African Union Guideline

On

Role of the African Standby Force in Humanitarian Action and Natural Disaster Support

(Draft of 01 December 2014)
FOREWORD

The African Union (AU) Guideline on the Role of the African Standby Force (ASF) in Humanitarian Action and Natural Disaster Support has been developed pursuant to the provisions of the African Union Constitutive Act, ASF Doctrine, as well as the Protocol Establishing the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, the Policy Framework for the Establishment of the African Standby Force and the Military Staff College, the draft AU Disaster Management Policy and the draft AU Humanitarian Policy Framework. The concept of the African Standby Force within the humanitarian framework is intended to build confidence and to generate more strategic stabilisation outcomes during humanitarian and natural disasters on the continent.

The Guideline broadly outlines the strategic focus and scope on the use of the assets drawn from the ASF which is now being considered in responding to disasters and humanitarian complex emergencies. The strategic focus will be to build the continental capacity for humanitarian and disaster management and for early warning, preparedness and response.

The Guideline is primarily complementing relevant humanitarian policy documents under the purview of the Department of Political Affairs which is responsible for humanitarian matters in the African Union. The AU is expected to achieve these tasks in cooperation with the RECs/RMs, including but not exclusively within the context of the ASF.

Critically, this Guideline calls for an enhancement of African capacity to deal with the emerging complex humanitarian emergencies, where a need exists for African recognized ‘hubs’ established by RECs/RMs and Member States to improve responses now and in the future to better address key future impacts and vulnerabilities and their variations over the years.

The Guideline is a document that should be studied closely by RECs, RMs, Member States, civil society organisations, institutions and individuals that want to play a positive role in consolidating the capacity of the continent in addressing humanitarian and natural disasters.

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January 2015
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INTRODUCTION

1. This AU Guideline on the Role of the African Standby Force (ASF) in Humanitarian Action and Natural Disaster Support is premised on the need to develop appropriate measures to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance and support efforts to address major natural disasters. The Guideline is primarily complementing relevant humanitarian policy documents under the purview of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) which is responsible for humanitarian matters in the African Union. The African Union (AU) is expected to achieve these tasks in cooperation with the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs), including but not exclusively within the context of the ASF.

2. The AU normative framework governing the linkage between the ASF and Humanitarian action and Natural Disasters is rooted in the Protocol Establishing the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (thereafter, referred to as the Protocol). Article 13 of the Protocol highlights one of the functional aspects of the ASF as the facilitation of “humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of civilian population in conflict areas and support efforts to address major natural disasters”. Relatedly, Article 15 of the Protocol seeks to further emphasise the relationship between the ASF and humanitarian action. It is against this background and in the wake of natural disasters in various parts of the world but notably in Haiti, in 2010 that, a declaration was issued by the Heads of State and Government at the Fourteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, for the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) to “examine the modalities of establishing an African humanitarian mechanism to provide a rapid response, in a coordinated, harmonized and efficient way, to serious humanitarian situations which could occur in Africa and in other parts of the world”. In this vein, the AUC in a collaborative effort of the Department of Peace and Security, and the Department of Political Affairs, initiated the Humanitarian and Natural Disaster Support (HANDS) programme in 2012.

3. This Guideline could be considered as part of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) given its connection with the ASF. It also draws upon elements of the African Governance Architecture (AGA), specifically the humanitarian cluster as well as other regional and international humanitarian regimes. It further recognises the linkages between humanitarian assistance, peace and security, natural and human-induced disasters and development issues.
4. The overall humanitarian situation and response in Africa remains challenging and is of major concern. This has resulted in a large number of forced displacements including refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) caused by conflicts, natural and human-induced disasters. The existing humanitarian and disaster management mechanisms are however, largely weak and insufficient. As a result, the AU Humanitarian Policy Framework was drafted to enhance, coordinate, and consolidate the existing mechanisms and address the challenges.

5. It is against this background that the AU is developing this Guideline whose aim is to support the draft AU Humanitarian Policy Framework, contextualised against the imperative of using available resources to support in the coping and resilience of RECs/RMs, Member States and communities, and working in collaboration with natural disaster response mechanisms and agencies on the continent.

6. This Guideline acknowledges that there are national and regional mechanisms and indicators that will serve as the basis to address disasters and humanitarian complex emergencies to alleviate the suffering of millions of people on the continent. These indicators may include the level of economy, health and nutrition, education, infrastructure, governance, demography, agriculture, energy and technology. At the local level in the communities, the interaction of the aforementioned ‘multiple stresses’ including the composition of livelihoods, the roles of social safety nets and other social protection measures that may enhance vulnerability, hence leading to disaster and humanitarian complex emergencies, need to be considered as mitigating responses to the chronic disaster challenges on the continent.

7. Given that the support and reinforcement of the humanitarian principles and the enhancement, coordination and consolidation of mechanisms require a multidimensional coordinated approach, this Guideline will enhance regional humanitarian coordination, including civil-military humanitarian coordination. In order to ensure timely and effective humanitarian action, AU activities will be driven by the AU Humanitarian Policy Framework and facilitated within a coordination mechanism and complemented by this Guideline on the use of the ASF. This is in line with scenario 5 of the ASF Roadmap which envisages the use of the ASF capacity to support disaster response on the continent.

**STRATEGIC VISION**

8. To support humanitarian action in Africa by reinforcing the ASF’s role and mandate through providing strategic approaches and guidelines in conformity with established strategic policies and principles.
PURPOSE, SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

9. The purpose of the Guideline is to establish a strategic approach in providing ASF assets to support humanitarian action on the continent in order to preserve, protect and save lives, alleviate suffering and enhance physical security and human dignity.

10. The Guideline complements and supports humanitarian policies of RECs/RMs and Member States. It is applicable to all humanitarian work and interventions in Africa.

11. This Guideline is built on the capability of the ASF to rapidly respond and deploy in emergencies that may arise as a result of either natural or man-made disasters. This capability is further enhanced by the various competencies and skill sets within the ASF. Utilising its multidimensional staffing - military, police and civilian - the ASF is capable for immediate response, and to provide emergency communication, escort, logistics management, search and rescue, heavy equipment, airlift, medical evacuation, protection of civilians, and early warning in the event of natural or man-made disasters. The Guideline details the means and methods for achieving the scope of engagement highlighted here.

OBJECTIVES

12. The objectives of the Guideline are to:
   1. Through the employment and deployment of ASF assets, support and promote the protection of persons affected by conflict, natural and human-induced disasters, taking into consideration the special needs of vulnerable groups like women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities.
   2. Support and promote the prevention and alleviation of abuses and its effects, and the restoration of dignified conditions of life.
   3. Support the capacity of RECs/RMs to build the resilience of communities against conflict, natural and human-induced disasters, especially those that undermine peace and security.
   4. Support the promotion of humanitarian dialogue and create an enabling space for coordinated humanitarian action and exchange of best practice.
   5. Support humanitarian coordination including civil-military humanitarian coordination that will create appropriate interaction on peace and security.

LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BASIS

13. The legal foundation of the use of the ASF in HANDS is derived from Article 7 of Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) which states that “in conjunction with the Chairperson of the Commission, the PSC shall support and facilitate humanitarian actions in situations of armed conflict or major natural disasters”.

14. Further, Article 13 of the Protocol highlights one of the functional aspects of the ASF as, the facilitation of “humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of civilian population in conflict areas and support efforts to address major natural disasters”. Relatedly, Article 15 declares “that the PSC shall take active part in coordinating humanitarian action in order to restore life to normalcy in the event of conflicts or natural disaster”. It also recalls that the ASF “shall be adequately equipped to undertake humanitarian activities in their mission areas under the control of the Chairperson of the Commission” and “shall facilitate the activities of the humanitarian agencies in the mission areas”. Pursuant to Article 15 of the PSC Protocol, ASF Road Map III also noted the need to, in consultation with the Humanitarian Affairs, Refugees and Displaced Persons Division (HARDPD) within the Department of Political Affairs, develop this Guideline for the employment of the ASF in support of HANDS operations.

15. In the Memorandum of Understanding in the Area of Peace and Security signed in 2008, the African Union and the Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution agreed, among others, “to coordinate efforts undertaken at regional and continental levels in order to minimize the humanitarian impact of conflicts...”

16. During PSOs, the use of the ASF on HANDS will be covered by the mandate of the mission and the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) / Status of Mission Agreement (SOMA) which must be in conformity with the Oslo Guidelines (Guidelines on the use of Foreign Military and Civil Defense Assets in Disaster Relief).

17. Following these guidance, the roles of the ASF can be considered in terms of humanitarian assistance in peace support operations (PSO), protection of civilians in armed conflicts, Humanitarian Disaster Relief Operations, and training.

PRINCIPLES

18. The actions of the ASF in HANDS will be guided respectively by the following AU and humanitarian principles:
   a. The AU Principles are guided by the AU Constitutive Act and are supported by Articles 4(h) and 4(j) listed below:
      i. the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in response to grave circumstances.
      ii. the right of Member States to request intervention from the Union in order to restore peace and security’.

   b. The humanitarian principles consist of the following:
      i. Humanitarian principles: humanity, impartiality, and neutrality.
      ii. State responsibility: the primary role and responsibility of member states to protect and assist affected populations within their territory.
iii. **Compliance:** Member states and humanitarian actors commit to adhere to establish international norms and standards including guidelines and codes of conduct recognized by the AU.

iv. **Non-indifference:** conformity with the relevant provisions contained in the Constitutive Act of the AU.

v. **Solidarity:** African customary extension of hospitality/egalitarianism and solidarity with people in situation of need and distress is institutionalized as an integral part of humanitarian response.

vi. **Accountability:** transparency and accountability must apply to all humanitarian actions.

vii. **Participation and ownership:** participation of affected populations/communities is the cornerstone of the planning and decision-making process for humanitarian action.

viii. **Subsidiarity and complementarity** between AUC, other organs of the AU, REC/RMs, Member States, UN and other actors and stakeholders.

ix. **Gender mainstreaming:** all activities must take into account the gender dimension of humanitarian action; and also include vulnerable persons such as the elderly and persons with disabilities considerations.

x. **Non-violability of humanitarian workers:** humanitarian workers are to operate in a safe and secure environment, free of threat and/or intimidation.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

19. The overall responsibilities in humanitarian operations are defined in the draft AU Humanitarian Policy Framework and Disaster Management Policies. The implementation of the Guideline on the role of the ASF in HANDS will be mainstreamed into the existing structures at the regional and Member State levels, with the ASF playing a support role.

20. This institutional arrangement at regional and national levels will essentially enforce effective participation and coordination of the stakeholders at the various levels of implementation. As stated in the ASF Doctrine, the PSO may take the responsibility for specific humanitarian functions, however more normally, they will be used to assist the aid efforts, development organisations and agencies. Such assistance might include specialist units such as medical, transport and engineer units, possibly reconfigured and reinforced to meet particular needs. Depending on the mandate, this support could also include management assistance, the protection of the aid agencies, as well as the creation and maintenance of aid routes. In extreme circumstances, the military and civilian components may have to take direct responsibility for the delivery of aid in order to maintain the flow. However, commanders and the heads of components should be aware of taking on extra tasks that are not specified in the mandate, beyond their capabilities and the higher authority’s intent.

**INSTITUTIONAL LINKAGES, MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION**

21. Besides the strong participatory mechanism inbuilt in the Guideline, its implementation will ensure a strong coordination mechanism with various institutions at regional and national levels. Smooth
implementation of the Guideline will be achieved based on a four-tiered layer of responsibilities in facilitating HANDS identified as follows:

A. African Union
22. The Department of Peace and Security, working with the Department of Political Affairs at the African Union Commission, will have the overall responsibility for coordination, accounting for human and financial resources and ensuring successful implementation of the Guideline.

23. The Department of Peace and Security, together with the Department of Political Affairs, will establish an internal working group to comprise of relevant departments within the AUC to strengthen and complement capacities.

B. Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms
24. The RECs/RMs will ensure effective sectoral linkages at the regional and national levels. The Humanitarian Unit/Section/Division or Department at the REC/RM level will take the lead and coordinate the REC/RM support which will include the standby force of that REC/RM.

25. At the regional level, RECs/RMs will work with regional and national level sector departments and ministries with respect to policy direction and implementation of norms and standards on natural disaster and humanitarian complex emergencies. Continental conformity to Guidelines at implementation will be ensured by the experts drawn from the relevant line ministries. Sector ministries will provide guidelines to ensure that the workplans contribute to the attainment of the Guideline.

C) Member States
26. At the national level, the Guideline will be coordinated through four distinct units, outlined below.

(a) Disaster and Complex Humanitarian Emergencies Monitoring Committee
27. The Committee will be set up in accordance with the broader AU Humanitarian and Disaster Management Policy Frameworks to provide overall monitoring, resource mobilisation, budget harmonisation and policy advice. The Committee will be chaired by the Minister responsible for Disaster Preparedness and will draw membership from Ministers in the key Sector Ministries, Development Partners and the Private Sector. The Committee will meet once every year and will report to the Specialised Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security (STCDSS).

(b) Disaster and Complex Humanitarian Emergencies Technical Working Group
28. The Working Group will provide operational and technical oversight for all Policy-related investments, ensure coordination and liaison of programmes, receive and analyse progress reports, instituting mechanisms for effective monitoring and evaluation. It will report to the Monitoring Committee listed above. The Working Group will be chaired by an Under Secretary for the relevant line ministry of Member States. It will be comprised of representatives of key sector ministries, local authority representatives, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), interfaith organisations and private
sector. The functions of the working group specific to this project, and consistent with other tasks prescribed, include:

(i). Providing technical and operational guidance to Member States in implementation of the Guideline.
(ii). Reviewing progress reports and provide technical guidance on issues raised in the progress reports and monitoring and evaluation exercises.
(iii). Review workplans and budgets.
(iv). Provide technical and operational guidance to local governments in the implementation of the Policy.

(c) Technical Support Team

29. The Technical Support Team from the Disaster Preparedness Ministry will support the Monitoring Committee and the Working Group in the day-to-day Guideline implementation.

The Team will provide technical support in the following areas:

(i). Developing and reviewing Disaster Preparedness and Natural Disaster Management handbooks, and simplified guidelines.
(ii). Providing implementation support.
(iii). Working with local governments in the development and review of delivery benchmarks and facilitate the decentralised management of Policy activities.
(iv). Documentation of achievements, best practices, lessons learned and challenges to inform local government and national planning processes.

D. Community Level

30. This is the level at which all interventions of community resilience will be initiated and implemented. The key actors at this level include traditional leaders, leaders of faith-based organisations, community-based organisations (CBOs), parish chairpersons/councillors and government representatives at the local levels. Development of communication campaign will be an essential instrument to provide the information that nurtures and promotes the participation of the key actors at this level.

The Communities will perform the following functions:

(i). Undertake community-based disaster preparedness, monitoring and reporting.
(ii). Participate in the implementation of the Guideline, and
(iii). Operate and maintain community assets.
STRATEGIC FOCUS

A. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS

31. All PSOs have at their root the aspiration to improve the lot of those who are suffering in a crisis zone. More specifically, humanitarian operations are conducted to alleviate human suffering. They may be conducted independently or as an element of a PSO. Humanitarian operations conducted by military forces may precede or accompany humanitarian activities provided by specialized civilian organisations. However, the prime responsibility for the provision of humanitarian aid and assistance rests with specialized civilian, national, international, government or non-government organisations and agencies. Specialist civilian direction of military humanitarian operations is necessary to ensure that military engagement, which tends to be the short-term and impact driven, does not create dependency or run contrary to longer-term specialized development programmes.¹

32. Humanitarian assistance is a set of integrated and coordinated measures that seek to save and sustain lives, maintain basic human dignity, ensure the protection of civilians, support the return and reintegration of displaced populations and help resuscitate socio-economic activity, particularly in the immediate post-war situation when state capacity is limited.² Activities under this element stabilise and rehabilitate the society including the return, reintegration and rehabilitation of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), ex-combatants and other war affected populations.³

In the context of PSOs, it consists of but is not limited to:

a. Information Sharing.
b. Building awareness.
c. Force protection.
d. Use of armed escorts for humanitarian convoys.
e. Use of armed guards.
f. Securing humanitarian routes and accesses.
g. Patrolling;
h. Supporting infrastructure;
i. Strategic lift
j. Evacuation Operations, including (i) Evacuation of staff and (ii) Medical evacuation
i. Logistics support and transport, including (i) logistics information; (ii) maintenance support; and (iii) convoy clearances and coordination.

B. PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS

33. The concept of ‘Protection of Civilians’ includes activities undertaken to improve the security of the population and people at risk and to ensure the full respect of the rights of groups and the individual recognised under regional instruments, including the African Charter of Human and Peoples’ Rights, the AU Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons and the Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, and international law, including humanitarian rights and refugee law.4

34. Protection, in the broadest sense, aims to ensure that authorities and other actors respect their obligations and the rights of individuals in order to preserve the lives, security, physical and moral integrity and dignity of those affected by conflicts and/or other situations of violence as well as natural and human-induced disasters. Protection includes efforts that strive to prevent or stop actual or potential violations of international humanitarian law and other relevant bodies of law or norms that protect human beings. Above all, protection aims to eradicate the causes of violations, or the circumstances that lead to them, by addressing the perpetrators of the violations.5 The Policy reaffirms the primary responsibility of States for protecting people affected by conflict, natural and human-induced disasters, taking into account the specific needs of women, girls, boys and men, especially the most vulnerable, including refugees, returnees, stateless persons and IDPs.

35. Considering its envisioned efficient and effective activation, the Rapid Deployment Capability of the ASF will contribute to the protection of civilians caught up in fast moving emergencies. The prevention of abuses to basic human rights and the imposition of justice will require a PSO that is appropriately trained and configured for such tasks.6 In coordination with other actors on the ground and through the establishment of a humanitarian civil-military coordination mechanism, the ASF will be called upon for the following:

a. Tracking, Tracing and Accountability of Casualties and Vulnerable Populations.
b. Assessing risks.
c. Security patrols.
d. Crowd control and policing operations.
e. Protection from physical violence.
f. Disarmament of armed elements within the population.
g. Rights-based protection; and
h. Establishment of a humanitarian civil-military coordination mechanism.


C. NATURAL DISASTER RELIEF OPERATIONS

36. The continent has experienced different types of disasters resulting from a diversity of hazards, such as droughts, fires, floods, locust and army worm invasions, collapsed buildings, and epidemics. To meet the needs of communities affected by any of such hazards, the ASF should support all natural disaster relief operations by performing the following roles:

   a. Establishment of an On-site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC), including communications.
   b. Ensuring security.
   c. Assist in facilitating provision of Relief – Escorts.
   d. Conducting search and rescue (SAR).
   e. Providing logistics support.
   f. Providing medical support.
   g. Providing transportation.

37. In addition, accordingly to the type of natural disaster, specific roles can be played by the ASF.

Drought and Desertification

38. Drought and desertification are caused by harsh climatic conditions due to rainfall deficit compounded by human activities resulting in higher sea surface temperatures, increase of atmospheric carbon dioxide and greenhouse effects. Drought is a recurrent phenomenon that affects large areas and numbers of people in the country, with cumulative effects that includes soil erosion, decreasing ability to cope with future droughts, impoverishment of rural communities, drying up of water bodies, extensive crop failure and death of livestock.

39. ASF Response to Drought. ASF may be called upon to:

   a. Provide and treat water.
   b. Construct dams.
   c. Provide logistical support for veterinary and agricultural services.

Floods

40. Floods are flash, river and coastal inundations from intense rainfall associated with seasonal weather patterns. They are also caused by the effects of tsunamis, hurricanes, typhoons, tropical cyclones, human manipulation of watersheds, drainage basins and floodplains. The effects of floods
include the displacement of families, loss of lives and property, waterborne epidemics, food shortages and destruction of infrastructure.

41. **ASF Response to Floods.** ASF may be called upon to:
   a. Open communication routes by undertaking construction works.
   b. Conduct evacuation.
   c. Carry out first aid and minor treatments.
   d. Provide and treat water.
   e. Provide temporary shelter.
   f. Undertake flood fighting operations.

**Landslides**

42. This is the down-slope movement of soil and rock resulting from the following; earthquakes, tremors, heavy rains, changes in direct water content, removal of lateral support, loading with weight, weathering, human manipulation of water courses and slope composition. The effects of landslides include displacement, destruction of lives, property and infrastructure.

43. **ASF Response to Landslides.** ASF may be called upon to:
   a. Open communication routes by undertaking construction works.
   b. Clear debris.
   c. Conduct evacuation.
   d. Provide temporary shelters.
   e. Provide and treat water.

**Earthquakes and Volcanic Activities**

44. The effects of earthquakes include death and injury, displacement of persons, destruction of property and infrastructure. Due to high population density and the large number of high-rise structures, major cities would be the most affected.

45. **ASF Response to Earthquakes and Tremors.** ASF may be called upon to:
   a. Conduct evacuation.
   b. Open communication routes by undertaking construction works.
   c. Clear debris.
   d. Provide temporary shelters.
   e. Provide and treat water.
Industrial Hazards and Pollution

46. Mining accidents, oil spills, radiation, air and water pollution are potential hazards to life and property. The risks of fires and explosions are ever present in industries, fuel and chemical storage depots. Dumping and disposal of chemical waste may also contribute to industrial and pollution hazards. The effects of industrial hazards include loss of lives, injuries, pollution, and environmental degradation, destruction of property, infrastructure and disruption of social and economic activities.

47. **ASF Response to Industrial Hazards.** ASF may be called upon to:
   
a. Conduct evacuation.
b. Decontaminate affected areas.
c. Provide temporary shelters.
d. Carry out fire-fighting.
e. Enforce quarantine.
f. Provide and treat water.

Diseases and Epidemics

48. Major epidemics affecting the continent include HIV/AIDS, cholera, malaria, typhoid, meningitis, tuberculosis and food poisoning. Continuous surveillance against the extremely lethal viral haemorrhagic fevers such as Ebola, yellow fever, Rift Valley fever, South Asia Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and avian influenza is being undertaken to generate more effective and sustainable response to reduce its effects. The effects of diseases and epidemics include death and disruption of social and economic activities.

49. **ASF Response to Diseases and Epidemics.** ASF may be called upon to:
   
a. Conduct immunization.
b. Enforce quarantine.
c. Conduct evacuation.
d. Provide logistical support to health institutions.
e. Provide and treat water.
f. Provide temporary shelters.

Structural Failures

50. Structural failures result to collapsed buildings and bridges amongst others occasioning loss of life and property of un-proportional magnitude. These failures are as a result of fault designs and or structural abuse.

51. **ASF Response to Structural Failures.** ASF may be called upon to:
   
a. Conduct evacuation.
b. Open communication routes by undertaking construction works.
c. Clear debris.
d. Provide temporary shelters.
e. Provide and treat water.
f. Carry out first aid and minor treatments

FUNDING MECHANISMS

52. The role of the ASF in HANDS will have cost implications implementation and sustenance of its support activities. Intended to be a light but long-term fit-for-purpose support activities, the funding of HANDS will need to be both immediate and rolling.

53. Immediate funding will be required for undertaking the teething support activities that will build up HANDS. These projects include training and capacity building, policy development workshops, acquisition of basic equipment; communication, Search and Rescue, field operations deployment, personal support equipment, and office requirements.

54. Rolling fund will be required for sustenance of the various activities; currency training, deployment logistic and personnel cost including daily subsistence, insurance, medical and basic operations cost.

55. Funding for ASF HANDS support activities should be guided by an appropriate Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and other legal arrangements. A predictable and sustainable AU Emergency Fund will be used for initial funding of urgent HANDS activities. The Emergency Fund should be primarily funded by AU Member States and augmented by other sources. Additionally, various means including direct AU funding from the AU Peace Fund, from the AU Special Emergency Fund, partner support funding and Member States assessed funds should be used to fund HANDS support activities. For sustainability of ASF’s role in the implementation of HANDS and to guarantee AU member states contribution to rapid and effective HANDS on the continent, assessed funding by AU member states is the preferred funding option.

TRAINING

56. An initial training package would be realized. This training will include familiarization to humanitarian civil-military coordination and protection of civilians. Specialized training on emergency communication, operations management, on-site operations coordination, basic SAR and emergency logistics will be sought from partner organizations such as UN, EU, Rescue South Africa and Red. UNOCHA will facilitate the initial humanitarian civil-military coordination and protection of civilians training. UNOCHA will also support On-site operations training, Search and Rescue and emergency telecommunications
ROSTERING

57. The human resource requirements for the HANDS will first and foremost be driven by the situation on the ground, the adopted strategy and the particular needs of the operations. It is recommended that HANDS human capacity make use of the Roster system to facilitate timely recruitment and deployment of staff. The Roster process will clearly define and determine the type and number of staff that would be recruited on a priority basis.

58. The HANDS component will be created on the AU civilian standby roster and its Supporting policies and directives to determine the staffing needs in areas such as Humanitarian support, Disaster preparedness, relief management, logistics management, public information among others. The AU civilian roster platform is flexible and scalable to accommodate additional components while recognizing the fact that civilian expertise, are often cross-cutting and are required for a range of peace and security operations undertaken by the AUC. The HANDS Standby Roster will be designed to meet the requirement for Human resource requirements across the range of HANDS operations as per the specific deployment requirements.

59. The roster will also be linked to training such as a structured induction programme for HANDS staff, the accumulation of knowledge, guidance and lessons learned practices to inform strategy and decision-making as well as several partnership arrangements with different stakeholders whose expertise can be called upon.

COORDINATION

60. The capacities and skills for providing on-site coordination, escort of relief convoys, logistics management, search and rescue, protection of civilians, early warning and emergency communications are essential if substantive support is to be afforded by humanitarian actors who usually respond to emergencies in a time-bound and pressured manner. These capacities and skills are to be employed in close coordination with AU Member States support and complementary role to the capacities of humanitarian actors on the ground. When deployed where humanitarian agencies are yet to arrive at the emergency theatre, the ASF support activities will as much as it is able to, use its capacities to address the needs of the affected population.

61. The deployment of the ASF will provide favourable ground for humanitarian actors as they progressively establish and consolidate their presence in the area of operation. The setting up of the immediate on-site coordination framework would be undertaken and managed by the ASF response team until taken over or substituted by the appropriate humanitarian response organisation. As soon as the civilian humanitarian coordination framework is set up, the ASF on-site coordination will merge with this system while maintaining its link with the early warning desk based at Strategic headquarters. The necessary coordination and operations management training will be availed to the ASF personnel to facilitate effective coordination.

62. Within the AU, the HANDS programme is an AUC-wide programme that involves the ASF in certain aspects of its operationalisation. There is therefore the need to establish a coordination framework for HANDS that involve all key players within the Commission. The coordination platform
to be established will link the relevant desk/department of the AU and external support entities such as the desk of the Emergency Response Teams in the RECs/RMs.

63. The HANDS Coordination Platform will be led by the Humanitarian Division (within the Department of Political Affairs) which will be directly linked to the AU Humanitarian Information and Resources Centre and also house the early warning desk. Periodic coordination meeting will be called to update stakeholders on events and emergencies on the continents, conduct scenario and contingency planning as well as assess the level of readiness of the ASF to undertake envisaged HANDS operations. All major stakeholders will be convened for these coordination meetings.

COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION
64. The traditional collaboration with bilateral and multilateral partners regarding HANDS should be maintained and deepened. The collaboration will seek to meet the aspirations and needs of the AU, RECs\RMs and Member states in order to bridge the gap in the HANDS capabilities.

65. The collaboration with the international community will be focused at the following priority areas:
   a. Information sharing.
   b. Support of training activities.
   c. Capacity building.
   d. Coordination of resource mobilisation and funding.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING
66. The AUC will report periodically to the relevant organs of the AU on the humanitarian situation in Africa. The Guideline encourages Member States and Regional Economic Communities/Mechanisms to participate in the assessment of and reporting on ASF Humanitarian Action and Natural Disaster Support activities on the continent.

IMPLEMENTATION
67. This Guideline will become operational upon approval/adoption by relevant AU Policy Organs.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
68. The implementation Plan is attached as Annex I.
LIST OF ANNEXES

ANNEX I: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
ANNEX II: ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS
ANNEX III: NORMATIVE DOCUMENTS