**DPKO, PBSO, UNDP and DPA joint review of the Priority Plan for Côte d’Ivoire**

**From 31 August to 4 September 2009**

The present report was prepared further to a field visit to Côte d’Ivoire undertaken by the Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) from 31August to 4 September 2009. This mission which was a part of the wider joint review of the priority plan for Côte d’Ivoire, visited 15 micro-projects in Bouaké, Seguela, Daloa and Issia. Discussions were held with implementing partners (ANADER, IOM, Cooperative Worodougouka) and local authorities involved in the local project committees. The mission also met with traditional authorities, project beneficiaries and demobilised ex-combatants who had not yet had a chance to participate in reinsertion or reintegration activities as well as the Programme National de Réinsertion et de Réhabilitation Communautaire (PNRRC) and the European Union. The Terms of Reference for the joint review of the priority plan for Côte d’Ivoire are attached in Annex A.

**A. Background:**

1. The aim of the One thousand micro-projects programme, which is jointly run by UNOCI and UNDP, and which was launched in August 2008, is to reinforce peace and security in Côte d’Ivoire through the provision of socio-economic reintegration options to its beneficiaries. More specifically, the programme, *inter alia*, aims to: create the preconditions for a sustainable social and economic reintegration of ex-combatants and militias; reduce the engagement of former combatant and militias in unlawful income generating activities; reduce the use of weapons as an income generating tool; and promote within the communities new opportunities for professional reinsertion. This programme is to target an estimated 25,000 FAFN ex-combatants and up to 20,000 former militia members as well as an unknown number of youth at risk. As of September 2009, 520 micro-projects have been run, involving 2,703 beneficiaries (1,099 FAFN, 757 militias and 847 youth at risk).

**B. Current Situation:**

1. The demobilisation of ex-combatants started in the second quarter of 2008. Shortly thereafter there were a number of violent incidents involving demobilised ex-combatants who had no immediate prospect for reintegration, resulting in concerns that this group could poses a threat to peace and stability in Côte d’Ivoire. Although a number of implementing partners are supposed to be running reintegration programmes for ex-combatants, most notably the *Program National de Réinsertion et Réintegration Communautaire* (PNRRC) and the *Programme Service Civique Nationale* (PSCN), neither these national structures have managed to mobilise funds and they have therefore not been able to operationalise their programmes. Other international partners have funds available to target ex-combatants but have either re-oriented their programmes or are still seeking reliable implementing partners. The United Nations therefore identified a critical need for stop-gap measures to address this caseload and to calm tensions amongst ex-combatants awaiting reintegration so as to avoid civil unrest and security incidents involving this potentially dangerous target group.
2. The demobilization process, which has been blocked since May 2008, is expected to re-start in the near future as pressure mounts to demobilize as many combatants as possible before the elections. Several interlocuteurs cited a figure of 18,000 to 20,000 FAFN combatants that are awaiting demobilization. [[1]](#footnote-2)The pool of people expecting to partake of reintegration opportunities is therefore expected to grow as demobilization efforts continue.

**C. Impact of the micro-projects:**

1. As of September 2009, the 1,000 micro-projects remains the only implemented programme targeting ex-combatants and militias (the European Community has a project for youth at risk that includes some ex-combatants but appears to be facing problems in scaling it up) . All of those the review mission met with confirmed the relevance of the micro-projects programme in addressing the issue of mounting pressure on the authorities (civil and military), civil society and the general population from unhappy ex-combatants and agreed that the 1,000 micro-projects programme is filling a critical gap in terms of consolidating peace and security in Côte d’Ivoire. The review team’s interlocutors variously described the projects as having a “real impact on the population”, “calming a potentially dangerous group” “reducing tensions” and generally contributing to security in Cote d’Ivoire. In Bouaké, where there had been a number of violent incidents involving ex-combatants between May and August 2008 it was pointed out that since the start of the 1,000 micro-projects programme in August 2008 there had been no further incidents. At the same time it was also pointed out that those who had not benefitted from the programme were starting to get impatient.
2. The review team spoke with a number of ex-combatants who were involved in the micro-projects, all of whom consistently claimed to have broken their ties with their former military hierarchy and expressed a desire to continue as civilians rather than take up arms again. This was confirmed in separate discussions with ex-combatants who had not yet benefitted from the programme who indicated that they had limited contact with programme beneficiaries. Should this be the case then the aim of breaking the military chain of command would appear to have been met and it is unlikely that the ex-combatants involved in micro-projects would re-mobilise in the future.
3. Finally, although the micro-projects has only managed to directly impact upon a small number of beneficiaries its wider impact was evident from discussions with other parts of the population who all indicated that the involvement of ex-combatants and youth in the projects had helped to increase security. As regards ex-combatants who had not yet been able to enter the programme they all expressed a desire to do so at the earliest and even if they had not yet benefitted from it they had been given some hope that efforts were being undertaken to take care of them. This has however led to expectations of future assistance amongst those who have not yet benefited from a micro-project that will have to be carefully managed.

**D. Project implementation**

1. The current reinsertion activities are already insufficient to meet the existing caseload of demobilized ex-combatants and militia members, not to mention the youth-at-risk. There is therefore already a requirement for a further reintegration activities and this will only grow as further FAFN elements are demobilised. Although the actual caseload remains uncertain it is estimated that this would include approximately 22,000 ex-FAFN and 20,000 militia. The implementation of such a programme will take several years and the reintegration activities will therefore continue far beyond the elections, currently planned for 29 November 2009. Moreover, even if demobilization takes place in several tranches it is likely that there will be a long gap between ex-combatants being demobilized and accessing reintegration programmes. Consequently there is a need to scale-up reintegration efforts by bringing in new partners and sources of funding. Stop-gap programmes such as high labour intensive programmes should be also be considered in order to keep those awaiting access to sustainable reintegration projects busy.
2. ***Project identification and delivery mechanisms:*** All those spoken to have noted that the partnership between the various actors involved in the 1,000 micro-projects programme has been extremely strong. The programme has been devised in order to divide the labor according to each partners strengths whilst reducing overlap. Whereas both UNOCI and UNDP provide technical support to the process, UNDP also receives and disburses the funds, whilst UNOCI provides logistical support to the process. In the field the organizations have coordinated their deployment so as to ensure the widest geographic coverage possible. The use of local Project Committees involving UNOCI, UNDP, the local authorities, PNRRC, PSCN and FAFN (in the North) or militia representatives (in the South) has meant that these are involved from the outset and all of those the review mission met with were very supportive of the programme. It was, moreover, noted that this approach had the added benefit of increasing the capacities of national partners to organize and manage such processes.
3. Likewise the group approach (as opposed to individual projects) which is encouraged in the micro-projects has allowed the pooling of resources to carry out more expensive projects and discussions with beneficiaries in successful groups have shown that this has assisted with the social reintegration of the members by providing a support network within the group. It should, however, also be noted that a number of failed projects were put down to “poor group dynamics” and it is clear that the failure of a group project has a larger impact than the failure of an individual project.
4. The 1,000 micro-projects programme was based on both a preliminary market assessment carried out by UNDP and an assessment of potential trouble areas (‘hotspots”) which unsurprisingly coincided with the locations where ex-combatants had been demobilized and were waiting for reintegration assistance. The decision was however also taken to expand coverage to also include militias and youth at risk in Government held areas. The review mission agrees with this approach which ensured equal opportunities in both the North and South of the country. Whereas it is felt that this approach should be continued, the limited resources available to the project mean that in order to achieve the maximum impact on the security situation in Côte d’Ivoire, future projects should be targeted at identified hotspots. Assessments should therefore be undertaken to ensure better targeting of the most “security relevant” groups and individuals whilst keeping in mind the political requirement to balance assistance in the North and South.
5. Although some of the local authorities claimed that the 420,000CFA limit per project was too low did not seem to be an issue for the beneficiaries and the review mission felt that this is an appropriate amount with which to provide the beneficiaries with viable economic opportunities. It was noted that, taking into account the higher cost of living in Cote d’Ivoire the overall cost per project was comparable to that of reinsertion or reintegration programmes in other countries and was cheaper than similar programmes run by the European Community in Côte d’Ivoire (€1,200 per beneficiary). There are, however, hidden costs as this does not take into account UNOCI’s contribution to the process, but also hidden benefits such as the increase in the capacity of the national partners involved in the project. Moreover, the projects reportedly have a high success rate (approximately 80% completed their first cycle) and many of these have undertake a second or third cycle, thus demonstrating a strong potential for long-term sustainability.
6. Several of those spoken to indicated the need to take into account the requirements of mid-level commanders. Such “commanders incentive programmes” have been used in several other countries and proven good at breaking down the chain of command and in gaining the support of an influential group that might otherwise feel left out of a programme that targets the rank and file. Such programmes should be considered in Côte d’Ivoire where, as opposed to the senior commanders, for whom a political solution is likely to be found, the mid level commanders have few prospects and could become a blocking factor.
7. There is often a concern that programmes targeting ex-combatants will lead to inequity and a feeling that combatants are being rewarded for their participation in a conflict amongst the local population. In Côte d’Ivoire efforts were made to mitigate this by opening it up to youth-at-risk and by undertaking parallel UNDP funded community reintegration programmes. Consequently the programme appears to have been well received by the local population. Traditional chiefs told the review mission that they welcomed this programme and many of the projects are located on land donated by the community. There were, however, persistent requests for more community rehabilitation programmes which, if they materialize, should be funded and managed separately from the micro-projects.

**E. Challenges:**

1. In view of the above, any follow-on programme is therefore likely to face the following challenges:

* National and international partners must be prepared to fund and implement further reintegration programmes so as to absorb the growing caseload. Some of these partners remain unconvinced of the 1,000 micro-projects approach and should be associated with future reviews so that they can see for themselves the impact these programmes are having. It is also hoped that a planned independent evaluation of the 1,000 micro-projects programme will also serve to convince them of the practicality of the micro-projects approach.
* Any scaling-up of the programme will require greater coordination between all the partners involved including insuring a balanced geographic coverage, coordinating the types of activities proposed so as to avoid saturating the market and the establishing shared beneficiary databases so as to avoid double dipping.
* As the caseload grows and the ability of the market to absorb certain projects diminishes there will be a need to diversify the types of projects offered. This in turn may require the identification of new project implementing partners able to offer a wider variety of projects.
* As the caseload swells pressure is likely to mount on the UNOCI and UNDP (which are currently the most visible actors in reinsertion), leaving them exposed both politically and from a security perspective. The Government and other parties must therefore be reminded of their responsibilities so that the United Nations in Côte d’Ivoire do not become a scapegoat for the failure of reintegration programmes, with all this may entail.

**F. Conclusions**

1. The DDR process in Côte d’Ivoire is far from the traditional type of DDR processes which have been undertaken in other parts of West Africa as there is currently no disarmament going on or planned. The development and implementation of the 1,000 micro-projects has however, assisted in reducing tensions in the country and providing an alternative to the use of weapons for its many beneficiaries. The review of the programme has demonstrated the overwhelming positive benefits of the micro-project approach taken in Cote d’Ivoire, however, the fact that these were required in order to counter the lack of longer-term reintegration programmes remains of concern. Although the micro-projects should not replace longer-term nationally run reintegration programmes they should be scaled-up to include beneficiaries who have not yet been able to benefit from them and who have not got other prospects for reintegration. At the same time the international community should continue to work with the Government and FAFN to ensure the implementation of the provisions of the Ouagadougou peace agreement on arms control and to ensure that the parties take responsibility for this process, including the reintegration of demobilized ex-combatants.

**G. Recommendations:**

* The FAFN should be asked to produce a reviewed chronogram for the cantonment and demobilisation of the remainder of their troops. Support plans and plans for reinsertion and reintegration should be adjusted to take into account the new timetable.
* Efforts must be made to continue to expand the reinsertion process to be in a position to accommodate the ex-combatants who will demobilize in the coming months. To this end, other reinsertion programmes should be brought on-line as soon as possible so as to absorb the maximum number of ex-combatants in reinsertion activities during the period immediately before and after the elections.
* Stop-gap programmes such as high labour intensive programmes should be considered in order to keep those awaiting access to sustainable reintegration projects busy. At the same time work should continue to establish reliable and well-funded reintegration programmes, including the PNRRC and PSCN.
* Consideration should be given to establishing a Commander’s Incentive Programme for mid-level commanders.
* New project implementing partners, able to offer a wider variety of projects, should be identified so as to avoid market saturation.
* The Government and other parties must be reminded of their responsibilities so that the United Nations in Côte d’Ivoire do not become a scapegoat for the failure of reintegration programmes, with all this may entail.
* Modalities and systems must be put in place to ensure that partners working on the DDR process have access to the relevant information collected during the profiling and so as to avoid “double-dipping” by ex-combatants trying to access the reinsertion and reintegration benefits more than once.
* Monitoring of progress on DDR in Côte d’Ivoire needs to be enhanced and should take in to account all efforts to reintegrate ex-combatants allowing a comparative evaluation of all efforts. This information should be shared with headquarters on a regular basis in order to allow the provision of appropriate advice as required.

**Annex A:** Terms of Reference for the joint review of the Priority Plan for Côte d’Ivoire

**Draft Terms of Reference**

**DPKO, PBSO, UNDP and DPA joint review of the Priority Plan for Côte d’Ivoire**

**From 31 August to 4 September 2009**

1. **Background**

In July 2008 the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) approved a $5 million Priority Plan for Côte d’Ivoire in connection with the support of the Facilitation of the inter-Ivorian Direct Dialogue on the one hand and on the other the one thousand micro-projects for the targeted reinsertion of ex-combatants, ex-militiamen and other vulnerable populations in Côte d’Ivoire.

* + The aim of the One thousand micro-projects’ programme, which is jointly run by UNOCI and UNDP and was launched in Bouaké in August 2008, is to reinforce peace and security in Côte d’Ivoire through the provision of socio-economic reintegration options to its beneficiaries. More specifically, the programme, *inter alia*, aims to: create the preconditions for a sustainable social and economic reintegration of ex-combatants and militias; reduce the engagement of former combatant and militias in unlawful income generating activities; reduce the use of weapons as an income generating tool; and promote within the communities new opportunities for professional reinsertion.
* Since the start of the operation, over 335 micro-projects have been launched in 16 locations countrywide (Abidjan, San Pedro, Tabou, Lakota, Yamoussoukro, Issia, Guiglo, Daloa, Bouaké, Brobo, Man, Séguéla, Bondoukou, Ferkéssédougou, Korhogo and Odiénné), providing support to over 1,190 ex-combatants, ex-militiamen, women affected by the crisis and youth at risk. At the same time, the longer term reintegration programmes that were due to be put in place, most notably the *Programme Nationale de Service Civique* (PSCN) and *the Program National de Réinsertion et Réintegration Communautaire* (PNRRC), have not materialized and there has been an apparent change in the Ivorian Parties approach to DDR, as per the fourth supplementary agreement to the Ouagadougou Agreement, which envisages a CFA 500,000 “*prime de demobilization*” for ex-combatants and militias.
* Since March 2007, and in order to support the facilitation of the Ivorian peace process conducted by President Compaoré of Burkina Faso and his Special Representative in Abidjan, Mr. Badini, PBF has also approved the disbursement of $2 million in three allocations, in 2007 and 2008, to support financially and logistically the facilitation. Other contributions, including from France, Norway, the European Union (through the EU funded ECOWAS Peace Fund) and the World Bank were received in the trust fund allocated for the support to the Office of the Special Representative of the Facilitator in Abidjan (OSRF), in parallel to logistical support provided by UNOCI, in accordance with the provisions of SCR 1765 (2007), 1826 (2008) and 1865 (2009). However, the facilitation efforts were intended to last until November 2008 initially and the subsequent postponement of the Ivorian elections, now scheduled for the end of November 2009, has presented a significant challenge for the funding of the Office of the Special Representative of the Facilitator. It is now envisioned that the facilitation, which should also ensure that the next steps in the electoral process, including the legislative elections, are consistent with the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and its supplementary agreements, would require support from the international community until mid-2010. In this regard, on 10 June, President Compaoré sent a letter to the Secretary-General, seeking further financial assistance from the UN. The Secretary-General is in the process of responding positively to the request, although details on the scope, duration and amount of PBF and other UN financial support are yet to be determined.
* UNOCI and the UNCT are currently in the process of developing an Integrated Strategic Framework that defines the UN priorities for peace consolidation in Côte d’Ivoire, including strategies to address the risks facing the peace process in the period leading up to elections. This ISF would provide a strategic framework within which to prioritize peacebuilding priorities and to consider essential linkages between the two PBF-funded initiatives under review and the broader set of strategic priorities of UNOCI and the UNCT.
* In light of the above, UNOCI, and SRSG Choi in particular, have suggested that a review mission, comprising representatives from DPKO (Office of Operations and Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions), PBSO, UNDP and DPA (Africa II and Mediation Support Unit) carry out a joint visit to Côte d’Ivoire to assess the progress made so far, the result of the projects and to advise the Mission on the future direction of the micro-projects. The Mission has also suggested that a similar review be conducted with regard to the support provided to the O/SRF in Abidjan, in light of the extension of the transition in Côte d’Ivoire until mid-2010.

1. **Objectives of the review mission**

* With regard to the 1,000 micro-projects: in consultation with the executing agency, implementing partners, beneficiaries, and host communities, review:
* the level of delivery of the project in relation to the planned timeline and workplan;
* the effectiveness and the efficiency of the mechanism established for project identification, prioritization, and delivery;
* the proposed project strategy in view of the changed political situation and new provisions for reinsertion included in the fourth supplementary agreement to the Ouagadougou Political Agreement;
* the impact of the micro-projects on reinforcing peace and security in Côte d’Ivoire;
* synergies and complementarities between the 1,000 micro-projects and the wider DDR/DDM processes, in particular with regard to any plans for longer-term reintegration programmes for ex-combatants, militia members and associated persons including with other donors (multilateral and bilateral);
* promote cross-fertilization and lessons learning with successful DDR experiences in the region;
* possible contributions of other members of the UN country teams as well as possible linkages between this initiative led by the DDR section and the work of other UNOCI sections, placed in the context of the ISF;
* provide recommendations to help the Mission, UNDP and UNCT define the future direction of the micro-projects.
* With regard to support to the facilitation, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, the objective of the mission would be to:
* assess the tasks that remain for O/SRF to facilitate the implementation of the relevant Ouagadougou agreements;
* evaluate the capacity of the O/SRF to carry out these tasks and contribute to the Ivorian peace process efficiently and effectively;
* assess the framework of support provided to the O/SRF by the United Nations;
* assist the Mission and DPKO identify other sources of funding than the PBF for supporting the facilitation;
* propose some adjustments in the composition of O/SRF and formulate recommendations to maximize the effectiveness of the UN support to this project;
* devise options for a phasing out/exit strategy of the office, as we enter the final leg of the peace process, with elections scheduled at the end of 2009, in consultation with UNOCI, the Facilitation and other concerned stakeholders;
* in line with this exit strategy, make recommendations for the integration of any remaining tasks in support of the peace process in the UN’s longer-term peacebuilding framework for Côte d'Ivoire, as is being defined by the ISF

1. **Expected results**

It is expected that as a result of the review a report of no more than 20 pages will be prepared that would include

* An assessment of expected effectiveness of the 1,000 micro-projects and the facilitation support and, where required, recommendations on how to better improve the process and increase the level of delivery.
* A set of recommendations regarding the implementation of the remainder of the micro-projects programme as initially conceived and on how to conceptualize any follow-on proposal.
* A better strategic understanding of how the 1,000 micro-projects proposal contributes in the wider DDR programme and overall peace consolidation efforts in Côte d’Ivoire.
* A set of recommendations regarding the support provided to the OSRF, sustainable funding avenues and follow-on actions, including an exit strategy and the integration of remaining tasks in support of the peace process in the UN’s ISF peacebuilding framework.

1. **Timing, programme and composition**

**The working language of such a review mission shall be the French.** The joint evaluation team will visit Côte d’Ivoire between 31 August and 4 September. The programme will be prepared by UNOCI in consultation with the evaluation team. Visits to micro-projects in various parts of the country will be arranged as required.

* DPKO (OO/AD2, OROLSI/DDR)
* UNDP
* PBSO
* DPA (Africa II and MSU)
* UNOPS (Abidjan office - TBC)

1. This can be calculated as follows: 32,000 FAFN combatants, less 9,000 who are to join the security services and the integrated brigades and approximately 3,000 who are in reinsertion programmes. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)