

# Implications of a Comprehensive or Integrated Approach for Training in United Nations and African Union Peace Operations

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Security in Practice 6 · 2009

[NUPI Working Paper 766]

Publisher: The Norwegian Institute of International Affairs  
Copyright: © Norwegian Institute of International Affairs 2009  
ISBN: 978-82-7002-252-6

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# **Implications of a Comprehensive or Integrated Approach for Training in United Nations and African Union Peace Operations**

**Cedric de Coning<sup>1</sup>**

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The present research project has been funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Training for Peace in Africa program ([www.trainingforpeace.org](http://www.trainingforpeace.org)).

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# 1. The United Nations and the Integrated Approach

The mixed findings of a number of recent peacekeeping, humanitarian and peacebuilding evaluation reports<sup>2</sup> and related research,<sup>3</sup> and the poor sustainability of peacebuilding activities undertaken to date, have led to a renewed focus on efforts aimed at improving our ability to undertake meaningful, coherent, coordinated and sustainable peace interventions. For example, the Joint *Utstein* Study of peacebuilding, which analysed 336 peacebuilding projects implemented by Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Norway over the past decade, has identified a lack of coherence at the strategic level, what it terms a 'strategic deficit', as the most significant obstacle to sustainable peacebuilding (Smith, 2003:16). That study found that more than 55% of the programmes it evaluated did not show any link to a larger country strategy.

The UN system has responded to this challenge by commissioning a series of high-level panels and working groups<sup>4</sup> to consider various aspects of this dilemma, and by experimenting with various strategic and operational coordination models.<sup>5</sup> Over the last half-decade, these efforts have culminated in the *Integrated Approach* concept. This refers to a specific type of operational process and design, where the planning and coordination processes of the different elements of the UN family are integrated into a single country-level UN system, when it undertakes complex peacebuilding missions.

Complex peacebuilding missions are multi-faceted systems that provide for parallel, concurrent and interlinked (short-, medium- and long-term) programmes, working to prevent disputes from escalating or to avoid relapse into violent conflict by addressing both the immediate consequences and the root causes of a conflict system. The post-conflict peacebuilding process typically, but not always, starts with a

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<sup>2</sup> Amongst others, Cutillo, 2006; Dahrendorf, 2003; Donini, 2002; Porter, 2002; Stockton, 2002; Sommers, 2000; Reindorp & Wiles, 2001; Duffield, Lautze & Jones, 1998 and Eriksson, 1996.

<sup>3</sup> For instance, Dobbins, 2005; Paris, 2004; Collier, 2003; and Stedman, Cousens & Rothchild, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Amongst others, the Panel on Peace Operations (UN, 2000b); the Working Group on Transition Issues (UN, 2004a); the Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (UN, 2004b); the Secretary-General's *In Larger Freedom* report (UN, 2005a); and the Panel on System-Wide Coherence (UN, 2006c).

<sup>5</sup> For example, the Integrated Mission Task Force concept for mission planning, the Strategic Framework concept in Afghanistan and the Results Focused Transitional Framework (RFTF) in Sierra Leone.

cease-fire agreement or peace agreement that calls upon the international community to support the peace process. It typically progresses through three stages: stabilization, transition and consolidation. The peacebuilding process ends when a society has developed the capacity to manage and sustain its own peace process without external support. This requires a wide range of internal and external actors, including governments, civil society, the private sector and international agencies, working together in a coherent and coordinated effort. These actors undertake a broad range of programmes that span the political, security, development, governance and reconciliation dimensions. Collectively and cumulatively, these programmes address both the causes and consequences of the conflict system, and build momentum over time that facilitates its transformation. In the short term, the goal of a peacebuilding system is to assist the internal actors in stabilizing the peace process and preventing a relapse into conflict, but the ultimate aim is to support them in transforming the causes of the conflict and laying the foundations for social justice and sustainable peace and development.<sup>6</sup>

Former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, issued a note on integrated missions that describes the concept as follows: ‘An integrated mission is based on a common strategic plan and a shared understanding of the priorities and types of programme interventions that need to be undertaken at various stages of the recovery process. Through this integrated process, the UN system seeks to maximize its contribution towards countries emerging from conflict by engaging its different capabilities in a coherent and mutually supportive manner.’<sup>7</sup>

The ‘integrated missions’ concept thus refers to a type of mission where there are processes, mechanisms and structures in place that can generate and sustain a common strategic objective, as well as a comprehensive operational approach involving the political, security, development, human rights, and where appropriate, humanitarian, UN actors at country level.<sup>8</sup>

The note of the Secretary-General on integrated missions establishes the integrated missions concept as the guiding principle for future post-conflict complex operations. It states that: ‘Integration is the guiding principle for the design and implementation of complex UN operations in post-conflict situations and for linking the different dimen-

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<sup>6</sup> de Coning, 2007:48 & NEPAD, 2005.

<sup>7</sup> United Nations, *Note of Guidance on Integrated Missions*, Issued by the Secretary-General on 9 December 2005 (UN, 2005b), paragraph 4. See also the Revised *Note of Guidance on Integrated Missions*, dated 17 January 2006, and released under a Note from the Secretary-General on 9 February 2006, paragraph 4.

<sup>8</sup> United Nations, *Integrated Missions Planning Process (IMPP)*, Guidelines endorsed by the Secretary-General on 13 June 2006, UN, 2006b: 3.

sions of peacebuilding (political, development, humanitarian, human rights, rule of law, social and security aspects) into a coherent support strategy.’<sup>9</sup>

Current UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon has reaffirmed the integrated approach as the guiding principle for all conflict and post-conflict situations where the UN has a country team and a multi-dimensional peacekeeping operation, or a political or peacebuilding office, whether these missions are structurally integrated or not.<sup>10</sup>

The 2008 Secretary-General’s decision on integration introduces the notion of the ‘integrated approach’. It differs from the ‘integrated missions’ concept in that it does not require structural integration, although providing for it, where appropriate. Instead, the integrated approach refers to a strategic partnership between the UN peacekeeping operation and the UN country team that ensures that all components of the UN system operate in a coherent and mutually supportive manner, and in close collaboration with other partners.

Thus defined, an integrated approach requires:

- (1) ‘a shared vision of the UN’s strategic objectives,
- (2) closely aligned or integrated planning,
- (3) a set of agreed results, timelines and responsibilities for the delivery of tasks critical to consolidating peace, and
- (4) agreed mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.’<sup>11</sup>

There are at least two ways in which the integrated approach is currently used within the UN. The first refers to system-wide coherence, and the term is used in a technical sense to denote a specific type of mission structure. Through UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182 of 1991, the UN has been given the role of coordinating all humanitarian assistance through the Emergency Relief Coordinator internationally, and the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) system at country level. The UN plays a similar role in development coordination through the UN Development Group (UNDG) and the Resident Coordinator (RC) system at country level. In most cases these two functions are combined as the RC/HC function. In the UN peace operation context, a mission becomes an ‘integrated mission’ when the RC/HC function is integrated with the peace operation through the appointment of special Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General (DSRSG) that is at the same time responsible for the RC/HC. The Secretary-

<sup>9</sup> *Note of Guidance on Integrated Missions*, paragraph 4.

<sup>10</sup> *Decision Number 2008/24 – Integration*, Decisions of the Secretary-General, 25 June 2008 Policy Committee, United Nations, New York.

<sup>11</sup> *Decision Number 2008/24 – Integration*.

General's Note on Integrated Missions applies to all missions that fall in this category.<sup>12</sup> In this sense, 'integrated missions' thus refers to 'integration' across the UN system, in that it links, through the DSRSG RC/HC function, the peace and security responsibilities of a UN peace operation on the one hand, with the development and humanitarian functions represented by the various UN agencies present in a country, on the other. These agencies are organised under the umbrella of the UN Country Team, and many are present in most developing countries, even in the absence of a conflict or natural disaster.

The second way in which the integrated approach is employed is more generic, in that it has become a synonym for multi-dimensional or complex operations. In that sense it refers to the 'integration' of the various military, police and civilian dimensions of a peace operation in a single office or unit. For instance, when the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)<sup>13</sup> establishes an 'Integrated Mission Training Cell' it is meant to indicate that the military, police and civilian training functions in a particular mission have been integrated into a single unit. This type of usage of the concept is, however, confusing because it does not measure up to the system-wide intention of the concept. When the military, police and civilian components of a peace operations come together to establish a multi-component entity this is rather usually described as a 'joint' entity, such as a 'Joint Operations Center' or a 'Joint Mission Analysis Cell'. The integration concept should only be used when parts of the peacekeeping operation and parts of the development and humanitarian community that is not part of the peacekeeping mission are brought together, i.e. when the security-development divide is bridged.

Integration, in the context of an UN integrated mission, is not intended to imply the incorporation of one entity into another, or subsuming one entity under the management control of another – each UN department, programme, fund, office, etc. maintains its own identity, management system, funding lines and financial responsibility. Instead, it refers to the processes, mechanisms and structures that are applied to connect these various UN entities, and the peacebuilding dimensions within which they carry out their work, together into a single interlinked, mutually supportive comprehensive UN country-level system. The objectives of this kind of integration are harmonization, alignment and coherence with a view to greater overall efficiency and effectiveness. The assumption of the integrated approach concept

<sup>12</sup> 'This updated Note of Guidance applies to all integrated missions in which the SRSG is supported by a RC and HC serving as the Deputy Special Representative Of the Secretary-General (DSRSG/RC/HC).' *Note of Guidance on Integrated Missions*, paragraph 3.

<sup>13</sup> As of 1 January 2008, the DPKO split into two departments: the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS). See General Assembly Resolution A/RES/61/256 of 22 March 2007.



is thus that a coherent<sup>14</sup> approach that manages to produce a comprehensive and coordinated UN system-wide effort will have a more relevant,<sup>15</sup> effective,<sup>16</sup> efficient<sup>17</sup> and sustainable<sup>18</sup> impact<sup>19</sup> on the peace process than a disjointed, fractured and contradictory approach.

### **The Comprehensive Approach**

Within the UN system there are various semi-autonomous agencies, funds, offices and programmes with a humanitarian and development mandate, departments of the UN Secretariat responsible for political affairs, peace operations and field support, and offices in the Secretariat responsible for humanitarian coordination and peacebuilding support. Although the core of the UN integration effort will aim at achieving system-wide coherence among these members of the overall UN system, the integration effort is not meant to be exclusively UN. The members of the UN system, and the UN integrated mission specifically, will facilitate, and participate in, various other coordination initiatives aimed at promoting harmonization among the external actors, and alignment between the internal and external actors in any given country or regional conflict system. In some circles, this broader strategic coordination process of establishing linkages among all the external actors in a given country or regional conflict system has become known as the ‘comprehensive approach’.

There are also initiatives underway to improve coherence internally among the different government departments engaged in international diplomacy, peace operations, development and humanitarian assis-

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<sup>14</sup> ‘Coherence’, in the peacebuilding context, is the effort to direct the wide range of programmes undertaken in the peace, security, socio-economic and reconciliation dimensions of a peacebuilding system towards a common objective (de Coning, 2007:66). It is important to recognize that the dynamic and non-linear nature of complex systems means that coherence can never be fully achieved. However, we may distinguish between systems where there are less coherence and ones where there is more coherence, and it is recognized that the process of striving for coherence is a catalyst for more efficiency in a system.

<sup>15</sup> ‘Relevance’ here refers to the extent to which the objectives of an intervention are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies (OECD, 2002:32).

<sup>16</sup> ‘Effectiveness’ refers to the extent to which the objectives of an intervention were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance (OECD, 2002:20).

<sup>17</sup> ‘Efficiency’ is a measure of how economically resources and inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results (OECD, 2002:21). ‘Economy’ in this context refers to the absence of waste for a given output: thus, an activity is deemed economical when the costs of the scarce resources used approximate the minimum needed to achieve planned objectives (OECD, 2002:20).

<sup>18</sup> ‘Sustainability’ refers to the continuation of benefits from an intervention after major assistance has been completed, the probability of continued long-term benefits, and the resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time (OECD, 2002:36).

<sup>19</sup> ‘Impact’ refers to the positive and negative, primary and secondary short-, intermediate- and long-term effects produced by an intervention, whether directly or indirectly, intended or unintended (OECD, 2002:24).

tance, and this process has become known as the ‘whole-of-government’ approach. In Canada this initiative has become known as the ‘3D’ process, as it combines the defence, diplomatic and development functions of government. The EU and NATO have also endorsed the ‘comprehensive approach’ concept, and are busy developing their own tools and mechanisms to improve their own internal coherence, as well as their cooperation with other international organizations so that they become better able to contribute to a larger system-wide effect.

All these initiatives have a similar aim: to achieve greater harmonization and synchronization among the activities of the different international and local actors, and across the analysis, planning, implementation, management and evaluation aspects of the programme cycle. The goal is to bridge the security–development divide, and to integrate the political, security, developmental, economic and other dimensions required to ensure a system-wide response to any specific conflict system.

The UN’s integrated approach concept should thus be understood in a wider international context where coherence is pursued at the national level among government departments (whole-of-government), and internationally among donors (harmonization); between donor and recipients (alignment); within the UN development, humanitarian and environment dimensions (system-wide coherence); and among the peace, security, human rights, humanitarian and development dimensions of the UN system at country level (integrated approach and integrated missions).

‘Integrated missions’ has now been officially accepted in the UN System as the mission structure of choice.<sup>20</sup> It will be the dominant management structure for UN complex peace operations in the near to mid-term, and it is likely that the EU, the African Union (AU) and others will try to adapt some of its core features to their own missions in future.

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<sup>20</sup> *Note of Guidance on Integrated Missions*, paragraph 4.

## 2. Integrated Missions and the African Union

The AU in particular has started to adopt some of the integrated missions terminology in its evolving African Standby Force doctrine.<sup>21</sup> However, it is important to distinguish between the scope for integration that exists within the UN system and that of the African Union. Whilst it is possible, under certain circumstances, to integrate the UN RC/HC function with UN peace operations to establish an UN integrated mission in the system-wide coherence context, it is inconceivable that the UN RC/HC function could be integrated with AU, EU, NATO, or any other non-UN peace operation, because the UN RC and HC functions have a specific mandate in the international legal context that can not become subservient to the overall direction of a regional organization. The opposite if possible, however, and has been done in the case of Kosovo, for instance, where the EU was responsible for a specific pillar under the overall direction of the SRSG of the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Even if this were possible from an institutional perspective, it would be undesirable from a humanitarian independence perspective, in that such integration is likely to negatively affect the perceived neutrality and independence of the humanitarian community.

This is not to say that the UN development and humanitarian community, and others like the AU, EU and NATO, cannot coordinate closely or even, under certain circumstances, cooperate – but it is inconceivable that they can be ‘integrated’ in the same technical system-wide meaning that this concept implies in the UN system context.

Instead, ‘integration’ in the AU context is used in a generic sense to refer to multi-dimensional coordination and cooperation. For instance, the AU’s ‘Integrated Planning Task Force (IPTF)’ refers to a mechanism whereby the military, police and civilian planning functions are combined in one process.<sup>22</sup> This differs from the way the concept is used in the UN system where, for instance, the UN’s ‘Integrated Mission Task Force (IMTF)’, refers to the coming together of planners

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<sup>21</sup> The African Union embarked on an initiative to develop an African Standby Force in May 2003 when the first ASF Policy Framework was adopted by the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the African Chiefs of Defence Staff, and endorsed by the Maputo Summit in July 2003. The concept has subsequently been further developed through a series of workshops in 2005 and 2006 that examined doctrine, training and evaluation, logistics, standing operating procedures, and command, control and communications.

<sup>22</sup> ‘*Policy Framework for the Civilian Dimension of the African Standby Force*’, African Union Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD), 1 September 2006.

from the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and planners from the UN Department of Political Affairs, UN Development Group, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and other UN agencies in a system-wide initiative. When integration is used in this way in the AU and other non-UN contexts, it should be understood as multi-component coordination among peace and security actors in the same mission, and not as system-wide integration that is aimed at bridging the security-development divide, as it is understood in the UN context.

### 3. Training Implications of Integrated Missions

The remainder of this paper considers the training implications of the integrated missions concept for UN and AU peace operations. From a training perspective, there is a need to foster a general awareness and minimum level of understanding of the integrated missions concept among all persons working in or alongside such a mission. This general awareness training should be supplemented with specialized training for those personnel who perform specific functions related to integrated missions.

Core elements that should inform any integrated missions training curriculum are:

- support to the implementation of a comprehensive peace process in a post-conflict setting, i.e. where there is a peace process in place and the UN or AU have been asked to support the parties with the implementation of this process;
- recognition that a comprehensive approach requires a system-wide process that can cover the political, security, development, human rights and, where appropriate, humanitarian, dimensions;<sup>23</sup>
- awareness of the different phases in each peacebuilding mission (stabilization, transition and consolidation) phase,<sup>24</sup> and knowledge of how the roles and responsibilities of the internal<sup>25</sup> and external<sup>26</sup> actors change over time as they progress through these stages;<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> There is broad consensus on these dimensions, although some add further dimensions. See, for instance the African Union's Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Framework (AU, 2006) that consists of six constitutive elements. This is the only framework to include gender as a separate element. Whilst some, such as the Utstein (Smith, 2004:27) and NEPAD (2005:13–15) examples, deal with humanitarian assistance as part of the socio-economic development category, many in the humanitarian community argue that humanitarian assistance falls outside the scope of peacebuilding, and should thus not be included in any such peacebuilding categorization. The *Note on Integrated Missions* (2006b:1) lists seven dimensions: political, development, humanitarian, human rights, rule of law, social and security.

<sup>24</sup> For more information on these phases, see de Coning, 2007:49

<sup>25</sup> 'Internal actors' are understood as all local actors in the country or conflict system where peacebuilding activities take place.

<sup>26</sup> 'External actors' are all international actors engaged in undertaking humanitarian assistance, conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities in a given country or conflict system.

<sup>27</sup> There are various different interpretations of these phases, but most convey the same essential progression. See for instance the Association of the U.S. Army & Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), *Post-Conflict Reconstruction: Task Framework*,

- understanding that, in order for all these dimensions to be brought into play in a synchronized, appropriately sequenced and coherent fashion, the members of UN family, which consists of various departments in the Secretariat,<sup>28</sup> independently constituted funds, agencies and programmes,<sup>29</sup> and the Bretton Woods institutions,<sup>30</sup> need to operate as one integrated UN system at country level;
- when regional organizations like the AU or EU are mandated with some of the peace-operation related dimensions of this overall response, that special mechanisms need to be established to ensure close coordination between the UN system and such regional organizations;
- resolve to establish a range of processes, mechanisms and structures that will generate common assessments, integrated plans, operational coordination mechanisms, common monitoring<sup>31</sup> tools and an ability to evaluate<sup>32</sup> the overall effect and impact of the integrated approach among all the relevant elements of the UN system, and other partners, such as the AU or EU.

### 3.1 United Nations Personnel

All those participating in some way in a UN integrated mission need to be aware of what an integrated mission is, why this specific type of mission design is being applied in a given situation, and which constitutive elements of the UN family have been integrated. A basic understanding is required of the various dimensions of peacebuilding operations, the phases of peacebuilding, and the roles and responsibilities of the various organizations that contribute to the overall effect, in order for all UN personnel to understand where they fit in this integrated and comprehensive approach. Otherwise, individuals and their groups

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Washington DC, 2002, in which they identify three stages: initial response, transformation and fostering sustainability.

<sup>28</sup> In the peacekeeping and peacebuilding context these are the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the Department of Field Support (DFS), the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

<sup>29</sup> Such as the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), etc.

<sup>30</sup> The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

<sup>31</sup> 'Monitoring' is a continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specific indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds (OECD, 2002:18).

<sup>32</sup> 'Evaluation' refers to the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results (OECD, 2002:21).

and organizations, are likely to work in isolation from each other and the larger UN system of which they are a part.

When people work in a disconnected fashion they are likely to start working at cross-purposes with each other. The system gets drained of its energy, as people apply pressure on each other, instead of focusing their combined and collective efforts on the conflict system that the peacebuilding mission is meant to deal with. Once individuals have grasped this essential insight, they become enablers who can identify potential coordination problems and rectify them at their level, thereby contributing to the overall coherence of the UN system.

Incorporating a module, or modules, on the integrated approach concept into every relevant training module, course or exercise, aimed at UN staff participating in some way in integrated missions, can contribute to such general awareness. It is important to keep this kind of general awareness training focused on the intent and objectives of the integrated approach, and not on its structures and mechanisms. The latter will differ from mission to mission, and do not necessarily convey the meaning or intent of the integrated approach concept. It is a common error to explain the integrated approach as a mission structure, as opposed to an ‘approach’ that should inform the work of every individual UN staff member, regardless of his or her role in the structure. Those who have grasped the functional logic of the comprehensive approach will be able to apply the integrated approach concept to their own work environment, irrespective of the form (mission structure) a specific mission takes.

All civilian, police and military personnel likely to work in an UN integrated mission should thus receive training on the integrated approach concept, whether at the generic level, as specialized training, mission-specific, pre-deployment or in-mission training. For instance, civilians deployed as human rights observers should ideally receive information on the integrated approach concept as part of their generic human rights observer training, as part of the pre-mission briefings and preparations and as part of their in-mission induction and other mission-specific training courses. In this way, personnel will develop an understanding of the overall UN system of which they are part, and their role therein.

### **3.2 African Union, European Union and other Non-UN Personnel**

As noted earlier, ‘integration’ in the context of the African Union or the European Union is often used to refer to the coming together of the civilian, police and military components of the AU or EU mission

in a ‘joint’ entity, such as a Joint Operation Centre. All AU personnel and those working alongside them (for instance UN, EU or NATO advisors and private contractors, as was the case in the African Mission in Sudan (AMIS)) need to understand the integration concept as it is used by the AU.

Furthermore, AU personnel and all other non-UN external actors operating alongside a UN integrated mission will also need to have some basic understanding of the integrated approach concept as used by the UN system, so that they can know how best to relate to it in the context of the wider country-level peacebuilding system of which they are a part. As explained, a UN integrated mission forms part of a wider peacebuilding system that incorporates all external peacebuilding actors at country level.

All external actors that form part of this wider peacebuilding system are interdependent, in that none of them can achieve the overall peacebuilding goals and objectives on their own. Each entity or programme contributes to only a part of the overall effort, and it is the combined, cumulative overall effort that builds momentum towards peace. Each of the various programmes, and each actor responsible for implementing these programmes, is thus mutually dependent on others to achieve a system-wide effect. Even if the external actors are not part of the UN integrated mission, they are linked into the same overall interdependent system.

Within this country-level context, the UN integrated mission will usually play a leading coordination role, as it officially represents the will of the international community through its UN Security Council mandate and reporting obligations. UN Security Council resolutions authorizing UN peace operations typically include a specific mandate to perform an overarching coordinating role. There will be an expectation that most non-UN external actors will participate in the overall comprehensive approach, and there will be various processes, mechanisms and structures to facilitate the coordination, harmonization and alignment processes necessary to achieve system-wide coherence.

### **3.3 The Humanitarian Community**

The humanitarian community, including the humanitarian elements of the UN family, has a special mandate that sets it apart from the political, security, human rights and development dimensions of the country-level peacebuilding system. Humanitarian action is premised on a concern for humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence from political influence. This implies that its actors cannot participate in the UN integrated approach concept, or a wider concept of peacebuilding



coherence, to the same degree as the other dimensions can, because its mandate excludes it from involvement in actions aimed at conflict resolution, or changing the conflict environment through peacebuilding. The independence of the humanitarian actors (as opposed to the interdependence of the peacebuilding actors) is recognized and safeguarded in the UN concept of an integrated mission.<sup>33</sup>

However, among the humanitarian community there is an expectation that most humanitarian actors at country level will participate in various coordination processes, and that some of these processes will be facilitated by the United Nations. The humanitarian coordination role of the UN has become widely accepted, and the UN serves in this role by providing a UN Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) at country level, supported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

The UN integrated missions concept recognizes the independence of humanitarian action. At the same time, it is also considered necessary that the work of the humanitarian community is factored into the thinking of the larger peacebuilding system. This delicate relationship is managed by creating two DSRSGs, and giving one of them the specific responsibilities of the HC function. As indicated briefly above, this DSRSG is commonly referred to as the DSRSG RC/HC, where the 'RC' refers to the Resident Coordinator or development coordination role, and the 'HC' to the Humanitarian Coordinator role. The DSRSG RC/HC is also the Deputy Designated Official (DDO) in the UN security system, which ensures that UN security decisions are not premised exclusively on political and security considerations, but that they also take into consideration the perspectives of the humanitarian and development communities.

This approach means that the humanitarian community has to be factored in, and reckoned with, in both the UN integrated approach and the wider country-level peacebuilding framework. The humanitarian community should be understood as connected with, but insulated from, the wider peacebuilding system, in the same way that a specific sub-network may be part of a larger network while also protected from it by a firewall.

It is useful to think of the humanitarian community as those working 'in' conflict, and of the rest of the external peacebuilding actors as those working 'on' conflict. In other words, whilst the peacebuilding system intends to have an effect 'on' the conflict system, the humanitarian actors do not. Although they operate 'in' a conflict context, their intent is focused on alleviating suffering and saving lives. They

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<sup>33</sup> *Note of Guidance on Integrated Missions*, paragraph 10.

achieve their neutrality and impartiality – and through it access to those in need, regardless of who is in control of a given area – by deliberately *not* seeking to have an effect ‘on’ the conflict itself. The humanitarian community should thus be connected with the peacebuilding system to the extent necessary for it and the system to mutually manage their presence and role in the same theatre, but they should not be expected to conform to, or participate in, those integration efforts of the system aimed at pursuing system-wide coherence. It is vital for the peacebuilding actors, including those in the UN integrated mission, to understand the unique mandate of the humanitarian actors, and for the humanitarian actors to receive training on the UN integrated approach concept and the wider peacebuilding context within which they will operate.

### **3.4 Internal Actors**

The internal actors are the most important element in the wider peacebuilding context. They are principally responsible for implementing their own peace process, and the work of the UN, AU and other non-UN external actors is carried out in support of their efforts. The internal actors that is responsible for liaison with the external actors need to understand the ‘integrated approach’ concept, and the wider peacebuilding system context, so that they can develop an understanding of how best to interact with it, in order to maximise the interaction to their own greatest benefit. It is, at the same time, critical that the external actors make an effort to understand the local context within which they operate, which includes a historic and socio-cultural grounding, as well as a needs-based approach. There will always be a tension between the need for international templates, like the integrated approach, that make it possible for international organizations like the UN to operate many different missions with one common support structure, and the need for each of these missions to reflect the unique context within which it has to operate. This tension will inform the detail structure of each mission, and will be a marriage between the universal template and the specific context. There is thus a need for both the internal and external actors to learn from and influence each other continuously.

One criticism of the integrated approach concept, and external actor coherence processes in general, is that it generates a united external actor front that leaves the internal actors with little choice but to accept the influence of the external actors. However, the converse is also true, in that if the internal actors learn to use the integrated missions to their advantage then their transaction costs will be minimized, as they will not have to expend resources to persuade a wide and diverse external actor community. Instead, the internal actors will only have to

persuade or influence a few key nodes within the integrated mission and external community, where after the contagion process within the closely connected integrated mission and interlinked external actor community should take over, spreading the message on its own. Special efforts should thus be made to inform key actors within the internal actor community of the underlying ideas and objectives of the integrated approach concept, and the wider country-level peacebuilding system approach.

For all the external categories, UN and AU integrated mission personnel, non-UN external peacebuilding actors and humanitarian actors, training can be conducted within their own professional fields, as pre-mission training, as mission-induction training and as ongoing mission specific training. For internal actors, special opportunities need to be created within the mission or country-level context.

In all these cases, integrated or joint training is encouraged, with the learning environment enriched by having multiple agencies representing some of the different actors involved in the field. Most military peacekeeping training centres have incorporated some form of integrated training in their peacekeeping training centres, and with very positive results. The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations has integrated its military and civilian training units, and most UN peace operations now have integrated training units at their mission headquarters.

### **3.5 Specialized Training**

Specialized training is needed to prepare those who are to perform specialized roles in maintaining the interface between the various peacebuilding dimensions. This includes personnel involved in undertaking assessments, planning, management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation. Each of these functions takes on a special meaning within the integrated approach context, as these are the key processes that generate a common understanding of the conflict system, a common strategic vision, common objectives, a comprehensive plan, common management and coordination processes, mechanisms and structures, common monitoring processes and joint evaluation processes.

Over the years, the main actors in each peacebuilding dimension (political, security, development, rule of law and human rights) have developed their own policies and procedures for assessment, planning, management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation. For instance, the UN development community has developed the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process, and the World Bank has developed the Poverty

Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) process, whilst the humanitarian community has developed the Common Humanitarian Assessment Plan (CHAP) process. In Liberia, some of these processes were initially brought together under the Results Focussed Transitional Framework (RFTF) in 2005, and later under an interim (2007) and then a fully-fledged Poverty Reduction Strategy (2008) called 'Lift Liberia'.

The UN Secretary-General has approved a new integrated planning process, the Integrated Mission Planning Process (IMPP).<sup>34</sup> The military and other security actors also have their own highly developed and specialized assessment, planning and monitoring tools. For instance, NATO uses the Effects Based Approach to Operations (EBAO), and many military officers that have been trained in EBAO will thus approach assessments, planning and evaluation from that perspective.

Specialized training will thus be needed for all those who will be working in assessment, planning, management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation in either the UN integrated approach context, or the wider country-level peacebuilding context. They will have to understand the UN integrated approach and the interdependence of all those interconnected through the country-level peacebuilding system, as well as the specialized processes, like the IMPP; and specialized structures, like the DSRSG RC/HC uncton, and the various mechanisms that flow from it. Eventually the system will either have to develop an interface mechanism(s) that makes these various processes interoperable, or that can integrate them at a higher level, or else it will have to develop new common processes and then persuade each participating organization to abandon its own processes and adopt the new common process. In the meantime, those closely involved with these processes should learn as much as possible from each other about their respective policies and processes. Then, armed with this knowledge and working together, they can chart a way forward, using a common vehicle such as the IMPP.

Specialized training should identify those in senior management, as well as those staffing each of these processes (assessments, planning, operational coordination, monitoring and evaluation) and provide them with the specialized knowledge necessary to understand each others' processes, mechanisms and structures. This will help them to jointly develop the new processes, mechanisms and structures necessary to achieve inter-operability among their different systems, with a view to producing common assessments, common planning, integrated management and coordination, joint monitoring and collaborative evaluations.

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<sup>34</sup> The Integrated Mission Planning Process (IMPP), UN, 2006b.

This would imply that those working in the Integrated Mission Planning Teams (IMPTs), Joint Operations Centres (JOCs), Joint Mission Analysis Cells (JMACs), Joint Logistic Operations Centres (JLOCs), and those engaged in the PRPS, UNDAFs, CHAPs, etc. should be trained in each other's policies and processes, as well as in any common tools that may be produced in the process. This can be done at the strategic level, e.g. by bringing together those working in these various equivalent areas at the UN headquarters in New York, but it should be undertaken especially at country level, where these different specialists should meet to teach and learn from each other about their respective policies and processes. Developing an integrated and systemic way of co-working among these agencies is in itself a process, and such training interventions should be understood as team-building and process enablers, as much as they are primarily vehicles for sharing knowledge.



## 4. Conclusions

The UN Integrated Approach concept has now become accepted as the guiding principle for future UN-led post-conflict complex peacebuilding missions. It is important that all those who participate in some or other form in UN integrated missions, or those who work alongside such missions – whether as part of a wider country level peacebuilding system, as part of the humanitarian community, or as internal actors – develop a basic understanding of this concept as formulated for the UN system, as well as the wider country-level peacebuilding system of which they are part.

The UN's Integrated Approach concept is increasingly being adopted by the AU and other regional organizations. However, there are important differences between the UN's system-wide coherence approach to integration, and the multi-component or 'joint' integration approach followed by the AU and other regional organizations. It is important to take note of these differences, and to focus training packages accordingly.

Training is a critical tool for the dissemination of new policies, processes and tools, especially in highly diversified organizations or systems. Training can thus be used as a tool to introduce the integrated approach concept to existing UN and AU missions, and those working alongside them, as well as to prepare those who will be deployed to such missions in future.

Specialized training is also needed to prepare those currently working in assessment, planning, management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation. These are critical areas of interface across the many agencies engaged in the various peacebuilding dimensions (political, security, development and human rights). As such they represent the most important nodes that will need to be influenced, if mission coherence and system-wide coherence are to be improved.





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