

Employment Intensive Investment Programme Community Contracting Initiatives in Calamity-prone Areas



International
Labour
Organization

The Challenge



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Typhoons and other natural calamities are usual in the Philippines. However, despite the frequency of such calamities, adapting is still not easy. The effects of natural calamities have undeniably worsened because of climate change.

Coping becomes harder because of intense sea level rise and unpredictable rainfall patterns. In such calamities, the poor and vulnerable are the hardest hit. Their communities and even worse, their homes are left damaged after every major typhoon.

Part of rehabilitation efforts right after every calamity is the restoration or reconstruction of infrastructure.

However, in some communities the rehabilitation period takes years since resources are always not enough for the repair of damaged infrastructure. When rehabilitation efforts are delayed, the economic activities of the residents are affected.

The Response

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is implementing the Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) to create jobs at community level through local resource-based investments in infrastructure. In the Philippines, EIIP developed and applied Community Contracting and Cash-for-Work in calamity-prone areas to provide employment opportunities for the residents and victims.

Considering the vulnerability of many areas in the Philippines during calamities, community contracting provides a long list of direct benefits to the residents.

Through community contracting and cash-for-work schemes, local employers, workers' groups, community associations, and the private sector work together to provide employment to residents to cope with the crisis. Through use of skills, materials, and other resources available, construction or restoration of infrastructure becomes more efficient yet less costly.

The application of the modified EIIP employment creation tools right after a calamity, in collaboration with the local government units (LGUs) and non-government organizations (NGOs), provides immediate income to victims and residents. The local workforce gets a chance to acquire practical skills and access other decent work opportunities. In addition, the direct involvement of the residents in all aspects of community infrastructure development gives them a sense of ownership that leads to the facility's proper use and maintenance, thereby prolonging its useful life.

Key Statistics

- Annually, the Philippines faces about 20 typhoons putting the lives and properties of the people at risk. Of the 20 typhoons, about five are expected to be highly catastrophic.
- In February 2008, heavy rains resulted to flooding affecting 46,000 families in central Philippines. During the same period, a tropical storm hit the northern part of the Philippines leaving 30,000 individuals gravely affected.
- Since year 2000, almost three million individuals have been affected by different natural calamities that hit the country.

Objectives

Development objective:

- Promote and support the generation of productive and decent employment in developing countries through labour-based investment policies and programmes in the infrastructure sector, thus contributing to poverty reduction, economic development, and social progress.

Immediate objectives:

- Promote the development and application of employment-friendly policies for public investment in infrastructure at the national, regional, and international levels.
- Promote small enterprises in the construction sector (labour-based contractor) and private sector execution of public works using locally available resources in an optimum manner, combining job creation in the infrastructure sector with improve and decent working conditions.
- Promote organization and collective negotiation at the small enterprise and community levels in labour-based works in the urban and rural sectors, and improve access of deprived communities to productive resources and social services.

Achievements

- Residents of Barangay San Isidro, La Paz District in Iloilo City and members of the Albacia Homeowners Association constructed a concrete walkway in place of the slippery and muddy path that links their community to the main road. The infrastructure not only improved mobility and provided paid work for residents but likewise allowed the transfer of practical skills to those who were involved during construction.
- Residents of Barangay Hechanova in Jaro District Iloilo City lament the dirty and stinking open ditch in the middle of the neighborhood beside their only pathway to the main road. To solve the problem, the residents constructed a covered concrete-lined drainage canal with footpath that generated paid work for residents. This infrastructure minimized threats to health of the residents.
- The perennial flooding caused by the clogged Calajunan Creek in Barangay Sooc Arevalo, Iloilo City was solved with the dredging and clearing of the waterway. This gave employment to 60 residents who gained experience in creek clearing. The city government then tasked the members of the Homeowners Association to clear the rest of the creek to the main river.
- In Dolores, Eastern Samar, residents from three *poblacion barangays* constructed the 800-meter concrete-lined covered drainage canal to address the annual flooding that also brings schistosomiasis infection. The residents organized, registered with government, gained the legal personality and were engaged as contractors.
- After the devastation caused by typhoon Ondoy in September 2009, the ILO worked with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the local governments' Public Employment Services Offices (PESO) in implementing Cash-for-Work schemes as emergency employment for victims in Quezon City, Taguig, Taytay, and Biñan, Laguna. Some 623 residents worked and earned in clearing their surroundings of the tons of debris and mud left by the receding floodwaters.
- The ILO-AusAID Project implemented emergency employment activities benefitting some 1,075 workers (337 females, 738 males). The activities include clearing and cleaning of surroundings, de-clogging of drainage lines and construction of benches in steep slopes to prevent threats of landslide. The emergency employment activities were implemented in 12 barangays in Cagayan de Oro and Iligan and generated some 19,334 workdays.
- The Project went into construction of temporary and permanent shelters and lofts (an additional floor inside permanent shelters) in collaboration with civic organizations like the Rotary Club of Cagayan de Oro and PAILIG Development Foundation Inc. and the faith-based group Kagay-an Evangelical Disaster Response Network (KEDRN). The activity provided not only immediate income for workers but also allowed the transfer of practical and life-long skills on carpentry, masonry, painting, electrical installation, and welding through hands-on on-site mentoring arrangements. To sustain the use of their new-found skills, the workers agreed to organize and provide services as community contractors.



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- Two community-based groups of workers in Cagayan de Oro have elected their officers and registered with DOLE and now have the legal personality to be engaged as community contractors. The new contractors will be tasked by the Project for small infrastructure projects like construction of drainage systems, perimeter fences and walls and repair of classrooms in schools prioritized by the Department of Education (DepEd) Division of City Schools. In Iligan, another group of workers will be engaged for the development of a potable water supply system that will benefit an ice cream vendors cooperative and internally displaced persons in transitional shelters.