Learning from experiences with implementation and financing of **recovery and peacebuilding assessments**: 1999–2017

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World Bank Group
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United Nations

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Preface

The 2008 Joint Declaration on Post-Crisis Assessments and Recovery Planning envisions a "common platform for action" for the European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN), and the World Bank Group. The most visible result has been a shared process for post-disaster needs assessments and post-conflict needs assessments (PCNAs), the latter of which have evolved into the current approach to recovery and peacebuilding assessments (RPBAs).

Conflicts are no longer time-bound phenomena that affect two to three parties, and that are resolved when a peace agreement is mediated and signed. Today's conflicts have mutated into systems driven by complex factors and multiple actors, generate turbulence over extended periods of time, spread over geographical and social landscapes, and continue at multiple levels even after a limited peace deal is signed among some actors. This is reflected in our approach—a dynamic change from PCNA to RPBA. It has also entailed substantial expansions in scope, with these joint assessments tackling both new kinds of challenges and new kinds of contexts.

The priorities identified in these joint assessments include the most sensitive issues of national governance. The process of finding a mutually agreed way forward is at the very core of the partnership. An enabling political environment for RPBA implementation is just as important as the technical quality of the work. It is critical to properly situate RPBA implementation in the broader political and aid environment.

This study reviews the implementation and financing arrangements that were established after the assessments were concluded, across a range of case studies covering both PCNAs and RPBAs. The overall goal was to identify what approaches have worked where, why, and for whom. Learnings from this study will inform the application of the RPBA methodology.

This report is about aid effectiveness in fragile settings. There is no doubt that cooperation between the three institutions creates powerful opportunities in this regard. There are many instances where a good "implementation architecture" has facilitated leadership by national stakeholders, improved coherence, pooled risks and made them more manageable, and reduced transaction costs. In some cases, these benefits have extended to the wider international community, with the three partner institutions underwriting essential common services that would otherwise have gone unprovided.

Operational coherence in RPBA implementation requires having a lead national institution with an adequate mandate and resources; a robust coordination architecture; and a good implementation, monitoring, and reporting system that can be quickly operationalized. Both the government and international partners must support these processes by investing upfront in operational capacities. The need for a coherent implementation and financing arrangement with the government leading the process, with effective communication with and engagement of the wider community, is crucial for a sustainable peace outcome.

—High-Level Advisory Group

Acknowledgments

This report is based on 100 or so interviews, and a fair-sized cabinet of accompanying documents. Our interlocutors have included colleagues in host governments; the World Bank Group, the European Commission, and the United Nations system; nongovernmental and civil society actors; and independent experts. We are grateful for their time and critical thinking on what has worked—and not worked—and hope that we helped provide an opportunity to think longer term and bigger picture.

Abbreviations

ARTF	Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund
BRR	Agency for the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Aceh/Nias
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
EU	European Union
IDA	International Development Association
LIC	low-income country
MDTF	multi-donor trust fund
MIC	middle-income country
MIP	Multi-Annual Indicative Programme
PCNA	post-conflict needs assessment
PCNI	Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative (Nigeria)
PDNA	post-disaster needs assessment
PSG	peacebuilding and statebuilding goal
RPBA	recovery and peacebuilding assessment
UN	United Nations

All dollar amounts are U.S. dollars unless otherwise indicated.

Executive summary

The 2008 Joint Declaration on Post-Crisis Assessments and Recovery Planning (EC, UNDG, and World Bank 2008) envisions a "common platform for action" for the European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank Group. The most visible result has been a shared process for post-disaster needs assessments and post-conflict needs assessments (PCNAs), the latter of which has evolved into the current approach to recovery and peacebuilding assessments (RPBAs).

To date, the PCNA/RPBA approach has been utilized about 15 times.[1] This study looks at what happened after the assessments were conducted, and reviews the implementation and financing arrangements that were established across a range of case studies. The overall goal was to identify what approaches have worked where, why, and for whom. The lessons learned are being used to inform guidelines for practitioners on how to develop RPBA implementation and financing modalities (forthcoming).

The essential background for this report is several generations of policy guidance on PCNAs, and two reviews of experiences in 2007 and 2016. The 2016 review marked the evolution of the PCNA methodology into what is now known as the RPBA approach. This study complements this earlier work by shifting emphasis in three ways.

1. Identifying the right priorities → Building effective partnerships

- The basic goal for RPBAs is to better align the efforts of national and international stakeholders. This can and should be conceptualized within the wider agenda for aid effectiveness in fragile and conflict-affected countries.

- Section 2 summarizes relevant principles, identified as success criteria, from this wider perspective. These principles are utilized throughout the study to assess "what good looks like" when reviewing practices at the country level.

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[1] Joint assessments formally recognized as PCNAs have been undertaken in Iraq (2003), Sri Lanka (2003), Haiti (2004), Liberia (2004), Sudan (2005), Sudan/Darfur (2006), Somalia (2006–07), Georgia (2008), Pakistan (2009–10), the Kyrgyz Republic (2010), and the Republic of Yemen (2012). Assessments recognized as RPBAs have been conducted in Nigeria (2015), Ukraine (2015), the Central African Republic (2016), and Cameroon (2017, ongoing).

2. Templates and models → Working with the grain

- Much of the early policy thinking for PCNAs/RPBAs was premised on stereotypes about the context—which was generally envisaged as a national political transition in an already aid-dependent country.

- In reality, however, the case studies were extremely diverse. They included middle-income countries and least developed countries, countries in the throes of national and subnational crises, and countries in stable as well as in fluid constitutional settings.

- With these factors in mind, the report is organized to support a design approach for RPBAs. In section 3, we summarize key contextual parameters that should inform the selection of "best fit" approaches. In section 4, we present options for implementation and financing modalities, and try to match them with the contexts in which they will work best.

3. Implementation → strategic management

- A neat division between an assessment phase and an implementation phase does not match reality. RPBAs are implemented in fluid situations, and touch on the most sensitive questions of national governance.

- In these settings, reducing implementation to a technical exercise will doom it to failure. Thus, a core objective is for all the partners to contribute to an enabling political and institutional environment; the ways and means of doing so is a recurring theme throughout section 4.

- Strategic management involves cultivating linkages between national and international policy agendas, finding consensus on how to move forward on divisive issues, and ensuring all actors are mutually accountable.

These three shifts in focus provide the point of departure. The majority of this report is devoted to a survey of current practices around the following four key themes:

- **Implementation in RPBA process design (subsection 4.1).** When and how to assess implementation options; how to organize political engagement and find relevant technical capacities; and how to kick-start roll-out within the EU, UN, and World Bank

- **Governance and coordination (subsection 4.2).** How to build political support, ensure operational coherence, monitor and report on implementation, and join the "silos" of international engagement

- **Institutional alignment (subsection 4.3).** How to translate the RPBA into internal priorities and planning within national government; within the EU, UN, and World Bank; and across the wider aid world

- **Financing (subsection 4.4).** The mechanics of an overall financing strategy, fund management frameworks, and mobilization of the right funding instruments

Within each of these subsections, we provide a succinct guide to findings with the intent of helping readers hone in on issues of individual interest.

Based on the assessment of practices across the case study countries, the following general recommendations were identified for these four areas.

■ **Implementation in RPBA process design (subsection 4.1):**

— Avoid prescriptive or "turnkey" definitions of implementation modalities. Instead, assess which options will be most viable and effective in a given context, and prioritize consultations and consensus building among stakeholders.

— Do not rush the development of implementation options; these do not need to be finalized during the assessment phase. However, do ensure that consultations and preparatory work begin early enough to avoid lengthy gaps—and a possible loss of momentum—after the assessment.

— Plan the development and roll-out of implementation mechanisms. Ensure that the EU, UN, and World Bank have the capacity to support this process, and consider framing implementation measures as a roadmap or action plan. Do not do everything at once; sequence roll-out based on national "load-bearing" capacity and progress in establishing the necessary prerequisites (e.g., national policy and legal frameworks).

— Governments and the EU, UN, and World Bank must invest significantly in planning and rolling out implementation modalities, to ensure continuity of support following the assessment phase. It is therefore imperative to secure agreements on this joint engagement, and on the division of labor, before the main RPBA assessment phase is completed.

■ **Governance and coordination (subsection 4.2):**

— An enabling political environment for RPBA implementation is just as important as the technical quality of the work. Accordingly, it is critical to properly situate RPBA implementation in the broader political and aid environment.

— High-level commitments on policy priorities and agreements on stakeholders' roles and responsibilities should be institutionalized, wherever possible, in a compact between national and international stakeholders. These agreements can serve as the foundation for implementation coordination and financing mechanisms.

— Operational coherence in RPBA implementation requires having a lead national institution with an adequate mandate and resources, a robust coordination architecture, and "good enough" processes that can be quickly operationalized. Both the government and international partners must support these processes by investing upfront in operational capacities.

— Linkages between the RPBA and other assistance frameworks (e.g., security and humanitarian support) should focus on achieving overall strategic coherence, and on aligning and coordinating their efforts in areas where there is operational overlap.

— Inclusivity and equity are key considerations when designing RPBA implementation arrangements, and this means ensuring broad participation in coordination and program design processes at national and subnational levels.

— A pragmatic, "light footprint" approach should be taken for RPBA monitoring and evaluation mechanisms; the emphasis should be on tracking core policy reforms, strategic results, and financing indicators.

■ **Institutional alignment (subsection 4.3):**

— Enabling policy and legal measures for RPBA implementation should be identified early, based on a thorough understanding of the political, governance, and stakeholder environment. At the same time, implementation should proceed wherever possible, including through temporary arrangements, while policy and legal arrangements are in the discussion stages.

— The EU, UN, and World Bank should proactively determine how best to align with, and support, RPBA implementation. This includes reviewing and adjusting country strategies, programs, and operations; and identifying capacity and resources to support RPBA coordination requirements.

— International partners should be encouraged to align with RPBA priorities and implementation processes based on relevance, interest, and capacity. "On ramps" (or access points) for engagement of additional partners should be identified within the RPBA implementation framework, whether in joint priority setting, harmonized monitoring and reporting, and/or participation in core thematic, sectoral, and financing coordination mechanisms.

■ **Financing (subsection 4.4):**

— The design of RPBA financing arrangements should be based on a comprehensive assessment of financing needs and modalities. It is good practice to develop a financing strategy to facilitate consensus building on funding priorities, and to establish a common framework for alignment of different funding sources and instruments.

— Upstream consultations and engagement with the government and donor partners on financing needs are needed in order to identify possible sources and instruments of financing and to facilitate consensus building on fund management modalities.

— Country systems for channeling and managing financing should be used wherever possible, taking into consideration any fiduciary and implementation issues. Where capacity constraints exist, technical and institutional capacity development assistance should be provided as a matter of priority.

1. Introduction

1.1 Scope and purpose

The 2008 Joint Declaration on Post-Crisis Assessments and Recovery Planning (Joint Declaration; EC, UNDG, and World Bank 2008) envisions a "common platform for action" for the European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN), and the World Bank. The most prominent result was a shared methodology for post-disaster needs assessments (PDNAs) and post-conflict needs assessments (PCNAs), the latter of which has evolved over time into the present approach to recovery and peacebuilding assessments (RPBAs).

To date, there have been about 15 PCNAs/RPBAs. The most recent review of this experience, completed in 2016 (Garrasi and Allen 2016), concluded that the host governments and the three partner institutions had not consistently followed up their assessments with coherent action. To the contrary, the authors found that "the impact of assessments on country-specific programming has been difficult to determine"; and documented a lack of processes for "good prioritization in regard to translating findings of an assessment into action."

The present review emerged in this context. The terms of reference developed in mid-2016 set out two objectives:

- Review past experiences with PCNAs and RPBAs to identify the challenges faced and lessons learned in implementing their findings

- Develop guidance for practitioners on how to approach implementation and financing modalities for RPBAs

This report addresses the first objective. It is the product of extensive consultation with practitioners across the EU, UN, and World Bank, and with interlocutors in host governments. The findings were also validated through workshop-style discussions with each institution in May–June 2017. The key findings have been adapted for use in a companion guidance note for practitioners involved with RPBA processes (forthcoming).

Both documents are primarily intended for the three signatories to the Joint Declaration—the EU, UN, and World Bank—referred to in this document as the "core partners." However, the documents may also serve as useful points of reference for other institutions interested in experiences with PCNAs and RPBAs.

In reviewing experiences across different countries, we deconstruct the goal of a common platform for action into four main planks. Each is discussed separately in section 4:

The RPBA process	When and how should implementation modalities be discussed? What enabling factors help keep up momentum after the assessment is done?
Governance and coordination	How can the RPBA drive an effective partnership between national and international institutions? How should these partners share information, make joint decisions, and monitor progress?
Institutional alignment	How is the RPBA translated into partner organizations' internal processes for planning, programming, and evaluating success? How is it anchored in government institutions and processes?
Financing	How do all partners allocate and manage the resources needed to support both the delivery of results and the above-referenced functions?

A fifth theme, constructive engagement with risk, is treated as a cross-cutting issue throughout section 4.

1.2 Approach

The goal of this review was effectively to identify lessons learned on what works for implementation and financing. To do this, we have drawn upon three sources.

The first and most important source was a review of country experiences. This comprised nine cases: five PCNAs/RPBAs, two PDNAs (Indonesia and Nepal), and two comparison cases that did not use the PCNA/RPBA approach (Afghanistan and Somalia). We deliberately selected non-PCNA/RPBA exercises so that we could compare how similar implementation challenges were addressed in different contexts. Three country experiences (the Central African Republic Nigeria, and Somalia) were researched in further depth than the others. Table 1.1 provides background information for each case study; specific practices, policies, and experiences are highlighted in sections 3 and 4. In addition to these case studies, we also drew upon the extensive policy resources already available for PCNAs/RPBAs, including guidance documents from 2004 and 2007, and reviews undertaken in 2007 and 2016 (Kievelitz et al. 2004; UNDG and World Bank 2007; UN and World Bank 2007; Garrasi and Allen 2016).

The second source of guidance was the wider normative debate around effective aid in fragile and conflict-affected settings. This provided essential background for interpreting, discussing, and evaluating what has been tried under the rubric of a PCNA/RPBA. Although not an exhaustive list, relevant points of reference include the following:

- **Aid effectiveness agenda—**Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, Accra Agenda for Action, and Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation

- **Aid in fragile settings—**International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (and the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States); Organisation for Economic

Co-operation and Development/International Network on Conflict and Fragility (OECD/INCAF) guidance

■ **Policy thinking by the core partners—**including formal guidance, evaluations, and lessons learned exercises

The third source was the academic and gray literature. We do not attempt to summarize the extensive writing on development assistance in conflict-affected settings, because the focus is on practical experiences; however, references are provided where sources are relevant.

1.3 How to read this report

Our point of departure is that what works for RPBAs is a question of best fit, of selecting the right approach for the specific case at hand. With this in mind, we summarize feedback under three headings.

■ **Section 2: Success criteria.** How to assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of implementation and financing arrangements

■ **Section 3: Contextual parameters.** The contextual variables that shape what works, where, and why, drawing upon variations between the case study countries

■ **Section 4: Practices.** Options and potential approaches for

— The RPBA process (subsection 4.1);
— Governance and coordination (subsection 4.2);
— Institutional alignment (subsection 4.3); and
— Financing (subsection 4.4).

Rather than drawing formal conclusions in this report, we focus on practical takeaways for each of these topics. These takeaways form the basis of the forthcoming guidance note.

Table 1.1 Overview of country case studies

AFGHANISTAN Reconstruction Trust Fund (2002–present)	The Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) was established in 2002, and has supported a succession of government frameworks and accompanying international compacts. The most recent of these are the Realizing Self-Reliance Framework (2014) and the National Priority Programmes. In recent years, the ARTF has managed just under $1 billion per year, with parallel windows for recurrent costs and investment spending. Its coordination functions are supported by a sizable secretariat, which is funded out of the levies on contributions.
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC RPBA (2015)	The National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (RCPCA) grew out of an RPBA conducted at the request of the incoming government, after a transitional regime and elections in 2015. The RCPCA covers the whole national territory, and has been endorsed as the de facto national development strategy for 2017–19. Funding needs were presented at an international donor conference in November 2016, with pledges of €2.06 billion, and a governance and coordination structure is progressively being established over the course of 2017. The interface with humanitarian agencies and the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) are key issues for implementation.

INDONESIA (Aceh/Nias) Damage and Loss Assessment (2005)	Following the December 2004 earthquake/tsunami in Aceh, the World Bank led a damage and loss assessment that mapped essential needs and informed a subsequent donor conference. The main output was the Master Plan for the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Aceh and Nias. The Agency for the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Aceh/Nias (BRR) coordinated the implementation of this project. With support from the UN and World Bank, the BRR successfully coordinated the work of more than 400 partners in the reconstruction effort; approximately $7.7 billion was allocated between 2005 and 2007.
MALI Joint Evaluation Mission for Northern Mali (2015)	The Joint Evaluation Mission for Northern Mali (MIEC) was undertaken within the framework of the 2015 peace accord between the national government and armed groups. A donor conference in October 2015 mobilized substantial funding, but this was not formally pledged in support of MIEC priorities, and connections were weak in practice. The MIEC outlined a phased strategy for implementation, but lacked national ownership and leadership due to turnover in the government and MIEC anchorage in the monitoring commission of the peace accord (hence diluting government accountability). Implementation of the MIEC as a whole has not proceeded for these reasons, but the underlying analytic work and planning has informed EU, UN, and World Bank programming for northern Mali.
NEPAL PDNA (2015)	Nepal's PDNA followed earthquakes in April and May 2015. This assessment covered the whole national territory because an estimated one-third of the population was directly affected, spread out over 31 of the 75 districts. One year later, the PDNA was supplemented by a national post-disaster recovery framework, with a total budget of $6.7 billion. A new reconstruction agency led coordination efforts, with some initial difficulties due to a turbulent political context. Funding sources included domestic resources, bilateral aid, and a World Bank–administered trust fund for housing reconstruction.
NIGERIA RPBA (2016)	The federal government requested help with an RPBA following the election of President Buhari in 2015. The RPBA covered the six northeastern states affected by the Boko Haram conflict and is intended to provide the basis for operationalizing the Buhari Plan (the national plan for the north-east states). Implementation modalities are being formulated through an action plan that brings in the relevant state governments and federal government entities, as well as key international financial institutions and bilateral donors. This process is marked by strong engagement of national and international partners and places a concerted focus on capacity development and early prioritization of interventions pending the establishment of formal implementation mechanisms.
SOMALIA Compact (2013)	The Somali Compact was formulated within the framework of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, and linked with the shift from the transitional federal government to the federal government of Somalia. The compact provided a framework for redefining relations with the donor aid community, and for prioritizing donor programs through a coordination structure organized around the peacebuilding and statebuilding goals. This led to a substantial increase in development aid for Somalia. Of the $2.3 billion in aid pledged against the compact in 2013, more than $1.8 billion had been allocated by 2016. The EU, UN, and World Bank provided substantial coordination support throughout implementation of the compact, including through a multiple window multi-donor trust fund, which provided an important platform for dialogue on aid harmonization.
PAKISTAN PCNA (2010)	The Post-Crisis Needs Assessment for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) followed counter-insurgency operations against militants in these areas in 2009–10. The PCNA was supported by a World Bank–administered trust fund, and it focused on programs in KP and the FATA, alongside a light steering and coordination structure at the national level. Allocations for this project were approximately $147 million over seven years. As of mid-2017, the PCNA trust fund has recently entered phase II, and key international partners are reviewing their level of engagement.
UKRAINE RPBA (2015)	The RPBA was conducted October 2014–February 2015, at the request of the national government. The assessment came after a surge of violence in the country's east region, and a "revolutionary" transition of government just prior to that. The assessment was approached as a phase 1 plan, pending stabilization of the situation, and applies to designated conflict-affected oblasts in eastern Ukraine. Total requirements were estimated at $1.52 billion, with the lion's share expected to be financed from national resources and loan financing. A new national authority led coordination efforts.

2. Success criteria

This section develops working criteria for what good looks like when it comes to implementation and financing arrangements. We use these criteria throughout sections 3 and 4 to help assess and compare practices across the nine case studies used for this review.

The starting point for this endeavor is the wider normative conversation about how to effectively organize international cooperation in fragile and conflict-affected settings. The main reference points in this regard are well known. They include the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2012). We also refer to the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding and the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States (2011).

A final source is the overarching policy approaches of the three core partners. As underscored in the 2016 review, since the RPBA approach was first developed, each institution has undergone significant transformations in how they approach fragile and conflict-affected settings. This is reflected in the range of mandatory policies, supplementary guidance, and exploratory research.

2.1 National leadership

It is axiomatic that peacebuilding and recovery must be nationally led to be successful and sustainable. This principle is recognized and restated in the Joint Declaration (EC, UNDG, and World Bank 2008) and the 2007 version of the PCNA guidance (UNDG and World Bank 2007) and is also heavily emphasized in 2007 and 2016 reviews of experiences with PCNAs (UN and World Bank 2007; Garrasi and Allen 2016). In practice, however, the latter document found that national authorities varied widely in their levels of engagement and reported that "overall there is little documented best practice."

It is thus clear that effective national leadership must be a central consideration across all four themes covered in this study. Read together, the above-mentioned sources focus our attention on the following:

- **Political and policy positioning.** An RPBA must link with national political, policy, and legal frameworks. These in turn must link to planning and resource allocation across government, and by international partners.

- **Local capacities.** This includes using and strengthening country systems; using domestic resources where possible; and ensuring timely, predictable aid provision. The RPBA process must also be sequenced with the aid partners' key planning and programming decisions, and financing instruments must be creatively used to respond to the evolving national context.

- **Transparency and information sharing.** These are basic prerequisites that allow governance and coordination mechanisms to work effectively and develop viable financing strategies.

2.2 Inclusive ownership

Fragile and post-crisis or conflict-affected settings are often characterized by weakened and/or contested mechanisms for building consensus and for compromising on tough policy issues. In some cases, institutions are transitional and lack an electoral mandate to set longer-term policy directions. In other cases, a government's legitimacy may be challenged along regional, ethnic, or other lines.

This environment poses serious challenges given that RPBAs are intended to focus specifically on the conflict "storyline," to use the terminology of the 2007 guidance. Discussions about what is to be done and how it will be done will inevitably touch on the most sensitive questions of national governance. Accordingly, there is a substantial risk of doing harm, and being perceived as taking sides, if national leadership is conceived too narrowly or legalistically.

The 2007 guidance on PCNAs recognizes this in straightforward fashion, noting that "no one actor can go it alone," and that the cooperation of actors outside of government will typically be essential. Elsewhere, it has become commonplace to insist on inclusive national ownership. This requirement is spelled out in Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals ("effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions"); within the New Deal framework; and in landmark reviews by the World Bank in 2011 and the UN in 2015.

Applied to RPBA contexts, these principles suggest several practical steps for the partner institutions:

- Involve nongovernment stakeholders—including organized civil society and the wider public—in the key decisions, processes, and structures relating to RPBA implementation and financing.

- Wherever RPBAs have identified exclusion and inequality as key challenges, develop measures to ensure adequate targeting of marginalized groups, including through programming and financing.

- Develop institutional arrangements for RPBA implementation that are inclusive of all branches of government, including relevant subnational levels.

2.3 Fit to context

The concept of "no one size fits all" is well beyond cliché in the field of international aid, and it particularly applies to fragile and conflict-affected settings. To provide one reference point, principle number 1 of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations is to "take context as the starting point" (OECD 2007). It is followed by principle number 7, which is to "align with local priorities in different ways in different contexts."

These principles have frequently been reiterated by all three partner institutions. The IDA18 replenishment meetings for the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) included a special theme on fragility, conflict, and violence; and the final report led with the statement that "addressing challenges of conflict and fragility requires a differentiated approach tailored to the circumstances of each country" (IDA 2016, 11). The UN's two high-level reviews of peacekeeping and peacebuilding in 2015 used similar language; as did the Council of the European Union in 2014 (EU 2014).

With respect to implementing and financing RPBAs, it follows that the goal is also to find "best fit" approaches for the context (as emphasized in section 1). Best fit approaches require the following:

- Identifying, and adapting to, key enablers and constraints in the political, security, institutional, and geographic environments (discussed more fully in section 3)

- Avoiding turnkey designs for implementation modalities, and emphasizing prior assessment and consultation to identify approaches that are politically salient and technically feasible in the local context (section 4.1)

- Sequencing RPBA implementation to ensure alignment with parallel strategies and processes—including political transitions, improvement of security conditions, and institutional capacity strengthening (section 4.2)

- Ensuring that global-level planning and management processes among the core partners provide enough flexibility at the country level to do all of the above (section 4.3)

2.4 Constructive engagement with risk

The Busan Partnership's point of departure on the topic of development results was to call for "approaches that manage, rather than avoid, risk." The New Deal states more bluntly that "we accept the risk of engaging during transition, recognizing that the risk of non-engagement in this context can outweigh most risks of engagement."

In practice, our informants suggested that RPBA implementation should help partners engage constructively with four categories of risk:

- **Political risk.** Building national ownership and leadership on difficult policy issues, in situations where government legitimacy is contested, reform processes are difficult, and political relationships are adversarial

- **Environmental risk.** Effective targeting and sequencing of interventions in contexts of continuing insecurity, violence, or conflict; ensuring that development aid works coherently with other "silos" of international intervention rather than at cross purposes

- **Fiduciary risk.** Facilitating the progressive use of national systems, despite a context of high-risk ratings on normal criteria; finding ways and means for monitoring and verification in situations where normal approaches are not feasible or economical

- **Program risk.** Creating a common vision on how to scale up transition to government service providers and build capacities to avoid gaps in service delivery

2.5 Coherent action

The third and fourth commitments of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness are "harmonization" and "managing for results." Paraphrasing slightly, this means ensuring that development coordination arrangements support a sensible division of labor among partners, track overall development results rather than individual agency agendas, and facilitate decision making based on those emerging results.

PCNA/RPBA guidance has stressed these principles from the very beginning, with the Joint Declaration envisioning a "strategic prioritization process," and "a selective framework for priority action to which international partners…align their programs and commit their funding." With regard to implementation arrangements, we highlight a number of specific outcomes in support of those goals:

- Effective coordination among government ministries, agencies, and other relevant entities, including clear mandates and adequate resources

- Clear priorities within and between sectors and geographic areas

- Joint monitoring and reporting to provide a common picture of available resources, progress on implementation, and eventually of progress against overall results

- Effective links between RPBA governance and coordination, and the internal planning and management processes of the core partners

- Coherent mix of funding instruments, including the national budget, to ensure that resources are delivered effectively and gaps are filled to the extent possible

2.6 Overcoming stovepipes

Development aid exists alongside other kinds of international engagement in fragile states. In each of the case studies, this included major political and security initiatives and an extensive humanitarian response. Relatively tight dependencies existed between these pillars of intervention, and partners needed to define joint ways of working.

All three core partners have taken internal initiatives on this point. The debate is perhaps most advanced within the UN system, where well over a decade of policy efforts have taken place under the rubric of "integration." UN policy on integration, which has also been reflected in recent strategic reviews, such as the 2015 High-Level Panel on Peacekeeping Operations and the New Way of Working initiative for complex humanitarian emergencies, frames the challenge as follows:

> Integrated assessment and planning processes are intended to maximize the individual and collective impact of the context-specific peace consolidation activities of the UN system. While there are important systemic constraints to integration within the UN, it is crucial that, at a minimum, the political, peacekeeping, humanitarian, human rights, and development entities of the organization share a common analysis and agree on a set of common strategic objectives. (UN 2013b)

The EU (2014) has suggested similar directions under the rubric of the "Comprehensive Approach," which calls for "common strategic objectives and a clear common vision of what the EU collectively wants to achieve in a particular conflict or crisis situation." The World Bank, lacking a political mandate, has put increasing emphasis on partnerships over the last decade, based on "a division of labor and recognition of the limits of the World Bank Group's mandate but also its comparative advantage in fragility, conflict, and violence contexts."

These ambitions have required adjustments on all sides. For development institutions, operating under the framework of an RPBA, these have included the following:

- Ensuring the political relevance of RPBA tasks, and connecting aid decision making with the wider political, security, and humanitarian "storylines"

- Managing dependencies at the operational level, including questions of sequencing and complementarity[1]

- Preserving space for principled humanitarian action

- Situating and aligning RPBAs within the broader framework for development cooperation, which involves clarifying who is doing what

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[1] Here, dependencies refer to areas of direct intersection between, for instance, development and security sector reform and humanitarian assistance. An example of the former is the broader institutional development and governance work that comes in support of the direct provision of security assistance (e.g., through a UN peacekeeping mission). An example of the latter is the need to sustain humanitarian gains following an emergency phase through longer-term development actions (e.g., transitioning from providing direct food assistance to supporting job creation and livelihood opportunities).

3. Contextual parameters

PCNAs and RPBAs have been utilized in a wide range of situations. This section summarizes stakeholder feedback on the most relevant contextual variables that come into play when designing a "best fit" approach for any specific case. These variables will determine the opportunities, constraints, and design trade-offs for the options and approaches considered in section 4.

We group our findings under two broad headings: the country context, and the aid environment. At the end of section 3, we illustrate what this kind of contextual analysis looks like for two cases—the Central African Republic and Nigeria—and how it affected the choice of implementation and financing arrangements.

3.1 The country context

3.1.1 Political and governance landscape

RPBAs touch on the most sensitive questions of national policy. How decisions will be made, and how progress will be measured, is accordingly a matter of intense concern for national stakeholders. At worst, poorly designed interventions can exacerbate historical, or contemporary, grievances about governance; at best, they will lapse quickly into irrelevance.

The practical implication is that it is essential to understand the existing distribution of political authority and how it is perceived by different stakeholder groups. This understanding should inform all aspects of RPBA implementation, but it is particularly relevant for the assessment design itself, for building national ownership and buy-in, and for grounding governance and coordination processes. A simple way of conceptualizing the issue is along two dimensions (stability and inclusivity).

Stability:

- **Institutions.** Do national authorities have a clear structure and mandate, or is this in a state of flux (as is the case under peace accords or negotiated transitions)?

- **Interlocutors.** Is there an upcoming election? Is there established leadership for key government entities, or is this in flux?

- ■ **Agendas.** Are there policy and legal initiatives that have a bearing on RPBA priorities? Are these likely to evolve in the near future?

Inclusivity:

- ■ **Distribution of power.** What is the distribution of competence between national and subnational levels? Between the different branches of government?

- ■ **Elite opposition.** Are there significant political factions, or regions, that are challenging the legitimacy of national authorities?

- ■ **Public participation.** How open are governance institutions and decision-making processes to inputs from organized civil society and/or the wider public? Are there specific demographic groups that have historically been marginalized?

It is important to consider these questions in the context of a country's culture and history. In most fragile and conflict-affected situations, there will be well-established grievances about the modalities or style of governance. Grievances may relate to the underrepresentation of certain stakeholder groups, perceived or actual inequalities in the distribution of services and resources, or the human rights legacy of specific institutions.

3.1.2 National capacities

Genuine national leadership, as outlined in section 2.1, puts relatively intensive demands on government institutions. Our informants emphasized that these two kinds of capacities are most critical.

Cross-government coordination:

- ■ **Policy making.** How is planning coordinated across different ministries, entities, and levels of government? What are the existing processes to ensure coherence at the sectoral level? At the cabinet or whole-of-government level?

- ■ **Budgeting.** What are the existing processes for budgeting, disbursement, and expenditure reporting across government? Where does international development assistance intersect with this system?

- ■ **Technical resources.** Will there be a heavier workload following the RPBA, with increased complexity or volume of aid flows? How will this be handled by government institutions?

Financial management:

- ■ **Probity.** How much scope is there for "on-budget" support (i.e., channeled through government systems)? Which partners currently do this, and under what kinds of arrangements?

- **Budgeting and allocation framework.** What legal arrangements will be needed to commit resources to RPBA priorities? Which budgets will they pass through? How are fiscal transfers managed at central and subnational levels?

- **Aid coordination.** Is the experience and capacity within government sufficient to deal with the policies and procedures of the core partners and the broader donor community?

Both sets of questions may also need to be examined at the level of subnational government. For both of the country cases discussed in table 3.1 (the Central African Republic and Nigeria), the distribution of authority and resources between different levels of government is a prominent part of any credible conflict analysis. This meant that it was important to look at the capacities of local and state-level institutions, and that the baseline was sometimes substantially lower than at the national level.

3.1.3 Economic resources

One of the striking features of the country cases reviewed for this study is that they are spread across a wide range of income levels. This is consistent with wider experience beyond the cases. As a recent World Bank study notes, "the development community's perception of conflict and violence is no longer primarily associated with low-income countries" (LICs), and this has wide-ranging implications for how to engage (IEG 2016).

The stereotypical belief is that middle-income countries (MICs) are not aid dependent and that MICs are able to finance and manage a higher proportion of peacebuilding and recovery priorities from national budgets and delivery systems. These perceived abilities are often assumed to be correlated with strong capacities for implementation, coordination, monitoring, and financial management. In practice, however, the situation has been profoundly more complicated. Our interlocutors made the following observations.

Governance and coordination:

- Key national capacities, as discussed in section 3.1.2, cannot be taken as a given in MICs. Conflicts will often play into specific weaknesses and fault lines in governance, and destabilize macroeconomic and fiscal conditions. Major crises can paralyze key systems or create bottlenecks.

Institutional alignment:

- Incentives for development partners, and for their individual staff, will be different. The different development challenges of MICs often result in different management profiles, technical expertise, and even support staff.

- There may be competing priorities within each institution—particularly where there is a subnational focus on conflict, but large-scale development aid occurs at the national level.

Financing modalities:

■ The available funding instruments are often different from those available in LICs. These instruments may have different comparative advantages and will need to be balanced with national budgetary resources.

■ To what extent are fiscal and fiduciary capacities "up to task"? Ensuring that this occurs is clearly a priority in LICs, but increasingly also for MICs that experience significant systemic and institutional destabilization and loss of capacity in the wake of a conflict or crisis.

3.1.4 Country situation and dynamics

RPBAs take place in complex political and security environments. In some cases, these have evolved very rapidly and rendered recommendations irrelevant. In others, they have failed to evolve at all, leaving little opportunity to move forward with planned activities (e.g., attempted PCNAs in Sudan and the Republic of Yemen). Most others fell somewhere in between these extremes, with shifting circumstances that have required ongoing adaptation by RPBA partners.

In all cases, it is essential to consider how wider dynamics may create opportunities or risks for implementation. We believe there are three overarching questions along these lines:

■ Does the RPBA storyline for peacebuilding and recovery remain valid as circumstances evolve over time? In turn, do the sectoral and thematic priorities still represent a viable theory of change?

■ Does RPBA implementation need to be phased according to the evolution of enabling conditions and constraints? Do plans need to be periodically reassessed and adjusted?

■ How can all this be facilitated through mechanisms for governance and coordination, and utilization of different funding instruments?

With this in mind, the country situation, and the opportunities and risks that it poses for RPBA implementation, can be assessed from several complementary perspectives. Many of these can be monitored through third-party country risk assessments, without overburdening RPBA processes. Risk assessment questions include the following.

Political/conflict:

■ Where is the country on the conflict curve? Post-conflict recovery? Transition period? Protracted crisis? Other situation?

■ **Stability of political and peace settlements.** Have core grievances and disputes been addressed?

- **Levels of armed violence and insecurity.** What challenges do they pose to economic recovery and program implementation?

- Is there a risk of cross-border impacts?

Economic:

- What is the overall macroeconomic and fiscal situation? Is the country on the rebound, or is economic growth declining? What is the government's financial position and stability?

- What is the level of national or regional dependence on single commodities?

- Are there regional trade or monetary vulnerabilities?

Social and demographic:

- To what extent are there regional imbalances in poverty, national development efforts, and public investment?

- What type of seasonal issues present challenges, for example with respect to agricultural and pastoral cycles?

- Are there domestic security risks outside of the normal framework of armed conflict, crime and violence, ethnic agitation, etc.?

3.2 The aid landscape

3.2.1 The EU, UN, and World Bank

The core partners' involvement with an RPBA must be understood in its wider context. In some cases, support to peacebuilding and recovery is the principal focus in a country. In others, this support may comprise only a small fraction of overall activities.

This positioning in terms of overall institutional priorities has a range of downstream implications, and it is critical to understand these before commencing an assessment. Experience also shows that when transitioning from the assessment phase to implementation, it is important to reassess whether the priorities, interests, and incentives of the three institutions remain aligned or have shifted in the course of the RPBA process. Key questions will include the following.

Country goals:

- **Priorities.** What is the weight accorded to RPBA priorities within each institution's strategic thinking and country planning, relative to other priorities?

- ■ **Internal differences.** The EU, UN, and World Bank are all complex and internally heterogeneous institutions—are there differences in goals between their component parts?

- ■ **External differences.** Are there significant differences in priorities and incentives between the three core partners? How do their planning timelines line up?

Operations:

- ■ **Coordination support.** What capacities are available to ensure internal coherence? To support external coherence and aid coordination?

- ■ **Programs.** How are existing activities distributed by sector and by geography? How does this map to the priorities identified in the RPBA, and is there latitude to make changes (adapt programs)?

- ■ **Expertise.** Is there specific, country-level expertise on conflict and fragility? Is there geographic expertise for the specific regions prioritized in the RPBA?

Resources:

- ■ **Existing resources.** Is there any merit in reorienting funding lines that already exist, and what would be the practical and legal steps to do so?

- ■ **Instruments.** What are the viable sources of new funding within the three partner institutions? Is there a possibility of accessing funding from external partners?

- ■ **Global depth.** Are there resources elsewhere in the organization upon which to possibly draw?

3.2.2 The international community

The EU, UN, and World Bank never act in a vacuum, and other international institutions will always be an important part of the country context. A key challenge here is the degree of variation from case to case. Which interlocutors are most significant—politically and financially—vary immensely, as do their goals and interests for the specific country at issue. For RPBAs, a thorough understanding of this landscape is essential to answer two basic questions:

- ■ **Scope.** Which partners should be involved in the RPBA, and/or within mechanisms for governance and coordination? Who should be kept in the loop even if they are not directly involved?

- ■ **Process design.** Will new arrangements be needed for RPBA governance and coordination, or is it possible to integrate the process design into existing mechanisms? If the former, how will links be established?

Basic mapping questions in this regard will include the following.

Interlocutors:

- Who are the major development partners? Where are they focused sectorally and geographically?

- What security actors are present? Does their mandate or concept of operations include a role in peacebuilding and recovery?

Processes and platforms:

- What are the existing mechanisms to coordinate development assistance? How well are they functioning according to the criteria described in section 2?

- What processes exist for coordinating security, political, and humanitarian interventions? How are these linked to mechanisms for coordinating development assistance?

- What are the expectations about the role of development aid?

Table 3.1 How context matters: Case examples

Factor	Central African Republic	Nigeria
Country context		
Political and governance landscape	**Stability.** An elected, post-transition government, but still in negotiations with a range of armed groups. Significant measures within the framework of the RPBA to join aid coordination with political and security initiatives through the involvement of the head of government and head of state, and attempts to define a compact-style arrangement. **Inclusivity.** Divisions between national government and regions are a central driver of conflict. The National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (RCPCA) linked with national consultations and household survey to try to bolster involvement of the public.	**Stability.** A complex but stable federal institutional and governance system. The newly elected president prioritized assistance to the conflicted affected states in northern Nigeria, which provided a framework for engagement with the donor community. **Inclusivity.** While not immune to conflict, devolution of significant authority to state governments within the broader federal system has facilitated broad inclusion in managing local political, economic, and social issues, and has contributed to relative stability.
National capacities	There are weak coordination capacities to ensure coherence across government. There are extremely weak capacities at the subnational level due to a historical lack of investment and engagement. Partners recognized the need for intensive support to the Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Cooperation for cross-government coordination. Elements of the humanitarian coordination system were utilized for parts of the RCPCA.	Although a MIC, capacities vary significantly between and across national and state levels. There is strong government engagement and leadership in coordinating RPBA implementation at national and state levels, and recognition of the need for international assistance for technical and institutional capacity building. A complex coordination framework is required to manage the significant number of government stakeholders at the federal and national levels. The Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative plays a central role in this context.

Factor	Central African Republic	Nigeria
Economic resources	A least developed country, which is highly dependent upon both development and humanitarian aid for the RPBA. The RCPCA adopted as de facto national development strategy and presented through traditional donor conference model.	This is a MIC with substantial national financial resources and institutional capacity. The RPBA is integrated as part of the national Buhari Plan for northeastern Nigeria.
Situation and conflict dynamics	Constitutionally stable regime, but still a highly fluid situation on the ground. Continuing humanitarian needs in many areas, with significant risk of recurring crises. Considerable attention to interaction with humanitarian appeal and coordination structure.	Constitutionally stable regime, although the situation in the northeastern states that are affected by the Boko Haram conflict remains volatile and marked by continued violence, necessitating continuation of security, humanitarian, and development efforts.
The aid landscape		
EU, UN, and World Bank	The context of national transition meant that most development partners in effect "rebooted" their country activities. Recovery and peacebuilding is the main focus, with country offices configured accordingly. Each partner mobilized special-purpose peacebuilding funding.	All three institutions maintain ongoing and established country programs, which have been revised to incorporate a focus on the conflict-affected regions of the northeast, based on the RPBA. Core partners are active in providing coordination support for RPBA implementation and capacity development assistance. Based on the RPBA, core partners have taken steps to realign or extend existing programs and develop new projects.
International community	Adoption of RCPCA as a national development strategy flowed through to country goals of most development partners. Investment in RCPCA coordination capacities was accordingly scaled to cover all development cooperation. The UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) is a key actor. Handled to date through structural integration of the UN resident/humanitarian coordinator, although all parties acknowledge that additional work is needed.	Alignment of the RPBA with the national plan for the northeast (the Buhari Plan) has facilitated engagement of donors, including international financial institutions and bilateral donors. Donor engagement and programmatic alignment with RPBA priorities were facilitated by core partners as well as through the repurposing of the existing donor group for the northeast.

4. Practices

In this section, we document the main topics of feedback that we received directly, or that have emerged from the secondary literature. We organize this into four major themes:

- The RPBA process, and how it should engage with implementation questions
- Governance, coordination, and monitoring
- Institutional engagement and alignment
- Financing modalities

For each theme, we organize our findings around selected core tasks (or challenges) for effective implementation. Our findings are not exhaustive. Rather, we present a prioritized list, based on feedback from stakeholders across the institutions on actions that are most critical to get right and with the emphasis on what will be most useful in policy guidance.

In each case, the aim is to identify the range of approaches that have been utilized in the past and what has worked where, why, and for whom.

4.1 Implementation in RPBA process design

Lack of sustained attention to the definition of implementation modalities as part of the assessment process has often been cited as one of the factors that explains the loss of momentum after assessments are concluded. In recent years, and notably in the context of RPBAs in the Central African Republic, Mali, and Nigeria, stakeholders have accordingly placed greater emphasis on articulating principles, options, and proposals for coordination and financing arrangements as part of the assessment process itself.

Across the nine countries in this study, there are wide variations of practice, and it is clearly essential to start early on with identifying, and creating, the appropriate enabling environment for implementation. Past practice also highlights that this process should not be limited to a technical definition of required mechanisms and functions, but should include a broader assessment of national capacities and donor/government appetite for engagement, as well as a process of consultation with all stakeholders to determine what is feasible and realistic.

The first and most obvious question is when and how to discuss modalities for implementation. Across the cases, there was a wide variety of approaches, including the following:

Guide to findings in subsection 4.1

Implementation planning alone is a necessary but not sufficient factor in maintaining momentum into the implementation phase. In all of the cases studied, other factors—notably securing stakeholder engagement; strengthening government leadership and capacity; and sustaining EU, UN, and/or World Bank engagement in a coordinating and support capacity beyond the assessment—are critical determinants in enabling a transition from assessment to implementation.

Process "load bearing" and timing (4.1.1). In some cases, defining and articulating implementation modalities early on (either as part of, or immediately following, the main RPBA assessment phase) has helped generate clarity and stakeholder consensus on how to operationalize RPBA findings, and has contributed to keeping up momentum for implementation.

Enabling factors (4.1.2–4.1.4). The timing and sequencing for assessing and developing implementation modalities has often depended on contextual factors, such as the ability of governments to engage, and the readiness of donors to discuss implementation, among other factors. With this in mind, attention to the details of implementation must be weighed against the need to maintain overall momentum.

- No concerted focus on implementation modalities during the assessment phase, followed by progressive establishment of coordination structures within which implementation modalities were developed and operationalized (Indonesia/Aceh, Somalia)

- Articulation of general implementation principles, options, and recommendations to be considered and decided upon in the post-assessment phase (Mali, Nigeria); in both cases, implementation structures and process were not fleshed out until the post-assessment phase, because there was not enough time to undertake necessary consultations and detailed planning

- Assessment and elaboration of specific implementation modalities and structures as part of the assessment process (Central African Republic)

- Organization of a formal planning process for implementation arrangements in the post-assessment phase (Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Ukraine)

These variations were driven, in turn, by a range of underlying factors, as follows:

- Considerations related to "load-bearing" capacity, and the need to sequence assessment and implementation planning

- Existence of an enabling political environment, with government and donors willing to make decisions and commit to implementation modalities

- Government capabilities to engage with, and lead, assessment and planning at the technical level

- Ability of the EU, UN, and World Bank to ensure continuity of support following the assessment

- Fluidity of the political-security environment

With respect to the political-security environment, the cases of Somalia and Ukraine illustrate some of the challenges that can arise. In Ukraine, the national political situation and absence of a credible national interlocutor prevented discussion of implementation during the main assessment phase. In Somalia, the compact was developed in a short period of time, and priority was placed on political buy-in and agreement on basic priorities. This sense of urgency precluded extensive consultations or the development of implementation arrangements, which occurred (to some extent) at a later date when key coordination structures had been established.

4.1.1 Process "load bearing" and how to sequence

Evidence from the cases underscores the importance of taking a sequenced and progressive approach to implementation planning that takes into account the readiness and capacity of key national and international stakeholders to move forward on implementation of RPBA results. In certain contexts, flexibility is required as discussions evolve with national and international stakeholders on the most appropriate arrangements. A flexible and progressive approach is also warranted in contexts of weak national capacities, which must first be bolstered to allow for adequate national engagement and leadership. In these contexts, a predefined or turnkey implementation framework could lead to unrealistic expectations, and a mismatch between the level of stakeholder engagement and the technical solutions identified.

Indonesia/Aceh and Nigeria provide good examples of flexible and sequenced approaches to defining implementation modalities. For Nigeria, the RPBA document fleshes out an overall concept for implementation, which includes key elements and modalities; a sequenced approach for operationalization, including process indicators; and defined phases that distinguish between recovery and longer-term stabilization efforts. It also details how to engage directly with the complexities of Nigerian governance, and describes the need for thorough technical work and stakeholder consultation as implementation structures and modalities are developed. After the RPBA was completed, a five-track implementation roadmap was prepared, which set out targets and benchmarks for policy development, prioritization, the establishment of institutional structures, and the development of strategies for program oversight and monitoring. This roadmap is utilized by the government (the Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative [PCNI]) and RPBA core partners—including some key bilateral donors—to guide national and international stakeholders in progressively establishing implementation modalities, beginning with the most important priorities. This includes developing prioritized action plans and establishing core institutional structures, including key nodes of convergence.

In Indonesia/Aceh, the urgency to respond to the effects of the disaster and the complex operating environment—which involved hundreds of first responders—precluded a linear approach to implementation planning; rather, the focus was on responsiveness, flexibility, and adaptation. This was led by the government Agency for the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Aceh/Nias (BRR), which established a center of gravity for coordination. This role was progressively institutionalized through three coordination frameworks (managed by the

BRR, UN, and World Bank) and associated prioritization, resource allocation, and monitoring mechanisms.

4.1.2 Political commitment and engagement

Momentum on implementation after an RPBA has been completed is correlated with strong donor and government engagement in the process—including at the level of head of state or head of government, and internal prioritization within partner institutions.

In Somalia, for example, strong political momentum drove the transition from developing the compact to implementing it; this effect was due in part to the conjoined priorities of using the compact as a mechanism to both articulate commitments and to restructure the international aid relationship between the government and international partners.

- In Aceh, the response was underwritten by strong and committed engagement from the outset by the Indonesian government, and its decision to transition engagement from an initial military/disaster response to a recovery process managed by an empowered national agency (BRR) that had the requisite political authority and leadership to operate autonomously and rapidly.

- In Nigeria, the need to address the crisis in the northeastern states was accorded high political status by President Buhari; in the context of the RPBA, momentum was maintained due to high-level leadership of the RPBA process, first by the vice president and then through the PCNI. Engagement and prioritization by state-level governments also played an important role.

Conversely, momentum on implementation stalled in other countries, where there was substantial disagreement or little political interest among national stakeholders on how to proceed. In Mali, despite attention to implementation arrangements in the RPBA, momentum was lost after the assessment phase was completed, due to lack of government buy-in, leadership, and engagement. In Nepal, the wider political environment was in flux pending the adoption of a new constitution in October of the same year as the earthquakes that had precipitated the PDNA. This overall situation made it arduous to develop consensus on modalities for implementation.

Several implications for implementation planning are thus apparent. First, the cases demonstrate how important it is to ensure linkages between the political process of dialogue and engagement underlying the RPBA, and the timing and methodology for developing implementation modalities. This is key to avoid parallel and mismatched processes.

Second, the cases underscore the need to gauge political will and to stimulate adequate commitment to the RPBA early on (arguably as part of the assessment process itself), even if specific implementation modalities are not articulated until a later stage. Options for accomplishing this task include the following:

- Making it part of the pre-assessment phase, which, in turn, could help define the scope of what is feasible in a given political/donor context

- Integrating specific consultations related to implementation issues as part of the assessment process itself (and calibrating/defining implementation arrangements accordingly)

- Utilizing post-assessment donor conferences as a venue for high-level dialogue to generate consensus and commitment on both assessment results and implementation requirements

The results of these consultations and assessments should feed into dialogue with national and international stakeholders regarding the degree and nature of political engagement, and the commitment related to RPBA objectives. Relevant talking points can include the following:

- National policy and legal frameworks, and points of connection with the RPBA

- Existing mechanisms and structures for coordination (governmental and with the international aid community)

- Existing intersections between security, humanitarian, and development actors

- Political economy of national governance (degree of coherence, unity, and horizontal/vertical inclusivity)

- A mapping of national and international stakeholders, including priorities and incentives

- Existing financing modalities (sources, instruments, and donor priorities)

4.1.3 Government capacity to engage

Government stakeholders have faced practical constraints in engaging with international partners, which has also affected the planning and operationalization of implementation arrangements. These constraints have included delays in establishing national coordinating entities, weak organizational and coordination capacities, and delays in securing internal government consensus on the appropriate legal and policy framework.

Across the country cases, the following approaches have been used to balance the needs for both adequate national capacity and rapid operationalization:

- Initiating specific aspects of implementation, calibrated to what the political and institutional context can bear. These have included detailed sectoral assessments and planning, donor consultations and prioritization of agreed-upon priorities, and establishment of supporting technical mechanisms (e.g., monitoring frameworks, technical working groups). These workstreams have often been initiated on an ad hoc or provisional basis while formal implementation arrangements are worked out (e.g., Nigeria).

- Agreement on a stronger (but temporary) management and coordination role for international partners at the outset, with progressive and phased transfer of responsibilities to government entities based on an agreed-upon timeline and milestones (e.g., Somalia).

- Integration of assessment findings (needs, priorities, interventions, and budgets) into existing national and international frameworks and mechanisms for program development, and resource allocation (Nepal, Ukraine).

In all contexts where delays in government engagement occurred, momentum on implementation can be supported through the provision of adequate technical and capacity development assistance to national counterparts. Such assistance has included the following:

- Advice and guidance on establishing national and legal frameworks (for RPBAs and national coordinating entities and structures)

- Technical advice on establishing national coordinating bodies (coordination structures and lead institutions), including terms of reference, staffing and organizational design, and budget formulation

- Provision of financial resources for establishing and launching national coordinating structures and lead entities

4.1.4 EU, UN, and World Bank engagement

For all countries assessed, the ability of the EU, UN, and World Bank to maintain their engagement in supporting national authorities and coordinating the process has been a critical factor in sustaining momentum on implementation. This is notably the case in the Central African Republic, Nigeria, and Somalia, where the continued presence of RPBA coordination teams by one or more of the institutions—together with additional resources for capacity development—has played an important role in enabling structured planning and operationalization of implementation arrangements.

- The case of Nigeria is an example of sustained commitment and engagement by the EU and World Bank in the immediate post-assessment phase. There, the World Bank took the lead among the three institutions in organizing a workshop on implementation immediately after the assessment was completed, coordinating development of the implementation roadmap, and mobilizing resources to finance detailed operational planning. The EU also provided critical support to early implementation efforts by deploying experts to support the development of detailed state-level plans, and allocating financial resources early for programming (including €100 million in new funds, and €100 million in reprogrammed funding). At the same time, coordination between the core partners has been ad hoc, and has unfolded in the absence of strong UN engagement, suggesting the importance of upfront and tripartite agreement on post-assessment coordination and engagement.

■ In Somalia, having a UN and World Bank team of experts that continued to provide support following finalization of the compact was critical for maintaining momentum and initiating early actions to establish key institutional structures and coordination mechanisms.

4.1.5 Toward a sequenced approach to implementation planning

Taken together, the experience of implementation planning to date and the various considerations outlined above point to the need for a sequenced and phased approach to implementation planning. While this approach will differ from country to country due to contextual specificities, three main stages in defining RPBA implementation modalities can be identified:

1. Assessment of implementation options, needs, and enabling factors (ideally as part of the RPBA assessment phase itself)

2. Consultation with key national and international stakeholders regarding implementation options and modalities (ideally before the end of the assessment phase)

3. Development of an overall implementation plan that outlines key functions, modalities, and timelines for operationalization (immediately after completing the assessment phase); ideally, this implementation plan would reflect consensus among key stakeholders

4.2 Governance and coordination

The defining characteristic of RPBAs is that they attempt to engage a wide range of stakeholders in support of common outcomes. This includes different ministries and the head of government, subnational governments, the core partners (the EU, UN, and World Bank), other aid actors, and a range of national stakeholders.

This subsection reviews experiences with working arrangements among all these interlocutors. The focus is on what has best contributed to the principles noted in section 2 of this study.

4.2.1 Sustained political support

Feedback was consistent across all the cases that an enabling political environment has been the most significant factor in determining the degree to which priorities are actually implemented. In plain language, it is essential to understand, and reinforce, the connections between RPBA priorities and what else is going on politically. This specifically includes the following:

Guide to findings in subsection 4.2

Sustained political support (4.2.1). Across the board, an enabling political environment has been the most important factor for implementation. Most pressing are the needs to identify how to link RPBAs to national and international political agendas, find a consensus on how to move forward on difficult policy issues, and ensure accountability for all actors. These objectives can be facilitated by good process design, including compact-type arrangements and steering committees. It is also critical to think politically, by formulating clear policy questions and carefully engaging with stakeholders to develop viable answers.

Operational coherence (4.2.2). A common storyline for national and international efforts requires consistent information sharing, joint priority setting, and ongoing monitoring and reporting. Key enablers in this regard include leadership by a national institution with the appropriate mandate and resources, a robust coordination architecture, and "good enough" processes that can be quickly operationalized. The capacities to support these outcomes are specialized and often become a bottleneck; thus, models of how to provide adequate support should be considered from the outset.

Inclusive ownership (4.2.3). Marginalization of specific groups or regions was a key driver of conflict in most of the case studies. This reality needs to be reflected in the design of RPBA implementation, which is a significant governance intervention in its own right. In the cases, a range of measures were designed to devolve some decision making and program development to the subnational level, along with more limited direct public consultation. In all cases, it is essential to establish entry points in national-level policy making, and avoid setting unrealistic expectations at the local level.

Monitoring and reporting (4.2.4). The ambition in the existing policy guidance for a detailed transitional results matrix has rarely materialized, usually because it did not fit the implementation context very well. In its place, partners have used a range of pragmatic approaches to track implementation and financial flows, and policy and political milestones. Beyond this, there have been few examples of monitoring strategic results; thus, it may be necessary to look outside of the PCNA/RPBA experience to find useful examples.

Joining the silos (4.2.5). RPBAs have coincided in most cases with major political-security initiatives and with humanitarian interventions. In both regards, it is critical to establish a coherent overall vision for how development cooperation will intersect with other lines of effort, and to manage specific contentious points related to operational issues and financing. Conversely, there is no reason to attempt full integration of planning given that actors have different goals, mandates, and operating approaches.

- Linking RPBA priorities with broader national agendas and policy frameworks, and relevant intergovernmental initiatives

- Finding an agreed-upon way forward on how to resolve difficult and politically divisive issues, and setting the necessary policy initiatives in motion

- Ensuring that all actors take political accountability for their individual activities and for their engagement with operational coordination mechanisms

The Ukraine case illustrates the stakes in this regard. Here, the RPBA was published in March 2015, but not endorsed by the national government until about six months later. The promulgation of the enabling policy framework, the State Target Program, followed in October 2016

and the memorandum of understanding for the supporting trust fund in that same month. The net result was that follow-up of RPBA priorities has remained limited up until the date of writing of this report in mid-2017—most of all at the cabinet level. Most interlocutors commented that the delays were a natural by-product of deep divisions within the Ukrainian government on how to respond to an acute national crisis. These mapped onto equally serious divisions among international partners, with unusually strong geopolitical interests at stake. In this type of environment, it is not surprising that the ongoing EU association process occupied most of the political "bandwidth" available for international aid and technical support.

Other cases are characterized by equally stark scenarios. In Mali, the RPBA process never got off the ground, due to a lack of real interest or constituency within government (although the RPBA assessment has been used to inform core partner programming). In Nepal, the new National Reconstruction Authority charged with leading coordination of recovery efforts struggled to start up operations, with significant contestation in the national legislature of the agency's work program and leadership.

Conversely, Indonesia/Aceh and Somalia are examples of processes underwritten by strong political will and engagement by both national and international stakeholders. This ensured that high political priority was given to jointly defined priorities and provided crucial initial momentum for coordination mechanisms.

These cases as a whole lead to the following question: What can be done to ensure the political salience of an RPBA, in terms of fostering commitment, engagement, and prioritization by national and international stakeholders—alongside all the usual complexities of coordination, technical assistance, and financing?

Review of practice

It is more difficult to summarize for this task than for most of the others reviewed in this study. Much of the work that is required to build an enabling political environment is tacit and informal, not explicit and written. Nevertheless, we attempt to summarize the range of efforts across the cases under three main headings: compact-type arrangements, steering committees, and wider political strategy.

Compact-type arrangements

A compact, as the name suggests, is a set of mutual commitments and accountabilities that are the result of negotiation and consensus between national and international stakeholders. Across the case studies, the most well-known examples have been the Somali Compact (2012) and two successive Mutual Accountability Frameworks in Afghanistan (2012 and 2015). The most exhaustive is the 2,200-page association agreement concluded between Ukraine and the EU, which deals with an unusually wide range of issues. A less ambitious, and certainly less successful, example is the Cadre d'engagement mutuel in the Central African Republic.

In the secondary literature (Bennett 2012; Mandaville 2016), it is argued that the value added of such arrangements is to contribute the following:

- A clear point of focus at the highest levels of partner institutions, which are unlikely to be much involved in day-to-day coordination of RPBA implementation

- Overt, baseline commitments for how all partners will engage with coordination mechanisms or support specific priorities

- Relatively explicit benchmarks to link decision making about development aid to progress in political initiatives, policy reforms, or security conditions

The country cases provide some evidence that compact arrangements are providing these benefits. The 2012 Somalia Compact demonstrates how high-level political commitments can be translated and linked to technical arrangements for implementation. At the outset, the framework drew strong political impetus from the need to re-establish relations between the international community and the new federal government of Somalia, and had a high profile internationally as a pilot for the New Deal on Fragile States.

In the absence of a national development strategy, the compact articulated a series of mutual commitments, around the peacebuilding and statebuilding goals (PSGs) of the New Deal,[1] with corresponding strategic objectives and benchmarks, and set out a vision for a revamped aid coordination architecture. This provided the foundation for the ensuing implementation and financing architecture, including the High-Level Aid Coordination Forum, thematic working groups centered on individual PSGs, and the Somalia Development and Recovery Fund. The last of these created a center of gravity for coordinating international aid flows.

Similar basic commitments related to aid coordination were included in Afghanistan's two Mutual Accountability Frameworks in 2012 and 2015. These provided the stimulus and momentum for a coordination architecture that developed from a very rudimentary starting point. Over time, partners substantially increased the proportion of aid recorded in government budgets, and the mapping of sectoral priorities and gaps improved.

Broadly considered, experience in the case countries suggests that an initial, high-level political commitment can be effective in setting parameters for aid coordination at the working level. These can include the core elements of aid effectiveness discussed in section 2.

High-level steering committees

All RPBA cases envisioned a steering committee to guide implementation. In most countries, this committee comprised the head of government, or in some cases, the head of state; ministers; and the most senior representatives of international institutions. In one case (Pakistan), the chair was held by the Department for Planning and Development, and a somewhat lower level of international representation.

On paper, the idea is simple. The steering committee brings together the individuals with the authority and responsibility to lead on the three priorities noted at the top of this section

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[1] See https://www.newdeal4peace.org/peacebuilding-and-statebuilding-goals/.

(major policy reforms, integration into the wider program of government, and accountability). In practice, however, the existence of this type of forum does not necessarily equate to an ability to lead on these complex tasks.

Pakistan is a case in point. Absent a wider political initiative, the federal steering committee did not have the clout to build cross-ministry consensus on challenging issues. This included governance reform in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas—despite PCNA urgings for "an open, honest, consultative, and government-led discussion at the highest level." The net result was that work under this pillar of the PCNA remained very limited until mid-2017. Efforts focused instead on the pillars with a more permissive policy environment, such as social services and economic growth and job creation.

We received analogous feedback in other cases. In Nepal and Ukraine, hopes that high-level forums could troubleshoot major blockages went unfulfilled, due essentially to a lack of wider political consensus. In the Central African Republic, it has proved very difficult to find political bandwidth for the high-level forums envisioned in the RPBA. Many interlocutors noted that this has left a gap after the landmark donor conference of November 2016, with respect to follow-up with international partners, and the ability to establish clear linkages between the RPBA and initiatives for stabilization, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration.

The bottom line is perhaps this: A steering committee is just a meeting. It is essential that the group develops a problem-driven agenda that identifies the issues requiring action at this level, with a viable supporting strategy to build the necessary political consensus and momentum among relevant stakeholders.

RPBA political strategy

As outlined in subsection 4.1, the analysis that informs an RPBA's substantive priorities must also inform the proposed implementation approach. This requires assessing the current political will to engage with the policy issues identified in the RPBA, understanding divisions on these issues among national stakeholders, and mapping wider grievances about the structure or habits of governance.

Bluntly speaking, from this point forward, a political strategy must be developed to provide direction to an RPBA process, and the team managing this process must have the corresponding political skills. We can draw here upon the wider literature on "politically smart, locally led" aid, recognizing that these critiques will be especially salient for the sensitive issues found in RPBAs (Andrews 2013). In essence, the following are essential tasks for both national and international partners:

- Identification of the (specific) political/policy conditions that will be required for program and financial support to achieve its desired results

- Understanding the political economy of these political and policy initiatives

- Stakeholder analysis and engagement to build a supporting coalition

■ Use of windows of opportunity to take the necessary formal steps to lock in decisions (e.g., through soft policy, executive actions, or legislation)

Analytically, most RPBA reports have identified major milestones for national policy at a sectoral level. The Central African Republic RPBA provides the clearest example in this regard, by including a schedule of strategic results that specifies critical reforms. We endorse the logic of this approach, as described by the authors:

> Lessons from other transition situations suggest that these need to be extremely selective and should reflect support at the highest political level. Progress against milestones should be reviewed regularly and can serve as a useful basis for political and policy dialogue. Priorities should include developing and implementing critical reform strategies for DDRR [disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and repatriation]; security system reform; promoting political inclusion; fighting against impunity… (EU et al., 44)

Similar milestones can be found in other cases, including Mail, Nigeria, and Somalia.[2] At a working level, however, we are not aware of applied political economy analysis of each issue or of explicit stakeholder engagement strategies. This has tended to be the province of individual agencies working on individual issues in ad hoc coordination with other partners active in that sector. But the track record seems clear that such a fragmented approach will not be adequate for issues that are cross-sectoral or extremely sensitive in nature.

One case that illustrates the complexity— and importance—of these issues is Nigeria. Here, the RPBA has been integrated at the federal level as part of the overall Buhari Plan for the northeast, with coordination through the PCNI. At the state level, there are individualized steering structures specific to each government, and state-level plans are in progress. Although plans are still a work in progress, it is clear that there are multiple centers of gravity in planning and implementation, and this was highlighted as a priority from the outset.

Additional findings

Understanding the stakeholder environment

We noted in section 2 that RPBAs are frequently employed in settings where the legitimacy and the effective authority of the national government are in question. As a consequence, as the 2007 PCNA guidance emphasizes, "no one actor can go it alone." The cases studied suggest that this has two important implications.

The first is perhaps obvious—it is necessary to **think broadly about the enabling political environment**. The practices noted in this discussion should be considered with regard to buy-in

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[2] The Post-RPBA Strategic Action Plan for Nigeria, which sets out a five-track roadmap for RPBA implementation, defines several policy development priorities in the area of displacement management (including a framework for safe and voluntary return of internally displaced persons and associated policies on housing, livelihoods, and private sector recovery). In addition, relevant enabling measures are also required (e.g., policy-making forums, advisory support on drafting policies).

- Within and across core government institutions, and between levels of government (federal and state, and national and local);

- Within formal "track 1" processes involving armed groups or political dissidents;

- With the electorate, powerful elite constituencies; and

- Of neighboring countries and relevant multilateral organizations.

The hard reality is that relationships between these stakeholder groups are often volatile and conflictual. This means that it is critical to map and understand the position and interests of all relevant stakeholders and to ensure sufficient inclusivity in the design of the RPBA to generate as much buy-in and engagement as feasible. In contexts where stable consensus is not forthcoming, it becomes important to consider how governance and coordination mechanisms can serve as sites for negotiation and consensus building—for example, on key policy reforms or decisions about priorities.

A case like Nepal illustrates this well. Here the approach to implementing the 2014 PDNA hinged on establishing a new National Reconstruction Authority. Legal and political challenges from the legislature and rival political parties immediately destabilized this attempt, and it was severely delayed. What is key to grasp, however, is that this was not particularly surprising in Nepal's specific political context, which includes the dissolution of Parliament in 2012, and agreement on a new Constitution in 2015. Without expressing any judgment on the PDNA planning process and its follow-up, the simple reality on the ground was that buy-in was needed well beyond the executive branch of government.

The case of Somalia provides a contrasting example. In this instance, broad stakeholder engagement and participation in implementing compact commitments were ensured at two levels: first, by encouraging the broad participation of national and regional Somali stakeholders at the level of the High-Level Aid Coordination Forum and PSG working groups; and second, by developing a separate compact and coordination framework for Somaliland. Although both approaches had their limitations, notably due to perceptions that coordination and allocation decisions were heavily donor influenced, they are good examples of how implementation mechanisms can serve as vehicles for consensus building.

The second implication of a fractured political system concerns the overall framing and goals of RPBA implementation. Stated simply, an RPBA cannot and should not be fully assimilated to the program of the government of the day. Rather, the objective of current policy guidance for a peacebuilding storyline posits a difficult middle ground between the best available independent analysis, and what is politically feasible at any given point in time. Finding and holding this terrain becomes especially critical in unstable constitutional settings, or where the legitimacy of national authorities is under serious challenge.

In practical terms, there are important trade-offs in how RPBAs are linked to national legal and policy frameworks. Full integration of an RPBA in a national framework will be most politically viable in contexts where there is not substantial political contestation, as was

perhaps the case in Pakistan or Ukraine. In contexts marked by deep divisions or mutual suspicion, a different (second) framework—perhaps linked to a peace agreement or transition plan—might be more appropriate. In a third set of cases, the solution might be a hybrid framework that marries a broad national program with specific plans tailored to the political dynamics and priorities for specific geographic areas. Examples include the separate plan and coordination structure for Somaliland in Somalia, and the heavy emphasis on state-level implementation plans and coordination mechanisms in Nigeria.

The Mali case sheds light on the difficulty, and importance, of striking the right balance. In 2015, a shaky peace and reconciliation agreement with armed groups was the platform for launching an RPBA. An approach aimed to maximize buy-in of the government of the day would not have been credible in the areas that the RPBA was primarily targeting, nor would it likely have survived a major reconfiguration of government stakeholders. However, by framing the RPBA as a provision of the 2015 peace agreement, and attributing responsibility for its oversight to the associated monitoring commission, the government (which was lukewarm on the peace agreement to begin with) was able to detach from taking ownership of or responsibility over the RPBA. This example illustrates that even in highly contested contexts such as Mali, it is vital to carefully identify anchorage points for the RPBA and build ownership with a range of stakeholders.

4.2.2 Operational coherence

RPBAs are expected to be selective. According to the 2007 PCNA guidance, the key point of distinction of RPBAs from a national development strategy should be an overall "peacebuilding storyline" that guides planning.

This storyline must include a diverse cast of characters. Across the board, major RPBA goals will involve multiple ministries and other government entities, nongovernmental and civil society actors, and a range of international partners. Effective action requires horizontal alignment of these stakeholders. In federal systems, or those with substantial devolution of authority, it also becomes critical to think about vertical alignment across different levels of government.

In practice, our interlocutors suggested that this meant three primary tasks for an RPBA's coordination architecture:

- Information sharing on resources and activities, including harmonization of approaches and synthesis into a coherent picture at the sectoral and strategic levels

- Priority setting by the national government, and corresponding alignment and allocation of resources

- Assessing emerging results and changing strategic direction as needed

Somalia provides a useful illustration here. Beginning in 2012, the working groups established around each of the compact's PSGs have led to important results. They established horizontal working relationships between partners, enabled narrative and basic financial reporting

against high-level goals, and permitted discussion on core priorities and sequencing. However, they have not yet been able to achieve coherent sectorwide approaches. Articulating clear priorities has been tough to do from the government side; it has been equally challenging to convince donors to fully align their individual approaches. An independent review in 2016 summarized the situation as follows:

> Many of the lessons are similar to the key findings in other countries… Compacts generally improve coordination but with high transaction costs and slow movement toward coherence of policies involving development, humanitarian, security, and political actors. Success in one of these areas is unlikely to be sustained without success in the others. In Somalia, a longer time to prepare would have given the chance for greater country ownership and broader participation. A narrower list of agreed priorities and shorter timelines, focused on the issues of greatest concern and the linkages among them, might have increased the relevance and effectiveness of the Compact. (Manuel et al. 2017)

This statement could equally apply to RPBA implementation across most of the case studies. In the remainder of this discussion, we look at experiences with operational coordination from three main perspectives: national leadership, coordination architecture, and operational planning.

Review of practice

National leadership and coordination

RPBA goals invariably cut across multiple ministries, or the entire cabinet, and a range of international agencies. Across the cases, there was consensus that it is essential to have an entity with a broader perspective to help with alignment of these actors in the senses described above. This was for two reasons:

- **Mandate.** To be "above the fray," and to be seen as such

- **Capacities.** To deal with the relatively specialized requirements of aid coordination, and the intersection with political-security-humanitarian domains

There have been two basic approaches to appointing this entity. The first is to task an existing entity with an established role in cross-government coordination. Examples include the Central African Republic (Ministry of Finance/Cooperation) and Pakistan (Department of Planning).

The clear advantage in using existing entities is that they can draw on an established legal framework and processes, with some supporting capacities already in place. This can facilitate rapid integration with country systems for budgeting, and sectoral policies and programs. In Nigeria, for example, the RPBA involves an extremely complex division of labor across different levels of government. Anchoring the process within the Office of the President (through the PCNI) has bolstered the ability to navigate this at the federal level, although specific relationships for implementation still need to be defined.

The primary disadvantage of this "double hatting" is that it can be difficult to redefine mandates and responsibilities. Competition for the time and attention of key staff will be an ongoing challenge—often in the context of a government struggling to establish basic functions—and there may be difficulties scaling up due to the perceived threat to core functions. In Pakistan, for example, the implementation support unit that was established under the World Bank Multi-Partner Trust Fund was based within the Department of Planning and Development. The focus was on project development for trust fund resources, with the provincial government as partner, but this entity never developed a service provider role for the wider donor community.

The second alternative is to start up a new entity for coordination support. Examples here include Indonesia/Aceh and Nepal (both were disaster recovery agencies), Ukraine (a new ministry), and Afghanistan and Somalia (autonomous multi-partner trust fund technical secretariats).

The primary advantages of this approach are that it lends itself to a clear and specific mandate and to a dedicated focus. As a special-purpose entity, it is also easier to design a management structure and geographic presence appropriate for the RPBA priorities. An obvious example is post-tsunami recovery in Indonesia/Aceh, where the reconstruction agency (BRR) grew quickly and with a decentralized structure to match the geography of implementing partners on the ground. The BRR was given delegated executive authority within its areas of focus, due to extreme depletion of local capacities by the disaster.

The main disadvantages of starting up a new entity are perhaps obvious:

- Potential overlaps or conflicts with other government entities and with established processes for cross-government coordination

- Disconnection from established budgets and sectoral strategies can reduce visibility, access to resources, and engagement from other ministries

Another PDNA, for Nepal, was challenged with both of these difficulties. In this case, the structure and mandate of the National Reconstruction Authority were almost immediately challenged. This led to unstable leadership, difficulties in recruiting staff, and weak relationships with reconstruction partners.

Coordination architecture

Across the cases, a wide range of models was used to bring together the government entities and international partners that were active under the framework of an RPBA. Working groups have been organized around the following:

- **Thematic pillars.** Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, and Somalia
- **Geographic areas.** Indonesia/Aceh (from 2006 onward), Nigeria, and Ukraine
- **Specific priority issues.** Nepal (housing reconstruction)

Which model makes most sense will depend upon the context. Specific criteria to think about include the following:

- **Clear ownership.** Is there a government entity that can lead a given forum with minimal disputes over turf, and with a mandate to find consensus? Where relevant, do subnational authorities have constitutional/legal authority to convene ministries and make decisions at this level?

- **Status quo arrangements.** What already exists? Is it possible to repurpose, or build upon, established architecture?

- **Transaction costs.** What will match up most easily with the way that national ministries and development partners organize their planning and budgeting? How will the proposed structure map to any pre-existing mechanisms for coordinating national development strategy or humanitarian aid? Can these relationships be simplified?

- **Geographic targeting.** How critical is it to define coherent responses for individual (high-priority) regions of the country? Should RPBA activities aim to reinforce diplomatic or security initiatives at this level, or is the idea rather that "a rising tide will lift all ships"?

The trade-offs are illustrated in the Central African Republic. In this case, RPBA coordination focused on the basics of sectoral coordination, aiming to lay the groundwork for development aid at a scale unprecedented in recent history. Doing so made sense in a setting where the legacy of overcentralization meant very limited legal authority and capacities outside of the capital. However, it also led to tensions in a situation where political-security dynamics varied dramatically between different regions. Major tensions emerged when a stabilization initiative was launched in one area, without the ability to target or accelerate efforts under the framework of the RPBA.

Operational planning and coordination

In several cases, RPBAs have been augmented with supplementary technical planning. Informants cited several reasons for this; one was that it can be useful to build buy-in at the working level of partner ministries, and not just with individuals involved in the RPBA itself. For their part, aid agencies often also require greater levels of detail for internal planning and program development than is available in an RPBA itself; and it may be most efficient to collect this information through a supplementary joint process.

At the same time, the headline finding is that the perfect may be the enemy of the good. The functions noted at the top of this section (information sharing, priority setting, and assessing progress) are iterative rather than linear. It follows that a rough process can still usefully provide guidance further upstream. The following case examples illustrate this point.

- **Nepal.** The PDNA was followed by an additional framework, the Post-Disaster Recovery Framework, which was produced within about nine months. This new framework changed some financial estimates, but not the material lines of effort. These new

estimates were then rapidly overtaken by events, with policy shifts requiring much more drastic revisions.

■ **Ukraine.** The delay in start-up of the RPBA meant that the situation on the ground had evolved substantially. This meant, in turn, that substantial parts of the technical work had been overtaken by events.

■ **Somalia.** The PSG working groups provided big tents under which national and international partners could share information and discuss sectoral and thematic priorities. Although this promoted wide participation and inclusivity, it came at the expense of more detailed joint planning, prioritization, and oversight in programmatic terms.

An example of a more emergent system comes from Aceh (and Nias) in Indonesia. Here, the BRR established six regional offices to track activities and share information across a range of sectoral and, later, geographic working groups. This system used project concept notes as a simple upstream control mechanism to check the alignment and complementarity of donor activities, and was supported by a World Bank database system and suboffices of the UN resident/humanitarian coordinator.

Additional findings

Coordination support as a public good

Each of the tasks noted above involves considerable time and effort, and can usually benefit from dedicated technical support. This poses a familiar collective action problem for aid effectiveness—namely, that all partners benefit from improved coordination, but no single institution is incentivized to bear the burden for all the others. This leads us to a basic policy question for any RPBA: Do the core partners want to underwrite operational coordination mechanisms as a service to broader aid effectiveness? And if so, how will this be resourced?

Across the cases, this question has been answered in quite different ways. The following are three contrasting examples.

■ **Afghanistan.** The Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) provides, in its own words, "a coordination and dialogue mechanism and a platform for policy dialogue on key reforms with the government, alongside a 'robust fiduciary and monitoring framework.'" All this is underwritten by a levy on trust fund contributions.

■ **Central African Republic.** The government's technical secretariat has been reinforced by deploying EU and World Bank consultants who provide general technical support and ensure effective interaction with their home institutions.

■ **Pakistan.** The World Bank's PCNA Trust Fund is supported by an implementation support unit embedded within the provincial government. The focus has been on programming of trust fund resources with government agencies, while providing limited support to wider aid coordination efforts.

Overall, it is apparent that the core partners have the capacities to strengthen core mechanisms for operational coordination. Whether it is appropriate to do so in any individual case will depend upon the broader political and operational framework for the RPBA, as discussed in subsection 4.2.1. It is also important to balance the short-term usefulness of capacity substitution (i.e., international partners taking over key functions) with the long-term importance of developing the capacity of government entities.

4.2.3 Inclusive ownership

National government interlocutors have featured prominently in the preceding sections. This is appropriate given that the RPBA policy framework is generally concerned with "statebuilding as a central objective," as it is phrased in the 2007 PCNA guidance. The question then becomes how to operationalize the principle of inclusive ownership, as recalled in section 2.

In several of the cases, this question has been critical to successful RPBA implementation. It is perhaps most urgent of all in the Central African Republic, a situation defined "by the absence of a functioning social contract between the state and society," according to the RPBA itself. This history of misgovernance is reflected in deep mistrust of political institutions in the capital, notwithstanding successful elections in 2015–16, and continuing accusations of marginalization of the northeast of the country. The consequence is that an aid coordination system centered upon Bangui outright risks doing harm if it is seen to reinforce the negative governance practices of the past.

Similar dynamics can be observed in virtually all of the cases. The RPBA processes in Mali, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Ukraine all exposed long-standing complaints of marginalization of particular regions, and, by association, ethnic or religious groups, in the very structure of government. The comparison cases in Afghanistan and Somalia also feature equally prominent regional disputes and dynamics. Even for the two post-disaster case studies, Indonesia and Nepal, there is a clear history of marginalization of certain communities and subgroups.

In the following section, we review how RPBAs have navigated this tricky governance terrain. Specifically, we look at efforts to improve inclusivity at the subnational level and with the broader public.

Review of practice

Subnational governance

In several cases, RPBA implementation has been decentralized, building upon the constitutional division of labor in-country. This decentralization has been most prominent in Nigeria and Pakistan, both of which have federal systems that vest substantial authority in subnational governments for the priorities identified in their respective RPBAs.

The Pakistan case, ongoing since 2010, offers an especially rich experience in this regard. Here, the World Bank established an implementation support unit within the Department of

Planning and Development of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This in turn facilitated project development for the World Bank—administered RPBA trust fund, working with different ministries of the provincial government. Over time, these projects have contributed some important results. However, the experience has also highlighted overarching questions on the approach.

The first question is to what extent should the processes discussed in 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 be replicated at the subnational level. In the case of Pakistan, the implementation support unit remained focused on Multi-Partner Trust Fund issues; this resulted in international partners other than the World Bank finding it difficult to engage. However, over time, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government itself exercised leadership by developing a strategic development partnership framework and a supporting development strategy for dialogue with international partners.

A contrasting case is that of Indonesia/Aceh. Here, the national agency that leads recovery efforts (the BRR) operated with exclusive authority in affected areas for most of its four-year lifespan in the absence of local provincial authorities, which were decimated by the disaster. Simultaneously, the BRR operated on the basis of a phased plan that included, in its later stages, a focus on progressive regionalization (shifting operations closer to affected communities) and transition of responsibilities to provincial structures and authorities. Doing this, and implementing the BRR's policy of actively involving and engaging provincial stakeholders following the peace process and ensuring elections, enabled a relatively seamless handover of responsibilities to provincial authorities for recovery and reconstruction over the longer term.

The second question relates to the specific steps that need to be taken at the national level to allow mechanisms at the subnational level to be effective. The Pakistan PCNA also targeted the Federally Administered Tribal Areas adjacent to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where local governance mechanisms are controversial and contested. In effect, this meant that the policy infrastructure to develop local priorities was itself viewed by local interlocutors as part of the problem. From a RPBA perspective, there was little scope to work around this—at least up until the proposal of major governance changes, just before this report was written in mid-2017.

Another case that falls into this category is Ukraine. Here, the RPBA emphasized the need to build ownership at the level of local council and oblast governments. In practice, this required ad hoc processes to involve these interlocutors with program development and execution. Both the EU and UN (through implementing partners) could work at this level notwithstanding a slow-moving process at the national level.

The broader public

As is abundantly clear, RPBAs occur in fraught political contexts. Indeed, the very first paragraph of the 2007 PCNA guidance sets the context by noting that "the people have high expectations of progress—freedom from fear and want, access to education and medical services, government institutions in which they trust."

Despite this expectation, public engagement has not been a major focus across the cases. Engaging the public received most attention in the Central African Republic, precisely because of the factors noted at the top of 4.2.3. The distinguishing elements in this case were as follows:

■ The RPBA process included a survey of needs at the community and household levels, and countrywide public consultations were held in August through September 2015.

■ The RPBA document identifies the aim of monitoring and reporting as to "establish a feedback loop between the state and citizens."

These are ambitious goals that have been met with significant practical challenges. The timeline to finalize the RPBA and build up the coordination system has been long, and the feedback in Haute-Kotto and Ouaka *préfectures* was uniform; in fact, little information had been circling back to the local level since those initial consultations in 2015. (In Ouaka, it was widely repeated that the vice president of the World Bank had promised CFAF 6 billion, but with no follow-up.) At the central level, no formal communications strategy or supporting capacities are in place, leaving this function to individual ministries and their partners. This poses evident problems in an environment with few media channels, limited literacy, and no history of transparent governance.

Another cautionary experience comes from Nepal. Here the government's Post-Disaster Recovery Framework sought to establish a network of district coordination committees and supporting resource centers, to disseminate information, and to help monitor and appraise reconstruction activities. The results of these efforts, after several years of experience, were limited. Third-party monitoring found that committees were functioning only in a "ceremonial" sense, with few concrete initiatives to gather public feedback or feed it into national-level policy discussions (Asia Foundation 2016).

Another case that is frequently cited on this topic is Somalia. Lack of sufficient public consultation at the early stages of the compact may have contributed to widespread perceptions that the process is elite dominated.

Building on these cases, we can summarize feedback as follows:

■ Timelines for implementation are long, and it is important to manage expectations.

■ Public consultations at the planning stage may simply raise expectations and feed cynicism, if there is no regular follow-up contact (this point was specifically highlighted in the Central African Republic and Pakistan cases).

■ Communication and engagement are specialized tasks, which rely precisely on the types of resources that may be in short supply in the target countries.

4.2.4 Monitoring and reporting

This is an area where there is a marked divergence between policy and practice. The 2007 PCNA guidance gives a prominent place to transitional results frameworks, anticipating that they are costed and sequenced, and form the basis for regular monitoring. In reality, as the Garrasi and Allen (2016) review summarized, "results matrices seem to be abandoned, for reasons that include their lack of capacity to prioritize and mobilize adequate funding."

The more recent practice has been to define a simplified set of strategic results on a provisional basis. This was the approach taken for the Central African Republic, Nigerian, and Ukrainian RPBAs, and for compact arrangements in Somalia and Afghanistan. While this makes sense to avoid overburdening the RPBA process, as noted in subsection 4.1, it does raise the question of how to approach monitoring and reporting. With this in mind, we endorse the approach of the aforementioned Central African Republic RPBA as a common-sense way to conceptualize the task:

> The RCPCA [National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan] monitoring framework should be targeted and light, in order to be both strategic and sustainable. It should provide a snapshot of progress and obstacles in order to inform decision-making and communicate results to citizens. It is recommended that the framework capture three types of monitoring: (1) results and achievements over the course of the RCPCA, (2) a set of milestones articulating concrete actions that will serve as stepping stones for achieving the objectives, and (3) transparent tracking of aid flows and indicators for improving aid effectiveness... (EU et al. 2016, 54)

What follows is structured on this basis, albeit in reverse order. This is to track the usual order of operations, a point that we return to under Additional findings.

Review of practice

Implementation monitoring

A common situational picture is a basic enabler for most of the core tasks covered in this document. It underpins engagement with political stakeholders, all measures for operational coherence, credible public involvement, and the interface with other institutions and sectors of activity.

Stakeholders' expectations for implementation monitoring were consistent, with the core elements as follows:

- Consolidated data on financial commitments, financial disbursements, planned activities, and realized activities

- Harmonized processes to ensure consistent spending classification and rapid updating

- Aggregation at the level of each pillar (or sector), and for individual geographic areas; the latter was highlighted as critical, in order to keep track of interregional equity in cases like Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, and Nigeria

■ Channels to share consolidated data with all stakeholders; this would include, ideally, a public communication strategy—although in the case studies, few examples of this exist

The more difficult question has been who participates. The answer may include, in order of increasing ambition, multi-donor trust funds (MDTFs), government partners, and bilateral partners that are aligning their approaches with the RPBA.

For **MDTF portfolios**, it is standard practice to provide consolidated reports (as was done in Afghanistan or Pakistan). This is facilitated by common standards for budgeting and reporting that are built into contractual arrangements, and use of trust fund staff and resources to facilitate the process. There are, at this point, multiple practical examples of program design and reporting tools. The Afghanistan ARTF was cited by several informants as "best in class," and uses a simple and frequently updated web portal.

For **government partners**, many interlocutors commented that the historical RPBA focus had been on aid management, and that considerably less thought had been given to how to collect and collate data. The figures reported in cases such as Afghanistan and Pakistan were widely regarded as problematic due to blurred distinctions between investment and operational expenditures, and pre-existing and new commitments. Financial monitoring also was hampered by broader weaknesses in public financial management in the host countries, including wide gaps between budget commitments and execution.

For the **wider aid community**, a basic design question is how far to go. Recent RPBA processes in the Central African Republic and Nigeria have sought to map the alignment of bilateral donors with their strategic results, but this has not yet translated into a consolidated baseline picture or ongoing reporting.

A better developed example comes from Indonesia/Aceh, where the PDNA was followed by a simple aid-tracking database, administered by the World Bank and made available to all interlocutors through the BRR. The database included monthly figures on commitments and expenditures by sector and geographic area, and eventually expanded to cover 85 percent of aid flows, including the 30 largest donors. The financial data were complemented by implementation progress tracking across all sectors and regions, managed by the BRR, which was used in conjunction with a concept note review process to guide and facilitate new programming and financial allocations.

Other relevant experience comes from Afghanistan and Somalia, which have a substantial, multiyear track record on how to approach this task. For these cases, the main enabling factors appear to have been the following:

■ A normative commitment to information sharing built into the coordination architecture

■ Technical harmonization through common data standards and definitions, including spending classification

■ Dedicated coordination support to compile, collate, and perform quality assurance on incoming data

Policy milestones

We noted in 4.2.1 that RPBAs are associated with a range of enabling policy conditions, and that these are equally as important a part of the division of labor as program results. From a strategic management perspective, then, progress on enabling conditions is a litmus test for how well the governance and coordination architecture is functioning.

Somalia provides a concrete example. Here, the compact sets out three to five milestones for each of the seven strategic objectives. These milestones cover a range of fundamental legal/institutional and policy measures, and have helped provide basic structure and consistency to the compact's annual reports in the absence of comprehensive data on ongoing activities and conditions under each strategic objective. Each milestone is associated with a government lead, and development partners prepared to assist with technical questions.

Strategic results

All of the reviewed RPBAs defined lists of expected outcomes under each sector, toward which individual activities and projects were expected to contribute.[3] Some cases, notably Mali and Nigeria, also included draft indicators at this level. (It was noted by all that the draft indicators were for discussion purposes, and had not yet been tested and refined with regard to definitions, sources of data, and baselines.)

Post-RPBA, however, there are not many examples of follow-up monitoring and reporting at this level. The Pakistan case is limited to reports on individual MDTF-funded projects. The Central African Republic, Nigeria, and Ukraine are all too recent, in different ways, to have established solid reporting systems as of the date of this writing in mid-2017.

The case that is perhaps most interesting is, accordingly, Afghanistan. The annual scorecard for the ARTF includes country-level data drawn from household surveys and indicators for selected pillars of the national priority plans. The underlying process involved the following:

- Interface with the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (a national household-level survey) to align it with outcomes of the national development strategy and national priority programs

- Progressive development of core sector indicators, to be tracked across different ARTF-funded interventions, and harmonization of operational approaches to ensure that these data could be collected and collated reliably

- An annual results workshop with local and international partners to disseminate, discuss, and validate key results

- Considerable funding through a levy on trust fund contributions, as noted above (4.2.2)

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[3] Exact terminology varies considerably. The Central African Republic National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan (RCPCA) lists about 20 "objectives," and well over 100 "strategic results," across three "pillars." The Ukraine RPBA lists about 20 "subcomponents" and 60-odd "outcomes" across three "strategic objectives."

It is difficult to identify many examples that go further than this, even when looking at the wider landscape of peacebuilding and recovery assistance. Those cases that do exist—such as for international stabilization efforts in the Democratic Republic of Congo—have tended to make use of third-party monitoring contracts.

4.2.5 Joining the silos

Of all of the RPBA case studies, it is perhaps Pakistan that comes closest to stereotypical post-conflict recovery, occurring in the wake of military operations in 2008–09 and in a stable constitutional setting. The other cases were somewhat more complex situations characterized roughly as follows:

- **Mali.** A formal and internationally supported peace process with numerous armed groups, culminating in the 2015 Peace Accords

- **Ukraine.** An apparently "frozen" conflict with the need to define both immediate measures and approaches for possible future scenarios

- **Central African Republic and Nigeria.** Active stabilization efforts, with a corresponding need to adapt approaches to fast-changing facts on the ground

The consequence is that these RPBAs existed alongside other ongoing programs and coordination frameworks for international engagement. In each case, this included major political and security initiatives, and a substantial humanitarian response. All stakeholders have accordingly needed to manage multiple intersections between these different lanes of international engagement.

- **Strategic.** Interdependent objectives, which require sequencing activities, dividing responsibilities, and reconciling/deconflicting priorities

- **Operational.** Managing a significant overlap of target areas, target populations, and—to some degree—substantive goals

- **Financial.** Direct competition for visibility, with RPBA and humanitarian and funding appeals referring to the same places at the same times

In the following discussion, we briefly review the approaches taken to manage these intersections. We group our findings under two headings: peace and security, and humanitarian response.

Review of practice

Peace and security

At the strategic level, difficult questions have often been posed on how RPBA activities should interact with fluid security and political conditions on the ground. Specific questions

have included how and when to sequence development aid, and how to play a reinforcing role for political initiatives.

The record in this regard has been mixed at best. Our interlocutors noted that clashing expectations frequently arose—from political stakeholders regarding the flexibility and speed of development aid, and from development actors regarding the risks and conditions for aid delivery. Establishing coordination forums involving stakeholders from both sides of the fence was no guarantee that these clashing expectations could be reconciled (as noted in 4.2.1).

In Somalia, for example, the central mechanisms have been the High-Level Aid Coordination Forum and supporting working groups on the PSGs. After three to four years of these efforts, an independent evaluation concluded that "the linkage between security and other objectives seems to have been particularly weak." The evaluation drew attention to the following issues (Manuel et al. 2017):

- A disconnect existed between aid activities and operations of government security forces and the African Union Mission in Somalia, with many of the key conversations happening outside the PSG structure

- Diplomatic and security actors were not comfortable with the PSG structure, and it was accordingly biased toward development institutions

- Weak links existed across sectors, for example, between PSG2 (security) and PSG4 (economic recovery)

- Haphazard progress was made on security financing needs, despite very large overall security engagement in-country

The conclusion in the case of Somalia was that a targeted work program would be useful for the security PSG, and parallel forums. In effect, the objective was to focus on thematic and geographic areas where security was a critical enabler for other parts of the compact, and to focus on coherent financing for key institutions.

Closer coordination between security and development interventions, focused on relatively specific results, has also been suggested in the Central African Republic and Nigeria. In the latter case, the RPBA document envisions staggered engagement of RPBA recovery and peacebuilding activities linked to the evolution of political and security conditions on the ground:

> Due to the fluid nature of the conflict situation at present, three possible scenarios have been considered in the RPBA… The future course of the conflict will be a major factor affecting the scope for reconstruction and peace building, and vice versa, the scope of reconstruction and peace building will be a major factor affecting the future course of the prevailing conflict. In considering the scenarios, it should be borne in mind that the situation is by its nature unstable and unpredictable, and that there is likely to be marked variation in conditions between and across states and local governance areas. (EU et al. 2015, 23)

It is too early to judge how this will work in practice. Our informants emphasized that the preconditions for such a sequenced approach to work effectively will include the following:

- The ability of the PCNI to actually set the tempo of work in specific local governance areas, given the large number of stakeholders involved and the extreme politicization of the issues

- Donors' ability to develop programs in response to changing conditions, or alternatively, to keep programs flexible enough to respond to these conditions quickly

- Identification of initial actions that could occur consistent with the status quo situation, given the urgency of the response

In the Central African Republic case, the UN has attempted to facilitate an emergency plan for the Bambari area, within the broader framework of the RPBA, to accompany stabilization efforts led by the government and the UN mission. As of mid-2017, this remained in the very early stages.

Humanitarian response

The need to ensure alignment between humanitarian assistance and recovery frameworks, such as those developed through RPBAs, has in recent years once again garnered focused attention, most notably following the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 and the development of the New Way of Working.[4] This attention results from a shared understanding that in most cases humanitarian and recovery/development needs coexist, and that the respective communities of practice need to be bridged and linked.

Across the RPBA cases, the practice has been inconsistent at best. A key issue is that there has been insufficient examination—beyond statements of principle—on the relationship between RPBAs and humanitarian needs in order to identify boundaries and points of convergence. These have included the following:

- Potential politicization of humanitarian aid, particularly where RPBAs have been explicitly aligned with political or stabilization initiatives (as discussed in 4.2.1)

- Hand-over of service delivery from humanitarian agencies to government providers, and the associated costs and uncertainties of capacity building

- Simultaneous RPBA and humanitarian funding requirements, and perceptions that the two are in competition

On the question of politicization, the core partners are quite clear, internally, on the role of principled humanitarian action. The partner that has given the most thought to how to balance this with wider objectives in conflict-affected environments is the UN, under the rubric of integration. After well over a decade of debate, the policy position has settled on the following:

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[4] See https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/initiatives/5358.

> In this regard, principled humanitarian action remains an important element of the United Nations system's response. However, even though humanitarian response often supports peace consolidation, its primary aim is to respond to needs. Accordingly, many humanitarian activities are likely to remain outside the scope of [integrated planning]. Key exceptions may be activities related to protection of civilians, some support for return and reintegration, and early recovery. (UN 2013a, 76)

At the level of implementation, then, it may be that the first issue is best answered by focusing on the second; in other words, by identifying working mechanisms for the areas of **direct** intersection between RPBA and humanitarian activities.

The case where these issues have received the fullest consideration is the Central African Republic, due to the size of the humanitarian response in this country and the embryonic nature of government service delivery outside of the capital. Here, the RPBA itself includes guiding principles outlining the respective roles of humanitarian and development aid. These state simply that humanitarian service delivery will remain essential, given limited government capacities in the short term. On the humanitarian side, the key planning framework (humanitarian response plan) was articulated for the three-year period 2017–19, with the expectation that the division of labor with the RPBA will be reassessed toward the end of that timeline. In the interim, the plan is as follows:

> The implementation of the HRP [Humanitarian Response Plan] and the RCPCA [National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan] will require very close and continuous coordination, and will be reviewed at least twice a year in order to (1) agree on geographical areas where recovery interventions can take over from humanitarian actions, while gradually transferring responsibility to provide basic social services and protection to national institutions; (2) identify incremental complementarities for recovery interventions to build on the achievements of humanitarian interventions; (3) clarify the respective nature of and methods used by humanitarian actors (e.g., acute and severe malnutrition) and recovery actors (e.g., structural interventions to address chronic malnutrition and ensure food security); and (4) specify respective target beneficiary groups. (EU et al. 2016, 25)

This plan includes two core ingredients: a common overarching vision and supporting mechanisms for operational coordination in areas of direct overlap.

In this case, alignment of the RPBA and humanitarian frameworks rests on the understanding that in most cases humanitarian and recovery/development needs coexist and must be addressed through a more coherent approach that bridges and links the respective communities of practice. In practical terms, however, important constraints exist, given the different focus, planning and delivery mechanisms, funding sources, and response timelines. Coherence is therefore more an issue of developing a common overarching vision, with operational integration limited to areas of overlap and transitions from humanitarian to recovery/development assistance (defined in either sectoral or geographic terms).

4.3 Institutional alignment

An RPBA is an analytic product that is prepared for a range of different audiences. For partners to act on it, they must link to the established internal processes by which they identify goals, commit resources, and measure success.

This subsection reviews how this has happened across the case studies. We look first at the host country institutions; then the core partners; and finally, the wider aid world.

4.3.1 National institutions

The host country government is the most important partner under an RPBA framework. Both governance/coordination and operational roles entail large commitments of time and money, and involve a wide range of actors.

Thus, it is critical to address how an RPBA—an analytic product—is converted into an instrument by which government partners can legally make policy and reform decisions, orient programs and services, commit resources, designate institutional responsibilities, and provide clear guidance to international partners. In practice, the completion of the RPBA is also a critical political milestone. Experience shows that the point at which an RPBA process emerges into mainstream politics is often when it is marginalized or contested.

Guide to findings in subsection 4.3

National institutions (4.3.1). An RPBA must be linked to instruments by which the government can make policy, secure the buy-in of key stakeholders, and commit resources. Several models have been tried, ranging from soft policy to legislation; the model which makes most sense for a situation will depend upon the context, including the constitutional environment, the existing policy landscape, and the scope of reforms envisioned by the RPBA. In all cases, delays and controversies are an inevitable part of the process—but it is important to avoid unnecessary bottlenecks and identify areas where it is possible to progress quickly.

The core partners (4.3.2). None of the cases was a blank slate for the EU, UN, or World Bank; and it is crucial to take stock of each of three institutions' existing goals and capacities. It is typically useful to amend strategic frameworks to clarify how new priorities relate to the old, and what implications this has for management structure, performance measurement, and supporting capacities. In several cases, coordination support and management engagement have become bottlenecks as the country office transitions from the RPBA to the implementation phase, so these aspects should be given special attention.

The broader aid world (4.3.3). A basic premise of this study is that RPBAs provide public goods for the host government and development partners. Whether these have been expanded to cover other development actors varies from case to case, and it is a strategic choice whether to keep coordination support "in-house" between the core partners, to include specific additional partners, or to create open processes for the aid community in general. In all cases, as more partners are involved, it becomes more important to define and enforce common principles that underlie governance and coordination mechanisms.

A vivid illustration of this dynamic is provided by Nepal's PDNA. This assessment was followed by a National Reconstruction Act and establishment of a National Reconstruction Authority. Both were met by repeated challenges in Parliament. This led to repeated changes in leadership of the National Reconstruction Authority, difficulties in mobilizing domestic financial resources, substantial delays in starting up key coordination functions, and a year-long process to prepare a supplementary assessment framework.

In the remainder of this discussion, we review two main challenges for national authorities: the policy/legal framework and operational roll-out.

Review of practice

Policy/legal framework

The design of national policy frameworks does not receive much attention in the current policy guidance. The 2007 guidance anticipates that a transitional results framework (TRF) will be an adequate foundation for moving forward, and can be "finally validated…with all major actors" (UNDG and World Bank, 10). This guidance stated that the TRF, should, moreover, "mirror as much as possible a basic version of a normal government budgeting process."

The closest approximation to this was in the Central African Republic, where the RPBA became the de facto national development strategy as a result of an acute national crisis, suspended donor relationships, and a full-blown government transition. Here, it made sense to simply "reboot" government development planning, and the RPBA provided an organizing framework to do so. This was accompanied by a simple presidential decree that defined basic institutional arrangements, thereby setting expectations for international partners.

In other cases, there has not been so clear a field. In Nigeria, a long-standing subnational crisis had already led to a range of pre-existing initiatives by the time the RPBA was initiated. These included a Presidential Initiative for the North-East, the North-East States Transformation Strategy, and elements of the national development strategy (Nigeria Vision 20-2020). The challenge was to identify how the RPBA would intersect with these frameworks (and/or modify them), and how to improve and build upon existing arrangements for coordination. In response, the RPBA report maps the distribution of relevant functions across levels of government, underscoring the need to coordinate different financing streams.

Mali and Pakistan illustrate a third type of case. Here, the RPBAs remained stand-alone products and were not translated into statements of government policy. Over time, it became clear that there was a lack of buy-in for key aspects of the assessment. The net result in Pakistan, as noted in 4.2.1, is that proposed governance reforms did not progress. The RPBA remained a reference document for project development under the Multi-Partner Trust Fund, but not for policy reform in the short term. In Mali, the RPBA effectively lapsed due to its association with a stalled peace agreement and government turnover, and did not become a significant organizing framework for government policy.

What can we glean from these country experiences? The germane points are perhaps as follows:

- An RPBA itself will not meet the formal requirements for designating responsibilities or committing resources. It will need to be accompanied by other measures, and it is important to understand what will be needed from a legal standpoint. There may be a trade-off between speed and robustness.

- The model of a TRF as "the" suitable framework for planning is only applicable in a clear-cut post-conflict situation, which was not the norm in the cases studied. More often, a set of initiatives covering peacebuilding, development aid, or linked agendas will already be in place. In these situations, the actors must map the points of inter-section, identify desired changes, and understand the necessary steps to make those changes. In most cases, this may entail integrating RPBA findings, priorities, and associated interventions into these different frameworks.

- The mixed experience on translating RPBA outputs into national policy and planning frameworks underscores how important it is to assess options and approaches early on and as part of the assessment phase (see subsection 4.1).

- Discussion and finalization of enabling measures, such as legislation, may itself be an important point of debate and validation by national stakeholders. This may, indeed, be the point at which the discussion broadens after a relatively narrow circle of interlocutors in the assessment phase.

Additional findings

Avoid the creation of bottlenecks

RPBAs cover politically sensitive topics, and as such, disagreements among national and international stakeholders are to be expected. In fact, the process of finding agreement is a key part of the value added, and should not be overlooked or rushed in favor of taking a purely technical approach. Yet, stakeholders must also be conscious that events on the ground are fluid and can have drastic human consequences. The 2007 guidance provides some pragmatic advice on how to balance these competing imperatives:

> In some cases, government and donors may judge that the moment is not yet ripe for a high-profile donor pledging conference. This may be because a transition process is not yet proven and large scale international commitments will not be forthcoming until later down the line. In this case, national leadership and international partners may wish to hold a lower profile meeting focused on the recovery plan and financing of immediate activities, rather than on new pledging, postponing a higher profile pledging conference until later in the transition process. (UNDG and World Bank 2007, 11)

The idea applies equally to national policy. In many settings, significant time and political effort are required to secure widespread consensus on difficult issues (as described in 4.2.1). In these circumstances, stakeholders should consider whether it is possible to advance on less controversial issues in parallel (see also subsection 4.1).

The purest illustration of this approach is in Ukraine, where the RPBA occurred in the context of a not-quite-frozen conflict in the Donbas region. The assessment goals were formulated as follows:

> The goal of the first phase of the RPA is to produce a pragmatic and coherent set of recommendations on urgent priorities related to restoring critical infrastructure and services, improving economic livelihoods, and strengthening social resilience and peacebuilding. It is expected that these recommendations will help inform the efforts of the government, its international partners, and other national stakeholders in improving human welfare and stabilizing social and economic conditions in conflict-affected areas under government control, while efforts continue to reach a definitive resolution of the Donbas crisis. (EU, UN, and World Bank 2015, 9)

From a practical standpoint, the RPBA process was indeed followed by significant delays at the political level, since agreement on parameters could not be reached quickly or easily. At the same time, it was possible to move forward with significant project activities by the UN, and by the EU through local implementing partners.

In the case of Nigeria, as mentioned in subsection 4.1, a progressive approach to operationalizing implementation modalities has been adopted, in part due to the complexity of the institutional environment. Early emphasis was given to detailed planning at the state level (by developing state implementation plans); and after this, identifying donor partners and associated funding instruments. Pending the establishment of formal institutional and coordination frameworks, to be supported and funded through donor resources, a pragmatic approach to coordination, through use of nodes of convergence has been instrumental in initiating momentum on program development and allocation of financing.[5] This progressive, and in some respects, ad hoc approach to implementation has allowed for initial progress despite the complexities and challenges involved in establishing a complete implementation architecture and policy/legal enabling environment.

4.3.2 The core partners

None of the case studies was a blank slate from the perspective of the three partner institutions. All country cases had ongoing activities, a team in place, and existing country-level strategic planning work. The question then becomes: How does the RPBA shift each institution's objectives at the country level, and how do they shift resources to achieve these objectives?

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[5] Several nodes of convergence, in the form of established or ad hoc coordination platforms, currently exist. These are (1) the federal level, through the PCNI, which brings together federal government entities, states, and international partners; (2) the state level, focused on coordination of project development; (3) the donor level, through the Northeast Donors Group (led by the UK Department for International Development); and (4) the multilateral development banks (including the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, and the World Bank).

Current policy guidance asserts simply that "the TRF should also serve as the analytical platform for all institutional country strategies during the transition period" (UNDG and World Bank 2007, 20). The reality has been more complicated; the recent RPBA review states that "the impact of assessments on the EU, UN, and World Bank country-specific programming has been difficult to determine" (Garrasi and Allen 2016, 32). In practice, RPBA documents are silent on follow-up actions from the three institutions, and we are not aware of explicit roll-out plans following the assessments.

Establishing current practice has thus required an oral history of "what happened next" across the case studies. The next subsections capture that history from two perspectives: strategy and policy, and operations and capacities. Following that, subsection 4.4 fully addresses a third major topic—mapping and activating the financing instruments available to each institution.

Review of practice

Strategy and policy

Each of the partner institutions has well-established processes for country-level strategy formulation and planning. While not an exhaustive list, these processes include the following:

■ Overarching country strategies—for example, the World Bank's country program framework, the country program documents of individual UN agencies, and the EU's National Indicative Programme (NIP)

■ Processes for "in-family" coordination—for example, EU joint program documents, the UN's integrated strategic framework, and the UN development assistance framework

■ Regional-level coordination—for example, EU for the Horn of Africa, and UN for the Sahel

The linkages between RPBAs and these processes have varied significantly from case to case. We group this experience roughly as follows:

Group	Description	Example
MDTF only	RPBA activities are limited to those financed through trust funds; broader country strategy remains unchanged	Pakistan
Partial alignment	Addition of a new pillar/theme for overall country strategy; review of existing pillars for possible complementarities	Nepal, Nigeria, Ukraine
Full alignment	"Reboot" of core planning tools so that the focus is fully on peacebuilding and recovery/RPBA priorities	Central African Republic, Somalia

Which approach makes most sense depends upon the circumstances. The aim of an RPBA is to focus attention on key recovery priorities—but how is this balanced with the broader mandates of the partner institutions in a situation such as Nigeria or Pakistan, where conflict is localized and there is wide scope for other engagement? Or in Ukraine, where a complex political transition intervened in a context of ongoing large-scale programs?

Whatever the answers to such questions, they may represent a significant shift in direction for country representation that was designed to support different objectives. Our interlocutors emphasized that this change in direction can be even more significant in situations where the emphasis has historically been on nonconflict issues or on different regions. They explained that the planning frameworks noted above are "core operating software," in the sense that they have implications for a range of other internal processes, such as

■ Management structure and human resources;
■ Access to certain funding instruments;
■ Performance management for the country office and for individual staff;
■ Oversight and debate by governing bodies; and
■ Engagement with external stakeholders.

An RPBA, by contrast, is a joint product that serves a variety of different audiences, and it does not automatically flow through to these internal processes. The implication is that it is important to translate the assessment into internal strategic planning at the level of each partner institution. This provides a place to discuss how to balance priorities and to determine what other internal changes are needed.

A simple illustration can be taken from Nepal. When the earthquake of April 2015 struck, the EU had just finalized its Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP) for 2014–20. In this context, it responded to the joint PDNA, and the subsequent Post-Disaster Recovery Framework developed by the government by the following:

■ Reviewing the existing portfolio in order to redirect some elements of the MIP to earthquake recovery (other workstreams that support education and agricultural development continued with minor modifications)

■ Utilizing the Nepal-EU Action for Recovery and Reconstruction (€105 million), a light framework supplementing the MIP, which focused on budget support, accountability mechanisms, and technical advisory support

■ Making related changes to monitoring, staffing, and risk analysis

Another example is Nigeria, where the World Bank has integrated a focus on the northeast states aligned with the RPBA as part of its ongoing country program strategy. The programmatic strategy for the World Bank consists of two related tracks: first, a focus on RPBA priorities will be integrated into six existing World Bank–financed operations (covering health, education, social protection, and agriculture) through additional financing specifically targeting the northeast (for a total of $575 million). The second track is a stand-alone lending project for the northeast (the Multi-Process Crisis Response Programme), for $200 million, which covers priorities in four sectors and provides capacity development support for institutional mechanisms at the federal and state levels. To ensure that the program portfolio is coherent with RPBA priorities, and is also coherent between projects, the World Bank intends to create a position within the country management unit to facilitate coordination between relevant project task teams.

Operations and capacities

Any significant shift in strategic direction requires realignment of capacities to be fit for purpose. We have already emphasized that high-level engagement is needed to support the kinds of policy/reform initiatives usually encompassed by an RPBA (4.2.1), as well as dedicated coordination support to build up operational coherence (4.2.2).

With respect to **coordination support**, the RPBA process itself is facilitated by specialists, and in some cases, consultants. This leaves a well-known point of vulnerability when a high-profile, heavily supported process ends, and the country office must transition back to the usual configuration. In recent years, this transition has been supported through a range of approaches to maintain momentum.

In Pakistan, secretariat support for the RPBA was embedded with a World Bank governance support project, and took the form of an implementation support unit within the Department of Planning and Development. This took well over a year to become operational. In Ukraine, interlocutors noted that there had been delays of a similar magnitude in getting project-based coordination support up and running.

Partly in response to this experience, more recent cases have tried alternative arrangements. In the Central African Republic, the EU and World Bank have recruited consultants to work with the RPBA technical secretariat, and to coordinate between the secretariat and their home institutions. This was reinforced by secondment of personnel from bilateral donors, notably France. In Nigeria, the World Bank has supported coordination under its multisectoral crisis recovery project, and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) provided consultants to facilitate state-level coordination.

In Nigeria, coordination support is provided by the EU and World Bank, with a division of labor at the federal and state levels. Through a $1.5 million grant provided by DFID, the World Bank is providing technical expertise and coordination support to the government for key preparatory activities (development of institutional and legal frameworks, monitoring/evaluation systems, national fiduciary and operational frameworks, policy development, and financing strategy), while the EU is supporting state-level governments as they develop prioritized implementation plans by deploying expert advisors.

The area of **management oversight and engagement** has received considerably less attention. The recent review was quite categorical on this point: "Interlocutors noted a lack of awareness of PCNAs at the level of country senior leadership of the partner organizations (for example, the UN resident/humanitarian coordinator or UNDP country representative, World Bank country director, EU head of delegation)" (Garrasi and Allen 2016, 19).

This is borne out by the present study. The research process has provided substantial "evidence of absence," insofar as it has been very difficult to engage leadership and general managers. RPBA issues were instead delegated to technical staff, most often those dealing with governance. This has made it difficult to develop practical findings regarding institutional

leadership, particularly as it concerns political sustainability (4.2.1) and "big picture" coherence (4.2.5).

Among the cases, leadership has clearly been a binding constraint on a few occasions. For example, there were vacancies in key positions in the Central African Republic and Nigeria, where changeover in the UN's resident/humanitarian coordinator caused a significant loss of momentum at critical junctures. This was especially problematic because of the UN system's highly decentralized nature, and the relatively limited ability for other officials to step into a coordinating role. These and other examples demonstrate how important corporate (headquarters) engagement and support are for ensuring the continuity of institutional engagement in an RPBA process.

Other capacity-related points raised throughout this study include the following:

- The need to clarify the intended results of management engagement, including the workplan for high-level steering groups (4.2.1), and engagement with stakeholders outside of the executive branch of government (4.2.3)

- How to mobilize support at the headquarters level to adjust strategic planning frameworks (4.3.2), or for access to specific financing instruments (4.4)

4.3.3 The broader aid world

The core tasks that we discuss in this report are clearly scalable to include partners beyond the EU, UN, and World Bank. These tasks include the assessment process itself (subsection 4.1), mechanisms for governance and coordination (subsection 4.2), and financing options (subsection 4.4).

Whether to include other partners is a strategic choice. The most important consideration is of course what is already there—there is little point in creating parallel coordination systems. Increased participation also entails financial costs and added complexity. However, in the right circumstances, cooperation between the three core partners can make a major contribution to broader aid effectiveness in situations where there would otherwise be a vacuum. Empirically, the range of experience across the cases is as follows:

Group	Description	Example
Open participation	Governance and coordination infrastructure open to all interested partners	Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Somalia
Key partnerships	Focus on selected institutions; e.g., the regional development banks or a specific bilateral donor	Nigeria
In-house	Limited involvement of other institutions	Pakistan, Ukraine

The choice of approach is a not a question of better or worse, but rather a policy decision. Whatever the scope in a specific case, the following discussion reviews experiences on how to involve other institutions most effectively.

Review of practice

A key theme of this study is that RPBAs can contribute to aid effectiveness with respect to both priorities and process. Yet the unavoidable fact is that process innovations for assessment (subsection 4.1), governance and coordination (subsection 4.2), or financing (subsection 4.4) are only as useful as partner contributions make them. It follows that it is important to think carefully about how partner institutions engage.

At the strategic level, several country cases have developed explicit partnership principles as part of the broader RPBA framework. The Central African Republic case is clearest on this point, and worth quoting in full:

> It is suggested that a set of partnership principles and a number of related international commitments be developed and agreed upon by all stakeholders as part of a new partnership framework. These should reflect a joint vision on the best way to operationalize the partnership and could include the following objectives:
>
> - Achieve greater transparency and alignment of financing against RCPCA [National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan] priorities
>
> - Reduce critical funding gaps as well as fragmentation and duplication of aid
>
> - Increase government ownership and leadership of the recovery and peacebuilding process
>
> - Ensure coherence and coordination across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus
>
> - Ensure that aid contributes to building the capacity of Central African institutions
>
> - Establish accountability toward citizens (EU et al. 2016, 44)

A similar set of principles was articulated in the compact cases (Afghanistan and Somalia). Several external evaluations found that these principles were key to strengthening aid governance and coordination over time, and to counteracting a tendency of bilateral partners to declare programs aligned without adjusting their programming practices.[6]

A second clear lesson learned is to provide regular "on ramps" for involvement with the RPBA framework. Partner interest may crystallize into concrete involvement at quite different times, due to internal planning timelines, home country politics, and a range of other factors. This suggests the need for mechanisms like a rolling financing strategy or operational plan (as discussed in 4.2.2).

At the operational level, we have touched on several other enabling practices elsewhere in this report. These include the following:

- Properly supported joint processes for engagement at the sectoral and subnational level, and with nongovernment interlocutors (4.2.2–4.2.3)

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[6] See, e.g., Hearn and Zimmerman (2014) and Manuel et al. (2017).

- Harmonized standards for monitoring and reporting on financial commitments, expenditures, and activities (4.2.4)

- Establishing an open architecture for thematic/sectoral coordination structures as part of RPBA implementation to encourage broad participation by partners, while simultaneously balancing the need for rigor in coordination with awareness of the need to reduce transaction costs

- Engagement with a wide range of partners, including other international aid partners, on implementation planning early on, including during the assessment phase itself (see subsection 4.1)

- The role of MDTF governance structures as a "pole" for attracting partners and facilitating coordination and alignment of resource flows (explored more fully in subsection 4.4)

4.4 Financing

This subsection reviews how RPBA financing requirements have been organized and used as a basis to mobilize resources and engage donors (national and international). It assesses the processes and frameworks for allocating against priorities, donor coordination, and financial tracking, including across different funding sources and instruments. This subsection also reviews the major funding sources and instruments utilized in RPBAs, including use of country systems.

4.4.1 RPBA financing strategies

Beyond a costed transitional results matrix (and an organized donor conference), most PCNA/RPBA exercises have not traditionally included an explicit strategy for how RPBA priorities and associated interventions will be financed beyond establishing a dedicated financing instrument (predominantly MDTFs). The consequence is that a consolidated picture of funding streams is rare, and it is difficult to map the track record of financing against defined priorities. This has often undermined operational coherence and the ability of national authorities to set direction, as discussed in 4.2.2.

The practice to date, then, suggests the criticality of developing a comprehensive financing strategy that is broadly inclusive of all relevant funding sources and instruments (and not limited to MDTFs). This strategy must be focused on partnership building and on facilitating broad engagement by national and international stakeholders, while at the same time remaining flexible, pragmatic, and adaptable with respect to the funding situation in-country as it evolves.

In the majority of exercises assessed (the Central African Republic, Indonesia/Aceh, Nigeria, and Somalia, among others), financing has been mobilized from a wide variety of sources and instruments, including bilateral funds (grants); loans; national budget; and EU, UN, and World Bank programmatic funding. Maintaining a broad view on financing, and placing emphasis

Guide to findings in subsection 4.4

Ultimately, the development of an RPBA financing strategy and architecture requires (1) properly assessing the donor landscape and establishing conditions for government/donor engagement (linkages to political processes are especially important), and (2) developing an appropriate framework that considers the relevant funding sources/instruments and a mechanism for allocation/coordination suited to the context.

Financing strategies (4.4.1). A review of country experiences shows how critical it is to develop a financing strategy as part of the implementation process, to situate RPBA financing needs in the broader aid/donor landscape, to help generate consensus on funding priorities, and to provide a framework for identifying and aligning different funding sources and instruments.

Donors and government (4.42 and 4.4.3). The practices reviewed in this study also underscore the need for early engagement with governments and donors on financing, and a need to use donor conferences more strategically. Most cases that successfully mobilized resources were underpinned by strong engagement of these stakeholders—not just in mobilizing and aligning funds, but also in contributing to policy dialogue, priority setting, program formulation, and monitoring within the context of RPBA implementation.

Fund management and instruments (4.4.4 and 4.4.5). In most of the cases, a broad range of funding instruments was used to finance RPBAs and analogous plans. The overall effectiveness of how these instruments have been deployed and aligned varies considerably, pointing to important trade-offs between "big tent" sectoral coordination approaches versus a more structured and centralized process for determining priorities and allocations. Most cases utilized the technical coordination structures (e.g., technical/sectoral working groups) and MDTFs, both of which have often provided an important locus for coordination and information sharing, joint prioritization, and funding alignment.

on harnessing/aligning different financing streams and instruments against RPBA priorities, is the key factor that allows stakeholders to maximize resource mobilization potential and leverage the comparative advantages of different instruments.

The experience of these and other countries points to several issues that should be considered in the design of financing strategies as part of an overall RPBA implementation plan:

- Undertaking a mapping early on (preferably during the assessment phase itself) of all relevant funding sources and instruments, their potential contributions against RPBA priorities, including specialized instruments and potential gaps which would require mobilization of new instruments/resources.

- Engaging early on with the national government, key donors, and other relevant stakeholders in dialogue on how existing funding streams and instruments could be aligned to support RPBA priorities (which in turn could inform design of fund management/ allocation structures). This is both an issue of aligning donor priorities/preferences and of reorienting existing instruments.

■ Clearly defining the scope of a financing strategy, which in principle could include (1) an overview of the funding/donor landscape and baselines on aid flows and gaps; (2) analysis of the potential scope for aligning donor and national funding against RPBA requirements (based on consultations); (3) identification of potential funding sources and instruments relevant to RPBA needs; (4) assessment of government financing capacity; and (4) definition of a proposed structure for coordinating, allocating, and monitoring funding flows.

4.4.2 Advocacy and partnership with donors

Engagement with the donor community on a collective framework for response (RPBA priorities or transitional results matrix) has proven effective in encouraging programmatic and financial alignment to RPBA priorities. If engagement is undertaken early enough, identifying the scale and scope of potential funding flows becomes easier, which allows RPBA prioritization, implementation, and associated mechanisms to be tailored accordingly. Conversely, the RPBA assessment and associated transitional results matrix could also provide insights into the scale and type of financing required, which in turn could inform the donor target group. These are arguably more strategic approaches than an open appeal model, or one in which funding needs and requirements are predefined/prescribed in the absence of consultation/ownership by the broader donor community. A few examples of early engagement follow:

■ In Nigeria, RPBA partners engaged with select donors early in the implementation process, resulting in a partnership with DFID (financing to support early implementation work and capacity development, as well as support for coordinating broader donor engagement) and other international financial institutions (notably the African Development Bank and the Islamic Development Bank, which agreed to align lending operations with RPBA priorities).

■ In Somalia, the development of the compact created a partnership framework between national and international partners against which donor funding priorities were also aligned. Key to this was the establishment of clear linkages between the collective political priorities of national and international partners in jointly supporting recovery and development in Somalia, and the processes for allocating international aid, which were established through the PSG working groups.

Although sometimes criticized, donor conferences remain an important vehicle for securing high-level engagement by donors and for linking an RPBA to broader political engagement questions. Lessons from the past, however, highlight the need to use conferences more strategically as part of a broader financing strategy, to establish funding baselines and pledge/aid tracking mechanisms, generate programmatic commitments, and develop consensus on allocation and coordination mechanisms. Donor conferences could also provide important platforms to discuss, "truth check," and secure consensus on the outlines of an RPBA financing structure and coordination architecture. Too often donor conferences conclude

with inadequate or poor follow-up (Central African Republic, Mali, Somalia), which represent missed opportunities.

Practice from the case studies pointed to five points that are important for donor engagement:

- A donor outreach strategy should be developed that outlines the overall approach for outreach, including the criteria for determining the scope of desired outreach (which depends on the extent and nature of RPBA financing requirements).

- Donor conferences provide opportunities for engaging donors on RPBA priorities and appropriate mechanisms for coordinating and allocating funding.

- Programmatic discussions need to take place on the topics of prioritization, coordination, addressing gaps and implementation approaches, usually within sectoral/thematic groups (Indonesia/Aceh, Nigeria, Somalia).

- Donors need to participate in funding instrument-level governance structures, which can help create "poles" for dialogue on funding priorities and coordination (Indonesia/Aceh, Somalia).

- High-level steering committees are needed, which can help link funding priorities to broader political commitments between governments and international partners.

Another example that merits emphasis is the rolling financing strategy used for the ARTF. This was first developed for the period 2012–14, and then again for 2015–17. The process for the second round involved (1) an initial draft by the World Bank, based on discussions with the government; (2) intensive discussion in a strategy group comprised of interested donors and the Ministry of Finance; and (3) validation by the ARTF Steering Committee. The document was then updated on an annual basis to reflect actual commitments and, in some cases, emerging government priorities.

4.4.3 The role of the government

The government's role is critical in generating and maintaining momentum on financing. Establishing close linkages between RPBA financing requirements and national plans and budget frameworks is essential. It can help anchor the RPBA as an integral component of the national budgeting process and better structure the relationship between the government and the donor community. The role of active government leadership as a lightning rod for resource mobilization is evident in countries such as Indonesia and Somalia; in other cases, government ambivalence or lack of engagement demonstrates the opposite (Nepal, Ukraine).

A financing strategy should prioritize the government's own resource commitments, be it as part of the national budget or an extra-budgetary commitment. The cases reviewed highlight the distinctions and similarities in the roles and capacities of government in MICs versus LICs. These include the following:

- In MICs, the assumption that governments have both financing and adequate financial management and implementation capacities raises expectations of their role that sometimes cannot be met. In Ukraine, the government is facing potential economic bankruptcy and political/institutional paralysis, and is unable to serve in either of these capacities. Other countries demonstrate wide variation between national and local-level capacities for fund management, which the designation of MIC obscures (e.g., Indonesia, Nigeria). In this sense, the starting points for government engagement in MICs are sometimes not so different from fragile countries and LICs.

- Many donors make an important distinction between MICs and LICs when it comes to eligibility of specific financing instruments. The former receive relatively less grant assistance and are not usually eligible for concessional loans (e.g., World Bank IDA). When confronted with a situation such as Ukraine, this poses a serious financing and implementation challenge, necessitating the primary use of lending instruments, but in a context where national implementation capacities can be quite weak.

- MICs can be expected, in general, to have more developed financial management and implementation capacities from an institutional perspective, thereby making it easier to channel financing through country systems. In formulating the financing strategy, this consideration is noteworthy, because MICs can be more centrally focused on supporting country systems and strengthening them as needed in this regard (e.g., Indonesia). This contrasts with fragile countries and LICs, where the absence of systems, basic capacities, and implementation capability of state institutions necessitates a far stronger emphasis, at the outset, on international systems for managing and delivering assistance (as was the case in Somalia, and will likely be needed in the Central African Republic).

Additional findings

The above findings have several implications for how national financing sources and instruments should be addressed in RPBA financing strategies, notably as follows.

- The case studies underscore the importance of aligning RPBA funding priorities with national planning and budgetary frameworks (including at sector and subnational levels), even if funding does not necessarily flow through country systems.

- The experience from RPBAs in both MICs and LICs highlights the importance of providing tailored technical and capacity development assistance to governments as part of an overall financing strategy for donor/aid coordination, budgetary planning, and public financial management (at both national and subnational levels)—both in terms of facilitating government engagement in RPBA financing and ensuring a transition from international to national funding over the long term.

- Most case studies demonstrate how difficult it is to include national financing for RPBAs, given the specialized and often extra-budgetary nature of resources required. In some situations, international partners have provided incentives to facilitate national

financing for RPBA implementation, via low-interest loans, budget support (e.g., development program lending through the World Bank), and debt write-offs. However, this type of support cannot substitute for government leadership in matters of financing. The case of Indonesia/Aceh is one of the few where a government contributed significant amounts of financing ($2 billion), which was facilitated by a debt write-off in the same amount. Where national financing is not available or will entail significant delays, these types of incentives or other financing modalities (including provisional allocation of international financing pending national funding) should be envisioned as part of an overall financing strategy.

4.4.4 Fund management frameworks

In countries where a broad approach (not limited to a single funding source or instrument and inclusive of the majority of donors) to financing has been undertaken (e.g., Indonesia/Aceh, Somalia), both senior policy- and technical-level coordination structures have proven critical as platforms for inclusive and structured dialogue on funding priorities, coordination, alignment, and monitoring progress. A key factor here is the voluntary participation and engagement of donors willing to discuss programmatic and funding priorities, and align their preferences accordingly. This approach could be more effective than a more controlling approach that would involve integrating funding sources/instruments within a common governance structure for priority setting and allocation.

Different approaches and options. The country cases assessed reveal a broad range of different approaches with respect to the mechanisms established to manage the process of allocating funding against assessed priorities. In practice, the mechanisms can be grouped into three main types of approaches:

- **MDTF-centered financing framework.** In this approach, the trust fund provides the main instrument/source of financing and its governance structure is the primary platform for coordination and funding allocation decisions (Pakistan, possibly Ukraine). This framework may be a useful option when RPBA needs are narrowly defined and outside the scope of regular donor assistance, when specialized needs require mainstreaming fiduciary and implementation modalities (e.g., quick and flexible disbursement/delivery, emergency short-term responses, high-risk interventions), or where efforts need to be tightly integrated and coordinated to concentrate and deliver resources against a limited number of critical priorities.

- **Coordination-oriented framework.** This approach, centered on RPBA technical and thematic working groups, has a focus on programmatic alignment rather than integration at the level of funding instruments and their respective governance structures (Indonesia/Aceh, Nigeria, Somalia). This is a useful option to consider when the RPBA framework is broad, funding is available from a broad range of sources and instruments, and establishing a formal fund management framework would be too cumbersome or undesirable.

■ **Integrated fund management architecture.** A third type, which is being established for the Central African Republic and Nigeria, focuses on developing a financing governance architecture that aligns and integrates individual funding instruments, and is linked to technical structures for prioritization and programmatic monitoring. Advantages of a dedicated fund management architecture are that it provides a platform for high-level dialogue on funding needs (perhaps linked to a compact-style arrangement for defining partner commitments and accountabilities); facilitates a harmonized approach to prioritization, allocation, and tracking of financing; and provides a mechanism to create deeper alignment between funding instruments, which maximizes the effectiveness of how resources are allocated and used.

Funding prioritization and allocation systems. Across several of the cases reviewed for this study, prioritization, and coordination related to funding allocations seemed to have been most effective in the context of sectoral/thematic working groups established to coordinate implementation (Indonesia/Aceh, Nigeria, Somalia) or within the framework of MDTF governance structures (Indonesia/Aceh, Somalia).

■ With respect to the first, cases demonstrated the advantages and trade-offs characteristic of the different types of coordination working groups. In Indonesia/Aceh and Somalia, these were "big tents," which offered platforms for alignment and coordination around broad priorities; while in the Central African Republic and Nigeria, discussions are more detailed at the outcome/output level. Although the former potentially generates the broadest alignment and engagement by donors, it comes at the expense of a more detailed, project-level focus on priorities, gaps, and monitoring.

■ MDTFs remain a critical funding instrument in terms of both their pooling and risk-sharing function (which enable targeting of specific priorities not covered by other instruments) and their strategic function in creating a center of gravity for dialogue for other donors that find the process of priority setting and coordination useful to inform their own programming and funding decisions. Indonesia/Aceh and Somalia are cases in point. It is important, however, to not limit financing strategies and frameworks to MDTFs—which constitute essential, but not sufficient, elements of a successful financing architecture. MDTFs also facilitate financing of public goods such as risk management and monitoring, from which every individual benefits but for which no individual is willing to pay. Afghanistan and Somalia are the clearest examples.

Use of country systems for management of international financial assistance. All cases reviewed have made the strengthening of country systems a priority, given that this is needed to sustain efforts over the long term and to ensure government leadership over recovery processes. In reality, most cases have fallen short of these ambitions (Somalia is a particularly good example). On the other hand, Afghanistan is a case that demonstrates the value of extensive support for public financial management in addition to commitments in a compact-type arrangement (the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework), which together enabled considerable progress in donors' use of country systems.

Aid tracking. The Indonesia/Aceh and Somalia cases, in particular, demonstrate the important role of comprehensive aid and financial tracking systems, in increasing transparency and the flow of information on ongoing and planned funding. These systems have been used as the foundation for dialogue on funding targets/priorities, gaps, and monitoring progress.

4.4.5 Funding instruments

Across most of the country cases examined, a variety of funding sources and instruments have been utilized. The practice to date in this regard has also generated many lessons learned on their respective merits and drawbacks in relation to RPBA implementation. The specific functionality and the comparative advantage of each type of funding instrument should be considered as far as how it can be integrated into the financing strategy, with specific RPBA priorities and funding requirements mapped onto different instruments.

Key criteria that could be utilized in the mapping include the following:

- The scale of financing required (large-volume lending or budgetary support)

- Financing of government systems and implementation capacity (government financing, loans, grants, and direct budgetary support)

- Types of activities (with large-scale infrastructure and social service privileging loans, and sensitive programming and capacity development privileging grants/MDTFs)

- Urgency of activities (with grants, MDTFs, and specialized emergency funds being privileged)

The principal funding instruments and sources used in RPBA implementation include the following.

International loans. International loans (either in the form of project financing or budget support) provide a source of high-volume financing that can support implementation of large-scale programs, including infrastructure and social services (Indonesia/Aceh, Nigeria). These loans are also useful in MICs with capacity/policy deficits, as they can benefit from the assistance attached to loans. A longer-term focus (due both to programmatic scope and fiduciary/operational requirements) makes this type of loan less suited for priorities requiring fast disbursement or flexible implementation modalities (Somalia infrastructure projects are a case in point). This type of loan is also acutely problematic where there are very weak national capacities. Nonetheless, some international financial institutions (including the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, and the World Bank) have validated important innovations on this point, by integrating capacity development (Nigeria) or streamlining financial management/procurement and disbursement procedures (Indonesia/Aceh). Loan agreements often have complex compliance requirements and are based on formal agreements, which limit their ability to be realigned or repurposed.

Government funds. Government financing can be provided either as part of the national budget or as extra-budgetary allocations. There are a few examples where governments have contributed funding, either directly (Indonesia/Aceh, $2 billion) or indirectly (Nigeria, to fund assessment and implementation). Advantages of this financing include linkages with national budget and institutional/governance processes, and the resulting political signals this sends to the broader international community. Drawbacks include delays and implementation problems where there are weak national capacities, or where relationships between sectoral ministries are complex (e.g., competition over the allocation of resources). The case of Indonesia/Aceh demonstrates how this can be overcome, where the BRR was given discretionary authority on how funds were to be used and managed, overriding line ministries' normal roles for a limited time period.

Bilateral donor or agency funding. Bilateral donor official development assistance or agency funds (either as grants, loans, or direct budgetary support) constitutes a significant resource in the context of RPBAs. Advantages of this type of funding include broad scope, diverse implementation modalities (from government execution, to civil society, to UN agencies), and rapid disbursement. Specialized crisis/post-conflict facilities with streamlined disbursement procedures also provide grant financing to address high-risk, pilot, or emergency priorities (e.g., the World Bank State and Peacebuilding Fund, and the UN Peacebuilding Fund). At the same time, the bilateral approach to programming and allocating these funds (which are often earmarked to specific projects or programs) can often reinforce fragmentation of aid, given the existence of separate accountability frameworks, reporting requirements, and procedures.

Multi-donor trust funds. MDTFs have played an important role in many of the cases reviewed for this study, both as funding instruments in their own right and as platforms for facilitating broader dialogue on priorities, programmatic approaches, and coordination/alignment (4.4.4). With respect to the former, MDTFs have been proven to cover gaps not covered by mainstream funding (Indonesia/Aceh); to address shorter-term priorities, where flexibility is key (Somalia); and to provide a mechanism for sharing and mitigating risks (Somalia). In the cases evaluated, MDTFs appear to have been most effective when situated as part of a broader financing approach (Indonesia/Aceh, Somalia), and least effective when they were established as the main or primary vehicle for financing RPBA requirements (Pakistan). In the latter case, it had the effect of limiting the scope of financing to a single instrument.

Private sector funding. Private sector financing is crucial for long-term economic recovery, but it is often difficult to attract at the scale required in immediate post-crisis or conflict contexts. The main sources of this type of financing include foreign direct investment as well as public-private partnerships, which blend public and private investments in large-scale infrastructure and services. Private sector investments can be encouraged and supported by international organizations, which can also include financing to create enabling environments (e.g., economic infrastructure) or support start-up investments.

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