

# **UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR)**

## **Support to NEPAD**

**Period of Report: 2004 - 2005**

### **Introduction**

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is the convenor of the United Nations Sub-Cluster on Humanitarian Response and Post-Conflict Recovery, of which one of the key priorities is the planning and implementation of comprehensive and integrated programmes in post-conflict countries to support reconstruction and sustain peace and stability.

### **Advocacy work and other activities undertaken in support of African development**

UNHCR actively advocates for a comprehensive and integrated approach to deal with the needs of post-conflict countries in Africa. The agency has been at the forefront of efforts to include and mainstream the concerns of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP), refugees and returnees in post-conflict recovery and reconstruction activities in order to offer durable solutions to their problems including return in safety and dignity. UNHCR regularly advocates with the AU, its Member States and other institutions based in Addis Ababa to ensure that refugee concerns are mainstreamed into their policies, plans and core activities for protection and solutions.

In November 2004, the AU held a 'Planning Seminar for the Stabilization of Somalia during the Transitional Period', where protection of the displaced was included in the Final Statement. More recently, on 14 February 2005, UNHCR met the Commissioner of the AU Peace and Security Department where UNHCR's contributions and support in regard to post-conflict reconstruction issues were welcome. Subsequently, the Sub-Cluster on Humanitarian Response and Post-Conflict Reconstruction met on March 30, 2005 to review current challenges, adopt its work plan and establish an inter-agency technical support cell which will advance the Sub-Cluster's work through regular consultations, meetings, field visits and the production of reports based on studies of the situation and challenges in post-conflict countries. UNHCR also provided support to the African Union including the development of a concept paper for an African Union Framework on post-conflict reconstruction, and the convening of an experts meeting on the subject.

### **Framework for Durable Solutions**

UNHCR's Global Consultations on International Protection had a particular focus on the tools of protection and on the identification of Durable Solutions for IDPs, refugees and returnees. As a result a Framework for Durable Solutions was developed, aiming at sharing burdens and responsibilities more equitably, building capacities to receive and

protect refugees; and redoubling the search for durable solutions. The Framework provides methodological models – i.e. Development Assistance for Refugees (DAR), Repatriation, Reintegration, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (the ‘4Rs’) and Development through Local Integration (DLI) - that facilitate proper targeting of development assistance.

During 2004, the High Commissioner reiterated on several occasions his commitment to targeting of development assistance to achieve durable solutions. In this respect, UNHCR developed an issues paper focusing in particular on the parameters of the existing aid regime and proposing means to ensure the inclusion of displacement in aid policies.

#### Dialogue on Voluntary Repatriation and Sustainable Reintegration in Africa

In March 2004, the conclusions of the ‘Dialogue on Voluntary Repatriation and Sustainable Reintegration in Africa’ recognized that conflict prevention, early warning and resolution required a multi-disciplinary and regional approach led by the African countries themselves, but bolstered by expertise and multilateral support afforded by the African Union, sub-regional organizations and the United Nations. NEPAD was cited by many delegations as the solid foundation that will lead to political stability, economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated regional integration on the continent, led by the AU.

#### 4Rs being implemented

For millions of refugees and IDPs, voluntary repatriation remains the most preferred durable solution to their plight. UNHCR’s efforts towards the realization of this solution require integrated and sustained actions by the international community. The smooth transition from emergency relief to longer-term development remains a key priority for the international community, particularly in post-conflict situations.

The High Commissioner ‘4Rs’ approach is a programme concept aiming at ensuring linkages between return, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction in order to promote durable solutions for refugees, broaden and accelerate poverty reduction initiatives and help create good local governance. The ‘4Rs’ concept is intended to serve as an overarching framework for institutional collaboration in the planning and implementation of reintegration activities in post-conflict situations. This comprehensive and institutionalized approach to reintegration has already been successfully implemented in a number of countries.

Since 2003, two major achievements in the 4Rs process were accomplished in Sierra Leone. The first was the arrangement of a Transitional Support Team (TST) that the UN Country Team set up in order to support the transition from recovery to poverty reduction in the country. As part of UNHCR's objectives in 2003 and 2004 to decentralise programming to Field Office level and to bolster community self-reliance, more than 250 Community Empowerment Projects (CEP) in main areas of return have been approved and funds provided via Implementing Partners (IPs).

## **Collaboration with other UN agencies**

UNHCR, in collaboration with the other agencies which agreed to be part of the Sub-Cluster, held various consultations during the reporting period, with UNHCR's Office in Addis Ababa functions as the Secretariat of the Sub-Cluster. In addition, several meetings were held to establish an appropriate coordination mechanism between the AU Peace and Security Council, the NEPAD Secretariat and the UN agencies.

UNHCR held a meeting with UNDP on 17 November 2004 regarding a three-year programme initiated by UNDP in support of the Peace and Security Agenda of the AU, which, among other things, foresaw the deployment of a post-conflict expert as UNDP's focal point for the Sub-Cluster. A consultant would visit Addis Ababa to help formulate a UNDP support strategy programme towards the AU. UNHCR and UNDP agreed on the need to call a meeting among the United Nations agencies, including in particular WFP and the African Development Bank, to strengthen the cooperation in the Sub-Cluster.

## **Technical support for NEPAD programmes and projects**

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in May 2004 seconded a Senior Technical Expert on Post-Conflict Recovery to UNHCR in Addis Ababa in support of the NEPAD Sub-Cluster programming work. The Expert has undertaken preparatory work, including drafting the criteria, for the selection and classification of 14 candidate countries<sup>1</sup> in transition and in post-conflict.

In close cooperation with JICA, UNHCR is currently analysing 14 African transition situations in order to identify critical gaps and how to improve the effectiveness of the sub-cluster's efforts. This exercise will inform future programme initiatives and contribute to NEPAD, UNHCR and UNDP work on a strategic framework for effective response to post-conflict situations including more sustainable return and reintegration of internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees and ex-combatants. The country profiles will attempt to bring together general information on the countries concerned, history and analysis of the conflict including their root causes, broad socio-economic and demographic information as well as assistance, recovery, reconstruction and development activities under way. The reports will also seek to analyze gaps in existing initiatives and recommend measures to address them.

In order to complete this work, in September 2004 a local consulting firm funded by JICA was contracted to produce the country profiles that will constitute the starting point for the country assessment missions of Sub-Cluster members, and to analyze existing programmes and propose interventions to fill the assistance gaps in the different sectors.

## **Institutional support to the NEPAD Secretariat**

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<sup>1</sup> Angola, Burundi, Central African Rep., Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Liberia, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, the Sudan, and Uganda.

The NEPAD Secretariat convened a Post-Conflict Recovery Workshop in Johannesburg on 13-15 October 2004, led primarily by NEPAD and its associated academic institutions in southern Africa, with modest involvement of United Nations agencies. Discussion focused on the core areas of intervention of post-conflict recovery. Participants agreed that the NEPAD Secretariat would be the institution responsible for drafting the post-conflict strategic framework which would be presented to the meeting of ministers of the target post-conflict countries for approval and to the AU/NEPAD for final endorsement.

At the workshop, UNHCR presented a paper highlighting the major challenges for post-conflict situations in Africa and outlining the core components of an integrated post-conflict and stability programme for Africa. The paper noted that NEPAD is established on the premise that peace, security and stability are the cornerstones of the materialization of all key objectives for the political economical and social revival of Africa.

Among the major challenges of post-conflict situations in Africa, UNHCR's paper highlighted the necessity of re-establishing the security situation and ensuring access to vital social services such as shelter, water, sanitation, health and basic education to all sections of the population including returnees, the internally displaced and other vulnerable people. The creation of income-generation activities should be a priority, alongside disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes and the rehabilitation of destroyed or dilapidated basic infrastructure. The need to devise appropriate and credible funding mechanisms that can assure timely and adequate resources that cover holistically the core components of an integrated post-conflict programme was stressed.

In February 2005, a Senior NEPAD Coordinator joined UNHCR's Regional Liaison Office in Addis Ababa. The Coordinator will work closely with the Senior Technical Expert from JICA and other members of the Sub-Cluster, and will act as the head of the Inter-Agency Technical Support Cell (IATSC) providing coordination and expertise to the African Union as well as the NEPAD Secretariat on post-conflict recovery and reconstruction.