

How to fix a failed state

In 10 steps

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Precondition: a UN Security Council Resolution

- Get international legitimacy for your intervention by framing it correctly
 - For example as an exercise in the War on Terror
 - To preserve the international system
- If the UN Security Council doesn't deliver, set up a 'Coalition of the Willing' including
 - the USA for military power
 - Some European nations and regional states for moral back-up and logistical support
 - Funding countries, such as from the Gulf or China

Step 1: set up a broad-based government

- Find out what the traditional set-up of society is: the tribal or ethnic balance. Try to replicate this in the government you set up.
- Disregard the modern social classes (they are culturally uprooted) and avoid giving representation to any political movements
- Give representation to exiles returning from abroad (natural allies)

Step 2: ensure a monopoly of violence for the new State

- DON'T DISSOLVE THE SECURITY FORCES – reform them (Security Sector Reform)
- Set up a demobilization program to disarm the (potential) opponents of the new government
- If disarmament fails, provide massive arms deliveries to ensure the security forces can outgun their opponents
- Maintain a military presence, with emphasis on irregular forces (Special Ops, drones etc.)
- Carrot and stick: while you fight the new State's opponents, embark on simultaneous Track B negotiations

Step 3: organize elections

- You need to get popular backing for the government you have set up; let them win in the polls.
- If the population intends to vote for an opposing candidate/group, tweak the institutional design of the elections to avoid a disastrous outcome.
- A certain level of electoral fraud is acceptable.
- Political immaturity is common in young democracies. Some nations are just not ready for democracy and are better ruled with a strong hand, but beware PR effects at home.

Step 4: mobilize sufficient funding

- A donor conference must be called for as soon as the new government is established.
- **DON'T ALWAYS LET THE USUAL SUSPECTS PAY.** Involve emerging countries (BRIC, MIST).
- Most of the funding is channeled back into the economy of the donor countries, so pay close attention to *their* needs: traditionally, the USA funds the military, the EU the rest of the security services and the soft sectors
- Rich countries close to the site of intervention must pay a fair share, as they have an interest in regional stability

Step 5: start rebuilding the country

- Reconstruction = legitimacy of the new government
- Provide contracts to institutions and companies from the donor countries, to ensure taxpayer acquiescence. The subcontractor change ensures good drip-down
- Good opportunities for everyone
 - Own (donor country) private sector & NGOs
 - Support the new regime
 - You – the international consultant.

Step 6: fight the insurgency

- Sore losers in any political settlement need to be fought
- Amnesty = peace; no justice without peace
- Assist new government's armed forces to fight the insurgency
- This ensures loyalty of that Army in the future

Step 7: support civil society

- Civil society = our natural allies in the country
- Small amount of funding is sufficient
- Organize an inclusive national dialogue to let civil society discuss key issues of state

Step 8: strengthen national institutions

- Write a new constitution
- Provide technical assistance (consultants) for skills transfer and capacity building
- The institutions = service delivery to the population

Step 9: promote good governance

- Long term stability of the new regime depends on **social contract**
- Develop a new national narrative supporting the new regime
- Gender balance: soft power
- Governance = subnational, close to the people

Step 10: develop and follow an exit strategy

- You don't want to stay forever
- At some time the government should be able to stand on its own
- No abrupt departures: phase it
- Frame the intervention as a victory at home