



Institute for
State Effectiveness



RE-EXAMINING THE TERMS OF AID

Jessica Mackenzie & Nelly Mecklenburg | Australasian AID Conference 2020

Fragile state governments cannot stay focused when their senior staff are in donor meetings from sunup to sundown, when aid programmes suck out their best staff with exorbitant salaries, and when changing donor fashions load them up with new conditions every three years. For their part, donors are rightly frustrated by persistent issues of mismanagement and cannot sustain aid without clearer results, less corruption, and more commitment to inclusive development.

- Development practitioner (2019)

We are long on commitments and short on behaviour change
— development partner representative (2018)

INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness

Monitoring framework: binding targets and framework to monitor progress, as well as additional commitments to focus on results and improve mutual accountability

2008 Accra Agenda for Action

Accelerating progress: accelerating progress towards the Paris commitments, with additional commitment to focus on the root causes of fragility

2003 Rome Declaration on Harmonisation

Concrete commitments: first set of concrete commitments to aid effectiveness, emphasizing ownership, alignment, and harmonization

2007 Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations

Minimizing harm: 10 principles for maximizing aid effectiveness and minimizing unintentional harm



2011 Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation

Inclusive development strategy: shifting focus from aid effectiveness to effective development cooperation

2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 16 & 17

Setting sights on long-term goals: the successor to the Millennium Development Goals, renewing momentum for commitments from Rome to New Deal and setting 2030 goals

2010 Dili Declaration

Setting the focus: setting out four key areas of focus for fragile states: capacity development, aid flexibility, planning processes and political dialogue

2011 New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States

Focusing on fragile states: a new architecture for working with fragile states, including aligning with country conditions and priorities

2016 Stockholm Declaration on Addressing Fragility and Peace-building in a Changing World

Recommitting to the New Deal: reaffirming the need to focus on root causes of fragility and recommitting to the New Deal principles

Why Have We Not Been Successful?

Despite what is known and been committed, an **implementation gap** remains

This is due to not having properly addressed the “how” - or the **incentive structures** that drive behaviour.

The Way Forward: Tackling the Implementation Gap

National strategies, plans, and policies

Have a great plan – tricky but not impossible



Donor incentives

Shift donors' incentives, so they are aligned and help



Reformist leadership and coalitions

Diffuse reforms beyond single key leaders



Implementation and accountability

Follow through and check the strategy is working



Whole of society approaches

Make sure citizens have a voice and are included



The Way Forward: Recommendations

National plans, strategies & policies

- Identify core priorities early
- Encourage experimentation
- Cut through siloes
- Effective strategic comms and engagement
- Economic growth focus from the start

Donor incentives

- Reframe agendas as mutual interest
- Shift 'risk' to include 'development risk'
- Realistic conditions, timeframes, and benchmarks
- Harness external oversight
- Reconsider performance rewards

Human capital

- Coalitions of reformers
- Beyond TA, organizational management and soft skills
- Invest in education and training of managers
- Bring the 'old guard' in
- Leadership as collective decision making
- Confidence to say 'no' to non-priorities

Implementation & accountability

- Strengthen management capacities
- Use a consolidated budget
- Redouble efforts to tackle corruption and PFM
- Monitor capacity for functional transitions
- Leverage metrics and reporting for accountability
- Team based performance frameworks
- National programs that collaborate with communities to scale delivery

Whole of society inclusion

- Inclusive, sustainable peace and reconciliation approaches
- Address urban-rural divides
- Broaden and bolster CSO engagement platforms
- Leverage role of culture and traditional systems
- Communicate and engage in dialogue
- Equip communities to adapt to changing circumstances

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The background of the slide features several abstract, overlapping lines in shades of blue and orange. These lines form a complex, geometric pattern that resembles a stylized map or a network of connections. The lines vary in thickness and color, creating a dynamic and modern aesthetic.

Jessica Mackenzie
Director for Country Programs
jessica.mackenzie@effectivestates.org

Nelly Mecklenburg
Program Manager – CDD
nelly.mecklenburg@effectivestates.org

Report available at: **www.effectivestates.org**