



Texas A&M University

Conflict and Development at Texas A&M

Connecting to Accelerate Global Development

The Higher Education Solutions Network (HESN) is a partnership between USAID and seven world-class universities to create a constellation of Development Labs. This network harnesses the ingenuity and passion of university students, researchers, faculty, and their innovative partners to incubate, catalyze and scale science and tech-based solutions to the world's most challenging development problems.

Through support to the university-led Development Labs, HESN taps into a global pool of expertise to accelerate innovation through the discovery, creation, testing and scaling of efficient, cost-effective, accessible and sustainable solutions to global development challenges.

With \$137 million over 5 years from USAID, and leveraging nearly equal investments from the institutions, the universities form a collaborative and vibrant network that extends beyond 100 partner institutions in academia, civil society and government across 38 countries.

The Challenge

How do we connect the research community to the challenges of working in conflict to accelerate the positive impacts of development in fragile and conflict-affected countries?

The Innovative Approach

Conflict & Development at Texas A&M (ConDev) conducts research around the world in partnership with local institutions to help USAID and other donors improve the effectiveness of programs in fragile and conflict-affected countries. ConDev seeks to identify innovative and conflict-sensitive approaches that can halt the cycle of conflict, support development and testing of those approaches, and evaluate their effectiveness. Funding through USAID's Higher Education Solutions Network has allowed ConDev to greatly expand its work, boosted by matching funds from the Howard G. Buffett Foundation and interdisciplinary collaboration from Texas A&M's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, School of Rural Public Health, and the Bush School of Government and Public Service.





Through extensive consultation with USAID, ConDev has prioritized research on Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Sudan, with a focus on food security, youth employment, natural-resources management, and strengthening local institutions as keys to reducing the risk of conflict.

Conflict and Development at Texas A&M is encouraging students to learn about the intersection of development assistance and conflict: offering a course on the economics of conflict and development, designing an undergraduate certificate in conflict and development, and establishing the Conflict and Development Academy to promote learning opportunities and internships. ConDev extends learning opportunities to future military officers in the Corps of Cadets and enlists students in capstone research projects on the countries of focus.

ConDev's activities under HESN build upon practically oriented field research projects led by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation Chair on Conflict & Development at Texas A&M University. For example, the lab is conducting an assessment of the causes and effects of food insecurity and low farm income in Liberia, Senegal and Ghana, aimed at producing tailored policies. ConDev is conducting a survey in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in

partnership with the Conflict & Development Foundation and others, to identify strategic investment opportunities to increase economic development for the region. Researchers are synthesizing information available through USAID, other donors, partner universities, and research organizations to better understand the relationships between foreign intervention, conflict, food security, natural resources, and institutions and youth while collecting primary data from the field in 15 fragile societies about conflict, food security, local institutions and governance, youth and gender empowerment, and natural resource management. ConDev also awards grants to university students worldwide to research and chronicle issues facing fragile and conflict-affected nations through the Student Media Grants Program.



For more information

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