

Early Recovery Steering Committee Launch on 21 July 2008 at the Nakuru D.C's office

Introduction

Community level committees are very important for success of peace and reconciliation; through these, localized solutions are implemented, thus the parties involved (both aggressors and aggrieved) own the solutions, unlike implementation of the top-down approach. Elders' playing the leading role in these efforts is considered very effective in targeting the locals, as compared to administration officers. The committees should be inclusive of all demographic groups; sensitive to representation of women, youth and other special groups in their efforts. This is what Nakuru district is striving to achieve through the Nakuru District Early Recovery Steering Committee and the District Peace building Committee, and is setting the precedent in livelihood restoration efforts.

The Nakuru D.C hosted a meeting to officially launch the Nakuru Early Recovery Steering Committee. At the meeting it was agreed that a peace building committee at



The Early Recovery Cluster Coordinator, Bernard Leflaive, explains the key objectives of the Early Recovery efforts as the Nakuru D.C (far left) takes notes and UNOCHA Kenya Nakuru Office Head Mary Chilunda looks on | UNOCHA Kenya/Mark Anthony Bonyo

agencies (UNOCHA, UNHCR and WFP) among others.

district level is necessary for livelihood recovery and shall be formed. The meeting was chaired by the Nakuru D.C, and was attended by the local administration, NBA (Nakuru Business Association), NCKK, Maendeleo ya Wanawake, independent peace initiative members, KRCS, UNDP (Early Recovery cluster lead agency) and other

The importance of peace and reconciliation in the Early Recovery process was emphasized, with all parties in agreement that there can be no sustainable security or development without restoring peace at areas of return.

Objectives

The Key objectives of the Nakuru District Early Recovery efforts are:

1. Peace building and Reconciliation
2. Livelihood restoration; working with other stakeholders in provision of farm inputs and supporting other income-generating activities that will lead to eventual self-sustenance; thus strengthening of the clusters and formation of an Early Recovery Steering Group
3. Coordination of recovery efforts up to grassroots level, and inclusiveness of all stakeholders in the resettlement process

Early recovery efforts in Nakuru

Nakuru district is the first to introduce early recovery efforts in the South Rift; there has been no official launch of Early Recovery efforts in other districts in the region. It was generally agreed at the meeting that there is need for mindset shift for IDPs to focus more on Livelihood Restoration and development in the affected areas to promote self-sustenance as opposed to seeking emergency assistance. During the launch of the Early Recovery Steering Group, the following issues were discussed:

“there is a need for mindset shift for IDPs to focus more on Livelihood Restoration and Development”

- Leaders should play an important role in early recovery efforts; elders, religious, political and special group leaders, so as to target all audiences down to grassroots level.
- The role of the youth in the peace efforts was discussed, especially since they are most vulnerable to incitement to violence by politicians and other leaders. Youth shall engage in seminars and events such as sports to encourage peace building.
- Women’s role as good planners in society was pointed out; and the need for training of more women counselors expressed by Maendeleo ya Wanawake Nakuru to better gender-sensitive post-traumatic counseling for the returnees.
- Restoration of confidence of IDPs is to be spearheaded by local leaders. This shall include one-on-one community outreach. Communal welcoming of IDPs has been carried out in some affected areas such as Baruti. Such efforts should be adopted in Nakuru and the country at large during the return process.
- The importance of coordinated response was pointed out, which has been acted on by UNOCHA and UNDP/UNV; they are currently in the process of developing a district peace and reconciliation 3W (Who’s doing What Where) matrix.
- A multi-sectoral approach shall be used in the early recovery efforts; stakeholders include the banking community, faith-based organizations, the Nakuru Business District Association, agencies and local NGOs among others.
- Restoration of the affected to normal economic status is important for the peace and reconciliation process to be successful. There is also need for clarification of support/startup targeting the affected population; there are misinterpretations by returnees over support such as cash and land to be provided by government.

- Economic recovery efforts are to be introduced by the Nakuru District Commissioner's office. Lack of resources is the major challenge faced, hence need for external support for sustenance of the efforts.
- UNDP, the Early Recovery lead agency pointed out that external resources for early recovery efforts shall be prompted by local initiative
- Agencies assured continued support to the government on IDP issues. UNHCR and WFP are currently working on provision of farm inputs and seeds and fertilizers to the affected respectively. Action aid is to support existing structures in the peace process in Nakuru then extend to North Rift region
- Profiling of IDPs has been carried out by the district office. An inventory of genuine cases shall be used for support/intervention efforts in areas of return.
- The Nakuru municipal council will support the recovery process through introduction of license waivers for affected traders (waiver period yet to be clarified). Free mortuary services for those affected by the PEV (Post-Election Violence) are already being provided by the council.

Peace Building Efforts in Nakuru

Peace building meetings have been held in several locations in Nakuru with support from the DC, including meetings with the chief of Kaptembua and Lanet. However more support is needed for sustenance of these peace efforts. During the meeting it was agreed that a District Peace and Reconciliation Committee will be formed and shall hold their first meeting the week beginning 28 July 2008 at the D.Cs office. Stakeholders involved in the Nakuru peace initiative include NCKK, Centre for Enhancing Democracy and Good Governance among others. Some felt that teachers are well placed to target parents and youth in the peace building efforts and should therefore be included.

Challenges faced by Peace building and Early Recovery efforts

Challenges faced by Peace building and Early Recovery efforts include:

- Insecurity at some areas of return.
- The many idle youth engage in substance abuse, which is rampant. There is need to positively redirect their energies.
- Peace and reconciliation efforts lacking at community level in some areas
- Implementation of division level committee meetings in all divisions. There have been limited resources to support the efforts
- Livelihood recovery for non-farmers among the affected population i.e. casual laborers and business people
- Delayed return of IDPs to initial areas of residence; majority of IDPs opt to settle in transit sites due to lack of shelter and other items. This has the effect of delayed reintegration and peace building.
- Returnee traders lack capital to pay the municipal council for operation licenses

The Way Forward

- Support for sustainable peace and reconciliation efforts from district to sub-location level by the district administration and all other stakeholders
- Provision of adequate shelter and NFIs to enable IDPs shift from transit sites to their homes, which will facilitate reintegration and livelihood recovery
- Trauma healing to enable returnee mindset shift into development stage. There is need for training of more counselors to deal with this, especially women.
- Community-sensitive assistance; provision of farm implements and access to services such as health targeting both returnees and host community
- Relevant and practical interventions; tackle response on basis of the returnees' occupation/livelihood activities – to consider farmers and non-farmers.
- Intervention in policies in the banking sector; implementation of debt rescheduling for returnees who lost property
- Facilitation of low-interest loans to support the affected in restarting their businesses
- Youth engagement in seminars and events such as sports to encourage peace building and counsel them on substance abuse
- Recovery plan should include provision of workshop tools and free professional assistance/training on basic skills in business and agriculture; simple farming technologies such as kitchen farming should also be considered.
- A comprehensive multi-sectoral needs assessment at areas of return

Outcomes of the Meeting

- A District Peace and Reconciliation Committee will be formed and shall hold their first meeting the week beginning 28 July 2008 at the D.Cs office.
- District Inter cluster meeting to be held the week beginning 28 July 2008 at the D.Cs office, following individual cluster meetings to chart their way forward.
- Early Recovery stakeholders to meet on 4 August 2008, chaired by the Nakuru D.C.