

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR)

Support to NEPAD

Period of Report: July 2006 to June 2007

Collaboration with other UN agencies

Following the creation of a new cluster on Peace and Security during the Regional Consultation Meeting of UN agencies working in Africa in November 2006, UNHCR has continued coordinating the activities of the Sub-Cluster on Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD). In this connection, UNHCR actively contributed to the consultations with the African Union (AU) in drafting the contents of the 10-year UN Capacity Building Programme for the African Union and its NEPAD Programme.

During the reporting period, members of the Sub-Cluster on PCRD actively participated in several consultations and provided valuable input in the finalization of AU's comprehensive Policy on PCRD that was adopted during the 8th AU Summit in Banjul, the Gambia in July 2006. Following the adoption of the Policy, the AU has engaged an expert who will support the implementation of the Policy in cooperation with the Regional Economic Communities, UN agencies, NGOs and other partners. Members of the Sub-Cluster on PCRD closely collaborate with the AU in supporting the implementation of various aspects of the Policy.

Under the auspices of the Sub-Cluster, UNHCR has compiled preliminary assessment reports on the status of PCRD in eight countries, including Angola, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan and the Central African Republic. Reports on the situation in Chad and Uganda are expected to be completed by June 2007. Two more reports are expected to be compiled under this project - on Somalia and Rwanda. The completed draft reports have been shared for comments with a wide range of stakeholders, including the concerned governments, the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat, and the Peacebuilding Support Office of the UN Secretariat. The reports are intended to provide background information and analysis that could encourage and facilitate the planning and implementation of further recovery and reconstruction and development initiatives. The ten reports mentioned above are expected to be printed and shared widely during the course of 2007.

Financial and institutional support

UNHCR has seconded two staff members (One P-4 and one G-2 support staff) to the Division of Humanitarian Affairs, Refugees and Displaced Persons in the AU Commission's Department of Political Affairs. A package of information systems equipment, including a server, desktop computers, and related accessories estimated to cost approximately US\$13,000 was also provided to support the work of the newly created PCRD Unit in the Peace and Security Department of the AU Commission. In

addition, the staff of the Liaison Section of the UNHCR Regional Liaison Office for Africa works closely with the concerned departments of the AU Commission, including in providing support for the preparation of analytical reports, concept and conference papers, coordinating inputs and organizing consultations.

Advocacy work in support of African Development

UNHCR's advocacy in regard to Africa's development focuses on three main areas:

- 1) comprehensive, integrated and robust post-conflict reconstruction and development to enable the sustainable return and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced populations. In this connection, UNHCR encourages the early engagement of development actors and multilateral financial institutions, such as the African Development Bank Group in the recovery, reconstruction and development process;
- 2) ensuring the protection of refugees and internally displaced persons, and encourage measures that would enable them achieve a degree of self-reliance and prepare for eventual durable solutions while still in displacement. Implementation of the decisions and declarations of AU Summits and Ministerial Conferences is one of the activities supported by the UNHCR;
- 3) prevention of forced population displacement through the above-mentioned approaches, early warning and encouraging interventions by all concerned to prevent the escalation of conflicts. In this connection, UNHCR is working closely with the AU in the organization of the first AU Summit on forced population displacement, expected to take place in 2008.

Advocacy activities during the reporting period included interventions with a broad range of participants at high-level conferences, such as the Summits of the African Union, Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, preparation and targeted distribution of concept papers and proposals, direct representation during workshops and meetings, organization of and participation in special events, such as the African Development Forum.

Impact of UNHCR's support activities to NEPAD

Noteworthy developments have taken place during the reporting period. The advocacy and support activities of UNHCR (and members of the NEPAD Sub-Cluster on Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development) have played a key role in bringing about these developments. The AU has adopted a comprehensive Policy on PCRD to provide an overall strategic framework to guide recovery and reconstruction in countries emerging from conflict, engaged an expert to coordinate the implementation of the Policy, developed a work plan for the implementation and is currently holding consultations with a wide range of actors, including the Regional Economic Communities, civil society groups and other partners.

The African Development Bank Group is also in the process of developing a comprehensive policy on its engagement in Fragile States – a category that includes post conflict countries and others that require special and targeted development assistance.