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**Sent:** Fri 10/5/2012 1:14:01 PM  
**Subject:** I sent this

Not only do diseases travel across borders, but they can also claim such a high number of victims in conflict-affected countries to lead to further political and military instability, and state failure.

In fact, states characterized as **fragile or failed** tend to have far worse population health indicators than states at comparable levels of development. As of today, for example, no low-income fragile or conflict-affected country has yet achieved a single Millennium Development Goal (MDGs). Poor health indicators are a product of inadequate governance and service development. Moreover, fragile states tend to be affected by humanitarian crises that extend for years. In other words, a context of continuing crises and emergencies, combined with weak or non-existent local and national institutions, can undermine health improvements or nullify health investments and programs in the long-term.

While armed conflict and instability undermine health goals, the opposite is also true. Investments in health, conflict resolution and statebuilding are **mutually reinforcing**. The position of medical professionals in society, given their neutrality, credibility, and equality, can be a precious resource during negotiations, as are health-related cease-fires. The fact that health issues are of interest to all warring parties can contribute to this advantage.

Moreover, health investment has contributed to statebuilding and legitimacy of the institutions. In the long term, stronger health systems improve the health of the population, leading to greater productivity, stronger economies, less violence, and state stability. Evidence also indicates that improved health services can increase trust in state institutions, thus contributing to the authority and legitimacy of the government

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