

Partnership between Accord, DPCR (Department of Peace and Conflict Research) and NAI ('Actor-driven cooperation') 2009 – 2011

Background

The present request for programme funding in the area of capacity-building for conflict resolution in Africa, amounting in total to 10.5 MSEK over the three-year period 2009-2011, is submitted to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) by the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), based in Durban, South Africa, on behalf of ACCORD, the Department of Peace and Conflict Research (DPCR) at the University of Uppsala, and the Nordic Africa Institute (NAI), also based in Uppsala, Sweden. The request forms part of the comprehensive submission to Sida in favour of core support for the period 2009-2011. It is proposed that the overall ownership of this partnership programme rests with ACCORD, who will enter into specific sub-agreements with DPCR and NAI, as well as report and be accountable to Sida.

With purpose to jointly increase their respective contributions towards the public goods of *durable peace* and *sustainable development* in Africa, in June 2007 ACCORD, DPCR and NAI defined five areas of cooperation, signing a novel North-South partnership agreement in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding. The five areas identified by the South Africa-based NGO, the Swedish university department and the Nordic Research and documentation centre* were i) knowledge production/research; ii) training/courses; iii) publishing; iv) documentation and library resources; and v) staff exchanges, including the placement of Ph.D. candidates at DPCR. Designed as a comprehensive and mutually supportive partnership, the overall ambition is reflected in the programme title, *From Wars of the Weak to Strong Peace: Developing Capacity for Conflict Resolution in favour of Democracy and Human Progress in Africa*.

*NAI is a Nordic research, documentation and information centre on contemporary Africa. In the case of the partnership agreement and the present request, NAI's participation envisages capacity-building with regard to documentation and library resources.

Rationale

ACCORD specializes in conflict prevention, resolution and management, intervening through mediation, negotiation and training of stakeholder and protagonists in African conflicts. While it is not a research organization, ACCORD's operations, however, are necessarily informed by multi-layered studies and analyses of the contexts in which it intervenes. In this report, ACCORD has both gained considerable empirical knowledge and come to realize the need to enhance its theoretical skills. A small Research Unit (RU) was set up in 1999. Acknowledging the need to register, document and draw upon in-house lessons gained from practice and experience on the ground, thereby also offering African perspective to the discipline of peace and conflict studies, following a strategic review in mid-2007 ACCORD decided to re-model the RU into a Department for Knowledge Production. It became operational in June 2008. Working in close coordination with the Programmes and Interventions Departments, the ambition is to continuously develop ACCORD's institutional

memory through a structure which can capture practical experiences and serve as a link in favour of theoretical and methodological development, enhanced skills and increased efficiency.

Taking pride in the evolving partnership with DPCR, a world-leading academic institution in the field of peace and conflict research, ACCORD stands in particular to benefit from DPCR's expertise in theories and methods, both qualitative and quantitative, in the area of peace processes, including intra-state peace agreements and challenges to durable peace during the phase of national post-conflict consolidation and reconstruction. In turn, the skills acquired will be of significance in the broader context of African conflict resolution.

The role of NAI with regard to documentation is of great significance. In 2006, NAI was awarded the distinction of 'Library of the Year' in Sweden, and over more than four decades it has established a unique distribution network across the African continent. NAI will assist in the build-up of the documentation facility at the APC, not least with regard to digitalization and IT-based networks. It is ACCORD's vision that the Africa Peace Centre will offer state-of-the-art, comprehensive library and documentation services. Building on its renowned expertise, experience and networks, NAI's advisory support is of great importance.

Summary of the request

With support from Sida, the envisaged tripartite partnership programme is scheduled to run over the period from January 2009 to December 2011, i.e. for three calendar years. The requested funds amount in total to 10.5 MSEK, out of which 2.2 MSEK for 2009, 4.0 for 2010 and 4.3 for 2011.