Editorial

The African Development Bank's quarterly newsletter focusing on its work in fragile situations is produced by the Transition Support Department (ORTS). Addressing fragility is identified as a special area of emphasis of the AfDB’s Ten-Year Strategy (TYS) for 2013-2022, which aims to promote inclusive growth and a transition to green growth on the continent. In this context, the African Development Bank Group Strategy for “Addressing Fragility and Building Resilience in Africa 2014-2019”, is aligned to the TYS.

Under the leadership of the AfDB President, Donald Kaberuka, and with the support of the Board of Directors, a full-fledged Transition Support Department was established within the Country and Regional Programs and Policies Complex. This department (formerly the Fragile States Department, which evolved from an initial Fragile States Unit) is responsible for leading the Bank's mandate in fragile situations. The creation of the department reflects and reinforces the AfDB’s ambitious commitment to responding effectively, expeditiously and flexibly to the challenges of fragility. ORTS plays a unique role within the Bank in that it provides critical inputs into programming and operational documents, and also manages the Transition Support Facility (TSF), which provides additional and targeted financing for fragile and conflict affected countries. Furthermore, the AfDB has recently appointed three High-Level Advisors with extensive knowledge, experience and networks across the continent, to contribute to the Bank’s engagement with regional member countries (RMCs) in the Horn of Africa, the Sahel and the Mano River Union (MRU).

This newsletter aims to provide readers with recent information, news and updates on fragility in Africa and the role of the Bank in such situations. In this role, particular attention is given to the evolving international framework for assistance in fragile situations, and the need for continuous reviews and adaptation of the Bank’s business model to ensure that no country is left behind.

Sibry Tapsoba
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A New Strategy Defined

In June 2014 the Boards of Directors adopted a new strategy Addressing Fragility and Building Resilience in Africa: the African Development Bank Group Strategy 2014-2019. The Strategy aims to significantly enhance the Bank’s support to RMCs’ efforts towards a more resilient and inclusive development trajectory. It introduces a fundamental shift in the Bank’s approach, based on an understanding of fragility as a phase of transition. The strategy is, thus, aligned with the finding of the High Level Panel on Fragile States, that “fragility is not a category of states, but a phenomenon that can appear in many places and forms”. On this premise, the name of the Fragile States Department (ORFS) was changed to the Transition Support Department (ORTS) in June 2014. This new emphasis from fragile states to fragile situations, offers a fresh start in the way the Bank engages with its RMCs affected by fragility, dispensing with a label that most RMCs find stigmatizing. It also demonstrates the Bank’s belief that countries are not condemned to remain in situations of fragility and conflict indefinitely, and that it is in their power to achieve both sustainable peace and development. Importantly, a key innovation of the new strategy, is the application of the fragility lens to the design and implementation of Bank policies, programs and operations.

Seeing through the fragility lens
The fragility lens is a range of analytical tools that assess and monitor the drivers and manifestations of fragility, their interactions, the political economy behind changes and the role of the Bank.

Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the Strategy for Addressing Fragility and Building Resilience in Africa and for the Transition Support Facility were approved in October 2014. In addition, a Guidance Note on the Application of Fragility Lens in Operations, was approved in December 2014 to accompany the operational guidelines of the strategy.

In line with the new mandate, ORTS has participated in the Bank’s Country Strategy Paper (CSP) and sector appraisal missions in order to take fragility into account in the design of new strategies and operations. ORTS has also initiated Bank-wide discussions on how to adapt the Bank’s business model with regards to Procurement, Financial Management and other sectors in a way that takes into consideration the unique capacity constraints of countries affected by fragility and conflict.

Introduction to the TSF

The Transition Support Facility (TSF – formerly the Fragile States Facility) was established in 2008 to address the low Performance-Based Allocations (PBA) to states affected by fragility. The TSF provides support through three main pillars: I) supplemental resources for PBAs; II) arrears clearance; III) targeted support - capacity building and technical assistance. The bulk of the resources have historically come from the African Development Fund (ADF) window - now in its thirteenth replenishment. Increasingly the Facility is attracting additional contributions from donors and third parties.

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<th>TSF Resources for the ADF-13 period (2014-2016), USD million</th>
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<td>ADF-13 resources</td>
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<td>Unused ADF-12 balances</td>
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<td>Total available resources</td>
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Note: 1 Unit Of Account (UA) = 1.40739 United States Dollars (USD), as of March 2015.
There is no predefined toolbox or an operations manual to deal with fragility, post-conflict reconstruction and development. Addressing fragility requires an in-depth understanding of its drivers. Each country has a unique set of historical, political, social and economic conditions. Thus, to support them towards a path of development, it is necessary to understand their challenges. ORTS has undertaken fragility assessments in the following countries: Madagascar, Guinea, Niger, Chad, Libya, Mauritania, Mali and The Sahel, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Malawi, Tunisia, and Guinea Bissau. While the fragility assessments are at different stages of completion, they provide important and analytical insight into the political economy and structural gaps that may hinder progress. ORTS is using this information to advise on Bank-wide policy and programmatic interventions, in order to provide the most effective solutions to the countries.

ORTS in Action
ORTS Kicks off the Bank’s International Women’s Day 2015 Events

On 3 March ORTS held a round table on the theme “Empowering Women, Empowering Economies”, the first of a series of events organized by various departments of the Bank, to celebrate International Women’s Day 2015. The meeting was jointly chaired by the Bank’s Special Envoy on Gender (SEOG), Geraldine Fraser Moleketi and ORTS Director, Sibry Tapsoba. Discussions centred on addressing the heightened vulnerability of women during fragile situations, and the potential of women to serve as agents of change in the peace building process, as well as in enhancing economic development. A short guide suggesting five key areas to consider with regards to gender and fragility was also presented. The areas proposed were: i) assessing fragility with a gender perspective; ii) creating economic opportunities for women in fragile situations; iii) promoting social inclusion; iv) building capacities; and v) tackling gender-based violence. As a concrete action going forward after the meeting, it was agreed that ORTS would work with the office of the SEOG to better integrate a gender-sensitive approach when dealing with fragile situations Read more...

Regional Updates

It is estimated that conflict in one country can lead to a negative spillover effect of up to 2.5% of the GDP of a neighboring country which is not in conflict. ORTS has led the Bank-wide effort to address the negative regional spillovers of fragility and conflict in the MRU, The Sahel, The Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa. A new Framework to Address Fragility through Connecting People, Consolidating Peace and Accelerating Economic Transformation has been developed for the MRU, with USD 5.4 billion for a regional integration and infrastructure program, in addition to USD 223 million mobilized for Ebola related support.

The Horn of Africa continues to be at risk of prolonged insecurity and fragility. The department has led the Bank’s efforts towards promoting institutional capacity building, as well as restoring financial and economic governance through targeted interventions in Somalia. Similarly, ORTS has provided capacity building support to the International Conference on Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) to further strengthen its role towards regional development for the countries of the Great Lakes Region, which are facing complex political and socio-economic challenges.
The Bank has mobilized some US $223 million so far for the fight against Ebola.

115 health workers were deployed through ECOWAS with the support of the Bank in the three affected countries.

A contingent of 115 health workers, comprising doctors, nurses, hygienists and disease control officers, have completed their mission in the three countries most affected by the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD). The workers were deployed to Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea through the West African Health Organization (WAHO), a specialized agency of ECOWAS, with the support of the AfDB. The professionals worked with personnel of health ministries in the concerned countries in a coordinated response to the Ebola crisis. Their main tasks included case management at the Ebola Treatment Units, epidemiological-surveillance, contact tracing, social mobilization, psychosocial support for patients, strengthening preventive measures, and revitalizing the health systems of the affected countries. The individuals are now on their way back to their respective countries, having completed quarantine in Abidjan. This team of volunteers was formally recognized in a ceremony hosted by the Government of Ivory Coast on 20 March 2015.

Sierra Leone has turned a corner in its move from crises to transitioning into a resilient state. This progress is demonstrated by three successive democratic elections, the conversion of the UN's country mission from peace keeping to a full-fledged development outfit, and the country's participation in African Union peace keeping missions.

The AfDB's support to Sierra Leone over the past twelve years illustrates its commitment to addressing the root causes of conflict and fragility by supporting reforms and capacity building programs. The Bank, through the Sierra Leone Field Office (SLFO), is engaged in high-level policy dialogue with the government. Strategic advice was provided during the preparation of the country's third generation Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) 2013-2018. Through the TSF, the Bank has more than doubled its resources available to Sierra Leone, leveraging more than twice the amount provided through the traditional PBA. The TSF has supported impact driven reforms in energy and public finance management, in addition to assisting the central bank to implement its Financial Sector Development Program, and the country to attain Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) compliant status. The TSF pillar III financing window will be critical in the post EVD recovery, by supporting the government’s efforts to enhance its revenue capacity and continue to promote reforms in the extractive sector, which is currently driving growth but affected by commodity price fluctuations.

Sierra Leone

Upcoming Events and Publications

29-30 April 2015 Transition Support Department (ORTS) Retreat.

May 2015 PUBLICATION


27/05/2015 Launch of the AfDB/World Bank Joint Post-Ebola Economic Recovery Program.


Voices From the Field