Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP)

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General

With the passing of the Cold War, failed and fragile states have emerged, as one of the greatest concerns among policy makers. Noted academics and policy makers alike have drawn attention to the complex relationship between state failure and both poverty and terrorism. Michael Ignatieff characterizes weak and collapsing states as the chief source of human rights abuses in the post-Cold War world. James Wolfensohn – former head of the World Bank- calls for a global strategy that includes measures designed
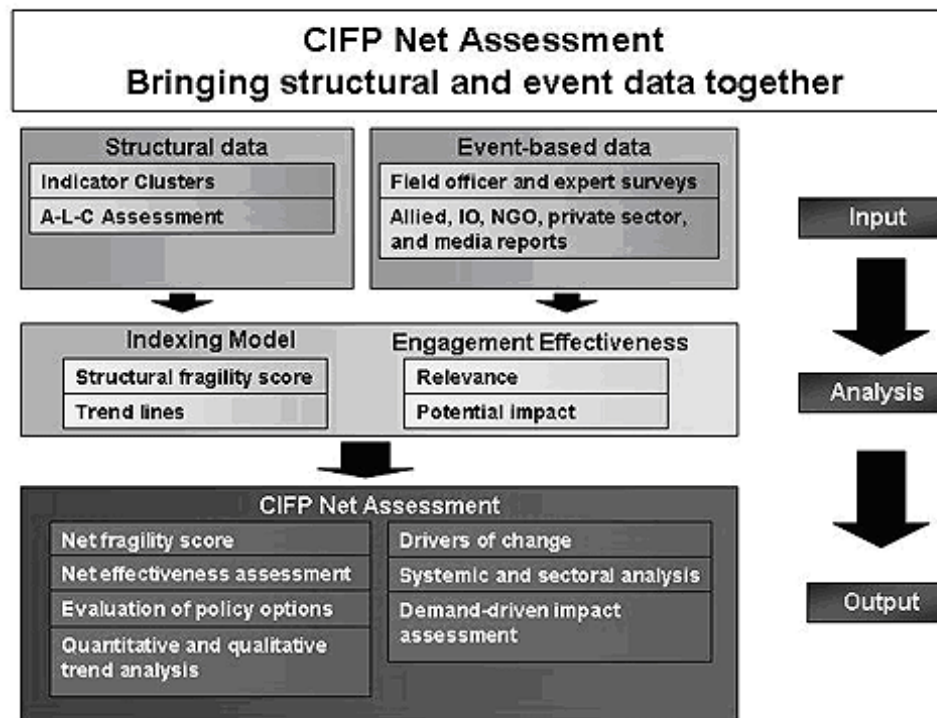
to address the root causes of terrorism: those of economic exclusion, poverty and under-development. Recent research has begun to quantify some of the costs associated with fragile and failed states.

Around 14% of the world_s population lives in states that qualify as fragile and depending on the definition used, there are anywhere between 30 to 50 such states. It is also broadly acknowledged that lack of progress toward global attainment of the millennium development goals (MDGs) is to a certain extent explained through the poor performance of the world_s fragile states. Several academics and policy makers have highlighted the connections between state fragility, state failure, poverty and terrorism, and recent research has found that there are substantial costs of not engaging in fragile states. Furthermore, the prevailing development orthodoxy is to reward countries that perform well and/or have good policy environments, with no clear direction of how to engage in fragile states, which by definition are characterized by poor policy environments. All of these factors point to a need for identifying the causes of state fragility and for providing a framework that can enable policy makers and development practitioners to engage in fragile environments.

The Project's Contribution to Policy

As part of a broader effort to enable more effective international engagement in failed and fragile states, a team from Carleton_s Country Indicators for Foreign Policy project (CIFP – www.carleton.ca/cifp) has been working with the Canadian government in a multi-year initiative that has three objectives. First, we have developed a number of wide-ranging tools that encompass, among other things, the monitoring, forecasting, and evaluation of failed and fragile states, as well as the assessment of supporting policies intended to address the development, security, and economic challenges they represent. The following diagram outlines the full extent of the CIFP analytical framework – known as the CIFP Net Assessment (CNA) – identifying the various modules involved in the analysis.

CIFP Net Assessment
Bringing structural and event data together

Structural data	Event-based data
Indicator Clusters	Field officer and expert surveys
A-L-C Assessment	Allied, IO, NGO, private sector, and media reports

Input

Indexing Model	Engagement Effectiveness
Structural fragility score	Relevance
Trend lines	Potential impact

Analysis

CIFP Net Assessment

Net fragility score	Drivers of change
Net effectiveness assessment	Systemic and sectoral analysis
Evaluation of policy options	Demand-driven impact assessment
Quantitative and qualitative trend analysis	

Output

Second the project presents a methodology for evaluating individual country performance. This drill-down capability provides guidance to programming officers at CIDA and other government departments working in complex and fragile environments. It enables them to focus efforts and resources on the root structural causes of fragility rather than the outward symptoms of the problem, while simultaneously identifying areas of comparative strength within the state that may provide valuable points of entry for international development efforts. At the same time, it allows them to avoid decisions likely to further destabilize the country through otherwise unforeseen consequences of programming activities.

Third, the project engages in statistical and theoretical research, regarding the nature of the relationship between state fragility and selected key variables. The findings provide some insight into the varied

causes of state fragility. Several important avenues requiring further study have been extensively covered in publication form. Such research is particularly relevant, given that the now broadly acknowledged lack of progress toward global attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is to a certain extent explained through the poor performance of the world_s fragile and failed states.
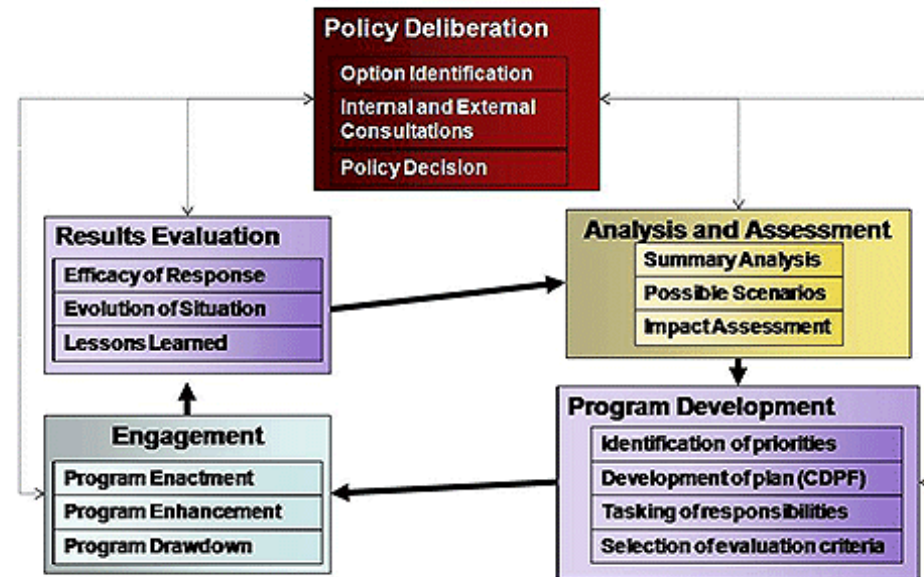
Innovations in Research Design and Methodologies for Risk Analysis, Country Monitoring and Impact Assessment

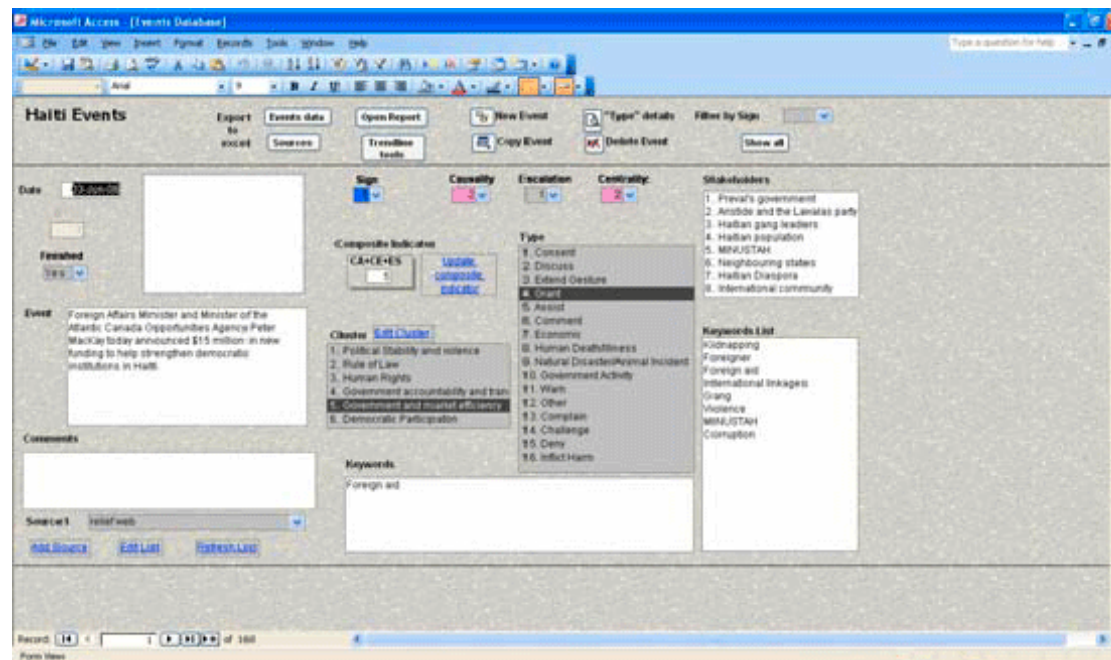Effective policy in fragile states requires a solid analytic base that:

- Is sufficiently nuanced to allow the observer to understand differentiated performance in different areas of fragility, rather than presenting processes and performance in an oversimplified manner;

- Identifies both positive and negative sectors in each state_s performance, thereby highlighting potential points of entry for external actors;

- Combines real time dynamic event and actor analysis with long-term structural information to counter time lags between developments on the ground and their reflection in statistical indicators and resulting programming priorities and timelines;

- Provides policy relevant diagnosis by matching the analysis to the end user_s operational capacity; and

- Provides an evaluative framework with which to assess policy impact both before and after programs are implemented.

The relationship between these objectives and the policy cycle are shown here:

Development Policy Cycle

In order to address these policy objectives, the CIFP Fragile States Project has developed a three tiered multi-source, multi method policy relevant tool kit. Our argument has been that if they are to have any significant impact, fragile state policies require a multifaceted but focused analysis based on an appreciation of the relative risks that exist within and between states and, more importantly, the development of effective policy-relevant tools for international engagement. One of the key innovations has been the construction of a web-based country monitoring tool, shown here:
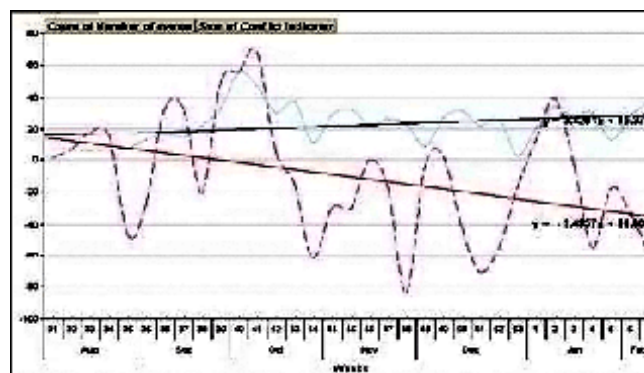
First, structural data, such as GDP per capita, political indices and human rights measures, provide a sturdy platform on which to build country analysis. Structural data are compiled by recognised organizations, sometimes in partnership with host nations. Structural data allows the end user to rank countries for quick assessments of performance within sub-sectors. Country level structural data also enable comparative analysis. For example, one may compare the voting rates among women in Ghana and Cote D_Ivoire using data collected by the UNDP or the World Bank. Using the same indicators and econometric analysis it is possible to determine in what way women_s voting rates in Ghana and Cote D_Ivoire are influenced by education levels, rural and urban environments, and formal employment.

Second, the systematic collection and evaluation of dynamic data also known as events-based information analysis, is highly relevant to fragile states programming and processes. Dynamic data analysis whether it draws on information from media sources or country experts, is useful for identifying up-to-date trends in

popular perceptions, preferences and stakeholder behaviours. Dynamic data analysis can add considerable value through regularized and standardised reporting. It can deepen understanding of trends found in structural data, and can highlight trend reversals. For example, a statistical study may show a steady decline in violent events over a series of years, but current events may evidence a sudden surge in violent demonstrations, one that will show up in structural data only until after the fact. Events-based information can also provide a window into stakeholder perceptions, how they are reacting to real-time changes and why they are doing so.

The figure below shows patterns of decline in governance performance approximately a year prior to the declared state of emergency in Pakistan in 2007. The red regression line in the graph represents the overall trend in events. Clearly, in the case of Pakistan, there was considerable evidence of an approaching crisis. Such evidence, if properly understood, can allow policymakers to respond in a timely fashion to impending problems, rather than simply responding after the fact.

Third, the project employs qualitative information, as a valuable complement to the systematic collection of statistical data, as it uncovers details and nuance. Put simply, when correctly structured, expert opinion can provide the "why" behind the "what" revealed through structural and dynamic data analysis. Expert opinions can provide detailed insight into specific issue areas, as well as offer ideas about what areas

deserve the most attention going forward, either because they are functioning well and can be used to propagate positive reform in other parts of the governance system, or because they are weakening and threaten to undermine stability and development in other sectors. For example, CIFP_s expert survey on Ghana highlights the problem of low popular expectations of government as an obstacle to improving governance performance. Ghanaians have become so accustomed to limited government capacity that they have ceased to seriously challenge the government on its service delivery.

Additional Information

For more information about our work, you can access our risk analysis data, reports and methodologies at http://www.carleton.ca/cifp. Our current initiative focuses on fragile and failed states with a view to assisting the Canadian government in developing more effective policies.

Additional information can be found **here**.

History

CIFP has its origins in an innovative geopolitical database – GEOPOL – produced ed by the Operational Research and Analysis Establishment of DND during and after 1991. The project was done at the urgent request of Chief of Operational Planning and Force Development, who needed a tool to assist the Canadian Forces in contingency planning for operations around the world. The project was led by Tony Kellett, who was largely responsible for developing the methodology and who was assisted by a number of defence scientists and military officers in ORAE. Paul Sutherland of ORAE took over the further development of GEOPOL when Tony Kellett was posted in 1993. Andre Ouellette of DFAIT was so impressed with the potential for GEOPOL to help in prioritizing mission locations around the world that he

asked ORAE for access to GEOPOL and then, with ORAE's concurrence, in 1997 contracted Carleton University to adapt it for DFAIT and CSIS And the rest is history.

What Others Have Said

Wired Magazine wrote up **a nice piece about us**.

and Countryrisk.com has this to say about us:

"Tired of playing second fiddle, Canada raises the bar with this site, which easily outshines the CIA's State Failure project (see separate entry). The base aim is similar: discover what factors correlate with violent political conflict, with a view to early warning and prevention."

"The CIFP, a joint academic-government project, tells us we should be looking out for factors including a history of conflict, environmental stresses, ethnic divisions, and militarization, among others. A well-done interface spits out the base statistics, and irregular risk reports provide country risk ratings as well as dry, detailed country risk assessments. Reports on hot topics such as corporate social responsibility also appear on the site."

Read more.

and here from Carleton Now:

Posted Jan. 9/06

By Scott Foster

A protracted conflict kills more than 10,000 people, and 150,000 flee to a neighbouring country. Aid officials estimate one million people are displaced from their homes. The tragic fallout is quickly dubbed the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.

This scenario is part of what happened last summer in Darfur, Sudan. And the impact is still being felt, leading many to raise pressing questions about how international aid agencies and governments can best respond to and prevent such crises.

Among those asking questions is Carleton_s David Carment, principal investigator for the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP) project and Professor in the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs. Helping him find answers for the Canadian International Development Agency, the Department of National Defence, Foreign Affairs Canada and humanitarian non-governmental organizations such as CARE International, is a recent Carleton University Foundry Program grant that gives CIFP and Carleton-based Global Development Group a chance to join forces.

Global Development Group, which develops high-tech solutions for the international development field, is working on an emergency response portal that will help governments and aid agencies better respond to regional conflicts and disasters, explains Ron Santos, MA/89, the companys project manager. The Foundry grant will provide the necessary seed money to allow CIFP to integrate its models on emergency risk assessment into the portal. An additional $250,000 in funding for CIFP comes from the Canadian International Development Agency.

When complete, the portal, which is called the Snowball Project, promises to be a major gateway of diverse information on certain hotspots. Currently, CIFP researchers are collecting data on areas such as Kashmir, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East. Soon, this information will factor into the user-friendly portal and join a treasure trove of CIFP analytical reports and briefs on particular events and newswire stories that can be accessed by stakeholders via computer.

Think of a map icon, says Carment. You click on it and access information on how a particular country is performing, whether its security, human development, economic development, political or environmental stability. In addition to that, you have a way to access events in the last few months and how those trends are affecting the situation on the ground.

The prototype, which is due out this spring or sooner, will allow users in the field to get updates on things like road conditions, weather, populations, and early-warning transmissions of potential conflicts that may soon erupt.

Its critical, says Carment, for users to have a tool that can forecast events before they happen so that everyone can be better prepared.

Disasters loom large and then disappear. Sometimes, governments or aid workers have to know in advance where the next disaster is likely to happen. And currently, that information does not reside in any single repository. So they find they have to scramble.

Carment adds the grant is extremely timely since the Government of Canada recently announced its plans for a Stabilization Reconstruction Task Force that would respond to the needs of fragile or failed states.

Personnel

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Carlo Dade	Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL)

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Presentations About CIFP

- Country Indicators for Foreign Policy:Final Report Phase III (1/04/2003)

- CIFP: Peacebuilding Consultations (03/05/2001)

- CIFP: FEWER Annual Meeting 2001 (10/01/2001)

- CIFP: Database Demonstration (09/11/1999)

- Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP):Project Description (08/12/1998)

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