

CONFLICT WATCH

Advisory Consortium on Conflict Sensitivity
(ACCS)

May Issue # 1

“PRDP II: What Needs to Change?” *The Views from Te-Yat*

Compiled by Odong Jackson

1.0 Introduction

The Refugee Law Project under its Advisory Consortium on Conflict Sensitivity runs a bi-monthly radio talk show on Mega Fm called Te-Yat (literally meaning Under the Tree) where critical issues are discussed. The overall objective of this Te-Yat radio program is to act as a forum for information gathering and sharing, public review processes through which information will be available for contextual analysis and early warnings in relation to potential conflict risks, evidence based advocacy, community's perceptions on ongoing peacebuilding and recovery programmes in northern Uganda. The ACCS-RLP Te-Yat radio program runs on Mega FM every first and third Saturday of the Month from 10:00am to 12:00noon.

On Saturday May 19, 2012, five (5) guest speakers through the Te Yat radio program explored critical issues regarding; the progress of PRDP I, the proposed PRDP II. The debate focused on public opinions in regard to their perception on the achievements of PRDP I and the hope of PRDP II. The purpose of this particular talk show was to analyze the milestones attained by PRDP I, challenges encountered, lessons learnt and emerging conflict issues that need to be taken care of by PRDP II. The speakers also addressed the question of what PRDP II could do differently from PRDP I.

The panelists for this talk show included: Eng. Andrew Olal Obong (Gulu District Engineer), Hon. Opio Ateker (LC V Councilor Awach Sub-County), Mego Rosalba Oywa (Gender Activist and CSO representative), Stephen Oola (RLP ACCS Coordinator) and Louis Okello (ACCS Northern Uganda Project Manager at International Alert).

2.0. Key Issues following PRDP I

In summary, the following are some of the key issues highlighted;

- The Lack of simple and clear information and limited sensitization of the



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community on PRDP I. This has affected the implementation and realisation of the objectives articulated in the PRDP framework.

- Functionality of infrastructures (in health, education, water and roads) built under PRDP I remains a big issue that has not been adequately addressed. Many of the facilities are redundant and delivering poorer services or not functional.

- Shoddy work by contractors: some constructions have developed cracks and callers said by the time PRDP II commences, some classrooms and bridges would have collapsed.

- The Panellists highlighted the capacity gaps, human resource challenges (both in terms of numbers and technical knowledge in new districts) which present a huge gap in ensuring that PRDP/PCDP delivers tangible peace results.

- Lack of logistics/facilitation for monitoring projects under PRDP has made different officials less energized and less interested in keenly supervising & monitoring the implementation of PRDP/PCDP

- Reduced budget support

from central government. The element of additionality is not achieved as the government reduced normal grants to PRDP districts. Thereby, raising concerns of government's commitment to practically rebuilding northern Uganda.

- The diversion of funds meant for PRDP activities.

- Centralisation of implementation of Objective 1 and Objective 4 which remains at the Central government level hence districts could not implement their peacebuilding priorities.

3.0. Questions, Comments and Concerns from Listeners.

Six phone calls were received from Amuru, Kitgum, Gulu town, Nwoya and Karuma, one of which was from a female and the key comments/questions recorded included;

- What PRDP II would do differently from PRDP 1?

- Whether there is value for money in PRDP implementation?

- How will OPM address the illusion of how the same contractors who do shoddy work continue to win tenders?

- What will be done on the

lack of proper accountability is creating suspicion of corruption and mismanagement of PRDP funds?

- Why NUSAF II sub-projects particularly in Amuru district are not being funded several months after projects were submitted and PRDP I coming to an end?

- Why is there a difference in design and construction of doctors, staff houses and that of teachers?

- What are the key priority areas of PRDP II and how will it address individuals affected by the conflicts?

- What will PRDP II do differently to have direct impact on people's lives?

- What happens to projects and constructions that have stopped on the way?

- What will happen to LRA fighters still in the Congo? Will PRDP revive the Juba peace talks?

4.0. Lessons Learnt

The following recommendations were identified as critical for PRDP II to make a difference on people's lives;

- Increase the awareness of PRDP programs and modalities through sensitization at grassroots level parish by parish.

- Incentivize the community to participate and monitor PRDP projects by supporting existing local groups engaging in savings scheme and communal farming.
- Direct support to youth groups engaging in agriculture, music and arts, drama groups and entrepreneurial ventures.
- Prioritize the functionality of health, education and community structures through increased salaries to teachers and doctors in PRDP districts to attract qualified staff and motivate workers.
- PRDP II money should be sent to the districts with guidelines to allow each district determine its key priorities for each year but not conditioned to OPMs set priorities.
- PRDP II money should not be sent back to central government in case districts were unable to implement particular project within the financial year since some districts lack capacity.
-  There should be adequate budget and timely disbursement for funds for supervision and monitoring of PRDP II projects.
- The question of additionality should be addressed. There is need to review government grants to PRDP district prior to PRDP I and the a similar grant should be maintained alongside the PRDP II funding for northern Uganda to catch up with other parts of the country.
- Centralized nature of some projects such as roads and bridges creates stagnation and delays in their implementation.
- Need for a Reparation policy to target individuals affected by conflict and their communities to heal and move towards reintegration and reconciliation.

5.0. Conclusion

There was consensus from the callers and the panelists that PRDP I made substantial contribution in the recovery direction but that full recovery is still very much a work in progress. A lot still needs to be done and differently for PRDP II to complete the job. There is need to prioritize Objective 4 for sustainable peacebuilding and reconciliation in order to consolidate the Juba peace dividend. There was also a great concern that PRDP I did not address the reparation needs of the local people who suffered direct physical and psychological injuries of the conflicts to aid them to heal and recover from the two decade LRA insurgency. This implies that, for PRDP II to be wholly embraced by the local people, especially with lapse of the Amnesty Act, there is need for a comprehensive strategy that seeks to end the ongoing LRA insurgency in neighboring while responding to the physical, economic, social and psychological needs of the affected individuals and communities in northern Uganda.

About Refugee Law Project (RLP)

The Refugee Law Project (RLP) seeks to ensure fundamental human rights for all, including; asylum seekers, refugees, and internally displaced persons within Uganda. RLP envision a country that treats all people within its borders with the same standards of respect and social justice.

About Advisory Consortium on Conflict Sensitivity (ACCS)

The Advisory Consortium on Conflict Sensitivity (ACCS) is a three member consortium that brings together, Refugee Law Project, International Alert and Saferworld. The overall aim of ACCS is assisting DFID and partners in strengthening the potential of the PCDP and recovery process to address the causes of conflict and contribute to sustainable peace and stability. Under ACCS, RLP is leading on contextual analysis of the overall recovery process (focusing on conflict indicators, issues and dynamics), and early warning as and when necessary.

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