

Foreword

From the food, fuel and financial crisis to the Arab Spring, the events of the past decade have demonstrated that local decisions and actions can quickly generate global reactions. Within this context, fragile states and situations that were once isolated or ignored have captured the attention of the international community.

Home to one-third of the world's poor, fragile states are more vulnerable to internal or external shocks than more stable countries. Not one of these countries has achieved a single Millennium Development Goal. Struggling to meet the challenges of basic survival, poverty-stricken populations in fragile situations are simply less equipped to deal with volatile changes, whether political, environmental or economic.

As areas plagued by conflict and fragility continue to fall behind more stable developing countries, instability and poverty are increasingly concentrated within them – although the consequences of resulting crises and conflicts continue to spill over borders.

Recent global events have also demonstrated that fragility can manifest itself in many different ways. Nearly half of all fragile states are now classified as middle-income countries, and pockets of fragility can exist in otherwise stable countries. The resilience of countries thought to be more stable has also been tested in places such as Tunisia, where growing access to information and changing expectations amongst constituents have revealed cracks in the social contract between state and society. This diversity of situations shows that fragility encompasses multiple dimensions – political, security, justice, economic, social and environmental. The way it is perceived and understood has a direct impact on how fragility is addressed, and evolutions in the conception of fragility have been echoed by changes in practice.

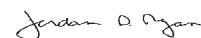
The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), through the International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF), has monitored aid and other financial flows such as foreign direct investment, remittances and domestic revenues since 2006. This year's report both analyses these flows and puts them into perspective, examining the different ways fragility can originate and express itself, and identifying trends amongst a diverse group of ever evolving countries. It is our hope that this publication will not only inform policy decisions, but also increase understanding about fragility and its many dimensions and impacts, resulting in more effective engagement in situations of fragility.



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