.[10] The transitional arrangements were minimalist in form, consisting of only four points: (1) a reaffirmation of the ceasefire; (2) the replacement of foreign troops with an ECOWAS Military Observer Group; (3) guarantee that ECOWAS will maintain order, keep warring parties apart, grant access to aid and open the airport to facilitate this; and (4) calling for general and presidential elections, observed by ECOWAS and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, to be held in March 1999.[11]

Six weeks later at an ECOWAS meeting in Lomé and following the appointment of Francisco Fadul as Prime Minister,[12] the parties agreed to an additional protocol that provided for the distribution of ministerial seats in the interim power-sharing government.[13] In accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1233, the UN Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea Bissau was created with the mandate to implement the Abuja Accords, with no more than US$19 million in budget.[14] Elections, supported by the UN Peacebuilding Office, were held in November 1999 with few irregularities and run-off elections on 15 January 2000, led to the victory of Kumba Yale of the Social Renovation Party.

Example Two: Sudan

Following the overthrow of President Omar al-Bashir in April 2019, and after months of sustained street protests, the Transitional Military Council (TMC) and the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC) alliance signed a political agreement on 17 July 2019 agreeing to a 39-month transition process.[15] This process rested on an agreed timeline and process for a return to democracy, and created interim executive, legislative and judicial institutions and procedures. On 17 August 2019 a Draft Constitutional Agreement confirming this deal was signed by representatives of the FFC and TMC in the presence of international heads of state and government.[16] This agreement called for the creation of an 11-member Sovereignty Council comprised of five military members and five civilians to be chosen by the two sides, and a civilian to be agreed upon mutually. The agreement also established a transition period of 3 years and 3 months, led by a TMC member for the first 21 months and a civilian member of the Sovereignty Council for the following 18 months.

International support for the transition has been mobilised on both political and economic fronts. On 4 June 2020, a virtual meeting of the UN Security Council, approved Resolution 2524 (2020) which mandated a United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS). This Resolution took note of a letter from Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, dated 27 February 2020 requesting support from the United Nations in a number of areas, including 'assistance to consolidate the gains made in Darfur... through peacebuilding efforts', and calling for 'support for the mobilisation of economic and development assistance.' [17] On 25 June 2020, a virtual partnership conference in support of the Transitional Government pledged over US$1.8 billion of support for social protection, development assistance and humanitarian aid. This pledged amount included a possible US$400 million 'pre-arrears clearance grant' by the World Bank Group for Sudan, to be approved by August 2020 (and eventually approved in two traunches by October 2020).[18]

International Partners, Transition Management and Interim Governance Arrangements

Interim governance arrangements are the exercise of public power by an interim authority put in place to institutionalise governance and reform processes in the context of political unrest or conflict (often following a non-constitutional rupture), with the aim of restoring constitutional order.[19]

The popular use of interim governance arrangements rests on their ability, in theory, to embed a transfer of political position and authority within a process of important, if politically challenging, reforms. As such, interim governments are frequently tasked with both governing the transition and defining the legal structure of subsequent regimes.[20]

In practice, transitional tasks extend beyond rebalancing the legal distribution of powers within the political system, through constitutional reform, for example. To be successful, transitions must reform the institutional rules of the game that embedded the previous political settlement in economic and social systems. [21] Interim governments are faced with dismantling domestic power structures, institutions, and legal frameworks that have often been established over decades.

In the absence of a national consensus on the rules of the game and clear mechanisms for conflict management, this process can in itself be conflict-provoking. As elites mobilise to defend their position, resources and control of violence, there is an apparent imperative to preserve elite cohesion for the sake of stability. This move to shore up the interim government must be balanced, however, with a functional need to implement technical design choices in specific sectors or siloes that will deliver the public goods and services required to send a 'credible sign of change' to the population and put the state and economy on a stable footing.

Action is required on multiple fronts to build short-term confidence and initiate the longer-term political, institutional, social, and/or economic reforms needed to strengthen or restore stability.[22] The necessary actions are often contradictory and work at cross-purposes, making it difficult for political leaders in charge of interim governments to anticipate the links between multiple and, at times, competing imperatives.

In this highly politicised and fluid environment, international actors are called upon, as shareholders in the international system, to assist interim governments, as: a) political guarantors of transition arrangements; b) providers of technical assistance and; c) sources of finance.

Peace and transition agreements frequently recognise these roles. Many include provisions for international and regional partners to 'monitor and assess' agreements. Even more frequently, agreements call on international partners to provide, 'political, security, financial and technical support' during critical transition moments of an interim period. [23] In the process, international actors become active stakeholders in the political settlements which are to emerge from the transition.

International support is received from diverse actors. International powers may control the resources, including those channelled through a wide range of multilateral organisations and donor agencies, as 'investors' in transitions. Neighbouring states are, however, direct 'consumers' of the political and security outcomes of transitions and can exert decisive influence.

International actors, in similar trade-offs as national leaders, face complex challenges of sequencing and coordinating interconnected actions both across priorities, and across international and national levels of action. This can place international partners in the position of simultaneously negotiating with and supporting transitional governments, so as to strain international assistance models which must then bridge support to political negotiations with development mandates which place a focus on 'national ownership'.

The economic and political duality of transitions is mirrored in the formal mandates of international actors. For example, on 4 June 2020, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2524 mandating the establishment of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS). This mission is tasked with assisting the transitional government in 'meeting the political benchmarks of the Constitutional Declaration including governance and institutional reform, constitution making and supporting implementation of peace agreements', as well as facilitating 'international support to economic reform that will help set the country on a path to economic recovery and sustainable development'.[24] This places UNITAMs simultaneously as the partner of government in mobilising development finance, as well as mediator between the transition government and remaining armed groups.

The brokerage between opposed parties, and the international community, influences the form of transition that emerges. Transitions and interim governance arrangements are therefore, on the one hand, highly context specific. Subject matter, processes and duration are determined by national stakeholders and the specific history and drivers of conflict. On the other hand, interim governments also share certain commonalities [25], such as:

1) **Legal internationalisation.** Increasingly, transitional governments are expected to ensure that national governance arrangements are guided by respect of international legal norms, and, increasingly, international law.

2) **Inclusivity.** It has become a mantra of the international system that 'a system of institutional transition cannot be unilaterally defined by the new de facto authorities in power; rather, a genuine broad dialogue within the political parties and civil society must be initiated'. [26] Transitional periods are frequently ended with an election.

3) **Transitional Justice.** In most cases, transitional authorities are required, or impose on themselves, to address the past of their respective countries in one way or another. In addition, there is consensus that transitional justice must be 'owned' by the population of the state in transition.

Types of International Actor

The complexity and diversity of international and regional actors engaged in transitions is large and arguably is increasing as as consensus on an international rules-based order weakens. This complexity is increased because many international actors face internal coordination challenges in managing engagements across development, diplomatic and defence instruments.

States ultimately hold responsibility for many of the decisions that shape transitions, including the authority to negotiate and navigate agreements, allocate resources, and direct policy. As such, 'the most crucial sources of support are usually other member states, often those in the same region or with strong historical ties, that can provide the political and financial support necessary to the process of building a peaceful society'.[27]

States, however, are neither homogenous nor monolithic, and differ greatly in their instruments, resources, and interests. For example, those states advising or supporting security sector reform may be different from actors engaged in humanitarian action, or in the promotion of democratic governance.

International organisations are given mandates to support transitions where state interests align rather than any pure 'assessment' of the needs of the transitional state. Which of the many international organisations are chosen for which task, and ultimately the mandate, capacities and resources they are given, is dependent on the willingness of states to act collectively.

A number of variables determine the degree of support from international organisations, ranging from mandates issued by a UN Security Council Resolution to requests for support by an ad hoc coalition of states or from the transitional government itself. [28] As the intergovernmental body with the 'primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security',[29] a vote by nine or more of the fifteen Security Council members, (not vetoed by any of the five permanent members) is a clear signal of collective political commitment to a transition.

In addition, Security Council Resolutions provide a collectively agreed narrative and commitment to an interim government to which all international actors are required to pay at least due regard. The Council can mandate an array of operational responses, including authorizing the deployment of political or peacekeeping operations to monitor and support the implementation under the authority of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG).[30]

In the absence of a Security Council Resolution, international organisations have a wide range of mandates and capacities to support transitions. The Secretary-General can request via an exchange of letters with the Council, the appointment of a Personal Representative, Advisor or Envoy. While a permanent member of the Security Council may block such a request, considerable latitude remains: such appointments do not require consultation with a UN deliberative body, nor produce potentially restrictive negotiated mandates. Even in the absence of such a single political coordinator, operating as part of the United Nations Development system and coordinated by a Resident Coordinator, UN agencies, funds and programmes, for example, are tasked with supporting countries around the world to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These organisations have mandates broadly linked to building capacity, monitoring and/or enforcing internationally agreed normative or legal regimes, and enabling knowledge exchange in specific sectors.

International Financial Institutions (IFIs), include multi-lateral and regional development banks, such as the World Bank Group, the African Development Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank, and monetary organisations, such as the International Monetary Fund. IFIs, are both important sources of financing and professional advisory services on issues of economic, fiscal and monetary policy for interim governments.

With growing instability in Middle and High Income Countries, recent evaluations have highlighted the increasing role of IFIs as conveners as well as providers of finance for transitional governments. [31] Driven by high demands from shareholders and donors, the World Bank and other IFIs have scaled up their convening role to offer agile financial solutions. Less well recognised is the demand for IFIs to step up engagement in convening policy discussions, generating data and analytics, and leading dialogue with transition governments. Several ground-breaking reports, such as 'Pathways for Peace', [32] and 'Forced Displacement' [33] have established the World Bank as a recipient of donor funds and support for knowledge production to help achieve Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16).

Regional organisations. Long recognized as key partners of global institutions, regional organisations have experienced an expansion of their mandates, legal frameworks, and organisational capacities to address a broad range of regional political, security, and economic issues.

Some regional and sub-regional organisations have acquired considerable authority to engage in transition processes, with robust normative frameworks and enforcement powers. The most notable example is the African Union's (AU) Constitutive Acts: particularly the Addis Ababa Charter; the Lomé Declaration of July 2000; and the Economic Community of West African States' (ECOWAS) Protocol on Good Governance and Democracy, establishing powers against unconstitutional changes of government. Other regional organisations serve more as forums for coordination between regional states, with limited operational and institutional mandates or capacities for autonomous action.

Non-State Actors. Beyond states, international and regional organisations, there is a wide diversity of other transnational non-state actors operating alongside the state-based international order.

International civil society actors comprise a wide range of associations and non-state entities, including charities, non-governmental organisations, community groups, faith-based organisations, trade guilds and unions, professional associations, and advocacy groups, among others that provide many of the basic services to people in transition or post-conflict settings.[34] With the increasing prevalence of cross-border and regionalised conflicts, these groups can be an important constituency for managing security and stability during transition processes. Unlike humanitarian action, almost none of the more political INGO or peacebuilding civil society organizations have their own funding or funding from multilateral sources. In most cases, their involvement is a function of a member state interest or backing.

While civil society is often seen as consisting of organisations that may be competing for the same pool of resources, their underlying norms and values have been assumed to be largely shared. With an increasing multiplicity and diversity of actors engaging in the civic space, this space is, however, becoming a more contested domain of public life and this assumption does not always hold.[35] In addition, civic space has received a digital dimension, which provides further space for different modes of both solidarity and contestation internationally.[36]

Noting the diversity of actors involved, it is unsurprising that not all international actors will be interested in the overall success of a transition. While categories such as 'spoiler' are useful in general terms, they are often an oversimplification of the diverse interests international actors may have in the outcome of a transition.

In some situations, international partners may have narrow interests that do not extend to the overall success of the transition (e.g. halting the risk of refugee spill overs in the region, or maintaining trade), or may diverge conceptually from liberal-peace models (e.g. a focus on security or resource extraction over inclusion or governance reform). Nevertheless, when interests diverge substantively, international actors may be actively invested in perpetuating instability or disorder in the country (e.g. preferring national disorder to competition over regional power).

This is as true for state and non-state actors. When the state has not established its presence in a convincing way, for example in slum or periphery areas, non-state armed actors, violent extremist groups, criminal gangs and even private companies often step into the breach and provide alternative forms of governance. When these groups can establish control and set up parallel state structures, especially when they deliver security and justice or livelihoods that the state cannot, or will not, deliver, the state loses credibility and its capacity is undermined.[37] In large impact humanitarian emergencies, non-governmental organisations have been accused of performing such a role, for example in Haiti. Illicit trafficking or violent extremist networks have also provided viable alternatives to state authority in periphery regions of, for example, the Sahel.

The Role of International Actors

International actors never have enough personnel, resources, or legitimacy to control the outcome of transitions. Recent history has provided several examples where international actors have sought to directly shape political settlements often resulting in over-reach and counter-productive results.

International support can, however, provide additional avenues or resources to influence national protagonists, whether that is a state or a non-state group. [38] The level, type, and timing of international support can, therefore, improve chances of making a political settlement last. Rather than imposing outcomes, the most constructive external role of international partners has usually been to create space and, in some cases, safety nets — fiscal and economic, security, human and social capacity, or political — into which domestic actors can step forward.

In general, international actors assume these roles in three broad areas: 1) political support; 2) technical assistance; and 3) financial assistance. Each of these are summarised below.

Political Support. International political, financial and peacekeeping architectures lend aspects of sovereignty to national governments.[39]

To access this support, transitional administrations require formal political support from other states. Clear examples are found, for example, in the Security Council votes to deploy UN peacekeeping operations, or governing (re-)entrance into regional organisations, requiring approval by members of that organisation.

Confidence of member states in an interim government is therefore, critical in determining how much support and what kind of support an interim government can access. Reflexively, political support can include deterrence — clearly messaging that activities which might threaten or destabilize a transition will be met with punitive action. This could include sanctions, withholding of assistance or, in contexts where multilateral peacekeepers or other international military personnel are present, military action. Deterrence raises the price of action and can impose limits on national actors. For example, UN peacekeepers have previously used force to stop armed groups from moving towards capital cities or exacting retaliation against civilians, particularly where such threats risked undermining the transition as a whole or international law.

It is important, however, to place this support in political context. Interim governments frequently find themselves having to balance the demands of the domestic constituencies that keep them in power with the requirements for international support. This dual accountability represents a critical dilemma for many interim governments.[40]

This dilemma may change in unpredictable ways due to both domestic and international events.[41] Until recently, a shared set of values held by the international community meant that the presence of international actors was understood to limit the degree to which national governments or political actors could diverge from broad international consensus. Even though this consensus shows signs of fragmentation, international actors must, nonetheless, balance a focus on accountability with the risks involved in withdrawing external financial or military support that allows interim governments to sustain power.

Technical Assistance. Beyond political support and normative authority, international actors are a source of technical advice, knowledge and comparative experience in transition processes. The focus of this assistance is to build capacity of national systems, institutions and staff, however, in key areas from the security sector, to fiscal management, this technical advice may also serve to ensure alignment with specific legal or regulatory requirements or standards. In specific circumstances, such alignment must be confirmed to allow for transitional governments to integrate effectively into the international system – for example, for money to flow, travel to be allowed, or goods to be imported.[42]

Critiques of the dominant approaches to peace- and state-building highlight how technical instruments and methodologies have often failed to reflect what we know about the nature of conflict, how it ends, and how peace processes are sustained, and peace consolidated. At the same time, understanding technical design choices and functions is essential to the effective delivery of the public goods and services required to send a 'credible sign of change' to the population in the aftermath of conflict.[43]

Technical assistance in transitional environments is therefore not neutral. Policy choices entail potentially conflicting processes, creating both 'winners' and 'losers'. Transitions are often 'hyper–politicized' environments in which low levels of trust penetrate deep inside institutions, particularly in cases where state institutions may have been compromised by human rights violations. These histories of conflict raise questions about the feasibility of building on existing systems as a means of promoting sustainable peacebuilding and democracy.[44]

In situations of sanctions relief or military assistance, countries sometimes must meet both political and technical benchmarks before assistance can be provided. For example, the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000, regulating the EU's relations with 79 countries from Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP), 'requires parties to abide by essential elements' in the area of human rights, democratic principles, and the rule of law.

Through the provision of technical advice, international actors can be extremely influential in determining the outcome of transitions for better or for worse both by advising on the direction of institutional reform, and by determining levels of confidence in transitional administrations, or 'setting the market' on lending rates. Particularly in the early stages of transitions (up to 18 months), international advice to national partners can be extremely influential in determining outcomes and setting parameters on the political settlement.[45]

Financial Assistance. In many cases of transition, the primary focus for international support is financial assistance. The largest sums of this support are reported as Official Development Assistance (ODA) specifically targeting 'the economic development and welfare of developing countries'.[46]

ODA is an essential source of financing for interim governments, both in volume and in quality, and fragile countries are increasingly targetted for development assistance. In 2016, ODA funding for fragile contexts was greater than earmarked funding for other developing countries. Furthermore, between 2014 and 2016, ODA to fragile contexts increased by 14.4%, or US$8.6 billion, far outstripping growth in non-fragile contexts. Indeed, ODA to fragile contexts has been on the rise since the end of the global financial crisis, growing by 26% in real terms from 2009 to 2016 (although this could be affected by any Covid-19 affected financial crises to come).[47]

Beyond volume, the degree of fragmentation of different sources of financing and the degree to which financing aligns with national ownership and demand, can directly impact on the ability of a transitional government to direct or target aid in an effective or timely manner. International funding modalities are not always fit for 'transition management' purposes.

Interim governments must often mobilise short-term project-based funding, while establishing the track record needed to access stable long-term funding from development finance instruments such as the World Bank. Traditional development responses which are on budget, often 'do not allow for an accelerated pace to respond to communities' expectations in the face of a crisis'.[48] Humanitarian aid, which can act quickly in response to a large-scale crisis, is rarely delivered through national systems or on budget.

Of concern to transitional arrangements is that even when volumes of aid are high, relatively small proportions of finance are allocated to core peacebuilding objectives at the nexus of peace and development. In 2015, only 4% of ODA to fragile states globally was allocated to legitimate politics, 2% for security, and 3% for justice.[49] Many of such projects are either clustered at low-level funding, ranging from US$1,000 to US$30,000, or in a group with funding values starting at US$2 million for bilaterals and US$10 million for multilaterals. The former tend to be too small for broader impact and have comparatively high transaction costs, while middle-sized programmes of between around US$30 000 and $2 million aimed, for instance, at peacebuilding outcomes such as social cohesion, struggle to attract financing.[50]

There is clear evidence that beyond financing alone, in these areas related to core peacebuilding objectives (and sensitive areas of sovereign policy), priority support integrating political, technical and financial sectors may have most value. Efforts to extend state authority, for example in CAR or in South Sudan, or to prevent institutional failure, as in Yemen, require significant mediation and dialogue to negotiate and align international strategy, along with the technical support and financing to support operationalisation.

Whilst some funding, such as that provided by the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), or the EU Instrument for Stability, may directly target the risks of escalation or instability, 'financing committed for peacebuilding activities ... is unpredictable, ad hoc in nature and insufficient to ensure that the root causes of conflict are addressed'.[51] As such, in transitional contexts, it may be possible for overall volumes of financing to be high, but with relatively little and unpredictable financing targeted against priorities for consolidating the political settlement.[52]

Example Three: Somalia's Long Road to Debt Relief

Somalia has long relied on short-term humanitarian aid to stem its suffering, but with support from international partners and sustained commitment to economic reform, in March 2020, Somalia began receiving debt relief from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, allowing it access to both concessional loans and grants financing from IFIs.[53]

Debt relief under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC Initiative) has been a critical step in Somalia's long-term transition, allowing it to access more, consistent and on-budget development finance. Somalia's total debt is at around US$5.3 billion as of end-2018. The United States is the largest creditor holding US$1.1 billion, the IMF holds about US$330 million. Most of the remainder of the debt is held by France and Italy. Non-Paris Club bilateral creditors hold roughly US$1.5 billion of Somalia's debt.

After almost a decade of discussions on debt relief in the country, based on a broad-based global effort, Somalia reached the first milestone – the Decision Point – early in 2020. To reach the Decision Point, Somalia satisfied three main criteria:

- mobilized sufficient financing assurances for debt relief;

- established a track record of implementing sound economic policies under an upper credit tranche instrument; and

- adopted an interim poverty reduction strategy, reflecting broad-based consultations with key stakeholders.

On reaching the Decision Point, Somalia also normalized its relations with the IFIs, which unlocks access to significant new financial resources to address Somalia's large development needs and poverty reduction.

Priority Sectors

As described above, international actors are key sources of political, technical and financial support for advancing transition objectives of institutional reform, and for mitigating the impact of shocks.[54] International actors are equally sources of deterrence, to avoid deviation of national actors from agreed frameworks of action, or from international law. Although important across the board, this support gains particular importance in areas that are critical to the political settlement.

In each of these areas, political support, financing and technical advice align around the need to extend the overarching political settlements into core state institutions which allow public governance to function. In this process, the extent of a transitional government's control of the state is often left unsettled and under negotiation during the transition, particularly in institutions where groups bargain for access to the basic means of livelihoods and well-being. Although broad agreement to limit competition to non-military means may have been reached, this cannot be taken as given where 'exclusion from one or more arenas can, often literally, become a matter of life or death'.[55]

Consolidating change in these institutions and arenas requires interim governments to manage complex transitions in several interrelated areas, for example:

► the re-establishment of security, both state security and human and community security, and renewal of the rule of law, the creation of mechanisms of accountability, and an end to impunity;

► reforming, recreating, or building of public governance institutions and processes that are able to reconcile social conflict and pursue collective goals of prosperity and development;

► the re-establishment of systems of service delivery realizing for all a 'peace dividend' able to garner legitimacy and support from social forces; and

► economic stability to include the creation of livelihoods and employment, collectively managing natural resources and fairly distributing the proceeds of national wealth.

While the state may not exercise full authority in all these sectors, it bears ultimate responsibility for coordinating the actions of other actors. Through its actions or inaction, interim governments can reinforce 'a broad-based belief that social, economic, and political arrangements and outcomes are accessible to all. Alternatively, it can reinforce perceptions of exclusion that deepen tensions among groups'.[56]

In each of these areas, interim governments must balance the imperatives of the political settlement with effective provision of services and the demands of international partners. In finding this balance, financing and advice from international partners can be immensely influential in determining policy outcomes and the legitimacy of interim governments. How do international actors work with governments in such a space, in the context of an evolving political settlement where they must manage the trade-offs between political, technical and normative considerations? How can partnerships and risk-sharing enable greater flexibility in navigating non-linear pathways to outcomes such as peace and stability?

This section will briefly review four examples of sectoral transformations:

a. Security Sector Transitions
b. Restoration of Core Government Capacities
c. Re-establishment of Macro-Economic Stability
d. Rebuilding legitimacy through service delivery

a. Security Sector Transitions

Transitional governance arrangements almost always have at their centre complex challenges related to the control, command and oversight of the security sector. The presence of insecurity, due either to a chronic breakdown of law and order, or to a presence of spoiler groups resisting reintegration into the state, can impact on any actor's ability to deliver services, foster partnerships, or provide technical assistance. Continuing violence, even if sporadic, can dramatically limit the willingness of donors to support a transition in a context in which gains can easily be swept away by uncertainty and risk.

As such, ensuring that actors that control the means of violence remain part of the political settlement is decisive to the success of transitions. Perhaps beyond other substantive questions, the control of armed force is a central component of transitional political settlements, and remains so long after active conflict has ended.

As in almost all peace negotiations, the agendas of those who have carried out violent acts are central to negotiations. However, to ensure progress and reform, these interests must be balanced against demands for accountability, the ending of impunity and transitional justice, often represented formally through calls for commissions of inquiry. This balancing-act requires political mediation or mechanisms to avoid splits in the security sector or defections as a first priority. Often it will be international or regional actors who intervene politically if the transition agreement does not provide robust and effective mechanisms, including by maintaining a credible deterrent through use of force or sanctions to ensure adherence.

As a second priority, which cannot proceed without the first, transition arrangements supported by international partners frequently call for a reform, downsizing or restructuring of the security sector. This call aims to embed political change in institutional arrangements, including through the inclusion of groups key to the conflict in the security sector.

Security sector reform can place the technical design choices required to ensure an effective and accountable security sector at odds with the political imperative of preserving adhesion to the political rules of the game by actors able to mobilise violence. International actors can support credible exit pathways from violence that lessens the risk of splits, mutinies or defection. Traditionally conceived as Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR), pathways from membership of armed forces can be built into institutional reform through the financing of pension or retrenchment schemes. These types of approach can relieve pressure from sectoral reform on the central political settlement.

The challenge of balancing security sector transitions can be aggravated when political power-sharing is used to underwrite the commitment of the main parties to move away from violence. In the face of a prevailing trend of increasingly complex and multi-layered conflicts, in which violence may persist in a country even after a central political transition has been negotiated, power-sharing deals risk incentivizing new forms of violence or a splintering of armed groups seeking access to state resources and positions.[57]

For example, the Sudanese Comprehensive Peace Agreement (2005)[58] recognized and addressed two armed groups when over twenty-four existed. Those excluded groups then ramped up violent activities in an attempt to gain a position in the national military.[59] This fragmentation of armed groups produces a situation where security forces may be central actors in calls for accountability and the reform required to restore stability at the centre, whilst simultaneously causing insecurity, or engaging in transnational organised crime in the periphery.

b. Restoring Core Administrative Capacities

Defined as the core or cross-cutting capacities required for governments to make and execute policy, core administrative functions do not in themselves deliver services but are a necessary requirement for doing so.[60] Beyond support to negotiating political settlements, international actors often seek to enhance state capacity through the provision of support to core government functions during transitions.

Conflicts act as disruptive shocks to public services, draining qualified personnel, destroying offices and records, and bringing to power new political elites keen to reward their own clients with public sector jobs. Transitions do not result in a blank slate ready for the building of public services anew.[61] 'The presence of transitional governments born of fragile peace agreements has heightened the risk of nepotism and discretionary recruitment'[62], as elites seek to consolidate authority or reward allies through the public sector wage bill.

International technical assistance has frequently emphasised specific characteristics. Firstly, the function of public administration is to raise resources, deliver services, promote growth and to provide a set of rules through which citizens can interact with and influence the state, and participate in or challenge decisions that will affect them. Second, a public service with a clear political/technical distinction and merit-based recruitment is perceived as the best way to do this. Public administration reform is seen as the way to develop such a public service, and is implemented as a largely technical process of introducing new institutions, organisations and best practices. Third, there is a 'post-conflict moment' that offers an opportunity for new political leadership, supported by the international community, to wipe the slate clean and bring in a range of systemic reforms to public services.[63]

This approach implicitly sees the development of core government functions as sequential, with a political settlement around transition to be followed by technical approaches to building core government functions and a progressive building of capacity. As seen, transition politics are rarely linear. As a result, although some countries have made modest, but sustained, progress on governance functions (Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone), others made initial gains after a peace agreement, but then slipped back (Afghanistan, Kosovo, Timor-Leste).[64]

In principle, comprehensive reforms may be the best way to improve functionality in the long-term. In the immediate aftermath of a conflict, however, international actors need to understand and approach public administration as much as an expression of the developing political settlement, as a vehicle for delivering public goods.[65] Again, aligning specific technical design approaches with political parameters and mediation can reduce risks of splits while enabling an avenue for reform. This may require emergency measures and financing to preserve the integrity of institutions to then allow for progressive reform through, for example, establishing oversight mechanisms on recruitment reinforced by international sanction, enabling the use of country systems based on international standards, or even enabling a sharing of sovereignty over certain functions.

Example Four: Use of Government Systems in Central African Republic

In March 2013, the Seleka rebel movement seized control of the capital of the Central African Republic, Bangui. The chaos surrounding the seizure of power and collapse of organised forces escalated into spreading inter-communal violence between Christian and Muslim groups, resulting in the displacement of an estimated 400,000 people. In November 2013, the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned that the country was 'descending into complete chaos'. Violence continued throughout December, until in January 2014 both the president and prime minister, under pressure from regional leaders, resigned at a regional summit. Later that month, Catherine Samba-Panza became the Interim President, and André Nzapayeké, the Interim Prime Minister.

The escalation of violence following the resignation of Bozizé had let to the complete collapse of public revenue generation and emptied the state treasury. Ministries and decentralised government offices were looted, equipment destroyed and records burnt. Staff had either abandoned their posts or fled with displaced populations. At the same time, criminal and militia activity had closed the central banking and commercial district of downtown Bangui and cut the main commercial highway to Cameroon.

By February 2014, salaries for an estimated 31,000 civil servants had not been paid for five months [66], and the already weak central government 'survival' systems were collapsing. Several experts had noted that without action insecurity would be worsened by a collapse of the functions of central government in Bangui.

[cont'd]

In an address to the UN Security Council on 20 February 2014, the Secretary-General highlighted that while CAR had been on the agenda for many years, the level of the current emergency demanded an immediate, comprehensive and integrated engagement to stabilize the security situation, including the provision of immediate tangible financial assistance to support the newly formed transitional government. Immediately following the SGs address, the newly-elected President of the National Transition Council reinforced this message with a request for urgent support from the international community to settle the payment of the civil service, highlighting that this payment would give credibility to the newly formed government, help resume some basic functions of the state, and inject money in the economy.

In February 2014, a joint IMF, EU, AfDB, and UN mission to Cameroon worked with the Minister of Finance to assess the immediate fiscal needs of the government of the CAR. This mission confirmed critical challenges in covering payroll, and the need for an option for addressing security sector salaries. The key challenge was the management of risk. Whilst ex-ante fiduciary risk could be managed by channelling funds through a cash management committee to oversee (and approve) expenditure, ex-post risks were high.[67]

In order to manage these risks, operating under a peace and security mandate, the UN committed to undertake a manual re-registration of CAR's over 31,000 civil servants. At the same time, the entire wage bill was placed in escrow to allow a dispute resolution mechanism to operate, and a process to register and identify civil servants in displaced centres and refugee camps abroad.

The manual re-registration resulted in savings of an estimated US$6.6 million in recurrent expenditure, and contributed to a 71% increase in domestic revenue by December 2014. More importantly, it enabled the World Bank and the PBF to provide roughly US$12.4 million financing through government systems to restart the payment of salaries in June through September 2014.

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This financing helped to avoid the collapse of the nascent transitional government – and was acknowledged in President Samba Panza's speech to mark her first 100 days in office. These emergency measures to safeguard institutions enabled the putting in place of critical 'next steps' of transition. In July 2014, the World Bank's Country Engagement Note was submitted to the Executive Board for approval covering an 18-month period up to and beyond elections in 2015. On 15 September 2014, the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) transferred its authority over to MINUSCA, in accordance with Security Council Resolution 2149 (2014).

As part of its overall mandate to support SSR in the CAR, MINUSCA supported regular strategic and technical coordination platforms with the participation of regional organisations, the AU, EU and UN Security Council, as well as the Central African Government. These mechanisms ensured coordination between the Government, the UN Mission and key technical and financial partners, as well as the EU Training Mission for the diverse investments in the capacity, professionalism and inclusivity of the Central African armed forces. These coordination mechanisms helped organize comprehensive support for the reform and remobilization of the different security forces, following the adoption of national defence and security sector reform policies and plans.

In addition to the comprehensive training provided by the EUTM and diverse material support, the UN Mission supported the Government in the conduct of nation-wide recruitment campaigns for the army in 2019-2020, and to the police and gendarmerie in 2019. For the first time in the country's history, the recruitment campaigns included gender inclusion targets, literacy and numeracy tests, and quotas for each prefecture, which enabled the inclusion of ethnic and religious groups previously excluded from the security services. The lack of representation of groups from the north and north east of CAR was perceived as a key driver of conflict in the country. Introducing credible recruitment mechanisms which expanded the inclusivity of the army, police and gendarmerie, was a critical component of efforts to build a more durable peace.

c. Restoring Macro-fiscal Stability and Economic Support

Multilateral funds available from International Financial Institutions (IFIs), when added together, outweigh the bilateral support of individual states. However, rallying these disparate sources – from the variety of development aid, to debt relief – is frequently a medium-term endeavour, with numerous levels of both political and technical conditionality. As such, alongside the management of other issues, interim governance arrangements are tasked with managing the transition towards macro-fiscal stability and working with international partners to secure medium-term financial support.

Example Five: Liberia

Liberia's Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme (GEMAP) was a partnership between the Government of Liberia and the international community to enable Liberia to use its resources in the interests of its citizens.

Implemented during the period 2003-2010, the Programme was overseen by an Economic Governance Steering Committee, co-chaired by the President of Liberia and the United States Ambassador to Liberia, and coordinated by a Technical Team composed of key government and international counterparts.

The logic of the Programme was to give international partners confidence that the government of Liberia's financial management systems and budget controls were sufficient for resources to flow to state institutions.

A preliminary Phase 1 (2003-2005) was focused on ensuring that revenue was deposited in the Central Bank, that payments were made only through official channels, and that basic accounting tasks such as bank reconciliations were undertaken.

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During a Phase II (2006–2010) the formal GEMAP project was established following repeated bad audit reports. GEMAP was led by technical assistance to the central bank, and then expanded to put in place systems in the Ministry of Finance and to generally build capacity in Liberia's key ministries, agencies, and state-owned enterprises. This project placed technical experts from different agencies in Liberian institutions (IMF experts in the Central Bank, World Bank experts in Ministry of Finance, and USAID experts in the revenue agency, and so on), and established 'dual key' approval mechanisms through co-signatory of payments on expenditures and other forms of control.

The macro-fiscal trade-offs for stability are uniquely context-specific. However, transitions frequently follow decades of corruption and mismanagement, characterised by the capture of state resources, government profligacy, entrenched monopolies, and distorted markets. For example, in Sudan a core effort of the transitional government has been to reduce the country's immense subsidy bill covering imported fuel. Beyond re-establishing a sustainable fiscal policy, this cutting of subsidies also targets 'elites who have positioned themselves as designated importers and could take advantage of preferential foreign currency exchange rates'.[68]

There is not a well-established literature on financial support in transitions, but its associated challenges depend heavily on the degree of the transition country's estrangement from conventional engagement with the IFIs (e.g. Venezuela, South Sudan, Burundi, Syria). For example, Sudan is not just in arrears and suspended from IFIs, but has the additional complication of the States Sponsors of Terrorism legislation. Each of these layers of isolation and action must be managed separately.

In general, while bilateral sanctions are more difficult and political to address, multilateral suspension due to debt arrears is based on a clear process managed through the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative.[69]

The crux of the dilemma in this area is that countries must simultaneously demonstrate high poverty rates, an unsustainable level of debt, and a solid macro-economic track record. Addressing these challenges simultaneously requires often years of efforts from countries to strengthen policies and institutions, and support from the international community to do so.

In most cases, due to the protracted nature of the HIPC process, countries need to arrange interim or transitional financing solutions, combining ODA, mobilised for example through donor conferences, with grants and loans from private or regional creditors.[70] These financing solutions frequently come tied with critical policy reform agendas, tying progress on reform to maintaining financial support. In countries where fiscal sustainability or macro-economic stability is in question, these reforms aimed at reducing corruption, for example through subsidy reform, can often be critical not just for restoring confidence but equally in enabling a transition of authority away from actors who have benefited from corruption.

d. Rebuilding Legitimacy through Service Delivery

Failure to deliver basic services is increasingly understood as both a symptom and cause of state fragility. Conflict adversely impacts the coverage and quality of basic services, and this in turn negatively affects human development and economic activity. Supporting basic services can become highly political in situations where there is conflict, instability, inequality and social exclusion.

Since the rise of the state-building agenda, the impetus for donors in supporting service delivery in fragile states is not only to meet basic human needs, but also to build state capacity, reciprocal state-society relations and state legitimacy.

Balancing the need to provide essential services at scale and fast whilst also trying to develop state capacity is a critical challenge for international partners. Even in highly fragile states, or areas of limited statehood, service delivery may be negotiated through some nascent form of state control. In any given context, the degree of state capacity may not correspond with the level of service delivery.

Since 2011, the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC) has sought to understand how processes of post-conflict recovery and state-building play out. These are four key findings from SLRC's broad programme of mixed-methods research [71] :

a) Livelihood recovery is neither automatic nor linear after conflict. Even in situations of positive political transitions, shocks and stresses – including those not related to conflict – 'churn' people's livelihoods and outcomes long after political settlement, sometimes causing the rapid depletion of hard-won livelihood improvements.

b) Improvements in physical access and overall perceived quality of service matter far less than how people are treated. The establishment of channels of redress have greater impact on perceived outcomes than improvements in overall levels of access or quality.

c) Service delivery is not only positive. Experiencing problems with services can lead to negative perceptions of government, even in cases where no service was available previously.

d) State legitimacy and capacity is fundamentally about how individuals and organisations relate to each other. State performance alone is underpinned by all kinds of relationships, and systems that privilege relationships can be both resilient and effective at maintaining legitimacy.

The overall message of this research is to raise a series of flags around the use of service delivery or social protection as a tool for building government legitimacy. Legitimacy is based on localised networks of power and politics, whilst international actors' assumptions about how systems ought to work often drive policy. It is the systems that operate in practice that really matter. These systems are often much more pluralistic, and diverse in their functioning that standard models, with outputs that go beyond formal delivery of goods and services. A further key message of this research is the importance of realism about the timelines over which recovery takes place.

Dilemmas of International Action

As the above four priority sectors highlight, there is a tension in most transitions between actions which will reinforce the political settlement, and those which will reform or strengthen formal state institutions and/or alignment with international law. These tensions provoke core dilemmas for international support to transitions.

Transitional periods are never linear.[72] Experience indicates that transitions are medium-term undertakings, and highly vulnerable to reversals and shocks. While they can achieve a degree of stability, they struggle to implement an established political settlement. Most aspects of state and society are politicized and there are usually no strong institutions to mediate and contain political competition. This in turn means there is rarely a consensus national vision on a development strategy around which international partners can coordinate, sequence and prioritise.

This presents significant dilemmas for international partners who are facing pressure to provide financial or other support when 'everything is a priority'. The assertion of the 'primacy of politics' in transition management, emphasizes both the importance of preserving the overall stability of a transition over any particular sector or silo, and a reminder that 'design choices and technical advice can have profound political impact.'[73] The resolution of these dilemmas is as dependent on the art of politics as it is on science.

a. Establishing National Ownership

A clear challenge in post-conflict or fragile states is how to ensure 'effective' ownership in contexts with fragile institutions, weak civil societies, and divided populations. Absent of a clear consensus on the rules of the game, post-conflict polities raise the question of ownership by whom, for what reasons, and for how long?

A clear immediate challenge lies in balancing ownership between interim governments and international partners. Evidence suggests, that where transitions are highly internationalised, international interests can have a damaging impact by inadvertently undermining or purposely fragmenting the underlying political settlement, increasing the potential for renewed violence, as for example Libya, Iraq, and Afghanistan.[74]

When seeking to guarantee compliance with international accountabilities or interests, the result can be siloed interventions, built around parallel systems sustained by technical assistance and international resources. These systems may effectively deliver programme objectives providing resources, and maintain accountability, but at the risk of undermining national and local ownership.

On the other hand, interim administrations run the risk of actual or real state capture.[75] Simply aligning international technical, political or financial support with national political settlements may produce non-performing assistance programmes, diversion of funds, or complicity in human rights or other violations. In these cases, international norms and regulations become important guidelines not just for protecting international investments but also for reinforcing and improving national systems.

The longer term mitigation measure to this dilemma is to ensure that national ownership is inclusive. Interim governments frequently end with an election, and the establishment of government based on democratic mandate. Prior to this point, ensuring that decisions made by interim administrations are based on as extensive a process of consultation and dialogue as practically feasible, with populations, subsidiary levels of government, and the private sector, can ensure that decisions reflect to some degree the wider interests of society rather than only the elite in charge of the administration. The investment of international actors in ensuring that national ownership is inclusive, is based on the recognition that exclusionary political settlements can create further incentives for future violence.

b. Maintaining International Coalitions

A key challenge in transition management is the mobilisation and maintenance of effective coalitions of support both for overarching transition management, and for specific reforms required to stabilise the country. This requires mobilising international support, at key moments such as donor conferences, as well as ensuring that remaining international support aligns with domestic priorities. As stated, transitions are medium-term undertakings, and in a world of competing priorities, sustaining support through ups and downs in the transition is often critical to the successful outcome of transition processes.

Just as domestic action to preserve or build stability requires coalitions,[76] so does international action. No single international actor has the resources, mandate or breadth of expertise to support a transition in isolation. Building and maintaining support for a transition process requires a broader coalition of national and international actors. For example, the uprising and political transition in Burkina Faso in 2014, dubbed the Burkina Spring, owed its peaceful character to the 'determination and conciliation' of the Burkinabe people, but this was backed by the combined weight of the African Union, ECOWAS, and the United Nations. This combined pressure helped shift the calculus in favour of a civilian-led political transition and opened space for inclusive Burkinabe-led negotiations on a transition roadmap.

For international actors, this extends the dilemmas of coordination beyond the national level to building and maintaining political coalitions regionally and internationally. As well as mediating national political disputes, this, when available, becomes a primary task of envoys or Special Representatives.

Active management of these coalitions is key not just to mobilise support, but also to ensure that the siloes of international decision making do not work at cross-purposes. Effective international coordination can, for example, coordinate decision making between the UN Security Council, mandated to address risks to international peace and security, and the World Bank Board of Directors, mandated to support poverty alleviation.

Since the emergence of Friends of the Secretary-General on El Salvador in 1990 [78], ad hoc mechanisms have emerged through which international actors can coordinate support to prevent and resolve conflicts, or to keep and build the peace across different levels. These very diverse groups, clustered here under the general term, Groups of Friends, cannot on their own create or impose the conditions for peace, but they have become an important auxiliary device to mobilise support and resources for international engagement for a peace process or transition.

For example, two international initiatives helped create a coalition of Western, Gulf and regional actors behind a position of support for the transition in Sudan. The first to form was the Friends of Sudan contact group which met first in May 2020 in Washington DC and included representatives from the UN, AU, EU and Ethiopia, and which expanded to include Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar at its second meeting in Berlin in June 2020.[79] A second – smaller and more informal – Quad of the USA, the UK, Saudi Arabia and the UAE met with the military council and opposition coalition leaders on 29 June 2020.[80]

c. Coordinating International Action

Coordination of international support sits, in principle, with national governments. However, many interim governments lack the capacity to manage a proliferation of donor processes alongside managing domestic politics and institutions. In the absence of effective mechanisms that bring together international partners and government, a lack of coordination between different processes can inhibit delivery and risk management.

The diversity of international actors and the extent of their engagement with transition processes is context specific and can change dramatically over time. In the early days, challenges lie with the provision of qualified specialists and resources. However, over time, and particularly in transitions which capture political attention, offers of support can rapidly overwhelm national coordination capacities.

Sharing information and continuing interaction in a range of formal and informal settings can be valuable mechanisms to enhance coordination, but will not overcome a breakdown in coordination due to diverging priorities.[81] As a result, international support is often 'stove-piped' or 'siloed' in sectoral approaches with allocation decisions defined as much by supply-driven considerations as by context.

The absence of a holistic visioning and planning system that sequences immediate inputs with longer-term capacity development and links interventions across sectors can lead to ad hoc, piecemeal and fragmented inputs, and limited or narrow coordination – for example, between major economic and/or political processes. This can form obstacles for medium- and long-term strategies for ensuring sustainability, and impede government's ability to balance priorities and trade-offs.

Managing these tensions requires forming and sustaining effective coalitions on specific policy issues that are able to see through policy, legal and institutional reform processes. At the same time, progress and action across these policy areas must be coordinated. These coalitions are particularly critical in support to the security sector, where parallel systems of support and lack of transparency can build divisions and internal competition both between national actors and international partners.

In many cases, the framework for engagement with interim authorities is tasked by concerned states to international organisations, primarily the UN, either alone or jointly with a regional organisation such as the African Union. These organisations are asked to coordinate international support and, in many cases, to lead its delivery in specific areas of engagement, for example on human rights.[82]

Where coordination support has been mandated through, for example, the UN Security Council, international actors benefit from an agreed analysis and framework of priorities. Where this does not exist, coordination of support must take place through other instruments or tools. Tools such as the joint Recovery and Peace Building Assessment (RPBA) provide a common analysis of risks and opportunities which, in turn, allows for targeted efforts to build resilience and sustain peace to be based on agreed priorities and help direct technical advice, political support and resources to address specific arenas of risk.[83]

Example Six: a Tool to Improve Coordination Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments [84]

Amongst the OECD Development Assistance Committee members and international organisations, there have been increasing efforts to extend frameworks of coordination to provide more consistent and predictable support in post-conflict and political transitions. As part of the 2008 Joint Declaration on Post-Crisis Assessments and Recovery Planning, the EU, UN, and the World Bank committed to providing joint support to assessing, planning, and mobilizing support for recovery, peacebuilding, reconstruction and development in countries affected by crises.

In conflict-affected contexts, this is accomplished through the joint Recovery and Peace Building Assessment (RPBA). The agreement represents a commitment on the part of the three organisations to work together in support of national ownership of the recovery and peacebuilding process, and to coordinate the broader international response to crises. Countries and regions in recovery face the challenge of meeting a broad range of immediate, medium- and long-term needs across the humanitarian, security, political, peacebuilding and socio-economic development spectrum.

RPBA processes aim to ensure that international and local interventions for recovery are aligned by helping countries assess, plan and prioritize requirements over time under a common process. This includes: establishing a political process that can foster and sustain a political settlement; an effective and accountable security sector; increased access to judicial systems; economic foundations that can generate employment and livelihood opportunities; equitable service delivery and access to basic services; trust in institutions; and an assessment of main reconstruction and construction needs. Addressing the needs of displaced populations, structural gender inequalities, youth empowerment, and violent extremism are also concerns.

Between 2003 and 2019, approximately 19 joint assessments have been conducted in countries ranging from Central African Republic and Nigeria, to Zimbabwe.

d. Sequencing Short and Medium Term

The temporary aspect of interim governance arrangements contrasts with the long-term impact of decisions and institutional structures established as part of and during interim governance arrangements. The interim period is a moment of intense political competition between stakeholders to ensure access to state resources, guarantee political survival, and provide a means of influencing ongoing and future state agendas.

Interim administrations face a behavioural challenge in the reality that, faced with short-term horizons, households, firms, and the government in transitional arrangements put less weight on the future relative to the present. Incentives to preserve wealth, invest, and build institutional capacity building all diminish.

The political leadership in these contexts often resists reforms that will take time to deliver, in favour of approaches that are likely to deliver on short-term political interests or pay-offs. Dominated by short-term political survival, or, at best, by the desire to establish new political and constitutional rules of the game, countries can be caught in a 'transition trap' in which although time passes, the presence of constant crises inhibits the progress of structural or institutional reform.

This presents real dilemmas to international partners who are faced with deciding on the allocation priorities for resources and support between short-term, projectized initiatives that can mitigate shocks or provide humanitarian relief, and support for medium- to long-term institutional reform or transformational initiatives that require national buy-in to succeed. With transitions frequently facing shocks or crises, international partners find themselves shifting between the two approaches.

Countries undergoing transitions therefore experience higher degrees of aid volatility as the main mechanisms and the scale of international support shift with aid diverted from development and institutional support to humanitarian relief and back again.[85] An OECD study highlights how this volatility is in part related to donors' unwillingness to flexibly shift allocations to peacebuilding and development programmes in a volatile context, given development programming is often locked in for three- to five-year periods.[86]

The tension between the need for medium-term planning to address the institutional weakness and the urgency of short-term priorities, is central to the cycle of partial recovery and relapse that is extremely common to interim governance arrangements. The need to focus on highly visible political priorities often undermines progress and investment in other areas that are essential for medium-term growth and stability. The correct level of focus on each of these areas is a matter of judgment, not science.

Possible Responses

Interventions in support of transition states are often based on an assumption that policies aimed at navigating complex security transitions, promoting macro-economic stability, governance reforms and extension of service provision are mutually reinforcing. There is little evidence to support the idea of a linear transition in which all good things come together. Case material reveals significant tensions and trade-offs between building short-term confidence in a political settlement and addressing longer-term institutional reforms.[87]

Ongoing mediation support. Long beyond formal peace agreements or constitutional settlements, external mediation can play an important role in helping to secure the success of transitions. Transition management above all involves influencing complex political settlements at different levels. Such political engagement is costly, non-linear, and uncertain, and it involves a broad set of actors.

Where accepted by interim governments, dedicated mediation support can equip international actors with a centre of gravity to coordinate action across different silos and levels of engagement, for example national vs global, or economic vs political. Mediation can prove important in addressing identified bottlenecks or potential crises long beyond a specific transition agreement, and in avoiding derailing interim arrangements. Ongoing mediation support can almost invariably include international facilitation through channels such as the 'good offices' of the United Nations or regional organisations (AU, GCC, SADC, and so on).

Reinforcing national systems. A declared outcome of international support in transition contexts should be to catalyse the development of national institutions that can lead processes of reform supporting the progressive meeting of international norms. This goal may require recognizing 'good enough' governance as a first order priority, with the objective of reinforcing national systems through the deployment of international technical assistance and financial resources, over promotion of comprehensive reforms.

Medium-term financial support equipped to manage shocks. In many cases, international financial support is dependent on agreed response plans with agreed milestones, timelines and priorities. In highly fluid situations, if not carefully designed, such response plans can mobilise support, but are ill-equipped to respond to rapid changes in context, such as escalations of insecurity. The use of country platforms bringing together key international partners and the use of multi-donor trust funds, based on an assessment of the financing needs and landscape, can act as centres of gravity enabling a harmonized approval, disbursement, and monitoring and reporting process over individual projects or programmes.[88] The Somali Stability Fund, a multi-donor fund for local governance in Somalia, offers a recent example of an adaptive approach to navigating politics by shifting resources based on changing realities and what was working or not.[89]

National dialogue and citizen engagement. Whilst need for public consultation in peace processes is widely seen as important, many processes of engagement with interim administrations can become highly technocratic and invisible to the population. Ensuring effective communication and consultation of transition plans, macro-economic support packages and institutional support can be essential for informing priorities (for example, shifting from infrastructure to legal recognition of vulnerable groups), and for managing the expectations of populations and partners.

Scenario mapping. Frequently, the nature of international support to transition management is determined at key decision points, for example Security Council votes, or World Bank Board of Directors meetings. These inflection points often occur long before the impacts of these decisions are felt. In many cases, these inflection points are well established and can be mapped early on, providing a robust basis for broader scenario mapping and to help navigate prioritization and planning processes, which often require decisions across, rather than only within, instruments.

Integrated transition approach. In transitions, trade-offs do not come solely within particular sectors, but come across and between different areas of action. The objective of a transition is not to design one aspect of a transition perfect, but to ensure sufficiently capable functions across key areas. In many ways, transitions require a strong approach of 'fail better', with a commitment to meet expectations in each cycle of dialogue and decision making.

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Endnotes

[1] While a single typology of different interim governance arrangements does not yet exist, all such governance arrangements align with the principle of setting down legal anchor points to allow for national governance in complex and fluid periods of transition. Cf. De Groof, E. H. D. and Wiebusch, M. (2020). International Law and Transitional Governance: Critical Perspectives. Abingdon: Routledge. For more analysis of the structures and practicalities of 'interim governance', please refer to: Forster, R. (2020). Interim Governance Arrangements in Post-Conflict and Fragile Settings. Political Settlements Research Programme report in collaboration with International IDEA. Stockholm: International IDEA. https://doi.org/10.31752/idea.2020.48 [Last Accessed 25 September 2020].

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[5] De Groof, E. H. D. (2019). 'The Features of Transitional Governance Today'. PA-X Report. Political Settlements Research Programme. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh. https://www.politicalsettlements.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Interim-Transitions-Report-DIGITAL.pdf [Last Accessed 3 August 2020].

[6] According to Walter: "Outside intervention that occurs after a peace treaty has been signed has a strong positive effect on the successful resolution of [violent conflicts]" (Walter, B. (2017). 'External Intervention and Civil Wars.' Unpublished paper, University of California, Berkeley, p.3).

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[10] PA-X Peace Agreement Database, "Ceasefire Agreement in Guinea-Bissau", August 26, 1998, https://www.peaceagreements.org/view/323

[11] PA-X Peace Agreement Database, "Agreement between the Government of Guinea Bissau and the Self-Proclaimed Military Junta ('Abuja Accord')," November 1, 1998, https://peaceagreements.org/view/185

[12] Fadul was mostly independent of the political parties, see Yabi, G. O. (2010). 'The Role of ECOWAS in Managing Political Crisis and Conflict: The Case of Guinea and Guinea-Bissau'. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/nigeria/07448.pdf [Last Accessed 25 August 2020], p.18.

[13] PA-X Peace Agreement Database, "Additional Protocol to the Abuja Accord of 1 November 1998 Concerning the Formation of the Government of National Unity of Guinea-Bissau," December 15, 1998, https://peaceagreements.org/view/218

[14] World Peace Foundation. (2017). 'Guinea-Bissau Short Brief. African Politics, African Peace'. World Peace Foundation, Tufts University. https://sites.tufts.edu/wpf/files/2017/07/Guinea-Bassau-brief.pdf [Last Accessed 3 August 2020], p.2.

[15] PA-X Peace Agreement Database: "Political agreement on establishing the structures and institutions of the transitional period between the Transitional Military Council and the Declaration of Freedom and Change Forces", July 17, 2019, https://www.peaceagreements.org/view/2243

[16] Pospisil, J. (2020). 'Sudan's Interim Constitutional Arrangement: The Risk of Sharing a Non-Existent Cake.' Political Settlements Research Programme Blog. https://www.politicalsettlements.org/2019/09/02/sudans-interim-constitutional-arrangement-the-risk-of-sharing-a-non-existent-cake/ [Last Accessed 3 August 2020].

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[19] Based on working definition by De Groof, E. H. D. and Wiebusch, M. (2020). Introduction. In: De Groof, E. H. D. and Wiebusch, M., (eds.). International Law and Transitional Governance: Critical Perspectives. Abingdon: Routledge, pp.1–2.

[20] Shain, Y. and Linz, J. J. (1992). The Role of Interim Governments. Journal of Democracy 3:1, 73–79.

[21] Transitional governments cannot avoid decisions that impact on resource flows and patronage networks of elites, for example: reforming state resource flows and budgets (eg. reducing the public sector wage bill or lifting subsidies); changing in economic model (eg. privatisation of public enterprises, reform of export licenses, changing financial sector regulations); and reforming institutions (eg. appointments to the command and control of security forces, staffing of universities).

[22] Paige, A. (forthcoming). 'Looking Backward: Stocktaking of the UN-IFI Relationship, 2018 to 2020'. Center for International Cooperation, New York University.

[23] For peace agreement examples, please refer to: Bell, C., Badanjak, S., Beaujouan, J., Epple, T., Forster, R., Jamar, A., Molloy, S., McNicholl, K., Nash, K., Pospisil, J., Wilson, R., and Wise, L. (2020). 'PA-X Peace Agreements Database and Dataset, Version 4'. Political Settlements Research Programme. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh. www.peaceagreements.org [Last Accessed 24 August 2020].

[24] UNITAMS Website. (n.d.). h[ttps://dppa.un.org/en/mission/unitams](https://dppa.un.org/en/mission/unitams) [Last Accessed 18 August 2020].

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[26] United Nations General Assembly 'Interim report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Burundi' (A/51/459), report of 7 October 1996, quoted in De Groof, E. H. D. (2020). State Renaissance for Peace: Transitional Governance under International Law. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.225.

[27] United Nations Secretary-General. (2018). 'Peacebuilding and sustaining peace: Report of the Secretary-General'. A/72/707–S/2018/43, p.3.

[28] For every intrastate war situation in which the Security Council has taken action, there are many others in which the Council does not act. In ten out of the 25 most deadly conflicts since 1990, the Security Council could not agree on any action. von Einsiedel, S., Malone, D. and Stagno Ugarte, B. (2015), Conclusion: The Security Council and a World in Crisis. In: von Einsiedel, S., Malone, D., and Stagno Ugarte, B. (eds.). The UN Security Council in the 21st Century. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, p.840.

[29] United Nations. (1945). 'Charter of the United Nations'. Available as 'UN Charter (full text)' at https://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/un-charter-full-text/ [Last Accessed 24 August 2020].

[30] While decisions about establishing, maintaining or expanding a peace operation are taken by the Security Council, the financing of such operations is the collective responsibility of all UN Member States based on a special scale of assessments taking into account, among other things, the relative economic wealth of Member States. Cf. von Einsiedel, S., Malone, D., and Stagno Ugarte, B. (2015). The UN Security Council in the 21st Century. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

[31] World Bank Group. (2020). The World's Bank: An Evaluation of the World Bank Group's Global Convening. Independent Evaluation Group. Washington, DC: World Bank Group. https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/sites/default/files/Data/Evaluation/files/WBG_Convening_Power.pdf [Last Accessed 21 September 2020].

[32] United Nations and World Bank Group. (2018). Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict. Washington, DC: World Bank Group.

[33] World Bank (2017). Forcibly Displaced : Toward a Development Approach Supporting Refugees, the Internally Displaced, and Their Hosts. Washington, DC: World Bank. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/25016 License: CC BY 3.0 IGO

[34] Marc, A., Willman, A., Aslam, A., Rebosio, M., and Balasuriya, K. (2012). Societal Dynamics and Fragility: Engaging Societies in Responding to Fragile Situations. New Frontiers of Social Policy. Washington, DC: World Bank Group. https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/239731468170343524/societal-dynamics-and-fragility-engaging-societies-in-responding-to-fragile-situations
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[35] Poppe, A. E., and Wolff, J. (2017). The Contested Spaces of Civil Society in a Plural World: Norm Contestation in the Debate about Restrictions on International Civil Society Support. Contemporary Politics 23(4): 469–88.

[36] Dahlgren, P. (2015). The Internet as Civic Space. In: Coleman, S. and Freelon, D. (eds). Handbook of Digital Politics. Cheltenham: Elgin, pp.17–34.

[37] Despite the terminology of non-state, all such groups have a variety of relationships with the state and with society. When elites accept bribes or participate directly in trafficking networks, legitimacy suffers, and resources that could go to deliver basic services are diverted. Cockayne, J. (2016). The Hidden Power. The Strategic Logic of Organized Crime. London: C. Hurst; Kemp, W., Shaw, M., and Boutellis, A. (2013). 'The Elephant in the Room: How Can Peace Operations Deal with Organized Crime?' International Peace Institute; Stearns Lawson, B. and Dininio, P. (2013). 'The Development Response to Drug Trafficking in Africa: A Programming Guide'. USAID. https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/Development_Response_to_Drug_Trafficking_in_Africa_Programming_Guide.pdf [Last Accessed 21 September 2020].

[38] United Nations and World Bank Group. (2018). Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict. Washington, DC: World Bank Group.

[39] Ayoob argues that the international community is a primary driver of state sovereignty. See, Ayoob, M. (1995). The Third World Security Predicament: State Making, Regional Conflict, and the International System. London: Lynne Rienner, p.190.

[40] Ghani, A. and Lockhart, C. (2008). Fixing Failed States. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press.

[41] For example, a broad consensus has existed on limiting the excessive use of force by partner governments. Arguments exist that a focus on counterterrorism and a new emphasis on stability has led to a weakening of the international commitment to norms on maintaining stability through coercion and repression.

[42] Whilst traditionally the development community has focused on aspects of civilian governance, technical support has also included direct technical assistance, training or equipment of military and security forces. Historically, in the absence of a Security Council mandate, technical assistance in such areas was the preserve of bilateral support by states. Recent UN Development System reforms and in particular the 2016 General Assembly and Security Council Resolution on Sustaining Peace, have, however, given greater flexibility to UN Resident Coordinators to engage more broadly with the expertise and assets of the entire United Nations system to ensure better delivery of their mandates, for example on conflict prevention.

[43] World Bank Group. (2011). 'World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development'. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/4389 [Last Accessed 24 August 2020].

[44] Salmon, J. and Piza-Lopez, E. (2010). 'Capacity Development in Post-Conflict Countries'. Global Event Working Paper. United Nations Development Programme.

[45] For example, the willingness of interim transitions to engage with international partners on human rights has significant impact on the level of support to transitions, with national ownership of human rights norms often considered to be a proxy for national ownership of peacebuilding and taken as a signal of good faith.

46 OECD. (2017). 'ODA Casebook on Conflict, Peace and Security Activities'. DCD/DAC(2017)22/FINAL. https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD/DAC(2017)22/FINAL/en/pdf [Last Accessed 24 August 2020].

47 OECD. (2018). 'States of Fragility 2018'. OECD States of Fragility series. https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264302075-en [Last Accessed 25 August 2020].

48 Efforts exist to address this gap, with for example, a scale up of human and financial resources for 'FCV' contexts by the World Bank Group, a scale up of financing from the PBF, and joined up planning processes, such as Prevention and Peacebuilding Assessment (PPBA) carried out jointly by the UN, World Bank, the African Development Bank and European Union, under the leadership of the respective government, in Cameroon, Central African Republic, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. Adam, D. and Caus, J. (2019). 'Conflict Prevention in the Sahel: Emerging Practice Across the UN'. United Nations University, New York, https://i.unu.edu/media/cpr.unu.edu/post/3640/UNU_Conflict_Prevention_FINAL_WEB.pdf[Last Accessed 25 August 2020], p.22.

49 Whilst recent trends indicate more investment in inclusive political processes and core government functions, investment in basic safety and security and the rule of law and human rights remains worryingly stagnant.

50 United Nations Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund. (2020). '2020-2024 Strategy'. United Nations Peacebuilding. https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/pbf_strategy_2020-2024_final.pdf [Last Accessed 25 August 2020], p.4.

51 United Nations Secretary-General. (2018). 'Peacebuilding and sustaining peace: Report of the Secretary-General'. A/72/707–S/2018/43, p.8.

52 Although portrayed schematically as sequential, various flows of financing are path-dependent. Humanitarian aid continues so long as there is a humanitarian crisis, and importantly a humanitarian planning process, while development financing can take several years to scale up or to scale down. As such, the overall financing picture for a country frequently combines different 'layers' of funding, with different objectives, disbursement timelines, and governance mechanisms largely set by donors. The proliferation of such instruments can itself create a significant transaction cost to interim administrations.

53 Reuters. (2020). 'IMF, World Bank clear Somalia for debt relief, normal ties to world'. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-debt-idUSKBN21D05Q [Last Accessed 24 August 2020].

54 United Nations and World Bank Group. (2018). Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict. (Washington, DC: World Bank).

55 Ibid, p.142.

55 Ibid, pp.141-142.

56 For a detailed discussion of political power-sharing in peace and transition processes, please refer to: Bell, C. (2018). 'Political Power-sharing and Inclusion: Peace and Transition Processes'. PA-X Report: Power-Sharing Series. Political Settlements Research Programme, University of Edinburgh. Available at: https://www.politicalsettlements.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2018_Bell_PA-X-Political-Power-Sharing-Report.pdf [Last Accessed 3 August 2020].

58 PA-X Peace Agreement Database: "Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Sudan People's Liberation Movement (Naivasha Agreement)," January 9, 2005. Available at: https://www.peaceagreements.org/view/337

59 Bell, C., Gluckstein S., Forster, R., and Pospisil, J. (2018). 'Military Power-Sharing and Inclusion in Peace Processes'. PA-X Report: Power-Sharing Series. Political Settlements Research Programme, University of Edinburgh. https://www.politicalsettlements.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/2018_Bell-Gluckstein-Forster-Pospisil_Military-Report.pdf [Last Accessed 3 August 2020].

60 UN policy has categorised these functions into six, (i) executive decision-making and coordination at the centre of government; (ii) public revenue and expenditure management; (iii) government employment and public administration; (iv) the security sector; (v) local governance; and (vi) aid management.

61 Blum, J. R., Ferreiro-Rodriguez, M., and Srivastava, V. (2018). Paths between Peace and Public Service: A Comparative Analysis of Public Service Reform Trajectories in Postconflict Countries. Directions in Development—Public Sector Governance. Washington, DC: World Bank Group. https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/423851544473789878/paths-between-peace-and-public-service-a-comparative-analysis-of-public-service-reform-trajectories-in-postconflict-countries [Last Accessed 21 September 2020].

62 Ibid, p.xxii.

63 United Nations Development Programme. (2015). 'Restore or Reform: UN Support to Core Government Functions in the Aftermath of Conflict'. UNDP Report. https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/crisis-prevention-and-recovery/Executive_Summary_Public_Administration.html [Last Accessed 25 August 2020].

64 Ibid.

65 Ibid.

66 According to the official payroll held by the Ministry of Finance arrears for October to November 2013, excluding the army, amounted to USD12.4 million, and the total wage bill for the current payment owed for the month of December 2013, was estimated to be USD7.9 million. Source: on file with author.

67 For example, payment had to be made on the basis of the existing payroll held by the Ministry of Finance, which could not be reconciled immediately against personnel records, damaged by neglect or burnt during looting, There was equally a risk of coercion or crime to divert funds from intended recipients.

68 International Crisis Group. (2020). 'Financing the revival of Sudan's troubled transition'. Briefing No 157 / Africa. https://d2071andvip0wj.cloudfront.net/b157-financing-revival-of-sudan.pdf [Last Accessed 25 August 2020].

69 To be considered for HIPC Initiative assistance, a country must fulfil the following four conditions: Be eligible to borrow from the World Bank's International Development Agency, Face an unsustainable debt burden that cannot be addressed through traditional debt relief mechanisms. Have established a track record of reform and sound policies through IMF- and World Bank–supported programs. Have developed a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) through a broad-based participatory process in the country. Once a country has met or made sufficient progress in meeting these four criteria, the Executive Boards of the IMF and World Bank formally decide on its eligibility for debt relief.

[70] Of the 39 countries eligible or potentially eligible for HIPC Initiative assistance, 37 are receiving debt relief from the IMF and other creditors. Two countries, Zimbabwe and Sudan, which have been identified as potentially eligible for HIPC Initiative assistance, have not yet reached their decision points. These countries, in addition to arrears, face complex political challenges that have complicated their accession to HIPC.

[71] Schomerus, M., Buell, S., McCullough, A., Gunesekara, V., and Richards, G. (2019). 'What Matters To People When Recovering From Conflict', Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium Booklet. https://securelivelihoods.org/wp-content/uploads/SLRC-booklet-with-bands-v2-web.pdf [Last Accessed 25 August 2020]. For more information on the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium and research findings, visit https://securelivelihoods.org/findings-second-phase-2017-2019/

[72] For a visualisation of the complexity and non-linearity of peace and transition processes see, https://www.peaceagreements.org/visualizing-peace?visualisation=messy

[73] United Nations. (2015). 'Uniting our Strengths for Peace: Politics, Partnerships and People'. Report of the Independent High-Level Panel on Peace Operations. https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/report-of-independent-high-level-panel-peace-operations [Last Accessed 25 August 2020].

[74] Cheng, C., Goodhand, J., and Meehan, P. (2018). 'Synthesis Paper: Securing and Sustaining Elite Bargains that Reduce Violent Conflict'. UK Stabilisation Unit. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/765882/Elite_Bargains_and_Political_Deals_Project_-_Synthesis_Paper.pdf [Last Accessed 24 August 2020].

[75] In addition, national and international actors face a range of political and technical challenges in organising or supporting elections, including a potential 'status quo bias' of office holders and a lack of agreement around electoral design. For a discussion of these challenges, please refer to Ellis, A. (2020). 'The Interplay Between Political and Technical Factors in Democratic Transition Electoral Processes'. PA-X Spotlight. Political Settlements Research Programme, University of Edinburgh. Available at: https://www.politicalsettlements.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/PA-X-Spotlight-A-Ellis-Policy-Paper-PRINT4-002.pdf [Last Accessed 3 August 2020].

[76] United Nations and World Bank Group. (2018). Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict. Washington, DC: World Bank Group.

[77] Pichler-Fong, A. (2017). Burkina Faso: Popular Uprising and Political Transition (2014-2015). United Nations-World Bank Background Paper, Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict.

[78] Whitfield, T. (2005). 'A Crowded Field: Groups of Friends, the United Nations and the Resolution of Conflict', Center on International Cooperation. Studies in Security Institutions (Vol. 1), Occasional Paper. https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/ACrowdedField_WhitefieldCIC2005.pdf [Last Accessed 25 August 2020].

[79] International Crisis Group. (2020). 'Financing the revival of Sudan's troubled transition'. Briefing No 157 / Africa. https://d2071andvip0wj.cloudfront.net/b157-financing-revival-of-sudan.pdf [Last Accessed 25 August 2020].

[80] Ibid.

81 For evidence based on case studies, see: Bhattarai, P. (2016). The Impact of Relationship Dynamics on Third-Party Coordination: Perceptions of Third-Party Practitioners in Nepal and Philippines. International Negotiation 21(1): 43–74.

82 It is important to note that the international system is not coherently organised – coordination of overall support to a transition government is frequently managed by coalitions, such as a Troika or a Group of Friends, under hybrid leadership, such as a joint AU-UN mandate. Similarly in some technical policy areas, such as for example security sector reform, air traffic control or decentralisation, no clear multilateral lead exists (or is contested) and/ or leadership is not attached to capacity in country to support. In other areas, such as human rights, multiple frameworks may coincide and intersect, such as those held by the UN, EU or AU.

83 United Nations Secretary-General. (2018). 'Peacebuilding and sustaining peace: Report of the Secretary-General'. A/72/707–S/2018/43, p.6.

84 Garrasi, D. and Allen, R. (2016). 'Review of Experiences with Post-Conflict Needs Assessments 2008–2015'. World Bank Background Study. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/24029 [Last Accessed 25 August 2020].

85 United Nations Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund. (2020). '2020-2024 Strategy'. United Nations Peacebuilding. https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/pbf_strategy _2020-2024_final.pdf [Last Accessed 25 August 2020].

86 OECD. (2020). 'Mission drawdowns: Financing a sustainable peace: Sustaining gains and supporting economic stability post UN mission withdrawal'. OECD Development Policy Papers.

87 Cheng, C., Goodhand, J., Meehan, P. (2018). 'Synthesis Paper: Securing and Sustaining Elite Bargains that Reduce Violent Conflict'. UK Stabilisation Unit. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/ attachment_data/file/765882/Elite_Bargains_and_Political_Deals_Project_-_Synthesis_Paper.pdf [Last Accessed 24 August 2020].

88 See, for example, Molloy, S. (2019). 'Peace Agreements and Trust Funds'. PA-X Report: Economic Series. Political Settlements Research Programme, University of Edinburgh. https://www.politicalsettlements.org/wp-content/ uploads/2019/08/Trust-Funds-Report-Digital.pdf [Last Accessed 3 August 2020].

89 Laws, E. (2018) 'Thinking and working politically in Somalia: A case study on the Somalia Stability Fund'. Overseas Development Institute. https://twpcommunity.org/resources/somalia-stability-fund [Last Accessed 24 August 2020].

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The Political Settlements Research Programme (PSRP) is centrally concerned with how political settlements can be made both more stable, and more inclusive of those affected by them beyond political elites. In particular, the programme examines the relationship between stability and inclusion, sometimes understood as a relationship between peace-making and justice.

The programme is addressing three broad research questions relating to political settlements:

1. How do different types of political settlements emerge, and what are the actors, institutions, resources, and practices that shape them?

2. How can political settlements be improved by internally-driven initiatives, including the impact of gender-inclusive processes and the rule of law institutions?

3. How, and with what interventions, can external actors change political settlements?

The Global Justice Academy at The University of Edinburgh is the lead organisation. PSRP partners include: Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution (ASPR), Conciliation Resources (CR), International IDEA, The Institute for Security Studies (ISS), The Rift Valley Institute (RVI), and the Transitional Justice Institute (TJI, Ulster University).

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