

Explanation of Symposium Structure

In collaboration and consultation with several internal and external experts on Sudan, the Planning Committee has attempted to create and construct spaces over the course of a two-day symposium period that will allow participants to collectively meet the following objectives:

- *Provide a space where various stakeholders and noted experts involved in the Sudan/South Sudan crisis can meet, discuss, and exchange ideas on present challenges and brainstorm cross-sector solutions on how to address such challenges going forward*
- *Foster dialogue between and among different disciplines of practitioners and policy-makers from the state, regional and international level to consider a wide range of social, economic, and political factors that are affecting the current state of affairs in both Sudan and South Sudan.*
- *Develop an informal network among participants that can serve as a means for future exchange and collaboration to address the two Sudan's challenges in the future.*
- *Devise a set of practical and reasonably achievable actions, initiatives and programs to help address the humanitarian crisis confronting the two Sudans.*

Specifically, the committee has identified the following spatial elements as needed to foster dialogue that allows participants to collectively meet these objectives accordingly:

Open AND Closed Sessions: Open and Closed sessions will be held over the course of the symposium in order to allow for open, public discussion and input, as well as space to address and discuss topics that require more confidential, sensitive, “safe” arenas that allow participants to disclose and to contribute to discussions in meaningful manners beyond their public titles and image(s), respectively. Open sessions are designed to highlight key, overarching themes for discussion, whereas the closed sessions are designed to foster discussions that are action-oriented and guiding policy and related solutions. Open sessions will feature a plenary of speakers with discussion facilitated by a moderator; all participants and the public will be present. Closed sessions will be held for participants only and each closed session will consist of several breakout groups (approximately 20 participants per group); a facilitator will be present in each breakout session accordingly.

Technical Working Groups & Small Group Discussion(s): Closed sessions of the symposium will consist of a series of breakout technical working group meetings where each small group will have the opportunity to discuss a specific topic or theme from the open, plenary session in a more, in-depth manner. The idea behind having such small, breakout meetings in closed, confidential spaces is to allow participants to candidly address these topics in a way that may lead to action-oriented solutions and policy shifts on the ground. Each small breakout group discussion will consist of approximately twenty participants and one symposium participant will serve as a facilitator for each discussion. Breakout discussions will immediately follow open discussions and will last approximately ninety minutes.

Debriefing sessions: Following the breakout sessions, all participants will come back together in one space for a collective discussion to share outcomes and discuss their reactions and experiences from the culmination of both the open and closed sessions. The debriefing sessions are designed to synthesize the content of the technical working group meetings as well as the

tentative solutions and follow-up steps for the post-symposium period.

In light of the vast scope of this topic, the Planning Committee, in collaboration with the internal and external experts has further identified the following topic areas as critical to discuss over the course of the two-day symposium and have arranged them under the following categories or plenary title topics:

- *Understanding the Extent and Nature of the Humanitarian Crisis in Sudan and South Sudan*
- *Understanding the Environmental, Economic, Social, Cultural, and Political Factors Underlying the Chronic Humanitarian Crisis in Sudan/South Sudan: The Legacies of Unending Armed Conflict and War*
- *The Humanitarian Assistance Situation*
- *Constructive Paths Forward: Searching for Solutions to the Humanitarian Crisis through Peace-Making and Peace-Building*
- *Investing in Sustainable Development and Livelihoods*
- *Durable Solutions for the Displaced*

The first three topics will serve as the focal points of discussion on the first day of the symposium, and the latter three on the second day. In this way, participants can collectively use the first day of the symposium to capture and take stock of the crisis overall, while the second day can be devoted to more action and solution-oriented discussions and dialogue.

In order to make the results, dialogue and proceedings from this symposium relevant and useful to attendees beyond this two-day period, the planning committee has considered the following ways to document proceedings accordingly for participants' use and action in the post-symposium period:

- *The use of student rapporteurs and/or note takers for all of the sessions and, in particular, the technical working group meetings.*
- *The development of an interactive website for all those participating in the symposium and the public at large.*
- *Engaging the local and international media on the subject matter of the symposium.*
- *A publication focused specifically on the policy and program outcomes that emerge from the deliberations at the symposium.*
- *Various academic journal articles that capture the symposium and its outcomes in terms of both process and policy and program outputs.*

Note on Participant Input & Symposium Structure Flexibility: Though the Symposium has been structured in a pre-determined manner, the committee realizes that new topics and approaches for addressing the key concerns of the crisis may emerge over the two-day period and have thus structured the flow of discussions and sessions in a way that can allow for flexibility in its structure and new input and ideas to guide the proceedings as may be required.