



## **Building Consensus on Common Ground Issues: North Darfur Youth**

**El Fasher, North Darfur  
August 31 – September 2, 2009**

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## A. INTRODUCTION

In collaboration with the University Center for Peace and Development Studies in North, South, and West Darfur, and in coordination with the United Nations–African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) Civil Affairs Department (CAD), the Darfur–Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC) is facilitating broad and inclusive consultations with key stakeholders to discuss and find solutions to the root causes of the conflict in Darfur.

**Building Consensus on Common Ground Issues: North Darfur Youth**, one in a series of statewide consultations with specific stakeholder groups that the DDDC is facilitating in each Darfur State, was held at the University Center for Peace and Development Studies, in El Fasher, North Darfur, on August 31 – September 2, 2009.

In an effort to work closer with more of its partners and help promote the capacity of local organizations, the DDDC collaborated with the Ajaweed Organization for Peace and Reconciliation on this consultation.

During the three–day consultation, 86 youth from all North Darfur localities, representing internally displaced persons (IDP), a variety of political parties, civil society organizations, youth and other groups, met in El Fasher and discussed and built consensus around six common ground issues: land and natural resources, security, identity, recovery and development, administration and democracy, and reconciliation.

The participants were divided into four groups to discuss the common ground issues among themselves and then shared their recommendations with other groups. All of the participants met again to discuss points of agreement and disagreement to narrow differences and build wider consensus on recommendations by North Darfur youth.

Key findings include:

- Well–planned nomad settlement projects that include basic social services and infrastructure development elements will help nomadic groups settle and develop new livelihoods. They will also help mitigate new conflicts.
- To establish and maintain trust among armed rebel groups it is necessary to unify all of them, or, in the least, unify their vision with regard to peace and stability in Darfur.
- Darfur can contribute to clarifying, defining, and deepening Sudan’s “Afro-Arab” identity because it is a model for the mixture of Arab and African elements.
- Elected legislative councils assisted by technical expertise and consultancy agencies should design a development strategy for Darfur.
- A free and fair electoral process could contribute to peace, stability, and reconciliation in Darfur, repair the damaged social fabric, and pave the way for sustainable development.
- An appropriate reconciliation process can start in Darfur if peace and justice are prevalent.

This report provides background on the DDDC, the consultation process, common ground issues, and detailed findings from the **Building Consensus on Common Ground Issues: North Darfur Youth** consultation.

The DDDC is working towards developing consensus around common ground issues during consultations throughout North, South, and West Darfur. Working closely with its partners and stakeholders, the DDDC will feed Darfurian views learned during consultations and other related activities into the Darfur peace process.

**Khartoum, Sudan  
October 3, 2009**

## **B. BACKGROUND**

### **1. THE DDDC**

Darfur is home to a multi-ethnic population that has long experienced severe social, economic, infrastructure, and environmental challenges, exacerbated by policies that have undermined the region's potential. This, in part, led to conflict over control of power, land and natural resources, and to the outbreak of war.

Massive displacement, destruction of infrastructure, loss of life, property, and livelihoods, blockage of nomadic roots, violence, and other war-related factors fractured the social structure of Darfur and weakened traditional peace and reconciliation mechanisms.

The Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), which aimed to end the conflict in Darfur, did not secure consensus among all parties affected by the conflict. The DPA did, however, establish the DDDC, an autonomous, inclusive, non-partisan process mandated to enable Darfurians to voice their opinions and views to achieve sustainable peace and reconciliation in Darfur.

Tasked with helping Darfurians discuss and find solutions to the root causes of the conflict in Darfur, the DDDC developed a strategy to facilitate a broad and inclusive consultation process. Working closely with its partners and stakeholders, the DDDC will feed Darfurian views learned during consultations into the Darfur peace process.

Seeking peace and reconciliation through dialogue and mediation to resolve conflict within and between communities is a deeply rooted Darfurian tradition. By engaging conflicting groups, restoring confidence, building trust, and promoting open and transparent dialogue to overcome grievances and agree on common grounds to achieve sustainable peace, the DDDC is a continuation of this tradition.

### **2. CONSULTATION PROCESS**

During the past 18 months, the DDDC engaged with a broad range of Darfurians at the grassroots level to build trust among stakeholders connected to the Darfur conflict. These consultations yielded a number of results, including identifying stakeholders, relevant priority issues, and familiarising stakeholders in the Darfur conflict about the consultative process.

The DDDC, however, was unable to reach and engage with all groups. Moving forward, the DDDC expanded its outreach to include consulting with Darfurians underrepresented in the Darfur peace process, including tribal leaders, civil society, youth, women, IDP, and others. The DDDC is now also expanding its reach and facilitating Darfur statewide consultations with specific stakeholder groups.

To ensure that the consultation process is inclusive and Darfurian owned, the DDDC partnered with the University Center for Peace and Development Studies in Darfur. Working in close collaboration, the two bodies planned and designed a consultation process by which stakeholders could peacefully discuss and come to consensus on solutions to the root causes of the conflict in Darfur.

In regard to the North Darfur Youth consultation, the DDDC:

1. Developed a format for consultations.
2. Finalized participant selection in line with the DDDC principle of inclusivity.
3. Designed facilitation techniques.
4. Planned and structured individual consultation sessions.
5. Grouped and managed diverse participants.
6. Established documentation and reporting mechanisms.
7. Facilitated common ground consultations.
8. Evaluated consultation process.
9. Communicated consultation process and outcomes to Darfurians and other stakeholders.

The consultation process was designed and implemented to promote confidence of participants to contribute to peace in their communities and greater Darfur and increase capacity of local partners to conduct similar consultations in the future.

### 3. COMMON GROUND ISSUES

The DDDC, with the support of national and international partners, engaged Darfurian stakeholders in Darfur, Khartoum, and abroad to help identify “common ground” issues with the objective of working towards developing consensus around them. The common ground issues identified are:

- Land and Natural Resources
- Security
- Identity
- Recovery and development
- Administration and Democracy
- Reconciliation

### C. CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

During the two-day consultation, 85 women from the North Darfur localities openly discussed and built consensus around the six common ground issues. The consultation outcomes are:

#### 1. LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Implementing all agreements between Darfur’s nomadic and settled communities can increase cooperation and reduce competition to meet conflicting land and livelihood needs.
- In order to secure nomadic routes in a flexible manner to accommodate changing environmental conditions without violating the rights and property of the settled farmers it is necessary to:
  1. Open migration routes.
  2. Identify grazing areas.
  3. Adopt modern models of farming and animal husbandry
  4. Provide farmers with seeds, tools, and other materials.
  5. Put in place mechanisms for small-scale farmers to easily access credit.
  6. Establish veterinary service units along migration routes.
  7. Provide sufficient security and properly manned police posts.
  8. Establish basic health service facilities.
- Well-planned nomad settlement projects that include basic social services and infrastructure development elements will help nomadic groups settle and develop new livelihoods. They will also help mitigate new conflicts.
- New alternative, environmentally friendly, and sustainable Darfur livelihood strategies should include:
  1. Modern farming, animal husbandry, and industry-mixed farming techniques.
  2. Agroprocessing.
- Necessary measures to prevent further environmental degradation in North Darfur include:
  1. Reactivation and strict application of already existing environment protection laws against overgrazing and over-exploitation of forest resources.
  2. Planting of green belts.
  3. Use of alternative energy sources, such as electricity, solar energy, and natural gas.
  4. Utilization of locally made bricks for housing and other construction projects instead of wood, grass, and straw.
- It is possible to clarify the relationship between statutory and customary land law, including the question of the necessity of a Darfur specific land tenure statute, by reconciling these laws, as in the case of the *hakoora* system, a traditional system of allocating land to tribes.

- Ways to reform the *hakoora* system or consolidate it so it is responsive to the needs of all Darfurians include:
  1. Granting Darfurians the right to register their land holdings, as is the case in the rest of Sudan.
  2. Granting individuals and communities full rights of citizenship inside the *hawakeer* territories and put in place mechanisms to ensure that there is no discrimination between communities living within the same area.
  3. Recognizing the *hakoora* system while preserving the rights of others to use resources within the same area.
- The appropriate way to resolve conflicts around land in Darfur:
  1. Allow native administration, the responsible body, to resolve land disputes.
  2. Ensure that users of *hakoora* land recognize and respect the rights of its owners.
  3. Reparation and compensation for those who have had their rights violated.

## 2. SECURITY

- To ensure the security of IDP currently living in camps and during repatriation to their areas of origin:
  1. Implement a satisfactory political settlement for the Darfur conflict.
  2. The rule of law should prevail.
  3. Sudan should protect all of its citizens, which is its responsibility.
  4. Control the use of arms.
  5. Open and protect migration routes.
  6. Design individual security plans for each of IDP camp.
- To involve citizens in security:
  1. Put in place a democratic system of governance that satisfies basic development and infrastructure needs of the population.
  2. Dismantle all security organs, including the Popular Police, Popular Defense Force, and security operations within the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS).
  3. Dissolve all militias and paramilitary groups sponsored and controlled by the Government of Sudan.
- Official security forces, such as the regular police, armed forces, and national security forces, should conduct their duties according to the rule of law and constitution.
- The NISS should confine their role to intelligence collection and stay away of security operations.
- Principles of disarmament should include:
  1. Consolidation of friendly relations with neighboring countries to help control the supply sources of weapons.
  2. The assistance and expertise of agencies specializing in arms control and collection.
  3. Reactivating the role of the UN and the Sudan Disarmament Commission to reintegrate ex-combatants.
- To establish and maintain trust among armed rebel groups it is necessary to unify all rebel groups, or, in the least, unify their vision with regard to peace and stability in Darfur.
- UNAMID and security in Darfur:
  1. Participants agreed that UNAMID should provide basic services to people
  2. Participants agreed that UNAMID conduct its tasks in a neutral manner.

### 3. IDENTITY

- With regard to identity, a “Darfurian consensus” means that all of the people of Sudan are unified around a single vision for the realization of collective interests and development goals.
- In a post–conflict period, Darfurians can realize consensus by, in part, narrowing their ethnic and political affiliations.
- Darfur can contribute to clarifying, defining, and deepening Sudan’s “Afro-Arab” identity because:
  1. It is a model for the mixture of Arab and African elements.
  2. Its history of taking care of its social and cultural heritage.
- Participants agreed that the proper authorities should immediately deport settlers who illegally arrived to Sudan or have been brought for specific political purposes should be immediately deported to where they came from

### 4. RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT

The priorities for development in Darfur in the short–, medium–, and long–term are as follow:

- Short–term priorities:
  1. Provision of basic social services and infrastructure development.
  2. Provide credit and other finance support to small businessmen and women.
- Medium–term priorities:
  1. Security.
  2. Basic health services.
  3. Implementation of sustainable development programs.
- Long–term priorities:
  1. Construct a Darfur interstate road network.
  2. Link Darfur to central Sudan via paved roads.
  3. Reform the academic, vocational, and technical education system.
- Quick impact development projects that have broad social benefits are possible under the current conflict situation in Darfur.
- Elected legislative councils assisted by technical expertise and consultancy agencies should design a development strategy for Darfur.
- Justice and equality can help change the perception and reality of marginalization experienced in Darfur.
- The spread of trust and a culture of peace in Darfur will help create the environment needed for recover to begin, for the delivery of basic services to resume, and create employment opportunities.
- Meaningful peace will provide the basis for the restoration and guarantee of rights for all Darfurians.
- Equitable distribution of power, wealth, and resources can significantly contribute to recovery and Development in Darfur.

## 5. ADMINISTRATION AND DEMOCRACY

- Strengths of native administration include:
  1. Deep roots in a tribal and lineage system that is capable of solving problems and disputes.
  2. The reinstatement of the original mandates and powers that native administration enjoyed before the local government acts of 1970 and 1995.
- Weaknesses of native administration include:
  1. Its inability to cope with social transformation and modern complex social and political issues and challenges.
  2. The emergence of new leadership, especially in IDP camps, that is challenging the old traditional leadership.
  3. Deep politicization by the central government.
- The organization of IDP in camps and in areas of repatriation is the responsibility of native administration that was in charge of areas of origin before the displacement.
- In order for the administrative system to properly perform its functions, free and fair elections, to ensure legitimacy, are necessary to select its officials.
- Participants agreed that there is now way to conduct elections in Darfur in 2010.
- Unless and until there is an environment of peace and stability in Darfur, genuine elections are not possible. Holding elections that are not genuine and free and fair could lead to chaos and further conflict and instability.
- If peace and stability return to Darfur, the following preconditions are required for free and fair elections:
  1. Comprehensive peace throughout Sudan.
  2. A genuine, accurate, inclusive, and comprehensive census.
  3. International monitoring.
- A free and fair electoral process could contribute to peace, stability, and reconciliation in Darfur, repair the damaged social fabric, and pave the way for sustainable development.

## 6. RECONCILIATION

- The purpose and objectives of reconciliation in Darfur are:
  1. To repair the destructive impact the war has had on the social fabric.
  2. Rehabilitate all that the war has destroyed.
  3. Refugee and IDP repatriation to their areas of origin.
- An appropriate reconciliation process can start if:
  1. Peace is prevalent.
  2. Justice is prevalent.
  3. Guarantees are in place to ensure that reconciliation agreements are implemented
  4. War criminals are prosecuted.
- The following principles should shape reconciliation in Darfur.
  1. Norms and tribal traditions.
  2. Religious values and tolerance.
  3. A culture of forgiveness.
  4. Honoring agreements.

- The roles of individuals, groups, the media, and governmental officials in reconciliation are as follows:
  1. Raise individual and public awareness.
  2. Transparently and accurately disseminate information to communities.
  3. Fully utilize cultural and religious channels, drama, music, and other outlets.
  4. Spread culture of peace and reconciliation, particularly with and through the media.
  5. Create special radio broadcasts on issues of reconciliations.
  6. Remain neutral.
  
- Specific mechanisms for reconciliation in Darfur are:
  1. Collective compensation.
  2. Reparations.
  3. The traditional *Judiyya* and *Rakooba*, systems.
  
- Reconciliation is directly connected to justice.
  
- Prosecuting individuals responsible for war crimes can create an environment conducive for reconciliation.
  
- The main role of the international community in reconciliation is to act as a neutral guarantor of the implementation of reconciliation agreements between conflicting parties.

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**The Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund**



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