

Responding to Difficult Political and Social Transitions



Characteristics

-) May result in recession, inefficiency, bankruptcy, lack of foreign investment and unemployment
-) These stresses may exacerbate existing social tensions and may contribute to increased crime, general insecurity and internal armed conflicts
-) Dynamic and uncertain processes with unpredictable outcomes
-) Some countries may experience prolonged instability, while in others a crisis situation may develop rapidly

Types: DPSTs

-) Formation of new states
-) Movements for political independence or separation
-) Transitions to new political or economic system
-) Social transitions due to new socio-economic and/or political systems

Causes: DPSTs

-) Political fragmentation; Remobilisation around a cementing ideology
-) State institutions unable to provide basic services
-) Weakening of dominant or autocratic state
-) Weakening economic structures
-) Decline of welfare state
-) Separatist movements
-) Economic transitions, recession, stagnation

Social Impacts: DPSTs

-) Increased unemployment and underemployment
-) Threats to democratic gains caused by political instability
-) Rising social tensions and social instability
-) Increase in the number of poor people
-) Rise in income inequality
-) Increased feminization of poverty

Case: East Timor 1999

-) Displacement of 75% of the population
-) Destruction of 70% of the utilities, public buildings and private housing
-) Unemployment and underemployment at 80%
-) Shortage of managers, trainers, skilled and technical personnel for rebuilding the economy
-) Inadequate skill training facilities
-) Huge deficit in training material, equipment and tools

Proposal: East Timor 1999

-) Business tracking for self-employment and micro-entreprise creation
-) Registration and counseling through Employment Information and Service Centres
-) Training-of-trainers and capacity-building of training and service providers
-) Inclusion of training and capacity-building components in other rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes

Case: The CIS 1990s

-) CIS-former Soviet Union - Major transition
-) Severe decline in living conditions for millions
-) Increase in number of poor people and those living in acute poverty
-) Vulnerable groups: single-headed households, pensioners, unemployed
-) Increased feminisation of poverty
-) Erosion in gains made in gender equality
-) Decrease in public-sector employment