

Peace Operations: the Civilian Dimension Accounting for UNDP and the UN Specialized Agencies

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Introduction

Complex, multidimensional peacekeeping is a creature of the 1990s. The civilian tasks are those set out in Agenda for Peace (1992), and its 1995 Supplement, while the lessons of the 1990s for UN operations were only codified in the Brahimi Report of August 2000 and its proposed reforms. The explicit contribution to peacekeeping missions of UNDP and the Specialized Agencies, with the important exception of those with an established humanitarian mandate such as UNHCR and WFP, is thus little more than a decade old. Capacity-building reforms within UNDP and the agencies for this conflict-related and post-conflict role date to 2001-2002 at best. Accommodation by the UN system for peacekeeping operations of their now integral role has not begun.

In assessing current capacity of the UN funds and programmes for planning and implementation of the civilian components of post-conflict peacebuilding and stabilization engagements, therefore, one is faced with a dilemma. On the one hand, impressive internal reforms have been adopted, but their implementation is in process. It is too soon to be able to judge their results. On the other hand, the problems that have generated such reforms – primarily insufficient and unreliable funding and accompanying demands for greater efficiency and coordination -- do not result from issues of capacity internal to individual programmes and agencies but from the fact that the organization and financing of peacekeeping operations in general do not reflect these conceptual, political, and operational changes.

This paper will argue that appropriate recognition of the role of UNDP and the Specialized Agencies in the civilian dimensions of peacekeeping operations and the latter's goal of a sustainable peace requires even further change in that conceptual framework and a reform of the organization, financing, and personnel for peacebuilding missions at both headquarters and country level based on that framework. Such an understanding cannot alter the current organizational division of labor within the UN system. A recognition of its obstacles to an effective response to the current threats to international peace and security from internal violence, however, would be a more efficient and practical route to reform.

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The Changed Agenda and Current Reforms

The integral role of UNDP and many of the Specialized Agencies in peace operations springs from three separate developments. The first was the evolution of peacekeeping itself and the recognition in second-generation operations that a sustainable peace requires more than military assistance in separating forces, demobilization, and reassurance to build confidence among former warring parties. As the menu of tasks grew to include the return and reintegration into civilian life of refugees, the internally displaced, and demobilized soldiers (including children), the creation of a government capable of taking charge of the peace process and becoming a functioning member of the UN system, and not only reconstruction but long-term economic, social, and cultural development to prevent a recurrence of war, those specialized in these tasks within the UN system naturally became active members of peacekeeping missions.

The second was the change in international climate during the 1990s. As attention to internal violence grew along with post-cold war freedom to assist countries at all phases of conflict – prevention, crisis-management, and postconflict reconstruction – more and more actors sought to bring their technical mandates to bear on issues of “conflict.” An expanding international agenda of concern also made many Specialized Agencies active partners in peacebuilding, including, *inter alia*, a gender perspective and the rights of women and children, health care, food security, housing construction, reintegration of demobilized soldiers, resettlement of the internally displaced as well as refugee return, the problem of organized crime and trafficking in illicit drugs, other goods, and persons, and the necessity of responsible government capable of delivering security, justice, basic social services, economic recovery and employment, and accountability to democratic citizens.²

Third was the academic and policy literature of the late 1990s on the role that development aid can play in generating conflict and the view that greater sensitivity to the causes of conflict and to the ways that external assistance can either help prevent conflict or at least not make matters worse. Research aimed at improving systems of early warning and prevention identified rising human rights violations as a particularly sensitive indicator of impending conflict, generating efforts to improve relations between UNHCHR and the Security Council. Viewing conflict as a problem of development meant a conceptual shift, with organizational implications, to treat security and development as intimately related.

The first response to these developments was a kind of “on-the-mission training” over the course of the decade to apply already established technical and sectoral expertise to the special conditions and needs of countries emerging from armed conflict and civil war. Since 1996-99, UNDP, ECOSOC, and most of the Specialized Agencies moved to create dedicated facilities and even service lines and bureaus to learn lessons from

² Useful illustration of the range of such activities is the mandate recommended in the Secretary-General’s report for a mission to Haiti, S/2004/300 (16 April 2004), Section X: A (pp. 20-21); the final mandate (MINUSTAH, established by UNSCR 1542 on April 30, 2004 [S/RES/1542 (2004)]), to begin June 1, 2004, is less ambitious.

country-specific missions and plan responses to foreseeable crises. A combination of cumulative field experience and dialogue with research scholars and country experts, usually after the fact, has also generated an impressive collection of evaluation reports, best-practice summaries, and experienced UN staff, although making their evidence or conclusions comparable in the absence of a common methodology is not always easy. The Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery of UNDP, established only in November 2001, launched in September 2002 a crisis prevention and recovery practice network, which now includes 450 members, to share “best practices, referrals, technical expertise, digests, consolidated replies, a newsletter, workshops and knowledge-based advisory services.”³

The division between the Secretariat and the rest on peacekeeping operations disappeared, in fact, with the 2000 Brahimi Panel Report on Peace Operations. Its proposed Integrated Mission Task Forces (IMTF) include UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCHR, UNHCR, and WFP, while UNDP and OHCHR are represented in the Senior Appointments Group (SAG). The idea that the Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator should be combined and become Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG) is being implemented in recent missions such as Afghanistan and Liberia (and the plans for Sudan, Haiti, Burundi, and Côte d’Ivoire). Like DPKO, the agencies are operational and UNDP provides the Resident Representative in country. They, too, measure learning in relation to specific missions, not just agency functions. The lessons of El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Mozambique, Cambodia, Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and East Timor still echo throughout assessments, and the transitions in Kosovo and Afghanistan continue to challenge the optimists. Staff now judge the capacity of their programme or agency, however, in terms of the planning and deployments of 2003-04 to D.R. Congo, Liberia, Côte d’Ivoire, Haiti (and perhaps, Iraq), and planning for Sudan.⁴

Reform, however, has been an evolutionary process within existing organizational mandates and UN budgetary processes. The most recent trends have been of 3 kinds: (1) to create expertise specific to the tasks of conflict prevention and peacebuilding; (2) to improve coordination among members of the UN system; and (3) to develop new financial facilities and resource mobilization strategies to supplement existing lines.

Capacity for Conflict Analysis and Post-Conflict Implementation

Sensitivity to the particular issues of conflict is now accepted in the UN system as among bilateral donors and the IFIs. However, the operationalization of this capacity-building for UNDP has been at a regional as well as country level. BCPR and the regional bureaus in UNDP are working together to create a cadre of peace and development advisors; thus far, one advisor has been deployed to the Central Asia bureau

³ Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund, “Annual Report of the Administrator 2002,” 17 April 2003 (DP/2003/11): 12 (¶45).

⁴ This list does not include all UN peace-related missions in the 1994-2004 decade, only those that have been most influential on institutional and programming reform.

and another assigned to the UN Office in Western Africa. Through the latter, assistance to develop such capacity will also be provided to ECOWAS.

Although still at the level of accumulated knowledge and aspiration more than practical effect, there is increasing appreciation of the role that ECOSOC could play as the only forum worldwide where donors and recipients meet together and thus a resource for information-sharing and potential policy change on the relation between development assistance and conflict. The report produced by the UNDG/ECHA working group on transition issues in February 2004 is a major contribution in establishing the concept of a transition, specifying with impressive sophistication its characteristics (including the fact that this period may be long and will certainly not be linear and predictable), and identifying current capacities and areas for further work in the UN system. In July 2002, ECOSOC created an Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries emerging from conflicts to set up “at the request of any African country emerging from conflict, a limited but flexible and representative ad hoc advisory group at the ambassadorial level” to examine needs, review existing assistance programs and make recommendations “to ensure that the assistance of the international community in supporting the country concerned is adequate, coherent, well-coordinated and effective and promotes synergy.”⁵ Thus far, pilot assessments were made for Burundi and Guinea-Bissau, the Advisory Group for Burundi reported in January 2004, that for Guinea-Bissau is forthcoming, and an evaluation of the instrument itself is due in July 2004.

UNDP has also joined forces with DPA to recruit full-time peace and governance advisors with process skills who can be deployed to the capacity-building programs on governance in country missions, such as one sent recently to Ghana. At the end of 2003, UNDP created a joint programme with DPA to assist UN Country Teams and their national partners in building capacity for the peaceful settlement of disputes that could become violent. Drawing on lessons from conflict assessments by UNDP in 6 crisis countries in 2001-2, the aim is to develop conflict prevention strategies and support to local stakeholders (governments and civil society) into UN instruments for country programming – the Common Country Assessments (CCA) and UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF). Two pilots, in Guyana and Niger, have been launched, six additional ones (in Ecuador, Yemen, Kenya, Zambia, Ghana, and Namibia) are being developed, and four others will follow. For peacebuilding missions, BCPR has created new staff lines called peace and governance advisors in recognition that effective implementation requires process skills and country expertise in addition to technical and thematic expertise. BCPR is also seeking to create a roster of external experts on governance-related tasks (such as constitution writing) who have more contextual expertise (country-based or regional) and can be recruited rapidly.

Specialized Agencies have responded to the literature on conflict by introducing programs to link humanitarian assistance with development goals, such as that between WFP and FAO to combine food aid with the provision of seed. Similar efforts to reduce the repeated cycles of humanitarian crisis and the duration of wars can be seen in the combined efforts by UNDP, OCHA, and DPA to keep development activities going

⁵ Economic and Social Council, E/2002/L.12 910 July 2002), ¶ 2.

despite crisis and war. For example, in Guatemala, they sought to persuade warring parties to distinguish development projects that are not of strategic significance to their war aims and let them be, thus identifying neutral territory and creating multiple, tactical ceasefires to protect capacity that would be needed after the war ends.

Coordination

The need for strategic coordination among the multiple actors within the UN system and with regular external actors such as the World Bank and prominent NGOs is now conventional wisdom and has generated a multiplicity of new vehicles since 2001 in which UNDP, UNHCHR, and some Specialized Agencies are regular participants. In addition to those recommended by Brahimi, such as the IMTF and SAG, there has been a proliferation of programmatic partnerships between bureaus and agencies, such as those mentioned between UNDP and DPA on conflict analysis and WFP and FAO on food security and others like that between ILO and UNDP on employment and poverty reduction. Assistance programs are now coordinated under the UN Development Group.

The concept of integrated strategies --originally designed for the early stage of intervention when humanitarian objectives proved unsustainable without linking to agencies and activities with a longer-term, more developmental focus, such as UNDP, ILO, and UNHCHR, in reality, and in principle, WHO, WFP, UNHabitat, and UNFPA -- is now being valued for their role in forcing more planning. These include UNHCR's 4Rs, which variously link it with UNDP, UNICEF, the World Bank, WFP, and bilateral donors;⁶ Area-based Development Programmes (joint planning between humanitarian actors focusing on population categories and development actors focusing on the developmental and community-level requirements for successful reintegration -- UNHCR and UNDP);⁷ efforts to improve on UNHCR's QIPS (Quick Impact Projects) which proved unsustainable due to lack of adequate planning and integration with recovery (e.g., ILO on employment and microfinance) and development strategies; HURIST (joint Human Rights Strengthening between OHCHR and UNDP); PRSPs (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers) which are required by the World Bank and IMF but have now been adopted as the basic framework for country-level development planning by UNDP; and MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) which provide the organizing framework for longer-term development planning by UN Country Teams. UNAIDS will necessarily work on this same principle.

The concept of clusters has been developed for mission planning to address the obstacles to both planning and operations from the bureaucratic interests and demands for autonomy of agencies and programmes. Thus, categories of necessary expertise and operational requirements are decided according to sectors and themes rather than agencies (e.g., three in Sierra Leone, peace and security, reintegration, and rebuilding

⁶ Under its Framework for Durable Solutions, 4Rs refers to Repatriation, Reintegration, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction.

⁷ UNDP/PRODERE in Guatemala and El Salvador remains the model of what can be achieved as well as what needs improving.

communities). Persons with the appropriate talents to fill those slots are then identified, and teams are then formed, not of agencies but of individuals committed to the issue.⁸

A major innovation for coordination and the capacity for planning that such coordination aims to improve, according to those involved, are the joint needs assessment missions of UNDP, the World Bank, and others to prepare for donors' conferences. Beginning in Afghanistan, they have been improved substantially, according to UN staff, in the cases of Iraq, Liberia, and Sudan. In the planning for Haiti, the government itself was responsible for the needs assessment and built the "Interim Cooperation Framework" on the PRSP which the previous government had already prepared.

Financing Facilities and Resource Mobilization

One could well interpret all of these innovations of coordination as resource mobilization and cost-savings tools in a budgetary system that has not accommodated to the integral role in postconflict missions of UNDP and many of the Specialized Agencies. The joint needs assessments, in particular, aim primarily to create confidence with donors that the requests made are realistic and appropriate to conditions in the country at issue. As an explicit goal, however, the innovation of Trust Funds for the early transition period is important on its own.

Aimed at the rapid disbursement and flexible programming considered essential to crisis and immediate post-conflict conditions, this instrument now includes ad hoc interim funds at the country level; the Integrated Trust Funds created by donors' conferences and shared between the World Bank and UNDP (e.g., 50-50 in the case of Liberia); and the Thematic Trust Fund for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, created by Norway with UNDP, which covers 7 Service Lines.⁹ UNDP uses Service line 7 to support peace operations, for example, with special interim funding windows to provide budgetary support to transitional authorities (e.g., paying civil service salaries, purchasing very basic equipment for government ministries such as desks and telephones, and getting urgent public services started) so that the delicate initial stage of implementing a peace agreement can proceed and the public is drawn to support these authorities and peace. Although the idea behind the interim funds to support a peace process began with the Holst Fund for West Bank/Gaza, in support of the Oslo Peace Process, the Afghan Interim Authority Fund in 2001-2 illustrates the extent to which this idea has developed and become institutionalized.¹⁰ A similar Trust Fund was created for Guinea-Bissau, is being created for Sudan, and will be created for Burundi.

⁸ Called "directive management" by UNAMA.

⁹ Service Line 1: Conflict Prevention and Peace-building; 2: Recovery; 3: Security Sector Reform and Transitional Justice; 4: Small Arms Reduction, Disarmament and Demobilization of Ex-combatants; 5: Mine Action; 6: Natural Disaster Reduction; and 7: Special Initiatives for Countries in Transition.

¹⁰ UNDP also established a Law and Order Trust Fund (LOTFA) in December 2002 to pay police salaries; unfortunately, it was severely under funded, although some argue that a far greater cause of police reform was the lack of reform in the Ministry of Interior and its confusing procedures.

Capacity to Respond Effectively

It is generally agreed that the UN system has made enormous strides in recent years in the actual capacity to plan and implement the emergency phase of a peace mission. This includes the part played by UNDP and many, though not all, of the Specialized Agencies. Responding largely to the Brahimi Report, the reform stimulus has also appeared to generate assessments done increasingly in “real time,” and case studies such as those done for the UNDG/ECHA report suggest a welcome willingness to resist the organizational culture (shared with bilateral donors) of rose-colored glasses and obligatory success. Nonetheless, these innovations are so new that systematic evaluations of actual practice have not yet been done, although many are due presently. There is much to be said for allowing these innovations time to prove their worth, with an emphasis on more systematic and continuous evaluation.

It is also generally asserted that what happens during those first 3 to 6 months will determine the long-term success of the operation. Yet a focus on UNDP and the Specialized Agencies allows one to see a glaring capacity gap in sustainability. On the one hand, the emphasis of the Brahimi Report on rapid deployment, the initial problem of “spoilers” and thus enforcement capacity (including troop contributions and ROE), and a doctrinal shift on security to include in the peace-enforcement function civilian policing and the rule of law (particularly in the sense of accountability for wartime crimes) ignores much of what UNDP and the Specialized Agencies should bring to a mission -- the developmental, long-term, governance-building tasks that decide whether a peace is consolidated or war resumes. On the other hand, evaluations of their programs suggest strongly that the bases for this perspective -- for sustaining their initial programs, for peace consolidation and long-term development (including employment), and for planning the transfer after the mission ends to those UN agencies and programs that will remain and to local authority and responsibility -- are all severely underdeveloped.

This capacity gap on sustainability has at least four elements in current practice, all of which are directly a consequence of the fact that the organizational division of labor and budgetary system of the UN system were not and are not designed to address the threat to international peace and security of internal violence.

1. *The focus on crisis.* A surprising finding of this survey was the extent to which the contribution of UNDP and the Specialized Agencies to peacebuilding, singly and together, is focused on early recovery and a humanitarian- and crisis-oriented definition of their task, not on long-term development or sustainability. While one might expect this from WFP or UNHCR, it is difficult to understand with UNDP, UNHCHR, WHO, ILO, UNICEF, FPA, or UNODC, or the very assumption behind the integrated strategies, namely, that to do even humanitarian work effectively requires a developmental perspective. There are a number of reasons why ECOSOC is considered dysfunctional by those who see its role as a policy forum and policy-maker on development, but this could be one.

One clear manifestation of this problem emerging from evaluations is the repeated and universal criticism of QIPs for their lack of sustainability and inability to bridge between relief and development. This remains despite efforts by UNHCR to address this problem, and UNDP continues to participate. The idea of an immediate “peace dividend” is now so ingrained, despite much evidence against its operationalization, that it has become a substitute for critical review. Unsustainability is commonly cited as well in programs by WHO, FPA, WFP, UNHCHR, and many (e.g., Community Services) by UNHCR. Frequent staff rotations and resulting lack of institutional memory, although not always detrimental if a fresh approach is needed, contribute to this lack of a more sustained, longer-term focus. One may ask, moreover, whether recent reforms could be counterproductive. Is the new capacity in specialized units for crisis, emergency, and conflict a gain or a loss? Do they help or hinder the transfer of lessons from development interventions to the transition from war to peace? Are the instruments developed to give agencies and UNCT greater flexibility in crisis situations an incentive to keep defining a situation as an emergency or humanitarian operation?

2. *Absence of capacity for policy.* There appears to be general consensus, particularly among UN staff, that aside from the UN’s crucial convening authority, it is a process instrument. Its approach consists largely of tools and process mechanisms. Recent reforms go even further in this direction by emphasizing improved coordination and integrated strategies across programs, agencies, and sectors, including greater flexibility in the use of such tools through the development of analytical frameworks to give coherence for country-level teams and guidance from HQ.¹¹ So do the emphasis on process skills and on the refinement of benchmarks and indicators of progress. Nonetheless, field missions repeatedly criticize New York for its lack of strategic policy and planning mechanisms. They understand the importance of such capacity, particularly to keep a country on course in response to events on the ground and the non-linear character of these transitions.

One manifestation of this incapacity for policy is the ever growing menu of activities and agencies engaged in a peacebuilding mission.¹² Despite the concept of an integrated mission, this reality of proliferating actors, activities, and aspirations appears to stand in the way of its realization in mission design; at the same time, UNDP and many agencies criticize the approach to mission design that consists of filling boxes on an organogram with advisors rather than a strategy appropriate to the country at stake. Programmatic partnerships and greater coordination appear aimed at the resource problem through increased efficiency of agencies in their field programs (WFP is a good example) or cost-savings through cooperation and a division of labor, but the resource problem is equally or more the lack of mechanism to set priorities within budget constraints. This is an urgent concern because the ambitions far out distance anything the

¹¹ See ¶ 86, Report of the UNGD/ECHA Working Group on Transitions Issues.

¹² For example, a casual survey reveals that DDR is done, at least, by DPKO, UNDP, ILO, UNICEF, and WHO; for security sector reform, which commonly includes rule of law, UNDP currently has 70 projects, 20 of which relate to the police, while DPKO, UNODC, UNHCHR, UNICEF, and HURIST all have programs; repatriation and resettlement of refugees and IDPs are shared among UNHCR, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, FAO, ILO, UNHCHR, IOM, UNOPS, WHO, UNFPA, and the World Bank, with no lead agency on IDPs; the health sector is shared among WHO, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNHCR, UNICEF, and IOM.

local population will be able to accomplish in a reasonable period of time (e.g., 10 years), let alone a host country sustain.

One might argue, however, that there is no space for policy given the international consensus on correct policies and templates (e.g., the Washington consensus, “good governance,” human rights and rule of law, DDR and the 4Rs). What space there was for choice has been filled by the sheer amount of experience in field operations and by lessons-learned exercises. The long-standing and well-documented concern about the conflict between IMF-led economic strategies (emphasizing macroeconomic stabilization and their contractionary effects) and the political goals of peacebuilding has not led to a change in policy.¹³ There is surprisingly little debate even now about whether existing peacebuilding strategy, particularly but not only its economic and social aspects, is appropriate to the needs of countries in crisis or emerging from conflict. This is in spite of the large academic and policy literature recently demonstrating that pro-growth economic policy is not necessarily pro-poor or pro-employment (causing repeated failure to do the R in DDR) and that its outcome in increasing inequality runs directly counter to the recognized role of perceptions of equity for popular support of the peace process. Although these issues should lie squarely in the comparative advantage of UNDP, it appears to have chosen to defer to the World Bank on matters of economic policy and development strategy and to settle for establishing standards, such as the MDGs and human security, in measuring outcomes.

Both planning and implementation, moreover, are still seen as technical exercises. But a repeated theme throughout evaluations is that a primary cause of problems with long-term sustainability is the inability to engage directly with the politics of the peacebuilding process.¹⁴ Technical improvements may well have reached their limit in what they can achieve without finding a way to engage the intensely political nature and high stakes of institutional design and resource allocation of a transition from war to peace.

Some of those political parameters are set by outsiders. For example, to “get a deal,” peace negotiators often leave major political decisions to the phase of implementation which cannot then be treated as if they are technical issues alone. There is even a growing international tendency to believe that a peacebuilding process (creating and implementing ceasefires, confidence-building, economic recovery, and institution-building) can *produce* a political outcome and thus to use UN missions to implement this approach; how can one plan if one does not know the political end point?¹⁵ Planning assumptions taken within the UN system may not coincide with political decisions taken elsewhere, such as the effect of IMF and creditors’ decisions on a country’s

¹³ The question has been raised whether the increasing partnerships between DPA and UNDP are aimed at aligning political and developmental strategies in general, or only aligning UN departments.

¹⁴ For example, the highly regarded innovation of a World Bank, multidonor Trust Fund for post-conflict reconstruction has not spent a penny in 11 countries because of the political issues. See also the discussion in the Secretary-General’s Report on Haiti, S/2004/300 (16 April 2004), ¶ 50.

¹⁵ Kosovo is the most obvious case, but the number of such “entities” has been rising noticeably – Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Somaliland and perhaps Puntland, Nagorno-Karabakh, Transnistria, Abkhazia, and so on.

macroeconomic situation when public-resource management programs are at issue. The high politics in capitals over assistance policy (the Palestinian case is particularly striking) may inhibit the assumptions necessary to deliver aid on the ground.

Some of the politics is among local actors and groups. A process of implementing a peace agreement is often seen by local parties as a continuation of the war by non-violent means. Planning must be sensitive to the inevitable politics of this process and not, for the sake of planning alone, get ahead of the local political dynamic. Even an effective DDR program requires deep and current knowledge of the political context and its dynamics, such as the particular interests and organizational capacities of militias, whom to demobilize, whom to train for a new army or as police, the effect of war-time on the assumptions made for reintegration, details of the bargaining during peace negotiations, and local mechanisms for security that have survived the war, developed during the war, or traditions that can be revived.

The stakeholder approach to the political questions appears to assume that identifying and including all stakeholders will automatically create agreement and thereby improve both planning and implementation. In fact, stakeholders will disagree deeply on these matters and their preferred outcome; there must be some procedural mechanism – some institutionalized capacity with accountability – to make these decisions. The tendency of postconflict missions to generate increasing local frustration with the international presence is in part a manifestation of this programmed insensitivity to local politics and the resulting lack of accountability by external actors which the local population perceives. Similarly, a major factor in the difficulty of generating serious policy dialogue on these matters within ECOSOC is the resistance by member states to discussing anything that appears political.

3. *Failure to achieve national control and functioning states.* There is no dispute about the primary determinant of success in sustaining a peace process and preventing both a resumption of war and an interminable stalemate – leaving behind a country capable of governing itself and being a functioning member of the UN system. The priority of state-building means not only the technical capacity of administration to provide basic services, including security, but also national control over decisions that matter to a country and functioning governments with the authority to implement and enforce choices made. Indeed, the best solution to the difficulties engaging political questions discussed above is to put the recipient country in the driver's seat from the start. Yet the failure to achieve this universal objective permeates every evaluation we have consulted.

Some sectors receive particularly low marks, such as (surprisingly) human rights,¹⁶ but all are implicated, from project to program to integrated strategy. This ranges from the failure to consult local parties in planning exercises to the overdetermination of governmental outcomes as a result of such planning. For example,

¹⁶ “The sustainability of all projects is assessed as low.” Cees Flinterman and Marcel Zwamborn, From Development of Human Rights to Managing Human Rights Development: Global Review of the OHCHR Technical Cooperation Programme: Synthesis Report (Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM) with MEDE European Consultancy: September 2003), p. 7 and *passim*.

the joint needs assessments generating current enthusiasm are sectorally organized to conform to the line ministries of a national government, as if local authorities should not decide how they wish to organize their government. Development strategy is preset by the required PRSP and MDG (let alone the terms of IMF membership that is a precondition for World Bank loans and the preparation of an CCA, I-PRSP, and UNDAF). The task of resolving differences among bilateral and multilateral donors in their philosophies on development, governance, and public goods is treated as a matter for donor coordination just as the goal of the needs assessments is donor trust.¹⁷

Categories of populations in need of protection, such as the vulnerable and minorities, are set by external agencies. Data bases to establish needs, track progress, and govern aid are created by outsiders according to highly standardized forms. Donors seek implementing partners outside the government (whether INGOs or NGOs they fund in the country) because they do not trust new governments in postconflict conditions, depriving governments of the flow of information they need to make policy, regulate the economy, and be accountable to the population and conditions within the country.¹⁸ Yet freely flowing and reliable information is the *sine qua non* of effective democratic government.

UN staff themselves are concerned that more attention is being paid to training of and coordination among UN staff and agencies than that of locals. The primary focus of capacity-building, including for conflict assessments, appears to be members of the UN system, not the intended recipients of assistance. The World Bank Institute does have a program to train civil servants during the conflict so as to be ready for the transition, but it is directed at expatriates whom it hopes will then return. While there is also substantial capacity now to build local capacity at the microlevel – the community development and decentralization emphasis that flows from the lack of trust of central governments and frustration at the time necessary to constitute them – there is little capacity for a “scaling up” process and its quite separate requirements (e.g., to move from popular participation to representation) or for creating micro-macro linkages from the start.

Most important to the long-term viability of the country and its government is the apparent lack of attention in planning decisions, or even in periodic assessments of implementation, of the financial sustainability and developmental soundness of the myriad programs and externally designed governmental structures and capacities now part and parcel of a peacebuilding mission. This problem is separate from and prior to the now recognized need to pay more attention to generating public revenues than cutting public expenditures. The common threat in post-conflict transitions of aid dependence, corruption, and rent-based politics cannot be viewed as a problem of local culture alone.¹⁹ There does not even appear to be recognition of the huge transaction costs (in money and time) for the host country of the multiple and complicated technical

¹⁷ The attractiveness of the CAP, indeed, is that it does not require the engagement of national authorities.

¹⁸ There appears to be little attention to the skills that NGOs (local or international) require for these tasks, as opposed to members of the UN system; for example, donors in Afghanistan apparently faced a huge difficulty because of the lack of knowledge about reconstruction by their NGO implementing partners.

¹⁹ Despite UNAMA’s commitment to a “light footprint” in Afghanistan, this issue of aid dependency permeates the current assessment for the Norwegian government by Chr. Michelsen Institute and PRIO: Astri Suhrke, Kristian Berg Harpviken, and Arne Strand, Conflictual Peacebuilding: Afghanistan Two Years after Bonn (Bergen: CMI Reports R 2004:4).

procedures and reporting requirements to donors along the lines that is already recognized by the DAC for effective foreign aid (and its Rome Declaration on Harmonisation of February 2003) and by the UNDG in response to the Monterrey conference on financing for development.

4. *Financing as the driver.* All three of the above elements of the capacity gap on sustainability can be explained by current mechanisms for financing postconflict transitions and peace operations.

Despite the conceptual and operational transformation of peacekeeping operations over the past 15 years and the recognition of the intimate relation between security, conflict, and development, the budgetary system maintains the prior distinction between assessed and voluntary (CAP) funding and matters financed by the Security Council and those by the General Assembly. If the activities of UNDP and the Specialized Agencies can be defined in terms of the short-term and DPKO-defined mandate and budget or as emergency, humanitarian assistance under the CAP, they may be funded. Once the CAP is spent, programs with a longer-term, developmental focus necessary for sustainability of the peace also collapse for lack of funding. Regular service lines within the Multi-year Funding Framework, such as for UNDP or UNICEF, build in stove-piping and bureaucratic organization to tasks that should be flexible and at least conceptually integrated. Development policy appropriate to crisis, conflict, and countries emerging from conflict has no venue. Donors prefer to fund World Bank Trust Funds and to keep the UNDP Trust Funds limited to the budgetary stop-gap of the first 3 to 12 months, even though the World Bank cannot disburse those funds for political reasons in the first 12 to 18 months (or longer).

IFI dominance over economic policy and development strategy is a consequence of financial weight alone while programmatic partnerships as one solution to UNDP funding reinforce the UN focus on process and tools rather than policy. UNDP even fills that temporal gap for the World Bank, implementing the IPRSP and LICUS programs when the Bank cannot be present. Donors who want to fund UNDP and certain Specialized Agencies for post-conflict work, to address the political issues, and to improve country-level implementation must find ways around what they consider the dysfunctionality of ECOSOC and the fact that responsibility for the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review belongs to DESA, which has no country-level knowledge. The result, however, is informal, thus untransparent, agency-based, and bilateral. Sectoral preferences of particular donors (for example, with UNICEF and WFP) receive funds rather than an integrated strategy for peace in a particular country. The result is to reinforce the lack of capacity for planning, system-wide policy, and probably even accountability as discussed above. Even the apparent insensitivity to a hard budget constraint of the inevitably underfunded and overly ambitious list of projects and programs can be seen, paradoxically, to be a direct result of the absence of a regular funding mechanism for activities under the mandate of UNDP and the Specialized Agencies on which planning calculations can be made.

If there is one constant theme in the evaluation reports of all UNDP and agency projects and programs in countries emerging from conflict, it is the direct consequences of this financial system -- insufficient financial resources to complete projects started, implement them as planned, or to follow-through. There is, in fact, a planning mechanism in New York, but it is the budgetary decisions of the Fifth Committee. Field missions adjust timelines and policy in response to its announcement of impending budget cuts. As essentially external shocks to the mission, however, these cuts can wreck havoc with long-term designs, obviate efforts to adjust those plans in response to feedback from the ground, and above all, leave little room for building the capacity for the transfer to locals that must then occur. The entire corpus of learning about how to leave behind a functioning state and consolidated peace is in conflict with decisions taken with little or no relation to developments at country level.

A Word on Crisis Response

As an organization of sovereign member states, the UN system is often accused of privileging governments, of a reluctance to do contingency planning when it might send the wrong political signal or when governments might perceive such planning as interference in their internal affairs, and of an inability to act when there is no host government (because it does not exist, sides have not yet reconciled in an early peace process, or UN resolutions create prohibitions). Increasing caution in the face of security threats from armed conflict or a collapse of law and order also places limits on working in situations of crisis, uncontrolled militia, and war. Despite the Secretary-General's focus on conflict prevention, recent innovations in capacity for planning and implementation related to conflict are, as is this project, on the activities of intervention at the postconflict stage.

In fact, however, many UN agencies, such as UNICEF, UNDP, ILO, UNODC, UNAIDS, WFP and the resident coordinator system, do continue operations as best they can under these circumstances. They are present on the ground when sensitivity to conflict and to potential triggers for contingency planning is essential for conflict prevention. During war or the insecure conditions prevailing when negotiations to achieve a ceasefire and political settlement are taking place, they will be *the* UN presence, maintaining a lifeline and information between the country and the UN system. They can therefore promote peacebuilding and capacity-building activities where local security allows (similar to humanitarian space) and train locals in the skills that will be needed the very moment transition begins. When political reasons prevent deployment of a special envoy or special representative of the Secretary-General (e.g., currently Zimbabwe or Nepal) as well, the role of the resident representative (in capacity as resident development and/or humanitarian coordinator, most often the UNDP resident representative) becomes critical.

This range of activities suggests the potential, for the most part unplumbed, in thinking of internal violence as a continuum, not discrete stages. At the very least, a postconflict perspective could be introduced much earlier than is currently organized to generate a Security Council resolution – if not to prevent fragile states from failing or

collapsing into civil war, then at least to prepare the human capital and protect the developmental and governmental capacity, insofar as possible, that can swing into action as soon as political conditions allow. Donors, too, must examine the counterproductive role of aid as a form of sanctions against one or another party during peace negotiations and of waiting until there is an agreed political authority to act.²⁰ Similarly, peacebuilding activities do not end with a peace mission; if sunset clauses are obligatory in all mission mandates and active planning in country for the transition to local authorities and post-mission UN activity occurs from the start, then the central focus of national authority and capacity could move from rhetoric to results.

Conclusion

The contribution of UNDP and the Specialized Agencies to the civilian dimension of international engagements in countries emerging from crisis and armed conflict raises two fundamental issues regarding current practice: (1) that the goal should be, but in practice is not yet, to create an autonomous and functioning state responsible to its citizens as well as international norms, and (2) that current financing mechanisms drive the concept of international engagements whereas the concept should come first. In both regards, the long-term, structural, institution-building, and development-oriented activities of the UNDP and many Specialized Agencies are no longer, and should not be considered, as “add-ons” that need to be coordinated, but as the critical “glue” of success. Their operations also demonstrate the artificial nature of thinking in conflict stages. As the ongoing presence currently in 166 countries, they could contribute far more to conflict prevention and speedier postconflict recovery if their contribution did not have to fit a crisis-oriented, humanitarian or short-term conception and if the concept of an integrated mission gave way to a conceptual framework for successful state-building.

If the UN system is to adapt its organizational and financial division of labor to the changes in peacekeeping operations and knowledge about them of the past 15 years, then changes would have to be initiated by UNDP and the Specialized Agencies as well as the Secretariat. The following recommendations are intended as a start in that direction.

Recommendations

1. **Financing.** Recognize that peace operations now routinely include many activities done by UNDP and some of the Specialized Agencies which are no longer “add-ons” but constitutive of the institutional and developmental aspects that make a peace sustainable and of international commitments (e.g., on human rights, gender relations, child protection, and HIV/AIDS). Identify those that are essential and redefine the boundaries between assessed budgets and voluntary contributions accordingly, in place of the artificial division among humanitarian, peacekeeping, and developmental activities. Consider creating a separate budget line for all essential civilian aspects of postconflict reconstruction and peacebuilding tasks, as established by a system-wide, conceptual framework.

²⁰ The current situation in Sri Lanka is a good example.

2. **Comparative Advantage.** If a standing mechanism for financing postconflict engagements is to be created and the unacceptably low ceilings on such activities currently, given their vital role in international peace and security and thus the national interests of all member states, are to be raised, then UNDP and the Specialized Agencies must identify their priorities, specific value-added in relation to other parts of the UN system, and comparative advantage in relation to others present in a peace mission. The decision on what they do best and what should go to others should not be based on current mandates necessarily, must reduce wasteful duplication and take into account external evaluations of actual practice, and must be up-dated regularly through a systematic mechanism of ongoing evaluation that holds agencies and programs accountable for performance and for local control.²¹

This assessment must include the currently fuzzy division of labor between UNDP and the World Bank in postconflict operations. Donors must recognize the disadvantages of the World Bank in terms of the early phase of postconflict, including issues of speedy disbursement, social and economic equity, and capacity-building, and consider the advantages of giving the UNDP leadership over (and appropriate financing mechanisms for) developmental programming for the first 18 months to two years of a postconflict mission. The IFIs must work more closely with the UN country team and postconflict mission, and the respective roles of the IFIs, ECOSOC, and the Security Council in regard to the links between development, conflict, and security should be the subject of high level discussion.

3. **Resident Coordinator/DSRSG.** Strengthen the Resident Coordinator system in line with its role in and potential for prevention and peacebuilding during conflict and its role after the mission departs. Accept the role of RC as DSRSG and establish criteria for choosing the humanitarian coordinator or the development coordinator as RC and for selection of the DSRSG that does not stop with DPKO and OCHA but includes regular consultation with UNDP or other relevant agencies. Build on recommendations already made by the UNDG/ECHA report on transitions issues (para. 66) to improve the system and support for it. Selection of the RC and DSRSG must be improved with mechanisms for identifying the particular personal and professional skills needed for postconflict peacebuilding, for quality control, and for accountability, in the same way that must be improved for selection of the SRSG.
4. **The Goal of State-Building.** Place the goal of building or restoring governmental authority and public institutions – statebuilding – at the center of all activities and assessments. This should include the following:

²¹ For example, current evaluations suggest examining the effects of WFP food aid, the effectiveness of QIPs, the insufficient “nationalization” of human rights programs, the UNHCR Community Services system, the WFP’s PRRO failure to show results on the ground, the overemphasis on decentralization and community development when the tasks of peacebuilding require the creation of legitimate authority, societywide reconciliation, and nationwide institutions, WHO’s implementation capacity, the negative effects of pro-growth economic strategies on social inclusion, the poor, and equity, all critical to peacebuilding, and the underfunding and short-staffing of the resident coordinator system.

1. Devise an obligatory monitoring instrument and accompanying (single) data base from the very start of planning through to the mission exit to assess how each unit of the UN system involved in the field operation are contributing to the creation of an independent and effective state; require written brief justification where activities work against that goal (there may be good reasons but they must be provided). This instrument and data base could be housed in the office of a Legacy Ombudsman attached to the OSRSG that would generate “legacy audits” (“what are we leaving behind?”) through data collection and regularized communication with locals.
2. Reorient UN efforts to improve coordination toward making the local government and institutionalized channels of domestic representation the center of coordination and planning. In the beginning this might be a counterpart agency working alongside the UN mission but the latter must have a sunset clause and transparent timetable for transfer.
3. Redefine good governance and its related programming away from the policies and institutions identified by the World Bank (CPIA) for economic growth in a stable but poor country toward those capacities necessary for establishing public authority and effective governance for the transformative tasks of peacebuilding. (This would require coordination with the military aspects of a peacekeeping mission so as to develop from the start the state’s monopoly over the use of force within its borders and the agreed rules on its legitimate use. It also requires giving the responsibility for implementation to public authorities, not to INGOs and other external contracting agencies, because without the information about conditions and the population that comes with implementation, governments cannot make effective policy, regulate effectively, or be accountable.)
4. Begin the technical and administrative training of eventual civil servants as soon as possible (even during the war); require the World Bank institute and UN agencies who will do this to demonstrate that 80 percent are from the country and have contracted to remain (or return); reorient the training of skills already identified by UNDP as crucial to peace implementation away from UN staff and toward the local population; include in the data base the number and location of locals being trained or employed in positions related to these needed skills in relation to those servicing the mission (e.g., as drivers or translators).
5. Make an obligatory part of planning, mission design, and programming the financial requirements (both immediate and long-term) for the recipient country and assessment of the financial sustainability and developmental soundness of the capacity and obligation being incurred.
6. Adopt the methods for harmonizing donor practices for effective aid delivery that are being developed by the DAC (after the Rome Declaration on

Harmonisation of February 2003) and by UNDG in response to the Monterrey conference on financing for development and are currently being developed by UNDG to establish (and oblige donors to use) a single financial and technical reporting system so as to reduce the transaction costs (in money and time) on the host government. Other recent efforts to create standards of “good donorship” should be applied to postconflict aid as well.

5. **Data bases.** As an extension of its convening authority and standard setting (including the MDGs, the UNDP Early Warning System, the WHO data bases) and its universality, the UN system has a comparative advantage in generating regular, longitudinal, and comparable information about conditions in a country. Nonetheless, a recurring plague of countries emerging from conflict is the absence of baseline data on which to build needs assessments and national development plans and public services. At the same time, there is a proliferation of data sources, including multiple but incompatible data bases on aid to the same country, that do not reflect strategic decisions about what data are essential, the reliability of the data base, and how the separate sources collate. Nor are there standardized criteria for evaluating postconflict projects, including the fundamental requirement of causal analysis, not simply a record of outcomes, so that future decisions can be based on why an outcome succeeded or failed.

Establish a small task force of independent professionals (e.g., epidemiologists, economists specializing in data on civil war and postconflict development) to assess current data gathering activities and data bases and make recommendations for the revision of current efforts and possible creation of new ones. At the same time, create a data base of experts, by region, with skills in peacebuilding, thematic competencies (e.g., legal specializations), and experience as former recipients, for both planning and ready deployment. Increase funding from the US, the European Commission, and other interested donors in the training and recruitment in regional centers located in the South of the skills needed for civilian aspects of peace missions.

Appendix

Parts of the UN system analyzed for this paper:

Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)
International Labor Organization (ILO) – Infocus Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction
International Organization for Migration (IOM)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which includes,
 Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR)
 United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)
 United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)
 United Nations Volunteers (UNV)

United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) – Office of Emergency Operations and Operations Center
United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) – particularly its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries emerging from conflict
United Nations Economic, Social, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
United Nations Family Planning Agency (FPA)
UN-HABITAT – Disaster, Post-Conflict, and Safety Section, Urban Development Branch (and its Disaster Management Programme)
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR)
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
United Nations Office for Drug and Crime (UNODC)
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
World Food Programme (WFP) – and its Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO) established May 1998
World Health Organisation (WHO) – Division of Emergency Operations and Humanitarian Action, but especially, its Health Action in Crisis program

Peacebuilding Tasks covered by these agencies

Governance (creation of a constitution and basic legislation to a functioning government; voter registration, advocacy, and electoral system design; public administration, including social service provision; civil service reform, recovery, salaries, and training; public revenue generation and transparent management; gender; decentralization and local administration; accountability including human rights)

Security Sector Reform (demilitarization, demobilization, and training of new armed forces, including civilian oversight; child soldiers; justice [civil and criminal codes, courts, human rights monitoring, prisons, lawyers]; police; intelligence services; mine action; counter-narcotics and organized crime)

Refugee and IDP repatriation, return, and reintegration

Economic development (sustainable livelihoods, micro-credit and small and medium enterprise development, employment generation, property rights and dispute resolution, and, possibly, privatization, access to land and its redistribution, and, along with the World Bank and IMF, creation of a market- and foreign investment-friendly economic environment)

Education (primary, secondary, job training and skills development, “culture of peace” and reconciliation)

Health (basic health services, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, psychosocial support)

Housing and Urban Development

Natural Resources (such as agricultural development) and environment

Food aid and security

Culture and media