



The New Deal and Ebola – A Framework for Effective Recovery: An International Dialogue Brainstorming Workshop Report

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INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE STEERING GROUP MEETING
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A Workshop Report

The New Deal and Ebola – A framework for effective recovery

An International Dialogue Brainstorming Workshop

27 February 2015

OECD Headquarters, Paris

Summary

The Secretariat of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (the International Dialogue) in partnership with UNDP, hosted a brainstorming workshop: ‘The New Deal and Ebola – A framework for effective recovery’, on 27 February 2015, at the OECD headquarters in Paris. [Participants](#), included the g7+ national focal points from the Governments of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone, experts from multilateral institutions, development partners representatives, OECD governments and civil society, working on the Ebola recovery process and the New Deal at country and global levels. **The objectives were to enable the sharing of experiences between countries, development partners, and civil society, involved in the response and recovery process, as well as identifying and agreeing on practical ways of linking effective Ebola response and recovery to the goals and commitments of the New Deal.**

General principles and recommendations (see below) were agreed upon and an [Outcomes Statement](#) issued (see annex), which participants endorsed and agreed to circulate through all possible channels to delegates to the Ebola Conference “From Emergency to Recovery”, scheduled for 3 March 2015 in Brussels. Beyond Brussels, participants agreed that the core messages from the workshop would be used to engage with national recovery strategy development processes at country and global levels in order to facilitate their integration of New Deal principles and experiences of New Deal implementation.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. **Recovery must build on the principles of the New Deal** in order to open up space for New Deal implementation when the time is ripe for development. This means focusing on rebuilding institutions in ways that reinforce the five Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs), which are all interrelated. It also means focusing on systems, not sectors (for example: strengthening the system that makes health service delivery possible).
2. International partners and affected countries must **act now to ensure that states overcome the crisis and build up their resilience to future shocks**. The Ebola epidemic revealed fragilities but also the resilience of the affected states, which were able to gain compliance from citizens but not without huge costs and with pockets of insecurity. Trust cannot be taken for granted and must be rebuilt within society (overcoming stigmatization) and between states and citizens. This makes the New Deal, whose focus is on rebuilding state-society relations, highly relevant.
3. **National ownership means putting governments in the driving seat and fostering inclusive participation of citizens**. The Ebola crisis revealed the importance of **decentralisation** – bringing government closer to the people. This costs more, yet it would cost much more not to invest in it.

Follow up

At the end of the workshop, participants agree on **4 next steps**:

- 1. To develop and implement a communications plan to disseminate the Outcomes Statement as widely as possible (International Dialogue to lead)**
- 2. To identify and share key influencing opportunities and strategies for engagement over the upcoming months (International Dialogue and UNDP)**
- 3. To develop a 'best practice' guidance note deepening further the key messages and identifying how they could be practically implemented at country level**
- 4. To recruit an international consultant (for 3 months) to be based in Freetown, Sierra Leone, to support the development of New Deal aligned recovery strategies in the 3 countries**

Full Workshop Report

1. Rationale: Why the Workshop?

At the last International Dialogue Steering Group meeting, held in Washington, 13 October 2014, the Co-Chairs of the International Dialogue mandated its Secretariat to work on the linkages between the New Deal and the Ebola crisis and to facilitate discussions on this topic. The New Deal, since its endorsement in 2011, has aimed to set a global standard for engaging in fragile and conflicted affected states by focusing on investment in building effective institutions as key to addressing the root causes of fragility. The emphasis of the New Deal framework on country leadership and rebuilding effective and resilient institutions in fragile situations makes it highly relevant to developing effective Ebola response and recover strategies. The Ebola outbreak in three New Deal signatory countries (Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea) revealed and compounded institutional weaknesses but also demonstrated the resilience of both social and state institutions.

On 12 December 2014 the UN Secretary-General also requested that UNDP lead a multi-partner effort to support the design and development of Ebola related recovery plans in the three countries mostly affected by Ebola (Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone) in which are in the Mano River basin region. UNDP in close partnership with the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the European Union, and UN agencies organized a team of experts to support the affected countries. In addition to consolidating ongoing Ebola related assessment reports and national strategies the team undertook field visits to the countries to engage with the governments, civil society, the private sectors, and international partners operating in the countries. The preliminary results of these efforts and the emerging draft recovery plans were the subject of discussion at the Brussels Conference, which took place on 3rd March 2015.

The idea for the workshop, attended by some 20 participants from multilateral institutions, governments, and civil society organisations, emerged against this backdrop. The morning sessions were devoted to lesson sharing, whilst the afternoon sessions were used to develop practical recommendations, in groups, for how the New Deal could be mainstreamed into recovery efforts in practice.

2. Objectives

- To provide an opportunity for government representatives (IDPS focal point) from the 3 affected countries, signatories to the New Deal, to share their experience in the implementation of the New Deal and their own country's situation vis-à-vis the Ebola Crisis, including the National Recovery Strategy with a wider group (including UNDP, leading the ERA team)
- To collectively brainstorm about how to ensure that the New Deal could be used to frame thinking and priority setting for recovery in each of the countries of the region – in practical ways.

3. Recovery Strategies in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea

Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea's presentations of their emerging **National Recovery Strategies showed they faced similar challenges and impacts** of the crisis (economic, health system, and social and security area). Yet the different emphases in their presentations reflected the **different stages of the recovery in each country**. Whilst Liberia and Sierra Leone's presentations focused on response and post Ebola recovery strategies, Guinea's presentation focused more specifically on response measures and prevention need to bring Ebola infection rates to zero. For each country, **recovery was seen as a 'short term' interim measure with a duration of about 12-18 months**. The challenge will be to revise and update existing national plans and create sufficient scope to build bridges between them and emerging recovery strategies. Both Sierra Leone and Liberia are also in the process of revising existing national plans, with scope for reintroducing the New Deal framework into both recovery and longer term development planning.

All three countries see scope for introducing a New Deal framework. This could arise through revising (or carrying out, in the case of Guinea) Fragility Assessments (nationwide consultations), and aligning recovery strategies with national plans that have already integrated the New Deal principles. The New Deal inspired mechanisms could also be used to rationalise more transparent aid management systems, the use of country systems, capacity building to make that possible, and a movement towards more programme and budget support. All countries highlighted the importance of **disaggregating pooled funding to ensure clarity of funding streams** for the three countries and of transparency by external actors, in order for each country to have a clear sense of resources entering their countries, including medical and logistical assets and humanitarian support and effectively cost their recovery strategies.

Liberia

Theo Addey, the Deputy National Coordinator from the Liberia Development Alliance (LDA) at the Ministry of Finance, outlined the impact of Ebola on national development objectives, detailed in the Agenda for Transformation (AfT) and the Vision 2030 process ([see his presentation here](#)), as the most serious threat to state stability and security posed since the end of the war in 2003. He insisted on the need to stabilise the economy first and deliver key services and support to communities affected by the crisis, as a precondition to getting back on track with the national development plans. The Economic Stabilization and Recovery Plan (ESRP) includes:

- agriculture stimulus packages
- rebuilding the health sector
- supporting education and private sectors
- providing employment opportunities to local communities

- introducing cash for work programmes
- additional interventions to update of the Vision2030 and the Agenda for Transformation and facilitate a smooth transition for implementation

He insisted that the focus on the economy does not mean that security concerns are ignored, but are reflected in the national prioritisation planning process (the process to update existing national plans) which is ongoing and will be endorsed by May 2015. **The Government is committed to getting New Deal implementation back on track by reviving the Compact development process that was underway prior to the crisis**, using its country systems inventory, building institutional capacity, and enabling the government to take a lead in efficient service delivery. **The Ebola recovery strategy development process has opened up space for wider-Government buy-in for the New Deal principles. Yet it has also increased competition between competing ministries for funds.**

Sierra Leone

Abie Kamara, the Deputy Director of the Development Assistance Co-ordination Office (DACO) in Sierra Leone's Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, **outlined a two phased recovery strategy: an immediate 18 month recovery plan to address the immediate impacts of the crisis across a range of sectors, and a medium to long term strategy**, currently being revised to take full account of the impact of the virus and spearhead Sierra Leone back on a development path. ([see her presentation here](#))

The immediate plan would focus on rebuilding health systems, WASH services, education services, improving livelihoods, economic recovery, strengthening decentralised services, and facilitating the transition from response to recovery.

In terms of approach, Sierra Leone plans to use the Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals as guiding principles and emphasised the need to rebuild social trust as critical to enabling the state to regain stability, focus on youth and women's livelihoods, strengthen local resilience and leadership, facilitate access to justice and security, strengthening inclusiveness, and community participation.

For the medium to long term strategy, the focus would be on revising the existing Agenda for Prosperity, so that it distinguishes more clearly between medium and long term goals. It is based on a revised Fragility Assessment, integrates lessons learned from the impact of the virus on the country's development trajectory, and aims at developing a resilience strategy against future shocks. She also emphasised the importance of a regional approach and cross border coordination.

Future opportunities for shaping the national recovery strategy development in country were outlined, notably with the revision of the draft strategy process and nationwide consultations.

In its international engagement, the Sierra Leonean Government will continue to insist on the use of country systems, regional funding pools, but a disaggregation of pooled funding streams to enable clear distinction between regional and national funding flows. This will allow for more clarity on volumes coming in to each country, better aid management systems – which do not currently exist because of the absence of clear disclosure practices and uncoordinated actions by external actors – securing additional financial resources and increasing fiscal space to address the huge economic dent, compounded by the crisis.

She highlighted the importance of learning and sharing lessons from the Ebola outbreak between countries of the region, to enable the country to address future shocks and formulate a regional approach, in terms of cross border collaboration and coordination, and in building strong resilience systems.

Guinea

Ibrahima Seck, the designated g7+ focal point for the Government of Guinea, from SENAREC-GUINEE focused **almost exclusively on improving effective response to the current crisis by raising awareness and putting in place communication strategies with emphasis on prevention measures**. In addition, he insisted on the management and prevention of the Ebola virus and bringing and keeping infection rates down to zero, via good health and hygiene practices (WASH); promoting better governance and management of allocated funds, improving access to health services and bringing services closer to the people, by decentralizing treatment centres to the local level, strengthening human and institutional capacity; changing cultural practices (burial practices) and strengthening and rebuilding trust between state and citizens, addressing the huge problem of discrimination associated with the virus, and promoting appropriate economic development. He also emphasised the importance of data collection, and the need to conduct and update data to quantify the impact of the epidemic at national level, and support for the introduction of effective monitoring frameworks. ([see his presentation here](#))

4. ERA explained: UNDP presentation

Samuel Doe (Policy Advisor for Crisis, Fragility and Resilience, currently leading the ERA process), **presented the key findings from the Joint Ebola Recovery Assessment team of experts** from the UNDP, World Bank, African Development Bank, the European Union, and UN agencies, set up in December 2015 to rapidly support national recovery development plans. The ERA report focused on four broad themes: i) Health, nutrition and WASH, ii) Governance, peacebuilding and social cohesion, iii) Infrastructure and basic services and iv) Socio-economic revitalisation, all of which, unsurprisingly, are reflected in the national recovery plans. Its conclusions insisted on the following:

- **Understanding why systems did fail so quickly**
- **Acknowledging the huge impact across all sectors** (social, economic, political, security)
- **Decentralisation as key to effective responses** (lack of governance at local level and proximity to communities led to of trust)
- **Linking early warning/prevention systems** (food security, security, health)
- **Bridging the human capacity gap**, especially at local level by investing in in building local capacity
- **The lack of basic infrastructure as furthering the spread of the crisis**
- **Peacebuilding challenges** remain persistent and lie at the heart of the scale of the human losses (weak state-society, reconciliation challenges)
- **Safe spaces needed for dialogue to discuss** why and how systems broke down, what happened and how people perceived the effectiveness of the response. It is critical to enable societal healing and rebuilding state-society relations
- **Regional interconnectedness as a weakness and a strength**: The Kissi triangle used as an example. It is the intersection between Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea and the epicentre of war over a decade ago, it has now been the epicentre of the Ebola crisis. Yet it reflects the interconnectedness of the region and could become the epicentre for economic revitalisation and economic stability.

5. Conclusions: Summary Morning Session

1. **New Deal is relevant** to Response, Recovery and Post Recovery phases (Development). **Recovery must build on principles of the New Deal and the New Deal should NOT be seen as only relevant**

- to development phase.** Recovery has to be conducted in spirit of the New Deal to open up space for New Deal implementation when time is ripe. This means a focus on **systems NOT sectors** (not health sector, but system that makes health service delivery possible)
2. **Putting countries in the driving seat** can aid response and recovery: Lessons from Liberia show what can be achieved when the International Community places the world's best health experts at the disposal of and in support of the national Health Sector, rather than operating independently. This should be drawn and documented. These lessons should be used to set standards for the UN reform and following the New Deal thinking.
 3. **All PSGs – Inclusive Politics, Security, Justice, Building Economic Foundations and Revenues and Services are key to restoring state society relations** weakened by Ebola shock. All PSGs are mutually reinforcing and need to be integrated into the recovery efforts to ensure that window of opportunity is not lost, patience does not give way to uprising.
 4. **Act now to ensure states get over the crisis, and build up their resilience to future shocks.** The Ebola shock revealed fragilities but also resilience of fragile states, able to gain compliance from citizens, but not without huge costs, and pockets of insecurity. Trust cannot be taken for granted and must be rebuilt – within society (overcoming stigmatization) and between states and citizens.
 5. Economic Development – PSG4 – is key to security and security is needed to promote economic development. **Engaging the Private sector for recovery and post recovery is critical.**
 6. National ownership and nation-wide ownership of citizens are both key to effective recovery. **Community support, participation and leadership have been vital in tackling the crisis.** Guidance from state to communities has actually worked (even if expectations are now high that states will deliver basic services). Development partners should continue to support state efforts to forge relations with their citizens, rather than working independently with communities, which undermines state efforts.
 7. **Supporting effective governance at local level is a must.** This has been neglected by the New Deal in the past focused on building national institutions. Yet Ebola revealed that effective response relied on operational local structures/able to service local needs. The inability of government to reach this level undermined civil trust. **Decentralisation as key:** it costs but it would cost much more not to invest in it. Not investing in decentralised institutions/services made cost of crisis higher. New Deal Monitoring report and experience from Somalia, highlight the importance of support to decentralised administrations (Liberia and Agence Française de Développement can share lessons).
 8. **Regional Focus is critical.** Regional interconnectedness of three countries allowed virus to spread so rapidly from epicentre, but economic potential should be explored
 9. **Aid transparency even during response and recovery phase is vital.** Countries need to know what they are getting, aid needs to be predictable and on budget (resource mapping). This will enable countries to institutionally build capacity to deliver services to citizens in ways that promote peacebuilding. **Monitoring and Evaluation need to be prioritised and not bypassed because of crisis context.**
 10. Basic aid effectiveness principles should not be ignored. **New Deal monitoring report highlighted poor investment in use of country systems and capacity building for use of country systems** prior to the Ebola crisis, even when reform showed good progress. Mutual accountability frameworks need to work effectively – be revived where they exist and introduced where they do not.

GOUP DISCUSSIONS: Afternoon Session

Break-out groups discussed the 'HOW' question, i.e. **how the New Deal experiences and sets of tools, could be put into practice in the recovery context.** The first group discussed the relevance of the FOCUS tools at the disposal of governments to put the New Deal into practice (Fragility Assessments, One Vision One Plan, Compacts, Use of PSGs to monitor, Support political dialogue and leadership) whilst the second group looked at how TRUST principles – basic aid effectiveness approaches directed at donors (Transparency, Risk Sharing, Use of Country systems, Strengthening Capacity, Timely and Predictable Aid) could be used in the recovery context. Their conclusions were as follows:

Group 1: FOCUS

- **Fragility Assessments:** Some sort of *assessment of systemic fragility* that led to the scale of the crisis is needed, but *not* necessarily a New Deal style Fragility Assessment with the potential of overly exposing the government to public scrutiny at a difficult time. Sierra Leone is keen to update its own existing FA, but many parts of the country continue to be inaccessible, making the idea of country wide consultations unpractical. A widely consultative exercise could help to restore public confidence but would not replace the need for a frank assessment of why fragility issues were not paid attention to prior to the crisis, possibly behind 'closed doors' initially, between governments and development partners.
- **One Revised Plan** should be promoted – which incorporates recovery needs and critically adjusted previous goals to take account of Ebola impact and what Ebola revealed. Yet political economy battles between ministries to get new funding may make this difficult. Donors need to support governments in efforts to revise their One Vision One Plan in light of this. Governments can help by doing Dedicated Periodic Reviews (as advocated in New Deal Monitoring Report) monitoring progress on plan. There is an overlapping rather than sequencing between One Vision One Plan and Recovery Strategy.
- **Benchmarking:** Mutual Accountability Frameworks should be revised to incorporate new Benchmarks where they exist (Sierra Leone) and introduced where they do not, along the lines of revised plan. New Deal/ International Dialogue – necessary technical and financial resources. MAF creates platform for good dialogue. This should be the platform for regular and continued dialogue – between donors and governments and should build on existing platforms.
- **Community networks built up and reinforced in Ebola response** could become **vehicles for state/citizen dialogue.** Donors who support civil society could explore with government how to reinforce these new spaces, and help rebuild trust between states/citizens.

Group 2: TRUST

- **Address absence of good data:** There is a need for an inventory of Ebola Aid because of absence of full disclosure. Guinea should take the opportunity for establishing an Aid Information Management System. Need to get over regional funding pooling and disbursement through international organisations and NGO. There are difficulties because so much goes through local level – therefore addressing this issue is important for building state/ society relations. Citizen's trust in the state is undermined by a lack of good data on funding.
- **Use of Country systems:** Good practice examples should help instil more confidence, e.g. Sierra Leone example of 'real time audits' – strengthens case for use of country systems – donors must

recognise and reward this by channelling more aid through these systems. The political agenda of New Deal makes it possible to push country systems use amongst donors and country government.

- **Fragility Assessments can be used to define benchmarks for use of country systems;** Efforts should be made to use governments systems. **Moving gradually away from project support towards programme support and budget support.**
- **Pooled funding** is the preferred funding modality – yet attention must be paid to regional versus national funding channels and the need to differentiate between types of pooled funds and mechanisms that respond to need for recovery and quick funding, which should cover all PSGs.

6. Outcome Statement (see annex)

A voting exercise was used to distil three key messages as ‘general principles’ from the conclusions of morning session, and three key messages from the group work (afternoon session) as practical means of implementing the New Deal in recovery processes, all of which were then pulled together in the outcomes statement (see annex) broadly endorsed by members of the group.

7. NEXT STEPS

i. Development of internal and external communication plan to disseminate the statement and subsequent work

As well as disseminating the Outcomes Statement to participants at the Brussels Conference, and more widely. Participants agreed on the importance of putting in place effective communication mechanisms to promote New Deal principles and recommendations as part of the recovery process in the Ebola affected countries. The International Dialogue secretariat was asked to follow up with a suggested plan, for engaging different media/social and more traditional, in which collaboration by participants would be requested, and to put in place dedicated capacities to support continued networking within the group and beyond on these issues.

ii. Participants agreed to focus on shaping national strategy development processes at country and regional levels by

- facilitating the establishment of New Deal/Ebola Recovery platforms at country level which would take forward the conclusions regarding Mutual Accountability Frameworks as a key mechanism for returning to structured and regular dialogue between partners and governments based on New Deal principles and developing a practical strategy for engaging key players (lead donors)
- turning the key messages into more robust concrete practical recommendations for New Deal recommendations in recovery plans (International Dialogue secretariat ‘good practice paper’)
- putting in place dedicated consultants to support national and regional recovery plan development and alignment of national plans with the New Deal (UNDP).

iii. Participants also agreed to using the messages in the [outcome statement](#) to shape global engagement, notably the OECD Global Forum OECD, World Bank Spring Meetings (April 17-19), and UN Meeting June 2015.