



MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE g7+



"Urgent action is required to reduce poverty, deter conflict and provide better conditions for our people" g7+ Statement, 9 April 2010, Dili

Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Timor-Leste, Togo, Yemen

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Foreword by the Chair of the g7+

It is a great honour to introduce this report that tells the story of the emergence of the g7+ the world's only grouping of Countries affected by conflict and fragility, that I have had the privilege of chairing since June 2014. I have assumed my role as Chair following in the footsteps of my two predecessors who were key architects of the g7+, H.E. Olivier Kamitatu, Planning Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and H.E. Emilia Pires, former Minister of Finance of Timor-Leste.

Telling the story of the emergence of the g7+ in our own words is important for two reasons. First, it helps to build the institutional memory of our group. It is a reminder of the challenges that led us to join together and the vision that we set out to achieve. As the g7+ grows, new members join and those who represent us change; it is vital that we have a record of where we came from and where we plan to go.

But telling our story is also important because the very act of doing so represents what we stand for. We are writing our own history. As the g7+ has grown and become stronger, more is written about us by our partners and external observers and we welcome their engagement. However, we are also keen to ensure that we have a hand in documenting the story of the g7+.

I hope you enjoy this remarkable account of the rise of g7+ as a group connected by voluntarism, cooperation and solidarity in our fight to become resilient.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Member Countries Of The G7+	i
Foreword By The Chair Of The G7+	ii
Contents	iii
Introduction	iiii
The Origins Of The G7+	1
1. The problems with aid and MDGs	1-8
2. A group of g7+ emerges	9-16
3. The vision of the g7+	17
4. Negotiating the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States	18-32
Achievements To Date	33
1. New Deal Implementation	34-40
2. Developing as an intergovernmental forum	41
3. Making our voice heard	42-50
4. g7+ Fragile-to-Fragile cooperation	51-54
Challenges And Future Priorities	56-58
Concluding Remarks	59-62
Annex Gallery	63-69

A NEW DEAL for engagement in fragile states



g7+ CHARTER

The Governments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Togo and Yemen (the "Member States")



UNITED NATIONS **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**
 17 Goals to Transform Our World



INTRODUCTION

Since its official formation in April 2010, the g7+ Group of Countries in a fragile situation has gained global attention, particularly as the acuteness of the challenges and issues in making development work in countries affected by conflict and fragility have become more apparent. This includes, for instance, the fact that few of these countries have met the targets set by the Millennium Development Goals and that, in future, poverty will be concentrated in fragile settings (OECD 2013). Effective aid in fragile situations depends on donors delivering aid; it is recognized that delivering aid in this context cannot be business as usual nor one-size-fits-all approach.

Given growing attention to countries in fragile situation, the g7+ Secretariat was keen to document the story of the emergence of the g7+ Group in its early years – capturing the challenges “*we saw facing our countries and how we sought to come together to address them*” and its achievements. This presentation, therefore, sets out our own account of the emergence and formalisation of the g7+ as the global forum for countries affected by conflict and fragility. It has been more than five years since our group was formally established in April 2010 in Dili, Timor-Leste. Establishing and sustaining a credible grouping of conflict-affected and post-conflict countries which however are rich in extractive and their resources is a momentous achievement in its own right.

Up to now we have achieved a great deal in our more than five years and we are ourselves undergoing transition within our own countries, as well as within the g7+ Group (see Annex 2 for a timeline of the journey of g7+). We felt that it was important to reflect on the history of the g7+ to date and ensure that the institutional memory is not lost. Our initial vision continues to be a unifying force for those states struggling to overcome conflict or crisis and to move towards resilience and development for all.

This paper was prepared by the g7+ Secretariat. It draws on interviews with key architects of the g7+ (see annex 1), g7+ official declarations and statements, the minutes of g7+ meetings, speeches and articles by g7+ representatives, as well as the wider emerging literature on the g7+. Drafting conducted by Lisa Denney (Overseas Development Institute) and finalization of the document by Felicia Carvalho (g7+ Secretariat).

THE ORIGINS OF THE g7+

1. The problems with aid and the MDGs

1.4 billion people live in countries in a fragile situation – that is one out of every five people on the planet. Of these, one third live on less than USD 1.25 per day. Countries in a fragile situation lag approximately 40-60 percent behind other low-income countries in progress against the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Locke and Wyeth 2012: 1) and by 2030, around two thirds of global extreme poverty is expected to be concentrated in fragile states (Greenhill et al. 2015). In many countries that are in a fragile situation, levels of international support pale in comparison to the scale of the problems faced, resulting in ‘aid orphans’. In other similar countries, challenges persist despite significant international and domestic investment and the problem is how aid is delivered, rather than its overall levels. As Vanessa Wyeth (2012: 1) notes:

Critics have pointed to persistent shortcomings in the way that international assistance is delivered, particularly in problems of will and attention, lack of engagement with national stakeholders, aversion to risk, inflexible and cumbersome financing mechanisms, opaque decisionmaking processes, lack of country ownership, and a distressing lack of coherence and coordination among international actors. The potential for donor assistance to have the unintended effect of undermining, rather than bolstering, state capacity and legitimacy is now widely recognised.

Our countries have experienced – and in many cases continue to experience – these problems with aid first hand. These are not academic matters of aid effectiveness to us – they are matters of life and death. A review by the Norwegian Government on aid to Timor-Leste, for instance, revealed that USD 8.2 billion had been spent on aid and peacekeeping between 1999 and 2006. But what had it delivered? Poverty had doubled; in some regions one out of every two Timorese lived below the poverty line. Roads were impassable, most of the country had no electricity, there were no pensions to support the most disadvantaged, and many of the hospitals and schools were still in ruins (Pires 2012).

While this money was spent on Timor-Leste, it was often not spent in Timor-Leste (da Costa 2015: 6). Our own experience shows that aid often gets tied up in foreign controlled programs, with most of the funds finding their way back to the donor nations with limited benefit to the people of recipient countries in a fragile situation. As the former Prime Minister of Timor-Leste and Eminent Person of the g7+ H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao explains:

[I]t has been our experience that aid delivery can be inflexible and process heavy; resulting in funds being spent in the wrong places and not able to be used to prevent emerging conflict that threatens the State. We have also had to deal with development “experts” seeking to impose their supply driven or template solutions with little regard for our culture, our context and the reality of our country (Gusmão 2011).

The incentives of donor organisations are often skewed in such a way that actually undermine, rather than support, a country’s development. For instance, donor projects set up to strengthen the capacity of our government institutions are often oriented towards the success of the project, rather than the success of the institution. This means that capacity building is effectively undermined.



“experience from many of our countries is that all too often aid is managed in a way that has by passed our own systems”

H.E. Salva Kiir, President of South Sudan



“I would go into meetings with donors, be shown a PowerPoint of the project that was supposed to help me reform the ministry....Then I felt like a rubber stamp.”

Madame Emilia Pires (g7+ Special Envoy)



“aid must not suffocate ... national and local initiatives but free them.”

H.E. Laurent Lamothe, former Prime Minister of Haiti

Also, there is a lack of efforts by donors to harmonize their aid and align it with country priorities. What is more, as H.E. Salva Kiir, President of South Sudan notes: *“experience from many of our countries is that all too often aid is managed in a way that has by passed our own systems. By using parallel structures, aid has undermined rather than strengthened our governance structures”*(2011).

Some of the problems are summed up by the former Minister of Finance of Timor-Leste, Former Chair of + and g7+ Special Envoy:

“I recall at the beginning of my mandate ... when I attended a meeting, the presentation would start with the project first and at the end, you would see a mention of the Ministry of Finance. The project managers begged me to chair the meeting so they could show to the donors that there was ownership. Then I felt like a rubber stamp. I was spending days struggling on how I was supposed to reform the ministry and time talking intensively to Timorese staff on the importance of putting the ministry first, explaining the role of the institution in the building of our nation and how the whole thing would affect all our lives, our children and future generations if we didn't do the right thing. Then I would go into meetings with donors, be shown a PowerPoint of the project that was supposed to help me reform the ministry, where the first twenty slides were about the project and what the international advisors would be doing and if lucky the last slide would be on the Ministry. It was like living in two different worlds”. (Pires 2012).

So while large amounts of aid are reported by the donors, it often does not benefit the citizens of recipient countries themselves, nor results in the urgently needed strengthening of our institutional capacities. As H.E. Laurent Lamothe, former Prime Minister of Haiti notes, ‘aid must not suffocate ... national and local initiatives but free them’ (quoted in Haiti Libre 2012).

Yet when aid programs fail to deliver the transformational aims they set out to, the blame for this failure is often located not with the donor but with countries themselves (Gusmão 2011).

This stems from the measurements by which we are judged that emerge not from our own situation – what

the priorities are and what is realistic in our context – but from internationally imposed standards and benchmarks, as portrayed in the Millennium Development Goals. These goals were not priorities that fitted the situation of many countries affected by conflict, and yet we have been measured against these standards and we were so often shown to be failing. There was no strong representation from countries in a fragile situation in the negotiation of the MDGs framework to ensure the priorities were not using a one-size fits all approach.

They said, “Ok, the children are not being educated. The children are stunted. The infant mortality is high, etc.” We said, “How can the children be educated if we have instability? There is no security, so which parent is going to allow the children to go to school? Which farmer is going to grow vegetables?” (Pires cited in Wyeth 2012).



“Fourteen years ago state-building was not considered to be a crucial issue of world interest..”

H.E. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai,
President of Afghanistan

In Afghanistan USD 240 billion worth of infrastructure was lost due to war and social and political unrest between 1987 and 2001 (Ghani and Lockhart 2008: 86). As the President of Afghanistan H.E. Ashraf Ghani asserts “Let us begin with a statement of the problem. Global stability rests in the hands of states under threat. Fourteen years ago state-building was not considered to be a crucial issue of world interest. Today the question of how to build stable, successful states is the pre-eminent question of our time. Building states and building peace are now goals shared by the entire world.” (Ghani, 2016).



“many crisis have weakened the economy, destroyed basic social infrastructure...”

H.E. Florence Limbo, former
Minister of Economy, Planning
Cooperation and Development of
Central African Republic

In the Central African Republic ‘many years of crisis have weakened the economy, destroyed basic social infrastructure and resulted in the overwhelming rise in internally displaced people’ (H.E. Florence Limbio, former Minister of Economy, Planning Cooperation and Development, quoted in g7+ 2014).

In Timor-Leste, education goals were off-track because for 24 years the people had been focused on fighting for independence and suffering the impact of colonization which affected the languages (Portuguese and Bahasa Indonesia) and the overall level of education. When she took over as the Minister of Finance of Timor-Leste in 2007, Emilia Pires ‘inherited a ministry where 60% had 3rd grade level math skills’ (Foreign Policy 2012: 6). Upon taking office she recalls:

There were no handover documents. No briefing on how our policies could be implemented, or the status of the programs of the previous Government. I had a blank computer and no Internet access. There was one qualified Timorese accountant in the Department of Finance (Pires 2012).

In such situations, achieving progress against the MDGs – the same goals that non-conflict countries are measured against – is unrealistic in the extreme. Such measures set countries in fragile situations up to fail. The MDGs cannot be built without foundations. As the g7+ Special Envoy explains:

We are not meeting [the MDGs], not because we didn't want to meet [them], not because we didn't work hard enough to meet [them], but because there were some prerequisite goals that needed to be met before we could get to the MDGs. (Pires cited in Wyeth 2012).

As Deputy General Secretary of g7+ Secretariat, Mr. Habib Ur Rehman Mayar notes “Achieving the MDGs and their successors in fragile situations seems impossible without establishing basic state institutions which can sustain these global goals. The relevance of the global development goals for countries affected by conflict and fragility has never been called into question. However, it is more about how to realize these goals in countries where core state institutions are in a fragile situation (I use the term “fragile” to imply a situation where the core state institutions need more care and are to be supported, not ignored). The logic of any global development agenda should be to enable these state institutions to stand independently and enable them to sustain the development goals”. (Mayar, 2012).

In the MDG framework, conflict-affected countries were not being recognised or rewarded for trying to meet these prerequisite goals and thus we appeared to be performing poorly. And yet, within our own



“We could not achieve the MDGs unless we first achieved peace in our own countries”

Former Prime Minister of Timor-Leste and Eminent Person to g7+, H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao

countries, we were making genuine progress in achieving those indicators. Countries like Sierra Leone and Liberia were reforming their security sectors to help build security in their newly post-conflict countries. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, stability was the priority, especially in the East, where huge numbers of refugees had to be accommodated, including migrating cattle herders from neighbouring countries due to the effects of climate change (interview with former Minister Kamitatu). And in Togo the government was working to rebuild democratic foundations, the deterioration of which had led to donors cutting aid between 1994 and 2005, severely limiting development prospects (Ahoomey-Zunu, 2014).

These and other achievements might not have shown up directly in international measurements but they represented important steps away from conflict and fragility in our own countries. And these achievements often were not recognized in the donors’ reports. These were the necessary building

blocks to get to a position where the MDGs were achievable; *“We could not achieve the MDGs unless we first achieved peace in our own countries” (Gusmao 2014).*

When a country is in conflict it is difficult to focus on development because its main focus is to solve its problems and find solutions to bring peace back. Countries affected by conflict and fragility needed new goals, tailored to our needs and realities and that would actually be a help, rather than a hindrance, in providing interim steps to work our way out of fragility (Foreign Policy 2012: 2). And donor needed to work with us to make sure that we did not go back to a situation of crisis.



“Achieving the MDGs and their successors in fragile situations seems impossible without establishing basic state institutions”

Mr. Habib Urrehman Mayar,
Deputy General Secretary of g7+ Secretariat



“It is imperative that we create a framework that embeds just and lasting peace”

H.E. Kaifalah Marah, Chair of g7+ and Minister of Finance and Economic Development of Sierra Leone



“Nothing about us without us”
Former Minister of Finance from South Sudan, H.E. Kosti Manibe



“The central impediments to progress were our young institutions, challenged by capacity constraints and maturity, and our lack of peace.”

Dr. Helder da Costa, General Secretary of g7+ Secretariat

As the Chair of the g7+, H.E. Kaifalah Marah, Minister of Finance and Economic Development of Sierra Leone notes:

We must ensure that the next generation, those born in 2015, are not caught up in the same problems as this generation. To do this, it is imperative that we create a framework that embeds just and lasting peace, as well as justice and security, as goals in themselves, since these are the key enablers to other dimensions of development (Marah 2013).

The g7+ Special Envoy said, ‘Conflict states just need someone to give them a chance. Nobody wants to be a failure’ (in Foreign Policy 2012: 6).

We also needed time and space to develop our own plans that donors could align their support to, rather than imposing their own plans, even when these were well intentioned. This was summed up best by the former Minister of Finance from South Sudan, H.E. Kosti Manibe, who proclaimed **‘nothing about us without us’**.

Even though it will take us time to develop these plans, and this can be slow and frustrating for our partners, it is essential to have genuine ownership (da Costa 2015: 11). As the former Prime Minister of Timor-Leste asserts **‘We did not fight for our independence just to lose ownership of our development’** (Gusmão 2011).

As General Secretary of the g7+ Secretariat, Dr. Helder da Costa, notes, “It emerged clearly in our ongoing discussions that the central impediments to progress were our young institutions, challenged by capacity constraints and maturity, and our lack of peace. Examples were plentiful in the stories of our g7+ countries’ experiences. For years we had been asking: ‘How can we achieve universal primary education [MDG 2] when our schools have been burnt down and our teachers have been scattered’; ‘How can we improve maternal health [MDG 5] if state institutions are so weak that vital services cannot be delivered?’; ‘How can we end poverty [MDG 1] if our governments don’t have the ability to execute the most basic functions?’; and ‘How can we strive for global partnerships [MDG 8] if our in-country partners don’t even listen to us?’ (da Costa cited in 2013).

Examples of Challenges Faced by Some g7+ Member Countries

Some member countries spoke to us about the problems with aid in their country that led to the need for a 'New Deal'.

Afghanistan:

Afghanistan's aid problems are some what unique compared to other g7+ countries, especially given the scale and nature of international community engagement. A high level of overall aid dependence continues to exist, particularly in the security sector.

Aid has been distributed unequally between and within provinces, sometimes leading to tensions between residents.

"The aid system is the problem. Current practices make state fragmentation inevitable. And while there have been some reforms over the past decades, the promises made in Paris, Seoul, Accra, Delhi, and elsewhere are not yet backed up by sufficient credible actions. Too many aid practices continue to prevent reformist leaders from negotiating strategy, consolidating their budget, and managing their economy in self-reliant ways. Too often aid partnerships mean that our ministries become speckled with specially created project units that magically appear and never go away. Our ministries and our civil society groups lose their talent to high-paying consultancies that are then sent back to build the capacity that they just drained away. Our budgets become assemblages of donor projects that cannot be restructured or re-positioned to tackle new needs. (President Ghani's speech, g7+ Ministerial Meeting Kbul, 2016)".

Large donor engagement since 2001 has created parallel systems that draw talent away from civil service and the private sector, particularly due to inflated salaries that are donor-dependent and unsustainable.

Aid levels have fluctuated considerably over the past 15 years with little predictability. This undermines the development of proper planning processes within government institutions. Afghanistan has made steady progress with many of the MDG indicators (maternal and child health, literacy, etc.) from very low levels in 2001. However, the

sustainability of many of these efforts is still in question as donor engagement is decreasing and domestic revenue is not yet high enough to sustain the infrastructure needed to maintain these gains and continue progress. Furthermore, the growing conflict across the country is putting many of the gains over the last 15 years at risk.

Government has not always been properly consulted in planning of donor projects or provided with evaluations, contributing to additional duplication and waste.

Burundi:

After 10 years of civil war until 2000 and the Arusha agreement on 28 August 2000, the International community established a Strategy of Recovery to fight poverty with paying attention only to economic growth neglecting peace and security. Consequently, in parallel the government put in place a Strategic Plan of Construction of the Peace with collaboration of the UN but there was no coordination between Government and Donors with overlapping programs and financial issues.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC):

In the late 1990s, the DRC was a country ravaged by armed conflict, especially in its eastern part. One of the most important goals was the construction of peace and the strengthening of institutions. Donor interventions were mostly limited to emergencies and their projects did not allow our country to get out of its fragile situation.

Guinea:

Since independence a very turbulent period brought violence and instability to the country, leading to a great crisis of confidence.

In 2010 under very delicate circumstances, an election was held and resulted in the election of a democratic civilian Professor Conde. At present, efforts are being made to restore the foundations of a democratic state and the peace pledges of harmonious development.

The New Deal is par excellence a paradigm that will restore confidence and stimulate growth and build a peaceful society oriented towards development.

Liberia:

The aid architecture in Liberia was very fragmented. Coming out of a protracted violent civil crisis, Liberia enjoyed the goodwill of the international community eager to support a transition to peace and stability.

Several bilateral and multilateral donors became very active in Liberia. However, a review of the aid environment revealed serious fragmentation and a lack of coordination amongst donors as well as between donors and the government. As a result of this fragmentation and weak coordination, donors got involved in directly implementing projects across the country. In many instances the decisions regarding program development and project selection were not done in consultation with the government or local actors. This situation presented some unique challenges for the government.

Capacity of the state to deliver some critical services was relatively low coming out of conflict which destroyed not only infrastructure but also human capital. Adhoc donor interventions in the country undermined the legitimacy of the state with its citizens. Many people saw donor interventions not as support to the government but rather as an alternative to the government.

Liberia was in the middle of a violent civil war when the MDGs were formulated. Coming out of the war, the MDGs were not the immediate priority of the government. Government had to focus on rebuilding peace, fostering reconciliation, ensuring security and reinstating the rule of law. Infrastructure and basic services were necessary to rebuild citizen's trust in

the state to deliver much needed services. Transition from fragility to resilience was the most important priority for the government of Liberia. Amidst the myriad of challenges, donor programming and support driven and influenced by the MDGs fell short of meeting Liberia's needs. The government, realizing this disconnect, played an active role in driving the development of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States to draw attention to the peculiarities of transition from conflict and fragility to resilience. The "Monrovia Roadmap" which led to the New Deal in Busan, 2011 was adapted at a conference hosted in Monrovia, Liberia.

Sierra Leone:

During the immediate post war period in Sierra Leone, the existence of parallel aid coordination and institutions to implement development projects/ programmes was evident. This undermined government's ownership and led to some donors pursuing their own agendas, often in the absence of clear national strategies against which to align.

Sierra Leone was unable to implement the Paris Declaration because our context compared with countries that were stable was completely different. For instance we did not have proper public financial management systems in place in the immediate post war period to attract donors to use our national systems. In the immediate post war situation, accountability was mainly on the side of government and less on partners, which in some instances created confusing scenarios.

Sierra Leone was still at war when the MDGs were adopted in 2000. The conflict in Sierra Leone only ended in 2002, two years after the adoption of the MDGs.

South Sudan:

South Sudan is a country working to escape conflict. The New Deal recognises that aid needs to support a sustainable transition out of fragility before development can take place. Because this is a break from the normal donor practice, it is important to have an internationally recognised tool for the government to focus donor attention on the PSGs before the MDGs and SDGs.

These experiences with aid in our own countries led us to the conclusion that development assistance to countries affected by conflict and fragility must change. It must become based on a genuine partnership between governments—as the elected representatives of their people—and development partners, in support of country-led and owned plans. We witness the problems in our countries, and the problems with aid in addressing them, on a daily basis. We knew something had to change if we were to get our countries out of fragility and yet – at the time many of us were emerging from conflict – we were experiencing these problems alone. We had yet to find a shared forum for countries in fragile situation to discuss these concerns and put forward a new agenda.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000-2015



2. A group of g7+ emerges

Aid effectiveness was already receiving global attention through the High Level Forums (HLF) that started in Rome 2002 and picked up greater momentum following the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness at the Second High Level Forum in 2005. Yet, as the General Secretary of the g7+ Helder da Costa explains, the Paris principles were ‘all well and good, however for countries ... coming out of contexts of conflict, the ability of our governments to assert themselves and take the lead when determining how aid is allocated and accounted for within their borders often proves impossible’ (2015: 3-4). The particular development challenges faced by, and different approaches to aid required in, countries in a fragile situation was also being increasingly recognised in aid effectiveness debates, with books like Paul Collier’s *The Bottom Billion* published in 2007 and many donors setting up fragility units.

Step 1 - Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States & Situations

It was this recognition that led to the Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations in May 2007 (see box 1).

Box 1: Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States & Situations



The image shows the cover of a report titled 'PRINCIPLES FOR GOOD INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT IN FRAGILE STATES & SITUATIONS'. The cover features a close-up photograph of a compass with a purple and white color scheme. The text is overlaid on the right side of the compass image.

1. Take context as the starting point
2. Ensure all activities do no harm
3. Focus on state building as the central objective
4. Prioritise prevention
5. Recognise the links between political, security and development objectives
6. Promote non-discrimination as a basis for inclusive and stable societies
7. Align with local priorities in different ways and in different contexts
8. Agree on practical co-ordination mechanisms between international actors
9. Act fast... but stay engaged long enough to give success a chance
10. Avoid pockets of exclusion (“aid orphans”) (OECD 2007)

However, as the International Peace Institute noted:

Despite the good thinking that underpinned them, the Fragile States Principles were created by donors, for donors. Much like the Washington Consensus which governed development policy in the 1980s, the early discourse on aid effectiveness largely consisted of outsiders diagnosing the problem, prescribing the solution, and assuming responsibility for carrying out the treatment. (2012: 2).

Step 2 – Round Table 7

The Fragile States Principles were taken further by ‘Round Table 7’ on Conflict and Fragility co-chaired by France and DRC. The results of the Round Table 7 Discussion was presented at the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness to take place in Accra in September 2008. A meeting was convened in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in June 2008 to discuss issues of conflict and fragility and how they should be dealt with in Accra. Co-chaired by DRC and France, Round Table 7 played an important role in formulating the idea of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS), which went on to be officially established at the Accra HLF. The ‘Kinshasa Statement’ coming out of the DRC meeting emphasised the importance of peacebuilding and statebuilding and the need for country-owned development plans. However, noting that full ownership could be challenging in contexts of fragility and conflict, ‘government leadership over priorities and policy direction’ was recognised as ‘an important first step towards ownership’ (Kinshasa Statement 2008: 1). Importantly, the Kinshasa Statement called for the need to have an international dialogue between countries in fragile situations and development partners on peacebuilding and statebuilding. Following the plenary session, seven countries were identified to monitor the ten OECD Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States.

Step 3 – Accra Agenda for Action

As a result, the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) paragraph 21 points (b) and (c), called for the establishment of an International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding and asked for fragile countries to volunteer to undertake monitoring. It was on the basis of this meeting, attended by Helder da Costa from Timor-Leste, that Timor’s then-Minister of Finance, H.E. Emilia Pires, agreed to attend the 3rd High Level Forum Meeting.

In the words of the General Secretary of the g7+ Secretariat, Helder da Costa, ‘If it weren’t for Accra we would never have thought of the g7+’ (during an interview in 2015). The Third HLF was a watershed moment. Seven countries volunteered to monitor

the implementation of the Fragile States Principles – Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Cote d’Ivoire, DRC, Haiti, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste.

For the first time, our countries had the opportunity to speak in the same forum as the decision makers of the donor organisations that were supporting us. This opportunity was not missed to speak at the same level as donors. Following a session in which various multilateral donors spoke about their efforts to simplify procurement processes and streamline



“If it weren’t for Accra we would never have thought of the g7+”

General Secretary of the g7+ Secretariat,
Dr. Helder da Costa

compliance procedures, the Minister of Finance from Timor-Leste took the floor, announcing this ‘was music to her ears’ and proceeded to explain her daily experience as a Finance Minister in a country in fragile situation, trying to build an institution while also being pulled in different directions by every donor.

She asked, simply, if the World Bank President had read his own guidelines, because in her experience, they were neither simple, nor fast to implement. The question was met with applause by other aid recipients in the room. **The speech acted as a galvanising force and opened up a more frank conversation about the problems with aid amongst countries affected by conflict and fragility.** Through this greater and more frank engagement with countries in fragile situations at Accra, our countries called for a more equal voice vis-à-vis our development partners in establishing Peacebuilding and Statebuilding priorities (Accra Agenda for Action, see box 2).

¹The IDPS was established in 2008 as the first forum for political dialogue to bring together conflict-affected and fragile countries, international partners and civil society to catalyse successful transitions from conflict and fragility. Funded by the OECD in Paris.

Box 2: Accra Agenda for Action

“At the country level, donors and developing countries will work and agree on a set of realistic peacebuilding and state-building objectives that address the root causes of conflict and fragility and help to ensure the protection and participation of women. This process will be informed by an international dialogue between partners and donors on these objectives as prerequisites for development.” (OECD 2008)



Step 4 – Paris meeting

With an agenda clearly set, we next met in Paris in December 2008 with development partners to discuss the nature of this new dialogue. The French Foreign Ministry, hosting the meeting, suggested that countries in fragile situations and development partners both meet separately before the joint meeting to have a chance to discuss shared concerns. This proved a critical moment of parity between conflict affected countries and development partners. Fourteen recipient countries were present, represented by ministers and representatives at this first closed door meeting. One by one, each Minister spoke about how well things were going in their country and how progress was being made with the support of donors. When it was the Minister from Timor-Leste’s turn to speak, she asked, why, if everything was going so well, why were our countries still fragile? She set out the problems of donor fragmentation and weak alignment to government plans, the lack of national capacity and the abundance of natural resource wealth on which the countries were not able to capitalise. When the Minister finished, others asked if they could speak again, and a more frank discussion emerged about their shared challenges.

We felt meeting together in this way was such a useful exercise that we agreed to continue to meet as a small group on the sidelines of other events. The g7+ Special Envoy recounts:

We found out that we had so many things in common, and when we never knew each other – we were so different in history, geography, religion, you name it, languages – we thought it was very interesting that we have very similar challenges. And so we wanted to continue that. (Pires cited in Wyeth 2012).

We joked that with the G7 (the Group of 7) having become the G8, the G7 name was now available; we were also seven because of the number of countries volunteering to monitor the Fragile States Principles. However, because we were small and fragile we opted for the ‘(g) 7’ – or the ‘little g7’.

Step 5 –Dili International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (Dili Declaration) and the establishment of the g7+

Plans set out at the Paris meeting for the first International Dialogue meeting to take place in the Central African Republic proved impossible, and in mid-2009 Timor-Leste stepped in with an offer to host the first meeting in April 2010. We must remember that Timor-Leste had experienced a major crisis in 2006-2008, making it more admirable to host the first International Convention of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding. Over a matter of a few months, Dili turned the old market place into a convention centre to host the event and even chartered a plane from Singapore to get all the delegates in the one place on time, under the sarcastic eyes of donors. The convention was held with international standards.

Prior to the IDPS meeting, the g7+ held a 2-day closed-door meeting. It was at this meeting that the ‘+’ was added to the ‘g7’, in recognition of the other members who wanted to join.

Up until this time, the informal ‘g7’ grouping had been chaired by H.E. Olivier Kamitatu, Minister of Planning of DRC, given his role as co-chair of both Round Table 7 and the International Dialogue. At this meeting, however, Minister Kamitatu handed the role of Chair to Minister Pires, with the endorsement of the membership.

The result of this first g7+ meeting was the ‘g7+ Statement’, which became an annex to the Dili Declaration agreed by the IDPS. It formally stated the intention of the ten founding members to continue meeting to share experiences, learn from each other and promote a stronger voice for countries in fragile situations. It highlighted four priority areas these countries should focus on, and which development partners should support and align to:

1. Governance;
2. Economic development;
3. Human and social development; and
4. Security.



As the newly appointed Chair of the g7+ articulated: ‘We wanted to end the monologue spoken at us, and promote a dialogue spoken with us’ (Pires 2012).

It was agreed by all delegates that the Secretariat for the g7+ should be established in Dili, Timor-Leste.







THE DILI CONSENSUS

PREAMBLE

The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste hosted government and civil society representatives from the g7+ group of fragile states, Pacific island countries and the group of Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOP), at the Dili International Conference on the post-2015 development agenda on 26-28 February 2013. The theme of the conference was 'Development for all: Stop conflict, build states and eradicate poverty.' Its purpose was to reach a broad consensus on how the specific development challenges faced by fragile and conflict-affected states should shape the post-2015 global development framework.

We came together in a spirit of mutual learning, and to find common ground and build solidarity. Together we have a vast reservoir of experience and a powerful voice. We know that many of us will not achieve most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We know that the well-being of our people depends upon the achievement of outcomes that were not adequately reflected in the MDGs, most notably in the areas of peace and justice and climate change. We know that we must shape our collective future, and that where factors impeding development are beyond our control we must speak with one voice in articulating our expectations of the global community.

TOWARDS A NEW DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

We are in agreement that the MDGs have helped to focus our development efforts, facilitate dialogue and make our development strategies more results-oriented. However, they do not recognise the fundamental barriers that we face. Most importantly, conflict and fragility are not reflected in the MDGs, and have been fundamental obstacles to their achievement in our countries.

We believe the post-2015 development agenda must reflect the development challenges of all groups of countries, and be defined through inclusive country-led consultative processes. We underscore the importance of participatory national consultations and self-assessments as the basis for defining our national development priorities, and acknowledge the critical role of political leadership and sustained political commitment in realising our goals.

We support the pursuit of universal aspirational goals at the global level. At the same time, we emphasise that national ownership of the development agenda is imperative. Our national development frameworks must reflect our national priorities and circumstances. They should be aligned with, but not subordinate to, global goals.

While our specific needs and priorities may differ, we all envision better lives for our people, based upon human security. The post-2015 global development framework must seek to enhance the social contract by promoting integrated action in four major areas not adequately treated in the MDGs: inclusive economic growth, state effectiveness, peace and justice, and climate change and environmental management. Existing goals in relation to health, education, women's empowerment and global partnerships should remain, with refinements.

We believe that inclusive economic growth requires policies that are pro-jobs and pro-poor. It requires investments in soft and hard economic infrastructure that facilitate private sector development, regional integration and global connectivity. It requires that we receive fair and sustainable returns from our natural resources including oceans, which will help us finance the provision of basic social services to our people. With these things in place, and conducive policy and regulatory environments, trade and investment rather than aid should increasingly drive our development. Given the links

Step 6 – The g7+ Secretariat

Initially, the g7+ and the Chair were supported by a small set of staff from within Timor-Leste's National Department of Aid Effectiveness (NDAE) which is now called Development Partnership Management Unit at the Ministry of Finance of Timor-Leste, who retained other responsibilities related to aid coordination and were seconded from other institutions.

It became a separate entity hosted by the Ministry of Finance in February 2014. Since that date the Secretariat has grown and flourished as an independent decision maker, away from external support with strong in-house expertise from g7+ countries.

The core team since the establishment of the g7+ Secretariat in their own words about working in the g7+ Secretariat (interviewed 2015):



"The g7+ has been shaping the policies which help us transition towards resilience. The journey is never ending, we will always be part of this".
Helder da Costa, General Secretary (2008 – present)

"When differences in views among people become a source of antagonising each other, the societies fall in conflict; we need to promote the habit of dialogue to use those differences to build our societies. That is what g7+ is all about".
Habib Mayar, Deputy General Secretary (2012-present)



"The g7+ is about giving importance to having a voice and not fearing to speak out. We are trying to change the narrative".
Felicia Carvalho, New Deal Coordinator (2010-present)



"We are working on the common good. At global level, for a country in a fragile situation is about finding solutions and willingness to change"
Mena Savio, Finance Manager (2008-present)

"g7+ countries have influence in international meetings and many people talk about the g7+"
Leigh Mitchell, Program Officer (2009-2012)



3. The vision of the g7+

Our vision was to get our countries out of fragility towards resilience by managing our own natural resources effectively in order to become prosperous and not aid dependent. The g7+ Special Envoy explains the difficulties encountered in Timor-Leste:

I remember one, very small example: The prime minister, in the middle of so many priorities, he wanted to do a garden – to fix up the garden. And he ordered to put in ... swings for little kids. And we thought: “Prime Minister, we’ve got things to do, we’ve got no electricity, we’ve got no roads, and you want a garden for the little children?” And he goes, “Yes, we need for the next generation to be brought up in a normal life. They need to know that there are swings to play with, there are gardens that you go to, that mothers and children can smell the roses and stuff like that – that is normal life.” And when the garden was ready, you should have seen – you know, people queue up for shops, etc. in other countries – children were queuing up to take a chance on the swings. They cried, they stayed until midnight, just to have the swings. And that’s when I thought, this is normalisation. (Pires cited in Wyeth 2012).

How do we get out of fragility? First of all we need peace, as a foundation on which all else gets built. Second, we need a capable state that can deliver services for our people. It is the elected leaders of our countries who are responsible for delivering this. Last but not least, we need mutual trust between us and our partners to ensure the country does not go back to conflict. Donors and our development partners can, of course, play an important supporting role in this process, but ultimately they are not accountable to our public – our governments are. It is therefore our governments that should be in the driving seat and making decisions about the path out of fragility and towards resilience. It is this, a country-owned and country-led transition from fragility to resilience, from conflict to peace, that is the overarching vision of the g7+.

A successful g7+ will see the disappearance of ALL countries affected by conflict and fragility.

4. g7+ Membership

The g7+ group has become increasingly institutionalised over time with an independent g7+ Secretariat established in Dili, Timor-Leste.

The membership of g7+ is quite unique as it based on voluntarism, solidarity and cooperation from the beginning.

• Voluntarism

Since April 2010, the g7+ has grown in size and influence. As of 2016, it has 20 members (see box 3). Membership is entirely voluntary. Both Nepal and Ethiopia were part of g7+ group until 2011 when they voluntarily decided not to be part of the family.

Box 3: Members of the g7+



Joining the g7+ starts with governments expressing their interest to the g7+ through an official request to the Chair or Secretariat, and often attending meetings first as observers. Then the application is accepted on a no-objections basis at the annual Ministerial meeting. The members have volunteered because they believe that solidarity will enable them to move out of fragility towards resilience.

• Solidarity

Our solidarity derives from a shared recognition of our fragility, and a belief that by learning from, supporting and cooperating with one another, and by improving the ways in which aid is delivered in our countries, we can become resilient. As the former Prime Minister of Timor-Leste Gusmao explains:

'If we stand alone we have no voice and can be ignored, but together we can speak with legitimacy and credibility' (2014).



"If we stand alone we have no voice and can be ignored, but together we can speak with legitimacy and credibility."



"The leadership by the g7+ countries is uncontested. We have a new voice and a new commitment to work collectively"

President of Liberia, H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

Solidarity does not just imply among ourselves but with our partners, as President of Liberia, H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has stated:

'The leadership by the g7+ countries is uncontested. We have in it a new voice and a new commitment to work collectively, as a group, and individually, as empowered leaders and countries, to build peaceful and stable futures for our people ... [A]s a consequence of this empowered leadership, we all agree that the time is ripe for a new partnership between our countries and our bilateral, regional, and multi-lateral partners, across the diplomatic, security and development communities.'

• Cooperation

The g7+ has also achieved greater cooperation and knowledge-sharing among member states themselves. This enabled us to understand better the situation others are facing in their country, and how best our fellow countries can help us in advocating for greater international assistance.

Overall, this voice allows us to credibly represent our combined populations of roughly 365 million people globally, which are among the poorest in the world.

The g7+ is a unique and important forum for its members, as can be seen by comments from some member countries:

Afghanistan: *It's a good way to share lessons learned in other countries and act as a global voice in changing the nature of development policy and engagement worldwide (Hamed, 2016).*

Burundi: *To share experiences with other conflict-affected countries, Burundi has never known peace yet due to socio-political difficulties.*

Democratic Republic of the Congo: *To join g7+ means to share experiences and learn from each other as well as make a plea to the international community to reform its way of engaging in post-conflict states.*

Guinea: *The g7+ is a prestigious international group that will provide solidarity with the Guinean position of fragility. It also carries the very high voice of its members like Guinea to force the donor community into aligning with national priorities so that a lasting and well monitored resilience would stimulate growth and harmonious development.*

Liberia: *The g7+ group is an important forum for Liberia. It provides the space for Liberia to discuss challenges unique to conflict affected states. It presents an environment for exchange of ideas between member states and serves as a major advocate with multilaterals for countries in fragile situations. As clearly demonstrated during the recent Ebola outbreak in West Africa, the g7+ is a family that Liberia can count on for support in difficult periods. Liberia is proud to be a part of the g7+ group.*

South Sudan: *By joining with the other voices of the g7+, South Sudan's needs as a country in a fragile situation are part of a strong and internationally supported framework. Once ideas become accepted by donor headquarters, the government can advocate for their use in South Sudan. Hopefully the g7+ can continue to incubate analysis and solutions that are tailored to the needs of countries affected by conflict and fragility and present them strongly to the global community.*

Sierra Leone: *As part of the g7+, Sierra Leone has contributed to collective advocacy of not only Sierra Leone but other countries affected by conflict and fragility, and how partners should engage in these countries to help them transition out of fragility. Sierra Leone has also benefitted from the peer to peer learning initiative of the g7+ known as the f2f cooperation. This was evident in the process of updating the Fragility Assessment in 2014 when colleagues from DRC and an advisor to the World Bank visited the country to assist in the process. During the Ebola outbreak as well, Sierra Leone benefitted from financial and other forms of assistance from the g7+ and the government of Timor-Leste.*



g7+ MINISTERIAL RETREAT

DRAFT AGENDA

Juba, Republic of South Sudan
18-19 October 2011

DAY 1

08.00 – 08.30 Participant arrival & registration

08.30 – 08.50 **Welcome remarks**

- H.E. Kosti Manibe, Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, Republic of South Sudan
- H.E. Emilia Pires, Minister of Finance, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste & Chair of the g7+

08.50 – 09.30 **Keynote addresses**

- H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, Prime Minister, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste
- H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit, President, Republic of South Sudan

09.30 – 09.45 Coffee break

09.45 – 10.00 **Update from the Chair** covering retreat objectives

- H.E. Emilia Pires, Minister of Finance & Chair of the g7+

10.00 – 11.00 *Tour de Table (closed meeting)* - ten minute intervention by each representative on major peacebuilding and statebuilding obstacles or on a success story

11.00 – 11.15 Break

11.15 – 12.45 *Tour de Table (cont'd) (closed meeting)*

12.45 – 13.45 Lunch

13.45 – 15.45 **Presentation: Policy Working Group
The Fragility Spectrum**

General Discussion based on country overviews, obstacles to peacebuilding and statebuilding with integration into draft Fragility Spectrum

15.45 – 16.00 Break

87+ Ministerial Meeting in Juba, South Sudan 18-19 October 2011



The Haiti Declaration

Port-au-Prince 14 November 2012



We the representatives of the g7+ participating in the Second g7+ Ministerial Retreat in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, are pleased to make this Haiti Declaration.

We confirm that during our meetings in Haiti, delegates have accepted the request of the Union of the Comoros to join our group. We welcome the Union of the Comoros into the g7+ family now numbering 18 nations.

We take this opportunity to unreservedly declare our solidarity as a group and to reaffirm our commitment to the collective efforts of advocacy in the international arena and ongoing peer-to-peer support amongst our member states. Together we recognise that the achievements of the past twelve months since the first Ministerial Retreat held in Juba, South Sudan, are a clear testimony to what we can achieve together with an effective and united voice.

We acknowledge the generosity and hospitality of the Government of the Republic of Haiti and pay tribute to the resilience and courage shown by the Haitian people in the face of adversity. The g7+ stands together in deep friendship with the Republic of Haiti. Each of our member nations are engaged in efforts to achieve the same outcomes; to build resilient States in order to provide better living conditions for the Peoples of our nations.

We recognise the contributions of the Prime Minister of Haiti, His Excellency Laurent Salvador Lamothe and the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, His Excellency Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, in this Second Ministerial Retreat and extend our appreciation to the Chair of the g7+ Her Excellency Emilia Pires.

In this Haiti Declaration the g7+ emphasises its' respect for the national sovereignty of it's members and the principle of country-owned and country-led transitions towards resilience and national development.

Whilst the g7+ is committed to promoting mutual transparency and trust in development partner relationships we remain respectfully aligned with other groupings who hold the principled position that aid should not be conditions based, and that developed countries must respect the sovereignty of developing countries, recognising national ownership of priorities, planning, policy and process.

The g7+ welcomes and appreciates emerging South-South cooperation as a compliment to North-South cooperation. We continue to respectfully urge developed countries to honour their ODA commitments.



The Origins Of The g7+
4. g7+ Membership





Lomé Communiqué

We, the Ministers and Delegates from the g7+ countries participating in the third g7+ Ministerial Meeting in Lomé, Togo, on the 29th and 30th of May 2014, are pleased to gather in the spirit of solidarity and cooperation that characterises our association.

We applaud the progress made in the implementation of the New Deal in several g7+ countries, and welcome the launch of the New Deal fragility assessments in Guinea-Bissau and Comoros.

We congratulate the people and government of Afghanistan and Guinea-Bissau for conducting successful elections.

At the same time we empathise with the people of the Central African Republic and South Sudan as they experience a period of crisis. We stand in solidarity with the government and people in those countries and commit our collective efforts to restore peace and resilience.

We welcome the Republic of Sao Tome and Principe and the Republic of Yemen as new members of the g7+ family.

We endorse the g7+ Charter and confirm Dili to be the headquarters of the g7+ Secretariat.

We announce H.E. Minister Kaifala Marah of Sierra Leone as the new g7+ Chair and H.E. Deputy Minister Alfred Metellus of Haiti as Deputy Chair.

We appoint the outgoing Chair H.E. Emilia Pires, as the g7+ Special Envoy and the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, as a member of the g7+ Advisory Board.

We reaffirm our commitment to the realization of the New Deal principles and call on our development partners to fulfil their commitment thereto.

We welcome the initiative of “Fragile to Fragile” (F to F) cooperation and encourage peer learning among member countries. We commit to explore ways in which the g7+ can increase awareness of emerging crises and tailor responses accordingly.

We endorse the 2013 Annual Report and the 2014/15 Work Plan.

We strongly support the inclusion of a separate goal on Peaceful Societies and Effective Institutions, in the Post-2015 Development Framework.

We conclude our meetings in Lomé, Togo, with deep appreciation to the Government of Togo for generously hosting this third g7+ Ministerial meeting.

We look forward to the next Ministerial meeting in Afghanistan.

Lomé, Togo.

30th May 2014.

g7+ Ministerial Meeting in Lome,Togo, 29-30 May 2014





Kabul Communiqué

We, the Ministers and Delegates from the g7+ countries, met during the 4th g7+ Ministerial Meeting in Kabul, Afghanistan, on the 23rd and 24th of March 2016.

We applaud the progress made by all countries towards the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals. We congratulate the people and governments of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in overcoming the Ebola crisis of 2015. We congratulate the Central African Republic (CAR) and Togo for their successful elections and we look forward to Somalia's upcoming electoral process.

Despite progress, numerous challenges are faced by member countries. We stand in solidarity with the people of Burundi and reaffirm our commitment to see stability re-established. We stand in solidarity with the people of Yemen and support the ongoing peace process. We recognize the signing of a peace agreement in South Sudan and encourage its implementation. Furthermore, we support Afghanistan's call for a result-oriented regional cooperation to ensure the success of the Afghan peace process and we support Timor-Leste's call for recognition of its legitimate rights on border delimitations, under international law.

We reiterate our resolve to reconciliation and peace as cornerstones for resilience and support political dialogue to that end. We commit to mobilizing influential personalities from within the g7+ to help in promoting peacemaking and peacebuilding. We wish to collaborate with the United Nations and other actors on conflict prevention in our countries. We believe that Civil Society is an important actor in restoring trust between states and citizens and in promoting peace and reconciliation. We call upon Civil Society to constructively engage with governments and other national actors in helping reach inclusive political settlements.

As we remain convinced that sound economic foundations with a specific focus on job creation, women's and youth empowerment and private sector development are essential to sustain peace and resilience, we call upon development partners to help g7+ countries in strengthening these foundations. This requires more investment in infrastructure and skills development as critical enablers for economic growth. We call upon multi-laterals and in particular the World Bank Group to enhance their support to private sector development in g7+ countries, through country specific reforms and effective implementation of existing policies.

In line with the New Deal principles, development aid needs to unleash the economic potential of our countries and promote self-reliance. Development aid must be allocated by the recipient countries and

spent through county systems. This will ensure country ownership of development. We acknowledge the findings and recommendations of the Independent Review of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, re-commit to the implementation of the New Deal and reaffirm our partnership with the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding.

We welcome the launch of the 2030 Agenda and commit to contextual implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in our member countries. In particular, we commit to prioritize and jointly report on progress against the agreed list of SDG indicators through the portal established in the g7+ Secretariat and using the New Deal principles to achieve the SDGs. We will continue sharing experiences through “Fragile-to-Fragile” cooperation in peacebuilding and statebuilding under the spirit of volunteerism and solidarity.

We strongly urge the United Nations, in particular UNDP, to mobilize support to the g7+ and to host a high level session on the SDGs in New York.

We endorse the 2014-15 Annual Report and the 2016-17 Work Plan and entrust the g7+ Secretariat to facilitate its implementation.

We conclude our meetings in Kabul, Afghanistan, with deep appreciation of the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan for generously hosting this 4th g7+ Ministerial meeting.

We look forward to the next Ministerial meeting in 2017.





A NEW DEAL for engagement in fragile states

THE FACTS

- *1.5 billion people live in conflict-affected and fragile states.*
- *About 70% of fragile states have seen conflict since 1989.*
- *Basic governance transformations may take 20-40 years.*
- *30% of Official Development Assistance (ODA) is spent in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.*
- *These countries are furthest away from achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).*

The current ways of working in fragile states need serious improvement. Despite the significant investment and the commitments of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), results and value for money have been modest. Transitioning out of fragility is long, political work that requires country leadership and ownership. Processes of political dialogue have often failed due to lack of trust, inclusiveness, and leadership. International partners can often bypass national interests and actors, providing aid in overly technocratic ways that underestimate the importance of harmonizing with the national and local context, and support short-term results at the expense of medium- to long-term sustainable results brought about by building capacity and systems. **A New Deal for engagement in fragile states is necessary.**

THE VISION

We, the members of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding ("the Dialogue"), comprised of the g7+ group of 19 fragile and conflict-affected countries, development partners, and international organizations, believe that a new development architecture and new ways of working, better tailored to the situation and challenges of fragile contexts, are necessary to build peaceful states and societies.

These are presented in the **New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States (the "New Deal")**.

The "New Deal", which builds on the vision and principles articulated from the Millennium Declaration to the Mauritius Roadmap, proposes key peacebuilding and statebuilding goals, focuses on new ways of engaging, and identifies commitments to build mutual trust and achieve better results in fragile states.

We recognize that the success of our combined effort depends on the leadership and commitment of the g7+ group of fragile states supported by international actors. We also recognize that construction state-society relations, and the empowerment of women, youth and marginalized groups, as key actors for peace, are at the heart of successful peacebuilding and statebuilding. They are essential to deliver the "New Deal".

THE NEW DEAL

We, the members of "the Dialogue", endorse the "New Deal" and commit to undertake the necessary actions and reforms to implement it.

- We agree to use the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSSGs), as an important foundation to enable progress towards the MDGs to guide our work in fragile and conflict-affected states. By September 2012, a set of indicators for each goal will have been developed by fragile states and international partners, which will allow us to track progress at the global and the country level.
- We commit to FDGCB on new ways of engaging, to support inclusive country-led and country-owned transitions out of fragility based on a country-led fragility assessment developed by the g7+ with the support of international partners, a country-led new vision and new plan, a country compact to implement the plan, using the PSSGs to monitor progress, and support inclusive and participatory political dialogue.
- We commit to build mutual TRUST by providing aid and managing resources more effectively and aligning these resources for results. We will enhance transparency, risk management to use country systems, strengthen national capacities and timeliness of aid, improving the speed and predictability of funding to achieve better results.



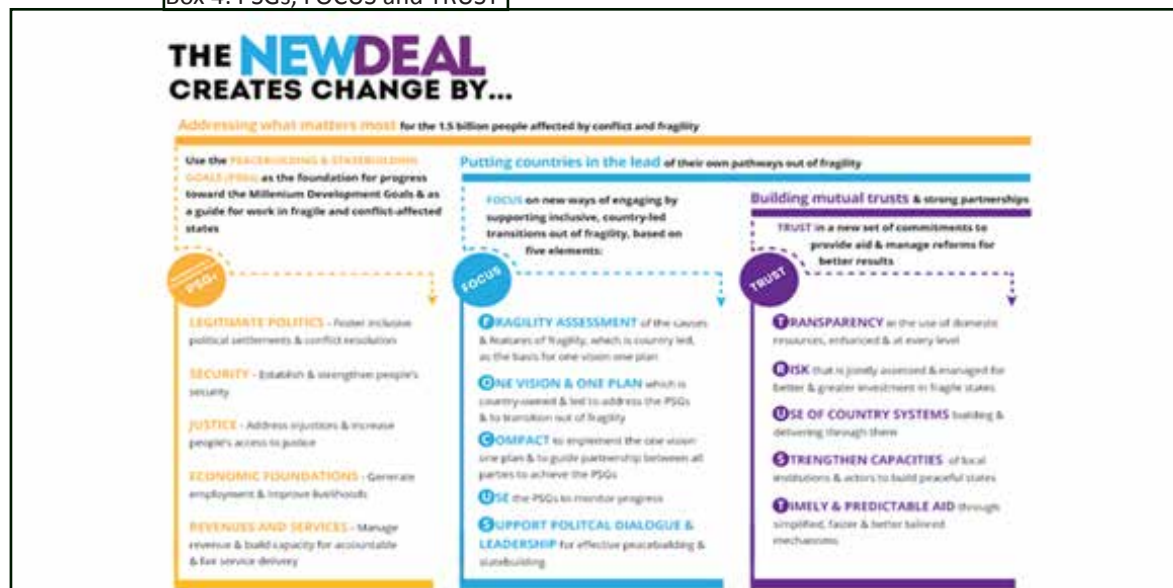
5. Negotiating the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States

The New Deal implies a new approach in doing business when engaging in fragile situations. From April 2010 through to the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF4) in November 2011, in Busan, South Korea, the primary focus of both the g7+ and the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding was the negotiation of the ‘New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States’.

This was a lengthy process with intensive meetings and negotiations throughout the year and a half in the run-up to 4th High Level Forum (HLF4). Key among them was the 2nd IDPS Global Meeting in Monrovia, Liberia in June 2011. It was at this meeting that one of the key building blocks of the New Deal – the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs) – were agreed as important stepping stones for countries affected by conflict and fragility in reaching the MDGs (see box 4). The PSGs set out the priorities that matter most in achieving peace and stability and that should therefore be the focus of resources and action at the country level (IDPS 2014: 7).

Despite the suggestion by the IDPS in Paris to divide the g7+ group into two sub-groups (Africa and Asia grouping to lobby as regional blocs), the discussion amongst the g7+ came up with the decision to stay together, in order to ensure our voice remained strong and united.

Box 4: PSGs, FOCUS and TRUST



Later in 2011 the g7+, with the support of our communications team at the g7+ Secretariat under the visionary guidance of former g7+ Chair Madame Emilia Pires, the concepts of ‘FOCUS’ and ‘TRUST’ (see box 4) were developed. These acronyms together with the PSGs represent the backbone of what would become the New Deal. Using the acronyms of FOCUS and TRUST was a systematic way of encapsulating the main messages of Peacebuilding and Statebuilding goals.

The FOCUS principles prescribe that a country focuses on its national priorities to ensure that there is no going back to crises while the TRUST principles help to develop mutual trust between the partners and the country to support its national priorities with effective aid delivery.

It is also important to note the g7+ through the Secretariat undertook the New Deal negotiations with a united voice, despite the difficult negotiating conditions. At the final meeting in Paris prior to the HLF4 when the New Deal text was being agreed, for instance, the Afghanistan delegation were late due to delayed flights, missing the morning session and heading straight from an overnight flight into negotiations. The g7+ Chair (Madame Pires) was not able to leave Timor-Leste due to budget negotiations there and participated by videoconference. Time differences and language barriers were other common factors.

The New Deal was to be – in the words of the g7+ Special Envoy: **“our call to the rest of the world for a new way of engagement”**. It is an architecture shaped by the g7+ to increase aid effectiveness and country ownership’ (Pires 2012).

Agreements like the New Deal are fundamentally about shifts of power and what we were pushing for, as a group of countries affected by conflict and fragility who had previously not been consulted on how aid in our countries should work, was more power in determining the development trajectories of our countries. Our counterparts in the IDPS and development partners, were supportive of this shift and also believed it was necessary to achieve better development outcomes in fragile situations. But, naturally, sticking points arose in the negotiations. This included the issue around Compacts (with many donors interpreting this as being between governments and their citizens; and fragile states interpreting it as also including development partners) and how to manage risk in a way that was politically acceptable to donors, but that ultimately enabled the necessary engagements with fragile country systems. There was significant back and forth amongst donors and countries on these, and other, issues.

Relationships were, at times, naturally strained. At times, our counterparts felt we were being pushy and difficult, but these were very real and important issues for us and we wanted to make sure our voices were heard. Why, if these issues had been simple, then aid to the countries that are affected by conflict would have been working effectively long ago. But commitment on both sides saw us continue to work together to find areas where we could find common ground to improve aid effectiveness.

As Deputy General Secretary of the g7+ Secretariat, Habib Ur Rehman Mayar notes: *“When you talk of the Dialogue ... it should be controversial. That’s where you find better ways of working. It’s not easy ... So I don’t see that controversy not results in deteriorating relationships but ... I see it ... giving us opportunities for exploring further ways to work together”*.



“When you talk of the Dialogue ... it should be controversial. That’s where you find better ways of working.”
Mr. Habib Ur Rehman Mayar, Deputy General Secretary of g7+ Secretariat

Indeed, the very dialogue that is necessary in order to find agreement amongst the opposing views itself helps to strengthen relationships. Through the dedication of all those involved in negotiating the New Deal, from the g7+ Secretariat and member countries to donors, civil society, the IDPS Secretariat and the Overseas Development Institute, we managed to arrive at a final agreement.

We believed that this could transform aid effectiveness countries affected by conflict and fragility. In the words of the former Prime Minister of Timor-Leste: **“The New Deal is a big deal. It gives fragile and conflict-affected states new hope in terms of achieving the MDGs as it takes into account our unique needs and challenges, and prioritises country ownership and leadership”**.

The g7+ was instrumental in strengthening the text of the New Deal. Without the opportunity to meet together as countries in fragile situation on a regular basis in the lead up to Busan, we would not have been able to negotiate so strongly. **We have one strong and amplified voice that spoke on behalf of us all.** For this achievement alone, the g7+ has served a great purpose in ensuring the voices of countries in a fragile situation were resonant in the latest global agreement on aid effectiveness.





ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE



Goodbye Conflict Welcome Development.
Faire le monde plus en développement.

g7+ CHARTER

The Governments of Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, São Tomé & Príncipe, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Timor-Leste, Togo and Yemen (the "Member States"):



1. New Deal Implementation

The New Deal was, of course, a great achievement in itself. In contrast to the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, which set out general principles, the New Deal is an action plan with concrete guidance on finding the right path for countries to go ahead, and changing behaviour in doing development in countries affected by conflict and fragility. In addition, the New Deal was the first aid architecture effectiveness agreement owned by countries themselves. **This was no longer a donor agreement about aid recipients – it was a partnership led by aid recipients.** The fact that countries themselves feel ownership of the New Deal is a testament to its relevance.

The g7+ has made important progress in implementing the New Deal at the country level. There is evidence that the New Deal principles are now applied at all levels in g7+ countries, and for example there are some obvious success stories:

A successful election process in the Central African Republic partially inspired by the sharing of experience between g7+ member countries on reconciliation in 2015;

A harmonious change of government in Timor-Leste 2015;

Recovery from the Ebola crisis by country-led efforts in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea, together with g7+ solidarity and financial support from another member country (Timor-Leste).

Fragility assessments completed in six countries (DRC, Liberia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Timor-Leste and Comoros, with three more planned or underway in Afghanistan, Guinea-Bissau and Togo).

One vision and One plan becoming the inspiration of government actions in most member countries.

Compacts agreed upon in Afghanistan, Sierra Leone and Somalia, with a compact in South Sudan currently postponed due to the renewal of conflict.

Aid management system and transparency portals introduced in various countries e.g. Timor-Leste.



Note on the

Fragility Spectrum

Launched in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, 2013

Aid instruments for peace- and state-building: Putting the New Deal into practice

Achievements To Date
1. New Deal Implementation



Some further examples of why the New Deal is important in member countries are below:

- In Afghanistan



The New Deal is relatively more comprehensive in the sense that it recognizes and addresses not just the development component of donor interventions in fragile situations. The New Deal draws on the nexus between development and peace, an extremely important relationship integral to making International Community engagement in fragile situations more effective.

Previous frameworks for engagement in fragile contexts were mostly/purely development focused and rather inward looking, not addressing or taking into account factors that are beyond the immediate national boundaries of the fragile countries. In a situation such as Afghanistan, it would be considered unwise to talk about the causes and drivers of conflict and instability without looking at the role, destructive or constructive, that regional dynamics and actors have played here (2016).

- In Burundi:

The New Deal is needed to establish peace because it deals with political solutions instead of military intervention. FOCUS and TRUST principles are the best mechanism for the consolidation of peace, which is a long process.

- In DRC:

The participation of the DRC in the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, 2011, has enabled the Government to understand the limits of the principles of the Paris Declaration.

The New Deal approach that builds on the vision and principles outlined since the Millennium Development Goals and proposes the objectives of consolidating peace and strengthening the state opened the way for the Government to target new ways to engage and enhance mutual trust in order to obtain better results. The commitments under the New Deal, to manage resources more efficiently and organize these resources to get results, provide the DRC authorities with a better and fair way of exploiting the natural resources.

- In Guinea:

The New Deal is of paramount importance for Guinea in that it will allow the internalisation of new virtues to get rid of fragility and promote sustainable development.

- In Liberia:

Liberia Fragility Assessment- Final Draft
September 5, 2012

Executive Summary:

Liberia has made remarkable progress since the end of hostilities in 2003 in consolidating peace and rebuilding a government shattered by over a decade of war. After holding two relatively peaceful and credible national elections, maintaining peace in the face of regional instability particularly from neighboring Cote D'Ivoire and retaining a steady increase in economic growth Liberia is a nation on the rise.

At the same time, empirical data indicates that recovery from conflict is often far more challenging and more fraught with potential reversals than we would like. In order to ensure Liberia stays steadily on a path towards recovery, peace and prosperity the government is investing in both national and international conversations around new approaches to supporting countries struggling with challenges of peacebuilding and statebuilding.

The *New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States* was endorsed at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011 by forty countries and multi-lateral agencies, including Liberia. The *New Deal* calls for a new paradigm for approaching and addressing situations of fragility through focusing on the key causes and manifestations thereof. The *New Deal* specifies five Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals as necessary areas for fragile states to focus on in order to reinforce their resilience. These are:

- PSG 1: Legitimate Politics – Foster Inclusive Political Settlements and Conflict Resolution
- PSG 2: Security – Establish and Strengthen People’s Security
- PSG 3: Justice – Address Injustices and Increase People’s Access to Justice
- PSG 4: Economic Foundations – Generate Employment and Improve Livelihoods
- PSG 5: Revenue and Services – Manage Revenue and Building Capacity for Accurate and Fair Service Delivery

The *New Deal* also focuses on key commitments that the government and their international and local partners, including civil society, must make in order to achieve success. These include supporting political dialogue, national visions, transparency and strengthening of capacity.

As agreed to at the High Level Forum, seven countries have agreed to be on the forefront of taking the *New Deal* forward through a process of piloting. The first step in the piloting process is to carry out an assessment of fragility for each country. The following represents the Government of Liberia’s Fragility Assessment.

Methodologically this assessment took a different approach than is being done in some of the other pilots. Namely, Liberia has over the past several years carried out and invited in several assessments on areas highly relevant to fragility. Rather than undertake yet another consultative assessment process, as is being done in several countries, in Liberia the approach used was to

The New Deal presents an opportunity for Liberia and its development partners to identify and support national priorities for Liberia’s development, paying particular attention to issues of fragility. Prior to the New Deal, previous national plans did not pay special attention to fragility and drivers of conflict.

The New Deal provided the framework for Liberia to plan with the objective of transitioning from fragility to resilience.



Fragility Assessment

Republic of Sierra Leone
Sources of Fragility



- **In Sierra Leone:**

The fact that government needed to first of all restore peace (peacebuilding) and build state institutions (state-building) after conflict meant that we could not afford to be as transparent as we would have wished for fear of relapsing into conflict. Therefore the country needed another Framework which is better suited to its context. The Accra Agenda for Action high level forum subsequently led to the creation of the New Deal for engagement in fragile states which took the context of fragility into consideration.

Before the New Deal, Sierra Leone had an IGAP (Improved Governance and Accountability Pact) – although IGAP was in place, government was more answerable to partners at international forums than partners were to government.

The New Deal was indeed timely as it sought to put g7+ countries in charge of their own aspirations. It has helped government focus on building a strong foundation for sustained and resilient change.

Sierra Leone was the first g7+ country to conduct a Fragility Assessment in 2012 and attempted to do an update in 2014 but was inconclusive as a result of Ebola Virus Disease. The Fragility Assessment identified the drivers of conflict. The findings of the 2012 assessment were incorporated into the Agenda for Prosperity (AfP). The PSG's were also reflected in the Dashboard of the Mutual Accountability Framework (MAF) which was developed to ensure that both government and partners commit to a set of indicators that monitors the PSG's as well as related indicators.

- **In South Sudan:**

South Sudan is a new country and the New Deal is a way to avoid making the mistakes that others have made by pushing for the MDGs before stability and security have been achieved. Even though South Sudan has not yet achieved a New Deal Compact with the international community, the principles of the New Deal and the discussions that it has stimulated are still influencing donor and government choices.





• **In Somalia:**

Somalia launched a Compact Progress Report in November 2014, following the agreement of a compact with donors in 2013. A High Level Partnership Forum on Somalia was held in Copenhagen in November 2014, reaffirming the New Deal as the overall framework for Somalia's post-conflict transformation. Inter-Ministerial task forces have been set up around each PSG. Also, in the end of 2015, a high level joint g7+/IDPS visit, including the Deputy General Secretary of the g7+ and the Co-Chair of the IDPS was conducted in Mogadishu to support the sensitisation of the New Deal within and across the government.



• **In Timor-Leste:**

Timor-Leste is carrying out its second fragility assessment in 2015, adopting an inclusive and consultative methodology with focus groups in all 13 municipalities. Timor-Leste has also spearheaded fragile-to-fragile cooperation with Central African Republic in 2014-15, provided technical assistance to Guinea-Bissau's 2014 elections and provided financial assistance to the Ebola-affected g7+ countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in 2015.

Summary Report
Fragility Assessment in Timor-Leste

"Learning from the past and always try not to repeat terrible things.
We all should be together to bring our country move forward"

Produced by Fragility Assessment Team at Ministry of Finance

Dili, 26 February 2013



A young girl with dark hair, wearing a yellow dress with a brown polka-dot pattern and ruffles, is shown in profile. She is holding a bouquet of pink and white flowers and a small flag of Timor-Leste. The background is blurred, showing other people and a red flag.

**2ND PHASE OF FRAGILITY ASSESSEMENT REPORT
IN TIMOR-LESTE, 2015**

*"Is this a strong Timor-Leste
or is this a weak Timor-Leste?"*

Produced by New Deal Assessment Taskforce Team with contributing partner CEPAD

Dili, December 2015

2. Developing as an intergovernmental forum

The achievement of the g7+ is the fact that it has continued to exist and to meet on a regular basis. Since emerging in April 2010, we have held four Ministerial Retreats in 2011, 2012, 2014 and 2016. In addition to these important political-level meetings, our focal points continue to hold several technical meetings each year on a range of issues – from natural resource management and private sector development, to the development of indicators to monitor fragility and internal g7+ governance.



In between meetings, we keep up to date through videoconferences, telephone and email correspondence. The g7+ focal points play a big role in linking their Government with the Secretariat. As the New Deal Coordinator noted, “our g7+ focal points are our Ambassadors, even if it took us a few years to ensure their initial understanding and followed by active participation. We have a strong relationship, when we are communicating with each other as brothers and sisters in g7+ family”. In addition, the Secretariat makes sure it visits as many member countries as possible, through g7+ road trips.



As the General Secretary of the g7+ recounts: “The reality of our existence as conflict-affected states often comes into play whenever we try to meet. [In 2012] One of our focal points from Somalia recently avoided a suicide bombing that injured others who were with him. At each event our Afghani friends overcome many challenges to be with us. And yet each time they turn up with determination, enthusiasm and a smile.” (da Costa 2013: 101).

Despite the logistical challenges of bringing all g7+ countries together through holding meetings in g7+ countries to finding suitable travel itineraries to visa requirements and more; the Ministers and their focal points who everyday face multiple competing priorities, are dedicated and tireless. In these circumstances, we manage to overcome the challenges. Also, translation and interpretation services are now a standard feature of our events to ensure equitable participation from the entire membership.

We now have a g7+ Charter, develop annual work plans and produce an annual report – all keeping us on track and maintaining a clear and precise agenda.

In addition, we have all found in the g7+ a forum for learning, sharing and joint lobbying. In the words of the former Prime Minister of Timor-Leste (Gusmao, 2014):

“We can all be proud of how far we have come since we met in a small room in Dili and decided that for too long our nations had walked alone, as others made decisions affecting our common future. We now walk together. We have shared our stories and histories, from across Asia, Africa and the Pacific. And while each nation is unique, we are bound by similar challenges, and a shared desire to contribute to the discussions on the global development agenda. The g7+ is now a credible voice, and our vision has been accepted in international forums including, of course, the United Nations.”

3. Making our voice heard

In addition to sustaining the existence of the g7+, we have also made strides in extending our voice beyond just the IDPS and Global Partnership emerging out of Busan, to a number of other global fora. This includes the United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, G20 and International Labour Organisation. These world organisations are recognising our presence and our specific needs, so much so that we can now work together on an equal basis. An illustration of this collaboration is found in two achievements, which deserve particular mention.

First, we have successfully lobbied for a peace goal as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to replace the MDGs which expired in 2015. This began with appointment of the Liberian President, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, as a co-Chair (alongside the President of Indonesia and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom) of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda by the UN Secretary General. Critically, the then g7+ Chair was also appointed by the Secretary-General as a member of the Panel. This gave countries in fragile situations a direct voice in the negotiation of the SDGs, with the g7+ consistently lobbying, alongside others – notably civil society organisations – for a peace-related goal. The peace goal has survived the various stages of the SDG negotiation process, appearing in the High Level Panel’s report, the Secretary-General’s report, and the report of the Open Working Group on the SDGs. This represents a major achievement for the g7+, as it enshrines in the global development architecture the key development challenge faced by counties in a fragile situation.



Second, we have secured a voice for conflict affected countries within the international financial institutions that play such an influential role in our countries – the World Bank and the IMF. This is critical in catalysing the change that we need to see in aid to countries affected by conflict. Since April 2012, the g7+ has obtained an agreement from the World Bank President to hold two meetings every year with g7+ Ministers on the side lines of the World Bank Spring and Annual Meetings. These opportunities provide our countries with a chance to voice their concerns directly to the senior management of the Bank and ensure that it is aware of the challenges we are facing.

In 2013, the g7+ achieved observer status at the International Development Association’s (IDA) 17th replenishment round meetings, and helped secure an agreement for a new IDA allocation formula and a new ‘Turnaround Facility’ which between them should allow countries in fragile situations to access billions of dollars of additional development finance. This round concluded with record pledges by donors for IDA17 (2014-17) (Mayar 2014a: 97).

In October 2013, g7+ Ministers met for the first time with the Managing Director of the IMF, which has opened up other opportunities to engage with IMF senior management.



“The presence of the g7+ secretariat in the IDA meeting aimed not only to reflect the voice of the group, but also to facilitate the future engagement of the group in the monitoring of progress on the execution of the commitments.”
Mr. Habib Ur Rehman Mayar,
Deputy General Secretary of g7+ Secretariat





As H.E. Amara Konneh, Minister of Finance and Development Planning from Liberia explains, *'You cannot expect countries that have been through conflict, that are experiencing difficulties in capacities, to have the same standards as those who do not'* (quoted in Guest 2013).

Our involvement in these fora is not simply an important achievement in terms of getting a better deal for our countries. It is also changing the narrative and the way we talk about countries affected by conflict and fragility and turning it into a more meaningful conversation between equals. These fora give us an insight into the functioning of the world bodies. The international community used to talk about fragility in a one-dimensional way – having insufficient capacity, too much risk, and so on. Through the increased engagement of countries in fragile situations in a variety of international fora, understandings of fragility are becoming more nuanced and increasingly focused on solutions in each different country context. As we learn more about both our similarities and our differences, countries are helping to build better understandings of fragility itself.















g7⁺



g7⁺ Policy Note on
Fragile-to-Fragile Cooperation

4. g7+ Fragile-to-Fragile cooperation

According to one of our g7+ principles, the g7+ has also achieved greater cooperation and knowledge-sharing between countries affected by conflict and fragility themselves – what we call ‘fragile-to-fragile’, or F2F, cooperation. Concerned over the deteriorating situation in the Central African Republic, in early 2014 the g7+ Secretariat organised a peer-to-peer learning meeting between the Secretariat, Chair, a number of focal points and a delegation from CAR. This enabled us to understand better the situation they were facing in their country, and how best their fellow member countries could help them in advocating for greater international assistance. This was followed by a visit by the g7+ Secretariat, including the g7+ Eminent Person, the former Prime Minister of Timor-Leste, to CAR in February 2015 to support political dialogue and prepare for the Bangui Forum .

When Guinea-Bissau faced difficulties in running its elections planned for 2014, the g7+ mobilised support from Timor-Leste to provide financial and technical assistance in their preparation. Following the devastating outbreak of Ebola in West Africa in 2014, Timor-Leste pledged USD 2 million for the three member countries affected – Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Importantly, unlike most international assistance, this support was provided directly to the national budgets of the affected countries, in line with the principles of the New Deal (Mayar 2014b: 123).

In 2014 we also published a report on Natural Resource Management across all g7+ countries, with a view to supporting each other in understanding how to better benefit from our abundant natural wealth. And in 2014 we also held the first meeting of Justice Ministers from g7+ countries to begin to broaden the areas on which we engage in peer learning.

While our countries are all unique, F2F cooperation recognises our shared challenges. As former Minister Kamitatu of DRC notes:



“our proximity and our links are inversely proportional to the distance between us. We are very close despite our geographical distance ...”

Mr. Olivier Kamitatu former Minister of Planning DRC

Timor is 14,000 square kilometres; DRC is 2.3 million square kilometres. Timor has 1.1 million people; DRC has 80 million people. One could believe that we have nothing in common. But we are linked by something very strong: together, we have gone through very violent times of conflict; together, we have gone through times of great fragility when the sheer existence of Timor was threatened; when the sheer existence of DRC was threatened. This means that our proximity and our links are inversely proportional to the distance between us. We are very close despite our geographical distance and my interest is that the South-South partnership, the Fragile to Fragile partnership ... will allow us to become emergent states together. (Interview).

This form of cooperation is an indication of mutual support from member countries in difficult times. We also continue to learn from and support each other and see this unity as our greatest strength and achievement.

These achievements to date since the establishment of g7+ have placed it on the international platform and allowed the development of collaboration between g7+ members and world bodies.

The Bangui Forum was held in CAR in May 2015, bringing together 600-700 stakeholders from government, political parties, civil society, religious and traditional institutions, the private sector and armed groups to discuss prospects and priorities for peace. The g7+ also attended the Forum.



Fragile to Fragile Cooperation

Peer Learning:

- NRM
- PFM
- Peace/Reconciliation

F2F

Dealing with acute and emerging crisis

Implementing the NEW DEAL



F2F Modality



- CSO** Civil Society Organisations
- Donor** Donor organisation and other development partners
- Member** Member countries of the g7+





Examples of F2F Cooperation



Achievements To Date
4. g7+ Fragile-to-Fragile cooperation



F2F – South Sudan



g7+ Mission to South Sudan in December 2013, prior to the Crisis





g7+ Mission on Reconciliation to Central African Republic, 2015

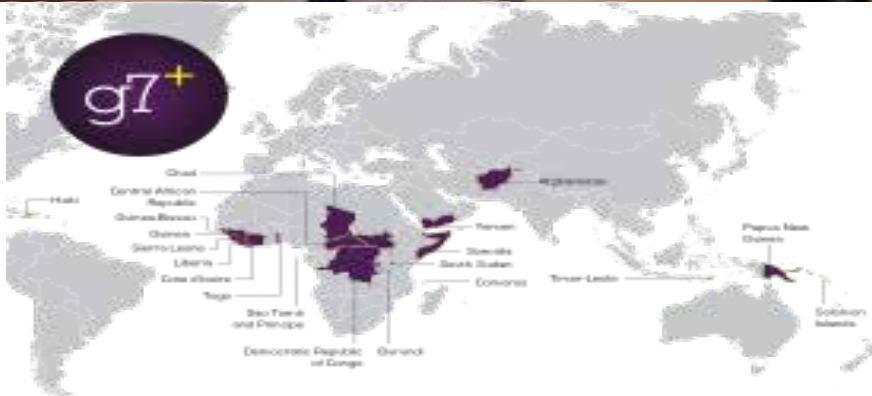


Achievements To Date
4. g7+ Fragile-to-Fragile cooperation



F2F Cooperation in Guinea Bissau, 2013





Natural Resources in g7+ Countries

g7+ Secretariat, Dili, Timor-Leste



Challenges and future priorities

Of course, improving aid effectiveness in countries in fragile situations is not without its challenges, and there remain a number of areas where further work is needed. Four areas where we will pursue greater efforts in the years ahead are set out below.

First, Development Partners remain largely off-track in delivering on the TRUST principles. While there are some islands of good practice, there have not yet been tremendous changes in donor behaviour. But we must remember this is a long-term endeavour. We are talking about changing narratives and mind-sets that have been in place within the development industry for decades. Changing these will require time, and it will also require greater political commitment on the part of donors.

Second, one of the challenges we have faced throughout the existence of the g7+ is that during our regular meetings it is g7+ Ministers who are sent to advocate for countries affected by conflict and fragility; but middle- and senior-level technocrats are sent from the donor side. This is not to discount the quality and commitment of the donor representatives we work with but they are ultimately not the decision makers who are needed to make the changes we are seeking and their frequency of turnover means that we are often dealing with new staff who must familiarise themselves with relevant people and processes. The problem is compounded by the fact that Ministers from donor countries are rarely able or willing to travel to our countries – making it difficult for them to comprehend the realities of our situations and to meet us on a level playing field. If donors are to meet their commitments under the New Deal, they will need greater political support at the highest levels.



Third, the present global financial crisis is encroaching on aid budgets with greater scrutiny and less appetite for risk. A number of donor countries have also seen their aid departments folded back into foreign affairs ministries. This increases the role that foreign policy interests play in aid – although of course, these interests have always been there. We understand that this context makes the New Deal even more difficult to implement and, at this stage, the push for change is unlikely to come from within donor organisations.

Fourth, the g7+ will strengthen efforts to implement the New Deal at the country level. The FOCUS commitments, which are largely those to be implemented by g7+ countries, have met with varied performance (see box 5) (IDPS 2014). While fragility assessments and compacts received a green rating (on track), “one vision, one plan” and “supporting political dialogue” received an amber rating (partly off track), and the use of PSGs to monitor received a red (off track) (IDPS 2014). We will support our members to improve on these results so that the vision of the New Deal can be realised in every country in a fragile situation.

Box 5: 2014 New Deal Monitoring Survey Results

FRAGILITY ASSESSMENTS	TRANSPARENCY
ONE VISION / ONE PLAN	RISK SHARING
COMPACTS	USE OF COUNTRY SYSTEMS
USE OF PSGs TO MONITOR	STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES
SUPPORT TO POLITICAL DIALOGUE	TIMELY / PREDICTABLE AID



The implementation has by no means been perfect, and we are constantly facing challenges such as a lack of capacity, competing priorities and, in some contexts, limited funding to support implementation. It is important to remember that we are not working in perfect scenarios. We are attempting to implement an ambitious aid effectiveness agenda in the most challenging environments in the world. There is a need, therefore, to moderate expectations (da Costa 2014).

As far as priorities are concerned, through the g7+ countries affected by conflict and fragility now have a recognised forum that will continue to push for change and support each other until all of our members have become resilient.

In the next few years, we hope to see some of our members graduate from fragility – a number of members are on track to do so.

We need to find ways of strengthening the area of PSG 3 – Justice which many of us find a particular challenge. Our engagement with all SDGs and in

particular SDGs 16 should be our inspiration for the 2030 Agenda.

We also hope to establish international exchanges between our ministries. For decades we have benefited from technical assistance from donors to countries in a fragile situation, but we see great potential for peer learning from other states also.

We will continue to build F2F cooperation, with a particular focus on peace and reconciliation, natural resource management and public financial management. These have been identified as critical entrypoints where we can learn from each other also.

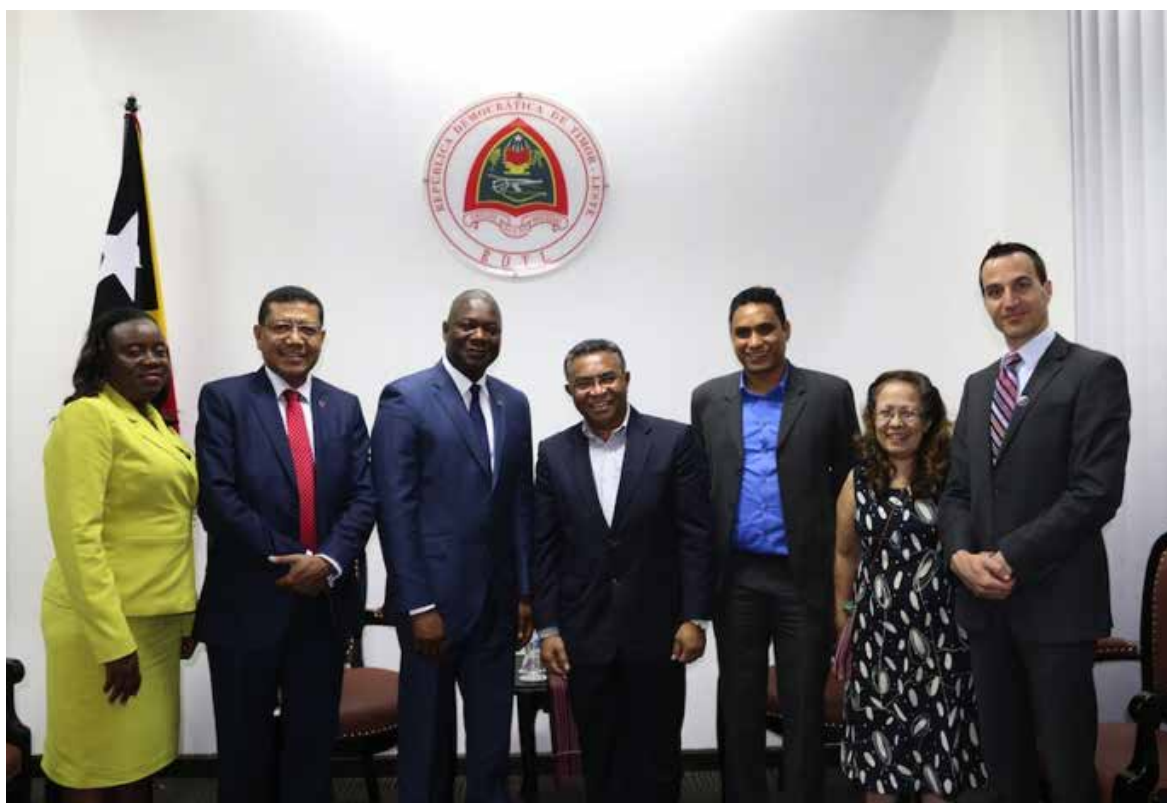


CONCLUDING REMARKS

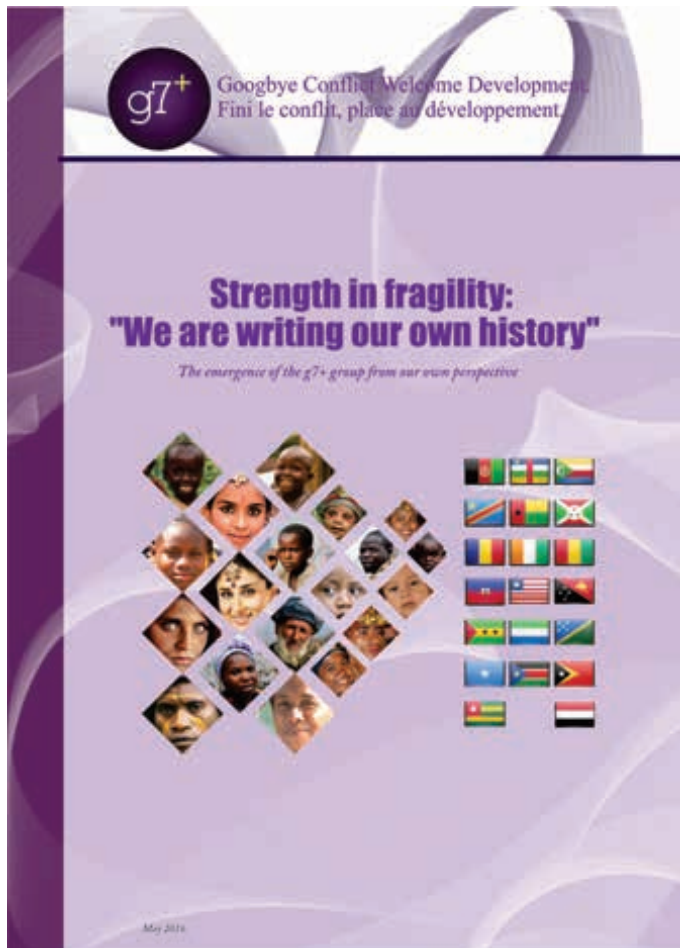
It has been a remarkable journey since we all first sat together in a room in December 2008 in Paris and realised just how much we had in common, and how much we still have to learn from each other. While we are fragile, we are also unified and strong. Our experiences of conflict have made us strong, and our banding together through the g7+ has amplified our voices.

The New Deal, and the other changes we seek in the international development system, are long term endeavours, and the g7+ will continue to represent the voices of the poorest to ensure that they are heard at the highest levels.

“Welcome development and goodbye conflict”.



To be continued...



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Annex 2: List of interviews

Felicia Carvalho, New Deal Coordinator, g7+ Secretariat, 24 February 2015

Helder da Costa, General Secretary, g7+ Secretariat, 17 and 18 February 2015

Donata Garrasi, Former Lead Peacebuilding Adviser, OECD DAC, 18 February 2015

Olivier Kamitatu, Minister of Planning, Democratic Republic of the Congo, 26 March 2015

Habib Mayar Ur Rehman, Deputy General Secretary, g7+ Secretariat, 19 February 2015

Leigh Mitchell, Former World Bank Seconded to the g7+ Secretariat, 24 February 2015

Emilia Pires, g7+ Special Envoy, 19 February 2015

Mena Savio, Finance Manager, g7+ Secretariat, 20 February 2015

Nikunj Soni, Adviser, Ministry of Finance, Timor-Leste, 23 February 2015

Annex 3 : List of written answers to interviews



Our appreciation to g7+ focal points



Our appreciation to g7+ focal points



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Members of the g7+



Burundi



Central African Republic



Chad



Comoros



Côte d'Ivoire



Democratic Republic
of the Congo



Guinea



Guinea-Bissau



Haiti



Liberia



Papua New Guinea



Sao Tome and Principe



Sierra Leone



Solomon Islands



Somalia



South Sudan



Timor-Leste



Togo



Yemen

Pathways



towards resilience

Goodbye Conflict Welcome Development.
Fini le conflit, place au développement.



g7+ Secretariat

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