

**Stop Conflict, Reduce Fragility and End Poverty:  
Doing Things Differently in Fragile and Conflict-affected Situations**

1. **One of the great development challenges of our time is to help countries affected by conflict and fragility find a path towards sustainable peace and development.** The World Bank Group has set the twin goals of ending extreme poverty within a generation and boosting shared prosperity in all countries. Reaching those goals means sharpening the focus on the world's fragile and conflict affected situations. They are the most challenged in the developing world in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 - a deadline now less than 1000 days away.
2. As the [2011 World Development Report on Conflict, Security and Development](#) revealed, one in four people on the planet live in areas affected by repeated cycles of political and criminal violence. People in fragile and conflicted-affected situations (FCS)<sup>1</sup> are more than twice as likely to be under-nourished as those in other developing countries, more than three times as likely to be unable to send their children to school, twice as likely to see their children die before age five, and more than twice as likely to lack clean water. Half of all child deaths occur in conflict affected areas.
3. On average, a country that experiences

growth rate

7. However the latest World Bank analysis<sup>5</sup> points to some signs of progress. Twenty FCS have now met one or more MDG targets and an additional six are on track to do so by the deadline of 2015. Eight countries – about 20 percent of all fragile and conflict affected states as defined by the World Bank<sup>6</sup> have now met the target to halve extreme poverty ahead of 2015, including Guinea, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Nepal, Timor-Leste, and the territory of West Bank and Gaza.

8. This reflects a change since the publication of the 2011 World Development Report on Conflict, Security and Development which stated no low income fragile or conflict affected country had yet achieved a single MDG.

9. The analysis points to signs of progress in meeting other targets under the MDGs. Fragile and conflict affected states have made the greatest progress on gender parity in education – the ratio of girls’ to boys’ enrollment in schools (MDG 3a). Countries including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kiribati, Federated States of Micronesia, Myanmar, and Tuvalu have met the target and those on track include Burundi, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nepal, Timor-Leste, and Yemen.

10. The world has met the target of halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, five years ahead of schedule. The analysis shows FCS including Nepal, Tuvalu, Comoros, Myanmar and Afghanistan have already met the target for access to an improved water source. Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone are on track to achieve the target by 2015.

11. Globally progress on maternal health is lagging, with maternal mortality remaining high in much of the developing world. Fragile states, as a group, started with a similar number of maternal death to Sub-Saharan Africa (780 deaths per 100,000 live birth in 1990) but Nepal has already reached the target of reducing the maternal mortality ratio by three quarters from its 1990 level. Provided current trends continue, Afghanistan, Angola, Eritrea, Timor-Leste and the Republic of Yemen will remain on track to meet the MDG maternal health target.

12. Nepal and will,

13.

62 percent drop in the number of children dying under the age of five. The number of children vaccinated in rural areas tripled between 2003 and 2011.

20. Afghanistan put in place an innovative performance based contracting system between the Afghan ministry and non-government organizations (NGOs) – financed by donor partners<sup>7</sup> under the leadership of the World Bank –to deliver a package of health services and essential hospital services, covering all but three of Afghanistan’s provinces. NGOs were given th

provides a vital platform for coordination among governments, donors, private sector, academia and civil society, minimizing the risks and costs associated with a proliferation of donors in low capacity FCS.

24. IDA is focused on achieving sustainable results through the long haul of strengthening governance and building institutions. And though FCS are defined on institutional quality, exceptional support from IDA to countries emerging from conflict is showing results even in this most difficult of areas. While most FCS countries have shown continued declines in the World Bank's measure of institutional quality, those countries receiving exceptional IDA support after conflict have progressed on institutional policy reform at the same rate as non-fragile countries. And for those countries returning to IDA after prolonged arrears, often due to crisis or instability (so called re-engaging countries), the pace of progress on institutional reform has been nearly five times that of non-fragile countries.<sup>8</sup>

25. Experience has shown that achieving results in FCS requires a different business model to respond to the high volatility, high risks, and low capacity in these countries. With special procedures for emergency situations introduced in 2008, IDA has cut by a third the amount of time from project approval to disbursement on the ground in response to crises in FCS countries. IDA moves funds to recipients faster in fragile and conflict affected states than all other IDA borrowers: this year, IDA funds in FCS disbursed 33 percent faster than in other IDA countries. And though the risks to results in FCS are far higher from the outset, internal Bank research shows that such risks are not translating into lower success rates.

#### **Box 2: Featured IDA Results in FCS**

Following its independence in 2002, Timor-Leste was left to face the devastating aftermath of conflict. The country and families were torn apart, nearly 70 percent of all buildings, homes, and schools were destroyed, and an estimated 75 percent of the population was displaced. IDA helped rehabilitate more than 2,000 classrooms and raise primary school completion rates from 73 percent in 2009 to over 83 percent in 2012, which exceeded the original target of 80 percent.

With help from IDA, Burkina Faso has transitioned from fragility to stability, supported by a market-driven economy that is providing the foundation for growth, poverty reduction.

In Afghanistan, over the period 2003-2010, about 22 million people in rural areas have benefitted from improved infrastructure such as access to water, electricity and roads through the National Solidarity Program.

Sierra Leone emerged from an 11-year civil war in 2002 with most of its basic infrastructure in ruins. An IDA-financed safety net program facilitated access to healthcare for 700,000 people, provided 360,000 children with access to educational facilities and benefitted 30,000 people through a cash-for-work program

IDA has provided extensive support to Liberia, where 15 years of conflict killed tens of thousands of people and destroyed key institutions and infrastructure. Support from IDA and other donors has enabled Liberia to move from a post-conflict crisis situation to a longer-term view of development, with an emphasis on energy, education, and youth employment

## **Embarking on the Path to Peace?**

26. Given the magnitude of challenges faced in fragile and conflicted affected situations and the continued difficulties in channeling international assistance effectively to achieve sustainable results in these environments, the 2011 World Development Report on Conflict, Security and Development called for a paradigm shift in the international development community's approach to FCS. The report argued for the importance of building legitimate institutions that provide people with security, justice and jobs.

27. The g7+ group – a group of 17 fragile states stretching from Africa to the Pacific – and their international partners successfully advocated for a new framework for dealing with fragile and conflict affected states. The “New Deal” calls on the international community to more firmly support peace- and state-building goals, as essential prerequisites for sustaining peace and meeting the MDGs. The World Bank Group signed on to the New Deal and is working to put these principles into practice.

28. The Bank is heeding the call of the g7+ group of fragile states and also the messages of its own research to fundamentally change the way it engages in fragile states to meet the challenge to provide citizen justice, security and jobs. In the wake of the World Development Report, the Bank is expanding its role to help FCS. While the importance of justice, security and jobs in fragile and conflict affected situations is widely recognized, how to achieve their provision is not always obvious. The World Bank Group is exploring through country-level innovations and rigorous analysis what works and what doesn't.

29. **Pushing new frontiers on justice:** This entails a move beyond just helping build courthouses or setting up the legal framework in a country. The Bank is analyzing what best fits a country's needs. The analysis is providing the evidence base for designing justice services –







#### **Box 4: Polling**

Through the Country Opinion Survey Program, the World Bank Group gathers feedback from opinion leaders in client countries across the globe, systematically and annually – the only international organization to so broadly gather such information. In the past year, among the many countries polled, the Bank has surveyed opinion leaders in twelve FCS.

Findings from these twelve surveys<sup>10</sup> that included more than 3000 people from government, NGOs, the private sector, media, academia and other groups, indicate that the top development priority issues for fragile and conflict affected countries are perceived to be education and agriculture.

The polling shows energy and agriculture are cited as equally fundamental for sustained economic growth with agriculture seen as vital to reducing poverty. When asked why reforms fail, respondents cited inefficient government work, followed by an inadequate level of civil society participation. The most essential issue cited for fragile and conflict affected states was capacity building – getting governments to function better for their people.

While respondents recognized clearly a significant role for the World Bank Group in