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RECOVERY AND PEACEBUILDING ASSESSMENTS

INTRODUCTION

As part of the 2008 Joint Declaration on Post-Crisis Assessments and Recovery Planning, the World Bank Group (WBG), the United Nations (UN), and the European Union (EU) have committed to providing joint support for assessing, planning, and mobilizing efforts geared toward recovery, reconstruction, and development in countries affected by crises. This tripartite agreement is executed via the mechanism of joint Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments (RPBA).

Previously known as Post-Conflict Needs Assessments (PCNAs), RPBAs support more effective and coordinated engagement in countries that are emerging from conflict or political crisis. RPBAs offer countries a **standardized and internationally recognised approach for identifying the underlying causes and impacts of conflict and crisis. They also help governments develop a strategy for prioritizing recovery and peacebuilding activities.**

RPBAs include both the assessment of needs and the national prioritization and costing of these needs in an accompanying transitional results matrix (TRM). They can be used for various purposes including influencing political actors to inform and give shape to a political process, galvanize policy changes, and build acceptance to conduct work in areas affected by subnational conflict, among others.

RPBAs are undertaken by a range of actors, including national and local government representatives; members of the tripartite agreement, the WBG, UN, and the EU; international and national consultants; representatives of other relevant donor and humanitarian organizations; and members of civil society groups.

HIGH-LEVEL ADVISORY GROUP

A high-level advisory group (HLAG) meets regularly to strengthen the RPBA partnership at the corporate level and to monitor ongoing and potential RPBA and partnership arrangements at the country level.

VIRTUAL SECRETARIAT

The Secretariat supports the HLAG in developing guidance and training material. Focal points can be contacted for advice on partnership arrangements and on planning/conducting RPBAs, including organizing scoping missions.

RATIONALE

Conflict and political turmoil generate a broad range of concerns for recovery. Recognizing the capacity constraints faced by governments in countries emerging from conflict and violence, and the challenge of delivering coordinated support from the international community, an RPBA has four primary purposes: (i) to help governments identify, prioritize, and sequence recovery and peacebuilding activities; (ii) to provide an inclusive process to support political dialogue and stakeholder participation; (iii) to coordinate international support through a joint exercise and monitoring system; and (iv) act as a mechanism that can facilitate early coordination of international support behind these activities.

An RPBA provides countries and international actors a plan for addressing the many needs that arise from conflict. Where plans already exist, an

RPBA can serve as a harmonizing and coordinating tool for these plans. As such, an RPBA serves to coordinate the work of a wide range of local, national, regional, and international actors and governments. By consolidating the work and plans of these actors into an overarching framework for understanding needs and prioritizing interventions, the RPBA brings the variety of recovery and peacebuilding actors “onto the same page,” helping eliminate variations and divergences in recovery efforts.

An RPBA can also serve as the basis for reengagement in countries where conflict has stalled or halted interna-

tional support. It can bring together the many strands of international support—political, security, humanitarian, development—to offer a more coherent plan for engagement.

Conflicts present a complex field of needs, actors and interventions. As an adaptable tool, the RPBA furnishes a strategic assessment and prioritization process that is essential for developing a framework of priority actions to which international partners and national authorities commit, and within which they can align their programs and commit funding.

GUIDING QUESTIONS—HOW TO

The process of undertaking an RPBA involves conducting a scoping mission to agree on the approach and methodology for the assessment. It also involves analyzing the drivers of conflict; assessing the conflict’s impact; estimating recovery priorities, and articulating a strategy for implementing and financing these. It often concludes with a pledging conference to raise funds for recovery and peacebuilding efforts. RPBAs normally feature at least three phases:

INITIATION & PRE-ASSESSMENT

This phase is normally used to agree on the utility of and requirements for an RPBA, and to carry out preliminary research, analysis, consultations, and data collection. It would normally be triggered by a scoping mission of RPBA experts to define the scope, utility, methodology, and approach of the assessment. In contexts that feature ongoing peace talks it could also be used to facilitate analysis and consultations that are aimed at informing the negotiations, and encourage preparedness and effective coordination on the international side.

During this phase, a conflict analysis is undertaken. Such analysis provides a clear understanding of the drivers of conflict to ensure that the recovery and peacebuilding strategies included in the RPBA are conflict sensitive.

ASSESSMENT & ANALYSIS

It is during this phase that the actual assessment is carried out. Teams collect necessary information and data based on agreed scope, resources, and time available, and build on the preliminary work done during the scoping stage. Short- and long-term recovery and peacebuilding priorities are identified, costed, and validated. An implementation plan and financing strategy is outlined.

VALIDATION & FINALIZATION

Consultations are organized to discuss the proposed prioritization framework before the report is finalized. Once finalized, it is either presented to an international donor conference, used to underpin the development of the government’s own strategy, or used to inform existing or new coordination mechanisms for recovery and peacebuilding.

The RPBA methodology is conducted under the Joint Declaration on Post-Crisis Assessments and Recovery Planning signed by the WBG, UN, and EU. However, this does not prevent other international donors and humanitarian organizations from participating in the RPBA. For instance, in the case of the RPBA conducted in Mali, the Islamic Development Bank and the African Development Bank contributed to the exercise. In the case of the Central African Republic, the work was carried out in close collaboration with bilateral donors and humanitarian actors.

RPBAs can be adapted and implemented to various contexts, including national and subnational geographic areas depending on the areas where conflict or political turmoil develops. Assessments have been requested in response to both national conflict (Central African Republic, Myanmar) and subnational conflicts (northern

Mali, northeast Nigeria, Ukraine). They can be carried out quickly in response to urgent needs, or accompany complex peace processes. RPBA's have also been carried out following national elections and transitions, in response to violent insurgencies, and to help revise national policy frameworks for dealing with underlying causes of conflict and violence.

Despite the context, the national or subnational government (depending on the RPBA context) drives the RPBA process. The WBG, UN, EU, and other relevant international and humanitarian organizations support the process in the form of technical, analytical, and financial support

IMPLEMENTATION AND FINANCING

An assessment of needs is the starting point for coordinated action to address peacebuilding and recovery. To ensure that the assessment leads swiftly to a coordinated response, the RPBA needs to be firmly linked to implementation and financing mechanisms. The unique environment of each RPBA should inform the design of these mechanisms, making sure they are realistic and actionable.

KEY LESSONS LEARNED

Every context is different, and there is no single best way to undertake an RPBA. However, a few key lessons stand out.

Building buy-in and consensus ensures national strategic leadership of the process from the start. In order to ensure that the RPBA process builds on existing processes, is integrated into government functioning, and its recommendations implemented, it is critical to engage the national government—or international or regional leadership, if appropriate national authority is unavailable—from the pre-assessment stage. To forge consensus around critical priorities and ensure the RPBA leads to concrete implementation, it is recommended **to focus on building widespread consensus** with a broad range of stakeholders on all sides of the political conflict, beyond the government.

Linking to humanitarian work and existing recovery plans both maximizes the potential of the RPBA's work and helps develop synergies between the works of other organizations. To successfully sync with humanitarian work and recovery plans, **how to facilitate implementation should receive early attention**, and emphasis should be placed on reaching a good understanding

of existing actors and projects that can support the RPBA's recommendations.

Making the RPBA immediately useful by identifying or emphasizing the priorities that are likely to immediately improve the population's living conditions helps build momentum and goodwill for the RPBA and the subsequent recovery. In addition to identifying a set of urgent priorities, the RPBA should recommend and facilitate interventions to be immediately designed and implemented.

PROJECT EXAMPLES & RESULTS

Between 2003 and 2016 about seventeen joint assessments were conducted, including assessments in Ukraine, northern Mali, and northeast Nigeria.

UKRAINE (2014-2015)



Based on Government request for technical assistance and financial support to assess and plan priority recovery and peacebuilding efforts in the conflict-affected regions of eastern Ukraine. Joint scoping mission was conducted in late September 2014, on which basis the Eastern Ukraine Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment (RPA) was launched in October 2014. In light of the continuing conflict a two-stage process was agreed - an initial rapid assessment in areas under government control was carried out late 2014, with the understanding that a more detailed assessment would be launched once the situation would allow for more detailed field work. The initial assessment provided an analytical and programmatic baseline for recovery efforts, identified urgent interventions for the first 18 months, and provided a basis for scaling up the responses as needs evolved. As a result of the RPA, a specialized government agency was established to implement identified priorities, and discussions about specific financing modalities were initiated.

NORTHERN MALI (2015)



The RPBA for northern Mali was requested in the Algiers Peace Accord, signed in 2015. It was conducted by the World Bank, the United Nations, the Islamic Development Bank, and the African Development Bank during the course of a three month period, and presented for financing at a donors' conference. It offered a detailed overview of needs and priorities to support the implementation of the Peace Accord in northern Mali, along with more detailed recommendations for how to improve coordination, implementation and monitoring of critical results.

NORTHEAST NIGERIA (2015-2016)



Following a formal request from the Federal Government of Nigeria for assistance to identify needs and responses to the crisis in the six north-eastern states, the EU, UN and WBG fielded a scoping mission in September 2015. The mission identified the scope and approach to the RPBA. The assessment itself was launched in January 2016, following a five month preparatory phase, and was finalized in April 2016. The RPBA focused on identifying and prioritizing short- and medium-term responses to the needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs),

host communities, and conflict-affected populations, and articulated the related recovery and peacebuilding needs for northeast Nigeria, including infrastructure rehabilitation and reconstruction and service delivery restoration and improvement needs.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (2016)



The newly elected Government of CAR requested technical support from the EU, UN and WBG to carry out an RPBA in May 2016. A scoping mission was immediately launched, identifying the prioritization framework of the RPBA, its scope and approach. The assessment was carried out over a three month period, resulting in a National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan that was adapted by the Government and the National Assembly and presented for financing during an international conference in November 2016. The assessment included detailed recommendations for the implementation and financing mechanisms that would be required, which allowed for the negotiation of a Mutual Accountability Framework, design of a monitoring system, and the establishment of a Secretariat charged with supporting the implementation ahead of the donors conference.

RESOURCES

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