



EMPLOYMENT *for* PEACE



Briefing Note No. 4 - The ILO-UNHCR Technical Cooperation Partnership

ILO/CRISIS, April 2007

General Description

For millions of refugees, voluntary repatriation and reintegration remain the most preferred durable solution to their plight. The realization of this solution, however, involves complex and challenging processes requiring integrated and sustained action by the international community. One such challenge is presented in the effort to bridge the gap between relief and development. Two and half years ago, ILO and UNHCR made an irrevocable choice to become

partners in the humanitarian-to-development transition. This decision, which followed the initiative of the respective heads

of agencies, spurred many innovative projects and ideas that have expanded on the old fashioned leitmotiv of international assistance in crises.

Among the mechanisms and tools developed jointly by the ILO and UNHCR, there is the global programme referred to as the "ILO-UNHCR Partnership for the Socio-economic reintegration of refugees, returnees and IDPs", which aims to promote sustainable livelihoods of refugees, returnees and IDPs, as well as the search for durable solutions for displacement. Potentially this programme will be able to serve the entire refugee population assisted by UNHCR as it sets the framework for the rapid deployment of ILO livelihood experts to UNHCR's

country operations. It also builds on ILO's country programs reinforcing their capacity and ability to work in crisis contexts. The joint programme intends to support both reintegration of returnees in countries of origin, as well as refugees' self-reliance in the asylum context, in the recognition that the rapid deployment of ILO technical staff to crisis-affected regions will contribute to the prompt development or refinement of programmes seeking to provide the affected population with employment and/or income generation opportunities.

Being a refugee or an internally displaced should not be a permanent condition. Preparing for a new life after displacement is a priority for over 10 million people across the globe and multilateral assistance should support the recovery of livelihoods and the consolidation of peace

This project has proven its effectiveness in coupling ILO's expertise in livelihoods and sustainable development with UNHCR's expertise

and mandate to provide protection and assistance to refugees, returnees and at times, IDPs, and to find durable solutions to their plight. The ILO and UNHCR have effectively combined their respective expertise, becoming partners in an innovative humanitarian-to-development transition.

The ILO-UNHCR Partnership was launched in 2004 thanks to the Italian Cooperation's endorsement, which recognized its potential: putting competencies together and making them work in the field. This Program has opened new avenues in technical cooperation and become a precursor to the current humanitarian reform of the UN system, encouraging more cohesiveness among UN agencies.

BASIC FACTS

- **TOTAL CONTRIBUTION:** 2,033.855 US\$
- **IMPLEMENTATION STARTING DATE:** February 2004
- **PROJECTS CONCLUDED (17)** in Angola, Benin, Burundi, Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, North Caucasus, Serbia and Montenegro, Somalia, Southern Sudan, Sri Lanka, and Uganda
- **PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE (3)** in Azerbaijan, Nepal, Thailand

ILO-UNHCR Collaboration: A Long History

ILO-UNHCR collaboration has a long history starting in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War.

Both institutions continued to collaborate closely during the struggles that followed the decolonization process in Africa. Some of the major Cold War conflict scenarios were again occasions for fruitful cooperation, which also reflects why both organizations were honoured on different occasions with the Nobel Peace Prize. But nevertheless the new partnership that began to grow in 2003 paves the way for enhanced and more systematic cooperation, creating a permanent and solid alliance which has contributed to and even anticipated the process of UN reform in the humanitarian sector.

Areas of ILO-UNHCR Collaboration

- micro-finance
- micro and small enterprise development
- cooperatives development
- local economic development
- skills/vocational training
- women's socio-economic empowerment
- employment-intensive reconstruction project

The last three years have witnessed more consistent and significant cooperation between the two agencies. Following an exchange of letters between the High Commissioner for Refugees and the Director General of the ILO in 2001, a number of measures have been taken. Respective focal points and working groups have been established. A **Joint Statement by the Executive Heads on the ILO-UNHCR Collaboration** has been signed on November 4th, 2004. This statement reflects the full parameters of cooperation and builds on the Memorandum of Understanding signed between ILO and UNHCR in 1983.

If women refugees are running new businesses in Gash Barka, Ethiopia, or in Nampula, Mozambique, this is also thanks to the ILO-UNHCR partnership.

The same is true of new cooperatives in the North Caucasus, energized agricultural activities in southern Chad, and so many talents discovered through the vocational training programmes conducted in several African countries.

The partnership between the ILO and UNHCR also contributes to one of the main Millennium Development Goals, the reduction of poverty, as displaced populations are one of the most vulnerable to poverty.

It also follows the Secretary General's call for closer cooperation among UN agencies to achieve greater efficiency.

The ILO-UNHCR partnership is an important step forward in the search for protection and durable solutions for refugees. With UNHCR bringing its extensive knowledge of refugees and ILO its valuable technical expertise refugees and IDPs can be better supported in re-creating their livelihood from an early stage of displacement.



Country Interventions

Up to date, ILO experts have been deployed to 15 countries: Angola, Benin, Burundi, Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, North Caucasus, Serbia and Montenegro, Somalia, Southern Sudan, Sri Lanka, and Uganda.



COUNTRY	ACTIVITY
PRJ. CONCLUDED	
Angola	Women's socio-economic empowerment through entrepreneurship development
Benin/Togo	Micro-finance and income generation programme (2004); Vocational/skills training programmes (2005)
Burundi	Local Economic Development
Southern Chad	Socio-economic analysis and development of income generating activities (mainly agriculture).
Ethiopia	Skills development & income generation activities
Eritrea	Micro-finance (village banking for returnee area); reintegration of returnees through income generation
Kenya	Vocational/skills training, micro and small enterprise promotion
Liberia	Labour market assessment (skills, capacities, resources, local economic opportunities) (2005)
	Youth Skills development and reintegration activities (2006)
Mozambique	Women's socio-economic empowerment through entrepreneurship development
North Caucasus	Cooperatives and small enterprises development
Serbia & Montenegro	Assessment of UNHCR implementing partners for micro-finance
Somalia	Local Economic Development
Southern Sudan	Vocational/skills training programme for return areas
Sri Lanka	Employment/income generation activities
Uganda	Vocational/skills training programme for Sudanese refugees
PRJ. In PIPELINE	
Azerbaijan	Entrepreneurship development and job assessment
Nepal	Socio-economic assessment for the conflict affected people
Thailand	Vocational training, Socio-economic analysis and development of income generating activities

The Way Forward

In the past two years, this program acquired high relevance by supporting UNHCR operations in terms of livelihood promotion and finding durable solutions for displaced persons. This Global programme has created new hopes for a better future of the targeted populations, built on ILO and UNHCR competences and shared know-how.

Through this programme, ILO is able to broaden its outreach to help vulnerable populations in different parts of the world that suffer from the consequences of displacement, to become self-reliant through sustainable income-generating opportunities. The experts assigned to various field deployments (8 in 2004; 10 in 2005; 2 in 2006) have contributed to either shaping and fine-tuning existing UNHCR livelihood programs aimed at facilitating local integration during asylum, or/and reintegration into countries of origin, upon repatriation.

The cooperation between ILO and UNHCR not only offers a framework within which to implement and evaluate different solutions but also offers the ILO the opportunity to introduce economic recovery approaches, starting from post-conflict/post-crisis contexts, in countries where it has no presence. It thus allows the ILO to apply policies and technical solutions in “well defined and controlled environments,” with the possibility to verify efficacy and impact.

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The Partnership also offers a framework to call other UN agencies to join the efforts of both UNHCR and the ILO. Along this perspective, the Programme now aims to move from the mere logic of expertise deployment to the logic of fully engaging the international community into livelihood-sensitive operational strategies.

KENYA

GENERAL CONTEXT:

□ “According to UNHCR... reports, the Sudanese caseload constitutes almost 75% (64,644) of the total refugee population in Kakuma of 86,276; Somali refugees constitute the second largest group, at 17,762 or 21%; the Ethiopian refugees account for the third largest group, 3%.”

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES:

□ “Refugees in the [Kakuma] camps continue to participate in a limited range of economic activities where conditions and market access make this possible.”

□ “In Kakuma camp, the micro and small businesses found in the districts are mainly focussed on production – in a very traditional way – for the local markets. The majority of livelihood activities of the population in the district are in the field of localised farming and animal husbandry.”

□ “The particular situation of the three Dadaab camps puts strong limitations on creating opportunities for self-reliance or taking advantage of existing ones. Refugees are not allowed to undertake business activities outside the camps and therefore rely completely on business transactions and work opportunities in the camps. “

RECOMMENDATIONS:

□ “It is recommended that in order to promote the introduction of labour-intensive methods of road/irrigation canal rehabilitation in South Sudan, UNHCR in collaboration with ILO should organise workshops for its reintegration staff in the field.”

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JOINT ILO-UNHCR PUBLICATIONS

- Building entrepreneurial capacity for returnee and refugee women in Angola and Mozambique (ILO-UNHCR, 2006)
- Employment for Peace. ILO Tools to Rebuild Conflict-affected Communities (CD-ROM)
- Introduction to Microfinance in Conflict-affected Communities: A Training Manual