

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR)

Support to NEPAD

Period of Report: 2003-2004

Areas of support for NEPAD

Peace and Security

UNHCR has the leadership role in the Sub-cluster on 'Humanitarian Response and Post Conflict Recovery'. The underlying rationale of the work of this sub-cluster is that post-conflict recovery is pivotal to peace-building, to ensuring a stake for returnees and other displaced persons in their countries of origin and to the prevention of renewed displacements.

UNHCR has initially identified 14 African countries in post-conflict situations. The criteria, which are inspired by the report of the UN Development Group on Transition, as well as, the countries identified are to be agreed and adopted by the next Regional Consultations in October 2004 after endorsement by the Commission of the African Union.

UNHCR's financial commitment to NEPAD

UNHCR currently provides technical and material support to a number of countries to assist in the reintegration of returnees and in the rehabilitation of infrastructure, such as, the health and education sectors, for the benefit of the entire community. Given UNHCR's own budgetary constraints, additional resources for the implementation of the programmes and activities formulated must be sought through a resource mobilization strategy to be implemented jointly with the African Union, concerned Member States and other UN agencies

Contribution of UNHCR to strengthening the response to NEPAD

Promoting coordination and coherence in support of NEPAD priorities

Based on its field experience and involvement in the reintegration and rehabilitation phases of voluntary repatriation operations, UNHCR has outlined a programme of activities designed to promote effective responses to humanitarian crisis situations and post-conflict recovery. Effective implementation of these activities requires the expertise and involvement of other UN Agencies, development partners and financial institutions. In this regards, UNHCR has been working to promote coordination and coherence in the support of NEPAD priorities. A position of Senior NEPAD Programming Coordinator has been created at UNHCR with effect from 1st January 2005 in order to operationalise NEPAD post-conflict programme.

Recommendations for strengthening NEPAD implementation

The African Union (AU) has repeatedly and expressly described NEPAD as a programme of the AU and directed its integration into the AU within the next three years. In this context, in particular, there is a need for the AU to provide guidance on the process envisaged for such integration and on the ways in which UN Agencies will interact with the AU in providing support toward the implementation of the NEPAD priorities.

In the case of the sub-cluster on 'Humanitarian Response and Post-conflict Recovery', the need for clarification on the interface between the work of the Sub-cluster and that of the AU's Peace and Security Council and its African Standby Force is particularly critical.

As a humanitarian agency, the major challenge for UNHCR is in mobilizing the needed support and resources from development agencies and financial institutions to provide a sufficient, coherent and integrated programme of post-conflict recovery in the countries identified as meeting the criteria.