



THE HOPE AGENDA FOR COUNTRIES IN CRISIS

BY JORDAN RYAN
UNDP ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR AND DIRECTOR,
UNDP BUREAU FOR CRISIS PREVENTION AND RECOVERY



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Nearly ten years ago UNDP created the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) to help restore hope to women, men, girls and boys, whose lives have been shattered by conflict or disaster. Operating through some 100 UNDP country offices, BCPR provides a bridge between the activities of humanitarian agencies that handle immediate life-saving needs and development initiatives following recovery. In addition to bridging this gap, BCPR supports national authorities to create stability out of chaos through better planning, reconciliation and recovery efforts. In all its work BCPR seeks new ways to prevent crises, engage earlier, in riskier situations.

Today, more than ever, the United Nations is called on to bolster the prospects for sustainable peace, stability and recovery in countries affected by conflict and natural disasters. In response to the growing challenges, UNDP, through BCPR, will focus on an agenda of HOPE, one that stands for:

H— HEALTHY SOCIETY: A healthy society is one that deals with conflict without resorting to violence, cares for its people and faces the future with confidence. No society can thrive when communities are shattered by conflict, or thousands of lives have been lost needlessly in a cyclone, or half of its population is denied equal access to justice. We need to support countries to change the dynamics of violence and address the inequities and distortions that fueled crisis and conflict in the first place. To help create healthy societies, we need to intensify our prevention efforts, reduce the exposure and vulnerability of communities to natural hazards, step up our recovery work and never forget that in the end, it is the respect for human dignity that matters most.

O— OPPORTUNITY: What better depicts the lack of opportunity than the demobilized soldier carrying a gun? If that same individual had the means and the training to earn a living, to raise a family, to have a home – why carry a gun? Those who have none of these things – and thus nothing to lose – are easily lured into conflicts that can feed on themselves for decades, destroying the prospects for development and shattering the population’s chances for a better life. To build peace – and thus create the stable foundation upon which a society can thrive – we need to generate opportunities for employment and improved livelihoods, for reconciliation and building social cohesion. With the world threatened by climate change, the rising number of disasters and their disproportionate impact on the poorest, makes essential for us to focus efforts on laying the foundations for development opportunities in countries at high risk of “climatic hazards”.

P— PROTECTION: The first casualty of crisis is physical security. Whether villagers are threatened by machete-wielding militants, cluster munitions or violent storms, they lose the means of fulfilling their most basic needs. In camps for the internally displaced, even fetching wood for cooking or walking to a distant latrine becomes risky for women and girls. Rape is regularly used as a weapon of war, young girls and boys are forcibly recruited as combatants, and young women separated from their families are vulnerable to the horrors of trafficking. We must protect communities by ensuring that the rule of law is respected and access to justice becomes a reality. Our efforts are linked with other UN entities engaged in this field, but by working together we can do so much more.

E— EMPOWERMENT: Inclusion is the first step toward empowerment, especially in countries confronting the aftermath of crisis. By giving women a role in decision-making, minorities a voice in elections, young people an opportunity to be heard and become engaged, we create the conditions for sustainable development. With education, the children raised in poverty can become teachers, medical workers, and other productive members of society. The single mothers who head households can secure the training and finance they need to start small businesses. Gender equality is essential for poverty reduction, as well as crisis prevention and recovery. Empowering women is a crucial part of advancing a country’s prospects for longer term development. As long as women are barred from decision-making, from owning property, from education – the societies in which they live will fail to benefit from their talents and resourcefulness. They also fail to develop in any meaningful sense.

THE HOPE AGENDA IN ACTION. TO PROVIDE HOPE TO COMMUNITIES IN CRISIS, WE WILL:

- **RALLY RESIDENT COORDINATORS** to unite the UN family in the effort to Deliver as One and support coherence across the system. We also need strong, efficient, well-equipped UNDP offices with the best people, equipment, resources, knowledge and ability to address key challenges. Capacities for supporting national post-crisis peacebuilding, natural disaster risk reduction and recovery efforts must be on the ground as early as possible to ensure the appropriate experience and knowledge are available to plan interventions and deliver results.
- **RECOGNIZE THE ECONOMIC MERITS OF INVESTING IN PREVENTION:** The costs of rebuilding a country devastated by disaster or war are significantly higher than those of preventing the problems in the first place. Investments in prevention, peace-making and peacebuilding are likely to reduce the need for large and costly peace-keeping operations. For the world's ten million refugees and 25 million internally displaced persons, conflict has scarred their lands, degraded their communities, and destroyed their homes, crops and livelihoods. It remains an insurmountable barrier to development. Likewise, a single natural disaster can cost a society a significant portion of its annual GDP. High risk areas and the factors which cause disasters are known with increasing local precision. Preventing disaster losses in such areas can be done for fraction of the costs of reconstruction, with many lives saved in the process.
- **BRIDGE THE FUNDING GAP FOR EARLY RECOVERY** by providing resources for activities that will bridge the transition from crisis to development. While the ongoing financial crisis will undoubtedly affect our resource mobilization activities, we will redouble our efforts to provide survivors something to live for and rebuild their future.
- **EMPHASIZE PEACEBUILDING:** We need to engage the entire UN family to support reconciliation and peacebuilding. In doing so, we must apply what we have learned about the causes of conflict to "build back better" countries that have experienced violent conflict. Our efforts in peacebuilding should focus on what we do best: address the root causes of conflict, promote the rule of law and enhance community security, develop capacity for governance, including through dialogue at the community level, and support the creation of sustainable livelihoods in affected communities.
- **SCALE UP DISASTER RISK REDUCTION PROGRAMMES** in high risk countries. Only by acknowledging that there is nothing *natural* about natural disasters will we step up our efforts with the urgency required to save lives ahead of a cyclone, flood, or other calamity. The need to reduce exposure and vulnerability to climate-related hazards such as drought, floods and cyclones becomes even greater when climate change is taken into consideration. Through its on-going work, UNDP is already identifying communities at risk and working closely with the governments to protect communities from climatic and other natural hazards.
- **EMPOWER WOMEN AND ALLOW THEIR VOICES TO BE HEARD:** Women are resourceful members of their communities and agents of change. We need to continue our rule of law work, providing access to justice to victims of violence, or survivors of conflict. We will strengthen our collaboration with the Department of Political Affairs and other relevant actors to ensure that women are substantially involved in peace negotiations. We will also continue to promote gender equality in disaster risk reduction and recovery. These will be important contributions towards the implementation of the UNDP Eight Point Agenda on women's empowerment and gender equality in crisis prevention and recovery.
- **CHAMPION THE UN'S VALUES:** We need to rally behind a United Nations "at work together" and our ability as a system to cooperate and deliver as one across entities. This requires ensuring that all of our crisis prevention and recovery work is done in a way that enhances coherence, coordination and is complementary with the entire UN system.

How BCPR WILL ROLL OUT THE HOPE AGENDA:

When a crisis occurs making the right decisions in a matter of hours can save lives. Drawing from what we have learned, we need to ensure that we are fast, responsive, predictable and ready. Equally important is our commitment to invest in prevention efforts to ensure that crises (conflicts or natural disasters) do not occur in the first place.

A guiding principle of BCPR is the need to work together with the entire UN system, through more joint efforts, including in integrated mission settings, we will have the strength of consolidated purpose. We will strengthen our work with humanitarian actors in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), including as lead of the Early Recovery Cluster. Efforts in peacebuilding, recovery and statebuilding offer special opportunities to engage with the United Nations system, especially the Department of Peace-keeping Operations (DPKO), the Department of Political Affairs and the Peacebuilding Support Office as well as the Funds and Programmes. We will expand our partnerships with the World Bank, the European Commission and other key stakeholders.

Guided by a vigorous internal monitoring and evaluation system, BCPR will be relentless in its focus on results. These will be measured not by the number of workshops we hold but rather by the changes in people's lives we have promoted and supported, through our country offices working with national partners. What matters is the number of survivors of sexual violence provided with access to justice in conflict zones; the demobilized soldiers able to earn a living; the acres of farm land cleared of landmines or cluster munitions; a parent's ability to find a job to sustain family members; and the widows and extended family members who have benefited from a loan to open a small business. What matters is national and local institutions back at work, delivering services for their people, earning their trust and leading reconciliation, recovery and reconstruction efforts.



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2009 KEY PRIORITIES FOR BCPR:

1) **SUPPORT UN SYSTEM COHERENCE:** We will re-double support to the UN system by:

- Deploying staff, including recovery advisers (including early recovery advisers where applicable) and peace and development advisers, to support the Resident Coordinator's Office. These advisers will have a direct reporting line to the Resident Coordinators, and, as necessary, assume programme management functions. BCPR will also expand its network of national and regional disaster reduction advisers.
- Deploying staff who can help Resident Coordinators integrate the crisis prevention and recovery perspective in all country programming, including post-conflict needs assessments, post-disaster needs assessments, Common Country Assessments, and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks. We will also provide Resident Coordinators with access to our expertise in addressing the challenges of complex transitions.
- Linking with the Peacebuilding Support Office, BCPR will engage UNDP offices and United Nations Country Teams in developing appropriate integrated peacebuilding initiatives in line with national priorities and our comparative advantage.
- Working with other International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) members, BCPR will implement disaster risk reduction programmes at country level.

2) **COUNTRY OFFICE SUPPORT:** 2009 will see a major emphasis on UNDP country office support, including the provision of relevant technical advice, especially how to translate policies into practice and concrete programmes, and the allocation of catalytic funding to support immediate country priorities. BCPR currently supports crisis prevention and recovery programmes in over 100 countries globally. In addition, we have strategic partnership agreements with a smaller number of priority countries to ensure a high level of results. In 2009, we will:

- Develop a multi-year strategic partnership with select UNDP country offices that integrates crisis prevention and recovery work into the existing work of UNDP offices, including country programmes. Countries where this will occur initially include Haiti, Nepal, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan and Uganda.
- Roll out comprehensive disaster risk management measures in five countries: Honduras, Madagascar, Nepal, Sudan and Tajikistan.
- Roll out early recovery programmes in Honduras, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Sudan and Uganda.
- Increase our support for the establishment of sub-offices in crisis countries to ensure results are delivered in affected communities.
- Increase the roll-out and further development of efficient, lean and fast-track operational and recruitment procedures to ensure a timely and appropriate response.

In addition, we will work hard to ensure that UNDP is prepared and ready to respond during the transition from the humanitarian to the development phase. This will be done in close collaboration with national counterparts, UN entities, the World Bank, IASC members and civil society groups as a specific follow up to the Secretary-General's report on Peacebuilding in the Immediate Aftermath of Conflict.

- 3) WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT:** Gender equality and women's empowerment in crisis countries matter. We will focus our interventions to ensure tangible results in affected countries. We commit to roll out in at least five countries (Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone and Sudan) programmes that respond to and prevent gender-based violence. In addition, we will ensure that UNDP Gender Advisers are on the ground in at least 10 countries, including those with UN DPKO/peacekeeping missions.
- 4) GLOBAL CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR CPR PRACTICE:** We will ensure that through both direct support to country offices and select, targeted information we will infuse concepts of peacebuilding and reconciliation into our work, and make the necessary links with conflict prevention, early recovery and disaster risk reduction. This information will be evidence-based and will provide UNDP country offices with practical, relevant and focused guidance on CPR issues.



Work in these four priority areas will be implemented through strong engagement with all of UNDP, and with the wider UN family, our partner countries, humanitarian actors, International Financial Institutions, bilateral donors and civil society partners.

Working in countries in crisis is a risky business. To be an effective partner in moving societies towards peace, security and recovery, we must assume risks of our own. Our experience has taught us that we need to be flexible – always seeking new ways of responding more rapidly by getting in earlier and functioning more effectively in riskier situations. We, in turn, are always seeking partners on the ground who are willing to work, learn and take risks alongside us.

With a concerted focus on the HOPE agenda, we intend to deliver results to those most in need. They should expect nothing less from UNDP.