Today between forty and sixty nations, home to more than one billion people, have either collapsed or are teetering on the brink of failure. The world's worst problems--terrorism, drugs and human trafficking, absolute poverty, ethnic conflict, disease, genocide--originate in such states, and the international community has devoted billions of dollars to solving the problem. Yet by and large the effort has not succeeded.

Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart have taken an active part in the effort to save failed states for many years, serving as World Bank officials, as advisers to the UN, and as high-level participants in the new government of Afghanistan. In Fixing Failed States, they describe the issue--vividly and convincingly--offering an on-the-ground picture of why past efforts have not worked and advancing a groundbreaking new solution to this most pressing of global crises. For the paperback edition, they have added a new preface that addresses the continuing crisis in light of ongoing governance problems in weak states like Afghanistan and the global financial recession. As they explain, many of these countries already have the resources they need, if only we knew how to connect them to global knowledge and put them to work in the right way. Their state-building strategy, which assigns responsibility equally among the international community, national leaders, and citizens, maps out a clear path to political and economic stability. The authors provide a practical framework for achieving these ends, supporting their case with first-hand examples of struggling territories such as Afghanistan, Sudan, Kosovo and Nepal as well as the world's success stories--Singapore, Ireland, and even the American South.

Features:
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This is an utterly brilliant book that has held my attention all morning. Although the authors do not integrate the thinking in the ten books below, I am totally, deeply, impressed by their intelligence, knowledge, and good intention.

They set out to develop understanding in five areas:

1. What State needs to do
2. How international community can help
3. How timelines and interdependencies should define sequencing
4. Why one size does NOT fit all
5. Why we must accept our shared responsibility and recognize the need for both proactive intervention, and coproduction (and sharing) of wealth.

I started with the endnotes and index, which is where I begin the most intelligent books in my reading program. I immediately detected the gaps that I address with the ten annotated links, but I was also immediately won over in seeing their appreciation for the report of the High Level Threat Panel of the UN, for Singapore under Lee Kwan Yew, for the balanced score card approach (some call for a triple bottom line), for Paul Collier's focus on the bottom billion, for Paul Hawkin's et al on natural capitalism.

Within the notes, I was shocked to learn that it has been reported that the United Nations deprived Afghanistan of the first two and a half years of all donor contribution, "by agreement" with US Government and World Bank. Since one of the author's has served as Finance Minister in Afghanistan, not only do I believe this--it must never happen again.

I find in this book one of the most original, refreshing, relevant, and therefore essential reviews on the matter of the State. Although the author's do not cite McIver, the original master on the origins and functions of the state, I consider them to be the new thought leaders and essential to any discussion of how to improve the inter-relationships among the eight tribes of governance: states, militaries, law enforcement authorities, academics, businesses, media, non-governmental organizations, and civil society including labor unions and religions. They are wrong-headed in thinking that "only sovereign states...will allow human progress to continue," and that "illegitimate networks will not be conquered except through hierarchical organizations," but in no way does this diminish the extreme importance of their deep thinking on the role of the state and the need to change both our concepts of sovereignty and our rules of the road for international organizations.

A useful early idea is that of the "double compact" between the country leadership and the international community on the one hand, and with the citizens on the other. It becomes obvious very quickly that corruption in government service is the single cancer that must be removed before states can achieve legitimacy and efficacy.
The authors have many gifted turns of phrase to include "harnessing our collective energies and readjusting to emerging patterns."

The authors recognize early on that legitimacy comes from below, from citizens, and must be earned.

I am not going to summarize each chapter, but I want to point readers toward the Army War College Strategy Conference, just concluded, on "Rebalancing the Instruments of National Power." I have posted both 29 pages of notes and an 8-page draft article for the Joint Forces Quarterly. Singapore got it early and is the world's first "smart nation." They understood early on that education powers economics, economics powers security, and so on.

Today, the authors document ably, stewardship of the environment, respect for social entrepreneurship, fair trade, and innovation in applying information technology to create wealth are all coming to the fore with honest leaders.

They identify five aspects of the networked world that are of note:

1. Framework for balancing activities of diverse stakeholders
2. Rule of law at a strategic level, with freedom of action at a tactical level (not quite true in the USA where the corrupt federal Congress establishes federal Ceilings for regulatory action).
3. Massive investment—two reads repeatedly of the glut of money available for emerging markets (and I would add, the absence of both commercial intelligence and co-investment planning with charitable foundations)
4. World is evolving according to open systems (super point, see my keynote briefing to Gnomedex 2008, "Open Everything."
5. World is finally starting to evolve past rote memorization and toward recognizing patterns (the adaptive complex system and panarchy literature covers this well).

In the middle of the book they have six themes, each developed in a manner that makes this book quite valuable for any library, personal or organizational.

1. Conflict causes polarization of identities *and* ungovernability of aid subject to black market rules.
2. Peacemaking has been geared to compromise rather than strategic planning for a long-term outcome
3. This means that state dysfunctionality is highest immediately after the peace accord.
4. Even if civil war does not break out, cost of failed politics and poor policies is immense.
5. Lack of money is not the driver for poverty, but rather corrupt politics that enrich the few at the expense of the many.
6. Dysfunctional states spawn the rise and spread of networks of criminality and wealth confiscation instead of networks of social wealth creation and sharing.

The book concludes with "A New Agenda for State Building"

1. International compacts
2. Sovereignty strategy
3. Shared rules of the game
4. Mobilization of resources (this would be better titled harmonization of resources--we need Global Range of Gifts Tables for every country down to the village hut level, online, updated by national call centers
4. New leadership styles--this is a superb overview of what it takes to migrate from industrial era pyramidal leadership to Epoch B swarm leadership (see the image I am loading above).
5. Reflexive monitoring at every step of the implementation process
6. Double compact in practice

The final two chapters focus on national programs, and in conclusion, on "Collective Power."

I put the book down feeling GREAT. This book is a seminal reference.

Now for ten books (and my reviews) that round out this one book:
The Health of Nations: Society and Law beyond the State
High Noon 20 Global Problems, 20 Years to Solve Them
Plan B 3.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization, Third Edition
The leadership of civilization building: Administrative and civilization theory, symbolic dialogue, and citizen skills for the 21st century
Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems
The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid: Eradicating Poverty Through Profits (Wharton School Publishing Paperbacks)
The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom
Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom
How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas, Updated Edition
Collective Intelligence: Creating a Prosperous World at Peace

For More 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price:
Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World by Clare Lockhart - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!