

Bangladesh—ILO experts participate in joint damage and needs assessment

Dhaka—2 February ILO experts revisited the three worst-affected districts by Cyclone SIDR to assess and validate the damage and loss estimates reported by the Bangladesh government. ILO's estimates on employment and income loss were successfully integrated into the World Bank-led assessment.

The World Bank Joint Damage and Needs Assessment (JDNA) team, which is funded by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and included the participation of UN agencies, took place in January 2008, nearly two months following Cyclone SIDR. The purpose of the mission was to gather sector-wide government estimates of damages and losses. ILO visited the areas of Faridpur, Shariatpur, and Madripur as part of the Livelihoods Team, which also includes experts from the UNDP and World Bank.

The Livelihoods team met with local government representatives, Deputy Commissioners, District Disaster Management Committees, UNOs, and affected communities of the respective districts. The team specifically set out to validate government figures of damage and loss.

Overall, the estimates on damages in the majority of sectors were accurate due to local government representation. However, some discrepancies were witnessed in the housing sector due to different interpretations of definitions on full and partial damage to various housing structures.

Livelihoods sector was also challenging due to the lack of baseline data at the local level. The World Bank made use of ILO's analysis of population census, labour force surveys, and household income and expenditure surveys from a several years ago to develop a baseline. The inter-agency collaboration will allow for damage estimates to be harmonised into one JDNA report, leveraging financial resources for recovery projects.

An ILO mission was first sent a month after Cyclone SIDR hit the coastal and central areas of Bangladesh on November 15, 2007. During this visit, the ILO together with the Ministry of Labour and Employment conducted a rapid assessment of the affects of the disaster on livelihoods. The mission applied the methodological guidelines of the "Rapid Livelihood Assessment Toolkit", which are being jointly developed by the ILO and the FAO. FAO conducted a simultaneous mission to assess impact on the agricultural sector, while ILO assessed primarily the non-agricultural activities in the districts of Barguna, Bagerhat, Patuakhali and Projpur, which account for 87% of all deaths and 88% of all livestock losses. The ultimate aim of the assessment was to identify early livelihood recovery needs.