



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



International Institute
for Educational Planning

Capacity development in education planning and management in fragile states

Prepared for IIEP-UNESCO
by Lynne Bethke



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List of abbreviations

AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir (Pakistan)
CPIA	Country Policy and Institutional Performance Assessment
DCTE	Directorate for Curriculum and Teacher Education (Pakistan)
DFID	United Kingdom's Department for International Development
DEE	Directorate of Education Extension (Pakistan)
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	education management information systems
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
INGO	international non-governmental organization
IOS	Internal Oversight Service
NGO	non-governmental organization
NWFP	Northwest Frontier Province (Pakistan)
OECD-DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PRSP	poverty reduction strategy paper
SC-UK	Save the Children-UK
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SWAp	sector-wide approach
TA	technical assistance
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo

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Foreword

Capacity development is a fundamental part of the mandates of many international organizations. Much of their work aims to strengthen national capacities through training, technical advice, exchange of experiences, research, and policy advice. Yet there is considerable dissatisfaction within the international community regarding the impact of many such interventions. The activities have usually strengthened the skills of individuals, but have not always succeeded in improving the effectiveness of the ministries and other organizations where those individuals are working. These shortcomings demand investigation in order to strengthen capacity development policies and strategies.

In this context, UNESCO received funds from the Norwegian Ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs to focus on 'capacity development for achieving the Education for All goals'. The objective was to identify appropriate strategies for UNESCO and others. Within UNESCO, IIEP has coordinated this work. A wide range of activities was undertaken, including detailed case studies on three countries (Benin, Ethiopia and Vietnam), a series of thematic studies and literature reviews, and consultations with experts. The focus has been on educational planning and management as stronger capacities in these areas should lead to important improvements in the education system as a whole.

IIEP's work has led to the identification of some main principles:

- The type of capacity development being considered here only works in a sustainable manner when there is national leadership and ownership, and when international efforts match national priorities and strategies.
- Strategies need attention at several levels: the capacities of the individual, the effectiveness of the organization (for example the ministry of education), the norms and practices which rule public management as a whole, and the political, social and economic contexts.
- Any intervention must recognize the intrinsic values of ownership and participation. When it aims only to identify partners' weaknesses or to strengthen the positions of those already powerful, the deepest sense of capacity development is lost.

The series *Rethinking capacity development* has been prepared within this framework.

Mark Bray
Director
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Summary

Capacity development is a multi-faceted concept, impacting upon and being affected by several interacting levels of analysis. The author uses the OECD-DAC typology of fragile states as a main reference in order to explore the links between state “fragility” and capacity development. The characteristics of countries in a state of “arrested development”, “deterioration”, “post-conflict transition” or “early recovery” largely determine how to design sustainable capacity development strategies that have the intended effects. The challenges facing different types of fragile states are considered: the presence or absence of violent conflict, political will and existing capacity levels are crucial variables in this respect. In post-conflict situations, for example, expectations of a “peace dividend” are normally high, but may be difficult to meet because of low levels of capacity. In situations of violent conflict, however, the legitimacy of Ministry officials may pose a larger challenge. The paper further presents a few common dilemmas faced by actors on the ground. Overcoming these dilemmas, such as working with state actors or non-governmental actors, is often about finding the right balance in the specific context. The sustainability and coherence of interventions should for example be measured against their legitimacy and urgency. Strategies for capacity development emphasize a long-term perspective, building trust and improving coordination, but equally stress the importance of planning, setting goals and measuring outputs along the way. Flexibility is also a crucial point: fragility is a moving concept, and states may become more or less fragile practically overnight, directly affecting capacity development efforts. However, if properly designed, capacity development interventions may also reduce fragility through efficient educational planning and management.

Résumé

Le renforcement des capacités est un concept complexe : plusieurs niveaux interagissent et s'influencent mutuellement. L'auteur utilise la typologie de l'OCDE-CAD des Etats fragiles comme une référence principale afin de traiter de la relation entre la « fragilité » d'un Etat et le renforcement des capacités. Les caractéristiques des pays en « état de faillite », sur une « pente descendante », sur « la voie du redressement », ou en « situation post-conflit » déterminent largement la conception de stratégies efficaces de renforcement des capacités. Les défis auxquels les Etats fragiles doivent faire face sont soulevés ; la présence ou l'absence de conflit armé, la volonté politique et les niveaux existants de capacité sont des variables cruciaux dans ce contexte. Dans des situations de post-conflit par exemple, les attentes liées à une « dividende de paix » sont généralement élevées, mais peuvent être difficiles à satisfaire. L'accès aux écoles et la communication entre les niveaux centralisé et décentralisé peuvent être entravés par des conflits violents. Le document présente ensuite quelques dilemmes communs rencontrés par les acteurs sur le terrain, par exemple travailler avec les acteurs étatiques ou non étatiques. Surmonter ces dilemmes implique trouver le bon équilibre dans chaque contexte spécifique. La durabilité et la cohérence des interventions doivent être confrontées à leur légitimité et à leur urgence. Les stratégies de renforcement des capacités mettent l'accent sur les perspectives à long terme, la construction de confiance et l'amélioration de la coordination, mais mettent également en exergue l'importance de planifier, de fixer des objectifs et d'évaluer le progrès au fur et à mesure. La flexibilité est également importante : la fragilité est un concept changeant, et des Etats peuvent devenir plus ou moins fragiles pratiquement du jour au lendemain, ce qui a un impact direct sur les efforts de renforcement des capacités. Cependant, si correctement conçues, les interventions de renforcement des capacités peuvent également avoir des impacts sur la fragilité en la réduisant par le biais de la planification et de la gestion efficaces de l'éducation.

Introduction

As part of the development of a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) strategy paper on capacity development for achieving the Education for All (EFA) goals, the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) has commissioned several studies on capacity development. This paper focuses specifically on the issue of capacity development in education planning and management in fragile states.

Capacity development, when discussed in this paper, as well as in the larger context of the UNESCO capacity development project, relates to a broad range of activities designed to improve the capacities of individuals as well as organizations and institutions. In the context of the overall project, capacity development is interpreted “as a process with the following four dimensions:

- improving the competencies and performance of *individual officers* in charge of educational planning and management;
- improving *organizational performance*, if necessary through rethinking the mandate, structure and internal management of the organizational units within which individual officers work;
- improving the *public administration* to which these units belong, among other things through a reflection on the role of the public service, the rules of civil service management and the formal and informal incentives;
- improving the *social, economic and political context* within which officers work and within which education systems develop, by limiting the constraints and strengthening the incentives within the external environment” (UNESCO, 2008: 16-17).

These four dimensions offer a broad view of capacity development that goes well beyond skills training for individuals to look also at the organizations, institutions and broader context within which individuals work. Organizations can be defined as a ministry of education, for example, while institutions are defined as “the formal ‘rules of the game’ and informal norms that provide the framework within which organizations and people operate” (World Bank, 2005, cited in UNESCO, 2008: 16), for example the public management rules and regulations which a ministry must apply. While some issues at the institutional and contextual levels are beyond the remit of educational planners and managers, these levels must be considered in terms of their impact upon capacity development strategies for fragile states. For example, while educational planners and managers may not be able directly to improve “the social, economic and political context within which officers work ... by limiting the constraints and strengthening the incentives within the external environment”, the planning process must take account of the external environment and how it affects the system and individuals within it. Factors such as the ease with which employment can be found outside the public sector and at what wage level, have a direct effect on the implementation of educational plans and the management of the system, and must be considered when conceptualising capacity development efforts.

1 The fragile states context

Fragile states have become the subject of much international attention in recent years, though there is not always agreement on the specific definition of the term ‘fragile states.’ For the purpose of this paper, I use the definition put forward by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (hereafter referred to as OECD-DAC), that is: “States are fragile when state structures lack political will and/or capacity to provide the basic functions needed for poverty reduction, development and to safeguard the security and human rights of their populations” (OECD-DAC, 2007: 2). The key defining characteristics relate to the *lack of will* or the *lack of capacity* of governments. Because there is a wide range of states that can potentially be labelled as ‘fragile’ – from Afghanistan to Nepal to Zimbabwe – the OECD-DAC has also developed four categories of fragility that can facilitate the analysis of the conditions of fragile states and the types of assistance or strategies that may usefully be employed in different states. These categories can be simplified into two basic trajectories – “a ‘declining’ group, increasingly at risk of failure; and a ‘stabilising’ group, emerging from collapse” (OECD-DAC, 2008: 15) as illustrated in the typology of fragility shown in *Table 1*.

Table 1.1 OECD-DAC fragile state scenarios

Category		Scenario
Declining	<i>Arrested development</i>	Stagnation with low levels of effectiveness and legitimacy
	<i>Deterioration</i>	Declining levels of effectiveness leading to lower legitimacy; rising risk of violence or collapse
Stabilizing	<i>Post-conflict transition</i>	Low levels of effectiveness, transitory legitimacy, recent violence, humanitarian crisis
	<i>Early recovery</i>	Rising levels of effectiveness and legitimacy; declining international resource requirements; emergence from conflict or other crisis

Source: *Service delivery in fragile situations: key concepts, findings and lessons*, OECD-DAC Discussion Paper, 2008.

Even within this typology, however, it is often difficult to place a state in a specific category. The World Bank (2007) states that:

A definitive list of fragile states is impossible to draw up ... Some countries have more fragile characteristics than others, and for many countries, fragile status is a phase. However, there is a consensus for analytic and operational purposes that some countries’ policies, institutions, and governance can be defined as exceptionally weak when judged against the criterion of poverty reduction, especially with respect to the management of economic policy, delivery of social services, and efficacy of government. The Bank defines the set of countries exhibiting the most extensive fragile characteristics as low-income countries ranking among the lowest on the Country Policy and Institutional Performance Assessment (CPIA).

The CPIA rates countries against a set of 16 criteria (listed in *Annex 1*) grouped in four clusters: (a) economic management, (b) structural policies, (c) policies for social inclusion and equity, and (d) public sector management and institutions (World Bank, 2007). As an example of states considered

as 'fragile', the 2008 EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2007) includes the OECD-DAC's list of 35 fragile states, shown in Table 2. This has been adapted to also indicate the states that would be characterized as 'most fragile' in 2007 by using the World Bank's measure of a CPIA of less than 3.0.

Table 2.1 OECD-DAC list of fragile states 2005

Sub-Saharan Africa (20)	Angola ^{1,3} , Burundi ^{1,2} , Central African Republic ^{1,3} , Chad ^{1,2,3} , Comoros ^{1,3} , Congo ³ , Côte d'Ivoire ^{2,3} , Democratic Republic of Congo ^{1,2,3} , Eritrea ^{1,3} , the Gambia ¹ , Guinea ¹ , Guinea-Bissau ^{1,3} , Liberia ¹ , Niger ¹ , Nigeria ² , Sao Tome/Principe ¹ , Sierra Leone ¹ , Somalia ^{1,2} , Togo ^{1,3} , Zimbabwe ³
Arab States (2)	Djibouti ¹ , Sudan ^{1,2,3}
Central Asia (2)	Tajikistan, Uzbekistan
East Asia and the Pacific (9)	Cambodia ¹ , Kiribati ¹ , Lao PDR ¹ , Myanmar ^{1,2} , Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands ^{1,3} , Timor-Leste ^{1,3} , Tonga, Vanuatu ¹
South and West Asia (1)	Afghanistan ^{1,2,3}
Latin America/Caribbean (1)	Haiti ^{1,2,3}

Notes: ¹ Least developed countries; ² states in armed conflict in 2006; ³ most fragile in 2007, according to the World Bank CPIA (that is, index of less than 3.0).

Source: Adapted from EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008, Paris: UNESCO.

With regard to the typology of fragility, it is important to note that different parts of a state may be in different 'phases' of fragility. For example, while Somalia as a whole may be classified as in a state of 'arrested development' or declining, in Somaliland the situation may be stabilizing, thereby allowing and demanding potentially different educational or developmental responses. States like Afghanistan are also difficult to categorize – the central government has expressed its willingness to support the goals of increased security and poverty reduction for the people of the country but does not have the full capacity to achieve all of its goals. Some parts of the country can be categorized as in the 'early recovery' phase whereas other areas, particularly the southern and eastern provinces, are deteriorating rapidly. It is not clear at which point the whole country tips towards 'deterioration' but the precise label may not be the relevant consideration. The concept of fragility and an understanding of its characteristics – that is, lack of capacity or willingness to perform key state functions – and a good understanding of the particular context in which capacity development initiatives are undertaken are critical. For this reason the OECD-DAC (2007) document *Principles for good international engagement in fragile states and situations* lists "take context as the starting point" as the first principle. This principle calls for understanding the context and tailoring responses accordingly rather than importing 'blue-print approaches' from other situations.

The importance of capacity development in fragile states

Since one of the characteristics of fragile states is lack of capacity, attention to capacity development is particularly important in situations of fragility. Both the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the 2008 EFA global monitoring report call attention to the importance of capacity development with regard to meeting EFA goals. The Paris Declaration states explicitly that, "The capacity to plan, manage, implement, and account for results of policies and programmes is critical for achieving development objectives" (OECD-DAC, 2005: para 22). As such, it may also be necessary for transitioning out of 'fragility'.

In the education sector, fragile states are of particular concern in relation to slow progress towards the EFA targets. UNESCO (2007) estimates that in 2005 the 35 fragile states identified by the OECD-DAC (see *Table 2*) account for 37 per cent of all out-of-school children in the world. In addition, many fragile states lack education plans and poverty reduction strategies, which are necessary (but not sufficient) for countries to participate in the Fast Track Initiative. In states that are defined as fragile because of their limited capacity, achieving EFA is more difficult and therefore it becomes even more necessary to support efforts to develop the planning and management capacities of education authorities.

There are several policy commitments that call attention to the need for capacity development in fragile states. The Dakar Framework for Action identifies explicitly the need to enhance the “capacity of government and civil society” in order to “[m]eet the needs of education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability, and conduct educational programmes in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and that help to prevent violence and conflict” (UNESCO, 2000: 19) – a strategy deemed necessary for achieving the goals of EFA.

In the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, over 100 ministers, heads of agencies and other senior officials committed their countries and organizations to addressing weaknesses in partner countries’ institutional capacities in order to “develop and implement results-driven national development strategies” (OECD-DAC, 2005: para 4). As part of the Paris Declaration, governments committed themselves to the following five key principles or ‘partnership commitments’ for increasing aid effectiveness:

- Ownership – “Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, and strategies and coordinate development actions.” As part of this commitment, donors agree specifically to “respect partner country leadership and help strengthen their capacity to exercise it” (para 15).
- Alignment – “Donors base their overall support on partner countries’ national development strategies, institutions and procedures”, which includes a commitment to align with partner countries’ “capacity development objectives and strategies, make effective use of existing capacities and harmonize support for capacity development accordingly” (para 24).
- Harmonization – “Donors’ actions are more harmonized, transparent and collectively effective”. In fragile states, donors recognize that such harmonization is all the more important when governments are weak and have committed to the extent possible to align with central government strategies (para 39).
- Managing for results – For this principle, partner countries and donors have committed jointly to “Work together in a participatory approach to strengthen country capacities and demand for results-based management” (para 46).
- Mutual accountability – “Donors and partners are accountable for development results”, which should also translate into increased efforts to develop the capacities necessary to achieve those results.

In addition, the Paris Declaration acknowledges explicitly the importance of working in fragile states by indicating that: “In fragile states, as we support state-building and delivery of basic services, we will ensure that the principles of harmonization, 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” (OECD-DAC, 2005: para 7).

As a supplement to the Paris Declaration and specifically for the purpose of providing additional guidance on how to implement the key principles in fragile states, OECD-DAC (2007) also developed the *Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations*. These are:

- Take context as the starting point.
- Do no harm.
- Focus on state-building as the central objective.
- Prioritize prevention.
- Recognize the links between political, security and development objectives.
- Promote non-discrimination as a basis for inclusive and stable societies.
- Align with local priorities in different ways in different contexts.
- Agree on practical coordination mechanisms between international actors.
- Act fast ... but stay engaged long enough to give success a chance.
- Avoid pockets of exclusion.

These principles were developed based on “the long term vision for international engagement in fragile states [which] is to help national reformers to build effective, legitimate, and resilient state institutions, capable of engaging productively with their people to promote sustained development” (OECD-DAC, 2007: 1). Achieving this vision is a long and complex task in fragile states but if capacity development initiatives are designed with this vision in mind and follow the above principles, they will have a much greater chance of success.

While not an explicit policy commitment, the *Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction (Minimum Standards)*, developed through a consultative process led by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), also identifies the importance of supporting and developing local capacities in order to ensure that children living in emergency, chronic crisis or early reconstruction situations (that is, fragile states) have access to good quality education. The *Minimum Standards* focuses on four categories of educational response: access, teaching and learning, teachers and other education personnel, and education policy and coordination. In addition to these four categories, there are two minimum standards common to all categories: community participation and analysis. In these common standards is the implicit call for strengthening local and government capacities to provide quality education for all children by assessing the capacities, and developing responses that build on or take these capacities into account, including through efforts to strengthen the capacities of education personnel (INEE, 2004).

2 Capacity development in fragile states: the challenges

Capacity development efforts in fragile states face many of the same challenges as are found in other developing countries – for example, the high turnover of staff (or movement of staff from one position to another), low salaries and organizational environments that do not reward good performance or perhaps do not have clearly defined roles and responsibilities for educational planners and managers. In addition to these challenges, the task of capacity development for educational planners and managers in fragile states includes a number of challenges that relate specifically to the context of fragile states. In general, there is more experience related to capacity development in ‘stabilizing’ situations (post-conflict transition and early recovery) because these situations present more opportunities for engagement due to an increased willingness on the part of all partners (international as well as national) to focus on the education system and to improve access and quality throughout the country. In addition, as specified in the overall UNESCO strategy paper for capacity development (2008: 67), in these contexts “system-level planning and management remains very much a government responsibility” and not generally within the purview of civil society and non-governmental organizations – or at least, not on a large scale. A further reason may be that it is somewhat easier, from an analytical as well as a political point of view, to identify a post-conflict or recovery situation than a deteriorating situation.

‘Declining’ situations – arrested development and deterioration

The major challenge in ‘declining’ situations is finding opportunities for engagement. Insecurity is often one part of this challenge, especially when international advisors are part of the capacity development process. The activities and movement of expatriates (especially those working with the UN) will be limited by the security environment, which may mean that they are unable to travel throughout the country and contact or work with educational planners and managers at all levels of the system.

When violent conflict is present, capacity development efforts become more difficult as conflict will inevitably mean that some areas in the country are inaccessible and that the legitimacy of ministry of education officials may be challenged. This will affect directly the work of educational planners at the central level as well as at decentralized levels. Central-level planners may not be able to obtain data, nor communicate with or influence their counterparts in other areas of the country. Similarly, planners and managers at decentralized levels, for example at a district level, may be unable to obtain data or distribute needed resources to schools due to the insecurity. In Afghanistan during the 2007 national school survey, for example, there were certain schools that surveyors could not reach because it was too dangerous to go to them and, in some instances, it was even too dangerous for the school principals to travel to the surveyors.

In most situations of violent conflict, there is also a risk that school buildings, teachers and students will be targeted. The resulting loss in physical and human resources seriously affects children’s immediate access to education and has long-term implications for the rebuilding of the education system.

The risk or presence of violence also brings about another challenge for planners as populations (children and their families, as well as teachers and even education officials) move to safer areas to escape the violence. Not only does this lead to fragmented communities but it has an impact

on issues related to access to education and the dropout of children from the system, school crowding, resource allocation, curricular responses for affected populations (such as psychosocial or school counselling programmes) and the management of the education system. In deteriorating situations, the loss of qualified and experienced teachers, as well as educational planners and managers, significantly erodes capacity in conflict-affected areas of the country and makes the eventual task of rebuilding even more challenging.

Another part of the challenge of finding opportunities for engagement in declining situations is the difficulty of working with states that are not willing to fulfil their basic functions for all of their citizens (and perhaps, actively working against some segments of the population). In such situations, there may be fewer opportunities to develop capacities within the specific area of educational planning and management. Doing so may require focusing efforts within specific geographic areas of a country or finding niche areas where the technical skills required are recognized and valued by all parties.

In situations of 'arrested development', it is likely that few of the country's resources and little of the budget will be dedicated to education, and that committed efforts to meet international goals such as EFA will be virtually non-existent at the national level. In such situations, there may be little demand for improved educational planning and management skills and it may not be possible to pursue a broader capacity development strategy.

Another challenge related to capacity development in situations of 'arrested development' is deciding if and when to engage, especially when a government is actively denying the rights of some of its citizens or when the education system promotes the marginalization of certain groups – for example, through the curriculum and language of instruction. This occurred with the Kosovar Albanians, who were mandated to use the Serbian curriculum and language when Kosovo was still under the control of Serbia (Sommers and Buckland, 2004).

Post-conflict transition and early recovery

States that are characterized as either in post-conflict transition or early recovery (stabilizing situations) face high expectations from their citizens, and meeting these expectations is a necessary condition for ultimately establishing the legitimacy of the government. In post-conflict and early recovery situations, there is more willingness on the part of government officials to support development objectives but the political will to devote needed government resources to education and to ensure that *all* children have a right to access at least quality basic education may not be strong, especially following periods of prolonged conflict.

However, post-conflict examples from Afghanistan, Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone, among others, all indicate a pent-up demand for schooling as primary school enrolment increases rapidly in the post-conflict period (World Bank, 2005). Parents and their children want access to education, which includes access to teachers, learning materials and school buildings. Older children who were denied their right to education during the conflict will also want to access the education system, which poses a significant challenge for educational planners in determining how many over-aged children are enrolled in primary schools, and in developing programmes to address the educational needs of older children who are out of school.

In post-conflict situations, there is also a need for the education system to be part of the societal healing process. This often means that curricular reform is needed, which is a long process that demands the participation of many segments of the society. This process may impose new demands on educational managers, who may not have the capacity, skills or experience to embark

on curriculum reform in an open and inclusive manner. In situations where the conflict lasted many years (or even decades, as was the case in Afghanistan and Angola, for example), there may be a shortage of subject experts and, almost certainly, there will be a shortage of curriculum developers with the necessary pedagogical skills and background.

As in declining situations, in stabilizing situations there may be the challenge that areas of the country are largely inaccessible for reasons that range from destroyed roads to landmines to continued sporadic violence. Lack of access to or difficult physical access to communities results in logistical challenges related to bringing in resources (such as teaching and learning materials), constructing schools and classrooms, and collecting educational data. In inaccessible or rural areas, there may also be a shortage of teachers since many may have fled if there was a conflict or for reasons of a historical lack of investment in these areas. Therefore, it may be particularly challenging to recruit teachers since local residents may not be qualified and teachers from safer or better resourced areas of the country may be unwilling to accept posts in these areas.

Especially in countries where conflict has destroyed educational infrastructure and where teachers have fled the country or left the teaching profession, educational planners and managers are faced with the daunting challenge of managing public expectations at a time when they have limited capacity and resources to respond to the challenges of the system. Rebuilding the education system is just one of several competing priorities – such as rebuilding health, justice, agricultural, water and sanitation systems and physical infrastructure (including roads) throughout the country – facing the post-conflict government, which may still be fragile and subject to instability.

When working on capacity development in post-conflict and early recovery situations, it is important to engage with ministries of education as they are the rightful duty bearers with respect to ensuring education for all. Yet, especially after conflict, the ministry of education may be in a state of disarray and may be subject to frequent changes in leadership or key positions. Setting a coherent vision and developing and implementing plans are major challenges because of the chaotic, high pressure and often rapidly changing environment. In Afghanistan, for example, there have been six ministers of education since 2002 – the longest-serving of whom was the minister from mid-2006 to October 2008. Such frequent changes in leadership make planning more challenging as it is difficult to establish a consistent vision for the education system, to establish the needed systems and to secure the resources to implement them. Competent and experienced ministry staff may also have left the employ of the ministry during the conflict and the remaining civil servants may not have the necessary profiles and competencies to manage and plan for a rapid expansion of the education system.

At a time when ministries are weak, there will be incredible pressure brought to bear on them from within their own society as well as by external actors who arrive to provide 'assistance'. In the initial post-conflict period, under-resourced ministries do not have the capacity to coordinate the activities of well-financed donors, the UN and non-governmental organizations. This external support, while well-intentioned, can undermine the government's capacity and motivation to serve its citizens (Ghani and Lockhart, 2008). The result is often a plethora of international and non-governmental organizations providing education services according to their identified priorities – priorities which may not correspond with those of the national government, if national priorities have even been identified. For example, the initial priority in post-conflict situations is for children to resume schooling as quickly as possible. From a government or community perspective, the priority might be to focus on the provision of learning spaces (generally permanent schools) and teachers for formal education. The priorities of international organizations, however, might be different. For example, UNICEF's priorities as articulated in its *Core commitments for children in emergencies*

(UNICEF, 2005: 13-14) are temporary learning spaces, the resumption of schooling through the provision of teaching and learning materials, and “organizing semi-structured recreational activities”. Aligning priorities, such as the need for curriculum change or the types of teacher training required, necessitates that all partners work with the education authorities to understand and agree upon the priorities for moving forward.

Capacity development itself is often viewed as a second or third tier priority, even if it is a priority for the government. Sommers (2004: 68-69) cites the example of Afghanistan, where in March 2002 former World Bank official (and Afghan) Ashraf Ghani laid out several critical points for NGOs working in Afghanistan to consider:

- NGOs seeking to build local capacity are the ‘most valuable’. In turn, Ghani recommended that NGOs employ a high number of Afghan interns.
- A recognition of the government’s reliance on NGOs that ‘are a source of learning’ for the Afghan Government.
- A final plea to NGOs in Afghanistan: ‘Try to figure out how to work with us. You are a very valuable partner. What we need most is honest dialogue.’

Despite the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan, Sommers found that UN and NGO officials continued to work around the government system and carried on with ‘business as usual’. One of the main challenges with regard to capacity development is that it is a long-term process and in emergency and post-conflict situations, donors often want quick results or the funding time period is too short to result in a meaningful impact on capacities. Without predictable financing, post-conflict and early recovery states are unable to plan and manage the demands on the education system. Rose and Greeley (2006: 26), in their work on identifying good practices for supporting education in fragile states, note that,

More often, weak transitional financing arrangements create problems for coherent planning; it is the absence of predictable funding, based on long term partnership which national leaders have identified as a serious constraint in their partnerships with the international community. Ideally, these partnerships should be based on the prospect of a needs-driven long term arrangement and responsive to priorities of the national leadership; and, they should also be based on coordination with other external partners in ways that reduces [sic] transactions costs to local partners. In more normal development contexts, coordination has become a central concern of donors, through sectoral coordination groups, SWAps [sector-wide approaches] and coordination around PRSP processes and direct budget support. The unaddressed problems of coordination centre on the transitional arrangements between the humanitarian episode and the establishment of state will and capacity conditions that allow the sensible use of these coordination approaches.

Unfortunately, these coordination problems have long-term consequences for the planning and management of the education system. Despite efforts to improve coordination among humanitarian and development actors, in essence bilateral, UN and NGO projects are still largely in competition with each other and with the government for resources and staff. This competition often means that projects with the most money, for example, will pay higher salaries to attract competent staff in order to achieve the project objectives. This is completely rational behaviour on the part of project managers but the result is often that the most qualified people within the government’s education system will find employment with an NGO or UN agency in order to make higher wages to support their families – also perfectly rational behaviour.

The net effects are that organizational capacity is weakened or, in the case when donors agree to pay higher salaries to support key ministry staff or to provide higher paid national technical assistants to advance the work of the ministry more quickly, gains in organizational capacity may

not be sustainable if the higher salaries are withdrawn in the future. Organizational capacities are weakened when qualified and competent national staff leave the government system to take higher paying jobs with international organizations. This leads to an inefficient use of resources as organizations (including ministries) invest in staff training, only to see them leave for higher paying jobs elsewhere – for example, after their English language or computer skills have improved. The impact could perhaps be lessened if donors and other organizations would agree to coordinate on matters related to salaries and other issues. This would require a concerted effort to implement the five key principles of the Paris Declaration. Until this occurs, however, it must be recognized that even successful capacity development efforts within ministries of education will be affected by a certain amount of staff turnover as individuals seek to improve their own situations. As one World Bank official said: “Accept a bit of chaos especially in the early stages. If you cannot coordinate, don’t stop the process but be prepared to deal with the side effects.”

When national technical assistants who work within the government system are supported by international assistance and not paid within existing government structures, the impact on organizational capacity may be limited if the technical assistants do the work themselves and do not seek to develop the capacity of the civil servants. This results in a parallel system that does little to develop the individual capacities of civil servants and that may have only a limited long-term impact on overall organizational capacity.

3 Dilemmas related to capacity development in fragile states

Organizations supporting education in fragile states face a number of dilemmas if they are also interested in capacity development and applying the principles of the Paris Declaration. These dilemmas apply in particular to donors and to United Nations organizations, but also to large international NGOs.

Short-term service delivery versus long-term development priorities

In situations categorized as 'declining' (either arrested development or deterioration), this dilemma exists but perhaps is not quite as prominent. When states lack the willingness to establish and work towards long-term development priorities, the international community can do little to align with national policies, especially if those policies violate human rights or are inconsistent with the right to education for all children regardless of gender, ethnicity, political or religious affiliation. In these situations, short-term service delivery to provide children with educational opportunities becomes the over-riding imperative. When it is possible, however, organizations need to look for avenues to develop individual or organizational capacity, even in these situations. The goal might be to stay engaged with the government at all levels but to strengthen and promote the 'positive' forces for change evidenced by groups (or organizations) that can help avoid further decline. In Somalia, for example, UNICEF is engaged with the government in all regions of the country but is able to work more on capacity development with local officials in Somaliland and Puntland because the security situation is not as grave as in other areas of the country. The result is, hopefully, increased (or maintained) capacity, which can be used to improve education service delivery now and in the future.

In stabilising situations (post-conflict transition and early recovery), there will be many demands to get children into school as quickly as possible; communities will expect a 'peace dividend' and want evidence of quick results. In post-conflict situations such as Liberia, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan, this has meant that international organizations (UN and NGOs) launched massive back-to-school campaigns in cooperation with governments but with logistical support provided by external agencies, meaning that the local education authorities played a minimal, if any, role. In Kosovo, although early education efforts were supported by the education authorities of the previous parallel systems (Albanian and Serb), international efforts to rebuild the education system quickly swamped those of the Kosovars. Sommers and Buckland (2004: 149) spelled out the result:

A consequence of UNMIK's decision to implement rapid reforms was that Kosovars did not consider the process as either open or learning-based, and UNMIK's top education leaders were widely perceived as not receptive listeners. The handover process was limited, in large part because building capacity and trust, and developing a receptive system, were not awarded a particularly high priority. The choice ultimately came between actions that intentionally pressured local leaders and more patient, and perhaps more painstaking, capacity-building work. In the end, trust was not built because trust was not sought.

Rose and Greeley reach the conclusion that: "Fast impact activities have an important function both in dealing with emergency needs and in promoting state legitimacy but they are unlikely to contribute to sustainable turnaround if the spending is not coordinated and not part of the broader processes of strengthening state capacity and will" (2006: 26).

For this reason, it is critical that organizations also prioritize capacity development from the start. Some suggestions for doing this are included in the section on strategies.

The imperative to increase access versus the imperative to have relevant and high-quality education

This dilemma shares much in common with the previous dilemma related to short-term versus long-term responses. Most short-term responses in fragile states are designed more to improve children's access to education than to improve the quality of education. Learning materials are provided and learning spaces and teachers are identified quickly so that children can go 'back to school'.

The issue of the learning environment (physical as well as mental) that children encounter upon their arrival in school may be addressed but generally, in a rapid way. Most back-to-school campaigns consist of a teacher training component, which includes information about learner-centred teaching methodologies, a rights-based approach to education and possibly an introduction to psychosocial issues that children may be facing, especially in deteriorating or post-conflict environments. Because of the need to train tens of thousands of teachers quickly, this training generally lasts a maximum of 10-15 days. In addition, it is often conducted using a cascade method, whereby the master trainers receive training from the 'experts' (often international consultants who specialize in teacher training) and then these master trainers are responsible for training the teachers. Some of the master trainers will be excellent and will be able to convey the skills and knowledge quite well, but because of the large number of master trainers needed, others will not have the skills and expertise required to deliver high quality training to the teachers. Without supervision and follow-up after the training, the impact in most classrooms is likely to be minimal. Some NGOs can and do provide this type of follow-up support but government systems lack the capacity to provide the supervision and follow-up support that is needed on a national scale.

The curriculum is another area that needs to be addressed in post-conflict situations but it is not possible to implement a thorough, quality curriculum reform process quickly. In the immediate aftermath of a conflict the short-term goal is to eliminate the most egregious material from the curriculum in order to provide teachers and students with teaching and learning materials and to eliminate messages that are blatantly divisive. In Afghanistan and Iraq, this short-term process meant ridding textbooks of inflammatory or discriminatory messages and in Rwanda, this meant dropping the teaching of history from the curriculum altogether until there was agreement on how to teach about the history of the genocide and factors contributing to it (Obura, 2003). Depending on the length of the conflict and previous investments made in updating and maintaining the curricula, such efforts are necessary to increase access and to provide a more conducive learning environment, but they are not sufficient. They need to be followed by full-scale curriculum reform that results in a quality relevant curriculum based on the identified needs of all segments of society.

The initial impetus to increase access will undoubtedly be successful since most communities want education for their children. Long-standing gains in access cannot be maintained and increased, however, without also paying attention to quality – attention to both is essential to achieving the EFA agenda, though “interventions to improve quality and learning achievement require even greater management capacity” (UNESCO, 2007: 191).

Working with state or non-governmental actors

The state may need to be strengthened (and in some cases, reconstructed), but state actors sometimes lack political will, are not considered legitimate, are not held accountable or may have contributed to the present situation of fragility. In the specific area of educational planning and management, NGOs and other non-state actors may not only be more competent, they may be more representative of the local communities and of the population as a whole. On the other hand, there are also challenges associated with the provision of educational services by international and national NGOs. In situations of arrested development or deterioration, if international donors support education, it is generally through NGOs because trust in the governments is very weak. While support of NGOs ensures that children have some access to education, it will not result in the systematic improvement of the state's ability to provide education for its citizens. In Somalia, for example, Rose and Greeley (2006: 15) found "concerns that given the uncoordinated, ad-hoc project basis on which international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) more generally work in the country, after over a decade of intervention their innovative work has not produced sustainable systems". When working with non-governmental actors, however, donors and UN agencies should be guided by the OECD-DAC Principles for Engagement in Fragile States and, in particular, should seek to "agree on practical coordination mechanisms between international actors" in order to minimize fragmentation of efforts (OECD-DAC, 2007: 3).

In addition, donors and international organizations should consider the specific functional areas in which NGOs are providing assistance. Arguably, the role of an education system is also to strengthen national coherence and to contribute to nation-building. This is foremost the responsibility of a national ministry and therefore certain tasks intimately linked to this role cannot be 'outsourced' to NGOs. In other words, while it may be appropriate for NGOs to support improved school management activities, efforts to improve leadership in educational planning or in curriculum development are more appropriately focused on government education systems.

Top-down versus bottom-up support: should the support prioritize schools and local offices or central ministry staff?

Another dilemma with regard to capacity development in fragile states is whether to focus efforts at the central level first and then work towards increasing capacity at more decentralized levels, or whether to work from the local level to build capacity closer to the educational experiences of children, which may have an immediate effect on the quality of education they experience. For fragile states to take advantage of the Fast Track Initiative and garner more international support for efforts to rebuild the education system, a national plan is needed which in most instances requires capacity development efforts at the central level in post-conflict and early recovery countries. With regard to other areas of capacity development, however, the answer to this dilemma depends largely on the context of the specific situation. In some deteriorating environments it may only be possible to work on capacity development at the central level for safety and security reasons. In other situations, however, it could be that working at the central level is not secure or is least likely to be productive because of the central government's unwillingness to invest in efforts to achieve development objectives such as EFA. One example of this type of approach is illustrated by Save the Children-UK's (SC-UK) work in Somalia and Somaliland, where the organization

develops its programmes in consultation with the Ministry of Education, regional and local authorities, and at community and school levels when possible, and with local community and clan 'authorities' where the state is absent. ... The capacity developed ... is intended to constitute a vital resource for any national government that may be formed in Somalia in the future, since

any incoming government will inevitably lack management and administrative capacity in several sectors. (Rose and Greeley, 2006: 14)

Thus, understanding the context and the constraints to action or drivers for change will determine at which level to direct capacity development efforts. Eventually, however, successful capacity development initiatives will require some form of support at both the central and decentralized levels.

For all of the dilemmas identified in this section, there is no clear cut answer about which choice to make. For capacity development efforts to be successful and have an impact on the results that are achieved, it is necessary to have a good understanding of the context before selecting a strategy to pursue. Even with a solid understanding of the context, the solution to the dilemmas posed in this section is most likely not an 'either or' choice but is rather that capacity development efforts need to be multi-faceted and consider all of the aspects outlined above.

4 Strategies for capacity development in fragile states

This section presents some general strategies for how to approach capacity development in situations of fragility. With regard to all of these strategies, it is important to begin with the OECD-DAC principles and ‘take context as the starting point’. The analysis of the context should include the overall social, economic and political context in the country as well as a preliminary understanding of the other three dimensions of capacity – individual, organizational and institutional – that will ultimately bear on the effectiveness of any initiatives.

Prioritize capacity development even though the way forward is not clear

Ultimately, the improvement of conditions in fragile situations will hinge on the state’s ability and willingness to address its social problems. Humanitarian assistance, however well intended and necessary, is only a temporary measure and never a long-term solution. Therefore, it is essential that efforts to increase and develop national capacity (at the central and decentralized levels) are incorporated from the outset. Generating buy-in for capacity development among government officials is the first step in doing this. International organizations need some level of willingness on the part of the minister of education (or senior education authority) and his or her most senior officers in order to work on capacity development. This can be a challenge and is much more likely to occur in situations that are stabilizing.

In situations of ‘arrested development’, central-level education authorities may be unwilling to invest in capacity development efforts in general or in some areas of the country. This may also be the case in situations of ‘deterioration’ but in these environments security is an additional concern. In these two types of declining environments, it is important to look for openings or opportunities for capacity development that can help with the immediate situation as well as increase the competencies of civil servants, who may one day be responsible for planning and management in a more stable and improving environment. These openings may exist at the central level or, more likely, will exist at decentralized levels that are accessible to international organizations.

In post-conflict environments, senior officials are often under immense political pressure to show ‘immediate’ results. The danger in these environments is that capacity development efforts are given short shrift in the interest of ‘getting the job done’. Educational planners and managers can be bypassed by external technical assistance that is provided under immense pressure to show immediate results and by external organizations that are supporting educational activities in the country. The pressures and challenges related to the large presence of external assistance will continue, in most cases, into the early recovery phase. In early recovery, however, it is even more crucial to support capacity development efforts for educational planners and managers, to strengthen not only the individuals but for the longer-term strengthening of organizations, and to avoid the “corrosive effects of technical assistance on morale”, as a World Bank official explained.

One strategy for making capacity development a priority is to consider how efforts to improve capacity can be built into all activities and to analyse all projects for capacity development opportunities that may exist within them. As one former UNICEF official stated: “Never let any activity go ahead without exploiting potential ways of improving capacities.”

After the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan, for example, UNESCO, UNICEF and international NGO partners worked with the Directorate for Curriculum and Teacher Education (DCTE) in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and the Directorate of Education Extension (DEE) in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) to develop a psychosocial training programme for teachers. While the main focus of the project was teacher training, it also presented opportunities for improving the project management capabilities of DCTE and DEE staff (and thereby improving the organizational capacity of these two training institutions). To implement the project, staff in these organizations had to develop plans for rolling out the training to more than 20,000 teachers in NWFP and AJK. This meant identifying trainers, venues and teachers to take part in the training; scheduling the training; paying subsistence allowances and reporting on implementation to the donors. Neither organization had ever been responsible for the management of such a large-scale project before. Afterwards, individuals in both organizations had made improvements in their overall capacity to manage projects and could have been supported to develop these competencies further. While individuals within both organizations were willing and eager to support and manage projects, the organizations were less strong and needed additional support.

As a result of the successful teacher training initiative, donors that were looking for national partners sought out these organizations for more teacher training projects but unfortunately did not also include project elements to develop the management skills within the organizations and to improve the organizational systems and capacity for delivering and managing large-scale educational projects. There are two clear types of suggestions in these situations – the first is to be careful not to overload 'successful' organizational partners that will be eager to accept the additional financial resources but that may not yet be strong enough to manage and implement the projects and achieve the desired results. The second is that large-scale projects, even if related to areas such as teacher training, should have an explicit capacity development component built in so that the planning and management skills of individuals and organizations are strengthened.

Build trust and good inter-personal relationships

Without trust among all involved, it will be difficult to make a meaningful impact. For those providing external support, the essential element is to find ways to demonstrate to national partners a commitment to doing a good job and assisting them in doing their work better. Part of this can be established by finding ways of building in longer-term relationships. Especially in post-conflict and early recovery situations where there is significant donor interest, consultants can come and go within short periods of time. One reason for these short-term consultancies is that it is expensive for technical experts to spend significant amounts of time on assignment. In these situations, one possibility is to ensure some type of long-term commitment of consultants to work on a specific area of capacity development. Though any one mission may not be very long, multiple visits over a period of years may be a way of establishing relationships and may help to build trust on the part of national partners as well as the international organizations. For example, after independence in Timor Leste, UNICEF worked to convince the ministry of the need for a good EMIS in order to plan and manage better. As part of the arrangement, UNICEF found a consultant who was willing to work on the system and provide advice and input over a period of two to three years. Even though that person was not present for the entire three years, because of the overall time commitment he was able to build a relationship and gradually help to develop the national capacity for managing the system.

Another essential element here is the importance of external consultants or those providing technical assistance taking the time to understand the context within which they are working, to gain an understanding of the skills and capabilities of the people with whom they are working and not automatically to consider themselves the 'experts'. Sommers (2004: 61) states that:

There is a widespread assumption among international humanitarian experts (emergency education and otherwise) that most national government officials have a limited capacity to address technical concerns. This assumption is often based on heavy experience in humanitarian contexts. But it may also be based on a low regard for national government officials. Regardless, it may be wrong with regard to particular individuals (for instance, some internationals may assume that a civil servant who cannot speak English or French has low technical capabilities) or contexts.

This type of assumption is not helpful for building relationships and for long-term results. External consultants bring specific knowledge, skills and expertise but no matter how good the external consultant, he or she is not an expert on the country and its education system. As one World Bank official cautioned, "We are not equals. We do not know the local system". International advisors need to be willing to learn as much as possible from national counterparts and to be open to their ideas. This will help build trust and will have a greater impact. In the words of a UNESCO official, "Capacity development should be viewed as a mutual learning process where all involved work, plan and agree on activities and ways forward together". This advice applies in all situations of fragility, including in declining situations. The main difference is that there may be fewer entry points for capacity development in situations of arrested development or deterioration.

Commit to a long-term investment in capacity development

Not only does it take time to develop trust; donors and project planners need to be realistic in terms of how long it will take to develop the capacity needed for effective planning and management capabilities within a ministry. Such a long-term commitment may not be possible in declining situations, especially in the presence of violent conflict. In most of today's post-conflict or early recovery states, such as Angola, Afghanistan, Liberia and Sierra Leone, however, a long-term approach is needed and will have a greater impact over time. In these countries, the education systems were not particularly strong before the conflict and the many years of conflict have further decimated the system at all levels. All ministries have competent individuals and those who are willing and able to learn new planning and management skills, but these individuals are often overburdened or may be difficult to locate. Many ministry staff may not have the necessary education and training to do their jobs effectively, however, especially when they have to respond to the demands of donors and international organizations. In Afghanistan, for example, the Ministry of Education conducted a survey of all its administrative staff and found that only 26 per cent of its employees had more than 12 years of education. While this is an extreme example, it illustrates the magnitude of the problem.

Effective capacity development will not occur in a donor's typical time frame of six months to one year. As indicated by UNESCO, "many agencies and governments now recognize that 10- to 20-year time frames may be more appropriate in countries where capacities are least present" (2008: 61). The paper also cites a review of UNESCO's work by its Internal Oversight Service (IOS) that suggests that successful capacity-building programmes "have received consistent support from UNESCO and other development partners, at times for eight years or more" (2008: 24). In fragile situations that are stabilizing, it is possible to strive for a sustained, long-term commitment for capacity development. To do this, however, donors need to provide reliable funding that extends beyond short-term funding horizons. In Somalia, for example, a former UNICEF official indicated

that DFID had agreed to three years of funding, which allowed UNICEF and other partners to make better plans for their activities and to move forward in more rational ways.

Produce a capacity development plan (even if it is a small one)

While it will take time to produce, investment in a capacity development plan will help identify areas where specific skills or knowledge are needed and ideally, should help different partners coordinate capacity development efforts in order to avoid duplication and to ensure that all necessary areas are addressed. The needs analysis should include input from local officials, with recognition that their input will be based on their experiences and therefore may not represent all the needs.

Capacity development initiatives will have little impact if they focus only on short-term training for a few people. The few people who are trained may find that the organization lacks the policies, procedures or leadership for them to apply what they have learned or that there is no incentive for them to improve their performance as a result of the training. In other cases, investment in training is lost when the individuals are either transferred to another area or leave government service to take a higher paying job in the private sector. In either case, there is a need for a capacity development strategy that focuses on all four areas of capacity development outlined by UNESCO (2008): individuals, organizations, institutions and the broader context. Such a strategy could include multiple activities, ranging from the development or updating of systems within the ministry in order to make processes more effective, the provision of training and coaching so that individuals learn about new skills and are guided and supported when applying them, and perhaps advocacy for change in the institutional environment that will enable rewards and incentives for good performance or that will better coordinate capacity development efforts among all partners. A World Bank official recommended viewing capacity development plans as “an iterative process” in which organizations consider their short-term (for example, one year) capacity development needs within the context of a broader vision. This would result in a short-term plan focused on a limited number of issues and skills, which could then be built upon in subsequent years.

Study visits and long-term educational programmes are a frequent request of ministry staff. In some instances, the cost of these programmes may not be worth the overall benefit to the ministry, especially if individuals do not return to the country or the ministry after completing the programme. When these programmes have a real benefit for the country or ministry and are rigorous (such as the IIEP Advanced Training Programme), organizations should not be afraid to invest in them but they should insist on the selection criteria to make sure that those who participate will make use of the experience and are the most qualified to participate. They should also ensure that participants at least indicate their commitment to return to the ministry or government service after completion of the programme.

Develop and work on concrete outputs or outcomes in order to build on success and build confidence

One UN official interviewed for this paper indicated that a major challenge in fragile states is that officials often have a lack of confidence when confronted with requests (and demands) from international organizations. They may be highly educated individuals with years of experience, but perhaps at the micro or organizational level and not necessarily at the national level, and they may lack experience with what international organizations are asking them to do. He stated that “the jargon and frameworks thrown at people also affect [their] confidence in what they can do. When too many things are thrown at people, the result is that they are more inclined to rely on external

technical assistance". These factors and the push for rapid results can easily contribute to a lack of confidence. Capacity development efforts should strive to help officials develop their confidence by building on success and trying very hard to avoid demotivating people as a result of poorly executed strategies. Ghani and Lockhart (2008: 107-108) cite the example of a civil society leader in Nepal who "recounted how the aid system reinvents itself with new methods and languages, and the Nepali leaders spend their time learning those languages to meet the criteria of the moment. But as soon as they have mastered them and rewritten their documents, the approach changes, and the cycle begins all over again". The international community must find a way to transfer the essential principles of educational planning and management, regardless of the specific jargon or framework in effect, so that national partners have the skills – and the confidence – to plan and manage for results.

One way to do this is by focusing on specific outputs or outcomes such that people learn by doing. By focusing on a specific work task, such as the development of an education sector plan (but preferably based on a need identified by education officials), a group of people within the ministry can be responsible for completing it and provided with the necessary support to accomplish the task. The capacity development strategy can then include one-on-one (or very small group) mentoring or coaching and small workshops as or if needed to complete specific tasks. As different milestones are achieved, people will have a sense of achievement, which will help to increase motivation and which can be further built upon. This type of approach follows the advice of another UNESCO official – that is, "Do fewer things and do them deeper and better".

This type of approach increases capacity by working and doing together. Bringing in technical assistance from outside is not a bad thing per se but it is essential that the terms of reference for any technical assistance include a requirement for the technical assistance to work with and transfer knowledge or skills to national staff. Investments in technical assistance where the individuals simply do the work themselves is completely unsustainable – it may accomplish a short-term objective such as the development of a plan or the improvement of procurement procedures within a ministry, but its long-term impact for the country may not be as great. Working with national staff in order to transfer the needed skills should be the top priority.

Strive to improve coordination

Depending on the level of donor interest, fragile states are often overrun with UN agencies, NGOs and bilateral agencies providing assistance. In these situations, attention to coordination can help increase the chances of developing capacity. This could happen through coordination based on geographical areas of a country or through coordination of efforts by focus areas. For example, in Afghanistan, Sida's technical assistance has been invested primarily in the finance and procurement areas of the Ministry of Education, while IIEP has focused its efforts more specifically on the Department of Planning. There are many other agencies and organizations providing assistance to the ministry in terms of management and systems development, and it is not often easy to determine which organizations are supporting which areas. During one IIEP mission to Afghanistan, for example, a member of the IIEP team learned, after several days, that a member of the Canadian Strategic Advisory Team had been placed in the ministry for one year to help develop its strategic and operational planning capacity. This chance encounter was valuable because it allowed all partners to coordinate efforts and approaches, but it illustrates the need for widespread information sharing and for openness in terms of working with other partners.

When multiple organizations are working on capacity development, they may find themselves competing for the time and attention of the same ministry staff, especially the staff who speak

English. In Pakistan, about 18 months after the 2005 earthquake there were several organizations present and working in the education system. Their capacity development activities ranged from teacher training programmes to training for education managers. All of these organizations were conducting workshops and training, which became more frequent as some of the projects were 'finishing up' based on the funding time frames. The result was that the same people were being invited to multiple workshops at the same time and people were choosing which workshop to attend based on which organization was paying the highest daily allowance and not based on the workshops' content and value to their official responsibilities. When participants choose workshops primarily based on the amount of money they can earn, it is safe to assume that the impact in terms of learning and the development of the system is negligible at best. Ideally, capacity development activities should not include additional payments but this is not always a realistic objective. Many ministries, however, have an official payment scale that stipulates the allowance amounts for participants attending training. At a minimum, all organizations should agree to follow the official government scale of allowances, and if possible, avoid paying these allowances from the start.

Give people the tools that they need to do their jobs

Donors and international organizations expect national staff to produce data and reports but these staff may not have the skills of report writing or, even if they do, may not have the computer skills (or the computers!) to produce the required information. The lack of these skills among national staff also makes it more probable that international technical assistants will simply 'do the work' rather than invest in trying to transfer the skills. In order to build capacity, it is essential also to invest in generic skills training such as language training (English or French most likely) and computer training (at least Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint). Donors and international organizations expect to have (or at least find it easier to work with) national counterparts who can speak and write an international language. National staff who have these skills will be better able to communicate the ministry's priorities and help their ministries gain support from donors.

In addition to investing in language and generic skills training in most fragile states, there is also a need to supply resources (anything from paper clips to vehicles). This must be done cautiously or it will consume the entire project budget, but it is not fair to expect ministry staff to do certain tasks if they do not have the necessary tools. Staff and consultants of international organizations are able to do their jobs because they have ready access to resources, including laptop computers, printers, paper and toner. They can visit schools and monitor activities because they have vehicles and fuel to operate those vehicles. How can ministry staff be expected to do equivalent work with anything less? One UNESCO official pointed out that some capacity development efforts, especially training, suffer because the national officials who have been trained do not have the required resources to implement the training (either to develop a plan or to monitor or supervise schools since they may not be able to reach them) and not because these officials are unwilling to implement what they have learned.

Be flexible

This last point is critical in fragile states when situations can change rapidly. In states that are 'declining' or experiencing some level of violence, the situation may deteriorate to the point where international staff are no longer able to be present in the country to support capacity development efforts. This might mean either that efforts are postponed or that new strategies will have to be developed to achieve the capacity development objectives. For example, in Iraq the World Bank implemented a system of 'remote counterparting', whereby virtual relationships were established

between international staff and their counterparts in Iraq, who worked on direct implementation. This type of process can be successful but it must be recognized that the process will be slower.

Capacity development plans also need to be flexible and adapted based on the current realities of the situation. External agencies cannot always control the time frame for assistance for reasons that may go beyond security. In stabilizing situations, the competing pressures on government officials may mean that their priorities shift rapidly and no longer fit with the capacity development 'plan'. This is unavoidable and can be less of a problem when plans are developed as part of a longer-term capacity development strategy.

Conclusion

Capacity development in educational planning and management is a long-term process in all situations – and in fragile states the challenges are even more daunting. At the same time, however, the need for capacity development is perhaps even greater. Unfortunately the label ‘fragile state’ can describe states (or areas within states) in vastly differing circumstances. In the extreme case of a state categorized as *arrested development*, the state lacks legitimacy, is unwilling to prioritize security and development, and perhaps has limited capacity to address the needs of its citizens. Capacity development strategies in such an environment must be carefully crafted and will likely be more limited in focus (perhaps by areas of specialization or geographical area) and breadth.

In situations of *deterioration*, the challenges will be similar but are also likely to include insecurity as violent conflict may erupt in the country. Conflict has multiple effects on education systems, from the destruction of physical assets and records to the loss of qualified human resources and the inability or unwillingness of students, teachers and educational managers to access schools physically. Planning in such an environment is further complicated by the difficulty of obtaining information, especially as children and their families are much more likely to move to safer areas of the country in order to escape the violence. This also places an additional burden on the education system in the schools that are still functioning.

In *post-conflict* and *early recovery* fragile states, some of the challenges are lessened (for example, the state may exhibit more willingness to support development objectives and security throughout the country) but some new challenges may emerge. One of the greatest of these is likely to be the renewed and increased interest of the international community, which may mean that hundreds of millions of dollars and thousands of international aid workers will arrive in the country. These states, in which capacity has been further weakened by conflict, will face the huge challenge of trying to make their needs known and gain agreement on national priorities for moving forward. In these states, the Paris Declaration principles of alignment and harmonization becomes even more important, and certainly more of a challenge for fledgling governments and their international partners to confront.

While the challenges and responses may be slightly different depending on the categories of fragility, the need to work on capacity development in strategically focused ways exists no matter the exact condition of fragility. If the long-term vision is for states to move beyond fragility, then states need educational planners and managers with skills and competencies that can be used to improve the education system in their countries. Because of this, we cannot afford to delay completely capacity development efforts until other priorities have been addressed. We must continue to look for ways in which we can support capacity development, even if on a small scale.

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Annex 1. The World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Performance Assessment (CPIA) criteria

A. Economic management

1. Macroeconomic management
2. Fiscal policy
3. Debt policy

B. Structural policies

4. Trade
5. Financial sector
6. Business regulatory environment

C. Policies for social inclusion/equity

7. Gender equality
8. Equity of public resource use
9. Building human resources
10. Social protection and labour
11. Policies and institutions for environmental sustainability

D. Public sector management and institutions

12. Property rights and rule-based governance
13. Quality of budgetary and financial management
14. Efficiency of revenue mobilization
15. Quality of public administration
16. Transparency, accountability, and corruption in the public sector

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The book



Is capacity development in fragile states feasible? Is it possible for outsiders to help turn around a state which has experienced profound civic conflict? This report argues that external support to national capacity development is possible and may even be indispensable. But it also argues that, while many of the good practices for capacity development for educational planning and management are the same, fragile states pose some additional challenges. Strategies therefore need to take into account different situations of fragility.

This report also presents a few common dilemmas for practitioners. Overcoming these dilemmas, such as working with state or non-governmental actors, is often about finding the right balance in the specific context. Strategies for capacity development must be based on a long-term perspective that seeks to build trust and improve coordination. Yet it is critical to stress the importance of planning, setting goals and measuring outputs along the way. When working in fragile situations, flexibility is essential as states may rapidly become more fragile or less fragile, resulting in a direct effect on capacity development efforts. If properly designed, however, capacity development interventions may also reduce fragility through efficient educational planning and management.

The author

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