

Summaries

Introduction

Andrew Rosser

This article examines the factors that have shaped development outcomes – more specifically, outcomes *vis-à-vis* ‘turnaround’, a concept defined in the article – in the seven current and former fragile states covered in this study. It also examines the factors that have shaped donor effectiveness in promoting turnaround in these states. Finally, the article explores the implications of the findings in relation to these issues for improving donor strategies for engaging with fragile states.

Uganda

Mark Robinson

Uganda is regarded as one of the most successful turnaround states in sub-Saharan Africa, with sustained improvement in rates of economic growth and poverty reduction, and in bringing peace to many parts of the country after years of political instability and civil strife. These achievements are offset by low levels of life expectancy, continuing problems of rural poverty, and persistent conflict in the north. This article examines the reasons for Uganda’s success from the late 1980s, highlighting the government’s willingness to learn lessons from reform experiments in other countries, the significance of political commitment and state capacity, the timing and sequencing of reforms, and a strategy of compensating the potential losers of reform. Foreign aid played a critical role in Uganda’s turnaround, through the provision of ideas, technical assistance and financial resources. The article concludes that the considerable achievements to date may not be sustained on account of the failure to achieve a durable cessation of conflict in the north and to address growing governance problems, which have wider implications for political stability, economic reform and poverty reduction.

Lao People’s Democratic Republic

Andrew Rosser

This article examines the Lao PDR’s changing fortunes regarding turnaround since 1975. The

country’s poor performance during the first decade and a half of communist rule reflected, on the one hand, poor economic management on the part of the political leadership and, on the other, various factors related to the country’s location in the global political economy. While the decisive victory of the communists in 1975 facilitated the achievement of political stability, these various factors worked against strong economic performance. The country’s progress *vis-à-vis* turnaround between the mid-1980s and 2004 reflected changes both in the leadership’s approach to economic policy making and in the global political economy as well as the government’s continued ability to maintain political control.

Mozambique

Fidelx Pius Kulipossa

Mozambique satisfies the three criteria that define ‘turnaround’: a durable cessation of violent conflict, sustained economic growth, and sustained improvements in human development indicators. Two factors explain, contributed to, and serve to sustain Mozambique’s turnaround: (i) the implementation of relatively successful economic reforms, especially a structural adjustment programme, privatisation, financial sector reform, investment promotion, sound macroeconomic management, exchange, trade and price reforms, and public expenditure adjustment; and (ii) the introduction of political reforms, especially the approval of the 1990 constitution that enshrined liberal and multi-party democracy, the 1992 Rome peace agreement, the repatriation and resettlement of millions of refugees, multi-party democratic elections, democratisation, and public sector reforms. Each of these economic and political reforms has served to address the causes and consequences of civil war and the problems of promoting development and re-legitimising the Mozambican state.

Indonesia

Andrew Rosser

This article examines the dynamics surrounding Indonesia’s performance *vis-à-vis* turnaround between independence in 1949 and the late 1990s, as well as the role of donors in it. Indonesia’s performance

regarding turnaround has reflected a variety of factors including the orientations, abilities and political skills of the country's political leaders; struggles between the main social and organisational forces within the country and the emergence of new social forces; the nature of the country's geopolitical and geo-economic environment; and 'chance' factors such as economic shocks. Donors contributed to the process of initiating turnaround in the 1960s and 1970s through the provision of economic policy advice and much-needed finance but they also contributed to the process of reversal by encouraging the pattern of financial sector reform that contributed to the economic crisis in the late 1990s.

Cambodia

Caroline Hughes

This article examines the extent to which Cambodia has 'turned around' with respect to economic

performance, conflict resolution and human development. Cambodia's economic performance since the UN-sponsored peace process of 1991–3 has superficially appeared credible, but reflects the combined effect of a peace dividend and contingent factors, salient in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Unresolved structural issues emerging from the legacies of the Cambodian war represent a longer-term constraint on economic performance and human development. A legacy that continues to pose particular problems is the power of the military which has become entrenched as a key player within the government structure, in the interests of a peace conceptualised as public order. The article documents how this strategy has posed continuing problems for the structural reform of key aspects of governance such as the judicial sector and the promotion of an anti-corruption regime.