

Post-Conflict Needs Assessment and Framework (PCNA/F)
Background Note for UNDG Principals' Meeting on 19 April 2007

Action Point: UNDG Principals are asked to:

- Endorse the concept and methodology of the Post-Conflict Needs Assessment and Framework (PCNA/F), which includes the Transitional Results Matrix (TRM), and support on-going efforts to improve this tool based on the PCNA Review.
- Agree that the PCNA/F can serve as a primary entry point in post-conflict transition, and should also serve as the foundation for a common UN strategy that supports peace-building based on national priorities.
- Agree to support PCNA/F implementation through staff participation at the country level and efficient deployment of technical experts.
- Agree to disseminate the PCNA/F methodology within UNDG organizations in order to increase institutional awareness of this tool, and promote understanding of its usefulness as a strategic framework for policy setting, joint planning, prioritization of needs and resource mobilisation.
- Commit to use the contents of PCNA/Fs to guide UNDG members' country level recovery and development programme planning, and to support the implementation of the TRM

Background

In recent years, the UN and the World Bank have jointly supported post-conflict needs assessments in a number of countries emerging from conflict. These joint assessments and the identification of national priorities helped to mobilize resources for their recovery and reconstruction. The Post-Conflict Needs Assessment and Framework (PCNA/F) tool includes both assessments, as well as the costing of needs and prioritization of results in an accompanying Transitional Results Matrix (TRM).

As donors have given increasing importance to supporting post-conflict recovery and peace-building, PCNA/Fs have been used by both national and international actors to conceptualize, negotiate and finance a shared strategy for recovery and development in these fragile settings. Since 2003, joint UN/WB PCNA/F exercises were conducted in Iraq, Liberia, Haiti and Sudan, and are underway at the time of this writing in Somalia and Darfur. The PCNA/Fs have been presented at donor conferences, at which pledges of over \$40 billion were made.

PCNA/F Tool

The PCNA/F process is led by national authorities and supported by the international community. It is coordinated by the UN and WB working in partnership with national authorities, with the full engagement of bilateral donors, and conducted in close collaboration with civil society. The assessment process identifies needs, actions and outcomes which are necessary to redress the consequences of conflict, as well as to prevent renewed conflict. It shapes the short- to medium-term recovery priorities, and costs these needs in an accompanying results-based matrix, the TRM. The objective of the PCNA/F is to produce an actionable, prioritized and sequenced plan (the TRM) where the priority results are those that will help stabilize the peace and lay the groundwork for essential recovery and reconstruction activities.

The TRM articulates priority actions and outcomes, and their financial implications. The selection of sectors, and cross-cutting issues, is up to each country. The PCNA/F and its TRM

should help to apply the poverty reduction strategy principles of a unified, country-driven plan to post-conflict settings. It supports a country's return to regular development and progress towards the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals. While it has not been fully utilized in the past, the TRMs can support implementation monitoring and evaluation of outcomes and performance.

As a programming tool, the PCNA/F should provide the basis for the UNCT's planning process to promote programmes that address national priorities, and should be the basis for "recovery" aspects of the UN transition strategy or workplan. While this has happened in some cases, e.g. Sudan and currently in Somalia, it has not happened in all situations. In addition, one of the weaknesses of the PCNA/F has been that many of the activities indicated in the TRM were not translated into concrete action and results, which was compounded by insufficient monitoring.

PCNA/F Review

During 2006, the UN and WB conducted a global PCNA/F review, which led to a series of recommendations to strengthen this tool (see attached "UN/WB PCNA Review"¹). Among the many findings that the review highlighted, it noted that an appropriate balance must be struck between the urgency of producing an actionable plan and the plan's comprehensiveness, inclusiveness and national ownership, calling for a process that could be completed ideally between 4 to 6 months. Some PCNA/Fs have become part of the peace process and have taken over a year, with costs ranging from \$1 million to as much as \$5 million. In order to facilitate a speedier and lighter PCNA/F process, the review recommended that a pre-assessment/watching phase be introduced for countries where a PCNA/F is anticipated, which would include conflict/risk assessment, scenario planning, and analysis of state and non-state institutions and capacity. Critical cross-cutting issues i.e. gender, human rights, environment and HIV/AIDS should also be identified during this time to assure adequate resourcing.

The review is being followed by efforts in 2007 to refine the practical guidance note on PCNA/Fs and TRMs, and to launch a pilot of the watching/pre-assessment phase. Strengthened UN and WB policies and operational practices will also be sought for future exercises, which could include pre-positioning of staff and providing more predictable funding. In addition, institutional agreement will be sought from DPKO and DPA, where appropriate, to engage in PCNA/Fs. There is already agreement for the PCNA/F to be embedded in the peacebuilding architecture, where applicable, through the work of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Peace-Building Support Office (PBSO).

The PCNA/F seeks to develop linkages with the ongoing humanitarian, political, and security processes, but also to establish clear boundaries. Particular actions have been identified to strengthen the ability of future PCNA/Fs to incorporate critical political and security aspects in the PCNA/F process and to ensure that related key actions and costs are included in the TRM whenever possible. In countries where significant humanitarian needs persist, a separate humanitarian appeal instrument would be used. While country approaches to the linkages with humanitarian action or security planning may vary, it is essential that the nature of the link is clearly articulated to all key actors, especially when there is an Early Recovery Cluster arrangement or integrated mission planning process in place.

¹ For additional information, visit www.undg.org/pcna.