

Responding to Armed Conflict



Post-Conflict Characteristics

-) Fragile peace process
-) High expectations and hopes — short-lived
-) Root causes still exist
-) Psychological traumas and scars, and loss of social trust/social fabric
-) Culture of violence/availability of small arms
-) Breakdown of governance and other state institutions

Post-Conflict Characteristics

-) Expanded shadow economy and criminal networks
-) Widespread unemployment
-) Massive displacement and resettlement
-) Damaged physical infrastructure and production facilities
-) Ubiquitous presence of anti-personnel mines
-) Weak macro-economic situation

Socio-Economic Impacts

-) Destruction of productive assets, workplaces, general economic base, physical infrastructure
-) Damage to social fabric and community cohesion
-) Mortality, disability and psychosocial suffering
-) Civilian victims: predominantly women and children
-) Decrease in male population and increase in female-headed households
-) Disappearing social safety nets and support systems
-) Lost educational and training opportunities

Root Causes: Characteristics

-) Deep-rooted in the social, economic and political systems
-) Seemingly intractable
-) Existed for long periods of time
-) Require long-term development-oriented solutions (economic development, better governance, more equitable distribution)
-) Underlying problems and causes

Root Causes: Examples

-) High levels of social discrimination
-) Inequality and competition for resources
-) Socio-political exclusion affecting ethnic and minority groups
-) Authoritarian governance or poor governance
-) Land tenure issues
-) Long-term external political and economic interests

Proximate Causes: Characteristics

-) Symptoms or manifestations of deeper problems
-) “Just the tip of the iceberg”
-) May trigger or accelerate tensions and violence
-) Remedied with short-term fixes (food aid, elections, peacekeeping forces, one-sided victory)
-) Near-term problems


Proximate Causes: Examples

-) Government or military crack-downs on opposition
-) Break-down of negotiations, peace process
-) Economic or employment benefits derived from war
-) Political/ethnic extremism, demonizing
-) Austere economic reform measures
-) Proliferation of small arms and external military aid
-) Human rights violations
-) Severe economic downturn leading to massive sustained unemployment

Challenges for the ILO in Post-Conflict Situations

-) Reintegrate diverse conflict-affected groups into civil society
-) Rehabilitate socio-economic and physical infrastructure
-) Promote social/political negotiations, dialogue, reconciliation
-) Rebuild community social fabric and institutional capacities of ILO constituents
-) Promote equity and social justice by addressing root causes of the conflict

Special Conflict-Affected Groups

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-) Refugees/returnees
 -) Internally displaced people
 -) Demobilized combatants
 -) Female-headed households
 -) Child soldiers
 -) Disabled persons
 -) Conflict-affected youth and orphans

ILO Role Pre-Conflict/Early Warning Phase

-) Promote reconciliation and facilitate negotiations through participatory social dialogue
-) Dialogue, consultation and networking with others in UN system, social partners, and NGOs already in the area
-) Contingency planning, strategic planning of possible ILO interventions
-) Advanced administrative action related to possible options for ILO intervention

ILO Role Post-Conflict (Immediate/Short-Term)

-) Participate in joint needs assessment and analysis
-) Promote employment-intensive infrastructure rehabilitation and construction programmes
-) Skills training for wage employment in programmes
-) Accelerated business and micro-enterprise training
-) Developing Local Economic Development Agencies (LEDAs), and Local Employment and Economic Development Networks (LEEDs)

ILO Role Post-Conflict (Medium-Term)

-) Technical assistance to national employment offices to deal with employment-related dimensions of rehabilitation, reconstruction and reintegration programmes
-) Employment and income generation
-) Small and micro-enterprise development
-) Training in business skills, wage-earner skills
-) Contributing to development of employment and labour policies

ILO and ILO Constituent Post-Conflict Response

-) Employment creation through micro and small enterprise and cooperative development
-) Micro-credit programmes for self-employment and micro-enterprise development
-) Employment-intensive public works
-) Entrepreneurship and skills training for conflict-affected groups
-) Formulating new labour and safety laws
-) Promoting social dialogue and reconciliation through the tripartite structure

ILO Post-Conflict Response Examples

-) Entrepreneurship/skills training to ex-combatants (Mozambique)
-) Vocational training, labour-based infrastructure rehabilitation and small enterprise promotion (Cambodia)
-) Support in elaborating new labour code (Bosnia-Herzegovina)