Crisis Response Highlights

Afghanistan

The ILO decision to allocate significant start-up resources to Afghanistan through the “Cash Surplus” budget and to appoint a full time Country Coordinator very experienced in post-conflict country programmes is now producing important dividends. The most recent is the invitation of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan (TISA) to sole source its Technical Assistance for the National Emergency Employment Programme Rural Access component to the ILO. As a consequence, ILO IFP/CRISIS under took a mission to Afghanistan in the first week of September to negotiate this agreement on behalf of the Director of the ILO SRO office in New Delhi. The Technical Assistance contract is for USD 1.7 million. This is the first phase of the USD 39.2 million National Emergency Employment Programme for Rural Access funded by the World Bank through the TISA. It is a very important and large technical support programme which entails an agreement by the ILO and UNOPS. The latter will procure the equipment and provide local support staff for the ILO TA team, initially for some USD2.3 million. The ILO will have the responsibility of ensuring professional technical standards and contract arrangements for these public works to be undertaken using labour based technology, an area of expertise for which the ILO is known to be a world leader.

Iraq

IFP/CRISIS participated in an ILO programme needs assessment mission to Iraq in early August lead by the Team leader of the ILO Iraq task Force Yousef Qaryouti from the Beirut office. The mission members left Baghdad, unharmed, on the day of the bombing of the Jordanian Embassy. The mission was able to validate and refine the ILO strategy for contributing to Iraq’s reconstruction and to refocus priorities. The findings will be part of the overall UN assessment for the reconstruction of Iraq. The ILO priorities target:

1. Employment - getting the formerly state owned enterprises (SOEs) reopened and 1.2 million Iraqi’s back to work. A plan which will allow for an associated 1 million small businesses reopened as soon as the banking system will be re-established and when security conditions will make this possible.

2. Social protection — for up to 5 million Iraqis living in dire poverty and supported by a social welfare system which now provides for less than 100,000. This will become an imperative in consideration of the phasing out of the «Oil for Food” scheme.

3. Strengthening the ILO Social Partners — targeting primarily the new Ministry of Labour, employment services, vocational education and training (VET), support to workers organizations and the chambers of commerce.

Promoting new jobs in the agricultural sector and strengthening short and medium term labour-based employment schemes are also among the priorities.

Currently the ILO continues its ongoing Community Based Rehabilitation Programme for people with disabilities with a small local team. Special VET at the ILO Turin Centre will be organized.

Solomon Islands

Ex-combatants are gradually re-entering civilian life thanks to the Community Infrastructure Rehabilitation Programme (CIRP) which aims at peace building though short term employment creation for conflict affected populations in the provinces of Guadalcanal, Western and Malaita of the Solomon Islands.

A large number of unskilled workers will be involved in the rehabilitation of roads and bridges improving access to village markets and providing a much needed boost to agricultural and fisheries production. The project, funded by Japan and implemented jointly by UNDP and ILO, is now in its preparatory phase and it will provide direct employment to some 2180 former combatants. This past August works commenced in Tina Village with the employment of 230 workers.
ITENET – focus on Argentina

IFP/CRISIS met in early September a delegation of officials from six Italian Regions. The delegates came to Geneva for the programme "International Training and Employment networks ITENETs".

IFP/CRISIS presented the following issues:

- IFP/CRISIS role in crisis response and its main outputs; ILO-IFP/Crisis response to the Argentinean economic and financial crisis; the ILO AREA programme (Support to the Reactivation of Employment in Argentina).

Most of the Italian Regions are willing to participate in the response to the Argentinean Crisis. The cooperation among local institutions, the exchange of trainers, manpower and entrepreneurship are among the objectives of the ILO’s programme. The meeting was a first step in developing a positive cooperation between the AREA programme and the Italian Regions.

Atelier à Dakar

L’Atelier de renforcement des capacités en matière de réponse aux crises et de reconstruction a eu lieu à Dakar (Sénégal) du 1er au 3 septembre 2003. Cet atelier faisait partie d’une série d’activités du BIT visant le renforcement des connaissances et compétences techniques des cadres de l'organisation, de ses partenaires et d'autres acteurs nationaux qui sont appelés à intervenir sur les aspects sociaux du redressement et de la reconstruction. Facilité par un formateur du Centre international de Formation de l’OIT à Turin avec l’appui de deux membres de l’équipe de l’IFP/CRISIS, l’atelier s’est adressé aux spécialistes des Bureaux sous-régionaux de l’OIT à Dakar et à Abidjan et aux experts des projets de coopération technique du BIT basés au Sénégal . Il a permis de présenter la stratégie, les modalités opérationnelles et les activités de l’IFP/CRISIS, et d'avoir des échanges constructifs sur la situation dans des pays tels que la Sierra Leone, la Guinée Bissau, le Liberia et la Côte d’Ivoire, et sur la façon d'aborder les questions liées à la promotion du travail décent dans ces pays. Pour ce qui est des actions futures du BIT en matière de réponse aux crises, notamment dans les pays de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, on a beaucoup insisté sur la complémentarité des compétences internes et sur la coordination avec les autres agences. Les bailleurs qui interviennent dans ce domaine et les mécanismes pour y parvenir ont été aussi débattus. D'autres ateliers de ce type sont prévus pour le cycle d'activités 2004-2005.

CAP Preparations

Wednesday, 1 October is the deadline for UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators to submit Consolidated Appeals (CAP) and Transitional Appeals to OCHA Geneva. ILO Crisis Focal Points are encouraged to ask for early drafts of the documents and provide feedback.

Humanitarian appeals for 23 crises will be presented at the Global Launch*. Of these, 18 are considered traditional “CAP” There will be four transitional appeals: Angola, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Tajikistan. In addition, the Joint UN/Government Appeal for Ethiopia will be included at the launch.

Afghanistan will provide a document for the CAP Launch indicating their humanitarian requirements for 2004. In Colombia, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator, in close collaboration with the Government, is still discussing the format of the appeal for 2004. It is confirmed that Colombia will not be included in the CAP Launch. Iraq, Haiti, and Republic of Congo have humanitarian needs, but these are not included in CAP launch.

The CAP launch will take place in various cities on 18 and 19 November starting with New York on the 18 where the UN Secretary General will launch it with a global focus. Other Capitals included in this year launch are Brussels (with a focus on Sudan, Tajikistan and Uganda), Copenhagen (with a focus on Chechnya, Palestine (oPt) and Somalia), Ottawa (focus on Burundi and West Africa), Washington (focus on DRC, Eritrea and Ethiopia), Geneva (Indonesia, DPRK and Southern Africa), Dublin (Angola, Tanzania and Sierra Leone).

The theme of this year CAP will be : “Hear our Voices”. Stories from beneficiaries and live testimonies will be featured. These stories would be used on the CAP website campaign developed by OCHA. ILO’s contribution to collect and present those stories is encouraged.

*The following is the list of countries covered by the CAP:

15. Tanzania 16. Uganda 17. West Africa
18. Zimbabwe 19. Chechnya and neighbouring
20. DPR Korea 21. Indonesia
22. Occupied Palestinian Territory 23. Tajikistan

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