

**Cluster on Governance, Peace and Security  
And The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)**

***I. Background: The Humanitarian and Human Rights landscape in Africa and its impact on Peace, Security and Development***

1.1. The magnitude of the humanitarian and human rights problems facing the African continent seems at times overwhelming. While Africans constitute only 13 percent of the global population, it is estimated that some 60 percent of the world's 20 to 25 million internally displaced persons and about 30 percent of the world's 12.1 million refugees are to be found in Africa. The total number of displaced on the continent therefore stands at some 17.1 million. This human tragedy is primarily the result of the numerous and often protracted armed conflicts which plague many of Africa's countries and which also result in the disruption of economic and social life, destruction of infrastructure and services, a breakdown of democratic institutions and the rule of law, widespread abuses of human rights and a population caught in a downward spiral of poverty.

1.2. Armed elements are often to be found among displaced populations, thus aggravating further the atmosphere of instability and insecurity and posing a continuous threat of further conflict. Refugees and other displaced persons become the victims of militia groups who engage in theft, looting and generally using their arms to extort the limited humanitarian assistance provided to them. Countries which are not themselves directly involved in conflict are nevertheless affected; those hosting refugees tend to view them as unwelcome guests, as a burden on their already overstretched infrastructure, as a threat to their country's peace and security as well as to their relations with neighbouring states.

1.3. With social and economic development obstructed, generations of children are denied access to basic education, to health care and to family life. Many drift into a life of idleness, drug abuse, criminality, prostitution, precocious pregnancies and disease. The future is even more grim for the thousands conscripted as child soldiers or to serve as sex slaves or other forms of labour for the fighting.

***II. Peace, Security and Development: the Role of the United Nations under NEPAD***

2.1. A reversal of the situation outlined above requires enormous political will and resources. The sustainability of solutions for war-affected populations requires a complex, integrated humanitarian and development intervention as well as the co-ordinated and collective efforts of the entire international community, particularly within the UN system, at both country and regional levels.

2.2. Although the NEPAD policy document does not explicitly dwell, *per se*, on humanitarian and human rights concerns among its priority areas, it does, however, appeal to African governments to make every effort to find lasting solutions to existing conflicts. Any response to this appeal, if it is to succeed, must also address the challenges posed by the

absence of the rule of law, the lack of respect for fundamental human rights, as well as the problems of forcibly displaced populations.

In this respect, NEPAD does provide the scope for humanitarian and human rights organisations, in collaboration with all other agencies of the United Nations and with development partners, to contribute to its peace and security agenda. This possibility has been continuously bolstered since the Annual Regional Consultations of October 2001 where a cluster on 'Humanitarian and Human Rights Issues: Peace, Security and Development' was successfully created.

2.3. NEPAD also offers the opportunity for the UN Agencies to move from *ad hoc* approaches to a more integrated and co-operative mode of operation. It should be noted that in the past, a number of programmes have been designed by the World Bank and UNDP, for example in the area of disarmament and demobilization. While such programmes are critical to UNHCR's voluntary repatriation activities, they have not been formulated or implemented in consultation with UNHCR. Neither has UNHCR involved the World Bank or UNDP in the tripartite commissions normally established to plan and execute repatriation operations. While a wealth of expertise exists within the UN family as well as within other development agencies, more often than not each has developed their respective programmes in isolation from the other. The overarching need therefore is to learn from these experiences and to put in place a much more integrated mechanism for dealing with post-conflict recovery and in meeting the needs of the victims of conflict.

2.4. The Sub-Committee on Peace and Security established by the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee under the Chairmanship of South Africa is charged with giving priority attention to strengthening capacity in this area. In a communique issued at the end of the Second Meeting of the NEPAD Implementing Committee, African Heads of State requested the Sub-Committee to focus, among other things, on ***support to post-conflict reconstruction and development in all affected countries, including the rehabilitation of national infrastructure, the population, including refugees and internally displaced persons, with special emphasis on sustainable programmes of disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation.***

2.5. Considerable attention is focused on the United Nations and to the role it can play in moving this agenda forward. In his summary of deliberations during the recent High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly in New York, President Mbeki made several references to the role of the United Nations and stressed the need to respond creatively to the goals relating to women and children, to refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons in the plans and programmes to implement NEPAD.

How then can the United Nations family meet these expectations?

### ***III. Mobilising complementary technical expertise: possible collaborative action by the United Nations System:***

Agencies of the United Nations system have demonstrated readiness to mobilize in support of NEPAD and to apply their varied technical expertise. Several have already

articulated priority areas and activities which could form the focus of collaborative action to give concrete expression to the NEPAD principles.

### ***3.1. Respect for fundamental human rights, the rule of law and good governance***

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) underscores the fact that no development is possible without true democracy and respect for human rights. Consequently, the Office is committed to reinforcing the protection and promotion of human rights and to integrating human rights in all aspects of the development process. In pursuit of these objectives, the OHCHR proposes support for the NEPAD implementation process through a number of priority actions, namely:

- i) implementation of the NEPAD commitments in accordance with regional and international human rights standards and recommendations, including facilitating linkages between relevant institutions to encourage harmonisation of processes and resources;
- ii) effectiveness and accountability of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) through the inclusion of human rights, adherence to good governance and the rule of law;
- iii) support to the African Union and African Commission on Human Rights and People's Rights, sub-regional economic communities and their judicial institutions;
- iv) strengthen the role and capacity of civil society organizations to participate effectively in the implementation of the human rights component of NEPAD; conceptualization and implementation of post-conflict peace-building and peace-keeping initiatives with a view to dealing with impunity and promoting justice and reconciliation.

### ***3.2. The rights of children and young people***

UNICEF makes the case that the NEPAD aspirations can be most effectively achieved by focusing on the development of Africa's human capacity – particularly that of children and young people who make up more than half of the continent's population. The Organisation also advances the persuasive argument that NEPAD's vision of long-term development needs to be complemented by some measurable short-term results if it is to enjoy the support and credibility of a people disappointed by the failed promises of earlier initiatives. For these reasons, UNICEF proposes two specific areas for major collaborative action by the UN family and which could be tackled on a 'fast track' basis. These are:

rolling back the HIV/AIDS pandemic: HIV/AIDS is a survival issue for Africa,  
and  
accelerating girls' education as a prerequisite for Africa's development

These actions have the advantage of coinciding with those set out by the UN Secretary General for priority attention by the UN Agencies. They also coincide with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and with the priorities of a number of other UN Agencies, thus enhancing the prospects for successful implementation. In the area of HIV/AIDS, a number of specific activities have been proposed, among them:

- i) breaking the wall of silence, stigma and shame around HIV/AIDS to explicitly recognize that HIV/AIDS is the biggest single threat to economic survival and social stability in Africa;
- ii) prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV by rapidly expanding services to women of child-bearing age;
- iii) preventing the transmission of HIV/AIDS among young people, including placing HIV/AIDS prevention materials in all places where young people learn and socialize;
- iv) realizing the rights of orphans and other vulnerable children to a decent standard of living, health care and schooling.

In the area of girls' education, UNICEF advocates a short-run basic education strategy, coupled with longer-term reform of the sector, which would focus on lowering costs and other barriers to the poorest children, and specifically girls. This, it argues, would help to make good progress towards the MDG of eliminating gender disparity in basic education by 2005 as part of efforts to achieve universal primary education by 2015. These priorities could also form a key part of national development strategies within the NEPAD framework and could be implemented by utilizing available delivery systems. At the same time they would allow African leaders to concretely demonstrate and accelerate their commitment to improve the lives of children. Some of the activities proposed under this priority are:

- i) rapidly advancing to promote free and compulsory primary education for both girls and boys;
- ii) put learning before the lack of a uniform. Ways must be found to prevent uniforms becoming a barrier to learning for children from the poorest families or who have lost parents;
- iii) provision of mid-day-meals in all schools;
- iv) supplement the drive towards universal education with complementary educational initiatives for young people who have missed out on schooling.

UNICEF further proposes working with NEPAD and with other UN Agencies to develop benchmarks, based on its own national performance gap analysis – which could be integrated into the African Peer Review mechanism (APRM) to monitor and measure the performance of states towards their children.

### ***3.3. The reintegration of displaced populations: refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and ex combatants***

NEPAD identifies peace, security, democracy and good governance as essential prerequisites for sustainable development. It is however obvious that these objectives cannot be achieved without an inclusive approach being adopted to the problems of refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons and ex combatants. These groups represent the most visible consequences of conflict and their presence in any country or region carries the potential for continued instability, insecurity and even recurring bouts of conflict.

UNHCR is specifically mandated to seek durable solutions to the problems of refugees. While voluntary repatriation remains the most sought after durable solution for the overwhelming majority of refugees, their return cannot be undertaken in isolation from that of

other displaced populations. Neither can return to a community whose infrastructure and basic services have been devastated by conflict be pursued in isolation from other development initiatives or by any single agency. The transition from war to peace is a complex and long-term process which requires a concerted and sustained effort on the part of all concerned: the affected populations, multilateral and bi-lateral development actors and donors and the humanitarian community, with the national government taking a firm lead.

UNHCR has consistently advocated a four-pronged approach which focuses on bridging the gap between humanitarian relief and development assistance by linking the repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction processes. This strategy envisages the collective effort of different agencies with each taking the lead at different stages of implementation, according to their particular mandate and complementary skills. The overall goal would be national recovery which would in turn contribute to the consolidation of durable peace and stability and lay the foundations for longer-term development.

The following are therefore proposed as activities around which the United Nations and its development partners could mobilize to ensure a better transition from conflict to sustainable development and peace in those societies emerging from conflict:

- i) establishment by the UN, together with its development partners, of appropriate institutional arrangements within which to review and take stock of the needs and to plan and implement a comprehensive and integrated programme for post-conflict reconstruction and sustainable development;
- ii) ensure that the needs of all returnee populations are fully integrated into national reconstruction and development plans and provide support to the national government for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of infrastructure such as roads, housing, schools, clinics and the re-establishment of basic services;
- iii) rehabilitate and strengthen civil administration and judicial institutions to ensure the availability of constitutional and legal means necessary to settle differences non-violently and to ensure that all persons, especially returnees, are able to regain and enjoy their fundamental rights;
- iv) re-establish and strengthen through training and other means a credible law enforcement apparatus as part of the confidence building mechanisms;
- v) put in place and promote measures to bring about meaningful changes such as communal reconciliation and cohabitation; build the capacity of those with the potential to become catalysts for change – in particular women;
- vi) promote ownership of communities in the reconstruction process through equitable and inclusive economic activity, thereby underscoring the positive nature of peace as opposed to the negatives of conflict;
- vii) ensure an effective programme of disarmament and demobilization of ex combatants and complement this with counselling, skills training and income

generating activities to ensure the effective and productive reintegration of this group into the society.

### **3.4. *Development through local integration***

The need for a co-ordinated response to the needs of refugees and other displaced persons for whom the prospect of return is not a realistic option in the foreseeable future is equally critical. Failure to address issues of durable solutions for these groups often leads to new conflicts and the generation of further outflows of refugees, thus putting added strain on the socio-economic resources of host communities as well as of donors.

An approach which integrates the needs of long-standing refugee populations into the national planning and development agenda must be based on the understanding that if empowered to become self-reliant, refugees and IDPs could contribute positively to the development of their host communities. Self-reliance means that they would be less dependent on emergency and care and maintenance assistance and instead would be better prepared for longer-term durable solutions. Such programmes would have the added value of addressing poverty reduction and the empowerment of the receiving communities, through community based development programmes. In this way, the potential for conflict arising from any disparity in living standards between the two populations would be removed and conditions for peaceful co-existence created.

## **4. Mobilising the necessary resources: partnerships with donors and other financial institutions**

4.1. Under the leadership and guidance of the UN Secretary General, collaboration between the Bretton Woods institutions and the United Nations have been going from strength to strength. The achievements of the International Conference on Financing for Development, organized by the UN and held in Mexico in 2002 with the active participation of both the World Bank and the IMF, is one clear example of this.

4.2. In the context of NEPAD, these institutions as well as other donor groups have likewise demonstrated tremendous support for the NEPAD agenda. The International Monetary Fund, for example, has made clear its commitment to help in the mobilization of resources in support of country-led poverty reduction strategies through donor coordination. The Fund has also undertaken to provide critically needed support and additional resources for the special case of post-conflict countries in order to rebuild physical and human resources, key institutions and humanitarian and economic recovery.

4.3. The World Bank too has articulated specific areas of support to NEPAD which include regional infrastructure projects, agriculture, HIV/AIDS, education, health and strengthening the capacity of the regional economic communities. The Bank is also committed to facilitating NEPAD's dialogue with other development partners and to providing support for its technical planning and programming. Elsewhere, the World Bank, in collaboration with UNDP and other partners, has been instrumental in supporting the conceptualization and implementation of programmes for the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants, and for their productive reintegration into their communities. The critical importance of this programme for the peace and security agenda of NEPAD cannot be over-emphasized.

4.4. In their initial response to NEPAD, the G8 Group of countries have formulated some 112 specific activities under their Plan of Action for Africa designed to build new partnerships and lay the foundations for future co-operation based on mutual responsibility and respect. The response outlines a number of priority areas to which G8 governments are committed 'to mobilize and energize global action, marshal resources and expertise, and provide impetus in support of the NEPAD's objectives'. Several of the G8 priority areas also coincide with those priority areas outlined by U N agencies, among them:

- supporting African efforts to resolve armed conflicts, including assistance with programmes of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration;
- providing effective peace-building support to societies emerging from or seeking to prevent conflict;
- enhance the capacity of African countries to protect and assist war-affected populations, including support to African countries hosting, assisting and protecting large refugee populations;
- action to combat HIV/AIDS;
- supporting human rights activities and national, regional and sub-regional human rights institutions in Africa;
- support efforts to improve the quality of education, and
- fostering economic growth and sustainable development.

4.5. It is essential for the United Nations Agencies to forge meaningful partnerships with funding institutions and other donors in order to ensure the availability of adequate, predictable and flexible resources to meet the needs of the transitional process in post conflict societies.

## 5. Moving the peace and security agenda forward

5.1. Enormous commitment and goodwill exists within the international community to provide the support necessary to implement the peace and security agenda under NEPAD. *The challenge for the United Nations Agencies is to harness this commitment and goodwill and direct it towards the joint formulation and implementation of an integrated programme which will address the humanitarian and human rights needs and bring about peace, stability and socio-economic recovery in war-torn societies. In more practical terms, the establishment of appropriate mechanisms for joint needs assessment, programming and resource mobilization presents the more immediate challenge.*

Some useful lessons might be drawn from the 'Zambian Initiative' which is currently being implemented. A government-led and UNHCR-supported plan, the Initiative is a holistic approach which aims to build on the positive aspect of refugees by including them in attempts to alleviate poverty in the hosting areas. It does so by co-ordinating the efforts of donors, linking relief and development assistance, addressing the needs of refugees and the host population and thereby contributing to peace and stability in the areas targeted.

5.2. While Zambia provides an important case study and lessons learned in terms of development through local integration, the experience of Mozambique – and outside of Africa the Guatemala experience – are good examples of integrated programmes for reintegration

and reconstruction. Both cases provide a basis which can be built on. The Balkans Stability Pact is another of states coming together to overcome problems and advance the common interests of the region. Again, this holds important lessons which may be applicable to certain countries and regions of Africa such as Sierra Leone, Angola, Sudan, the Horn of Africa, the Great Lakes.

5.3. The initiative was preceded by a joint assessment mission comprising donor agencies, government line ministry officials and UN agencies. Programmes identified jointly with the government and the local community include projects in the field of agriculture, health (HIV/AIDS programmes, training, maternity wards, rural health centres), education (schools and vocational training centres, materials and teachers) and infrastructure (water and sanitation, roads). The wide range of donors involved have agreed among themselves the particular projects which each will fund. In addition to playing the lead role, the Government has allocated more land to facilitate implementation and plans to introduce legislation to allow long-staying refugees to apply for citizenship.

## 6. *Recommendations*

The priority areas and activities outlined above provide ample scope for United Nations Agencies to collaborate and contribute towards the realization of the NEPAD principles as well as the MDGs. A programme which focuses on post-conflict reconstruction offers the opportunity for each agency to contribute based on its particular mandate and expertise, whether it be in the field of human rights, addressing the special needs of children and women affected by conflict, health, education, promoting durable solutions for the problems of refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons and ex combatants, or building capacity to address the above issues. A complementary priority might be to focus on reinforcing continental and regional mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution. The following recommendations are proposed as initial steps in the collaborative process:

- i) A joint technical committee to be established, comprising representatives from each concerned agency, funding institutions, the AU and NEPAD Sub-Committee on Peace and Security;
- ii) Terms of reference for such Committee to include:
  - development of criteria for identifying post-conflict countries to be targeted for UN collaborative programmes;
  - undertaking joint needs assessment missions to determine the critical needs of specific post-conflict situations;
  - formulate appropriate recovery strategies based on findings, and
  - develop standard planning tools and operational modalities, including a joint UN programming mechanism and propose the division of labour among the various actors in respect of the different stages of implementation.

While the above-mentioned Technical Committee will have a regional mandate, it is important that consideration is given to translating such programmes at the national level to ensure their integration into national development plans. The full utilization of existing mechanisms such as the PRSP and UNDAF will need to be fully explored.