

Crisis Response in Asia and the Pacific

Rebuilding livelihoods after natural disasters and conflicts

The challenge

In the wake of a crisis, whether a natural disaster or an armed conflict, social and economic disruption is an unavoidable consequence and a dreadful reminder of how fragile human settlements and activities can be. Rebuilding the communities and livelihoods of the most vulnerable becomes a top priority for decision-makers and local administrators.

In post-crisis reconstruction creating decent jobs is an immediate need. Survivors and their families want to regain their incomes, as well as their dignity, self-confidence, hope, and take a stake in the reconstruction of their communities. Employment-led recovery not only contributes to establishing short-term stability, but also paves the way to sustainable reconstruction and peace.

The ILO response

The ILO has been working in a number of disaster-affected countries such as China, Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan and the Philippines, as well as in conflict-affected countries such as Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Nepal, Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka. In responding to disasters and conflicts, the ILO provides both upstream and downstream assistance:

1) Post-disaster impact assessment

Within the framework of a preliminary damage and needs assessment, and in close collaboration with the respective governments, the ILO focuses on the impact of disasters on employment and livelihoods.

Joint post-disaster assessments are a critical step towards coordination in allocating financial resources for post-disaster reconstruction to help people get back to work. They provide a robust platform for the next step – the joint elaboration of strategies and projects, in both rural and urban areas, to restore local production, re-establish economic and trade networks and revitalize local markets and the demand for local services and products.



2) Local economic recovery and development

The ILO promotes employment-led recovery by creating job opportunities at local level, where reintegration ultimately takes place. Key programmes in this area include:

- Cash for work programmes that maximize job opportunities for the local population through labour-intensive infrastructure rehabilitation.
- Capacity development programmes that provide skills and business management training to generate employment and livelihood opportunities.
- Capacity development programmes for local stakeholders, including the private sector.
- Local economic recovery programmes developed in consultation with local stakeholders, aimed at the expansion of the private sector and direct employment-support services.
- Community-driven development programmes comprising participatory investments in local socio-economic infrastructure.

“After disasters, international assistance should aim to not only rebuild societies, but build them back better. That requires decent work - work that is productive and comes with conditions of freedom, equity, with security and human dignity.”

*Sachiko Yamamoto, Regional Director
ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific*



3) Policy advice for constituents in formulating employment-led recovery strategies

The ILO, together with 18 other United Nations agencies, developed the system-wide United Nations Policy on Post-conflict Employment Creation, Income Generation and Reintegration. This Policy aims to inform decision-makers and practitioners about post-conflict work on employment-led recovery planning.

Projects and activities in the region include

- **Pakistan: 2010 and 2011 floods**
Cash for work projects to clean and rehabilitate flood-affected health facilities.
- **China: 2008 Sichuan earthquake**
Livelihood recovery project offering vocational and business management skills training.
- **Myanmar: 2008 Cyclone Nargis**
Labour-intensive infrastructure rehabilitation project to generate short-term employment opportunities for disaster-affected local community members.
- **Indonesia: 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami**
Emergency employment services established to link unemployed people with available work opportunities in tsunami-affected Aceh.



Resources

ILO crisis response

http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/lang--en/WCMS_DOC_EMP_ARE_CRI_EN

ILO's Role in Conflict and Disaster Settings – Guide and Toolkit

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms_141275.pdf

Local Economic Recovery in Post-Conflict: Guidelines

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms_141270.pdf

Prévention et résolution des conflits violents et armés. Manuel de formation à l'usage des organisations syndicales

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms_141272.pdf

Socio-Economic Reintegration of Ex-Combatants: Guidelines

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms_141276.pdf

The Livelihood Assessment Toolkit (LAT)

http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/tc/tce/pdf/LAT_Brochure_LoRes.pdf

United Nations Policy for Post-Conflict Employment Creation, Income Generation and Reintegration

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---ifp_crisis/documents/publication/wcms_117576.pdf

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