

3.3 Countries in Crisis and Post Conflict

The Current Situation

Over one quarter of the world is now afflicted by crisis or is in some form of post conflict recovery. Rather than being an unusual, infrequent or temporary condition, crisis/post conflict (CPC) situations are all too common today. They kill and impoverish millions of people and have destroyed decades of development effort.

"UNDP's failure to terms with countries in crisis is corroding its overall reputations."

- Bureau

But crisis can also bring opportunity. Well-timed intervention can sometimes determine whether countries regain the path to development or fall back into conflict. The experience of countries that have rebuilt and moved on after crisis and war indicates that programs for governance and considered international assistance can greatly assist recovery.

There is currently no comprehensive approach to prevention of or recovery from crisis and conflict, which combines political, humanitarian and development concerns. Combined programs for relieving tensions, building trust, promoting inclusive policy processes and reducing poverty and vulnerability are infrequent and under-supported, even though they arguably represent the best investment to assure that crisis does not occur or recur. The billions of dollars in assistance being poured into crises today, mostly for humanitarian relief efforts, too often appear to have little lasting impact. Lives could be saved and resources put to better use if crises could be prevented or mitigated.

"If war is the worst enemy of development healthy and balanced development is the best form of conflict prevention."

- Kofi Annan

The UN has had difficulty responding to the last decade of crises and conflicts. The vast majority are civil wars that occur within states, where national sovereignty and other concerns can limit UN action. Appropriate CPC mechanisms and policies are still in the process of being invented and refined as the UN strives to respond. Far greater cooperation is required for the various members of the UN family to build complementary peacekeeping, humanitarian and development skills, and utilize the Department of Political Affairs' (DPA) role as focal point for post conflict peace building.

As crisis and conflict have grown, the number of agencies, institutions, NGOs and other actors working in CPC have increased. Too often their efforts are ad hoc, rather than based on a considered strategy. Many of the actors are humanitarian organizations with short time frames, which lack the long-term presence and development expertise needed for sustained recovery. Other players, including many bi-lateral or regional organizations and financial institutions like the World Bank, lack operational skills, continuing presence, knowledge of local conditions and coordination experience. Few offer a

comprehensive approach required for CPC work, nor are they able to ensure needed local ownership and participation.

UNDP is well situated to fill the current need for a multi-lateral development actor in CPC work if it improves its performance. It has the potential to offer a range of assets and services that bilateral agencies, the World Bank and humanitarian and political actors are not designed to provide.

UNDP's Record

There are many examples of excellent crisis response and conflict recovery work by UNDP – for example, in the peace processes of Central America and in assistance for natural disasters. But overall, UNDP has not yet corporately come to terms with the huge development and governance challenge represented by crisis and conflict around the world.

There are many reasons for this. The first is both organizational and cultural. UNDP has yet to translate its traditional proximity to governments into coherent CPC policies. It is sometimes perceived as being too uncritical of governments, even in situations where they stand accused of abusing their own citizens. UNDP is also culturally averse to risk-taking and CPC work, as a departure from its traditional activities, represents a risk.

UNDP's insistence on its mandate to manage RCs even when its performance is seen as weak can make it seem an emperor without clothes. It is often criticized by its UN partners for failing to provide consistent, coherent and competent service to them and to countries in need. Many do not see the organization as a consistently reliable partner for CPC work.

In addition, the UN Secretariat, agencies and donors do not know with certainty who speaks for UNDP on CPC policy or in individual crises. UNDP's corporate policy and leadership in CPC are not well defined. And UNDP's attendance at, and follow up to, key Secretariat meetings are not consistent. There is sometimes doubt whether operational commitments made by UNDP will be carried out in the field.

UNDP also has suffered from inadequate internal capacity and procedures to undertake CPC work. The effort today is fragmented among regional bureaux, policy units, country offices and senior managers, whose CPC political and analytical skills are mixed. Views, commitment and capacity regarding CPC work vary widely. Staff, senior managers and RCs are not provided with sufficient support or training. There is no systematic networking of talent or strategic management of staff working in CPC. UNDP has little lessons-learned capacity and is not aware of the good work it has done, nor where it is doing poorly and needs to improve. Policy, training and practice in CPC are not mutually supportive.

Internal procedures also are too slow and rigid for effective CPC work. UNDP's personnel and finance departments cannot react quickly enough to meet CPC staffing and

funding needs when a crisis begins, or when conditions change and new measures are needed.

UNDP created the Emergency Response Division (ERD) in 1994 in recognition of the growing need to respond to crisis and conflict. But the unit has never been adequately staffed or properly used. Instead of being used to improve UNDP's work in CPC, ERD has served mainly as an accounting office for a series of CPC projects that often lacked coherence and focus, initiated by senior bureaux managers. While improvements have been made, ERD is still struggling to find a purpose and mission within UNDP. In large part this is because ERD does not easily fit into UNDP's current regional bureau structure and culture. Instead, there are mutual misunderstandings and suspicions within the organization.

Between ERD and other CPC staff working in Regional and other bureaux, UNDP has at least 40 people working in CPC in New York and Geneva. It also has 15 special CPC positions in the field. UNDP is currently spending over \$5.5 million annually for these posts. At present these staff are dispersed and not coherently organized. If they were networked and strategically managed, they would make UNDP far more effective in CPC work. ERD's current three professional posts are insufficient (see appendix for greater details on UNDP's current staffing and expenditure for CPC work).

Turning the Corner

Despite current problems, UNDP has enormous advantages for doing CPC work. It has a global, decentralized field presence. It has intimate local knowledge of conditions in CPC countries and can easily engage local participation as needed. There is demand for its services from programme countries. Because it is trusted, UNDP is often asked by fledgling governments to work in sensitive areas of governance such as justice reform or police training. Unlike bilateral agencies, UNDP can offer a disinterested approach to the development of programme countries' key political institutions. If UNDP can develop the political ability to balance its trusted relationship with governments, with the independence needed to carry out CPC work, it has a strong competitive edge in this area.

The Secretary General has said repeatedly that crisis, post conflict recovery, and their prevention are crucial areas for UN efforts and for the joint work intended in UN reform. He has affirmed the central role of the RC system in this effort, and UNDP's responsibility as its manager. Given this mandate, as well as UNDP's role as chair of the UN Development Group, it can help provide the platform for building the comprehensive approach that presently is lacking in international efforts to promote sustained recovery from crisis and conflict and their prevention.

There is also strong support from donors and from the UN Secretariat for more coordinated and comprehensive

"Crisis management and peace - building have to be part of a development strategy."

- Kofi Annan

responses to crisis and conflict, in which the political, humanitarian and development capacities of the international community should complement each other. If UNDP can compellingly demonstrate the value of its coordination services, the effectiveness of its local knowledge and field presence, buttressed by governance programs and development expertise in crisis and post conflict recovery, it will find major demand and support for its services.

CPC RECOMMENDATION 1:

Make crisis and post-conflict a priority policy area for UNDP

CPC RECOMMENDATION 1, OPTION 1:

Make governance work UNDP's principal area of focus in CPC

UNDP should make governance work in post conflict situations its central activity in CPC. This focus would build on UNDP's talents and fills a major need in CPC work. It would include pre-governance work, including consensus-building, and programmes to create space for civil society and government to meet and rebuild trust and local capacity for development. Other key governance areas should be rule-of-law and reform of the security sector (civilian police, penal reform, justice system, human rights, reduction of military spending in favor of support for development).

There is heavy demand for rule-of-law institution building from donors, programme countries and the Dept. of Peace-Keeping Operations (DPKO) in the Secretariat that seeks such assistance during UN Peace-Keeping Missions. There is no mandated international actor for such activity and UNDP is strategically placed to do it better than other agencies.

For such work to be successful UNDP must assure local ownership, participation, capacity and sustainability. UNDP staff and offices in CPC countries also must build the political skills for such work, as well as local analytical capacity in close contact with all key actors, not only the government. Staff would need to be fast, flexible and able to work closely with UN agencies, Secretariat, donors, embassies, and NGOs.

CPC RECOMMENDATION 1, OPTION 2:

Review other activities in CPC

UNDP should consider reviewing its role in other areas, such as demobilization of combatants, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and even mine action. While some of these are mandated activities, they do not at present necessarily fit into a new governance focus. Some might more effectively be done by other actors, or in partnership between UNDP, OCHA, UNHCR, the World Bank and non-UN actors such as the Red Cross movement and other leading NGOs.

But such choices should be studied carefully before any decision is taken. They could have a major effect on UNDP's resources and field activity. Some senior

RCs and UNDP managers strongly feel these activities should *not* be given up since they give UNDP the mandate and flexibility to respond to the wide range of shifting demands common in CPC countries. This discussion is important because it will help determine the current debate over who should “fill the gap” between relief and development.

CPC RECOMMENDATION 1, OPTION 3:

Devote an edition of the HDR to Countries in Crisis

Have the HDR devote an issue to the human and development impact of the last decade of crisis and conflict. This study should measure the millions of people who have been killed, the loss of community and trust the living have suffered, and how tens of millions have been pushed back into insecurity, poverty and illiteracy. The report should also seek to measure the success of those countries that have recovered from crisis and conflict.

UNDP should use this as a major platform within the UN and the international community to lead the debate on CPC as a growing development and governance issue that requires a comprehensive response. This could mean creating policies and joint practices able to address the complexity of the many different crises and conflicts today. The Administrator could consider leading this discussion with fellow UN actors in the UN Development Group, the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs and the Executive Committee on Peace and Security.

CPC RECOMMENDATION 2:

Strengthen strategic partnerships with other CPC actors

CPC is an area that demands shared efforts and cooperation between development, humanitarian, financial and political actors. Essential partners in CPC work for UNDP include OCHA, DPA and DPKO, other UN agencies and the World Bank. They could also include leading NGOs and the Red Cross movement. The Administrator should seek the Deputy Secretary General's advice to forge agreements with his counterparts in these other institutions for joint work in crisis and conflict recovery, as well as preventive development and other preventive action. Working groups could be formed where needed to complete this task.

On a practical level this would mean that UNDP should be a member of joint UN operations when crises begin, in order to help the plan for recovery. But UNDP should play a limited role during the relief stage. It should become more operational when the post conflict period begins (after six months to one year, depending on the crisis).

The organization and operation of UN political and peace-keeping missions is also an area in need of review. Some of the UN's effort in this area duplicates the programmes and resources of UNDP and other UN agencies already on the ground in CPC countries. Given UNDP's field presence and possible new governance focus, UNDP's contribution to UN missions could come to include providing post-conflict governance work, where

political conditions permit such a role. The RR/RC could serve as Deputy SRSR and UNDP could be the operational arm of the mission for most institution building.

In CPC countries where there is no UN political mission, UNDP should be the principal agency for post conflict governance work, keeping DPA informed of its efforts. But complex crises and prolonged conflict call for joint work in the field with DPA, OCHA, other UN agencies, the World Bank and leading NGOs, perhaps by improving current strategic framework efforts. UNDP should seek "secondment" arrangements with these other CPC actors, actively seeking partnerships and training exchanges. UNDP also should continue to be the partner with DPA's electoral unit when the UN assists in elections.

**CPC RECOMMENDATION 3:
Strengthen UNDP's CPC capacity**

UNDP's existing staff, structure and financial resources for CPC work should be significantly re-organized and focussed to improve performance. This is not so much a question of financial resources as one of more strategic use of existing resources and staff. No matter which of the following options is chosen, the first step for improvement is networking UNDP's CPC assets.

***CPC RECOMMENDATION 3, OPTION 1:
Invest in Regional Bureaux CPC capacity***

This would mean keeping ERD largely as it is at present, a small technical backstopping unit, but increasing UNDP's CPC capacity in each of the five regional bureaux and in a new policy unit. The advantage of this option is that it uses current UNDP structures and practices, avoiding both the internal political and structural problems of creating a different form of CPC work. Regional bureau experts would have to be networked, they would have to accept ERD's support and a new policy unit would have to link lessons learned, policy and programs in a way that country offices and the bureaux could use.

Such an approach may be possible, but to date UNDP has shown little capacity to make such a structure of separate ERD, policy unit, regional bureaux and country offices work consistently and competently. Making this option work will require a shift in current attitudes in UNDP and constant oversight from top leadership.

**CPC RECOMMENDATION 3, OPTION 2:
*Strengthen ERD, make it a center of excellence and change for CPC***

In order to strengthen UNDP's CPC capacity, a two phase approach would be needed. In the first phase, lasting up to three years, CPC capacity would be reinforced by placing both policy and operations in a single HQ unit whose role would be to improve UNDP's CPC work overall.

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In the second phase, this strengthened CPC unit would diminish in size and scope, as its efforts produce enhanced CPC operational capacity in the Regional bureaux and country offices. The reduced unit could become the CPC arm of a new policy bureau. Care would have to be taken not to create an additional large, permanent HQ unit doing CPC as a specialty task. The success of the phased approach defined here depends on a clear road map with benchmarks setting out the temporary expansion of the new CPC unit

The engine of change to improve UNDP's performance in CPC in the first phase would be a strengthened ERD that might be renamed the "Crisis and Post Conflict Unit" (CPC Unit) to underline UNDP's commitment not just to emergency, but to longer term recovery. Current CPC specialists in the regional bureaux (at least 7 staff) would be integrated into the new unit, but continue to work in the bureaux, reporting to both the new ERD and the bureaux heads in a matrix arrangement designed to network UNDP's CPC assets. The unit would combine lessons learned, knowledge-networking, advocacy, CPC policy and training into a coherent whole. This new ERD would speak for UNDP on CPC and attend principal UN Secretariat meetings representing UNDP.

The strengthened unit would take the lead when a crisis breaks. After the crisis period ends, (6-12 months) the lead would pass to the regional bureau, with ERD supporting as needed. It would have an "immediate reaction team" to assist in breaking crises and manage ready-lists of expert consultants and NGO/donor networking. The new ERD would have IT capacity for CPC countries and satellite telephones when needed. The criteria for exceptional direct execution (DEX) would need to be expanded to improve the unit's operational effectiveness.

The enhanced ERD would need to be given sufficient professional posts (funded either by core or non-core) to carry out its increased responsibilities. The exact composition and number of these posts merit further consideration, but might include: one D-2 director; two D-1 deputy directors; four CPC country specialists; and five policy and technical backstopping specialists. These numbers could be achieved by using project-funded staff and also by giving ERD use of CPC staff currently working in the Regional bureaux and the Bureau for Policy Development.

The new ERD would need the authority to help select and manage the 15 emergency posts available in the field. There should be staff in OHR and BFAS authorized in special rapid procedures, or seconded to the new ERD to handle CPC personnel and finance matters.

This enhanced ERD would have a three-year task of making UNDP's work in CPC coherent, consistent and competent by markedly improving policies and procedures, training country office and HQ staff, and providing enhanced service to the field. If this work is successful, the need for a large ERD should gradually reduce as UNDP's corporate understanding and capacity to deal with CPC

increases. After a start-up period, services and staff from the new ERD should be shifted to regional centers as needed to enhance responsiveness to country offices.

In the second phase of improving UNDP's CPC effort, the new ERD would reduce in size and could become the CPC arm of a new UNDP policy bureau. Other ERD experts would become CPC specialists in the Regional bureaux as needed. While some specialized efforts would be required, over the next five years CPC work would become a mainstream activity in UNDP and part of its core corporate practice.

CPC RECOMMENDATION 3, OPTION 3:

Create new CPC unit as above, but give more operational responsibility

In addition to crisis response, give a strengthened ERD operational oversight of those countries deemed to be suffering complex, prolonged emergencies, most of which require a joint UN system CPC response. This would include countries such as Somalia, Sudan, Angola, Afghanistan, etc. They have exceptional needs that have little in common with the normal work of regional bureaux. A new ERD would oversee such countries sharing staff and expertise with the regional bureaux. If this option were chosen, ERD would need to be given additional staff to handle the work.

CPC RECOMMENDATION 3, OPTION 4:

Expand the new CPC unit into the Bureau for Transition and Recovery, headed by an ASG

This would be appropriate if the structural option of creating new thematic bureaux headed by ASGs were to be adopted.

CPC RECOMMENDATION 4:

New recruitment and training for RCs and staff in crisis countries

This is an essential need, no matter which other options may be chosen. At present there is little training or special selection for RCs/RRs in CPC countries. This requires making changes in current DGO procedures that presently do not offer such selection and training. PARs should be written for crisis country work. RRs/RCs currently serving in such posts should be reviewed, retrained or replaced where unable to do the work.

Trained staff would enhance UNDP's ability to be a reliable partner for the UN and international system in CPC work. ERD and regional bureaux should carry out the review of CPC country office performance. The new ERD should be responsible for a training program to give HQ and field staff expertise in CPC work, including joint operations with UN agencies, the Secretariat and the international system, as well as knowledge of CPC policies and programs. Some of this training might be carried out jointly with DPA, OCHA and DPKO. The Turin training center could be used for some of this work.

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UNVs have proved a capable and flexible source of staffing for UNDP in CPC. Their use should be expanded. In addition, innovative programs should be considered, such as using advisers selected from former combatants, local human rights experts, and others who have actually experienced conflict and then engaged in post-conflict recovery. When properly selected and managed, such experienced actors can be extremely credible and informed advisers to others going through similar processes of recovery.

**RECOMMENDATION 5:
Form a CPC Implementation Team**

Appoint one or two seasoned experts in CPC and UNDP to work as an implementation team for a period of two years to assist ERD, Regional Bureaux and country offices to carry out whatever options for change are decided upon for CPC. The job of the implementation team will be to develop and monitor benchmarks. The Administrator and Assoc. Administrator should work with the Regional bureaux and ERD to set ground rules for a new way of working in CPC and drive the process forward.