Guidelines for Employment in Crises

PSIO Program for the Study of International Organization(s)

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In Muzaffarabad, Pakistan, devastated by the earthquake of 8 October 2005, men sell foodstuffs amid the destruction.
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Foreword

This publication is a result of the research project "Strengthening Employment in Response to Crises." The participants have sought to encapsulate the project's key recommendations in the 10 Guidelines for Employment-Friendly Recovery in this volume. These represent the final concentration of the knowledge generated by the project's research. Though they do not constitute a comprehensive guide, they serve as simple action points for crisis response practitioners and policy-makers. The participants believe they should be further disseminated and applied in any recovery or reconstruction project.

All crisis response actors seek to promote the well-being of those affected by crises, and this research project has identified many specific methods of boosting job creation and incomes. This, in turn, increases the su stainability of recovery and links immediate relief to long-term development. I believe the ten guidelines and other recommendations in this volume will help make employment and socio-economic concerns top priorities as we continue to face the challenges of crises.

The ILO Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction (ILO/CRISIS) focuses on the employment challenges of different types of crises, including armed conflicts, natural disasters, abrupt financial and economic downturns and difficult social or political transitions. ILO/CRISIS promotes the socio-economic reintegration of crisis-affected groups and strengthens the ILO's capacity to respond in a timely, comprehensive and effective manner to crisis situations.

A family of Indian descent sells textiles on the streets of Bogotá, Colombia.
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The Program for the Study of International Organization(s), the ILO's principal partner in this project, is a research and analysis program of the Graduate Institute for International Studies. It seeks to serve as a forum between academics and policy makers in international organizations and aims to stimulate dialogue between the two. Among its activities, the program engages in research projects involving international organization staff and GIIS faculty and supervises research by visiting fellows and scholars. It also organizes major conferences and colloquia and publishes and disseminates the results of research and events.

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Introduction

This publication presents the findings and policy recommendations of the research project "Strengthening Employment in Response to Crises," conducted by the International Labour Organization's Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction (ILO/CRISIS) and the Programme for the Study of International Organization(s) of the Graduate Institute of International Studies (GIIS) in Geneva. The project was included within the program of the Geneva International Academic Network (GIAN), which provided financial support. The other participating institutions were:

- Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees
- UN Development Programme
- UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
- UN University
- Coordinadora Nacional para la Prevencion de Desastres Naturales, Guatemala
- Centro Prevencion Desastres Naturales, Costa Rica
- University of Geneva
- Institut d'Etudes de Développment, Geneva
- Centre de Recherches Entreprises et Sociétés, Geneva
- Institut Technology Bandung, Indonesia
- Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá
- Universidad de los Andes, Buenos Aires
- Baghdad Economic Research Center, Baghdad
- Bisan Ceter for Research and Development, Ramallah
- The Life&Peace Institute, Nairobi
- University of Osijek, Croatia
- Regional Institute for Development Studies, Skopje
- Business Humanitarian Forum, Geneva
- War-Torn Societies Project International, Geneva
- West Africa Network for Peace-Building, Accra
- Sotz'il Resource Center on Indigenous Groups, Guatemala
- Consejo Indigena de Centro America, Guatemala
- Africa Peace Forum, Nairobi
- UGEAFI, Uvira

The research project conducted 14 case studies in crisis-affected countries around the world on three themes:

1. Supporting the private sector and social partners in response to conflicts and natural disasters;
2. Promoting livelihoods and coping strategies of groups affected by conflicts and natural disasters;
3. Strengthening crisis prevention through early warning systems.

On the occasion of the International Conference on Decent Work in Response to Crises, held to conclude the research project on 17 and 18 November 2005 at the ILO, these studies were published in three volumes, one on each theme. Each volume also contained a synthesis report with the case studies' main findings and insights from the authors' experiences.

A Global Report published in May 2006 reviewed the project's two-year duration. It described the program's history, presented the main points from the three volumes and Conference sessions, listed the principal policy recommendations and analyzed the project's work in a broader context.

The present publication, edited by Charles Landow, extracts the most policy-relevant findings and recommendations as well as background information on the connections between employment and crises. Drawn from the previous publications, this report describes ways to increase the positive effects that crisis response projects can exercise on employment and socio-economic well-being.

10 Guidelines for employment-friendly recovery

Every institution that plans and implements crisis response projects can take practical actions to promote employment. The project coordinators have drawn ten such actions from the project recommendations. These are immediate steps that will help create jobs, boost incomes, and foster socio-economic recovery after crises.

1. Provide external aid to meet only those needs not provided by local markets. Aid providers should not offer goods and services that local providers can supply. They should also buy relief and reconstruction materials locally whenever possible. This avoids distorting the local economy, helps local suppliers earn income and create jobs and boosts the skills base of the affected population. The government should promote links between crisis response organizations and the local economy and labor market, and should follow the same principles in its own investments.

2. Train local employees in high-demand skills in accordance with local markets' needs. Crisis response actors should train crisis-affected people in skills needed for recovery, such as construction, and in managerial and entrepreneurial skills. Coupling training with credit can jumpstart job creation by small and medium enterprises after a crisis.

3. Involve employers' and workers' organizations in international crisis response interventions. Crisis response actors should involve these social partners in project planning and implementation. Their participation can ensure a central place for employment and socio-economic well-being in crisis response projects, promote respect for labor and human rights and mobilize solidarity and resources for those affected. The case study on Algeria, for example, noted that the government, to instill donor confidence, allowed the major workers' organization to receive donor funds after the 2003 earthquake. The research highlighted the need for training and information campaigns to alert social partners to possibilities and needs, and for technical assistance to allow them to contribute to recovery.

4. Launch development and economic recovery as soon as possible within three months of a crisis. Jobs are needed immediately after a crisis to boost self-confidence and recovery. Crisis response actors can implement many activities in the early stages, ranging from small loans to infrastructure investments, to encourage job creation and economic recovery. The research suggested activities that promote economic development while building social links among communities and ethnic groups. The keynote address at the project's concluding Conference stressed the importance of starting employment-generation programs soon after the end of a crisis, since jobs are integral to peace-building and security.

5. Address the local recovery needs of micro and small enterprises, especially in the informal sector. The informal sector often dominates developing economies and its employees are especially vulnerable to crises. Crisis response actors should quickly enable informal businesses to provide essential goods and services after a crisis by repairing infrastructure and offering critical tools. A rejuvenated informal sector creates jobs and supplies the economy as a whole. Pribadi's case study on Indonesia recommended that immediate post-crisis support focus on repairing small infrastructure and transport links to help commercial distribution lines reopen and on boosting local production capacity through access to equipment, tools and housing. Help with risk preparedness and mitigation is also useful.

6. Allow local groups and communities to participate in project design and implementation. To respond to the needs of crisis-affected groups, no step is more important than listening to these groups themselves. Those implementing crisis responses should involve local communities in needs assessments, project design and implementation. Participatory needs assessments and projects benefit those most in need and give outside actors an accurate picture of the crisis-affected population.

7. Connect local economic development with community reconciliation initiatives. Crisis response actors should strive to promote both economic development and enduring peace in their projects. Inclusive economic recovery can address the root causes of conflict and prevent future conflict. Ideally, a single project can advance both aims; at the least, agencies working in each area should collaborate with each other.

8. Tailor early warning systems (EWS) to local circumstances while international organizations promote international standards. Agencies working on EWS should ensure that the systems fit the characteristics and respond to the vulnerabilities of the local society. At the same time, international organizations should promote common standards for selecting indicators, treating the data, and issuing warnings. UN agencies may be especially well suited to promote sequential EWS, which cover a multi-disciplinary set of indicators continuously over time.

9. Continuously monitor socio-economic causes and impacts of crises, not just political and security issues. Well-chosen and closely monitored, indicators allow EWS to perceive potential conflicts or natural disasters before they strike. EWS participants should consider socio-economic indicators alongside security and political measures, as socio-economic conditions can trigger conflict and increase vulnerability to natural disasters.

10. Engage local civil society and communities in EWS and peace-building by training local analysts to support EWS. International actors responding to crises should train and support national and local groups to strengthen EWS. These depend on collaboration among participants who can measure conditions and take action to prevent crises or limit the damage they cause. Information-sharing, joint analysis, and coordinated responses are necessary at all levels, from civil society groups to governments to international organizations.

A man works to rebuild his livelihood in Muzaffarabad, Pakistan, after the earthquake.
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1. Crises' impact on employment and livelihoods

1.1. ARMED CONFLICTS

Crises of all kinds exercise significant and long-lasting effects on employment, livelihoods and social progress. They jeopardize opportunities for decent work, both by eliminating existing jobs and making it more difficult for societies to generate new ones. And the concept of decent work embraces not only jobs, but also fundamental rights and standards, adequate social protection, and social dialogue. Crises imperil these elements as well.

Armed conflicts can be ruinous for economies and communities. An "immediate human cost" and "longer-term development costs" after armed conflict are described by Dunne and Martin, authors of an ILO working paper on crises and employment in Africa.

One study of 19 countries that experienced conflict between 1960 and 1989 estimates that the countries sacrificed 2.2% of growth per year during their wars. Another study, of 78 countries experiencing conflict between 1960 and 1999, estimates a loss of 2.4% of growth per year.[1]

In particular, a 2002 study of the conflict in Northern Uganda finds that the cost of this conflict to the economy has been over US$100 million per year. By comparison, the national government's annual health spending, according to the study, is about US$95 million. The study estimates a total cost of US$1.33 billion from 1986 to 2002, about 3% of the Uganda's GDP in that time. Another example of the costs of conflict comes from Nepal, where the Maoist insurgency appears to have diverted resources from development programs to military pursuits. According to an Asian Development Bank study, "The insurgency sharply escalated in 2001 and has adversely affected economic performance since then." The study finds that while development expenditures had grown by 10.4% from 1991 to 2001, they dropped by 4.2% from 2002 to 2004. Such expenditures represented 9% of GDP in 2001 but only 6% in 2004. Meanwhile, from 2001 to 2004, the government's security spending jumped from 1.6% to 3.0% of GDP.[2]

1.2. NATURAL DISASTERS

Natural disasters also wreak havoc on the places and people they affect. Economic losses due to natural disasters amounted to over US$210 billion in 2005 according to the MunichRe annual review of natural catastrophes[3], setting a new record. According to the same source, natural disasters have cost world economies an average of over US$60 billion per year over the last 15 years and affected the livelihoods of over 600 million people in the last three years.[4]

Societies affected by natural disasters can suffer a variety of negative impacts. Mohne et. al., in their study of natural disasters and employment in Africa, sum up those that impact livelihoods : "disruption of economic life through loss of output and earnings; disruption of social cohesion; loss of social amenities such as housing and energy sources; disruption of infrastructure such as roads, railways, bridges and vehicles; forced short- and long-term migration; disruption of marketing, distribution and communication systems; the possible breakdown of social order; and the resurgence of primary diseases."[5]

[1] *Ibid, pp. 8-9.*

[2] *Ra, Sungsup, and Singh, Bipul. "Measuring the Economic Costs of Conflict," Asian Development Bank, Nepal Resident Mission, Working Paper Series No. 2, June 2005. pp. 4-5. http://www.adb.org/Documents/Papers/NRM/wp2.pdf*

[3] *MunichRe, http://www.munichre.com/publications/302-04772_en.pdf?rdm=20604*

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Mohne, Guy C. Z., et. al. "Challenges of Natural Disasters to the Decent Work Agenda in Africa," in Africa's Crises : Recent analysis of armed conflicts and natural disasters in Africa. Geneva : ILO, InFocus Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction, Working Paper No. 5, March 2003. p. 2.*

The earthquake in Pakistan of 8 October 2005 had a massive employment and livelihoods impact. "The ILO estimates that over 1.1 million jobs and livelihoods were wiped out in the affected areas in Pakistan – including the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Pakistan-administered Kashmir – as a result of the earthquake. This would account for nearly half of the total employment that existed in the region before the earthquake."[6] Each worker was estimated to have at least two dependents, meaning the earthquake affected the livelihoods of over three million people, plunging them into deeper poverty.[7] Following the December 2004 Tsunami in the Indian Ocean, moreover, the ILO estimated that some 600,000 persons had lost their sole source of livelihood in Indonesia alone.

This section has indicated the magnitude of the socio-economic impact of conflicts and natural disasters. Increased understanding of this impact and improved orientation of needs assessments and responses have been specific objectives of the research project.

Combatants from the Civil Defense Forces head to a battle in Newton, Sierra Leone, in May 2000.
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[6] *ILO, "Global Employment Trends Brief, October 2005." http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/download/getpak.pdf, p. 1.*

[7] *Ibid, pp. 1-2.*

2. Policy recommendations on project themes

The case studies of this research project were grouped around three themes:

- Supporting the private sector and social partners in response to conflicts and natural disasters;
- Promoting livelihoods and coping strategies of groups affected by conflicts and natural disasters; and
- Strengthening crisis prevention through early warning systems.

This section presents the main points and policy recommendations on each theme from the case studies, synthesis reports, and Conference discussions.

2.2. THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND SOCIAL PARTNERS

2.2.1. Overview

Two premises underlie this research theme. First, private firms and social partners[8] can be key players in planning and implementing crisis response operations. Second, if they are to fulfill this promise, concerted action is necessary to establish links between them and international organizations. However, this topic remains relatively unexplored by academics and crisis response practitioners.[9]

The research project shows that private firms and crisis response actors must learn more about each other. Though businesses can play a major, positive role in recovery and development, there are few instances of concrete collaboration between them and international organizations or NGOs. John King, Director of the Business-Humanitarian Forum, spoke at the research project's concluding Conference of a lack of dialogue and understanding between crisis response and private sector leaders. Organizational cultures differ. And international organizations and NGOs have perhaps been slow to appreciate the vastly increased presence of the private sector in developing countries (including post-crisis ones).

2.2.2. Recommendations

1. Improve the business environment (policy, legislative, regulatory, institutional) in post-crisis environments, helping the government encourage private investment

What is true in stable countries is even more important in crisis-affected ones: market economies require state intervention to apply the rule of law, construct an adequate policy and regulatory environment, and provide security. This suggests that governments can improve the business environment after a crisis to stimulate private investment. The case studies show the ability of the private sector to affordably satisfy the needs of communities in a variety of settings (notably Iraq and Indonesia). In his keynote address at the project's concluding Conference, Staffan de Mistura, Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq, emphasized entrepreneurship promotion and job creation. He argued that poverty reduction should be considered a means to target the root causes of conflict and strengthen peace-building. In his synthesis report, McLin advocates a laissez-faire approach to private enterprise after crises. He believes only minimal conditions should be imposed on those launching or resuming commercial activities (one notable condition is a consultative process with employers' and workers' groups and civil society organizations). However, many case studies and Conference participants called for a more active state role to support businesses in post-crisis situations. The research identified small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as a priority. Among the most effective ways to do so, the case studies listed:

- Providing free goods and services to local firms, particularly if these goods and services are not available locally;
- Improving infrastructure, especially roads and transportation networks, to allow supply and demand to meet; and
- Increasing the availability of basic equipment and raw materials.

2. Maximize the local employment impact of public and private investment in reconstruction

As McLin noted, local officials must be aware of the benefits for the local population when evaluating the potential investment of multinational enterprises (MNEs). They should give preference to firms willing to hire local contractors and employees and use local materials. This can both decrease MNEs' costs and boost the prospects of local entrepreneurs and workers. Local officials can also target medium-sized businesses in their investment promotion campaigns. Such businesses in nearby countries or regions may see opportunities not apparent to larger firms based farther away.

3. Develop public-private partnerships in crisis response interventions to promote private investments that go beyond philanthropy

At the conference, McLin presented Table 1 showing a continuum of partnerships between firms and international organizations or NGOs.

Table 1:
Actions of private firms in "Partnership" with IGOS/NGOS: a hierarchy

Type	*Example*
1. Philanthropy	Loan of earth-moving or transport equipment following natural disaster
2. Development of products and services targeted at needs of the IGOs/NGOs	Development and marketing of anti-malaria bed nets
3. Contractual venture on sub-commercial terms	Provision of medicines or other supplies at sub-market rates
4. Adjunct to normal business activities	Training of own staff
5. Following principles of the IGO/NGO in its own business activities	Conflict "sensitivity," anti-bribery policies
6. Contribution to national development as implicit condition for operating in country	Natural resource company setting up educational or training programmes not limited to its own staff
7. Adoption of a business model aimed at the target groups of the IGOs/NGOs	Commercial banking units entering field of micro-finance.

[8] *In ILO usage, the term "social partners" refers to the workers' and employers' organizations who, with governments, form the tripartite structure on which the organization is based. The term is used principally in this sense here.*

[9] *The project explored the actions of businesses and social partners with four case studies and a synthesis report:*

1. *Synthesis report: "The Private Sector and Social Partners in Crisis Response," by Jon McLin*
2. *"The SME[10] sector in Iraq: A key resource to short-term income generation and longer-term development," by Sanaa Umari and Abbas Abu Altimen*
3. *"Promoting multi-ethnic stakeholder small-to-medium enterprises in the Republic of Macedonia," by Lana Srzic*
4. *"Le role du secteur privé de l'extraction pétrolière dans la reconstruction socio-économique en Angola," by Patrick Gantès*
5. *"L'implication des partenaires sociaux dans la réponse aux crises: Le rôle des partenaires sociaux dans la réponse d'urgence et la reconstruction socio-économique suite au séisme du 21 mai 2003 en Algérie," by Mustapha Hamoumou*

Just as traditional crisis response actors (international organizations and NGOs) should seek business participation in their work, firms should move beyond donations and consider how to serve their interests through more advanced partnerships. King underlined the huge potential of private contributions to crisis response. Those involved must be creative and define each party's objectives clearly to find areas of convergence. The companies that have signed onto the Global Compact would be a good first group of potential partners. To take their rightful place in crisis response, firms should participate in mapping exercises and assessments conducted to design response projects.

4. Prioritize credit provision, especially by encouraging commercial banks to invest in micro and small enterprises, and combine access to credit with business development training

In the case studies, the biggest constraints to success for SMEs involved credit. Small entrepreneurs interviewed in Macedonia, Iraq, Indonesia, and Croatia cited limited access to credit, its high cost, and related procedural burdens as their toughest obstacles. Appropriate remedies by crisis response actors can include small loans without collateral, targeted crisis recovery grants or support for commercial banks, including guarantee funds. Most of the case studies found weak commercial banking services to small and medium businesses. Crisis response actors should encourage financial institutions to provide services. Beyond credit and capital, the case studies on Iraq, Macedonia, and the Occupied Territories (OT) saw a need for enterprise start-up and development assistance.

5. Link the local economy with the regional, national and international economies by promoting outside investment through information campaigns

As for MNEs, the research observed that these firms weigh projected risks and benefits of investment in post-crisis countries just as they do for other environments. The project advocated coherence, transparency, simplicity, and stability in business-related policies and regulations to attract MNE investment. Additional efforts could include raising awareness among MNEs of commercial opportunities, and of ways to contribute to recovery, in post-crisis situations. Depending on the context, specific incentives to attract joint ventures and investments by international firms could also be useful.

6. Promote enterprises with stakeholders of different ethnicities as engines for peace-building

The case study on Macedonia focused on SMEs with stakeholders of different ethnicities. It found that such firms were often able to avoid the inter-ethnic tensions that roiled the country, suggesting that SMEs can boost peace-building and recovery efforts. The case study on Iraq also argued that SMEs could be crucial to development, but that they require political, legal, and infrastructural support to reach their potential.

7. Help extractive industries, especially oil, boost local employment and human development by promoting pragmatic public-private agreements, such as in the area of local content

Extractive industries have their own challenges and opportunities in post-crisis contexts, highlighted by the case studies on Angola, Iraq, and Sierra Leone. As shown in the first of these studies, oil wealth can coexist with appalling poverty and underdevelopment. But according to the research, a pragmatic approach can allow natural resources to fuel equitable growth. For example, tendering procedures can help local firms provide related services such as facility management, catering, distribution, and marketing. The Angola study also discussed the question of local content in the oil industry, which has received little attention. Quotas of nationals to be employed by foreign oil firms are easily circumvented by personnel practices. Skills development efforts are necessary to turn local content from a contractual requirement into a positive force for human development.

2.3. LIVELIHOODS AND COPING STRATEGIES OF VULNERABLE GROUPS

2.3.1. Overview

Just as crises inflict greater damage in countries with weaker preparatory and mitigation systems, they disproportionately affect the most vulnerable groups in each society, exacerbating their precariousness.[10] These groups were the focus of the research project's work on livelihoods and coping strategies. In particular, case studies examined the displaced, female-headed households, youth in conflict-affected areas, and informal workers and entrepreneurs in disaster-prone regions.

The term "coping strategies" can mean two things. First, it can refer to indigenous income-generating activities (IGAs) and other means of facing a crisis. These are economically sustainable and use locally available natural, human, and social resources. By definition, they also fit local cultural and social norms. The research project sought to promote such strategies, which constitute specific knowledge on which international actors can build. Second, coping strategies can be non-sustainable means of subsistence. These might promote short-term survival but they compromise long-term well-being. The case study on the OT, for example, found that most coping strategies among Palestinian families proved unsustainable over time. They involved such steps as cutting back on nutritious foods, asking children to work, selling assets, assuming debt, and reducing social activities. All of these can have negative impacts on physical and mental well-being; they are survival strategies, and should be seen as serious signs of distress.

2.3.2. Recommendations

1. Build on the resilience and strengths of local communities and place them at the center of the reconstruction process

In her synthesis report, Perecman cites two ways to support the constructive livelihood and coping strategies of crisis-affected groups. The first, "organic way" is to remove the obstacles that prevent natural coping strategies from emerging. The second is to use direct support to increase the gains that households and communities can reap by relying on their own financial and technological means. Outside actors may not recognize the resilience and indigenous coping strategies of crisis-affected people. The project therefore sought to promote crisis responses that see vulnerable groups as assets, thereby supporting their socio-economic empowerment and enabling them to drive their own recovery.

2. Integrate risk reduction and mitigation measures into recovery programs after natural disasters; after conflicts, address the root causes and foster social inclusion rather than a return to the status quo ante

In supporting sustainable and beneficial coping strategies, crisis response actors face a key debate. They must maintain concern for human rights and promote inclusive and free societies while respecting local cultural and social traditions. But, it emerged

[10] *The research project covered livelihoods and coping strategies with six case studies and a synthesis report:*

1. *Synthesis report: "Towards an understanding of coping strategies of vulnerable individuals and communities facing the aftermath of crises," by Ellen Perecman*
2. *"The vulnerability and recovery capacity of the informal sector in the face of natural disasters: A case study of natural disasters in Indonesia," by Dr. Krishna S. Pribadi*
3. *"Etude de cas: Jeunes, violence chronique et pauvreté dans les territoires d'Uvira-Fizi-Minembwe au Sud-Kivu (RDCongo)," by Hélène Morvan*
4. *"Reinventando la subsistencia: Estrategias socio-económicas de mujeres desplazadas, jefas de hogar, en Bogotá," by Adriana Alejandra Ramírez Duplat*
5. *"Women and women-headed households vulnerability in civil violence contexts: Some lessons-learned from the Occupied Territories (OT)," by the Bisan Center for Research and Development*
6. *"Territorial development, vulnerability reduction and community-reconciliation: A case study of Local Economic Development (LED) projects in Eastern Slavonia (Croatia)," by Slavica Singer*
7. *"Transnational networks: Recognising a regional reality," by Elca Stigler and Alessandro Monsutt*

in the research that efforts to boost indigenous livelihoods and coping strategies need not blindly reinforce socio-economic structures. This question sparked intense discussion at the concluding Conference. It is linked to debates on the universality of human rights and the validity of traditional values and norms. Uncertainty persists over whether crisis-affected communities are best served by stability or by efforts for increased equality and fairness that can ruffle feathers at first but may improve conditions over time. Overall, the Conference concluded that crisis responses should not be content to promote the status quo ante. They should, instead, capitalize on crises to promote more inclusive socio-economic structures and tackle the root causes of conflict and vulnerability to natural disasters.

In Indonesia in 2005, new government buildings go up as part of an ILO-run program.
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3. Use transparency to promote sustainability and fight corruption and the dominance of the stronger segments of society

With corruption and profiteering considered widespread in crisis-affected countries, transparency and accountability are prominent among the case studies' recommendations. Those conducting post-crisis programs should apply these principles in assessment and design, when they can help avoid bias in the target population or area, and throughout implementation. And transparency goes beyond the financial. As noted in the case study on Croatia, projects may risk diversion from their original objectives and compromise their goals from the outset if political concerns dominate project design or implementation.

4. Recognize the special needs of youth arising from their lack of education and experience in the labor market and consider them assets for recovery, especially by ensuring their participation in project design and implementation

Youth require special support to cope with crises. The plight of young soldiers, including children, has received much-deserved attention in recent years. The case study on the DRC finds that overall, young people join armed groups mainly as a socio-economic strategy to earn money, improve their social standing, or escape social structures that they find constraining. Girls often join such groups to find a husband or improve their living conditions, and sometimes also for protection against sexual abuse and general insecurity. Conflicts impact not only youth affiliated in some way with the armed parties, but also other youth in conflict-affected countries. Traditional Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs serve only youth who are members of an armed group and risk offering them a double prize: on top of any gains earned through violence, they receive special support in the post-conflict phase. The research noted the difference between integrating youth into the labor market and reintegrating adults who had already held jobs before the conflict. It also seems essential to complement DDR programs with support to the wider community of youth affected by conflict. Youth should participate in the design and implementation of recovery programs that affect them. The project recommends a broad local economic development approach to help youth seize short-term opportunities in reconstruction, since training or start-up capital for businesses may prove fruitless in a depleted post-conflict economy.

5. Promote community support networks and creative income-generating activities to meet women's needs, considering their household responsibilities and the social acceptability of work, and use statistics disaggregated by sex to understand crises' impact on women

In many countries women are marginalized from social and economic activities. When they do enter the labor market, their household responsibilities often remain. Efforts to foster income-generating activities and socio-economic participation for women should therefore consider the risks of overburdening. Women's vulnerability only increases in conflicts, as noted in the case studies on the Occupied Territories (OT) and Iraq. Engler writes that in the OT, conflict has added to traditional social restrictions as new security-related and political constraints further distance women from employment opportunities, services, and support networks. Palestinian and Iraqi women interviewed for the studies said they would consider entering the labor market as a coping strategy depending on the social acceptability of the work. They also say they would not consider venturing too far from home for work out of concern for their safety and honor. When violence increases women's isolation, they are forced to adopt unsustainable coping strategies that harm the health, education, and socio-economic well-being of their households. To promote positive coping strategies, Engler suggests supporting programs that allow women to work collectively, promoting diversified income-generating activities and strengthening community-based support networks. She also notes that changes in social and cultural attitudes toward women can allow them to cope more easily with crises. Other case studies also highlight the importance of social networks. In the case study on Colombia, Duplat reports that they have become the most effective and efficient conduits of aid to the displaced through general livelihood support and leads on jobs. By providing childcare, they can also enable women to work. And in the case study on Afghanistan, the researchers found that although employment opportunities are irregular in the host countries of Afghan migrants, most find work mainly through their social networks.

6. Encourage a policy shift from limiting migration to managing it, including through support to receiving communities as well as migrants

Besides the crisis that drives people from their homes, displacement represents another crisis in itself. Properly targeted support for the livelihoods of displaced persons can ease their integration. This support must recognize the gender roles and specific difficulties encountered by women and men. It can include such elements as vocational training in skills that are locally in demand (not limited to skills common under "traditional" gender patterns) and technical and financial support for income-generating activities and entrepreneurship. Beyond the practical, political questions surround support for the displaced. The question for international organizations and NGOs of supporting resettlement (rather than return) is politically sensitive. The case study on Afghanistan finds the boundaries between political, security-related, and economic migration blurry among displaced Afghans. It shows that efforts to support the livelihoods of resettling populations often fail to take into account the complexity of cross-border migration or the fact that Afghan migration is often not transitory. The Afghanistan study's key finding, indeed, is that migration represents a key livelihood strategy for individuals, households, and communities affected by protracted crises. It offers employment opportunities for those able to undertake the journey (thus often not the poorest and most vulnerable). Migrants' remittances (especially cash rather than in-kind) also contribute to the well-being of those who remain behind. Support for displaced persons and communities must not leave recipient communities out, though, since population influxes can strain job markets and local resources, creating tension or even conflict.

2.4. CRISIS EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

2.4.1. Overview

Prevention is often less costly and more effective than treatment. While it is prudent and necessary to improve crisis response policies and methods, it is even better to decrease crises' impacts or prevent them entirely. The project has demonstrated the relevance of early warning systems (EWS) as a tool for preparedness and crisis prevention.[11] It has also highlighted the importance of active involvement by humanitarian and development organizations to support these systems. EWS allow societies to:

- prevent crises as early as possible while forging cooperation among actors;
- monitor volatile situations to enable early interventions to reduce tension;
- establish mechanisms to prevent future economic crises, disasters, and conflicts in previously-affected areas; and
- measure the implementation and impact of crisis responses and adjust them accordingly.

These goals clearly justify an intensive effort to establish and upgrade EWS in societies with demonstrated vulnerabilities. And as the last point suggests, the benefits of EWS are not limited to the pre-crisis stage. They can also provide an invaluable tool to observe the dynamics of crises that do occur. Participants in the concluding Conference strongly argued that crisis management should be viewed as a non-negotiable expenditure in national budgets, not as an expendable extra. Recent armed conflicts, in particular, have been so complex and protracted that their causes and effects cannot be understood, and recurrences prevented, if they are not closely followed every day. And though EWS for conflicts and natural disasters are well-developed in many areas, socio-economic elements of vulnerability for both types of crises are often overlooked.

2.4.2. Recommendations

1. Balance the advantages of science-based and community-based EWS based on their sustainability and effectiveness

A key debate broached in the research is that between science-based and community- or civil society-based EWS. This touches squarely on the systems' appropriateness and sustainability, two closely linked characteristics. As described in the case study on Guatemala, many EWS blend science-based and community-based components. Each has its strengths and limits. Scientific EWS rely on systematized indicators and precise technical standards. They tend to be more expensive than community-based systems, which are less technically stringent. Community-based systems also reserve a central role for local civil society, which can help maintain networks of groups that share and validate information and expertise. In place of or in addition to strict indicators, civil society can provide adaptable information from local sources. Local civil society involvement in EWS also strengthens the population's ownership over crisis prevention and response programs in general, and can help foster a culture of peace or of risk mitigation and preparedness in areas vulnerable to conflicts or natural disasters, respectively.

Promote dialogue between public authorities, outside experts, and local communities so that all parties recognize both indigenous knowledge and scientific expertise to prevent natural disasters

Many countries have well-developed EWS for natural disasters. Decentralization and a technology level appropriate for the context (and thus sustainable) have been major factors encouraging their development. Such systems have shown that early and accurate alerts can dramatically reduce disasters' impacts on lives and livelihoods, as in the case studies on Guatemala and Indonesia. However, research notes that even where efficient EWS exist, people do not always view alerts as acceptable and credible. While bringing the benefits of a scientific approach to bear on the mitigation of disasters, EWS have sometimes failed to recognize the wealth of traditional knowledge among local residents who know their environment. Those overseeing the EWS must pursue dialogue with the local communities and ensure their participation in the EWS's operation. The case study on Guatemala cites one example of the benefits of combining science with local sensitivity. Through consultations with indigenous communities, scientific experts, and public authorities, it found that some traditional indicators related to animal behaviors, smells, and noises used by indigenous peoples to predict climactic events can improve the performance of science-based EWS. The other side of this coin is that dialogue should also help local communities understand the accuracy of scientific predictions of natural disasters. Only through mutual respect can local residents and outside experts build comprehensive EWS credible to all parties.

In Meunsasah Tuha, Indonesia, men build new boats, a major tool for livelihoods in areas affected by the tsunami.
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[11] *The project explored EWS through four case studies and a synthesis report:*

1. *Synthesis report: "Socio-economic indicators and ILO's entry points to strengthen conflict, natural disasters, and economic and financial crisis-related EWS. A synthesis report of four case studies," by Sharon Rusu and Reid Rossi*
2. *"Early-warning and preventative aspects of the Decent Work agenda for economic and financial crises: Some lessons-learned from Argentina," by Hector Maletta*
3. *"Precursores indígenas en el contexto de los sistemas de alerta temprana de Guatemala," by Juan Carlos Villagran de Leon*
4. *"Conflict early warning modeling: a Case study of Sierra Leone with a focus on relevant socio-economic indicators and potential entry points for the ILO," by Zebulon Takwa Suifon*

A refugee carries water in a camp in Goma, in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.
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Cover photograph:
A man helps to rebuild in Meunsasah Tuha, Indonesia, after the 2004 tsunami.
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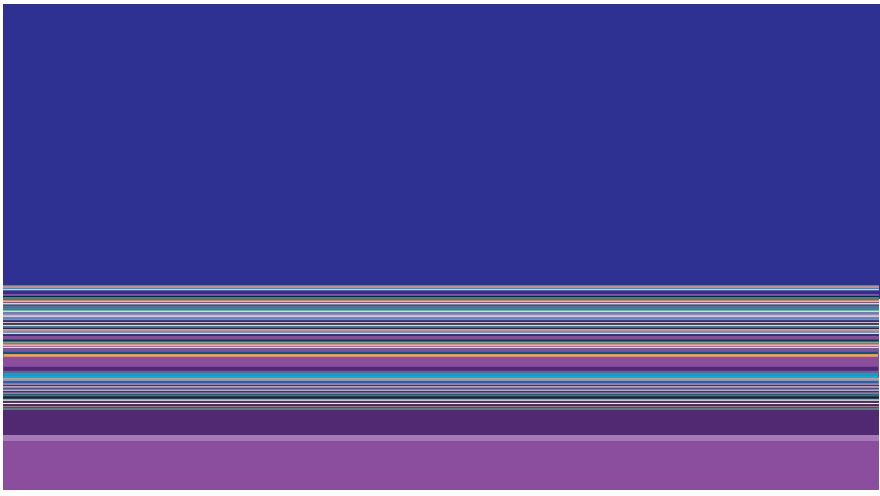
Conception et réalisation graphique:
Bontron & Cie
Impression:
SRO-Kundig

August 2006



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