



JOINT STRATEGY

**“STABILIZATION THROUGH COMMUNITY-DRIVEN SAFETY AND
SOCIO-ECONOMIC RECOVERY IN SOMALIA”**

1. INTRODUCTION

This strategic programmatic note, presented by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and the Danish Demining Group (DDG), outlines a joint strategy which operationalizes the principles of the *Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development* in the context of Somalia.

Somalia may be considered one of the longest standing failed states in the world today. Two decades of intermittent but fierce conflict, widespread fragmentation of society, climactic hazards, massive displacement and questionable international interventions have left Somalis in a very dire situation.

Consistently with the principles of the Geneva Declaration and the UN Secretary General's Reports "Achieving Development through Armed Violence Reduction" from 2009, and "Keeping the Promise" from 2010, DRC and DDG work together to ensure that DDG armed violence prevention and reduction initiatives in Somalia are linked to DRC initiatives providing non-violent alternative livelihoods for individuals and communities.

DRC and DDG have thus developed a joint strategy whose goal is *"to contribute to the stabilisation of fragile parts of Somalia by enhancing community safety and improving the quality of lives and livelihoods of conflict affected populations"*.

This strategy encompasses and integrates the following DRC and DDG projects:

- 1) DRC's Community-Driven Recovery and Development (CDRD) project which focus on service delivery enhancement and bottom-up governance.
- 2) DRC's livelihoods and protection activities
- 3) DDG's Community Safety (CS) project which aims at reducing threats to human security through comprehensive community-driven programming.

This note will substantiate the applicability of the Geneva Declaration principles in the context of Somalia. It will provide an overview of DRC and DDG interventions. It will give the rationale for the joint strategy which integrates the CS approach with the CDRD approach, and links livelihoods and protection activities to this integrated approach. The note will finally spell out the operational aspects of the joint strategy.

The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development

The Geneva Declaration acknowledges that armed violence constitutes a major obstacle to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and that conflict prevention and resolution, violence reduction, human rights, good governance and peace-building are key steps towards reducing poverty, promoting economic growth and improving people's lives.

The Geneva Declaration background paper, *Armed Violence Prevention and Reduction*, underlines that the "complex links between armed violence and underdevelopment - with armed violence undermining development prospects, and underdevelopment and inequality fuelling armed violence - are becoming better recognized by policy-makers and development practitioners". The paper acknowledges that "armed violence prevention and reduction is fundamentally a development issue" and that "collective and interpersonal violence undermines development programmes, diminishes aid effectiveness, and puts achievement of the MDGs out of reach".

The Geneva Declaration has been signed by 109 states, 61 of which re-iterated their engagement in May 2010 by signing the Oslo Commitments on Armed Violence and the MDGs.

2. THE GENEVA DECLARATION IN THE CONTEXT OF SOMALIA

As the Geneva Declaration Secretariat's report on the *Global Burden of Armed Violence* has stated, the human and economic costs of armed violence are tremendous. Armed violence can trigger forced displacement, erode social capital, and destroy infrastructure. It can impede investment in reconstruction and reconciliation.¹

This is clearly the situation in Somalia which is a show-case of how armed violence undermines development, while underdevelopment fuels armed violence. As a result of the past two decades of conflict, Somalia is now characterised by a significant displacement of populations, widespread fragmentation of society, extremely high levels of food insecurity, erosion of the rule of law, massive proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and the build up of armament and ammunition stockpiles.

According to UNCHR data, the number of displaced Somalis has grown almost four-fold from 619.618 in early 2007 to 2.178.300 in 2009. Whilst the vast majority of displacement consists of people fleeing the direct effects of conflict violence, there are also a growing number of Somalis who are impacted by the secondary affects of conflict, which include breakdown of economy, failure of state services and ultimately reduced state and community coping mechanisms against hazards or shocks. For example, drought has now become a significant cause of displacement. Those affected suffer from lack of state services, but also limited international services, due to the low volume and poor coverage of aid services.

There is no sign that conflict in the South-Central part of Somalia will decrease. Instead, with the weakening of UN-backed Transitional Federal Government in Mogadishu, the growth of splinter opposition groups and the stalled peace processes, the outlook is bleak. Somalia is at war, and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future.

Even though the autonomous Northern region of Puntland is less volatile than South-Central Somalia, Puntland is experiencing a three-year rise in insecurity and political tension. At its roots are poor governance, weapons proliferation and a collapse of the intra-clan cohesion. The piracy problem is a dramatic symptom of deeper problems that, left untreated, could lead to Puntland's disintegration or overthrow by an underground militant Islamist movement.² The security situation is volatile and even small clan disputes threaten to develop into larger political problems for the government.

The self-declared Republic of Somaliland in the North-West has exhibited more stability than the other Somali regions in the last decade. However, Somaliland is still vulnerable to armed violence and negative external pressures. Political disputes, clan based politics and resource conflicts are on the increase. Furthermore, the continuing violence in South Central Somalia has led to an influx of displaced people that the region are ill-equipped to handle, and the extremists' suicide bombings of UN, presidential and Ethiopian facilities in October 2008 highlighted how easily Somaliland can again become victim of radicalisation and how quickly the aid it relies on can be choked by violence.

¹ "Global Burden of Armed Violence", Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, 2008

² International Crisis Group, "Somalia: The Trouble with Puntland", Africa Briefing N°64, 12 August 2009

3. DRC AND DDG INTERVENTIONS: CDRD AND CS PROJECTS AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO SOMALIA

DRC and DDG strongly believe that in Somalia there is a need to support local capacities to both enhance community safety and strengthen protection and livelihood opportunities, in order to stabilise fragile parts of the region and improve the quality of life for Somalis.

DDG and DRC have established and tested community-driven concepts in the fields of community safety and community recovery and development. The CS project and the CDRD projects aim at supporting the local communities and their informal systems of governance.

CS Project - The project's goal is to strengthen the target communities' capacity to resist pressures, and prevent and resolve behaviours which contribute to violent conflict. With a mix of quick impact and long term impact interventions, this project comprises interventions aimed at the people affected by armed violence, the perpetrators of armed violence, the instruments used to commit violence and the wider institutional/cultural environment that enables or protects against violence. It emphasises participatory visioning, planning and implementation and focuses at the grassroots level on bringing members of a community together to identify and develop solutions to their problems.³

CDRD Project - Service delivery enhancement and bottom-up governance are at the heart of this project. The project's goal is to contribute to improve communities' livelihoods in Somalia. Specifically, the objectives of the project are to (a) empower communities by enabling them to freely exercise their right to decide on the design, implementation and evaluation of their own development programs; (b) meet community development needs by providing social and economic infrastructure and services; (c) promote bottom-up governance development and to build the capacity of local government to be able to take over the function and responsibility of helping communities help themselves.⁴

One tangible benefit of the CS project in Somalia is the reduction in conflicts in target communities while an important tangible benefit of the CDRD project is the visible reconstruction achieved through community cooperation. The increased income, new infrastructures, or renewed social services have provided immediate affirmation of the benefits of peace or stability in communities in Somaliland Puntland and South-Central Somalia.

³ For a full overview of the Community Safety approach please consult the webpage: <http://www.danishdemininggroup.dk/about-armed-violence-reduction/community-safety-interventions/>

⁴ For a full overview of the CDRD project please visit the website: <http://www.somcdrd.org>

4. DRC/DDG'S JOINT STRATEGY ON COMMUNITY-DRIVEN SAFETY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The signatories of the Geneva Declaration committed themselves to “strengthen [their] efforts to integrate armed violence reduction and conflict prevention programmes into national, regional and multilateral development frameworks, institutions and strategies, as well as into humanitarian assistance, emergency, and crisis management initiatives”. In addition, the signatories are committed to “[work] on practical measures that ensure that armed violence prevention and reduction initiatives target specific risk factors and groups, and are linked to programmes providing non-violent alternative livelihoods for individuals and communities”.⁵

In line with the above commitment, DRC and DDG have developed a joint strategy that will ensure that both DDG interventions aimed at armed violence prevention and reduction, and DRC interventions providing non-violent alternative livelihoods for individuals and communities target same areas and risk factors. The overall aim of DRC/DDG joint strategy is to:

“Contribute to the stabilisation of fragile parts of Somalia by enhancing community safety and improving the quality of lives and livelihoods of conflict affected populations.”

DRC and DDG believe that a combination and synchronization of efforts will maximize the overall impact of interventions.

DRC and DDG presence is increasingly determined and shaped by the conflict and displacement patterns in Somalia. As a consequence DRC/DDG has now established itself with areas of interventions along the various conflict and “Displacement Axis” in the region, with a total of 7 DDG field offices and 14 DRC offices in Somalia, of which most offices are located in transit areas or the receiving ends of the displacement axis. The only office which is consistently in the “sending end” is the DRC/DDG’s office in Mogadishu.

The joint DRC/DDG strategy will integrate, both strategically and operationally, the community-driven socio-economic recovery with the community-driven safety interventions, and ensure linkages with livelihoods and protection activities⁶ that take place within the displacement axis. In this way, DRC and DDG will ensure a balance between humanitarian assistance and longer term stabilisation and community safety assistance. The joint strategy will thus support areas and communities affected by conflict and displacement that:

- show a genuine potential for localised stabilisation and recovery;
- have a less certain immediate prospect for stabilisation, but are located in regions/districts that are traditionally perceived as critical for local/regional stability.

⁵ The Geneva Declaration at <http://www.genevadeclaration.org/fileadmin/docs/Geneva-Declaration-Armed-Violence-Development-091020-EN.pdf>

⁶ Please note that DRC implements another strategic component focusing on life saving activities. This complements the other components, but for the purpose of this note the former component is not included.

5. OPERATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE JOINT STRATEGY

In order to achieve the objective of the joint strategy, the CS project and the CDRD project will adopt a harmonized approach. The CS project and the CDRD project will target same areas and communities. The two projects will thus provide a comprehensive set of interventions that take into consideration both safety and socio-economic dimensions. In addition, other DRC protection and livelihood activities will be linked to CS and CDRD interventions.

The following summarizes the main operational aspects of the joint DRC/DDG strategy:

- DRC and DDG activities for IDPs and host communities in Somalia will be concentrated in selected communities, which meet criteria related to potential for stabilisation;
- In each target community, a CDRD approach will be followed. Under this approach each community will undergo an extensive participatory processes, prepare a community development plan, will receive training to implement their development plans, will receive a block grant to fund communal socio-economic infrastructures and services which are identified in the development plans, and will receive a social service access grant to allow vulnerable community members to access selected social services;
- In addition, in each target community CS initiatives will be implemented. Each community will prepare community safety plans through an extensive participatory processes, and will receive training to be able to implement the community safety plans;
- CDRD and CS will adopt a harmonized participatory process, which will have a common set of activities for community members, and common training components for community leaders;
- Simultaneously, livelihood activities will be offered to selected individual beneficiaries or group of beneficiaries, who may or may not be direct beneficiaries of the CDRD grants; livelihood activities will be informed by regular surveys on market demands, so that skills are linked to the actual demand;
- CDRD and CS will carry out joint baseline surveys, and will adopt a single Results Framework and a joint M&E system;
- CDRD and CD will develop a joint accountability framework, which will be drawn upon the framework used by CDRD. The latter has a set of measures that allow project stakeholders to both have access to and generate information (i.e. a web-based project management system, community-driven participatory monitoring, and a complaints mechanism).
- CDRD and CS interventions will be linked to district-level plans, through partnerships with the UN Join Programme on Local Governance and through the participation in the Somali Community Security Framework;

In addition to the common set of CS/CDRD activities, the CS project will be based on the wishes stated by target communities in their community safety plans be able to assist communities with the following additional community safety activities that do not fall under the harmonized approach:

- *Advocacy with community leaders* for reduction of (armed) violence, safe handling and storage of firearms, handover and destruction of ERW and cooperation with the police;
- *Removal and destruction of ERW* in order to prevent accidents as well as future use of these items as tools of violence;
- *Mine risk education* to teach safe behaviour in potentially contaminated areas;
- *Firearms safety education* for firearm owners and dependants to encourage safe behaviour when handling and storing firearms in order to prevent accidents and foster a wider ethos of responsibility;
- *Production and distribution of safe storage devices for firearms* in order to introduce a systematic firearms-management regime, prevent thefts by criminal elements and restrict accessibility for children and others who are vulnerable to accidents;
- *Conflict management education* to enable settlement of minor conflicts peacefully and discourage the use of (armed) violence;
- *Strengthening of relationships between security providers and communities* through advocacy activities and establishment and training of community based policing mechanisms to facilitate improved communication and cooperation.

6. CONTACT

Klaus Ljoerring Pedersen, Regional Director, DDG Horn of Africa & Representative for Armed Violence Reduction, Cell: +254 716 852 501, E-mail: klpc@drc.dk

Peter Klansoe, Regional Director, DRC Horn of Africa and Yemen, Cell: +254 723 111 359, E-mail: peter.klansoe@drc.dk

7. ANNEX: MAP OF DRC AND DDG ACTIVITIES IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

