The 3x6 Approach

The 3x6 approach (hereafter “approach”) is a starting point, post-conflict, on the road to sustainable development. It is an organisational response to move from interventions that provide immediate, one–off support to populations affected by conflict to an integrated approach that creates conditions for people to take control over their development processes and outcomes by building on and transforming capacities to better understand and take advantage of economic opportunities at the same time that it contributes to economic recovery and the social and economic reintegration of populations affected by conflict. The approach proposes a simple, systematic and comprehensive response to build and consolidate peace in what is often a highly complex, economically constrained, politically contested, socio-economic context.

The approach has emerged, evolved in the post-conflict context in Burundi as the Country Office of UNDP seeks an innovative response for the social and economic reintegration of ex-combatants and other populations affected by conflict. In the approach, Community Reconstruction Service is seen as a means to an end rather than an end in and of itself. The approach builds on traditional elements of socio-economic reintegration interventions – putting people to work, injecting money into local economy, and providing alternative employment opportunities for ex-combatants – and introduces innovative dimensions: promotes individual savings, enhances social cohesion through encouraging community members to organise to realise economic activities collectively (horizontal cohesion) and engage other actors (vertical cohesion) in joint economic ventures based on collective savings, outside investment, and risk sharing. The foundation is utilisation of local capacity, resources and know-how to transform passive recipients of development assistance post-conflict into pro-active, knowledgeable economic actors capable of defining and managing development processes and outcomes. The horizon is long-term, socio-economic development that is culturally and environmentally sustainable, capable of generating sustainable jobs and income streams.

So what is the 3x6 approach? The approach is made up of three organising principles – inclusiveness, ownership and sustainability – and six (6) discrete steps – enrolment, rapid income generation, savings, joint-venturing, investing and expanding markets. A brief overview of the approach follows below beginning with the principles.

The principle of inclusiveness reflects individual as well as collective dimensions. Individual inclusion refers to voluntary participation of people affected by conflict in the rehabilitation of social infrastructure, while collective inclusion implies community definition of their development vision; that it is community driven. Community development plans (Plan Communal de Développement Communautaire, PCDC) defines the development priorities of communities in the post-conflict scenario such as rebuilding roads, health posts, schools, rehabilitating irrigation and marshlands and other such interventions. Through these interventions, community dividends are produced that benefit all community members regardless of whether or not they participate directly in the rehabilitation actions.
The principle of **ownership** ensures that community members participating in social infrastructure rehabilitation organize themselves to implement an economic activity (and **share the risk** with others) to ensure **future** income, based on their own interests, skills, the economic potential of the community, and **assessment** of most feasible option.

**Sustainability** refers to **making choices** among different opportunities, **accessing markets** to increase incomes and generate **sustainable employment**.

Six steps constitute the approach:

1) **Enrolment** refers to community members (vulnerable members of host community, particularly women and youth, demobilized ex-combatants, and returning refugees) signing up to participate in the reconstruction of social infrastructure.

2) Participants in the reconstruction projects receive a daily wage for a period of 3 months which constitutes initial income to the participant and an injection of “new capital” into the community. Extending the period of reconstruction to 6 months is under consideration in order to provide longer period of time for people to work together.

3) Participants are obliged to save a portion of the money they receive, which is deposited in a savings account at a local financial institute.

4) Individuals are then encouraged to form a group with others in joint ventures for the implementation of an economic activity once the initial 3 month period comes to an end.

5) The total amount of capital that the group has is then tripled by the project, for example a group may be interested to raise vegetables to sell in a local market and they collectively save 100 US Dollars for which the project will invest an additional 300 US Dollars allowing the group to have start-up capital of 400 US Dollars.

6) A feasibility study will be conducted to confirm that the proposed project idea (vegetable production and marketing) is economically viable and access to a local market is ensured.