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**DISPLACED PERSONS IN AFRICA:  
PROFILE OF A REGIONAL PREDICAMENT**

**By**  
**Catherine Ade**  
**Regional Adviser**  
**ECA-MRAG**

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**Executive Summary**

**DISPLACED PERSONS IN AFRICA: PROFILE OF A REGIONAL PREDICAMENT**

Armed Conflict, has over the years had very serious political, economic, social, cultural psychological and educational repercussions on the African Continent. This study draws attention to one of its tragic consequences - internally displaced persons (IDPs) and gives reasons why it is a problem.

It defines IDPs as non-combatant individuals who have been forced to flee their homes suddenly or unexpectedly in large numbers... and remain within the territory of their country. Working within the framework of its purpose and objectives, the study links internal displacement to the root causes of armed conflict. In turn, the occurrence of conflict is explained within the context of Relative and Absolute Deprivation Theories.

Utilizing content Analysis, a research methodology, the study identifies and analyzes patterns of displacement, which provides for the discovery of the predicaments of internally displaced persons, especially those of women and children. Given the findings, a regional profile of predicaments is drawn which includes inter-alia:

- employment and educational disruptions;
- hazardous environments caused by landmines;
- high rates mortality originating from subhuman sanitation conditions;
- malnutrition stemming from the destruction of the sources of food supply;

- health problems;
- lack of clothing and shelter;
- abuse, torture, rape, molestation;
- psychological trauma;
- overburdened resources;
- potential problems of demobilisation;
- loss of real estate; and
- lack of protection and security.

The redress of these problems is examined within the stipulations of regional and international instruments, whereas, the same exercise is undertaken for the resettlement and recovery measures for IDPs.

The discovered legal and programmatic gaps are used to draw conclusions as well as advance recommendations at international, regional and national levels. Realization of the proposed initiatives is given thought within the parameter of funding priorities and modalities.

## INTRODUCTION

Research on persons displaced because of armed conflicts and violations of human rights in Africa is still in its infancy. The few studies that exist have focused attention on the legal protection, the prevention of IDPs from gaining refugee status, qualification for receiving humanitarian assistance, patterns of displacement, types of displacement, obligations of national governments and responsibilities of international, regional, subregional and national NGOs (UNDP, 1993, UN General Assembly Resolutions 43/116 of 1988, 44/136 of 1990, 46/182 of 1991; Frederick, 1991; Ressler, 1993; International Alert, 1994 and Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 1995). Internally Displaced persons (IDPs) are defined as those non-combatant individuals who have been forced to flee their homes suddenly or unexpectedly in large numbers because of the direct or indirect consequences of armed conflict, internal strife, systematic violations of human rights or natural disasters, and remain within the territory of their own country (Resolution 78/1990 of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the Analytical Report of the Secretary General).

The definition places the responsibility of physical protection and legal obligations of IDPs in the hands of their home governments, and disqualifies them from being considered under refugee laws. It also points out to the fact that internationally, there is no legally constituted regime that is responsible for their plight, except UNHCR, in situations where it is considered more advantageous to render services to them as IDPs than to do so when they have crossed the border and gained refugee status. Even so, the UNHCR is obligated by the General Assembly to deal directly with the government which in some cases is reluctant to see that aid is offered to IDPs. Even when the government is willing to see assistance reach IDPs, there are constraints to get aid to where it is needed most. In Mozambique, for example, food aid came from donors, but there were difficulties in distributing it.

Despite all these obstacles, they do qualify to receive humanitarian assistance in situations of armed conflicts as stipulated by specific sections of International Humanitarian and Refugee Laws. The problems of IDPs, however, multiply by leaps and bounds, in spite of humanitarian efforts.

## THE PROBLEM

African countries continue to experience internal displacement at staggering proportions in circumstances of growing social, economic, cultural, educational and ethnic strife. In 1994, there were close to 17 million people who were displaced in Africa within their own countries (4 million in Sudan; 4 million in South Africa; 2 million in Rwanda; 2 million in Angola; 2 million in Mozambique; 1 million in Liberia; 700,000 in both Somalia and Zaire; and 500,000 in both Burundi and Ethiopia (UNECA, UNICEF 1995:58). This called for emergency relief responses at national, subregional, regional and international levels.

The evidence thus presented indicates that internal displacement is a problem whose effects do not seem to dissipate, a problem without immediate solutions, a problem which must be studied further.

## **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This study seeks to document in detail the regional predicaments of IDPs in the areas of humanitarian and human rights abuse, and to recommend means of redress through peaceful strategies.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

In an attempt to realize the central purpose of the study, the following objectives were pursued:

- identifying the root causes, as well as patterns of displacement;
- documenting the regional predicaments of internally displaced persons;
- reviewing existing remedies within the present international instruments;
- presenting existing gaps in the international and national instruments;
- providing recommendations within the context of policy directives.

## **Justification For the Study**

The study is conducted for:

### **- Humanitarian Reasons**

Forced movements are always connected to distress, so humanitarian action is needed if not to ensure the well being of the people facing the predicaments as they experience hardships and suffering. Besides, the movement of people from one place to another constitutes a social problem that must be examined in its global context.

### **- Human Rights and justice**

Displacement is correlates with basic human, social and political rights violations that are often apparent as people are forced out of one place to another. Since respect for basic human rights is the pre-occupation of any civil society, as well as that of international security (resolution of conflict without the use of arms), it behooves the human race to pursue the issue of displacement. Where gross violations exist, class action is often necessary to protect victims.

- **Peace**

Displacement is a direct abuse of the UN mission to foster peace between people, thus the correlation between displacement and conflict provides an understandable cause for International concern.

**Delimitation of the study**

The study is limited to non-combatant persons who are forced out of their homes because of armed conflict, but who remain within their territorial boundaries. They may or may not have the assistance of their home governments.

Having stated the scope of the problem, the study examines, inter alia:

- the Theoretical Framework;
- research method;
- causes of internal displacement;
- armed conflict and internal displacement;
- regional predicaments;
- regional instruments addressing the predicaments;
- international measures addressing the predicaments;
- planning and delivering of aid to internally displaced persons;
- resettlement and recovery measures for IDPs;
- conclusion and recommendations; and
- funding for the recommendations.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Social Conflict theorists have postulated that political, economic, cultural, ethnic and educational inequality has the potential to lead to large scale violence. Inequality in this context encompasses absolute and relative deprivation of resources which invoke and maintain in individuals the feeling of anger, frustration and injustice. The oppressed, suppressed and deprived, see inequality as a vicious tool designed within the framework of injustice to exclude them from the overall societal benefits. Left with no alternative, the most logical expectation becomes the manifestation of high degrees of despair, learned helplessness, anger, and/or hostility (Williams and Flewelling, 1988).

Placed in extremely difficult circumstances, people usually consider two methods of adaptation: they either use violence to right what they consider great injustices and a threat to their existence, or they withdraw as a measure of safety to themselves and their families. The conditions of withdrawal are always sudden and unexpected movement to areas perceived to be safety nets. Usually, very little thought is given to their means of livelihood or what will happen to their homes, farms, animals and other family members. The primary preoccupation becomes the protection of lives.

The preceding analysis explains the occurrence of displacement in Africa where the victims suffer major repercussions.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The study uses Content Analysis, a technique that demands a systematic and quantitative description of oral and written communication. Initially designed to be utilized in analyzing the contents of communication, the method has extended its applicability to include Criminology (Ade, 1990).

In Content Analysis, essential units of analysis called for by the method comprise themes, characters, items, space and time. In this study, its usage is limited to pre-identified themes which were sorted out from relevant textbooks, journals, newspapers, pieces of international instruments, (United Nations Declarations), Public Policies and Public Pronouncements that deal with internal displacement. The exercise, therefore, covers a review of related literature under the various themes, in order to generate new ideas that are used to develop competing policy alternatives.

However, Content Analysis has its own shortcomings, which arise from dealing with non-human subjects (printed material). Hence, the inability of the researcher to interact with the authors and publishers. This, in turn, hinders attempts at verification and clarification. Such limitations which are usually checked by follow-up interviews, in this case, were not carried out, given the financial handicap of the study.

Handicaps notwithstanding, the validity of facts obtained through this method was ascertained by the credentials of the authors and publishers (For example, UN- specialized Agencies and the backgrounds of individual researchers).



## CAUSES OF DISPLACEMENT

Within each type of circumstances forcing people out of their home, are specific causes of displacement. For armed conflicts, displacement is usually out of fear, direct threat to one's life, harassment, persecution, destruction of property, and loss of economic base or employment.

Others move to accompany relatives, spouses, friends, or neighbours who move while some move because they have political allegiance to a certain party. People also move because government wants them to, or because of the absence of basic social services (schools, health centres, hospitals, water, etc.).

People have also been known to have moved as a direct consequence of poor governance, mismanagement of resources and services (inequity), marginalization (no opportunities for certain segments to participate in government; unfair laws, failure to uphold tolerance and respect for differences).

The movement of persons out of places of conflict may be influenced by: ground operations by armies, insurgents or militia, invasion of an area, military sweeps. If military activities destroy crops or economic assets such as livestock, harvested grains or land mines are planted in agricultural farms, farmers will be forced to move. Also, when food shortages occur as a result of conflict that has destroyed agricultural products and food marketing channels, movement is bound to take place.

The collapse of economies have led to the disruption of the marketing systems, community assets, destruction of profitability and a flop in businesses, leaving proprietors with no choice but to move. Cultivation is most vulnerable to destruction by warfare.

Groups likely to be affected by displacement as a result of these happenings include: country dwellers (farmers, pastorals and rural labourers); rural people living isolatedly on farms; and those dependent upon affected area. Where urban settlers are affected, urbanites flee to other urban areas and not to the villages.

Summarily, causes of Internal displacement include:

- civil strife
- ethnic tensions
- forced resettlement

### **- Civil Strife and Displacement**

In situations of civil strife, those internally displaced cannot escape war; they are literally stuck in neutral. For, although they may have fled their homes because of the fear of attack, their cash crops and animals which are their economic base having been destroyed, they are

also regarded with mistrust by either of the conflicting sides. Sometimes, they are recruited into armies, sometimes subject to armed attacks and violence, sometimes starved in order to weaken their ability to help one side or the other. Others, they are victims of land mines intentionally planted to maim or kill civilians.

**- Ethnic Tensions**

Ethnic clashes lead to internal displacement on large scale. Liberia, ethnic strife between the Krahn and Mandingo tribes on the one hand, and the Gio and Mano on the other resulted in massacres and internal displacement of hundreds of thousands in 1990.

**- Forced Resettlement**

Many displaced persons have been forcibly resettled by their governments. Internal displacement has been used as a tool by some governments to subdue political opposition and racial or ethnic groups. In South Africa, millions of blacks were forced into "tribal homelands" ("Bantustans") where they were given little assistance and stripped of their citizenship. In Ethiopia, 1984 saw the relocation of hundreds of thousands of Tifreans from the drought-stricken north to the malaria-infested south to weaken anti-government insurgency.

Understanding these causes is essential for the fulfilment of the needs of the displaced, for the implementation of preventive action, providing emergency assistance efficiently and effectively and enhancing recovery. Victim's perceptions of situation and the reasons for movement are also essential for understanding the causes of displacement.

**ARMED CONFLICT AND INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT**

Displacement studies have indicated that formulating plausible policies for internally displaced persons entails a comprehensive understanding of the root causes of displacement (Levinson, 1993). Such exercise is not easy as causes of armed conflict, the root source of internal displacement, have a multiple and overlapping nature. However, causes of armed conflicts are linked to Africa's colonial past, Western interference with the affairs of African countries after independence, the cynical attitude of most African leaders, ethnic animosities, inability of collapsed states to provide security, politically conflicting goals, religious differences, discriminatory educational practices and poverty initiated by ill-conceived economic and corrupt developmental practices. These tend to cause the struggle for control over political, economic, educational and ethnic power. Summarily, scholars have attributed conflict to:

"...vestiges of colonialism and persistent economic, social and political crises [that] have ...contributed to the disintegration of public order[,]....collapse of functional governments in many countries..., the personalization of power and leadership and the manipulation of ethnicity and religion to serve personal or narrow group interests [that] have fomented inequalities, grievances and conflict" (UNECA, ADB, UNICEF and Machel Study, 1995).

**Table 1. below presents a summary of the various causes and their indicators.****Root Causes of Conflict**

| <b>Conflict</b>   | <b>Indicators</b>  |
|---|--|
| 1. Conflicts and Colonial Past                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- divide and rule maxim</li> <li>- boundaries of convenience</li> <li>- lumping of ethnic groups of distinct culture in the same country</li> </ul>   |
| 2. Conflicts and Western Meddling                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- super-power interest in the country</li> <li>- provision of financial, political, military support to ethnic group in favour of its agenda</li> <li>- continuous support of the group in power regardless of the violation human rights</li> <li>- support of the violent overthrow of people in power</li> </ul> |
| 3. Politics and Conflict goals                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- conflicting political</li> <li>- dominance of one ethnic group in the political arena</li> <li>- unfair political appointments</li> <li>- discriminatory political policies</li> <li>- inadequate structures for the institution of democracy</li> <li>- rigging or unfair cancellation of elections</li> </ul>   |
| 4. Conflict and Leaders' perception of the State private property | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- abuse of the principles of statehood</li> <li>- consideration of the state as private property</li> <li>- transfer of state assets into personal pockets</li> </ul>   |

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|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>5. Conflict and Security</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- breakdown of central authority</li><li>- rallying behind charismatic leaders on the basis of ethnicity, age, religious or philosophical affiliation</li><li>- power struggle among leaders</li></ul>  |
| <hr/>   |   |
| <b>6. Conflict and Ethnicity</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- distinct ethnic groups with conflicting goals</li><li>- suppression of one ethnic group by another</li></ul>  |
| <hr/>   |   |
| <b>7. Conflict and Religion</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- clashes over religious views or philosophy</li><li>- clashes over the spread of religious principles</li><li>- religious fanaticism</li></ul>   |
| <hr/>   |   |
| <b>8. Conflict and the Economy</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- massive unemployment or underemployment</li><li>- disputes over land with economic potential</li><li>- gross disparities in wealth or income distribution</li><li>- deplorable salaries in worthless currencies</li><li>- discriminatory developmental policies</li></ul> |
| <hr/>   |   |
| <b>9. Educationally<br/>Motivated<br/>Conflicts</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- ill-conceived discriminatory educational policies based on race or ethnicity</li></ul>  |

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## **PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT**

The importance of the patterns of displacement is in its ability to provide reliable information that will dictate the pace and nature of assistance required. It has been noted that the alternative locations to which people move are highly variable, though the underlying consideration has been moving to a place that guarantees safety.

Judging from the magnitude of the conflict people either relocate within the community to the next village, other provinces or districts, mountain tops and valleys, or they move to large urban centres. In the case of Sudan, Mozambique and Liberia, most people moved from the rural areas to the capital cities, whereas in Somalia, people moved out of Mogadishu where the bulk of the fighting was taking place to the countryside around the city.

Internal displacement also occurs when the conflict is over. There were significant movements in Ethiopia following the fall of the Mengistu regime. So were tens of thousands of non-Eritrean civilians who were displaced from Eritrea, following the capture of the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) by the Ethiopian army, in May, 1991.

## **REGIONAL PREDICAMENTS**

The predicaments of internally displaced persons can be viewed in light of the disruption of lives; separation from source of livelihood; marginalization of victims in society; loss of personal goods and property; creation of circumstances where people live without adequate food, clothing, shelter, water, sanitation, educational opportunities, access to basic services; disruption of social support mechanisms; diminished sense of well-being and purpose; cause of psychological stress; and destruction of relationships within families.

In Angola, displaced persons were starved by government or rebel forces (UNITA) as they were viewed as a potential source of support for opponents. In other areas, land mines were deliberately planted to disrupt farming for subsistence. In Mozambique, RENAMO (rebel group) reportedly maimed, massacred and mutilated over 100,000 civilians and regularly used food as a weapon to bring displaced persons under control. In Sudan, food was repeatedly used as a weapon by government and rebel forces (SPLA) to weaken opponents. An estimated 1,000,000 Dinka and other tribes fleeing Khartoum from civil war in the south were refused assistance and protection. Millions of them facing starvation in the south were categorically denied relief. After the Eritrea/Ethiopian war, the large numbers of armed men who found themselves without jobs or shelter presented an atmosphere of insecurity.

In situations of civil strife, those internally displaced cannot escape war; they are literally stuck in neutral. For, although they may have fled their homes because of the fear of attack, their cash crops and animals which were their economic base having been destroyed, they were also regarded with mistrust by either of the conflicting sides. Sometimes, they were recruited into armies, sometimes subjected to armed attacks and violence, sometimes starved in order to weaken their ability to help one side or the other. Others, they were victims of land mines intentionally planted to maim or kill civilians.

## **Breakdown of Predicaments**

### **- Employment Disruption**

The disruption of employment is one of the major crises faced by internally displaced persons. It is a crisis that confronts people who have left either the private or public sector, to new and perhaps unfamiliar communities. Even if the new environment were that which had friends, relatives, or simply made up of the same ethnic group, there would not exist enough job opportunities to go around, owing to the large number of persons who have just moved in. The newcomers are people from all walks of life. They range from farmers from the rural areas to the most experienced government officials or scientists from universities. They have left those fields and institutions that provided them means of livelihood. These agencies have either been destroyed or located in areas of military operations. They might even be surrounded by land mines or other hazardous military equipment.

This problem is brought to light by Charman, a former camel herder who maintains: "I sit around all day, doing nothing...I cannot go home because when I get there, what would I do? I lost everything" (as quoted by Gallart, 1994:26). Charman, like many other displaced persons will continue to rely on humanitarian aid until the time of resettlement and recovery. Nobody knows exactly when this phase of displacement will occur. The only hope displaced persons faced in this condition have for survival is emergency relief which in some cases is complicated by legal and security problems. The basic issue, is how long they will be dependent before they become independent?

### **- Hazardous Environments**

Apart from other worries that IDP must contend with everyday is the hazardous environment which surrounds their very existence. Studies of hazardous conditions created by armed conflict estimate that in Africa, there exist about thirty million landmines, spread out over eighteen countries (Fabry, 1994). It is further indicated that of the 30 million, 9 million are scattered all over Angola, and in Mozambique 1 million, in Eritrea and Ethiopia 2 million, and in Sudan about 2 million. It is not known exactly how many IDPs are killed by mines. What is known, is that the victims of this "weapon" are not soldiers, but internally displaced civilians, especially women and children, who run into them while escaping military operations or in search of wood, water and food.

Mines which are plastic and look like toys are planted in and around areas such as farms, water supply centres, industrial and manufacturing facilities, major streets and residential areas. If they are not cleared, defused or demined, as it is always the case, they slow down the process of post-conflict resettlement and recovery. It has been noticed that fields, villages, economic centres and recreational centres have been abandoned for years after the conflict was over, just because of the existence of land mines.

Land mines pose a serious threat to internally displaced persons especially during the phase of resettlement. If the agricultural, recreational and industrial centres are not properly cleared of land mines, people are likely to be killed when they resume normal economic and recreational activity. The clearance of land mines is undertaken by experts, a task which most IDPs cannot perform.

Though the UNHCR and RIMFIRE, a British company with expertise in defusing explosives, have developed innovative programmes to address this problem, their efforts are rendered insignificant taking into consideration the large number of landmines spread out over the Continent. The point is underscored by the many IDPs who having survived armed conflicts for many years, only come back home to be killed by the landmines in their backyards. The inability of the government to solve the problem calls for concerted efforts at international, regional and national levels, as well as among scientists to develop new instruments or chemicals that can be used effectively in short periods of time.

#### **- Mortality**

Highest mortality rates have been recorded by humanitarian relief agencies during situations of armed conflicts involving the internal displacement of persons. Where governments have entered a state of denial, and/or refused international assistance, hundreds of thousands of people have lost their lives. Even where governments have been receptive, rebel factions may make relief efforts difficult, hence making the delivery of assistance, impossible (case of Mozambique). People who may be displaced into most areas will have barriers to the delivery of assistance in the initial stages of relief efforts. Even the insecure atmosphere that surrounded areas of civil strife such as in Liberia and Somalia, hampered the delivery of relief efforts. Areas housing large numbers of displaced in times of civil war have high rates of infant and child mortality.

Centres for Disease Control estimate death rates among internally displaced persons 60 times higher than non-displaced within the same country. In Sudan, the crude mortality rate for the Abyei, Muglad, El Meiram and Babanusa camps were registered at 30/1000/month. If the death rate had continued at this rate, the entire population would have been wiped out in a few months.

#### **- Malnutrition**

Malnutrition is one of the leading causes of death among the internally displaced. It occurs as a consequence of the destruction of crops and other food sources, or the destruction of good water supply and/or the looting of food supplies by unfed soldiers. The situation presents a special threat to displaced pregnant women and young children. Since prenatal care is hardly available.

Unfortunately, their diet is usually below qualitative and quantitative standards. Even when food is made available through emergency relief services, it is not always the right type. This is based on the assumption that when people are hungry enough, they will eat anything. In the absence of advice, IDPs will not be able to adopt foreign food into their traditional diet.

Complicating the issues is the lack of fuel, cooking equipment and water in the camps. This leads to either eating raw food or garbage especially by unaccompanied children.

Where all these negative factors are brought under control, malnutrition still hurts IDPs. This continues as food ration is rapidly sold and the proceeds used to buy large inexpensive quantities of food with less nutritious value or to settle other bills. Malnutrition is linked to limited food, poor environmental conditions, cultural deficiencies, biological variability and physiological differences (Mourey, 1994).

#### **- Health Problems**

Health complications are very common among IDPs. These are caused by several factors which include: malnutrition, the consumption of raw foods, overcrowding in the camps, poor sanitary conditions in the temporary settlements, lack of medication, medical facilities, equipment and personnel.

Groups that are vulnerable are pregnant women, children under five, old people and those already ill. Common air and water borne diseases that spread quickly are smallpox, chickenpox, diarrhoea, cholera and other respiratory infections.

Unfortunately, the absence of curative and preventive measures for the diseases cause more problems. The lack of treatment of the ill, immunization of children and the inability to provide clean water, vaccines and other medical supplies are attributed to feuding parties who usually block these items from reaching IDPs. All these offer explanations for the high rate of mortality among the internally Displaced.

#### **- Lack of Clothing and Shelter**

In addition to the more disturbing issues of malnutrition, numerous health problems and deaths among IDPs, it is not uncommon to experience shortages of clothing among them, as new arrivals are often found wearing only tree backs and sacks. Given the untimely circumstances under which they left, they had time to take enough clothes along with them. Even the few clothes taken are likely to be torn by violent attackers, or as they walk through the bushes.



As for shelter, it varies from nothing to temporary camps hurriedly erected using locally available materials or simply, worn tents set up to help the situation. The tents are on the average, one metre square per person to live, cook and sleep in. This explains why shelter is often crowded. Tree branches and often grass, are utilized as construction materials. Observably, they are exposed to harsh conditions of nature (cold weather, violent winds, rain, insect bites, ants, snakes, etc. Even those who move in with relatives or live in communities, run into other problems. They do not only create congestion, but they find themselves living in dangerous and dilapidated houses, unavailable for protection should need arise.

#### **- Abuse: Torture, Rape, Molestation**

Not only are they more vulnerable to abuse and victimization by their governments, they are also under-represented within the formal structures of the IDPs community. It is clear that women and girls who make up a substantial majority of displaced populations - 60% or more of the African displaced populations are most vulnerable to a variety of abuses. Of course, children are not granted immunity from torture and abuse. There is evidence that they are forced to:

"participate in killing and mutilation; beaten and left vomiting blood; sexually abused and raped; electrically shocked on many parts of their body; beaten to purposely inflict severe pain; bruised and injured; hit so as to break their bones; partially suffocated with plastic bags, tubing or water; suspended by chains from the ceiling; poisoned; forced to hear the screams of tortured parents; intimidated and humiliated; forced to eat human faeces; continually beaten while interrogated; deprived of food and sleep and left alone hooded" (Ressler, 1993).

#### **- Psychological Trauma**

Apart from physical handicaps, are emotional traumatic problems. Experiences of rape are commonplace in many of the conflict situations resulting to displacement. Even after checking into displaced persons camps or centres, the incidence of sexual violence is still high. Women and children who are subjected to those abuses eventually develop psychological problems. Confirming these abuses in a conference report on Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, held in Ottawa, Canada, from February 14 to - 16, 1992, displaced children maintained that they had witnessed about 32 wounded victims of a massacre which had occurred the day before in a small village north of (name withheld), who were brought to the (name withheld). Included among the wounded, was a three year old boy with gunshot wounds to his foot. The boy had come in the company of a neighbour who had been shot through both of his upper legs. The child's mother had been killed in the massacre, and his aunt, disembowelled in his presence, died before she could receive medical attention. There was also a sixteen year old girl who had severe bayonet and knife wounds, including wounds to her face and upper lip. She was alive only because bandits had left her for dead when she fainted.

Children who experience such trauma manifest insensitivity, lack of attention, uncontrollable violence, loss of memory, lack of respect for human life and withdrawal syndrome. These problems call for well-developed social re-integration programmes which are currently not available.

**- Social Problems Associated With Reunion**

In many cases, IDPs, especially the most vulnerable, are socialized into a world of war than are likely to identify with peace. Come pacific times, they are less likely to cope with the period of transition. Also, when they have been separated with their husbands, children and wives for longer periods than are necessary, post-conflict times introduce reunions for which they are not equipped to handle. This situation produces new traumas.

Following the secession of the Eritrean people for example, at least 85,000 were displaced a huge proportion consisting of women and children. Former government employees lost their jobs for which Eritreans were hired. Families of defeated soldiers were left in the cold, without support.

Families of former soldiers from the garrison in Asmara had problems. Many women had no marriage certificates. The difficulty of tracing their husband's families and not finding the men, made it almost impossible for the women to survive psychologically. Some were former sex workers while others co-habited with soldiers with whom they bore children. The situation was worsened by the fact that the moment a man was stationed in Eritrea, he hardly ever returned home to Ethiopia.

The internal displacement of women and children in Africa will have longer term effects not only for the victims themselves, but for their societies in general. Women and children who have been uprooted from their homes under forced conditions are likely to suffer long term effects of the psychological traumas they have been subjected to.

**- Educational Disruption**

Internally Displaced Persons, especially children, are victims of disrupted educational services and programmes. IDPs are less likely to access educational and training because they have moved to new locations where schools are likely to be unavailable. Where what used to be home, school facilities have been destroyed creating new learning needs and threatening the whole educational resources. Even if people moved into cities where school facilities are available, new problems arise as the educational facilities there cannot offer them services adequately as a result of limited classroom space, shortage of teachers, and school supplies, and lack of funds to accommodate the changes. The lack of money may be caused by the diversion of educational budgetary items into military expenditures.

Investigation in this area has indicated that during the more than 11 years of war in Mozambique, many educational facilities were destroyed. The number of functional primary schools dropped from 7,170 in 1979 to 3,496 in 1990. This pattern of disruption has also been documented in other countries within and without the region (Ressler, 1993).

Learning as a means of acquiring skills has no time limits or boundaries, but attendance in formal educational settings (grade school, secondary, high school and university) does. Disruption of informal and formal educational activities during armed conflicts do not only cause many internally displaced persons inconveniences, but it makes the realization of their dreams almost impossible. Educational disruption of IDPs in the long run costs the entire society a very high price.

Education is the best ever known tool designed by man for his/her social, economic, cultural and political advancement. Its disruption destroys the hopes of a holistic progress that any civilized society longs for.

**- Overburdened Resources**

Many of the displaced persons stay away from war torn communities by relocating to major urban centres where there is no fighting. When this occurs, the limited resources are stretched to breaking point. The crowded atmosphere produces an environment favourable for criminality. Women with little or no education and/or training turn to the life of prostitution, youth find refuge in drugs, theft and other criminogenic activities for survival.

When one examines the situation of IDP who have moved to apparent quiet rural areas, the same problems of congestion as a consequence of overcrowding resurfaces. The increase in traffic brought about by the transportation of relief items leads to the damage of roads and bridges which are ill-equipped to handle the stress. Also, the need for fuel wood further explains the reason for the rapid disappearance of forest reserves.

**- Potential problems of demobilisation**

Demobilising and sending ex-soldiers home without any means of livelihood presents a serious problem. They were provided for when they were fighting. When they are left on their own, with no skills, no education, nor training, except their fighting skills, which they now utilize to terrorize the about to be settled IDPs, a problem arises. In the absence of a means of livelihood, they steal food, clothes and money for survival. Violence becomes a normal way of life for them at the expense of the poor and defenceless civilians (International Alert, 1994).

**- Loss of Real Estate**

Most of the problems faced by IDP returnees are the loss of their real estate: homes, land, farmland, fishing ports and grazing land, etc. In most cases, they find that their homes and other property have been occupied by some other persons especially by the wealthy who have exploited their misfortune. This becomes a devastating experience and further complicates the processes of resettlement and recovery.

**- Protection and Security**

Though the protection of IDPs is implied in many international and humanitarian instruments, in principle, there is no international regime responsible for their plight. Thus, their protection falls back to their government who might either be ready to see them die or limited by resources to act. Instances like these have left IDPs without physical or legal protection under their governments. This creates a protection nightmare for nobody is there for them when they need assistance, except when their status changes from IDP to refugee (Colville, 1994).

**REGIONAL MEASURES ADDRESSING THE PREDICAMENTS: THE OAU 1969 CONVENTION AND THE PLIGHT OF IDPs**

One of the major pre-occupations of the Founding Fathers of the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration was the management of African conflicts and the question of establishing the appropriate machinery for this purpose. Their belief was that the peaceful resolution of conflicts, both large and small was a prerequisite for orderly progress, not only for individual member States, but also for the entire continent.

The OAU widely praised and publicized Convention of 1969 reaffirmed the commitment of the organization to address the problems of refugees in section U.N.T.S. number 14, 691. Though initially the mandate was implicitly intended to cover the regional predicaments of IDPs, it was not until in the early eighties that it was renamed Bureau for Refugees, Displaced Persons and Humanitarian Assistance. Though the word "internal" was not placed before the phrase "displaced Persons", one could by inference state that the scope of the bureau's mandate was extended by the convention, the regional instrument, to include activities and humanitarian assistance directed at IDPs.

Initially established as a clearing house, it soon became a mere secretariat for the Commission of Fifteen (C15), the principal policy organ of the OAU that is given the primary jurisdiction to advise the council of ministers on crucial issues pertaining to refugees and perhaps displaced persons. In addition, the Bureau acted as the secretariat for the Coordinating Committee on Assistance to refugee CCAR, set up in 1981 with a specific mandate to assist the OAU Secretary-General in the organization of international conferences/seminars as a measure to expose the problems of African refugees and probably those of IDPs the world over. As of 1995, CCAR had over 20 members made up of UNHCR, ECA, ILO, UNESCO and other international NGOs. Over its 15 years of existence, CCAR has basically evolved nothing more than an Advisory Committee to the Commission of 15.

There is no doubt that the Commission of Fifteen has been very quick at vocally pointing out some of the root causes of displacement in Africa as expressed in the following:

[T]he problem of the refugee [and displaced persons] is basically and foremost an African responsibility. There is no substitute to Africa's political will to tackle the root causes of the refugee problem. The international community would come to Africa's Assistance when there are convincing indicators that at least the root causes are seriously being tackled by member states" (as quoted by the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 1995:147-148).

Beyond this, it is inactive. Its influence is limited by the "non-interference" clause of the OAU Charter.

The critical review of the activities of C15, CCAR and the Bureau has indicated that all three organs need to revisit their mandates with respect to refugees and displaced persons. The increasing involvement of UNHCR in this area in the region questions their existence, even when one thinks of the inception of their income-generating project (IGP) started in 1986. The Bureau in particular is cautioned:

to conduct a serious re-examination of its present mandate and operations and critically consider whether they actually conform to the demands of the present refugee [and displaced persons] situation. Unless such action is taken soon, and with all earnest intent, the bureau may find itself wholly irrelevant to the main thrust of the situation on the African continent (Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 1995:166).

This advice is based on the inability of the Bureau to act whatever its political and financial handicaps are. The end result is that displaced persons are still abused and left unprotected because the regional instruments are not being enforced by the bureau and other agencies mandated to do so.

## **INTERNATIONAL MEASURES ADDRESSING THE PREDICAMENTS**

Although there are remarkable similarities in the causes and consequences of displacement between IDPs and refugees, there is definitely a fundamental difference between the two groups. The refugees who cross the border into other political territories seeking asylum come immediately under the mandate of UNHCR. These refugees are covered by international instruments whereas IDPs do not have any international legal regime directly responsible for their predicaments.

However, it is increasingly argued that there are specific provisions in the international and humanitarian laws that apply to the predicaments of IDPs. These comprise four Geneva Conventions and the two protocols which most states have endorsed. To illustrate the point, Article 54 of Protocol 1 to the Geneva Convention stipulates:

"(1) Starvation of civilians as a method of warfare is prohibited."

"(2) It is prohibited to attack, destroy, remove or render useless objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population such as foodstuffs, agricultural areas for production of foodstuffs, crops, livestock, drinking water installations and supplies, and irrigation works, for the specific purpose of denying them for their sustenance value to the civilian population or to the adverse party, whatever the motive, whether in order to starve out civilians, to cause them to move away, or for any other motives";

The same concern is addressed by Article 23 of the Fourth Geneva Convention which maintains:

"Each...party shall allow the free passage of all consignments of medical and hospital stores and objects necessary for religious worship intended only for civilians of another...party, even if the latter is its adversary. It shall likewise permit the free passage of all consignments of essential foodstuffs, clothing and tonics intended for children..., expectant mothers and maternity cases".

Further scrutiny indicates that:

- the psychological needs of children are provided for by Articles 38 sub (4), and 39, of the UN Convention on the Rights of the child and Principle 2 of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1959;
- reunion of displaced family members, caused by armed conflict is stipulated by Article 26 of the Fourth Geneva Convention;
- protection of unaccompanied children is provided for by Article 20 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- prohibition of Torture and Cruelty is spelled out in Articles 1 through 12 of the Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and
- educational disruption is discouraged by Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Principle 7 of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, Article 28 (1) of the UN Convention on the rights of the child, and Article 4 (3) sub (a), additional protocol 11 to the Geneva Convention.

Other specific sections of international instruments protecting the rights of IDPs are detailed in the 1992 Report of the Secretary-General's Special Representative of IDPs.

The report offers a critical analysis of the specific clauses of international humanitarian and refugee laws which are applicable to the protection and assistance of IDPs. The creation of the Secretary-General's Special Representative for IDPs came about as a result of Resolution 43/116 of 1988, requesting him (the SG), to examine the plausibility of an international measure to co-ordinate relief assistance for IDPs worldwide.

Despite the splendid advances made within the framework of the United Nations, and the international community as well as the applicability of international instruments to the solving of the problems of internally displaced persons, the ultimate responsibility of protecting and guaranteeing IDPs' legal rights remains with the home governments. Even though UNHCR is usually requested to provide assistance so as to prevent situations whereby their status is likely to change from IDP to refugee, this condition does not negate IDPs' rights of applying for asylum.

However, the major obstacle stems from the fact that every initiative must be endorsed by the government of the IDP, and the government most times would violate their human rights. The other complication comes from the fact that the UN firmly believes that it is better for the IDPs to be resettled in their own country, whereby such resettlement and recovery should be integrated into peace-making, peace-keeping and peace-building processes. Whenever UNHCR has to carry out any special mandate on behalf of the IDP, it must do so directly with the government that must be willing to grant full access to the IDP, with adequate security for UNHCR personnel. It is also expected that UNHCR's activities be confined within the dictates of non-political and humanitarian mandates. Agreeably, its involvement should be backed by three dramatic strategies, namely:

- monitoring, reporting and early warning;
- intercession, dialogue and mediation; and
- mobilization of humanitarian action" (UNHCR Draft Report of Internally Displaced Persons, Paragraph 22, 1994).

## **PLANNING AND DELIVERY OF AID TO IDPs**

When offering help to people who have been forced out of the places they called "home", it is necessary to observe the following:

**- Hospitality of the receiving environment**

The reaction to IDPs by the receiving communities is very crucial to their recovery, but difficult when conflict is ensuing. It is therefore, necessary for the aid provider to initially reconcile the newcomer and his/her host before attempting to help both IDP and recipient host.

**- Gender issues**

When changes in the traditional roles assumed by the sexes occur in the resettlement process, and there is understanding between the parties (usually spouses), this makes recovery easier. As displacement and economic activities change, a shift always exists in gender-based division of labour and social roles. Women and men have had different ways of adapting to situations of displacement. Women have the tendency to adapt easier than men. Sometimes, men are better placed to access new jobs in urban areas, leaving their spouses and children behind. In that case, some take on new families and the women they leave behind become heads of the households in spite of the fact that they have very limited resources.

**- Livelihood**

The re-establishment of a secure source of income is very important to IDPs. Hence, any assistance is wasteful if the IDP does not have a means of survival. To survive, s/he often needs fertile land (safe from land mines) for farming, especially if displaced from the rural area. With displacement, traditional careers are often impossible to pursue immediately after the movement, so alternative employment must be considered by the service provider. But care must be taken not to impose non-traditional employment on displaced victims. This can be avoided by involving IDPs in choosing among alternatives, even if none of the options is really what they want to do. When resettlement is created, the construction jobs, for example, must provide the opportunity for employment, skills training and apprenticeship for the IDPs.

The establishment of small businesses such as food preparation, hairdressing, barbing, seamstressing, tailoring, electrical work, carpentry, bricklaying, leatherworks, and shopkeeping, is an added advantage that would provide employment opportunities for many internally displaced women and unaccompanied youth who lack employability skills. These are ventures that require very little capital to set up and almost no technical skill to operate. Whatever means is employed to create a way of livelihood, it must be linked to national and regional development plans and macro-economic policies of the host community.



**- Resources/Capital**

People with enough wealth (savings accounts) or support systems (relatives, friends, parents, etc) when opportune, will organize their own resettlement programmes. Those will find very little negative effects of displacement. The service provider, should, therefore, build on the strengths and weaknesses of such persons.

**- Home**

Home is what one makes of it. Hence, the loss of "home" for the displaced is often severe. It is important to look into re-establishing equally meaningful places for IDPs. The topographic and climatic conditions, as well as the social relationships and patterns of settlement IDPs might be interested in should constitute the deciding factors of choosing what might become home for them.

**- Losses**

The extent of loss incurred is also important. Experience shows that recovery is difficult with those who have incurred huge losses. For example, when Heads of Households are killed, missing or disabled, the surviving family members usually have difficult times. Many losses in Real Estate (homes, land, businesses), are difficult to replace by IDPs on their own. It is therefore, advisable to include compensation of such losses in the recovery process.

**- Situations during displacement**

Those who find safe refuge, are healthy, treated with dignity and given the opportunity to learn new skills and build up resources are likely to recover easier than those who face hardship, abuse, illness, family disintegration and educational disruption. This is also the case with those who are forced to drop out of school and work to raise siblings, live in dehumanized conditions in camps and shelters, forced into prostitution, are traumatized or embittered by experience.

**- Circumstances of Displacement**

To effectively assist IDPs, it is necessary to know and understand the circumstances of their displacement. The more people participate in the decision to move and have time to plan ahead for it, the less stressful and more successful the recovery.

## **RESETTLEMENT AND RECOVERY MEASURES FOR IDPs**

The amount of effort which has been devoted to resettlement and recovery periods can be regrouped into four distinct measures which must be taken simultaneously: **treatment, reconstruction, rehabilitation and social re-integration.**

### **1. Treatment**

This is the process of healing the "wounds" of psychologically and physically disabled IDPs of the post-war era. It is the time to nourish the malnourished, to feed the hungry, to provide medical attention and psychological counselling, and to mobilize people in the "helping professions" (social workers, nurses, counsellors, teachers, criminal justice agents, police, lawyers, doctors, therapists, etc). Displaced children are expected to be given preferential treatment in such circumstances because they not only are fragile, but are the most susceptible to communicable diseases such as measles, mumps, chickenpox, diarrhoea, dysentery, etc.), problems which are more common during times of war and post-war.

Apart from medical and psychological treatment, IDPs should be protected from further physical harm, including sexual molestation and abuse in camps and possible abduction, while other immediate needs are being fulfilled. Investigations must be carried out in cases where separation has taken place so as to reunite family members, friends and neighbours. These significant others would play a very important role in the healing process. Just as they were there to provide food, clothing, shelter, health care (immunization, sanitation, safety measures from accidents), and even the psychological well being in the pre-war era, they must be present to wipe away the ugly memories of war.

### **2. Reconstruction**

This refers to efforts at rebuilding or repairing infrastructures (economic, educational, health care, cultural, religious and political) institutions that suffered physical damage from bombs, firearms, grenades, land mines, air raids, military occupation, tanks and heavy artillery, elements that must be functional for effective assistance of IDPs. The task calls for repairing roads, bridges, air and sea ports, railroads, buildings, power facilities, major industrial and manufacturing plants, water facilities, food processing centres, communication lines and print media equipment, which process will provide jobs.

These activities require the employment of highly trained personnel as well as the use of heavy equipment (tractors, drillers, heavy duty trucks), with stocks of spare parts, fuel and power. They also demand the restoration, or establishment of shops and storage areas, adequate enough to safeguard their continuous availability when and if needed. This calls for the recruitment of trained security officers, crime prevention experts or military personnel to wade thieves and/or frauds away.

### **3. Rehabilitation**

The term refers to activities geared towards medical, psychological and physical treatment of human beings and animals, the restoration of economic and income generating activities such as agro-businesses in the farms, opening of centres for the supply of basic services, and normalizing the activities of families and communities. Medical rehabilitation generally employs three measures, viz:

- prosthetic construction, which enables youth who have lost their limbs to regain physical functions;
- occupational therapy, which helps disabled people possess the necessary skills to function as equal members of the society; and
- physiotherapy, which helps people retain or regain their capabilities after injury.

The scope of assistance to IDPs, as in post-conflict rehabilitation, is also expressed in:

"helping victims again find their place as functioning members of society[,] ensuring that missing family members are reunited; that food, clothing, and necessities are available; that victims and victims's families have a means of self-support. Participation in usual family responsibilities, school routines, and civic activities all contribute to the re-establishment of the web of life that is often rent by the abuse of basic rights" (Ressler et al, 1993:135).

Rehabilitative measures for IDPs also include: establishing social support mechanisms, developing community action and implementing special programmes.

#### **- Establishment of Social Support Mechanisms**

Important in the rehabilitation process are social support mechanisms. These are meant to provide the medium for people of the same cultural and linguistic background to share similar traumatic experiences.

**- Development of Community Action**

This strategy works at two levels: assessment of economic problems and evaluation and identification of abused IDPs. This is to ensure that those who have specific needs receive psychological and religious counselling, prostheses and cosmetic and/or reconstruction surgery immediately. Activities focus on:

- rehabilitating farm lands in order to occupy rural people;
- rehabilitating wells so that they can be proud of good, clean water in the absence of pie-borne water;
- rehabilitating local health centres for health care;
- rehabilitating primary schools; and
- implementing strategies for ameliorating agricultural skills in the community (business agriculture).

The economic aspect addresses the issue of employment disruption and the clearing of land mines which often delay economic recovery for several years.

**- Special Programmes**

Special programmes are intended to solve the problems of IDPs who have found themselves in extremely difficult circumstances. These include cases of IDPs, who have taken to the streets (street children) and become drug abusers/peddlers, thieves, armed robbers, even murderers, and/or prostitutes.

The absence of special programmes makes IDPs who abruptly find themselves without family support (parents having been killed in the war or forced to relocate without them), most likely turn to this brand of equally destructive activities.

**4. Social Re-integration**

This measure facilitates the re-entry of IDPs who have been involved in conflict into the normal social life of pre-conflict communities. The educational, economic and protective needs have to be thoroughly evaluated and high-risk cases taken cognizance of. It should be clarified that the execution of these measures is conducted by both adults and youth.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The analyses have indicated that in all armed conflict situations, internally displaced persons are forced to move suddenly and/or unexpectedly. In all cases when they move to a new and strange environment, even though in their own country, they still need protection from abuse and loss of life, assistance with food, shelter, medical care, clothing, good water supply and basic needs for livelihood. These call for an emergency relief responses from the international community which has often been based on moral principles.

Initiatives developed and implemented within the framework of the United Nations system and other fora have provided a solid foundation on which to build legal and operational mechanisms for addressing the IDPs predicaments. However, new and innovative ideas are needed for adequate international, regional and national responses to this on-going crisis - the predicaments of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

What has also emerged from the study is the fact that internally displaced persons do not have any internationally constituted regime within the UN structure responsible for their predicament. Internationally, what applies to them are specific sections of international and humanitarian laws, and UN Declarations which address the rights of the civilian during armed conflicts. These provisions, are always violated during armed conflict even by nations that are party to them.

Regionally, the examination of the OAU organs established by the 1969 Convention have failed to either protect or render the humanitarian assistance needed by IDPs.

Nationally, the legal, political and military institutions that are supposed to render services to citizens, in many cases, do not.

## INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the region implicitly deserve to be assisted by the International Community on moral grounds, as well as on the obligation of international and humanitarian laws which apply to them in situations of armed conflicts. The dimension of such assistance would include major actors such as the United Nations and its specialized agencies, international NGOs and PVOs and foreign governments concerned with peace. International initiatives would require high level of cooperation and coordination among various participants.

The following constitute action at the international level:

**1. Dissemination of the Rights of IDPs during Armed Conflict**

The initiative must be spearheaded by the office of the Secretary-General's Special Representative in collaboration with UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO, UNIFEM and selected international NGOs. The document to be disseminated is that developed by the Special Representative. It contains detailed sections of international law, international human rights and refugee law that are applicable to internally displaced persons during armed conflict. The task should revolve around:

- translating IDP rights into many national languages;
- duplicating and disseminating them in the various educational, religious, political, civic and cultural institutions;
- initiating Public Service Announcements (PSAs) focusing on the most violated rights;
- developing and implementing the Armed Forces Radio programme. This should be implemented by hosts of Radio Talk Shows who will devote a segment of their programme called "The Armed Forces and the Rights of IDPs" with one or more IDPs in attendance;
- organizing regional seminars in collaboration with OAU for the Ministers of Armed Forces on the subject of armed conflict and the rights of IDPs;
- establishing databases with current information on IDPs and the list of service providers for them.
- monitoring and evaluating every phase of the operation.

**2. Establishment of a Council for Non-Educational Disruption**

UNICEF and UNESCO and UNDP, in collaboration with international NGOs and PVOs should be charged with the following:

- establishing a Council for non-educational disruption whose members should be drawn from international and regional NGOs and universities.
- developing mechanisms of protecting schools from destruction during armed conflicts;

- developing mechanisms for the immediate restoration of educational services should they be disrupted. This should ensure IDP involvement in whatever capacity;
- development of mechanisms of setting up "schools without walls" in the camps and communities where school facilities have been destroyed;
- developing screening and training programmes for IDPs as teachers, and also informal educational programmes;
- arranging with religious leaders to use their churches for classes while rehabilitation is going on;
- developing a strategy of quickly assessing and grouping the students in their normal grades for instruction by using pre-tests that can be administered by some IDPs orally;
- developing a mechanism of acquiring, storing and distributing school audio and visual aids in the event these are destroyed. IDPs should be involved in the distribution process for income generation;
- developing and putting in place a strategy for acquiring food for students, especially non-perishable items;
- formulating a plan for securing articles of clothing if needed by students;
- developing and implementing a plan that requires the use of IDP labour as teachers, builders, janitors, etc.
- establishing links with foreign governments that could dispatch units of their armed forces in consultation with national governments to assist in protecting school facilities or quickly rehabilitate those that have been damaged using local materials. This unit should be familiar with the delivery of humanitarian services.
- monitoring and evaluating all operations.

### **3. Establishment of an International Emergency Relief Council (IERC)**

The council, whose members will come from all international agencies will, with the assistance of UNICEF, UNDP, UNDRO, ILO, WFP, FAO, WHO, OFDA, UNESCO focus attention on the quick means of responding to the predicaments of IDPs. Agencies will be required to share these means with their national offices. The scope of this initiative will include:

- developing and ranking the needs of IDPs in terms of emergency responses;
- developing Early Warning Systems that the various international NGOs will implement in their national offices;
- developing strategies for overcoming major obstacles that prevent effective delivery of services;
- establishing a system of how IDP labour will be employed as opposed to foreign labour;
- developing and implementing networking mechanisms whereby services need integration;
- developing and implementing a plan that will minimize duplication of services;
- identifying and ranking specific risks to IDPs and establishing monitoring mechanisms for them;
- developing and implementing strategies that help unaccompanied internally displaced youths to reunite with members of their families;
- developing and implementing a monitoring mechanism that will ensure the availability of basic needs (food, clothing and shelter);
- developing a system of collecting and disseminating information about the availability of basic services, Such a system should identify the service provider;
- translating such information into national languages and using the print and electronic media (radio, TV) for disseminating. Such exercise should consider the use of PSAs;



- developing and implementing mechanisms for verifying the effectiveness of media programmes;
- designing, duplicating and distributing flyers relating to the availability of services in schools, churches, village halls, markets and IDP camps;
- using the services of IDPs as town criers for oral dissemination of vital information;
- identifying and using local markets that hold once a week effectively for PSAs. This strategy could be reinforced by the distribution of flyers by IDPs.
- monitoring and evaluating all operations.

#### **4. Establishment of a Critical Human Resource Bank**

This initiative will be placed directly under the control of UNICEF and WHO. The initiative intended to solve the post-conflict psychological problems of IDPs, will seek to develop and maintain an adequate list of volunteers from the medical profession, counselling careers, expert and practising professionals in the fields of Psychology, Clinical Psychology and traditional ritualists as healing strategies. UNICEF and WHO will develop and constantly review methods of rapidly assembling and deploying these professionals in regions of need. They will:

- work with them in training IDPs in assisting them in non-technical areas;
- screen and draw a list of IDPs who are professionals;
- assist in acquiring and maintaining an adequate supply of tools and equipment that will enable them deliver the required services;
- prepare them for learning some skills from local experts, should they exist;
- assist them to train local professionals who need remedial courses to perfect their skills;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the programme.

#### **5. Establishment within the UNDP, a Judiciary Committee**

Members of this unit should comprise representatives from UNICEF, UNDP, UNDRO, ILO, WFP, FAO, WHO, OFDA, UNESCO, the World Bank, African Development, all international development organizations, NGOs with UN status, and delegates from member states, together with political, military and judicial personnel from across the globe. This committee will be charged with establishing seeking remedies that may not be envisaged by the conflicting countries: how to repatriate refugees and displaced persons in dignity and security, how to integrate the army, setting up temporary structures, tranquillizing the people and initiating democratic processes stamping out all the old political forces responsible for conflict and encouraging new ones.

Organize peace, security, reconciliation and democracy inviting all the parties (political parties, refugees, internally displaced, neighbouring countries, the Un community, international development organizations, NGOs).

#### **6. Provision of Employment Opportunities and Safe Passage of Social Reintegration**

The underlying issue as the programmes are implemented is to provide IDPs safe passage back to normal society. The re-integration process requires the creation of employment opportunities.

Agencies actively involved in discharging the services are national government ministries, international and national NGOs whose programmes are sponsored by UNICEF, UNHCR, UNIFEM, IOM, ILO, UNDP and UNESCO. Their obligation should include:

- screening and establishing a skills bank for IDPs;
- providing employment for qualified IDPs. This should include training and employing demobilized soldiers to defuse land mines;
- providing remedial training programmes;
- collaborating with OAU in the area of income generation;
- collaborating with UNIFEM in training programmes for women;
- working with governments and other specialized agencies in clearing land mines from farming and grazing lands;
- establishing information sharing mechanisms;
- monitoring and evaluating all phases of programmes dealing with IDPs.

## REGIONAL INITIATIVES

As it is the case with international initiatives, those at regional level focus directly on the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of mechanisms providing solutions to the predicaments of IDPs.

It is also expected that all organizations involved with any initiatives will establish high level co-operation with the UNDP Resident Representatives in the region, UNHCR, UNICEF, OAU, AAU, ECA and Regional NGOs addressing the issues of internally displaced persons. The regional initiatives, therefore, should include:

### **1. Reviewing and amending the mandate of OAU 1969 Convention to include:**

- renaming of the Bureau for the Refugees, Displaced Persons and Humanitarian Assistance as the "Bureau for Internally Displaced Persons and Humanitarian Assistance". Its mandate should focus on the plight of IDPs in the areas of protection and humanitarian assistance. To this end it should do two things: i) collaborate with international humanitarian NGOs and UNDP in providing relief to IDPs, and ii) work with UNHCR and the Special Representative to the Secretary-General in making sure that those provisions of international law, humanitarian and refugee laws applicable to IDPs during armed conflict are not violated.
- abolish the Bureau for the Placement, Education and Training of refugees and assign its income generating projects and scholarship programme to the "Bureau for Internally Displaced Persons and Humanitarian Assistance". To this end, the Bureau will i) plan and provide IDP with income generation projects; ii) collaborate with UNIFEM in providing vocational training programmes of IDPs women and girls; iii) work with AAU on tuition waivers for IDPs in their member universities; and iv) establish a placement programme for graduating IDPs.
- maintain CCAR and limit its fundraising activities to the Conflict Management Fund geared towards the detection and elimination of the root causes of displacement
- maintain the Council of 15. Its primary function should be to work with AAU, the Conflict Management Division and other competent international groups on the development of reliable Early Warning Systems. These should be evaluated constantly so as to accommodate changes that occur with the passage of time.

**2. Establishment within the structure of the Association of African Universities (AAU), A Conflict Research Division (AAU-CRD)**

This division will be assigned the exclusive right to initiate conflict research in the region. To this end the division will be required to:

To collaborate forces with OAU, the Political Science Association of African Universities, regional research institutions such as OSSREA, CODESRIA and international ones with a focus on Africa (International Alert) to identify research priorities with special inclination to causes of armed conflicts as a major source of displacement;

- develop and constantly monitor the effectiveness of multiple rapid research designs to be used in collecting and analyzing data on root causes of displacement;
- provide OAU's Division of Conflict Management with such findings;
- duplicate and distribute such research techniques to research organizations like CODESRIA;
- assess and establish areas of research where IDPs labour must be employed;
- research on and furnish to OAU multiple indicators for Early Warning Systems as well as constantly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of such indicators;
- conduct yearly seminars/conferences for members of AAU on the subject of Conflict Research and IDPs.

**3. Establishment within the Association of African Universities, A Trauma Centre**

The centre's main obligation will be:

- to investigate how IDPs support groups can be used to remedy traumatic/psychological effects;
- to study the Liberia trauma centre and to recommend its replication at subregional and national level;
- to develop, implement and regally evaluate programmes addressing post-conflict psychological impacts on Internally Displaced children;

- to identify and establish the various traditional rituals useful as healing processes;
- to conduct annual seminars on various ways of identifying ID youths suffering from post-conflict psychological problems for teachers, PTAs (Parent-Teacher Associations) and other educational organizations at subregional and national levels;
- to investigate and establish a referral system;
- to use the electronic and print media to disseminate information about the availability of services and service providers;
- to research on and establish how various churches can act in the healing process;
- to investigate and establish networking mechanisms at subregional and national levels; and
- to monitor and evaluate all programme activities.

#### **4. Establishment within the ECA a regional Peace Academy (RPA)**

It is expected that the establishment of the academy will enhance ECA's participation in examining the best means people can be helped to render services to IDPs. The academy will have subregional offices and in collaboration with OAU, AAU, UNICEF, UNESCO and other regional peace organizations, will:

- focus on how education can be used in maintaining peace;
- develop and implement at national level programmes such as Women Against Conflict (WAC). This programme will involve teaching women various ways of settling disputes without violence and how to work with youth in organizing peaceful rallies against moves that may involve conflict;
- advise national education agencies on how to monitor and evaluate the peace education programme;
- work on the publication of a pictorial text which should be duplicated and used as a teaching aid for peace education in elementary school, while the full text is used at university level;

- work with the electronic media on a documentary on the atrocities of armed conflict like the ones reflected in newspapers and magazines (Ethiopian Herald of February 4, 1996, Newsweek of August 1, 1994). Such documentaries should be used regularly during i) speaking engagements/conferences at national level for army officers; ii) for PTAs and university students; iii) should be shown prior to mediation to feuding parties considering armed conflict as a solution to their problem;

### **NATIONAL INITIATIVES**

Nationally, the various governments and their agencies will be advised to formulate and adopt the following policies and programmes that will promote IDPs role in peace maintenance. Governments will be advised to:

1. reform their national educational policies pertaining to military training. The revised version should provide for the inclusion of segments of international instruments stipulating the rights of IDPs in their training programmes. Any recruits who fail to master the principle should be advised to leave;
2. establish a policy prohibiting anyone being recruited and sent to the battle front without prior military training;
3. establish some basic military training for anyone between 25 and 30 years old;
4. train a special military unit that will spend time providing basic education to the illiterate adult population integrated with peace education and income generation;
5. establish Peace Ministries that will collaborate forces with the army in promoting peace. Such ministries will have departments or divisions responsible for implementing the OAU early warning system, so as to detect trouble spots before they develop into large scale conflicts. The ministries will work with ECA's Regional Peace Academy (RPA) and OAU on peace initiatives;
6. establish national policies that recognize schools, churches and medical facilities as "No WAR ZONES" or "ZONES OF PEACE";
7. work with the various religious groups on national policies that foster peace maintenance;

8. establish an army recruitment policy that will discourage the dominance in the army of one ethnic group; and
9. establish a programme called "IDPs and the Army for Peace". This programme will be implemented by high ranking officers who will work with the peace Ministry on scheduling for them speaking engagements and peace rallies in the various educational, political, social, cultural and traditional institutions.

### **FUNDING FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

It has been proven that well-developed policies and programmes, if not translated into financial implications, will remain nothing else but sterile ideas. The recommendations made would not be actualized unless funding is provided for them. It is also important to review the existing resources to find out where accommodation can be made without further expenditure. The following financial measures must be taken as a strategy for funding the initiatives recommended here:

1. 50% reduction in military budgets across the region;
2. engagement of several units of the army in income-generating activities such as road construction, farming, real estate development, etc.;
3. organize fund raising activities such as those of UNICEF;
4. videotape cultural events (dances, choirs, etc) and produce from such tapes either for rent or for sale;
5. organize fund raising dinners, dances and musical tours around the region;
6. secure low or no-interest loans for income generation to sustain programming. These should be carefully studied so as to project realistic profits which would be channelled towards the implementation of programmes;
7. request funds and/or material donations from donor agencies;
8. strengthen programmes like the "Food for Work" programme.
9. Establish within the ADB and World Bank, a unit that would provide small credits for IDPs to establish micro enterprises, purchase tools, farming equipment and materials and make a difference in the capacity of IDPs to participate in post-conflict reconstruction.

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