States of fragility

States of fragility

plus a selection of articles on other aspects of forced migration.

Overleaf you will find for each article: the title, the author(s) and their affiliation, introductory sentences and a link to the full article online.

The full version of FMR 43 is online at www.fmreview.org/fragilestates in html, pdf and audio in English, and in html and pdf formats in Arabic, Spanish and French.

From the Editors

Fragile states are risky environments. Many states fail in their responsibilities to their citizens but those states which are fragile, failed or weak are particularly liable to render their citizens vulnerable. Failures of authority or legitimacy can lead to the emergence of significant organised violence; the impact of this can then be compounded by the failure of the state to protect its citizens, especially minorities. Thus conflict as a cause of displacement often correlates with state fragility, whether as a symptom or a cause of fragility, and the ability of fragile states and their neighbours to deal with displacement has become a key indicator of failure or progress.

This issue of FMR attempts to go behind the definitions, typologies and indicators to explore some of the concepts and realities. The articles in this issue also look at a variety of cases where displacement and state fragility go together or where countries are emerging from conflict-related displacement and fragility. They also discuss some of the humanitarian and development responses.

State fragility may play a significant role in forced migration relating to natural disasters or environmental crises, as failures in governance affect the vulnerabilities of populations and their ability to adapt and be resilient. We will be following up on some of these issues in FMR 45, due out in December 2013, which will have ‘Crisis migration’ as its theme.

We would like to thank Alex Betts for his assistance as special advisor on this issue. We are also very grateful to the John D and Catherine T MacArthur Foundation, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the UNDP Evaluation Office for their funding support for this issue, and to all of our regular donors and those readers who have made donations for their continued and valuable support.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates
State fragility, refugee status and ‘survival migration’

Alexander Betts (Refugee Studies Centre)

State fragility poses a challenge to the refugee regime. Rather than just placing the emphasis on the need to protect people fleeing the acts of states against their own populations, it also demands the protection of people fleeing the omissions of states, whether due to states’ unwillingness or to their inability to provide for their citizens’ fundamental rights.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/betts

How to engage constructively with fragile states

Jon Bennett (consultant)

Donors have allocated increasing resources in fragile states to the reform and/or rebuilding of the architecture of the state – such as justice systems, the police and army, and the management of ministries – in efforts to support stability. This has been important for all sectors of society, including displaced people.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/bennett

Displaced populations and their effects on regional stability

Joe Landry (Carleton University, Canada)

A better understanding of state fragility – combined with improvements in policy and funding for displaced populations – is necessary to prevent the proliferation of further regional conflicts.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/landry

Liberia: local politics, state building and reintegration of populations

Jairo Munive (Danish Institute for International Studies)

Interventions aiming to assist IDPs and refugees returning home in fragile states would do well to take note of the local political and economic contexts in the aftermath of war, because these deeply affect the reintegration of war-affected populations.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/munive

Peace villages for repatriates to Burundi

Jean-Benoit Falisse (University of Oxford) and René Claude Niyonkuru (University of Antwerp)

Burundí’s peace villages, which are intended both as models for reintegration and as centres of economic development, have encountered a number of problems which are related to the country’s continued fragility as a state.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/falisse-niyonkuru

Fragile states and protection under the 1969 African Refugee Convention

Tamara Wood (University of New South Wales)

Current practice in African states highlights both the potential and the limitations of the 1969 African Refugee Convention in providing protection to persons displaced from fragile states.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/wood

Fragile states, collective identities and forced migration

Kelly Staples (University of Leicester)

There has been a worrying tendency for the international community to ignore questions of state capacity when enacting repatriations. Governance and the rule of law should be vital considerations in attempts to deal with forced migration in fragile states such as DRC.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/staples

Repeated displacement in eastern DRC

Fran Beytrison and Olivia Kalis (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre)

For the vast majority of those affected by conflict, displacement is often seen as the only option in an attempt to find safety. The provision of some basic assistance in places to which people flee makes this process slightly easier but in the absence of state-led protection, multiple displacement has become a defining feature of the Kivu conflict. This has implications for both the humanitarian and the development response.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/beytrison-kalis

‘Everyone for themselves’ in DRC’s North Kivu

Luisa Ryan and Dominic Keyzer (independent and World Vision)

While the international donor community has been trying to engage with DRC by partnering with the government to implement the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, communities in DRC, especially those displaced in war-affected areas, continue to have to look out for themselves.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/ryan-keyzer

Can Refugee Cessation be seen as a proxy for the end of state fragility?

Georgia Cole (University of Oxford)

The cessation of refugee status results from a judgment that a sufficient change has occurred in the refugees’ country of origin that they no longer require international protection. For individual refugees this may leave them in a precarious situation. For states hoping to dispel an image of being economically, politically or socially ‘fragile’, this judgment is clearly very helpful.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/cole

The displaced claiming their rights in fragile states

Antonia Mulvey (Legal Action Worldwide)

To date, displaced persons in fragile and conflict-affected states have had little success in claiming their rights for housing, land and property violations. Creative legal thinking and strategic litigation has the potential to change this.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/mulvey

The ‘phantom state’ of Haiti

Andreas E Feldmann (Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile)

The fragile nature of the state had turned emigration into a major feature of Haitian life even before the earthquake displaced hundreds of thousands of people.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/feldmann

Post-disaster Haitian migration

Diana Thomaz (Pontificia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

Those who left Haiti in the chaotic aftermath of the 2010 earthquake did not generally find the same posture of solidarity and humanitarianism overseas that was apparent in the significant international assistance that followed the disaster.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/thomaz

Humanitarian responses in the protection gap

Aurélie Ponthieu and Katharine Derderian (Médecins Sans Frontières)

Often a combination of factors pushes people to leave their country, and the voluntary character of their departure remains debatable, challenging humanitarians both to meet needs and to adapt to changing categories of forced displacement.

www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/ponthieu-derderian
Flight, fragility and furthering stability in Yemen
Erin Mooney (UNHCR)
The existence of a large number of refugees or internally displaced persons in a country is considered a primary indicator of instability. By this measure, and all others, Yemen is one of the world’s most fragile states. Less well understood is how this context affects the vulnerability of refugees, IDPs and migrants themselves and what can be done to strengthen protection for them.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/mooney
Surviving the odds: education, commerce and development among displaced Somalis
Abdirashid Duale (Dahabshiil)
Private entrepreneurship and the diaspora play important roles in supporting displaced people in fragile ungoverned situations. They are also valuable in helping those situations emerge from fragility.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/duale
Networked governance in Ecuador’s border regions
Lana Balyk and Jeff Pugh (CEMPROC)
In order to improve security for both Colombian forced migrants and Ecuadorians in the communities where they live, an approach that takes advantage of governance networks can allow residents to negotiate access to resources and rights that they otherwise would not be able to enjoy. It can also improve relations between the two groups.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/balyk-pugh
 Refugees from Central American gangs
Elizabeth G Kennedy (San Diego State University and University of California, Santa Barbara)
El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras are among the world’s most fragile nations, yet they are largely ignored by refugee agencies who underestimate transnational criminal organisations’ abuses and powers of control, while overestimating national governments’ ability and willingness to protect their citizens.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/kennedy
Data quality and information management in DRC
Janet Ousley and Lara Ho (International Rescue Committee)
Forced migration creates special challenges to collecting data and monitoring responses in fragile states where infrastructure and systems are weak or non-existent.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/ousley-ho
The curious case of North Korea
Courtland Robinson (Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health)
Displacement and distress migration within and outside North Korea may be an indicator of state fragility but a reduction in numbers should not necessarily be read as a sign of improving conditions there. In fact, increased movements might be considered as positive, if they are accompanied by increased protection for refugees, survivors of trafficking, stateless children and other vulnerable populations.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/robinson
Was establishing new institutions in Iraq to deal with displacement a good idea?
Peter Van der Auweraert (International Organization for Migration)
The humanitarian, developmental and political consequences of decades of mass forced migration are part of the legacy that the current political leaders of Iraq need to address. For this they need the right institutions if they are to be successful in guiding their country towards a more peaceful and stable future.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/vanderauweraert
Displacement in a fragile Iraq
Ali A K Ali (London School of Economics)
The post-Saddam Iraqi state enjoys only limited support from the population, excludes significant sections of its people from power, suppresses the opposition and does not protect citizens from arbitrary arrests, and corruption is rampant. There is a direct relationship between these failures and displacement in Iraq.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/ali
Psychiatric treatment with people displaced in or from fragile states
Verity Buckley (King’s College, London)
A fragile state is not an ideal environment for any professional to work within – psychiatric, medical or otherwise. Psychiatrists working to assess psychological distress and mental health in fragile states, or with refugees from fragile states, need to adopt flexible approaches.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/buckley
State fragility, displacement and development interventions
Yonatan Araya (World Bank)
The development approach to displacement brings advantages not only in addressing the needs of refugees, IDPs and host communities but also in helping societies tackle the underlying aspects of fragility that may have caused the displacement.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/araya
g7+
Eighteen countries recognised as fragile states and clustering around the high end of the Failed States Index convene under the name g7+.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/g7plus

Ex-combatants and their extended family build a house on squatter land in Central Ganta.
General articles

Crisis in Lebanon: camps for Syrian refugees?
Jeremy Loveless (independent)
Lebanon has absorbed the enormous Syrian influx but at a high cost to both refugees and Lebanese populations. Current humanitarian programmes can no longer cope and new approaches are needed.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/loveless

The arts in refugee camps: ten good reasons
Awet Andemicael (Yale University)
Refugees’ involvement in artistic activity – music, theatre, poetry, painting, etc – often plays a powerful positive role in their ability to survive physically and even emotionally and spiritually.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/andemicael

Trails of Tears: raising awareness of displacement
Ken Whalen (Universiti Brunei Darussalam)
Trails of Tears have arisen to draw attention and give legitimacy to multiple movements for fairness and justice, hoping to create a community of support strong enough to rectify a past injustice or prevent a future one.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/whalen

Harming asylum seekers’ chances through poor use of human rights treaties
Stephen Meili (University of Minnesota Law School)
Over the past decade, UK courts and administrative tribunals have become increasingly comfortable relying on international human rights treaties in cases where non-citizens claim asylum or other means of protection from persecution. However, this trend does not mean that these treaties have always been deployed by refugee lawyers in ways which benefit their clients.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/meili

Older people and displacement
Piero Calvi-Parisetti (HelpAge International)
At all phases of the displacement cycle – flight, displacement and return – older people are exposed to specific challenges and risks which are not sufficiently taken into account.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/calviparisetti

Poetry as women’s resistance to the consequences of Bedouin displacement in Jordan
Maira Seeley (University of Oxford)
Despite the significant displacement that Jordanian Bedouin families have undergone in recent generations, Bedouin women are able to mitigate some of the consequences of that displacement through the opportunities and influence they have gained as Nabati poets.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/seeley

Emergency need for telecommunications support
Marianne Donven (Government of Luxembourg) and Mariko Hall (WFP)
The Haiti experience challenged the international humanitarian community both to take advantage of the possibilities of increasingly available and common communications technologies and networks, and to ensure that it has access to the technological infrastructure enabling it to do so.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/donven-hall

Understanding refugees' concepts of sexual and gender-based violence
Carrie Hough (RefugePoint)
Sexual and gender-based violence prevention campaigns that incorporate culturally sensitive understanding will stand a better chance of breaking down barriers to accessing services.
www.fmreview.org/fragilestates/hough

Migrants arriving on the coast of Yemen from the Horn of Africa.