

Webinar on Building back better from Covid-19: Reinforcing the nexus of peace, security, development, humanitarian affairs and human rights in policy design and implementation in Africa

11 November, 2021

Context

It is recognized that there can be no peace and security without development, and no development without peace and security, and neither without respect for human rights. In January 2016 at the Security Council Open Debate on “*Challenges of Maintaining Peace and Security in Fragile Contexts*”, the Secretary-General noted that interdependence and inclusion must be at the core of a more ambitious approach to end the cycle of poverty and conflict, within the context of sustainable development. And yet, sustainable development seems to be threatened by the economic cost of conflict. For example, the International Monetary Fund found that the economic impact of conflict in sub-Saharan Africa continues to be persistent, thereby reducing annual growth in countries in conflict by about 3 percentage points.¹

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063, all Member States have recognized the need to integrate the nexus between peace, security, humanitarian affairs, human rights and sustainable development in their development framework. The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) held in Istanbul, Turkey on 23-24 May 2016 also underscored the need for greater coherence among actors working on humanitarian, development, and peace and security domains. In this regard, there is need for actors working across humanitarian, development and peace to avoid working in silos, but instead to collaborate together to address violent conflict, deliver humanitarian assistance, and develop institutions and capacities in a complementary and synergistic manner that addresses development and humanitarian needs. The outcome of the WHS - New Way of Working (NWoW) aims to have a profound transformative impact on the effectiveness and sustainability of peace, development, humanitarian work and human rights globally.

COVID-19 pandemic represents a major challenge for progressing the implementation of the interlinkages in a situation where weak institutional systems and lack of national coordination mechanisms, inadequate funding, and the silos between actors continue to persist. In this context, adopting an integrated approach combining humanitarian, development and peacebuilding increases countries’ resilience to crisis. The Nexus approach contributes to long-term stability by ensuring that essential social services are planned and delivered in an inclusive and equitable manner. It can also contribute to transformative responses to crisis by reinforcing local and national leadership and combining short-term assistance with long term planning. This requires coordinated efforts between humanitarian, development, and peace actors to deliver better results. The COVID-19 pandemic has established that it is critical to adopt the nexus approach in crisis context due to the interlinkages between the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic (related mostly to lockdown measures and the global recession) and the humanitarian and peace dimensions.

¹ IMF (2019) *Regional Economic Outlook, Sub-Saharan Africa: Recovery Amid Elevated Uncertainty*

However, the COVID-19 pandemic has also provided opportunities for some African Governments to promote the use of the nexus approach and the response has brought actors and key stakeholders together from across various ministries to tackle the pandemic. This suggests that the appropriate response to build back better post-pandemic entails that development actors should work in an integrated manner, and not in silos, in order to create value-chains through an integrated multi-sectoral approach. A lesson learned from this pandemic going forward is that a nexus approach will offer advantages for strategic foresight, anticipation, and pre-emptive action for African countries.

The UN Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) commissioned a nexus study in 2020, which was complemented by ECA sub-regional studies, to help promote the synergy between the pillars of peace and security, humanitarian work, development and human rights in Africa. One of the key findings was the fact that conflict, instability and insecurity were the greatest single obstacle for achieving SDGs and Agenda 2063, followed cumulatively by social and economic inequalities and political challenges. Also, according to the report of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, the scourge of terrorism, violent extremism, transnational organized crime and trafficking have assumed an unprecedented scale of expansion and intensity within the Continent.²

Based on the above, and with the sponsorship of the UN Peace and Development Trust Fund, the Office of the Special Adviser in Africa, the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS), and the UN African Institute for Economic Development and Planning have recently designed and implemented an on-line training course under the title *“Designing and Implementing policies that promote the nexus or interlinkages between development, peace, security, humanitarian and human rights to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs in Africa”*. Achieving sustainable development in all African countries requires a holistic and balanced approach combining peace, security and development.

It is against this background that OSAA and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning are organizing a webinar on **“Building back better from the COVID-19: Reinforcing the nexus of peace, security, development, humanitarian affairs and human rights in policy design and implementation in Africa”** on 11 November 2021.

Objectives

The Webinar seeks to address the importance of acquiring knowledge for integrated policy development and implementation to build back better and accelerate effective implementation of Agendas 2030 and 2063. It also aims to promote the online nexus course by offering a platform to learn from best practices and enable participants to share their experiences and discuss the role of reinforcing capacities, skills and knowledge in applying the nexus approach in the context of building back better from COVID-19. The event will also serve as an opportunity to reach out to prospective participants of future editions of the course.

² African Union (2020) Assembly of the Union Thirty-Third Ordinary Session 9-10 February 2020, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. *Report of the Peace and Security Council on its activities and the state of peace and security in Africa*, for the period from February 2019 to February 2020.

Format

- Online Conference

Duration

- 1h30

Language

- English with interpretation into French

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