



The peace building challenge in Africa

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The continent most affected by conflict

- 1946-2006, 74 of 232 world conflicts in Africa (32%);
- More than 30 countries affected by violent conflict since 1980; 23 between 1990-2005;
- More than 10 million killed and injured;
- Over 30 million displaced – refugees, IDPs ...;
- Hundreds of thousands of women & children abused;
- Tens of thousands migrating every year;
- Home to $\frac{3}{4}$ of world's poorest people – tens of millions living on less than 50 cents a day;

The impacts of conflict

- Inability to ensure food security, basic services, safety and security;
- More than 15 million refugees & Internally Displaced people
- Returnees cannot effectively reintegrate as their needs & root causes of conflict not resolved;
- Numerous protracted refugee and internal displacement problems;

Conflict, poverty conspiring against Africa ?

- GDP growth reversed by as much as 65%;
- Direct, indirect, opportunity costs in trillions;
- The few clinics, schools, roads, bridges etc. destroyed;
- Youth lost opportunity - childhood, education, livelihoods &, for many hope;
- Social structures and coping mechanisms destroyed;
- Capacity for effective recovery severely diminished;



Many communities have lost critical capacities for recovery

Root causes of conflict

(based on report by PCRCD sub-cluster)

- Bad political & economic governance, marginalization;
- Lack of respect for human rights; absence of justice & the rule of law;
- Corruption, access to natural resources;
- Weak public, civil society & private sector institutions;
- Unfair international trade and global economic/financial system.
- Vestiges of the colonial era (ethnic divisions, weak nation states, arbitrary borders, socio-economic dependence etc);

Lessons that should be learned

- Peace processes & agreements focus excessively on interests of warring groups, give little attention to the root causes or needs of affected populations;
- Weak human and institutional capacities limit recovery, reconstruction and development;
- Standards of humanitarian assistance in Africa are very low - cannot contribute to effective long term recovery;
- International efforts for the most part lack comprehensiveness, strategic focus, are fragmented, not sustainable in the long term and, help little to develop & sustain local capacity.



**Women gathering at market,
Mukjar, West Darfur, Sudan**

Regional efforts crucial & need support

- AU/NEPAD, Regional Economic Communities, ADB have identified the key problems, are developing policies & tools, and, are mounting operational efforts on the ground;
- UN-AU collaboration framed under a 10 year capacity building programme, clusters of agencies formed to implement agreement;
- Post conflict reconstruction & peace building - one emerging area of collaboration between UN & AU:
 - Supported AU in development of comprehensive policy on post conflict reconstruction;
 - Assessments conducted on status of recovery in 11 countries;
 - Efforts ongoing to establish AU institutional mechanisms for implementation of PCRDR Policy

Why regional approaches ?

- Conflicts have similar and/or connected root causes;
- Impacts of conflicts have regional /sub-regional reach;
- Regional bodies offer unique opportunities for conflict resolution including through support for civil society, & other stake holders;
- Regional approaches can integrate peace building with regional integration;
- Regional capacities in key areas could be utilized to address multiple conflicts more effectively and efficiently;

AU's PCRDR Policy (adopted July 2006)

- Defined and established consensus among AU Member States on a comprehensive and strategic approach to peace building (PCRDR);
- Reconfirmed highest level and continent-wide political support and commitment to peace building;
- Articulated basic principles, priority areas, broad benchmarks and indicators;
- Other emerging developments include:
 - Database of African experts on PCRDR;
 - AU Volunteers programme being established;
- **Implementation slow due to capacity constraints.**

What should/could be done ?

- Special & comprehensive peace building measures for Africa needed. Such measures should include:
 - Dedicated resources;
 - Support for regional and sub-regional initiatives;
- Expand the scope of peace processes to include affected populations & their needs for peace dividends;
- Increased support to humanitarian efforts to address the pressing needs of the most vulnerable – women, children, refugees, IDPs;
- Strategic attention and resources needed for **building and sustaining** human and institutional capacity at local, national, regional level;

Sudanese women preparing mud bricks, Darfur, Sudan



Rehabilitation works at a returnee Way Station, Liberia



Africa is rebuilding - but needs support now !



IDP woman in South Kivu, DRC receiving training certificate and a tool to help rebuild her livelihoods.



Some of the homes built for refugee returnees and other destitute people , Gatere village, Burundi