

CHAPTER 8

EU POLICIES TO ADDRESS FRAGILITY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Addressing state fragility has been a policy priority for the EU for a long time. To deal with countries in fragile situations, the EU has developed a comprehensive set of policies, which includes a general framework, providing the guidelines and objectives for EU foreign and development policy, and specific policies towards fragility. The high priority conferred to state fragility is also reflected in the European Consensus on Development, adopted in 2005.

Whether this comprehensive set of policy documents translates into adequate instruments effectively addressing the challenges posed by the fragility of state institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa is still open to discussion. The object of this Report is not to evaluate the existing policies in detail, but to highlight the EU's potential and limitations in tackling fragility.

A review of the EU approach to state fragility reveals that progress is needed in several directions. The first and more general direction is narrowing the implementation gap between the theoretical policy framework and the design and implementation of specific interventions on the ground. This challenge is fundamental because the effect of a policy is seen in its implementation. Furthermore such implementation needs to be properly tailored because one-size-fits-all policies do not suit the needs of fragile states.

Next, and more specifically, progress is needed:

- To reach a solid understanding of the local context – to design effective interventions informed by such an understanding.
- To understand how the principle of ownership should be adapted when dealing with countries that have incapacitated or illegitimate state institutions, which can make budget support ineffective.
- To avoid having the breadth of EU policies backfire, which could happen if policy coherence for development is not achieved, and different policies produce indirect adverse effects on fragile states. The horizontal dimension of policy coherence needs to be matched by a better search for vertical coherence,¹ ensuring a better coordination between the EC and EU member states.
- To make EU trade policy more responsive to the specific needs of Sub-Saharan African fragile states and ensure that bilateral agreements do not harm the process of multilateral integration.
- To shift from responsive to preventive interventions – so that countries in fragile situations do not slide further down a spiral that progressively erodes the capacity and legitimacy of their state institutions. Such a shift could require moving towards a regional approach to fragility, because the bad neighbour effects described in previous chapters could jeopardise the chances for tackling fragility country by country.
- To better understand how the security and development nexus can be properly handled.

Narrowing the gap requires reassessing priorities, concentrating efforts, simplifying procedures and, in particular, finding the appropriate organisation or partner to implement the policies. It is an issue not only of implementing policies but also of building trust among recipients and donors and learning from the policy experiences. Furthermore, the EU should take a more constructive approach with the understanding that to fight fragility is in fact to build resilience.

Against this background, this chapter assesses the “state of the art” of EU policies towards fragile countries, developing the directions for changes.²

¹ Carbone 2009.

² See Bakrania and Lucas (2009) for an overview of donors activities in fragile countries in the Horn of Africa, which covers the African Development Bank, the EC, the UNDP, the US, the World Bank and selected individual countries. The study emphasises that donors activities reflect not only their own expertise, but also foreign policy interests.

1. THE EU'S HISTORICAL CONCERN FOR FRAGILE COUNTRIES

As early as 2001 the Belgian Presidency of the European Union made fragile states a priority, while the topic has been a preoccupation of independent EU policy research institutes for longer³. The 2003 European Security Strategy, in the post 9-11 world, recasts fragile states as a security issue⁴. The 2005 European Consensus on Development – adopted by the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission – for the first time agreed to a shared EU vision on development and defined state fragility as one of the five key challenges of EU development policy (box 8.1).⁵

Box 8.1: “Addressing state fragility” – Extracts from the European Consensus on Development, 2005⁶

- The EU will improve its response to difficult partnerships and fragile states, where a third of the world's poor live. The EU will strengthen its efforts in conflict prevention work and will support the prevention of state fragility through governance reforms, rule of law, anticorruption measures and the building of viable state institutions in order to help them fulfill a range of basic functions and meet the needs of their citizens. The EU will work through state systems and strategies, where possible, to increase capacity in fragile states. The EU advocates remaining engaged, even in the most difficult situations, to prevent the emergence of failed states.
- In transition situations, the EU will promote links between emergency aid, rehabilitation and long-term development. In a postcrisis situation, development will be guided by integrated transition strategies aiming at rebuilding institutional capacities, essential infrastructure and social services, increasing food security and providing sustainable solutions for refugees, displaced persons and the general security of citizens. EU action will take place in the framework of multilateral efforts including the UN Peace Building Commission and will aim to reestablish the principles of ownership and partnership.
- Some developing countries are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters, climatic change, environmental degradation and external economic shocks. The member states and the EU will support disaster prevention and preparedness in these countries, with a view to increasing their resilience in the face of these challenges.

The European Consensus on Development lays out an EU approach based on governance reforms, rule of law, anticorruption measures and the building of viable state institutions, as well as increasing capacity in fragile states⁷. It also underlines the perceived need within the EU to improve the effectiveness and coherence of its assistance to developing countries. And it advocates remaining engaged, even in the most difficult situations, to prevent the emergence of failed states.

Work by other institutions such as the World Bank and the OECD has been instrumental in focusing the policy thinking and debate on how to work in fragile states⁸. These institutions and individual EU member states, more than the EC and EU collectively, have often led the policy debate. While some EU member states had their own bilateral policies on fragile states, others felt the urgency to develop them and pushed for further policy discussions at the European level⁹.

Under the Portuguese Presidency in 2007, and following an extensive consultation with the member states, civil society players and other EU institutions, the EU defined the analytical and conceptual ground for tackling in a more systematic and strategic way its cooperation with countries and regions in situations of fragility. This led to the adoption, in October 2007, of a Communication of the Commission “Towards an EU response to situations of fragility – engaging in difficult environments for sustainable development, stability and peace”, which was followed by Conclusions of the Council and a resolution by the European Parliament on the same topic in November 2007¹⁰. In parallel, the Council adopted in November 2007 its Conclusions on “Security and Development”¹¹ where it stated that “the nexus between security and development should inform EU strategies and policies in order to contribute to the coherence of EU external action”.

³ Visman 1998.

⁴ Solana 2003.

⁵ This chapter draws on the background paper by Faria and Sherriff 2009 available in volume 1B.

⁶ Extracted from European Parliament Council Commission (2006).

⁷ See paragraph 20 of the European Parliament Council Commission (2006).

⁸ See the OECD International Initiative on Conflict and Fragility (www.oecd.org/dac/incaf) and World Bank (www.worldbank.org/ieg/licus/index.html).

⁹ For instance, DFID has already in place a specific approach to fragility, which includes focusing on state-building as the central objective, using different ways to deliver aid, working more closely with international partners and staying committed for the longer term to get results. DFID, (2009), chapter 4.

¹⁰ Commission of the European Communities 2007; European Parliament 2007; and Council of the European Union 2007.

¹¹ Council of the European Union 2007.

Based on these policy commitments, the Commission and the General Secretariat of the Council will, before the end of 2009, propose an EU Action Plan¹² for situations of fragility and conflict, outlining concrete measures on how to enhance the EU response to fragile situations in four key areas: “Whole of the EU” approach, state-building, making EU assistance more responsive and effective and international strategic partnerships.

1.1 THE EU POLICY FRAMEWORKS TO TACKLE FRAGILITY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

EU policies towards Sub-Saharan African fragile states are broadly defined along three lines:

- Overarching policy frameworks providing the general guiding principles and objectives for EU foreign and development policy and international engagement in areas that, although not specific to fragile states or to Africa, are generally key in situations of fragility, such as development, security and humanitarian assistance.
- Joint policy frameworks for Africa that, while not specific to fragile states, shape EU action in, and its relations with, Sub-Saharan African states (such as the Cotonou Partnership Agreement¹³ and the Joint Africa-EU Strategy).
- EC- or EU-wide policies and policy guidelines (not necessarily specific to Africa) that are focused on situations of fragility or that cover aspects of EC or EU action particularly relevant to them (such as crisis management missions; security sector reform; disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration; small arms and light weapons; governance; conflict prevention; children and armed conflict; security and development priorities; and policies and the development dimension of the financial and economic crisis).¹⁴

In addition to these specific measures, some other EU policies on trade, migration, research and innovation, fisheries and agricultural impact at least some aspects of fragility and interact with the ad hoc measures. It is therefore crucial to look beyond the traditional development and foreign policy arena to check whether these EU policies are coherent with tackling fragility and building resilience.

Through its leadership on Policy Coherence for Development, the EU has made some progress in recent years, but more needs to be done on understanding the actual impact of EU policy incoherence on fragile states in areas beyond development and foreign policy and, as recognised by the EU, in overcoming diverging interests among member states and pursuing more coherent whole-of-the-Union policies.¹⁵

The new strategic approach to Policy Coherence for Development highlighting the promotion of peace and security for development and contributing to the establishment of the policy framework for the whole-of-the-Union approach to development is going in the right direction.

On top of this, EU members and the European Commission have committed to the 2005 Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness and the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action, whose principles apply equally to fragile situations, although they need to be adapted to environments with little capacity and/or ownership (box 8.2).¹⁶ This aid effectiveness agenda has been translated by the EU into several initiatives such as a common framework for joint multiannual programming, common implementation mechanisms (co-financing, joint donor missions) and a “Code of Conduct on Division of Labour and Complementarity”,¹⁷ so far implemented “very partially”.¹⁸ An operational framework to further promote aid effectiveness and joint approaches at EU level in the areas of division of labour, use of country systems and technical cooperation for capacity development, including in fragile contexts, is currently under elaboration, in view of the fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness that will be held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, in 2011.

¹² The plan will be based on follow-up activities to both sets of Council Conclusions, separate throughout this process. The work on situations of fragility is based on: action plans, studies and reports from six pilot countries with a member state taking the co-lead together with the EC delegation in four cases: Sierra Leone (co-lead Germany), Burundi (co-lead the Netherlands), Guinea Bissau (co-lead Portugal), Haiti (co-lead France), Timor Leste and Yemen; a support study mapping the actors, instruments and assessment tools in fragile situations; joint work by the COM, the World Bank, AfDB and IMF on a common approach to budget support in fragile situations; and the adoption of flexible procedures in situations of crises and emergency. For the follow-up on security and development nexus, see in particular RELEX/ Studies/ IFS/ Security and Development. Final Report Book 1 and 2 (Project No. 2008/157766). The study examined at the security and development nexus in Aceh/ Indonesia, Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia and South-Africa and was distributed to EU member states in February 2009.

¹³ The Cotonou Partnership Agreement between the European Union and African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states includes all Sub-Saharan African states apart from South Africa.

¹⁴ A complete list of EU/EC policy documents related to fragility can be found in volume 1B.

¹⁵ Commission of the European Communities 2009b.

¹⁶ The Accra Agenda for Action 2008.

¹⁷ Council of the EU 2007.

¹⁸ European Parliament 2009.

Box 8.2: Specific provisions on fragility of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action

PARIS DECLARATION ON AID EFFECTIVENESS

Adapt and apply to differing country situations

- Enhancing the effectiveness of aid is also necessary in challenging and complex situations, such as the tsunami disaster that struck countries of the Indian Ocean rim on 26 December 2004. In such situations, worldwide humanitarian and development assistance must be harmonised within the growth and poverty reduction agendas of partner countries. In fragile states, as we support state-building and delivery of basic services, we will ensure that the principles of harmonisation, alignment and managing for results are adapted to environments of weak governance and capacity. Overall, we will give increased attention to such complex situations as we work toward greater aid effectiveness.

Delivering effective aid in fragile states

- The long-term vision for international engagement in fragile states is to build legitimate, effective and resilient state and other country institutions. While the guiding principles of effective aid apply equally to fragile states, they need to be adapted to environments of weak ownership and capacity and to immediate needs for basic service delivery.

Partner countries commit to:

- Make progress towards building institutions and establishing governance structures that deliver effective governance, public safety, security, and equitable access to basic social services for their citizens.
- Engage in dialogue with donors on developing simple planning tools, such as the transitional results matrix, where national development strategies are not yet in place.
- Encourage broad participation of a range of national actors in setting development priorities.

Donors commit to:

- Harmonise their activities. Harmonisation is all the more crucial in the absence of strong government leadership. It should focus on upstream analysis, joint assessments, joint strategies, co-ordination of political engagement; and practical initiatives such as the establishment of joint donor offices.
- Align to the maximum extent possible behind central government-led strategies or, if that is not possible, donors should make maximum use of country, regional, sector or non-government systems.
- Avoid activities that undermine national institution building, such as bypassing national budget processes or setting high salaries for local staff.
- Use an appropriate mix of aid instruments, including support for recurrent financing, particularly for countries in promising but high-risk transitions.

ACCRA AGENDA FOR ACTION

We will adapt aid policies for countries in fragile situations

In the Paris Declaration, we agreed that aid effectiveness principles apply equally to development co-operation in situations of fragility, including countries emerging from conflict, but that these principles need to be adapted to environments of weak ownership or capacity. Since then, Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations have been agreed. To further improve aid effectiveness in these environments, we will take the following actions:

- Donors will conduct joint assessments of governance and capacity and examine the causes of conflict, fragility and insecurity, engaging developing country authorities and other relevant stakeholders to the maximum extent possible.
- At country level, donors and developing countries will work and agree on a set of realistic peace- and state-building objectives that address the root causes of conflict and fragility and help ensure the protection and participation of women. This process will be informed by international dialogue between partners and donors on these objectives as prerequisites for development.
- Donors will provide demand-driven, tailored and co-ordinated capacity-development support for core state functions and for early and sustained recovery. They will work with developing countries to design interim measures that are appropriately sequenced and that lead to sustainable local institutions.



- Donors will work on flexible, rapid and long-term funding modalities, on a pooled basis where appropriate, to i) bridge humanitarian, recovery and longer-term development phases, and ii) support stabilisation, inclusive peace building, and the building of capable, accountable and responsive states. In collaboration with developing countries, donors will foster partnerships with the UN System, international financial institutions and other donors.
- At country level and on a voluntary basis, donors and developing countries will monitor implementation of the Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations, and will share results as part of progress reports on implementing the Paris Declaration.

The EU policy approach to fragility broadly reflects much of what is established as international best practice for fragile states, such as pursuing whole-of-government approaches and implementing the OECD's Policy Commitment and Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations of April 2007 (box 8.3).

Box 8.3: OECD-DAC Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations¹⁹

1. Take context as the starting point.
2. Ensure all activities do no harm.
3. Focus on state-building as the central objective.
4. Prioritise prevention.
5. Recognise the links between political, security and development objectives.
6. Promote non discrimination as a basis for inclusive and stable societies.
7. Align with local priorities in different ways in different contexts.
8. Agree on practical coordination mechanisms between international actors.
9. Act fast . . . but stay engaged long enough to give success a chance.
10. Avoid pockets of exclusion ("aid orphans").

Because an extensive policy framework and range of policy initiatives relevant to state fragility already exists in the EU and at the international level, the issue is not about creating a new framework. Instead it is about overcoming the political, financial and institutional challenges to implementing these policies in practice. Issues in search of operational guidance in fragile states include budgetary support, the link between peace-building and state-building, trade, climate change, decentralisation, regional integration, service provision, and gender and social cohesion. Some of these areas have already been tackled, while for others current EU policy provides only limited practical guidance. Furthermore, it is important that existing EU policy frameworks are sufficiently "field tested" for feasibility, relevance and impact in different fragile contexts.

¹⁹ Extracted from OECD/DAC 2007.

1.2 EU INSTRUMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

As recognised in the 2003 European Security Strategy and a number of other relevant policy documents, the challenge for the EU is to bring together its different instruments and capabilities in a concerted and coherent effort, not only among EU instruments but also embracing the external activities of the member states. Some instruments already in place are the following.

Guidelines, action plans and specific strategies. As mentioned above, an action plan outlining an EU approach to situations of fragility and conflict is currently under elaboration. The EU has also developed specific action plans²⁰ and strategies on other issues such as the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820. UN Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security was the first official UN Security Council document to recognise the impact of armed conflicts on women, to stress the importance of equal and full participation in peace and security and to require that all parties in a conflict respect women's rights (box 8.4). The EU 1325 partnership was induced by the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office Gender, Peace and Security group to provide a forum for policy-makers and to enhance discussion and understanding of the gender perspectives and implementation of the UN 1325 resolution within the EU.

Box 8.4: United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted on 31 October 2000, will help in addressing gender inequality in postconflict situations and in more gender-equitable peace-building. Resolution 1325 requires parties in a conflict to respect women's rights and to support their participation in peace negotiations and in postconflict reconstruction²¹. The resolution specifically addresses the disproportionate and unique impact of war on women, and women's special undervalued and underused contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace. It urges women's equal and full participation as active agents in peace and security. Peace-building is a continuous process in states moving out of fragility, and gender equity is crucial to encouraging good governance, transparency and accountability.

The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes trains men and women in conflict resolution, negotiation and mediation to assist them in presenting their issues, needs and interests at peace tables in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan and Uganda.

The Mano River Women's Peace Networks in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, signatories to the Lomé Peace Accord, were awarded the United Nations Human Rights Prize for their role in peace processes in West African in 2003. Their work points to the challenges to bring women into social, political and economic leadership positions in peace-building and reconstruction and the importance of international conventions and UN resolutions²² in underscoring women's role in maintaining peace and security in their societies²³.

In order to play a stronger role in women's protection and empowerment in postconflict settings, the EU needs to implement more efficient accountability, monitoring and reporting mechanisms and increase the financial and human resources allocated to this field of action²⁴. The role of customary providers of security and justice should also be considered in security sector reform processes because in many fragile states, security services do not reach beyond the capital centre, and people living in the rural areas or suburban slums rely mainly on an informal network of security providers.

²⁰ For example, EU action plans on climate change and development.

²¹ The European Commission, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization have also forged this partnership to support stronger action on gender equality and women's empowerment in national development processes and in co-operation programmes supported by the EC. The partnership includes a focus on effective implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and focuses on 12 countries, most of which are emerging from conflict.

²² Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women 1979; Beijing Platform for Action 1995; UN Resolution 1265 on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, adopted on 17 September, 1999; UN Resolution 1261 on Children and Armed Conflict adopted on 25 August, 1999; UN Resolution 1296 on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict adopted on 19 April, 2000; UN Resolution 1314 on Children and Armed Conflict, adopted on 11 August, 2000; UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security adopted on 31 October, 2000; Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-first Century, New York, 5-9 June, 2000; and Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, Maputo, 11 July, 2003.

²³ EU member states provide examples of good practice, which can be replicated in fragile contexts. The National Plans for Implementation of 1325 National Action Plans are under way in nine European countries (Austria, Denmark, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom). National Action Plans are seen as innovative attempts and comprehensive strategies to promote follow-through of international commitments. For a more detailed analysis of National Action Plans, see Sherriff and Barnes (2008).

²⁴ Sherriff and Barnes 2008.

Financial instruments and procedures. With the current financial perspectives 2007-13, the EC has engaged in a reform of its financial instruments for external action, comprising, among others, the Instrument for Stability, the Development Cooperation Instrument (including thematic budget lines such as non state actors and local authorities in development and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, plus the European Development Fund as the instrument for cooperation with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries outside the EU budget. The Instrument for Stability has €2.1 billion for 2007-13²⁵. The 10th European Development Fund for ACP countries has €22.7 billion for 2008-13. It provides an integrated framework for funding development and security-related activities²⁶.

Box 8.5: The Vulnerability Flex mechanism

To support developing countries coping with the effects of the 2008-09 economic and financial crisis, the EU has adopted several measures in 2009, including an ad-hoc Vulnerability Flex (V-Flex) mechanism²⁷. It is a short-term and demand-driven instrument supporting the most vulnerable ACP countries with poor resilience capacity with a view to enabling them to maintain priority spending, notably in the social sectors, in 2009 and 2010. The mechanism can operate to provide grants in ACP countries where international financial institutions loans are insufficient or where international financial institutions are not operating. Support can be provided either as budget support (preferred modality) or existing projects and programmes (fall back position).

The V-Flex has €500 million for 2009-10. Country eligibility has to be decided case by case according to the criteria set by the Commission.

The Peace Facility for Africa, created in 2003 in response to a request from the African Union, uses the European Development Fund to support African peacekeeping operations. More recently, the European Commission has engaged in a strategic work on budget support in fragile situations, together with several member states, the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund, with the aim to develop guidelines and to enhance coordination at the EU and international level. As mentioned above, a common approach paper on this issue should be adopted before the end of 2009. The Commission has also reviewed its procedures to make them more flexible in situations of fragility.

Human resources. Although appropriate human resources to implement these policies remain a problem in European member state capitals, in Brussels and in Sub-Saharan Africa, EC delegations have acquired greater political awareness and sensitivity. EC delegations are still mainly focused on managing assistance projects and programmes, but the political dimension is now more important, with better efforts to use the political dialogue tool more effectively. Some EC delegations have political advisors, and there is a sharper focus on governance matters, long a missing link in EC policies. Yet most EC delegations lack the capacity to look at societal factors that may trigger instability and lack the local presence to gain full understanding of the relevant issues. They also often lack a clear political strategy and mandate supported by all EU actors in the field, and the capacity to implement it. The EU Treaty of Lisbon, if adopted, could provide an opportunity for increasing and supporting this political dimension through a new institutional architecture. But the EC also needs to address procedural constraints that often hamper its capacity to translate policy commitments into activities²⁸.

Crisis management capabilities. The EU has also been developing its capabilities in civilian and military crisis management. In June 2003, in the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), the EU deployed its first military force outside Europe without using the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the Ituri province of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The goal was to stabilise the security situation and to improve the humanitarian conditions in and around the main town of Bunia. Between 2004 and 2006, still in the framework of the ESDP, the EU deployed European police officers to the Democratic Republic of Congo (EUPOL-Kinshasa), an advisory mission for security sector reform as well as the European Forces in the Democratic Republic of Congo mission, a military deployment, in and around Kinshasa and in neighbouring Gabon, assigned to support United Nations Organization Mission to stabilise the situation during the election and to protect civilians. From January 2008 until March 2009 the EU deployed a military force in eastern Chad and in the northeastern part of the Central African Republic to protect civilians in danger, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and protect UN personnel and facilities.

²⁵ For further discussion of this particular instrument, see Gänzle (2009).

²⁶ Provided these are not for offensive military costs, as European Development Fund activities cannot cover these in accordance with the internationally agreed official development assistance definition.

²⁷ Commission of the European Communities 2009.

²⁸ For instance, EC procedures make it difficult for EC delegations to hire local researchers to assist them with some of these context analyses. Koeb (2008) suggests recruitment of skilled staff.

However, the overarching pillar structure and the division of competencies limits links among different EU policies, tools and actors.²⁹ At the nexus between security and development – when military and civilian crisis management operations converge with institution-building, conflict prevention and economic development – serious questions of the demarcation of powers between the pillars arise.³⁰ Within European institutions there is no universal agreement that an integrated Council and Commission office is the best way forward.³¹ An attempt to link the EU's civilian and military capacities is under way with the restructuring of responsibilities within the Council secretariat, which could also affect joint work with the EC.

Table 8.1: European Union institutions and agencies relevant to fragile states

	European Commission ³²	Council of the EU	EU member states
Diplomatic action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DG External Relations • DG Trade • DG Development and Relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific States • EC delegations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GAERC • High Representative • PSC • PMG • Council Working Groups (COHOM, CODEV, CIVCOM and regional working groups) • EUSR • Council Secretariat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign ministries • Embassies / missions
Multilateral and bilateral programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DG Development and Relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific States • DG External Relations • DG ECHO (humanitarian aid) • DG EuropeAid • EC delegations 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development cooperation ministries / agencies • Operational development agencies • Embassies / missions
Crisis management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DG External Relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESDP Missions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions to ESDP missions

2. EU POTENTIAL IN FRAGILE SITUATIONS

EU is a crucial political, economic and diplomatic player. The EU is the world's largest trading bloc and collectively the largest international donor. Like other big players in the international arena, it is a major economic power. It can bring diplomatic energy to bear through its Common Foreign and Security Policy with the 27 member states acting together in countries and such international forums as the UN. And it has some advantages over international organisations in tackling fragility: the wide range of its potential actions, the resources that it can mobilise and its status as a political actor. Furthermore, the EU's own history with transition from dictatorship to democracy in some countries and from regulated systems to market systems represents an inestimable experience to be exploited.

EU engages with state and nonstate actors. The EU has the ability to engage with a variety of actors other than governments, including local authorities and nonstate actors and regional organisations, which add different perspectives to the EU's understanding of the local context, feed into the political dialogue with governments and improve the outreach of its policies. But that ability often remains unexploited because of the complexity of EU procedures and the limited capacity of some of the other actors.³³

EU has a long-lasting presence. The EU has, through its member states or through the EC delegations, a long-lasting presence in fragile countries. Even in situations of open violent conflict, when few international actors remain, it often maintains some type of presence and support through the offices or field experts of the EC Humanitarian Office. Indeed, the fact that the EC (through EC Humanitarian Office) was the only donor permanently present in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo through the

²⁹ Solana 2009.

³⁰ Hoffmeister 2008.

³¹ Vogel 2009.

³² Institutions have different roles within each of these areas, and the European Commission cannot initiate EU-wide diplomatic action.

³³ Particip 2008.

first years of this decade gave it a significant advantage over other donors. And it led to the first ever crisis management mission in Africa (without recourse to NATO assets) in support of the UN Artemis operation in Bunia, northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo, in 2003.

EU can build global partnerships. The EU is not the only economic, political or military power involved or interested in Africa³⁴. The EU's ability to build a genuine trilateral dialogue with Africa and China has proved challenging because few African actors see this trilateral dialogue in their best interest. In some cases, the EU capacities are matched or surpassed by others, but the nonhegemonic nature of the EU, as long as it is perceived as such, could add to the value of EU presence and action. In addition, the EU can act collectively with significantly less political baggage than its individual member states, particularly those with a colonial past in Sub-Saharan Africa. As long as partner countries do not see individual EU member states pursuing their own narrow economic or security interests through the EU, they may be more willing to engage with the EU and to accept it as a power in the UN. It is important, however, to be realistic and not overstate the EU's influence in Africa. Its effective role may be less than thought, partly because the EU is often not a collective entity in partner countries. Nor does it behave as such, with its role or action generally less than the sum of its parts.

But the EU should speak and act with one voice and mind. The EU's added value will remain underused until the EC and EU member states speak and act with one voice (sharing a common understanding and strategy of how to work in these contexts) and have an effective division of labour beyond the aid effectiveness agenda. As previously noted, several initiatives, such as the forthcoming action plan on situations of fragility and conflict, are under way. The issue is how the wide range of policies and instruments, as well as the different EU actors, interrelate to develop and apply a coherent, needs-based and well-informed strategy that can best help these states and societies cope with the causes and effects of fragility and enhance their resilience.

If EU coordination and coherence are very often difficult at a national level within member states administrations, they are even more complex at the EU level – with 27 member states, the EU institutions and the heavy and lengthy decision-making process and cumbersome internal and financial procedures. But the EU can achieve results as a single player, when there is able leadership and strong political will. EU policy in Democratic Republic of Congo in the mid-1990s is often considered an example of unity of purpose and commitments within the EU institutions (including member states) to support country stabilisation. But for this unified result to be more permanent, more stable institutional arrangements are needed. A unified long-term policy cannot be implemented through ad hoc coordination.

3. TOWARDS A BETTER EU RESPONSE TO FRAGILITY

Although progress is visible and policy documents provide more comprehensive political guidance, there is a long path to translating commitments into practice. Financial instruments and procedures have become simpler and more flexible, but they remain complex, cumbersome, lengthy and “nonstate actor unfriendly.” That is true even for humanitarian aid, which has by far the lightest procedures in the EC. The EC and the Council still compete on matters of competence. The creation of a common external action service, if the EU Treaty of Lisbon is ratified, could provide some answers, but the essential work is much deeper³⁵.

Development policies have to link with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the ESDP missions (civilian and military crisis management) – and vice versa. This is particularly so where cross-cutting issues (human rights, rule of law) and activities (security sector reform and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration are likely to be as important as traditional areas of EU foreign policy engagement (or even more so). Humanitarian and military actors are also more likely to meet in the field, which poses other challenges related to the perceptions of their distinctive roles, the clarity of their mandates and the adequacy of their means. Nor have links between development, security and environment really been addressed so far, although they are receiving more attention, particularly in Central Africa, including the Great Lakes Region.

The drivers of change are primarily local. Donors and their policies can help, hinder or make no difference at all. But it will be up to the local actors to determine whether and how change occurs. Hence it is important for the EU's roles and activities to root in each specific context (in accord with the OECD-DAC Principles). That presupposes knowledge and understanding of local and regional dynamics – from anthropological, historical, socioeconomic and political perspectives. So, a much more sustained political engagement, rather than a technocratic one, is required.

³⁴ Tadesse 2009.

³⁵ See Koeb (2008) for the implications of the Lisbon Treaty for EU's relations with developing countries. Against the background of the treaty's approval, Gaves and Maxwell (2009) propose different organizational models for restructuring EU development policy.

3.1 BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT AND AN ADEQUATE POLICY RESPONSE

A renewed effort to understand local dynamics, identify the causes of (potential) conflict and feed well-informed multisourced political, societal, economic and regional analysis into country strategies has characterised recent EU policy actions, especially in situations of fragility³⁶. There is often a shared analysis of the context by the EC and EU member states. And EC country strategies are generally rooted in needs and priorities identified in national strategy documents, increasing the potential for ownership. But the extent to which such analysis is informed by diverse local sources is not always clear. Nor is there deep understanding of local actors (spoilers, drivers of change), their motivations and the evolving societal dynamics. This can be partly explained by the need for EU member states to keep some political room for manoeuvre. Moreover, a shared understanding of the context does not mean that different actors (in the field, in EU capitals, local partners) share a common political and operational strategy.

The EU has had difficulty linking better political economy analysis to strategy and programming. Some think this is because the evidence is often conflicting, or requires political choices that the EU, or its partner, is unwilling or unable to make. For instance, in Kenya, most donors did not react or adapt their strategies until the political violence in 2007, despite warning signs over several years.

3.2 NEED FOR A QUALIFIED PRINCIPLE OF OWNERSHIP

In many fragile states, legitimacy is short-lived, even when the government is elected in a free and fair election process, itself an achievement in such context. Government capacities are generally overwhelmed by the level of needs. Government control is often limited to parts of the country, not extending to the perpetrators of violence (sometimes even within state structures). And national policies are not always existent or well-defined. Yet EU development policies often seem to assume a functioning government as a legitimate interlocutor and partner. So, more creative approaches are required to involve local and regional actors as partners in jointly owning EU initiatives, a considerable challenge to implement.

Recent interventions in Somalia illustrate the EU's capacity and will to find alternative approaches to almost exclusive state-to-state dialogue and relations, and move beyond such a government/state-limited vision of ownership. Even though the EU's strategy may not be the long-term state-building solution, the EU has continued to channel aid, support the provision of basic services through civil society actors and promote local government-civil society partnerships. The EU might draw on this example to revisit and qualify the ownership principle and its relationship with civil society in fragile states.

3.3 POLICY COHERENCE AND COORDINATION

Efforts to achieve greater coherence need to aim at building a common vision and political strategy – across EU institutions and key players in the field – on how to address the main challenges, what the priorities are, how to engage with whom and for what – in the event of unwilling governments and governance challenges. Leadership and compromise are not as straightforward as in other environments. Coordination in the field is still mainly understood as not stepping too much into the other's realm and as building synergies among donor activities. But there appears to be less appetite for an effective division of labour among the donor community in more political areas of development cooperation (such as progress in education seems easier than support to governance).

Above all, thorny political issues still tend to be left aside in any coordination effort in the field, particularly with poor governance and rather strong but unwilling governments, resulting in a lack of clear political strategies to address each fragile situation. This is partly the result of different political cultures and agendas of the EC and the EU member states – and partly the result of interaction between the field and headquarters (Brussels and capitals) suffering from a lack of clarity on the role of the field, both in policy-making and as a political actor. A new and more powerful high representative for foreign affairs and security policy, also a vice president of the European Commission, and a new jointly owned diplomatic service – the European External Action Service, as proposed by the EU Treaty of Lisbon – could bring some positive changes to some of the EU's shortcomings in coherence and coordination. Yet its possible transformative role should not be overestimated.

³⁶ On this issue, see the second paragraph of Commission of the European Communities 2009a.

Box 8.6: The EU's Common Agricultural Policy and food security in fragile African states

by Alan Matthews, Trinity College Dublin

The European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has been heavily criticised for its detrimental effects on food security in African countries. The criticisms are directed at the way subsidised EU agricultural products undermine the local markets for domestic producers and compete with African exports in third-country markets – and the way trade barriers make it more difficult for African producers to export to EU markets. Nongovernmental organisations have produced case studies of the damage done to local production due to subsidised EU exports of milk powder, sugar, preserved tomatoes and tomato concentrate, beef, cotton and frozen chicken.³⁷ There are fears that liberalisation requirements of Economic Partnership Agreements could expose vulnerable agricultural sectors to further import competition from EU agribusiness firms.³⁸

The food security impacts of the CAP must be evaluated in the light of significant reforms to the CAP market regimes in recent years. Market access conditions have also radically changed with new agricultural trade arrangements for African countries. The diversity of vulnerable African economies, often highly specialised in a small number of agricultural exports and dependent on food imports to satisfy dietary needs, also needs to be acknowledged. In these countries, EU food supplies will affect food producers and food consumers differently.

EU agricultural trade with Sub-Saharan Africa is highly differentiated. The EU imports mostly cocoa and cocoa products, bananas, coffee, cane sugar, tobacco, cotton and some fruits and vegetables from the region, and exports mainly wheat, flour, food preparations, white sugar, milk powder, malt and frozen chicken. CAP reform has lowered market price support for most basic commodities produced in the EU, while continuing to support farm incomes through largely decoupled direct payments. Thus, intervention prices for cereals, beef, dairy products, sugar and rice have been significantly reduced. Coupled direct payments for tobacco, processed vegetables and, partially, for cotton production have been eliminated. Dependence on export subsidies has been greatly reduced, though export subsidies were reintroduced for pig meat and poultry in 2008 and dairy products in 2009. But the EU has committed to the elimination of export subsidies after 2013. And the EU did not introduce export taxes on cereals during the 2007-08 food crisis as it had done during the previous price spike in 1995-96.

Less progress has been made in reducing border protection for EU agricultural production. Variable import levies were converted into fixed import tariffs and reduced on average by 36% in the Uruguay Round. But agricultural tariffs remain high at around 20% on average, with much higher tariffs on specific commodities such as beef, sugar, bananas and dairy products. There is also evidence of tariff escalation in the EU's tariff structure, with tariffs increasing with the degree of processing.

However, African countries benefit from preferential access to the EU agricultural market. All African least developed countries have duty-free and quota-free access apart from transitional arrangements for sugar which will be phased in by 2015. Duty-free and quota-free access has also been extended to African non-least developed countries that have initialled interim Economic Partnership Agreements with the EU, which give greater market access opportunities, particularly for bananas and, after a transition period, sugar. Rules of origin under Economic Partnership Agreements provide some relaxation and simplification for agricultural and processed agricultural products, enabling African farmers and producers to export to the EU market more easily. Duty-free and quota-free access also avoids the discrimination against value added processing due to tariff escalation. Non-least developed African countries that did not sign Economic Partnership Agreements can use the EU's Generalised System of Preferences scheme, though the tariff preferences on CAP products under this arrangement are very limited.

Paradoxically, CAP reform reduces the value of this preferential market access and erodes the rents African exporters can obtain. Expanded access for sugar has been accompanied by the renunciation of the Sugar Protocol, which guaranteed that African sugar exports to the EU within preassigned quotas would receive the EU guaranteed price. Lower intervention prices and tariff reductions have reduced the profitability of the EU market for African exporters of rice, sugar, bananas, beef and fruits and vegetables.³⁹ Thus, within the World Trade Organization (WTO) Doha Round trade negotiations, African countries have argued for extended time frames for the proposed tariff reductions for products where preferences are important.



³⁷ Paasch 2008; Oxfam 2002.

³⁸ Bertow and Schulteis 2008.

³⁹ Low et al. 2009.

The EU, recognising that CAP reform can cause adjustment difficulties for African countries because of the erosion of preferential access, has made financial aid available to help improve competitiveness and assist diversification. The Accompanying Measures for Sugar Protocol countries, with an indicative budget of €1.28 billion for 2006-13, support adjustment processes in 18 ACP sugar-producing countries. More than €450 million was provided under the Special Framework for Assistance to ACP banana exporters in 1994-2008 to promote adjustment. The EU and member states have also supported the EU-Africa partnership for cotton development since 2004 and have allocated more than €300 million for cotton programmes and projects.

So, there has been considerable progress in making EU agricultural policy more coherent with development goals and the food security objectives of vulnerable African economies.⁴⁰ But countries continue to express fears about the potential adverse effects of EU food exports to Africa in the context of the reciprocal liberalisation required under Economic Partnership Agreements. One of the main goals of CAP reform is to make EU exports of agricultural products more competitive. But the EU has assured countries that the asymmetry of liberalisation built into these agreements can be used either to exclude most tariffs on European agricultural products from liberalisation or make them subject to long transition periods (up to 25 years).

CAP reform will continue, given the lively debate on the nature and justification of decoupled payments in the EU particularly in the post-2013 period and the commitment to reach agreement on further agricultural trade liberalisation in the Doha Round. This will encourage greater imports of basic commodities into the EU while strengthening the competitiveness of the EU's processed food sector. For fragile African economies there will be both threats and opportunities in this process, but these need to be kept in perspective. Despite the high profile of debates on the impact of the CAP on African countries, particularly in Europe, African food security remains primarily a function of domestic agricultural policies and investment in Africa.

3.4 EU TRADE POLICIES TOWARDS FRAGILE STATES

In accordance with the Cotonou Partnership Agreement, the trade policy framework with Sub-Saharan Africa is based on the Economic Partnership Agreements negotiated between the EU and six ACP regions to boost trade and development and reverse the marginalisation of the ACP States. In Cotonou it has also been agreed that Economic Partnership Agreements will be WTO compatible. While there is some scope for exceptions for developing countries and particularly for least developed countries within WTO rules, there is no specific provision for fragile states or fragile situations. The ability and policy space for the EU to adapt or make specific provisions for fragile states in the field of trade is therefore somewhat limited by its existing international commitments (but nevertheless possible).

Some analysts have argued that, "while Economic Partnership Agreements are no immediate remedy to the crisis, they could further add to the difficulties encountered by some African countries, unless some flexibility is introduced in the Economic Partnership Agreement negotiations process and appropriate development support measures are promptly adopted and implemented".⁴¹ EU Aid for Trade measures could offer some scope for adaptation to the specificities of fragile states, or at least to ensure that they have their capacity to trade and resilience enhanced rather than undermined by the commitments in these trade agreements (box 8.7).

⁴⁰ Matthews 2008.

⁴¹ Bilal et al. 2009, p. 1.

Box 8.7: Aid for Trade

The EU is one of the main providers of Aid for Trade, a broad initiative encompassing assistance to promote trade, develop trade policies and build trade-related infrastructure. So, even if not specific to fragile countries, it is relevant for fragile countries, given their structural characteristics.

The 2005 Hong Kong WTO Ministerial Declaration called for more and better aid for trade. It sets in motion a process to help low-income countries overcome structural limitations and weak capacities that undermine their ability to compete and maximise the benefits from trade and investment opportunities. In 2007, the EU Council adopted an EU Aid for Trade Strategy, a joint Community and EU member states initiative. The objectives of this strategy are “to enable developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, to use trade more effectively to promote growth, employment, development and poverty reduction and to achieve their development objectives”.⁴² This strategy includes scaling up specific funding for trade related assistance to €2 billion a year by 2010. It intends to enhance the pro-poor focus, increase EU and member states’ capacity in line with aid effectiveness principles, support the ACP regional integration process and monitor the commitments.

On the EU pledge to commit €2 billion a year to Trade Related Assistance by 2010, new figures indicate that the collective EU pledge was nearly met in 2007. In 2007 the commitments from EU member states and the Community towards trade related assistance amounted to €0.96 and €1.02 billion, respectively. Total EU support in 2007 thus reached €1.98 billion with an increase of 8% from 2006, when total EU trade related assistance was €1.83 billion. With respect to the wider Aid for Trade agenda, total EU support reached €7.17 billion in 2007, and Africa is receiving the largest share of EU Aid for Trade funds – €2.7 billion in 2007 and 44% of the total EU Aid for Trade over 2005-07.⁴³

The rationale behind Aid for Trade – to help developing countries connect to the global marketplace – is important, because addressing behind-the-border issues and infrastructure constraints are long-term goals, essential for poverty reduction. And, in the 2009 downturn, Aid for Trade can have an immediate stimulus effect.

What is lacking in many fragile states is not so much trade in goods, which is mainly informal and diverts much needed state revenue, but the institutions that ensure the implementation of trade policy and agreements. Fragile countries in Sub-Saharan Africa face many internal barriers – lack of knowledge, excessive red tape, inadequate financing, poor infrastructures – making it difficult for them to trade and therefore to fully benefit from aid for trade. This is particularly true for countries in Central Africa, which due to their geographical position, risk becoming “aid for trade orphans” and further marginalised by globalisation.

While other creative measures could be adopted in the trade sphere, overall the EU appears to have limited scope to adapt its trade policy to make it more sensitive to situations of fragility. Some contend, given the impact of the current financial crisis, that “elements of the EPAs clearly need urgent revision” (box 8.8).⁴⁴

Box 8.8: Economic Partnership Agreements

Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) are asymmetrical agreements covering not only trade in goods and services but also behind-the-border issues, such as competition, government procurement, intellectual property, and trade facilitation, fostering regional integration and combined with aid. According to the Cotonou Agreement, the objective is to enhance cooperation in all areas relevant to trade and foster sustainable development in the ACP states. EPAs should be development oriented, deepening regional integration, enhancing market access for ACP products in the EU market and increasing cooperation on services and trade-related issues. By improving competitiveness, EPAs should help ACP countries’ integration into the global economy and promote their economic growth.

EPAs initially involved six ACP regional groupings, then seven with the East African Community, with five in Sub-Saharan Africa⁴⁵. In an EPA between the EU and a regional grouping, the latter negotiates as a single bloc, though the agreement is signed bilaterally. The non-LDC ACP countries that do not want to engage in an EPA can access to the EU via the Generalised



⁴² Commission of the European Communities 2007, p. 3.

⁴³ Commission of the European Communities 2009, p. 3.

⁴⁴ Jones 2009, p. 7.

⁴⁵ Stevens and Kennan 2005.

System of Preferences,⁴⁶ which is, however, less favourable. The interim outcomes of the EPA process⁴⁷ have been hotly debated in the economic and policy literature.⁴⁸

Many studies highlight their uncertain outcomes.⁴⁹ For some countries, interim EPAs are unlikely to generate significant gains from trade, because ACP countries can fulfil a significant share of the liberalisation efforts asked in EPAs without considerably undermining their current protection scheme.⁵⁰

From the perspectives of fragility and institution-building, an important issue concerns the potential impact of EPAs on tariff revenues of Sub-Saharan African countries. Given the importance of trade taxes in public revenues for African countries, a reduction of tariff revenues associated with reciprocal trade liberalisation could reduce the capacity to satisfy basic state functions. Estimates of full and immediate liberalisation suggest that the losses could be significant.⁵¹ For instance, West Africa is likely to be the region most affected, with loss estimates for Economic Community of West African States varying from about 30% of tariff revenues to up to 89.5%.⁵² More gradual trade liberalisation is likely to mitigate the losses in tariff revenues, but at the cost of reduced gains from trade openness.

So, without appropriate reform of taxation systems and compensating measures, EPAs may have significant negative consequences on the capacity of some Sub-Saharan African states to raise public resources. This is all the more important because it is well-known that poor countries have difficulties substituting value added taxes for trade taxes.⁵³ A key element in fiscal recovery rates is clearly to improve collection (and possibly include the shadow economy). Revenue losses could be manageable if trade liberalisation is gradual and accompanied by public finance reforms. Still, for fragile states with low capacity or limited political willingness, such reforms may be difficult to implement in the short to medium term. It is therefore important to have explicitly committed external resources to assist and facilitate the adjustment process for these countries.

More importantly, EPAs could be opportunities for African countries to rationalise their web of regional integration agreements and could be used as external commitment mechanisms for weakly institutionalised African states to undertake necessary internal reforms, anchoring themselves to the stronger institutional context of the EU. However there have been concerns about whether EPAs can foster regional integration in Africa and, in particular whether EPAs are building blocks or stumbling blocks. A major difficulty relates to the large Sub-Saharan African country heterogeneity within the different EPA groupings. Countries differ in terms of export structures, classification status (least developed countries versus non-least developed countries), degrees of regional liberalisation commitments and sensitive product lists.⁵⁴ While country heterogeneity is not necessarily an obstacle to regional integration, and can in fact increase its economic benefits, it also creates costs of policy coordination and political bargaining. For instance, the difficulty of harmonising trade rules across and within regional groupings may induce border controls and rules of origins on the movement of EU products within regions to ensure that the exclusion of a product in one country is not undermined by preferences for the same product in a partner country.⁵⁵ It is therefore important to have the same market access offer and the same excluded products for the entire region so as to foster single market possibilities.

⁴⁶ The first Generalized System of Preferences of the European Union was launched in 1971. In February 2001, the Council adopted Regulation (EC) 416/2001, the so-called "EBA Regulation", Everything but Arms, which is a nonreciprocal trade agreement, gives 50 countries – 34 of whom from Sub-Saharan Africa (including 22 fragile countries) – which are officially classified as least developed countries by the United Nations, to the EU for all products, except arms and ammunitions and 41 tariff lines concerning rice and sugar, for which duty-free quotas are established until full liberalization is achieved in September 2009 (rice) and October 2009 (sugar). Source: http://ec.europa.eu/trade/issues/global/gsp/eba/index_en.htm.

⁴⁷ Economic Partnership Agreement negotiations were launched in September 2002, with an initial deadline at 31 December 2007 to achieve conformity with the WTO rules. The negotiations have been extended beyond the initial deadline since they were proceeding slowly. As a consequence, the European Commission issued a communication on 23 October 2007, providing a provisional preferential market access for non-least developed countries from 1 January 2008 to extend the negotiation time towards complete EPAs. Hence, a number of interim agreements (also called "stepping stone EPA") have been concluded during the last part of 2007 between the EU and ACP subregions and individual countries, all containing liberalisation commitments on trade in goods to comply with the WTO compatibility requirement. Source: <http://www.acp-eu-trade.org/index.php?loc=epa/background.php>.

⁴⁸ By the end of 2007, 46 African countries were member of an interim EPA. At the same time, only 18 of them had initialled an interim EPA, eight of them fragile countries: Burundi, Cameroon, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe (Bilal and Stevens 2009).

⁴⁹ Sindzingre 2008; Delpeuch and Harb 2007.

⁵⁰ Stevens and Kennan 2005 and Delpeuch 2007.

⁵¹ Delpeuch and Harb 2007.

⁵² Busse et al. 2004.

⁵³ Baunsgaard and Keen 2005.

⁵⁴ Stevens et al. 2008.

⁵⁵ Brenton et al. 2008.

3.5 PREVENTIVE POLICIES AND ACTION

The EU latest efforts have focused on the need to better respond to and address crisis and postcrisis situations. But effective and timely work on prevention remains the major weakness. Although political dialogue in the European Consensus on Development is said to have an important preventive dimension, some evidence suggests that is often not used for that purpose.⁵⁶

Beyond political will, the EU faces several institutional and operational constraints, including the limitations of EU instruments, the internal organisational and decision-making processes and the capacity to fully respond to the requirements of upstream preventive policies. The institutional setup, which defines the roles and competences of each EU organ, results in different views and priorities for the various services of the Commission and in an institutional disconnect between the EC and the Council. The European External Action Service could offer more scope for improving this situation and better linking short- and long-term EU policies.

3.6 JOINT POLICY FRAMEWORKS WITH AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS

The EU has invested significant time and resources in developing partnerships with regional organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa and with the African Union. How such partnerships and joint policy frameworks shape EU policies to address fragility is less evident. The Cotonou Partnership Agreement – the main trade, aid and political dialogue vehicle for EU relations with Sub-Saharan African states – does not have a specific article on fragility or fragile states. But it does cover relevant actions from political dialogue to democratic governance and from human rights and trade to conflict prevention and peace-building through to punitive measures. Likewise, the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, signed by the heads of state during the Lisbon summit in 2007, did not explicitly refer to state fragility, a term widely rejected by African stakeholders in the run-up to the negotiations. The African Union and its member states seem nevertheless to accept the importance of addressing state fragility and moving beyond the label issue, which could open new opportunities for concerted approaches to address fragility.

The EU already has an enhanced dialogue and partnership on peace and security with the African Union and is a major backer of African Peace and Security Architecture, which includes mediation, early warning and peacekeeping missions – and links the African Union level to regional mechanisms. The Joint Africa-EU Strategy and its action plan provide opportunities to address fragility-related issues of governance, human rights, trade, regional integration and infrastructure. In practice, however, it had limited impact so far at the country level, and its implementation is dogged by how it should be financed and by a discussion on its real added value.

On the potentially more contentious issues, such as democratic governance and human rights, genuine dialogue and respect for the pace of African processes has been hard to discern. Most regional organisations have no interest in being “instrumentalised” to the EU policy agenda and see the furtherance of their own priorities as more important. Yet the quality of the dialogue in some areas within the Cotonou framework and the Joint Africa-EU Strategy has improved, as has EU alignment to African priorities (such as peace and security). The Joint Africa-EU Strategy has helped the EU align with the African Union on international contact groups for the ongoing crisis situations in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mauritania and Somalia. And the EU’s work to speak with one voice with the African Union and its regional economic communities has been a significant step forward.

A regional resilience-enhancing perspective emphasises regional links and the possibility of regional clusters of fragility. And taking a more global view of these issues highlights external drivers at the national and regional levels. Consistent with this perspective the Joint Africa-EU Strategy could foster a new comprehensive regional approach to Africa. Today, this strategy defines a broad framework for regional integration in Africa along political, economic and social lines. The first Action Plan (2008-10) has eight Africa-EU Partnerships in such areas as peace and security, democratic governance and human rights, and trade and regional integration. Most efforts so far have been organisational, to establish dialogue, trust and coordination. But expectations are high for further real delivery and funding commitments.

3.7 THE EU AS A SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT ACTOR

Overcoming poverty and increasing security go hand in hand. This is nothing new: since the Truman doctrine and the Marshall Plan, security has always been embedded in development policies, in various ways and to different degrees.

The interaction between security and development is widely acknowledged, and embodies the core objectives of the EU in international politics: contributing to peace and stability and promoting democracy, human rights, the rule of law and effective multilateralism. The pathways towards coherent EU goals, operational plans and programmes, and ultimately meaningful action, remain challenging. As described above, the EU has been building a wide range of policies, instruments and initiatives to face development and security issues, notably in Sub-Saharan Africa.

⁵⁶ Political dialogue is also an important element of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement.

The objectives, values and timetables of donors and recipients are numerous and often conflicting. Bringing together different actors and resources, aid workers and soldiers, diplomats and business people, while urgently needed, is challenging and time consuming. And the EU is itself a complex and, at times, uncoordinated international actor.

Confronted with fragility and insecurity, it is tempting to look for some prerequisite – such as a new economic measure or a different political institution.⁵⁷ We suggest on the contrary that societies facing fragile situations can begin to change in the security and development domain “as they are in spite of what they are”.⁵⁸

Building on the rich experience of local initiatives and capacity and the EU’s involvement in linking security and development in African countries facing fragile situations, notably security sector reform and crisis management missions,⁵⁹ we argue that well-known and well-entrenched obstacles to change in the security-development nexus can be overcome.⁶⁰ We highlight six processes in fragile situations:

1. SECURING AND DEVELOPING: ANTAGONISTIC OR NONANTAGONISTIC CHANGE?

Advocates of policy changes simultaneously affecting security and development often perceive their proposed reforms as nonantagonistic: moving out of fragility, making the population more secure and, in so doing, freeing energies for development can only be beneficial to all actors and ultimately to the country. This assumption is however questionable.⁶¹ First, in fragile situations, insecurity and the remnant dysfunctional public institutions can be useful to both governments and rebels alike. Some actors might even create, preserve and exploit insecurity to ensure their political survival.⁶² In Sierra Leone, the rulers intentionally destroyed the state capacity in order to provide public goods themselves.⁶³ Second, in fragile situations, relative weakness and relative strength often co-exist. State institutions in the Democratic Republic of Congo, for example, have been weakened, but they have not disappeared altogether.⁶⁴ Facing the demands of donors, public authorities – fully aware of the situation of fragility of their country, and precisely because of this fragile context and their (relatively) precarious position – were able to keep and even reinforce their bargaining position and develop a strategy of avoidance and resistance. Even when sovereignty appears to be at its lowest point, the remaining state is capable of shielding from the donors what it sees as the core of its autonomy.⁶⁵

So, fragility-related insecurity is not necessarily bad for every local actor, and it does not imply weakness for all the actors involved. Local actors react and try to circumvent the donors’ strengths and exploit their weaknesses. And this is why straightforward engineering approaches are unlikely to succeed. The EU should shift its linear social engineering approach to a more flexible and strategic approach.

2. INSECURITY AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Critics of the security-development nexus usually raise three concerns. First, the emergence of security in an already crowded policy agenda and of decision-makers with limited energies, capabilities and resources is bound to distract both donors and developing countries and hold back action on the main goal, reducing poverty. Second, security is only a surface problem, a symptom of deeper structural dysfunctions. Third, a genuine effort to face security challenges would probably go beyond the capacity of the donor and the partner country. In contrast, we suggest that the connection between security and development can generate opportunities for reform (box 8.9).

First, local populations often express a major and immediate concern for security and peace. For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo’s Kivus civil society, representatives rightly claimed that elections should wait until peace had been established, but they were not listened to.⁶⁶ Ignoring these pressing concerns is counterproductive. Second, the emergence of security concerns is an opportunity for reformers to find new allies and to facilitate joint analyses and strategy formulations. Third, insecurity can act as a searchlight and help in the early detection of social ills that, if neglected, might become much more difficult to handle.⁶⁷ Finally, timid or perfunctory policy initiatives can have the unintended effect of mobilising those who stand to benefit from the proposed solution – in the donor countries as well as in the partner countries.

⁵⁷ Hirschman 1963, p. 6; Hirschman 1967, p. 5.

⁵⁸ Hirschman 1963, p. 6.

⁵⁹ Brzoska 2006.

⁶⁰ Hirschman 1963, p. 6; Hirschman 1985, p. 3-34 and 56-76.

⁶¹ Englebert and Tull 2008.

⁶² Clapham 1996, p. 208-243; Chabal and Daloz 1999, p. 3-16.

⁶³ Reno 2003.

⁶⁴ Englebert 2003; Trefon 2004, 2007.

⁶⁵ For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo two important security services – military and civilian intelligence and border guards services – have been kept outside of security sector reform (Melmot 2008; Davis 2009).

⁶⁶ Autesserre 2009, p. 271.

⁶⁷ Hirschman 1981, p. 119, 149.

Box 8.9: Security and development challenges in fragile situations: lessons from ESDP operations

by Dr Damien Helly, EU Institute for Security Studies

The ESDP was born 10 years ago in the Balkans. Since then, the European Union has used it as a very unique military or civilian crisis management tool in a variety of fragile situations. Of 23 ESDP operations, 8 have been deployed in Africa, and some are still ongoing. All ESDP operations in Africa have to deal with some form of fragility. A recent book edited by researchers from the European Union Institute for Security Studies provides comprehensive data and critical assessment of the ESDP after 10 years⁶⁸. Some of its findings, based mostly on field interviews, can inform the debates on security and development, on situations of fragility and on the need for more coherence among EU instruments and policies.

- Over 10 years the EU has increased ESDP coordination with European Commission policies in fragile contexts. Since 1999, interlinkages between security and development challenges have become a well shared *leitmotiv* in policy discourses. Basic security needed for poverty alleviation, job creation and business development has been well-documented in key European policy documents, boosting awareness in policy planning. For instance, Brussels headquarters planned joint actions in Chad in 2008 aimed at mutual reinforcement. The Programme d'Accompagnement à la Stabilisation, funded by the European Commission, aimed to complement military deterrence, though coordination proved difficult and slow in practice.
- Despite progress at the strategic level, security experts, development promoters, economists and humanitarian actors still need to intensify the dialogue on fragile situations. Competition for resources to fund development and security can be high. Cooperation aid programme managers and security experts hardly exchange information on the potential security impact of, say, a transport infrastructure project. And while some types of experts work side by side, such as militaries and humanitarian actors, experience gathered during crisis management operations needs to be better disseminated. For instance, European Forces Chad/Central African Republic provided lessons for both the military and the humanitarian community, but it is unclear how they will be communicated to others.
- In fragile situations, qualitative assessments are as relevant as quantitative data. While economists mainly work only with tangible data, political scientists or intelligence analysts also use qualitative approaches. In the case of police or army reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo, sound understanding of local politics and power games is fundamental to establishing data collection mechanisms such as census databases. The European Communications Security & Evaluation Agency of the Military Committee, a mission in charge of assisting Congolese authorities in the reform of the army, spent its early years building mutual trust with national stakeholders through strong personal ties, human intelligence gathering and military expertise. Conversely, in Guinea-Bissau, where the small number of soldiers (fewer than 6,000) suggests that army reform would be easy, governance and power factors such as the symbolic power of veterans, intimidation and illicit trafficking have proved to be serious obstacles. Human realities sometimes contradict data.
- European initiatives in security and defence depend largely on the agenda and the political will of local authorities. When local authorities are reluctant to host ESDP operations or foreigners supposed to help reform their security apparatus – often for political reasons or because of vested interests – it proves extremely difficult for Europeans to maximise their impact. This has become obvious in the Democratic Republic of Congo when, after the 2006 elections, the government expressed much less interest in security sector reform. It was also confirmed in Guinea-Bissau, where the EU security sector reform mission found it extremely difficult to enter in a dialogue with the late army chief of staff, Tagmé Na Wai. It was obvious in Sudan, when the leadership did not wish to host an African Union/UN peacekeeping operation and delayed visa processes for EU staff supporting the planning and the chain of command of African Union Mission in Sudan, the African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur.
- After 10 years, ESDP personnel have learned about the difficulties of implementing local ownership, particularly in fragile countries where state capacities are close to nil and where local officials lack the capacity to absorb or cope with EU offers or interventions. The short mandates and high turnover of ESDP operations have rarely matched their counterparts' needs for long-term capacity building.



⁶⁸ Grevi et al. forthcoming.

- The EU suffers from a policy implementation gap in fragile environments. Despite an impressive tool box of strategies, communications and programming documents to address fragility, prevent conflict and support peacebuilding, the EU has much to do in translating these policy orientations into practice. EU staff frequently ignore key policy documents that guide their day to day work and decisions in fragile situations. Although well equipped with policy tools like Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development, the EU does not systematically use them in country. Training for personnel working in fragile contexts should be cross-cutting and more systematically implemented.
- When dealing with fragile situations, the EU has yet to identify its foreign policy priorities. Although state failure is mentioned as a threat in the 2003 European Security Strategy, key European strategic interests in Sub-Saharan Africa remain unclear. Some European states, mostly the former colonial powers, have concerns about fragile states in Africa, not least because they represent important threats like terrorism and drug, arms and human trafficking. But these concerns may not be equally shared by all EU member states, leading to the absence of clear foreign policies priorities in Africa, apart from those defined by continent to continent partnerships or by the Cotonou Partnership Agreements. More research is needed on this aspect and will be carried out by the European Union Institute for Security Studies in 2010.
- Officials from fragile countries often blame the EU for its contradictory policies. Commercial protectionism in particular is cited regularly as hampering development. Despite the new compensatory mechanisms, such as the Aid for Trade programme, political dialogue is still marked by mistrust. Dealing with fragility will therefore imply efforts towards genuine dialogue and the willingness to overcome past prejudices and acknowledge mutual responsibilities.

3. FRAGILITY LEADS TO THE RISE OF PARALLEL LOCAL SECURITY INSTITUTIONS

The withering of state capacity in fragile situations does not imply an absence of governance. In fact, fragile situations have triggered “local institutional initiatives that facilitated the survival and organisation of social life during the years of conflict and that could be useful in the future”.⁶⁹ Traditional chiefs, civil society groups, churches and aid agencies step in to take charge of security.⁷⁰ Fragile situations can accentuate unequal access to security and justice, intolerance of outsiders, violence, illegality and unaccountability. But in some cases poor state policing and sovereignty have reinvigorated self-policing⁷¹. The resulting “multichoice policing” provides a safety net and deepens local democracy. The success of this alternative policing would be further helped by favourable state responses and EU support.

4. SEQUENCES AND IMBALANCES CAN CONTRIBUTE TO SECURITY-DEVELOPMENT REFORM

To tackle the development-security nexus in fragile situations, “joined-up” strategies that combine all policy tools simultaneously in a coherent package that includes political, security, humanitarian and development instruments are often considered well suited to the discontinuity of the context.⁷² But, while some coordination is valuable – especially within the EU – there might be no need to spend considerable effort on early integration and on a simultaneous or balanced approach to the security-development nexus. Seesaw advances and adjustments of security and development policies are inevitable in fragile contexts. They are desirable because policy-makers become aware of the imperfections and imbalances of their action through failures, irritations and discomforts.⁷³ For example, in Sierra Leone there were no conceptual or substantial links among the elements of security sector reform, which proceeded independently,⁷⁴ but Sierra Leone is frequently presented as an example of good practice, even by the OECD-DAC.

Sequential problem-solving brings the risk of becoming blocked at one step or in one domain. Still, given the pervasive conventional wisdom about the need for coordination, it is useful to bear in mind that duplication, confusion and lack of communication among people working along parallel lines are not always bad, and can even lead to less costly and faster reforms.⁷⁵

⁶⁹ Englebert and Tull 2008, p. 125, 127.

⁷⁰ Vlassenroot 2008, p. 2.

⁷¹ Baker 2008.

⁷² Faria and Magalhães Ferreira 2007.

⁷³ Hirschman 1985, p. 74-75.

⁷⁴ Horn et al. 2006, p. 110, 118.

⁷⁵ Hirschman 1981 p. 66.

5. SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT DO NOT NECESSARILY ADVANCE JOINTLY

It is important to know whether ensuring security can trigger sustainable human development. In that regard, an assessment of 17 UN-led state-building operations five years after they had started revealed that although there is a potential link between security – defined as the absence of war and the reestablishment of a full monopoly over the means of violence – and other dimensions of state building, such as economic development, democracy and the creation of institutional capacity, security does not automatically lead to positive consequences for the rule of law or the effectiveness of government, economic development and democracy.⁷⁶

The connection between security and development progress can take different forms, and the pattern is not always an interrelation between the two policy domains. Proclaiming that the two domains are completely separate would be an overreaction. While security and development might not always be tied together in a functional way, alternating between interdependence and autonomy at different points in time and in different contexts is possible.⁷⁷

6. LESS CAN BE MORE

The EU boasts its continuing involvement and the relative stability of its engagement in state-building and development more generally. However, gaining flexibility in this regard and allowing for periods of selective disengagement could enlarge the range of initiatives. The assumption that “more state-building is better state-building” is widespread among Western policy-makers,⁷⁸ who allocate more resources to fragile countries considered important, such as Afghanistan, Bosnia, Iraq and Kosovo, than to countries considered peripheral. From a security standpoint, this implies that stronger EU and UN military missions, with more military means and more robust mandates, would offer the best opportunity for success.

The experience of development policies, specifically in the realm of security and development, shows that some uncoupling and disengagement can have positive consequences.⁷⁹ Less, or more limited and selective, engagement can provide room for social experimentation and favour the growth of local initiatives. Framing the Democratic Republic of Congo as a test case for UN peacekeeping by, for example, implying an intense engagement – often portrayed as a “protectorate” – led to problematic policy choices during the transition from war to peace and democracy in 2003-06.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ State-building missions achieved important security goals: 13 of the 17 missions ended war (1,000 battle-related deaths a year or during the war). While ending war was harder in the poorest postwar countries, state-building operations achieved their goal in this context as well (7 of 11 cases). State-building missions were less successful at reestablishing a full monopoly over the means of violence (9 of 17 cases). But this success in the security realm has limited implications for other dimensions of state-building (Zürcher 2006).

⁷⁷ Hirschman 1981, p. 142-166; Hirschman 1995, p. 221-230.

⁷⁸ Englebert and Tull 2008, p. 135-139.

⁷⁹ Hirschman 1995, p. 190-192.

⁸⁰ Autesserre 2009, p. 258.