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**ILO AND BRAZIL TEAM UP TO ASSIST COUNTRIES COPING WITH SOCIAL  
AND NATURAL DISASTERS**

Beirut (ILO News) – The Government of Brazil and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have announced the launch of a three-year programme aimed at enhancing the capacity of countries to respond to social and natural disasters.

The joint programme – to be developed by the ILO Training Centre in Turin – will seek to improve the capacity-building of countries in humanitarian assistance, train them on the prevention of natural and social disasters, and help them deal with post-crisis recoveries.

The first beneficiaries of the programme will be Haiti, Niger, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, East Timor and Portuguese-speaking African Countries. A total of 276 government officials will originally be trained on capacity-building and other issues.

“From earthquake in Haiti to the floods in Pakistan we have seen the crucial role that social inclusion and economic development can play in shaping a sustainable post-crisis recovery. The ILO is delighted to be joining forces once again with the Government of Brazil, whose leadership, commitment and expertise have been a true example of international humanitarian assistance”, said ILO Director-General Juan Somavia.

The new programme recognizes that protecting potentially affected populations and promoting sustainable development is as important as providing relief to victims of a natural or social disaster.

The Brazilian Government has pledged around US\$ 1 million to finance the project. Ambassador Maria Nazareth Farani Azevêdo, the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the UN in Geneva, has underlined that the programme “is a tribute to ILO’s capacity and determination to assist developing countries in their endeavour to prevent the effects of social and natural disasters.”

The project will also benefit from the ongoing cooperation between the ILO Turin Centre, the ILO Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction, and the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR).

Brazil has signed a number of funding partnerships with the ILO since 2005, including on child labour, forced labour and social protection. This latest partnership represents the first programme on humanitarian assistance in the world of work.