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UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

**THE CHALLENGE OF POST-EMERGENCY
ASSISTANCE TO SIERRA LEONE:
A FIRST NOTE ON A POSSIBLE UNIDO RESPONSE**

*prepared for presentation to
Ms. Elizabeth Lwanga, Resident Coordinator,
United Nations System
Sierra Leone*

22 December 1995

The challenge of post-emergency assistance to Sierra Leone: the UNIDO approach

Situation

After an extended period of hostilities and uncertainty, and the improvement of the present state of affairs in Sierra Leone since mid-1995 gives raise to the hope that the situation in this war torn country will become sufficiently settled to allow the process of the socio-economic development of the country and its population to be resumed. While the damage and destruction done to industrial production and service facilities as well as housing and civil engineering structures means that life will not immediately return to normal, the end of the fighting and the imminent dangers to the population allow the industrial reconstruction work to begin in earnest.

The earlier a reconstructed and, where necessary restructured, pre-existing local industry can be assisted to produce the required basic needs, the sooner can the humanitarian assistance provided by the international community be turned into financial assistance and further investment in the long-term industrial base of the country. This can, in turn, work directly towards achieving the objectives of the UNDP's preventive development initiative, with particular respect to emergency and relief support, to the assistance of people in productive activities, and to the creation of jobs for young people.

The necessity of a prompt and substantive engagement by organizations like UNIDO in Sierra Leone is underscored by the fact that most - indeed almost all - projects need in effect a certain preparation time. One or the other preconditions might still be required before the implementation of the project can start, but to allow the technical cooperation programme to achieve its full impact in the (near) future it is of critical importance that they be initiated now; otherwise it will not be possible to begin execution at the earliest possible, practical date, needed.

Methodology

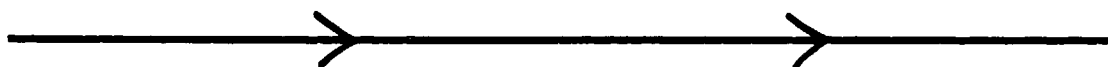
UNIDO - as the United Nations agency mandated to cooperate with developing countries and economies in transition to foster their industrial development - is particularly conscious of the need for it to act - where possible, jointly with other agencies - to respond to the needs such as those of Sierra Leone in the industrial sphere. It has been found that in Sierra Leone in many cases the pre-war industrial structure, the skilled labour force, and the transport and industrial infrastructure, while damaged, destroyed or dispersed, is nevertheless present and need not be rebuilt from scratch.

In the situation prevailing in Sierra Leone, UNIDO feels that only an integrated, multidisciplinary programmatic approach can achieve a symbiotic impact. This approach moves beyond a static dimension and views industry as an integral part of the entire dynamic relief-development process, which always aims towards achieving sustained socio-economic development, which also characterizes 'peace reconstruction and restructuring' component of the re-oriented UNDP Programme.

**Post
Emergency
Relief**

**Industrial
Reconstruction &
Restructuring**

**Sustained
Socio-Economic
Development**



Within this overall process, the assistance which UNIDO could begin to offer immediately - subject only to the availability to the Organization of the necessary funds - would include, among others, the following areas:

- restoring equipment and developing immediately required products and designs for priority industrial sub-sectors;
- creating an "industry for post-war reconstruction", i.e. focusing on satisfying the immediate needs for the reconstruction process;
- promoting enterprise development and foreign industrial investment; and
- alleviating the damage of war to the environment and building the basis for cleaner production and an environment-friendly industrial reconstruction and restructuring.

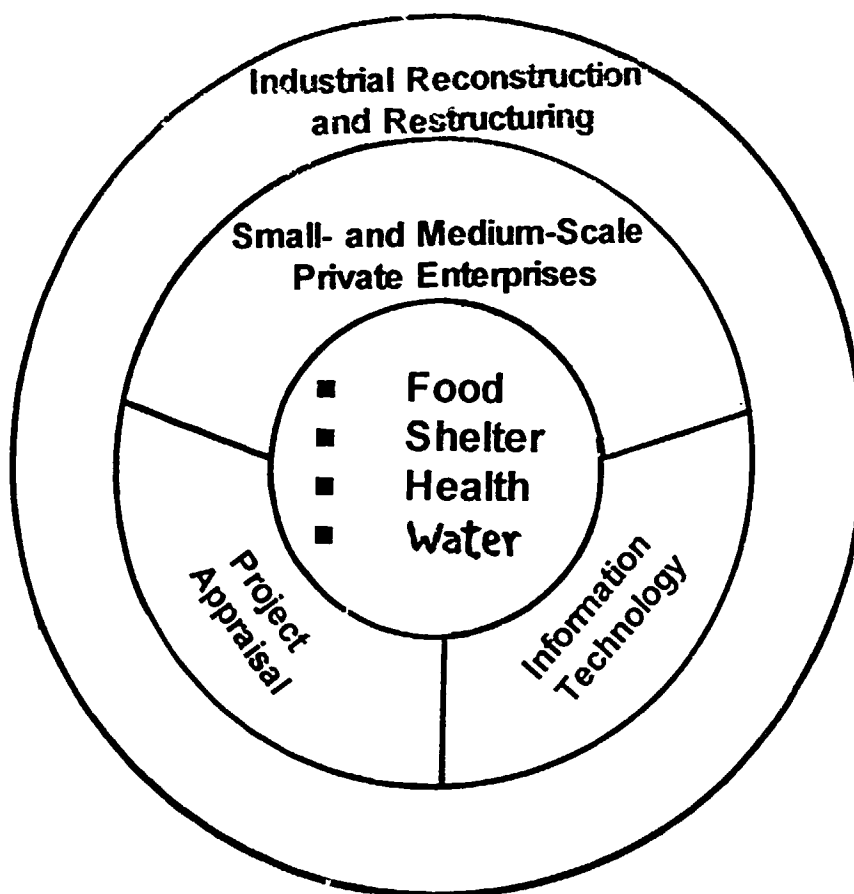
Other services which are also areas of key importance where UNIDO's experience and knowledge could be of paramount importance, could be provided as a second stage component of the types of services listed above. These would include:

- assisting the fostering of small- and medium-scale enterprises;
- designing industrial policy and privatisation programmes;
- optimizing the process of enterprise restructuring;
- creating an enabling industrial institutional support structure.

As a general proposition the approach selected should be:

- integrated and multidisciplinary;
- rapid in terms of resource mobilization and start-up;
- linked to long-term industrial development and sustainability;
- employment and income generating;
- conducive to the integration of women; and
- sensitive to the opportunities for new technology.

A diagrammatic representation of how the programme could look would be:



PRIMARY SECTORAL LEVEL

The need for an emergency programme for rehabilitation and restructuring means that policy makers, planners and enterprises are all faced with a different strategic decision-making environment than in the case of normal industrial investment decisions. The weight given to short-term priorities is greater than normal and the time-scale for investment to come on-line is more compressed; the high pressure for income generation in a population with the extremely high unemployment rates typical of the countries in question amounts to preference for labour-intensive projects with minimum start-up times; and the damage caused by war, including the total disruption of normal economic activities, naturally reduces the availability of local financial resources.

This concern for analysing the specific needs of the country in question and designing the corresponding programme for immediate industrial reconstruction as well as for post-war industrial restructuring is a further reflection of the UNIDO philosophy of ensuring that post-emergency assistance is integral to sustained socio-economic development. This would be manifest in any UNIDO-inter-agency programme for assessing the viability of local production of industrial products for post-emergency assistance as well as the required industrial services for industrial reconstruction and restructuring.

A. Restoration of Essential Industrial Production

In the eyes of the local population and planners, the most urgent requirement at the early stages of post-emergency relief is to bring pre-war production facilities back into production. This desire applies especially to those industries and technical installations which would feed the local market with products regarded as essential for the most basic survival, such as drinking water, staple food items, pharmaceutical items and medicinal supplies and materials for self-help repair of damaged homes and social institutions. However, seen in a slightly longer perspective the need is of a much more general nature, involving production units in all industrial sub-sectors. The resumption of industrial activities would signal a return to some degree of normality and, in this respect, have a non-negligible psychological effect.

It is emphasized that the restoration programmes must be based on an objective needs-assessment, both of the individual plants under consideration and of the relative merit and priority of alternative programmes. It is equally important that the opportunity for technology upgrading, referred to above, is seized at this point and the rehabilitation of obsolete technologies and worn out equipment avoided. Provision of adequate training in operation and maintenance as well as product development and marketing should be part of the package.

The level of damage sustained by the industry varies considerably from unit to unit but, as a general rule, in a war situation the eventual damage from shelling and direct fighting close to the premises is always compounded with further deterioration of the equipment and installations due to lack of maintenance and the unavoidable pilferage. The procurement of equipment and replacement parts needed to restore production and their installation together with a proper refurbishing of all plant and equipment could be an important area of intervention for UNIDO.

B. FOOD

The food processing and agro-based industries

An example of the valuable way in which UNIDO can intervene at an extremely early stage in the post-emergency relief, sustained socio-economic development process is to provide technical assistance to food processing and agro- industry to enable local production and processing of essential foodstuffs as early as possible. Due to the damage to buildings and machinery caused by the fighting one of the important ways in which UNIDO would operate is to assist in rehabilitating damaged food production capacities and re-establishing vital production units, through building reconstruction, repair of machinery, and the provision and supply of essential spares parts. Such assistance would be offered in mind of the fact of the need to raise the level of supply products to a level more compatible with the needs of the population.

In some cases the introduction of a level of quality control is appropriate and desirable to ensure a certain level of nutritional content of the food produced and reduced wastage. Training in minimum wastage and maximum utilisation techniques as part of the human resources development programme will also assist in stretching the available materials as far as possible.

At the same time as carrying out programmes of reconstruction and restructuring, the opportunity should be taken to introduce improved, cleaner and more efficient technology, thereby helping to enhance the competitive base of the concern whilst having a least harmful impact upon the environment.

These activities are not limited to the specific subsectors of the food processing and agro-based industries but may be extended over the range of other sub-sectors of the food and agro-based industry.

The link between the food industry and health is strong and especially important during the initial phases of the post-conflict period. UNIDO is able to assist in health promotion through its role in promoting industrial development, by for example, providing technical assistance and advice to adapt current or damaged facilities to produce foodstuffs enriched and fortified with proteins, vitamins and /or minerals. The Organisation also wishes to explore the possibility of a vitamin A fortification programme in cereal flour, rice, maize and cooking oil, etc. in Africa in general. Other programmes are also being considered.

To rehabilitate the food industry and help increase yield, UNIDO is also able to advise on and assist in the use of ecologically sound fertilizers and pesticides, and be instrumental in making these available.

Small and micro-enterprises form a sizable part of the producers in the agro-based and food production industries and through their numbers are important in ensuring as much of the population as possible is served. Assistance is required not only in larger enterprises but also for smaller rural concerns. Thus, whilst the above programme types are relevant to all concerns, it must be ensured that the type of assistance provided in rehabilitation correlates with the size and type of the unit assisted.

At the same time as planning and executing reconstruction and restructuring of industrial food production and agro-based industries, it is necessary to ensure that sufficient resources are available to support proper functioning of the enterprises, and that these resources are efficiently used. To this end UNIDO can foster the development of local human resources in areas such as basic maintenance and repair training, management of natural agricultural resources and systems, and waste reduction techniques as well as basic marketing methods, to enhance the basis for further development of small rural agro-enterprises.

As well as providing the basic food for human existence, through processing the meat, and crops produced by the food sector, this is a sector of basic industrial activity with closely related, strongly dependent subsectors e.g. wood and wood products, leather and leather products, textiles and garments. Assistance to food processing and agro-industry, in addition to providing immediate end products, generates a secondary industry and provides a basis for the production of a wide range of non-food items, thus helping to generate growth in the area's economy.

C. SHELTER

The Building Materials and Construction Industry

A priority sector, which is of key importance to a reconstruction programme is housing and physical infrastructure. To adequately provide for the basic needs of the local population, it is essential to ensure the provision of adequate shelter and housing. Since major armed conflicts invariably have a devastating effect on buildings as well as physical infrastructure, demand for immediate relief is correspondingly high. Additionally, this industrial subsector provides essential material for community and enterprise building repair and construction and assists in rehabilitating and repairing war-damaged buildings and in the later post-conflict period continues to provide housing, as well as community and business buildings.

For rapid relief quick impact micro-projects for specific needs may be implemented, which could later develop into small-enterprises. This would include the supply of building kits for constructing rapid shelter and community buildings, and by giving training in relevant construction techniques, making use, where possible, of local materials and human resources, so as to best exploit labour intensive activities in the provision of employment.

At the same time it is also necessary to rebuild the area's construction industry such that as soon as possible the subsector is able to become productive and relieve reliance on emergency aid. Initially this requires cooperation between UNIDO, the UN system, and the local actors in order to identify and assess key production facilities for building materials where assistance can begin. Looking at the technical, human resource development and investment inputs needed for their rehabilitation, as well as material inputs needed either to re-establish production or increase it. This latter involves determining the local availability of raw material and supply possibilities, and arranging for materials and energy where the industry is not operable/sustainable based on locally available inputs, until these items can be locally provided, or an infrastructure has been developed which can support their provision from elsewhere. Finally an active role would be played in the rehabilitation and start-up of such units through the provision of advice and technological support.

D. HEALTH RELATED INDUSTRIES

The Pharmaceutical and Chemical industries

In war torn Sierra Leone the health of the population today is a crucial issue generating high demands on emergency assistance. Whilst unable to provide assistance of this type, UNIDO is able to play an important role, through industry, to help alleviate suffering and contribute to improving the health of the population. This may be done through several different industrial subsectors.

Advice and assistance in the rehabilitation and restructuring of the pharmaceutical industry and assistance in the provision of necessary equipment and parts for this can help to supplement emergency services in the production of products such as emergency health care drugs, vaccines, blood products and large volume parenterals (infusion solutions). This also includes the personnel component of technical cooperation, the installation of the

equipment, its validation, and its run up. Additionally it is equally important that support given to companies to ensure their ability, at a later date, to market their products outside the country, once the conditions allow. Industrial production of basic health care items through the rehabilitation of the manufacturing health industry to restore domestic production of such items as syringes, bandages etc. will also contribute to meeting high demands and needs. Additionally assistance will be required, and can be provided, in the storage and distribution of medical products, including the training of nationals in modern procedures in this area, to ensure optimal efficiency in distribution and minimal loss and damage during storage.

Essential technical aids, prostheses, wheel chairs, crutches etc. are also items urgently required, and of which a number can be produced by local industry. Rehabilitation or establishment of such production facilities is also to be carried out, where possible, to take over from emergency assistance as soon as possible and help to bring a semblance of normality to lives of those maimed and crippled by the elements of war.

Hospitals, laboratories and health care centres have also suffered much damage, whether to the physical structure or through pilfering. Assistance in the repair, rehabilitation and construction of hospitals, can be carried out through the existing and re-established construction industry by ensuring that local enterprises, e.g. in the building materials sub-sector, are in a position to assist in these activities. Essential equipment and parts necessary for rehabilitation of these centre would also be provided alongside installation assistance and basic training in equipment.

Enabling the food processing industry to provide good quality, nutritional food to their customers is another way in assistance can be given in the post conflict period, towards improving the of health of the community. For example the food and food processing industry, can be adapted to produce nutrient and vitamin enriched products. For example, vitamin A fortification of cereal flour, rice, maize and cooking oil, etc. a possibility which the Organisation wishes to investigate for Africa in general. In this way, with UNIDO's help, the development and strengthening of those food-industry related sub-sectors, which cater for the most urgent needs of the community they serve, can be revived and encouraged. A further step along this path would be the adaptation of standard production and processing procedures and establishment of quality assurance and quality control systems in industrial food processing, all of which are of major importance with regard to ensuring food safety.

E. WATER

Chemical and industrial treatment of water.

In Sierra Leone many areas suffer from inadequate water supply. In addition, of those water sources that do exist, many are contaminated such that they cannot support life and/or are no longer potable, whether due to bad sanitation, industrial chemical leakage from broken pipes, or damaged/destroyed storage facilities and industrial plants. The need for immediate action to alleviate serious health problems and provided a reliable clean supply of water, is urgent. At the same time, however, steps must be taken to improve the medium- to long-term situation to not only from a health perspective but also from industry's point of view. Water is also a basic resource for industry, e.g. chemical, textiles, energy, and most notably agriculture.

In the initial stages UNIDO is able to assist in the provision of rapid relief by the supply and installation of on-site chlorine generating units to be placed in key establishments e.g. school or community buildings, in rural villages. Additionally carrying out repairs to sewage systems, water treatment facilities and broken pipelines, and cleansing/detoxifying these systems, would restore at least some of the pre-existing facilities and revive local water-purification related industry, where it has not totally been destroyed, thereby increasing currently available treatment capacity. Water clean-up procedures would also hamper the spread of contamination and help to achieve a more stable state on which a more permanent action plan might be based..

In the second phase of cooperation in this area, UNIDO's involvement in advising and assisting in water treatment, detoxification and pollution prevention/reduction, ensures continued access to safe water for health purposes, and the use of water to keep industry running while minimizing the environmental impact of industrially used water on the environment. In particular with regard to industrial water pollution, assistance will be required to survey towns and cities to assess total requirements, and advice required in the design, development and implementation of programmes for the decontamination of soil and waters.

It is also necessary to act as soon as possible in industrial reconstruction to provide training, through human resource development, on waste treatment procedures including safe handling and disposal of toxic, industrial and hazardous waste, and to establish monitoring and control procedures to avoid recurrence of dangerous contamination.

AT THE SECONDARY SECTORAL LEVEL.

A. Human resources

UNIDO can provide valuable assistance through the development of human resources in re-establishing basic industry and in the initiation of particular industrial subsectors. In particular the role of women is of crucial importance (due to war casualties, the number of women headed households is likely to have increased) in the promotion of income generating activities, which will not only address immediate and future needs, but also benefit the economy as a whole. It is of significance to involve women as full actors in the process and not only as recipients. Household and cottage industries e.g. textile related subsector, present areas in which women traditionally play an important part. Such activities can be speedily established, where skills are already known, often requiring little more than assistance with repairs and supply of spare parts. To increase the number of women involved and spread the growth of these enterprises there is an additional need for the supply of equipment and the establishment of training programmes which teach technical skills as well as basic entrepreneurial activities.

Depending on the priorities of the country and areas, women-specific interventions should be seen as part of an overall approach that addresses the problem of redressing previous inequalities in general (including, but extending beyond, the case of women in particular).

In general it is clear that human resources development is a necessary activity to support the development of and growth of SMEs and thereby to initiate economic activity.

For this reason a programme to generate growth of small-scale enterprises would necessarily include projects for human resources development. For the successful future operation of larger enterprises human resource development plays an important role through the establishment of management training and skill development programmes.

Human resources development could be encouraged and assisted by establishing programmes in sectors/sub-sectors that call for specific types of management skills for both private and public sectors. The development of training institutions and training of trainers for these centres such that the centre can become independent of UNIDO assistance, is one important activity. With regard to skills to be communicated by the newly created trainers, attention should be focused on local resources, advantages, demand and projected growth. Where possible, training will also incorporate the use of new technology and teach a heightened environmental awareness and approach in all industrial sectors.

B. SMEs

Under present circumstances the development of SMEs is highly important if the area is to begin recovery and start to re-establish local industry. In particular, small-scale enterprises will bring much needed employment to the area as well as some semblance of normal life. Through the initiation of economic activities they also help to strengthen the region towards achieving self-sustainable industry and industrial development.

UNIDO's long experience in assistance to small-scale manufacturing units to upgrade their commercial and technical skills and meet quality requirements is available to assist existing and future private entrepreneurs in the country to rebuild and strengthen the performance of individual enterprises. Equally important would be the development of transparent technology and market information systems for the networking of small-scale producers based on cooperation and complementarity.

The value to the economy of SME development and growth and the success of this has already been demonstrated by the Growth Centre Programme implemented during less violent times, but which has suffered greatly due to the conflict. This programme, very successful during less violent times to the point that it achieved self-sustainable independence of UNIDO simply combined teaching and training and assistance in the areas of raw material procurement, basic business and marketing skills, taught at the growth centres, to assist entrepreneurs in establishing and running their own enterprises, such as textiles, garments, leather products etc. Due to the initial success and that fact that two of the four growth centres established still exist in some form or other, the idea of reintroducing a growth centre scheme is appealing and will assist in reviving basic industry as soon as possible.

C. Environment

The conflict in Sierra Leone has had a severe and long lasting effect on the environment, and through this also on the health of the population, in particular through the effect on agro-industry, on water supply. Chemical pollution and other industrial leakages, makes the land unfit for farming and the water unpotable, thereby destroying a vital element which supports the local population. Numerous mines scattered, unrecorded,

about the countryside represent a hazard to agricultural and farming tasks, and make basic exercises extremely dangerous to both human and animal life. The carnage of abandoned and gutted vehicles, destroyed buildings and rubble only adds to the danger. The alleviation of this damage is the first step to be taken, if normal life is to be restored.

Consequently, in order to restore normality, avoid the development of chronic problems and alleviate related illnesses, it is important to act as soon as possible in repairing this damage and provide basic necessary equipment and parts. For the best and most efficient results UNIDO assists, advises and encourages damage rectification which both removes the waste and employs it usefully. Such clean-up and recycling operations include waste recycling policies: e.g. using rubble to form aggregate for construction and repair work, collecting and selling or melting down scrap metal etc; salvaging reusable components from abandoned destroyed vehicles and buildings for re-use as essential spare parts; and establishing local facilities for general removal, processing and recycling of urban waste). The latter step would involve the local population and in some cases the establishment of start-ups of small enterprises, using local production facilities to manufacture small-scale, labour intensive equipment for removal processing and recycling of urban. These enterprises are equally necessary in the later stages of industrial development e.g. establishment of waste recycling and disposal units and facilities for the treatment of ground and water to remove industrial pollutants such that they are no longer health threatening and can support agricultural/farming use. Maintenance and repair of machinery, and monitoring techniques to reduce the environmental impact of industrial activities are also communicated under the human resources development programmes.

It is also important that advice and assistance be given in the removal of hazardous waste and its transport for treatment, disposal, and instruction given in controlled dumping. Without correct instruction and monitoring, these activities could present an even worse environmental hazard than already exists, if carried out incorrectly.

The second phase of environmental assistance occurs as soon as start-ups appear and the focus turns from emergency relief to fostering development of basic industry. It concerns the improvement of industry's approach to and attitude on environmental issues and means keeping this constantly in mind during reconstruction, restructuring and development phases. In this stage the aim is to foster cleaner production and the development of a more environmentally friendly industrial sector which is encouraged through advice and assistance. In particular, help is offered regarding the introduction of cleaner technology and techniques where new machinery is needed and advice given on the use of energy and resource saving methods, waste recycling procedures and the optimal use of by-products. In this second stage of development assistance would require training in control management, monitoring techniques, and maintenance and repair, as well as advice on the use of ecologically sound agro-chemicals and industrial techniques, and safe/clean disposal of water and recycling procedures.

At all times UNIDO acts to foster the integration of environmental and industrial policies in a manner that does not adversely affect the overall objective of industrial development. In aiming to achieve this in the transition from post-emergency relief to socio-economic development, UNIDO follows a path of activities from arresting further damage and damage rectification to building a framework within which industry is reconstructed and restored in a cleaner and sustainable environment.

Conclusion: UNIDO's role

UNIDO's main role in the process of assisting societies to move from a post-crisis situation to sustained socio-economic development lies traditionally in the reconstruction and restructuring phase. However, a cardinal principle of UNIDO's approach is that its activities do not begin here, rather they grow out of upstream emergency aid activities and provide an essential link between emergency assistance and reconstruction and development during the post-conflict period. UNIDO achieves this by offering a path by which the burden on humanitarian assistance, as provider to the basic human needs of food, water, heat, shelter and health, can be gradually alleviated, through the revival and restoration of specific industries and industrial sectors to feed these needs i.e. *energy* for warmth; *construction* for shelter and housing; *water treatment* and detoxification for safe, healthy water; *farming, agro and agro-processing* to provide basics for clothing and nourishment in a form also suitable for distribution; and *pharmaceuticals* for emergency drugs and essential basic health care items and provision of relevant training and technical advice.

These specific industries are unique in that they have a dual role to play. On the one hand they are able to meet basic human needs, thus relieving reliance on emergency aid whilst presenting some industrial rehabilitation. On the other hand these industries are important for industrial development and restoration, and the movement towards sustainable development, in providing some of the basic elements necessary for industry to function and grow i.e. *energy* - a basic necessity without which much of industry ceases to function; *construction* - repair war damage, and rehabilitate and reconstruct industry; *water* - essential for certain industries e.g. textiles, ore processing, chemical etc. and the establishment of water treatment, detoxification etc. programmes ensure reduced environmental impact; *farming, agro and agro-processing* - basic industry around which many subsectors evolve and on which some are dependent e.g. packaging, transport and distribution, sales, leather and leather products, textiles and clothing; and *pharmaceuticals* to provide necessary materials to other chemical, pharmaceutical and agro-chemical industries as well as attracting and generating dependent industries.

As a consequence of all this UNIDO's involvement in post-conflict peace building activities is necessary right from the beginning, not only to ensure that proper foundations are laid for later work in reconstruction and restructuring thereby, through inter-agency action, to increase efficiency and effectiveness of aid administered. UNIDO's involvement also facilitates the transition from reliance upon emergency assistance to economic and industrial recovery, by increasing the capacity and capability for self-help and so to release funds tied up in humanitarian assistance for use in financial assistance and eventually in investment in the long-term industrial base of the country. In such a process essential jobs are created, thereby strengthening local self esteem and providing some indication of movement towards normality.

Through advice, assistance and instruction in the areas of reconstruction and restructuring to recipient countries, regions and industrial enterprises, UNIDO covers the whole industrial sector, while focusing on the concept of adding value. Through such actions UNIDO catalyses and nurtures further development and improvement in the state of a country's industrial sector with respect to an environmentally sustainable economic development. Thus the country is brought closer to achieving a healthy, and self perpetuating economic and industrial level.