# International Assistance to Statebuilding: Linking Aid Dynamics to Outcomes

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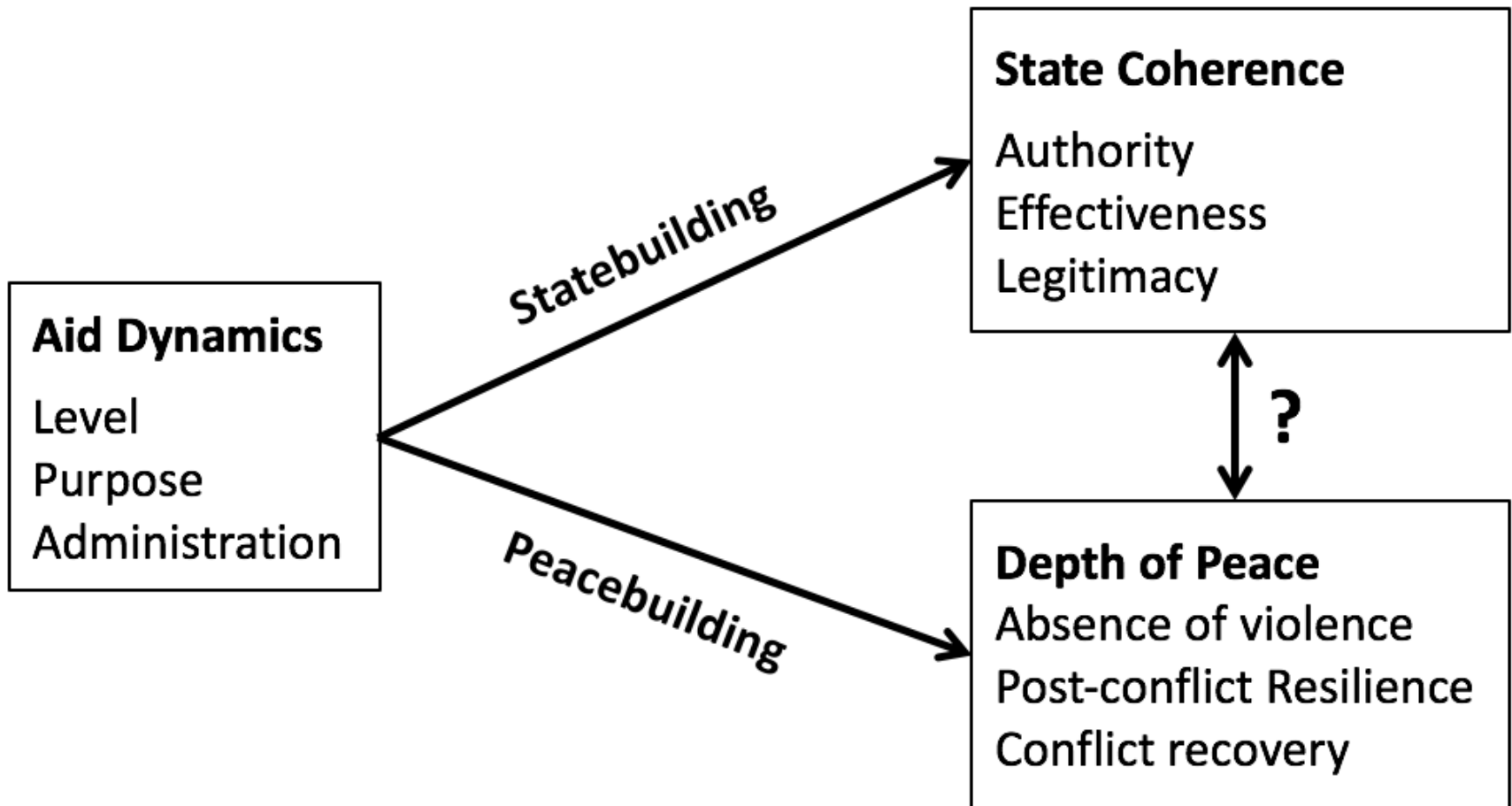Naomi Levy, Santa Clara University

# Three conceptual steps to improve our understanding of how peace is achieved in post-conflict countries

- Disentangle the goals of statebuilding and peacebuilding
  - Statebuilding and peacebuilding are dynamic processes that affect distinct sets of outcomes: "**state coherence**" and the "**depth of peace**"

- Examine the causal effects of international assistance on state strength and depth of peace outcomes
  - What aspects of "**aid dynamics**" are most conducive to fostering the desired outcomes?

- Conduct an empirical study through the lens of public service delivery
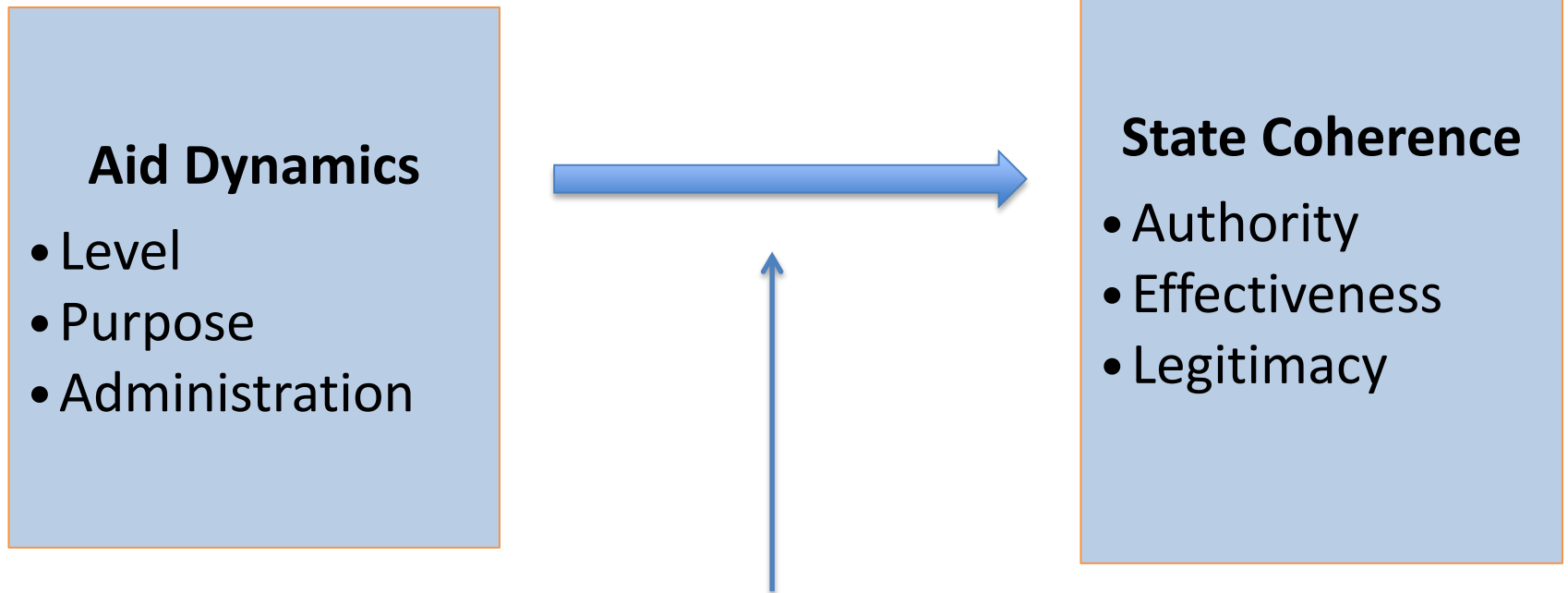  - An arena in which to examine state–society and government–development partner interactions

# What is the <u>causal effect</u> of the dynamics of aid on state coherence and the depth of peace?

# An empirical investigation underpins this "constructively critical" approach to peacebuilding

- Countries
  - Cambodia
  - Laos
  - Uganda

- Sectors
  - Education
  - Health
  - Public Works

- Content analysis

- Complementary large-N data collection process

- Three sets of interviews
  - External actors: International organizations, bilateral donors, international NGOs
  - Public officials: Central ministry officials and frontline public service providers
  - Other domestic stakeholders: local government officials; implementation partners

# Statebuilding Dynamics

**Aid Dynamics**

- Level
- Purpose
- Administration

**State Coherence**

- Authority
- Effectiveness
- Legitimacy

Unpack this dimension:
What are the causal dynamics?

| Aid Dynamics Causal Mechanisms | Impacts on State Coherence |
|---|---|
| 1. Systems enhancement<br>2. Resource mobilization<br>3. Long-term human capacity building<br>4. Skills transfer | Positive |
| 5. Gap filling<br>6. Parallel systems | Ambiguous |
| 7. Substitution<br>8. Impairment<br>9. Competitive systems<br>10. Rentier dynamics<br>11. Regime maintenance and/or securitization | Negative |

# State Coherence Outcomes: Positive Dynamics

**Mechanism**

- Systems enhancement

- Resource mobilization

- Long-term human capacity building

- Skills transfer

**Leads to**

- Increased human and institutional capacity, especially at the central levels
  - Policy development
  - Financial and regulatory systems
  - Sector-wide planning processes
  - Development of indigenous experts
- Government agencies that graduate from external support

# State Coherence Outcomes: Ambiguous Dynamics

**Mechanism**

- Gap-filling
- Parallel effort

**Leads To:**

- Extended service provision and potentially enhanced effectiveness via complementary service provision coordinated with government strategies.
- May or may not affect dimensions of state coherence.

# State Coherence Outcomes: Negative Dynamics

**Mechanism**

- Substitution

- Impairment

- Overwhelming

- Competition

**Leads to**

- Government *choosing* not to develop capacity in a sector due to high external involvement
- Service delivery problems attributable to interruptions with and reliance on external funding; sapping the human capacity of the government via competitive brain drain
- Crowding out of the government in particular areas, either a sector or an issue of high interest in highly aided sectors like health
    - Government fails to develop effective capacity in the arenas
    - Policies and programs driven by development partner interests vs local initiatives
    - Patchiness and coordination challenges
- Private provision detracting from government efforts

# State Coherence Outcomes: Most Negative Dynamics

**Mechanism**

- Rentier effects

- Regime maintenance

**Leads To:**

- Aid substitutes for other revenue sources and results in weakened bureaucratic and administrative capabilities.

- Recipient regimes use foreign assistance to enhance their own extractive potential and security apparatus (substituting force for legitimacy)

# State Coherence Outcomes: Contingent and Interactive Causality

- Interactive effects between the causal mechanisms

  - Direct interaction: substitution frees up resources → regime maintenance

  - Staged interactions:
    1. *Parallel* systems over time come to
    2. C*ompete* with government systems as
    3. The government s*ubstitutes* its activities outside of the sector;
    4. Resulting in the degradation in the parts of the sector in which the development partners were not active.

# Whether statebuilding and peacebuilding are complementary is an empirical question

Statebuilding can help to build more inclusive societies and legitimate political settlements centered on the state apparatus and the state–society interface.

BUT

Sometimes building state coherence to deliver governance can create distributional/identity tensions that undermine post-conflict recovery and conflict resilience.

AND

Achieving greater state coherence may require a different form of political settlement from deepening the peace.

# Questions?

# For more on the project, please visit http://www.peaceandstatebuilding.net/