

DANISH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IN FRAGILE STATES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Overview of Danish aid to fragile settings	4
Forms of cooperation	7
Country programmes	7
Other funding channels	8
Cooperation themes and approaches at country level	9
Afghanistan	9
Burkina Faso	10
Mali	11
Niger	12
Palestine	13
Somalia	13
Conflict prevention	15
Conclusions	17
References	19

INTRODUCTION

Addressing development challenges in fragile states is a core priority for many development cooperation providers. This priority reflects the scale of poverty in fragile settings and the outsized role that official development assistance can play in these contexts in light of challenges related to domestic resource mobilization and the ability to attract private investment. If current trends continue, an estimated 80 percent of the world's poorest people could live in fragile states by 2030 (OECD 2018). This paper provides an overview of Danish development cooperation in Denmark's fragile priority countries.

Increasing attention to state fragility on the international development cooperation agenda over the last two decades reflects concerns that the limited capacities of some states to exercise authority and provide public services are creating challenges for both the citizens of these countries and the international community due to the potential transnational threats they generate. Development cooperation interacts with complex dynamics in fragile settings because of the fundamental difficulties of political development that are often sources of fragility. International engagement to respond to fragility thus requires attention to the resolution of political conflicts beyond a focus on security and development-focused interventions (Andersen 2016).

As attention to fragile states has risen, there has been an evolution in donor understandings of how to engage in these settings, such as a greater appreciation of the importance of paying attention to state–society relations (Baranyi and Desroziers 2012; Faust et al. 2013). Engagement in fragile states presents donors with multiple dilemmas. Combining the objectives and competencies of development, diplomatic and defence communities under the label of 'whole of government' or integrated approaches can provide a multidimensional response to the challenges of fragility, but they also expose goal conflicts in donor engagement. Efforts to work around poorly functioning national systems may have the effect of reinforcing deficits in institutional capacity (Baranyi and Desroziers 2012). The risks involved in engaging in fragile settings can make it difficult for donors to achieve desired results.

The complexities of donor engagement with fragile states reflect the diverse characteristics of the various countries and territories that are labelled 'fragile'. The OECD's *States of Fragility* report provides an important reference point in conceptualizing fragility and outlining its multidimensional character. It understands fragility as 'the combination of exposure to risk and insufficient coping capacity of the state, system and/or communities to manage, absorb or mitigate these risks' (OECD 2018:82). The report presents five dimensions of fragility – economic, environmental, political, security and societal – that reflect the diverse risks that fragile states confront and the varied drivers of fragility across the 58 states labelled 'fragile' in OECD analysis.

These 58 countries range from small-island states (the Comoros and the Solomon Islands) to countries that are among the world's most populous (the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Pakistan). The label includes countries that are classified as Least-Developed Countries as well as middle-income countries. There is also variation in terms of the intensity of fragility, as well as in the development trajectory that fragile states are experiencing. Countries characterized as 'extremely fragile' are concentrated on the African continent and in South and Western Asia (OECD 2018).

Donor approaches to engagement respond to the diverse characteristics of fragile settings. The OECD notes that humanitarian assistance is the largest category of assistance to extremely fragile states, while aid to social infrastructure and services accounts for roughly half the aid provided to other fragile states. Similarly, channels for providing assistance vary across these groups. Multilateral organizations and donor governments play a large role in implementing assistance in extremely fragile states, while partner governments are the most important implementation channel in other fragile states (OECD 2018).

The variety of approaches to engagement with fragile states is clear even when the focus is restricted to the activities of a single donor (Denmark) in a small number of partner countries (Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Palestine and Somalia). These territories are named as 'poor, fragile countries' in the most recent Danish development cooperation and humanitarian assistance strategy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2017).

The first section of this review provides an overall picture of Danish aid to fragile states. It is followed by a more detailed analysis of Danish approaches to engagement in its fragile priority countries, as indicated in the country policy papers and country programme documents outlining Danish cooperation priorities in these contexts. A third section draws special attention to the topic of conflict prevention and identifies thematic emphases associated with this priority area in the countries examined. A concluding section summarizes key messages from the review and identifies possible areas for further analysis.

The purpose of this paper is to outline the different forms of cooperation that Denmark utilizes in fragile states and to provide an indication of how choices about ways of delivering aid have shifted in these contexts over time. The paper does not present an assessment of whether Denmark's choice of modalities is appropriate in these countries in relation to specified criteria.

OVERVIEW OF DANISH AID TO FRAGILE SETTINGS

Table 1 provides a summary of Danish aid to fragile states over the last decade. It reports aid flowing to the 25 largest cumulative aid recipients appearing in the list of countries defined as fragile states in OECD databases. The table groups countries according to their classification within Denmark's Strategy for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Action (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2017). It shows that the OECD categorisation of fragile states cuts across the core country categories outlined in the Danish strategy, which only lists six countries as 'poor fragile countries', thus reflecting a more restrictive definition of fragility and the geographical concentration of Danish aid. Half of this group of countries (Afghanistan, Burkina Faso and Mali) appear among the top ten recipients of Danish aid to fragile states. The group of 'poor stable countries' accounts for a sizeable share of Denmark's aid to fragile states as defined by the OECD. Mozambique and Nepal have also been important aid recipients over the last decade but have experienced a phasing out of cooperation related to broader cutbacks in aid since 2015.

Denmark's commitment to addressing challenges in fragile states is reflected not only in its list of partner countries, but also in the policy frameworks it has adopted. The Danish government formulated a policy toward fragile states as an extension of the priorities outlined in its 2010 development strategy. This policy document identified several guiding principles and key areas of focus for Danish engagement in fragile settings. With respect to principles, the policy stressed the importance of situational analysis to ensure that cooperation instruments would be adapted to the challenges facing individual partner countries, the value of whole of government approaches to promote coherence among military, political, humanitarian, stabilisation and development instruments, and the need for both substantive risk assessments and the acceptance of higher risks to engagement. Flexibility in programming to accommodate both short- and long-term interventions was presented as a means of managing such risks. A final principle for engagement encouraged a geographical concentration of resources in support of the division of labour agenda and Danish representation in the countries where resources were concentrated (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2010).

The policy document emphasizes state-building as a core focus of engagement across fragile settings, viewing capacity development in national and local institutions as the main objective. It also presents five priority areas for engagement: 1) stabilisation and security; 2) promotion of improved economic opportunities and livelihoods; 3) democratization, good governance and human rights; 4) conflict prevention; and 5) regional conflict management. Across these areas of engagement, the policy stresses the importance of working to strengthen collaboration with international actors such as the United Nations and the European Union (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2010).

Collaboration among governmental actors is a central theme in the 2013 policy paper outlining Denmark's approach to integrated stabilization. The document underlines the value of combining a variety of instruments, including tools of

diplomacy, development assistance and military engagement to promote stabilization goals. The starting point for integrated or comprehensive approaches is an agreement on common goals. Joint analysis and planning, as well as joint training of personnel involved in implementation, are a foundation for approaches drawing on the competencies and resources of different governmental actors. In addition to identifying lessons learned from Danish engagement in fragile settings, the policy paper expresses an intention to elevate the priority attached to conflict prevention efforts (Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Ministry of Defence / Ministry of Justice 2013). The Danish Peace and Stabilisation Fund, created in 2010, is a reflection of the integrated approach in practice. The cross-governmental funding stream is one of multiple funding sources supporting stabilization efforts, with other funds coming from the defence and development budgets (Coffey 2014).

Table 1. Top 25 ‘Fragile state’ recipients of Danish aid (2008-2017)

Gross disbursements in constant prices, USD millions												
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total	Rank
All recipients total	1.699	1.782	2.042	1.962	1.906	2.076	3.012	3.088	2.171	2.599	22.337	-
Fragile total	850	824	902	852	821	790	750	638	587	957	7.971	-
Poor fragile countries												
Afghanistan	44	77	71	79	76	53	76	92	40	70	679	3
Burkina Faso	39	32	32	38	40	41	61	43	49	33	409	8
Mali	11	17	28	28	14	36	31	27	41	43	275	10
Somalia	15	19	17	32	37	23	32	16	35	37	264	12
West Bank and Gaza Strip	9	18	26	18	25	36	27	27	7	19	211	14
Niger	12	10	12	8	14	12	9	13	15	7	113	22
Poor stable countries												
Tanzania	104	97	120	112	104	79	63	48	56	54	837	1
Uganda	74	84	75	60	59	50	45	31	43	46	567	4
Kenya	55	55	60	66	56	62	47	61	57	41	560	5
Ethiopia	7	14	8	24	8	11	15	6	18	307	418	6
Bangladesh	41	43	77	52	57	30	31	22	26	36	415	7
Myanmar	17	9	10	10	19	67	22	8	8	32	200	15
Transition and growth economies												
Egypt	45	15	18	11	15	11	3	2	3	4	126	21
Pakistan	0	4	27	16	14	9	16	17	7	1	111	23
Other												
Mozambique	76	94	80	100	75	83	60	66	39	63	736	2
Nepal	41	39	35	36	39	25	27	23	14	19	297	9
Zambia	31	43	23	38	41	27	38	20	5	7	273	11
Syrian Arab Republic	2	2	4	2	12	42	48	47	42	44	247	13
Zimbabwe	15	25	25	26	20	22	28	28	10	0	200	16
South Sudan	0	0	0	31	35	30	34	17	20	16	183	17
Iraq	32	14	31	7	14	4	9	10	22	34	177	18
Sudan	33	32	35	8	10	11	7	5	8	4	153	19
Nigeria	71	28	17	0	4	0	0	1	5	1	129	20
Yemen	4	3	3	3	6	14	6	8	7	30	84	24
Liberia	37	8	9	10	8	0	0	1	0	0	73	25

Source: OECD (2019). Figures have been rounded up or down to the nearest million.

FORMS OF COOPERATION

This section presents a brief overview of the different channels through which development cooperation is provided in order to frame the analysis of approaches to engagement outlined in country programmes. It distinguishes between development cooperation that is administered within and outside the country programmes that are the focus of this study. The Danish government's Aid Management Guidelines provide a basis for the selection of forms of cooperation. Across cooperation settings, choices on how to provide aid are guided by common considerations, including the perceived relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and potential long-term sustainability of the engagement. The potential for innovation, the capacities of implementation partners, the corruption risks and the security of deployed personnel also inform decisions on how aid should be delivered (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2019).

The decentralized character of aid management within the Danish system has been considered one of its strengths in comparison to other donors. However, in recent years increasing attention to global public goods and pressures on human resources due to budget cutbacks have contributed to a shift towards more centrally managed development cooperation (OECD 2016).

Country programmes

Country programmes outline the emphases of bilateral development cooperation between Denmark and its priority partner countries. Allocations to country programmes are listed under country-specific headings in Denmark's national budget. Danish representations in priority countries play a central role in carrying out relevant contextual analysis, identifying priorities in consultation with partner governments and managing implementation. Country programmes present three thematic areas for engagement, specify the planned development engagements falling under these headings and indicate how results will be monitored (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2019).

The Aid Management Guidelines express a general preference for using country systems for implementation when possible in order to strengthen partner capacities and accountability processes. At the same time, the guidelines indicate a need to exercise caution in the use of country systems when high risks such as the potential for corruption exist. In fragile settings, donor decisions to use country systems reflect a balance between the objectives of supporting institutional development and avoiding risks related to the management of funds (Hart et al. 2015). Examples of aid delivered through country systems include budget support or sector programmes implemented with partner line ministries.

Intermediated cooperation presents an avenue for donors to pursue a balance between engaging in difficult settings and dealing with risks. Country-level earmarked funding to multilateral organizations can take numerous forms, from donor-specific project-level funding implemented by individual organizations to pooled approaches that involve multiple donors and multilateral organizations. Multi-donor trust funds are a prominent example of earmarked funding

arrangements used in fragile states. Trust funds have gained in popularity due to potential advantages such as fostering donor coordination and increasing the predictability and long-term character of aid delivery in challenging settings, where the reliance on multilateral organizations as administrators sidesteps difficulties in public financial management. However, using these funds may also have drawbacks related to the persistence of donor-specific prioritization within them, their administrative costs and the limited strengthening of country systems (Barakat et al. 2011).

Beyond governments and multilateral organizations, country programmes may also include support for civil-society organizations for advocacy work or project implementation. Such support is often linked to the promotion of democratic governance and human rights.

A final example of a form of cooperation that can be part of a country programme is delegated cooperation. Delegated cooperation involves the transfer of authority for programme management to another bilateral or multilateral entity in order to draw on the expertise or implementation capacity of the other development agency. Delegated cooperation arrangements have been promoted in the context of the international division of labour agenda as a means of encouraging donors to operate in areas of comparative advantage and to limit fragmentation (NORAD 2006).

Other funding channels

Danish funding to fragile states also flows through numerous channels outside Denmark's own country programmes. Important examples include core funding for UN entities, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), contributions to the World Bank Group, and funding for EU development cooperation via the Danish contribution to the EU budget and through the extra-budgetary European Development Fund.

Denmark provides support to Danish NGOs engaged in development and humanitarian work via strategic framework agreements that fund organizational priorities. NGO funding pools allow a more diverse array of Danish NGOs to acquire funding for their work in developing countries.

Thematic budget headings provide another possible source of funding to fragile states. Examples include a large funding pool for environmental aid that is allocated primarily through multilateral organizations, funds to prevent irregular migration and support migration management, and funds allocated under the Peace and Stabilisation Fund to finance initiatives in several regions (Afghanistan, the Gulf of Guinea, the Horn of Africa, Syria/Iraq, and Ukraine).

Finally, Denmark provides significant humanitarian assistance through core support for multilateral organizations with a humanitarian mandate, contributions to the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and funding to Danish and international NGOs through strategic partnerships, funding pools or project support (Finansministeriet 2019).

COOPERATION THEMES AND APPROACHES AT COUNTRY LEVEL

This section provides a summary of the key priorities and channels for delivering support that are referenced in country policy papers and country programme summaries. The discussion of cooperation approaches is contextualized using information from the Openaid.dk portal (DANIDA 2019) reporting thematic priorities and implementation channels by country.

Afghanistan

Danish development cooperation in Afghanistan has evolved against the backdrop of changing international engagement and security conditions within the country (Ball et al. 2016). As part of the international coalition providing military support to remove the Taliban regime after 2001, Denmark also contributed significant support for reconstruction and development. Danish development cooperation emphasized a nationwide approach from an early stage, in contrast to the prioritization of assistance linked to provincial reconstruction teams. Other early emphases included an extensive project portfolio and support for technical assistance in response to the weak capacities of the national government. The project orientation created monitoring challenges, and technical assistance undermined capacity development goals to the extent that the additional human resources provided an alternative to the Afghan civil service. Over time, Denmark moved toward larger consolidated programmes and a greater reliance on multilateral delivery channels (Ball et al. 2016).

The move toward multilateral delivery was evident in the Afghanistan Country Programme for the period 2014-2017, which proposed increased Danish participation in the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2015). This shift not only reflected considerations on how to strengthen ownership and capacities in Afghanistan's national administration, but also management challenges for the Danish administration linked to the reduction of personnel to monitor cooperation at the country level and the increasing role of headquarters-based staff in overseeing cooperation. An assumption underlying increased Danish support for multilateral approaches, including multi-donor trust funds, is that multilateral entities have superior capacities to manage risks and monitor cooperation in challenging settings (Udenrigsministeriet / Forsvarsministeriet 2014).

Denmark's most recent country policy paper underscores that cooperation with international actors, including the European Union (EU), the UN Support Mission in Afghanistan and the NATO Resolute Support Mission, is important in achieving long-term strategic and development goals. The policy paper indicates an intention to deliver economic assistance primarily through the World Bank and UN entities in 2018-2020. While development assistance through the country programme is estimated to represent 45 percent of Danish financial assistance to the country in this period, humanitarian assistance and support to Danish NGOs accounts for another 30 percent, highlighting the persistent role of other channels of implementation, despite the preference for multilateral approaches. The remaining

25 percent of financial assistance is allocated to a Peace and Stabilisation Fund for Afghan Security Forces. The country policy paper acknowledges that the different funding streams carry with them a need to promote coherence across instruments, in particular through the closer alignment of development and humanitarian instruments within a broader 'peace–development–humanitarian nexus' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2018).

Burkina Faso

The cooperation relationship between Burkina Faso and Denmark has a long history, as Burkina Faso has been a priority partner country since 1993. The current cooperation profile reflects longstanding emphases on the issues of water and sanitation, education and agricultural development. While the country policy paper for 2013-2018 foresaw increased cooperation on foreign affairs through the European External Action Service and expanded commercial engagement, development cooperation remains the focus of Denmark's relations with Burkina Faso (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2013).

The country programme for 2016-2020 sets out three strategic objectives for development cooperation: 1) poverty reduction; 2) strengthening a rights-based and inclusive governance framework; and 3) promoting economic growth and employment. In relation to previous cooperation frameworks, the country programme expresses an interest in strengthening public accountability frameworks, supporting democratic forces in the country through a civil-society fund, raising the political commitment to human rights issues and increasing the attention being paid to regional challenges related to security, stability and countering extremism (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2016).

The cooperation approach centres on a development contract for the provision of general budget support along with three thematic programmes. Budget support has been considered appropriate as a tool to improve public financial management, promote policy dialogue and foster donor coordination. The dominant forms of engagement have thus reflected the core orientations of the aid effectiveness agenda, given the alignment of funds with the Burkinabé government's development strategy and the use of country systems for implementation. Support for basket funds in the education and the water and sanitation sectors offer further examples of Danish efforts to pool funding in close collaboration with government implementing partners (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2013; Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2016). Government ministries are the primary implementation partners for Denmark in Burkina Faso (DANIDA 2019). Despite the positive assessment of the achievements of budget support, the country programme signals a shift away from this modality to encourage larger domestic resource mobilization efforts (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2016). In the 2013-2018 country policy paper, Denmark also highlighted a phasing out of its bilateral education programme in favour of support to education delivered through multilateral organizations (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2013).

Several elements of Danish engagement are funded separately from the country programme, though these approaches also fall under the strategic umbrella

provided by the country policy paper. Examples are support through the Regional Sahel Programme of the Peace and Stabilization Fund, DANIDA Civil Society Support and DANIDA Business Finance (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2016).

Mali

As with Burkina Faso, there has been a long history of Danish development cooperation in Mali, which has been a priority partner country since 2006. Since 2011, cooperation has taken place against a backdrop of the destabilization of the country and international efforts to support stabilization in a context where large parts of the territory remain outside government control. The security situation in the country has contributed to engagement within the Sahel region being given a higher priority, particularly among European countries.

Given this context, the country policy paper for 2016-2021 emphasizes that Denmark's engagement in Mali follows the 'integrated stabilisation approach' for engagement in fragile states, which involves implementing a suite of instruments drawing on military, diplomatic, humanitarian and development cooperation resources (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2016). Multilateral action is a key element of Danish military and diplomatic engagement, involving military and civilian support to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and political engagement via the European Union.

Three strategic objectives guide Danish cooperation with Mali and frame the content of the bilateral development cooperation programme: 1) promoting peaceful coexistence and increasing stability and security; 2) strengthening democratic and inclusive governance; and 3) increasing inclusive and sustainable economic growth. In 2015-2016 Denmark implemented a transition programme with priority areas related to private-sector development, water and sanitation, the promotion of peace and reconciliation, and the provision of general budget support. In the context of political uncertainties, the transition programme sought to adapt longer-term approaches by pursuing cooperation with a range of actors beyond the government, including parastatal and civil-society organizations (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2016).

The continued use of budget support is linked to an EU state-building contract. Despite a reorientation toward a broader range of partners, including small and medium-sized enterprises in the context of a large private-sector programme, governmental actors remain important partners for Danish development cooperation in Mali. The Ministry for Decentralization was the single largest implementation channel for Danish aid in 2017 (DANIDA 2019). Support for decentralization processes is a core element of cooperation in order to address the goals of promoting democracy and strengthening governance (Finansministeriet 2019). Under the heading of advancing peaceful coexistence, the draft country programme document from 2016 foresaw commitments to multilateral actors in the form of support to the MINUSMA mission's community-based peace dividend projects and contributions to UN Women's country programme, along with support to non-governmental actors via a civil-society fund and funding for the work of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (DANIDA 2016a).

Beyond the thematic programme areas outlined in the country policy paper, Denmark can provide additional support to Mali through local grant authority, humanitarian assistance funds, Danish civil-society support, partnerships for market-driven growth, and regional and thematic initiatives (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2016; Finansministeriet 2019).

Niger

Like its regional neighbours, Niger faces a variety of challenges related to the security situation and political cohesion, economic and social development, and environmental change. Although the Danish government acknowledges the Nigerien government's efforts to maintain stability and promote economic development, the challenging framework conditions for cooperation influenced Denmark's decision to close its representation office in Niger in 2014. While Denmark seeks to continue to build on a legacy of development cooperation dating back to 1974, the responsibility for oversight of the country programme was transferred to the embassy in Burkina Faso.

Delegated partnerships and funding through multilateral organizations and other partners are currently Denmark's preferred funding modalities in Niger (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2016). Alongside a preference for delegated partnerships, the country programme is formulated in a manner to fund a limited and manageable number of initiatives and to work in areas that are clear shared priorities for the Nigerien and Danish governments that can build on the longer-term development cooperation relationship (DANIDA 2017).

The three strategic objectives of the country programme (strengthening stability and peace, enhancing access to rights and reducing extreme poverty) are pursued within the country programme through efforts to promote capacity-building among a variety of actors, improve the sustainable management of water and sanitation, and promote economic growth and job creation in agriculture (DANIDA 2017). Funding to address the first priority area is directed to a partnership managed by UNDP, complemented by funding for UNFPA's country programme to address demographic challenges. Cooperation in the water sector is delegated to Luxembourg, while delegated partnerships with the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation and the World Bank provide the implementation channel for the food security and private-sector development components of the Danish country programme (DANIDA 2017; Finansministeriet 2019). Even though governmental partners remain a focus within delegated partnerships, these arrangements promote an intermediated approach that responds to risks in the implementation setting and reflect a move away from government-to-government cooperation.

The country policy paper frames cooperation with Niger as part of a comprehensive approach to engagement. Elements of this approach beyond the country programme include support for conflict prevention through the Peace and Stabilization Programme for the Sahel region and contributions to EU-managed initiatives. Denmark has been one of the largest contributors to the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, which has emphasized projects aiming to limit migration

across the Sahel and other African regions, and Niger has been one focal point of EU action linking development investments to efforts to reduce migrant flows.

Palestine

Danish development cooperation with Palestine is embedded in a process of political engagement with roots in the Oslo Peace Accords from 1993 and the 1995 Interim Agreements. It aims to contribute to state-building activities to facilitate the achievement of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Udenrigsministeriet 2016). Denmark's approach to engagement emphasizes the advancement of political objectives through close cooperation with the EU and other member states and via the United Nations, alongside bilateral policy dialogue.

Although Denmark's cooperation relationship with Palestine draws on a long-term commitment with a specific Danish profile, the importance of joint approaches with other actors is clear in the choice of cooperation instruments. A large component of the cooperation programme relates to strengthening the capacities of municipal governments, supporting policy reforms and promoting infrastructure development at the local level. A World Bank-managed multi-donor trust fund provides the primary vehicle for addressing these objectives (DANIDA 2016b).

Apart from this multi-partner trust fund, six of the eight main development engagements outlined in the country programme reflect joint funding arrangements with other donors. Examples of these joint funding pools involve cooperation with a multilateral partner (the FAO) and an international NGO (Oxfam) in the context of the economic development component of the country programme, and cooperation with Palestinian organizations (the State Audit and Administrative Control Bureau and the Independent Commission on Human Rights) in the context of the thematic programme on human rights and domestic accountability (DANIDA 2016b). The increased reliance on joint approaches reflects a shift from previous cooperation approaches that implemented stand-alone projects to a greater extent. Joint implementation approaches are considered advantageous as a means of managing risk, achieving wider impacts and increasing political leverage (Udenrigsministeriet 2016).

Danish funding for the Danish House in Palestine, a platform for cultural exchange, provides an exception to the general pattern of pursuing joint funding. The approach to funding the Danish House in Palestine outlined in the country policy paper nevertheless reflects an effort to consolidate previous funding streams supporting activities related to cultural, heritage and media support in Palestine (Udenrigsministeriet 2016). Forms of support to Palestine outside the framework of the country programme include core contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and support to Danish NGOs active in Palestine through framework agreements (DANIDA 2016b).

Somalia

Somalia's status as a priority country for Danish development cooperation reflects the host of security and development challenges that it confronts. Regional conflict

management, combatting piracy, countering terrorism, addressing the drivers of migration and internal displacement, building public institutions and dealing with extreme poverty and food insecurity are among the issues on the cooperation agenda with Somalia. The difficult security situation within the country limits Denmark's country presence, with a small programme office in Hargeisa in the relatively stable region of Somaliland fulfilling a coordination role, while the Danish Embassy in Kenya assumes responsibility for the overall oversight of the country programme. Development cooperation through the country programme is one dimension of multi-faceted engagement that includes support from the defence and foreign ministries through the Regional Peace and Stabilization Programme, humanitarian assistance and engagement with the Somali diaspora through Danida's Diaspora Programme (Udenrigsministeriet 2018).

Approximately half of the Somalia Country Programme that was implemented from 2015 to 2018 was directed to support the Somali Compact, a development framework formulated as a means of collaboration between Somali stakeholders and international actors that takes the New Deal on Fragile States as its reference point. A central element of the New Deal was a commitment to support country-led transitions from fragility, using so-called 'compacts' as a guide for selecting aid modalities (International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding 2011).

The Somali Compact outlines the priorities for Somalia's peacebuilding and statebuilding agendas and emphasizes the aid effectiveness principles outlined in the New Deal process as a basis for how cooperation should be structured. These principles stress the importance of Somali ownership of cooperation efforts and advocate alignment with country systems and a preference for pooled funding instruments as further foundations for effective aid delivery. The aim of the Somalia Development and Reconstruction Facility is to establish a single delivery vehicle to disburse funding in line with government systems and priorities and avoid fragmentation. Multilateral organizations, namely the United Nations, the World Bank and the African Development Bank were entrusted with administrative responsibility for different windows within the facility (Federal Republic of Somalia 2013).

Danish support for the Compact therefore primarily takes the form of aid channelled through multilateral organizations. This consists of funding for a United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund that directs funding to UN implementing agencies and national government entities and addresses thematic priorities related to state formation, youth employment and the rule of law. Contributions to a second multi-donor trust fund administered by the World Bank focus on economic policy reform and public financial management, as well as private-sector development. Denmark's contributions to these funds involve preference earmarking to direct resources to specific priorities within the funds. A final dimension of Danish support for the Compact involves technical assistance to governmental actors in Somaliland within the framework of the Somaliland Development Fund. This component is implemented through a private consultancy firm acting as the fund manager (DANIDA 2015).

Multilateral cooperation is also an important element of the thematic programme on governance, with funding directed especially to a UN joint programme promoting improvements in local governance and further funds reserved for indirect civil-society support. Funding to NGOs and a delegated partnership managed by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) are the main implementing channels for the thematic programme on inclusive economic growth (DANIDA 2015).

Nearly half of the resources provided through the Peace and Stabilization Fund's Programme for the Horn of Africa 2015-2018 are directed toward Somalia, with emphases lying in stabilization efforts at different levels of governance and support to build state institutions such as the national prison service (Udenrigsministeriet 2018).

CONFLICT PREVENTION

International engagement with fragile states has emphasized crisis response, stabilization and reconstruction initiatives more than investments in addressing the conditions that give rise to conflict. This is a key message from the *Pathways for Peace* report, which encouraged the international community to elevate the priority assigned to conflict prevention (World Bank Group and United Nations 2017). The report characterizes prevention as a multi-level and multi-dimensional area for engagement. It can involve strengthening the multilateral infrastructure, regional institutions, governmental capacities at the country level, or the capacities and opportunities of a variety of societal actors. Promoting political and economic inclusion is a core recommendation for preventing conflict in diverse country contexts. Given the varied sources of conflicts, this general recommendation can be translated into action in numerous areas, including, as examples, political reforms to expand rights at a broad level and sector-specific interventions related to land and water management. The broad scope of action reflects the linkage between conflict prevention and the goal of building resilience in fragile settings. International support for conflict prevention can encompass a mixture of instruments involving diplomatic, development cooperation and military actors.

Denmark's development and humanitarian strategy mentions conflict prevention and stabilization in fragile states as a priority area and signals that conflict prevention initiatives in country programmes should be linked to regional initiatives to a greater extent (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2017). This section highlights examples of initiatives that address conflict prevention goals that are referenced in country policy papers and country programmes for the countries examined in this paper.

Conflict prevention as a stand-alone theme receives limited attention in the country programme documents. The only direct references to the topic arise in relation to

Danish cooperation with the four African states on the list of poor fragile countries, with varied emphases across these contexts.

The clearest references to conflict prevention in the country programme for Burkina Faso relate to efforts to prevent violent extremism and engagement intended to prevent and resolve water conflicts. However, other elements of the country programme involve measures such as strengthening human rights reforms, encouraging reforms in the justice sector and supporting the role of civil society in political dialogue (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2016). These priorities can also be understood as contributing to conflict prevention efforts, even if they are not explicitly framed in relation to conflict prevention as a goal.

In Mali, all three overarching strategic objectives outlined in the country policy paper (peaceful coexistence, stability and security, democratic and inclusive governance, and inclusive and sustainable economic growth) address themes that are associated with conflict prevention. The policy paper expresses a commitment to reconciliation efforts among groups in conflict-affected areas, the increased political participation of civil society and the need to extend opportunities to women, youth and marginalized groups. Support for decentralization processes is considered a main avenue for fostering more inclusive governance (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2016). These activities are embedded in an approach linked to international engagement in the country, such as the reconciliation activities carried out through the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

The Niger programme emphasizes conflict prevention as a goal of multiple development engagements, in particular in the context of a thematic programme on democratic governance, stability and migration management. The programme addresses conflict prevention by seeking to strengthen the ability of a governmental entity charged with consolidating peace to assess risks, influence other governmental actors and support an expanded service delivery role for local authorities, as well as by providing support to civil society and media organizations (DANIDA 2017). Other examples of conflict prevention activities falling under the umbrella of this programme include religious dialogue and efforts to address land management issues, as well as the engagement of women and young people in political processes. Support to government actors to improve integrated water management approaches are framed as a means of preventing and resolving water conflicts (DANIDA 2017). Conflict prevention is also a component of the Peace and Stabilization Programme for the Sahel region, which contributes funds to foster dialogue among different population groups in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, among other priorities (Statsministeriet et al. 2019).

The term 'conflict prevention' is not explicitly mentioned in the country policy paper or country programme document for Somalia. However, activities addressing goals such as strengthening local governance and citizen participation and the promotion of inclusive economic development indicate areas of consistency with a conflict prevention agenda (DANIDA 2015). The Peace Stabilization Fund's Programme for the Horn of Africa includes direct references to engagement

contributing to conflict prevention. It notes that activities supported under this funding vehicle aim to address the proximate drivers of conflict, such as political disputes, violent extremism, organized crime and the weakness of national institutions, in contrast to the activities addressing the underlying causes of conflict that are emphasized in the country programme (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark and Danish Ministry of Defence 2018). Examples of areas of support include strengthening the Eastern Africa Standby Force's preventive conflict management capacity and supporting community-driven local political settlements through a fund for civilian stabilisation.

CONCLUSIONS

This review of Denmark's cooperation approaches in its 'poor, fragile' priority countries indicates that the profiles of cooperation vary in relation to the problem complexes that these countries face. The portfolio of Danish aid to the wider range of states that are considered fragile according to international definitions probably reflects an even broader array of themes and approaches for engagement than those outlined in this paper. This conclusion summarizes common themes emerging from the review to provide suggestions for further analysis of modalities of engagement.

The prominent role of multilateral approaches as a means of fostering a comprehensive approach for engagement and as a channel for aid delivery is evident across the countries reviewed here. The cases provide illustrations of the variety of forms that implementation through the multilateral system can take. Danish cooperation with Afghanistan, Palestine and Somalia relies extensively on multi-donor trust funds administered by the World Bank and the United Nations. In Niger, a delegated partnership with UNDP and support for UNFPA's country programme provide examples of funding to multilateral organizations allocated at the country level. Bilateral aid channelled through the multilateral system exists alongside other Danish multilateral contributions, such as core funding or support to global thematic initiatives.

The preferences for multilateral implementing partners can reflect numerous motivations, such as taking advantage of the scale, specialization or administrative and risk-management capacities of multilateral organizations or promoting effectiveness by pooling donor resources. As delegation to multilateral organizations may be justified in relation to aims such as simplifying management or enhancing flexibility in programming, assessments of their added value as delivery channels should take their perceived advantages over other forms of cooperation as a starting point. Future analysis could not only delve deeper into the Danish motivations for pursuing intermediated cooperation through multilateral partners, but also examine the consequences of these choices for the achievement of development goals in selected countries and their implications for aid management.

Country programmes retain a central role in outlining cooperation emphases in Danish priority countries. While additional funding streams are identified in country policy papers, the activities funded through or outside country programmes can differ with respect to factors such as their objectives, the stakeholders involved and the time horizon for implementation. A review of the characteristics of separate funding streams within selected priority countries can provide insights into the value added of the different approaches and whether the coherence or complementarity of different bilateral funding streams should be examined in depth.

The review of references to conflict prevention activities in the six priority countries suggests that conflict prevention receives limited emphasis as an objective in country policy papers and country programme documents. However, many engagements can be interpreted as contributing to conflict prevention, either by addressing underlying drivers of conflict or more proximate drivers of conflict. Conceptual work to distinguish conflict prevention activities from other forms of engagement in fragile settings or to explain how conflict prevention thinking is integrated into programming could provide a basis for making the commitment to conflict prevention in Danish development cooperation more transparent and enable a review of approaches across fragile settings.

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