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Roundtable 4 Presentation
**“Working out of crisis: Creating opportunities for crisis
affected women and men”**

John Ohiorhenuan
Deputy Assistant Administrator and
Senior Deputy Director
Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
United Nations Development Programme
New York

Working out of crisis: Creating opportunities for crisis affected women and men – the central place of employment and livelihood recovery

Issue 1: While economic recovery and sustained growth cannot be maintained in the absence of appropriate macro economic policies, labour market policies can help ease the transition and contribute to early recovery in employment and poverty reduction. A) How do we make employment, and other socio economic concerns, central to recovery from crisis? B) How do we promote coherence between policy and action to ensure the desired outcome in terms of job promotion and social economic recovery?

Questions 1 and 2 below provide some background on this issue. Questions 3 and 4 deal explicitly with the questions asked and the annex provides examples of UNDP support in this field.

1. Why is employment generation an important component of post-crisis recovery?

- Employment generation is always an important part of a poverty reduction strategy whether in a 'normal' development situation or in a post-crisis context

In a post crisis situation employment generation is also particularly important as it:

- Can provide part of the Peace Dividend: To consolidate peace a government will often need to show people quickly that there benefits that will soon come. One way of doing this is to provide 'quick wins'. An example would be through immediate employment generation as part of a well designed livelihood scheme.
- Can reduce conflict: The chance to make a legitimate living without resorting to violence can both make it harder for rebel groups to mobilize troops and easier for the government to demobilize remaining armed groups that risk destabilising the peace process.
- Can provide the foundation for a re-newed development trajectory: Employment generation programmes help catalyse the monetization of the economy, and allow households to move from subsistence living, or reliance on humanitarian aid, to having the initial means for investment, *'the first rung of the ladder'*.

2. Why is post-crisis employment generation difficult?

Employment can be slow to 'bounce back' after a crisis for several reasons

- People have been displaced from their 'sources of livelihoods', such as land, markets etc.
- Assets destroyed: Sources of livelihoods may also have been destroyed in the crisis and cannot be repaired immediately (a volcanic eruption may render land infertile, or mines may make it impossible to farm etc).
- Investment risk is too high: Private sector investors generally shun early engagement until there is more certainty over the security situation and the sustainability of the peace agreement.
- Trust needs rebuilding: Social capital has been destroyed and this will slow down the rebuilding of markets and trading networks. For example, before

people begin to come together again at markets, or join cooperatives or farmers' associations etc. a process of grass roots reconciliation and trust building may need to take place.

The government may not have the capacity to create an enabling environment for employment immediately

- The government lacks the resources (human and financial) to rebuild infrastructure, markets etc
- The government may not perceive employment generation as a priority in itself. It may, therefore, miss opportunities for instance, by assigning large infrastructure projects to foreign contractors who may prefer to employ capital intensive techniques

The most effective programmes are likely to be those that:

- Minimize the need for fully functioning markets
- Do not require sophisticated infrastructure networks to be in place
- Do not place heavy administrative burdens on the government.

3. How do we make employment, and other socio economic concerns central to recovery from crisis?

- Employment issues must be integral to the planning process from the very start
 - Employment needs and potential policies for meeting them must be discussed during the Peace Negotiations
 - Employment analysis must be incorporated into the Post-Conflict Needs Assessments (PCNAs), Post Disaster Assessment, TRM etc
 - Employment generation programmes must be included in the CAP+
 - Programmes to support national employment generation should be included in Development partner country support plans (UNDAF etc) – and aligned to the national development objectives
- Bring in technical expertise on employment generation/ livelihood restoration – to focus on building national capacities in this area and to help get 'quick impact' programmes up and running
- Build national ownership behind the importance of employment generation and ensure that appropriate policies are incorporated at all levels of government
- Involve civil society in the identification of needs and programmes

The UNDG Guidance note on durable solutions for displaced persons recognizes that capacity to absorb/integrate displaced people is one of the major concerns of national and local authorities of post conflict states. **To help create the necessary legal and administrative framework for access to livelihoods and ability to own/use land**, the UNCT can ensure that their development and poverty reduction programmes give due priority to areas and communities hosting displaced persons in line with the national priorities. Specific steps to be considered should include:

- Settlement programmes that include provisions for land restitution and/or compensation, land and natural resource management, environmental protection, and housing assistance;
- Micro-finance schemes and income-generating projects, including food-for-work, cash-for-work programmes, and small-business schemes;

- Community driven development through empowerment projects aimed at strengthening capacity, assets and technical services and that are sustainable without external assistance;
- Food security, nutrition and health interventions that meet the immediate needs of displaced persons while assisting them in building assets with longer-term benefits to their livelihood requirements;
- Steps to ensure equal access to services; and
- Targeting of vulnerable groups, in particular female- and child-headed households, youth, HIV/AIDS affected households, the disabled and the elderly.

4. How do we promote coherence between policy and action to ensure the desired outcome in terms of job promotion and social economic recovery?

To help ensure the desired effect, programmes for employment generation must:

Be conflict sensitive: It is critical to ensure that the employment generation programmes designed for recovery are conflict sensitive and do not have the adverse effect of building new grievances that could destabilize the peace

- *'Well designed economic and social programmes can help contribute to political stabilization; ill-timed or badly targeted programmes can undermine it'. Transitional Results Matrix Guide*
- The issue is how to balance the need to target programmes at the 'high risk' groups such as demobilized soldiers while also providing for vulnerable groups at the community level
- Locally focused programmes should do impact assessments to examine is the aggravate regional imbalances or ethnic tensions etc

Be feasible: Policies should take into account the reality on the ground and the implementing environment. While best practices can be drawn from other countries, local level knowledge is also important.

- The ILO recommends that you
 - Begin with a comprehensive mapping exercise of livelihood opportunities and resources.
 - Build on local capacities, resources and skills
 - Start with small scale livelihood activities and progressively expand scope as resources and institutional capacities increase

Avoid building parallel structures: The focus should always be on building national capacities and not creating parallel structures. However, it may be that for 'quick win' programmes there is a need to involve a third party to assist with local level programme management if local governments do not yet have the capacity to manage.

- The case of East Timor demonstrates the need to leverage existing institutions over creating new ones. UNDP succeeded in providing vocational training by establishing a partnership with several NGOs that were already up and running.

Be participatory and socially inclusive: Planning processes that empower local communities help to

- Promote self reliance, reduce dependency
- Counteract problems due to weak/absent institutions
- Repair the social and economic structure and facilitate equitable growth processes at local level

Rely on simple decision-making mechanisms: For rapid impact programmes effective decision making mechanisms are needed that are inclusive but do not involve too many stakeholders

Be integrated with the national Recovery Strategy: Employment generation programmes should be integrated in an overall strategy for recovery and where possible support the other priorities.

- For example, if the national strategy for recovery prioritizes the rebuilding of local roads and markets then labour intensive construction activities should be used where appropriate
- The ILO states that in post-conflict countries programmes should focus on three areas essential to post-war reconstruction - namely farming/fishing and construction - and their related support sectors, as well as the support sector to international donor activity

Tackle Demand and Supply Side issues: Policies should recognise that there are two sides to the challenge of employment – creating jobs and building skills

- For example, partners can assist national and local authorities in designing skills training programmes prior to the return/integration of the displaced persons.
- Some work may be able to begin prior to the peace agreement signing – for example, during the emergency and the transition phases, every effort should be made to develop programmes that will help displaced persons become self-reliant.

Accept the informal economy: The government should not seek to close down the informal economy (except for the criminal activities) in the early years of recovery. Instead it should be allowed to function and maybe even promoted, with a view to drawing it into the formal economy as the recovery strengthens.