

Natural Disaster Response with a Central Focus on Employment Policy



The Pakistan Experience



Context

- **Pakistan a highly disaster prone country with at least three mega natural disasters and an internal armed conflict during the past decade**
- **The disaster management institutions in the country are nascent and are still evolving**
- **The low Human Development Indicators and poor infrastructure make responding to the recovery needs of the affected population a complicated and challenging affair**
- **Institutional linkages between the disaster management authorities and labour and skill development entities not formalised**
- **Enforcement of “Decent Work” standards is difficult even in normal circumstances and is harder to observe in emergency situations**

Challenges

- **Humanitarian actors primarily concerned with short-term, life saving activities, with little regard for post-relief phase**
- **Employment recovery does not intuitively appear to most humanitarian actors as a humanitarian issue**
- **The “Humanitarian Cluster” system of the UN is not the best suited set up for catering to the employment recovery needs of the affected people**
- **Though the losses to employment form a prominent part of Post Disaster Needs Assessment, the humanitarian donors seldom attach high priority to this sector and are often tilted towards conditional or unconditional asset transfer**

Challenges

- **The low skill level among most of the affected population makes it difficult to involve them in non-conventional employment generation activities**
- **A lack of area specific baseline information on skill level of the affected people makes it hard to plan appropriate employment schemes**
- **The cultural context constrains the pursuit of gender balance in post emergency employment projects**
- **In case of mass displacement, it becomes difficult to implement employment generation programmes exclusively for the affected population, due to the risk of creating conflict with the host population**

Pakistan Experience - Some Highlights

➤ In response to 2005 earthquake:

- **Emergency Employment Services - to register job seekers (14,000 registered) and link with employment opportunities**
- **Construction in emergencies - skills training - 2 training centres established; 160 instructors trained on pedagogical and technical skills; 11,000 affectees provided training in employable skills**
- **Cash for Work (CfW) to inject emergency funds into the economy - more than 35,000 persons employed directly**

Pakistan Experience - Some Highlights

- **In response to 2010 and 2011 floods:**
 - **The government established 8 Sectoral Working Groups to coordinate early recovery work, including Non Farm Livelihoods and Community Physical Infrastructure, co-chaired by the government, ILO and UNDP**
 - **US \$ 78 Mn has been invested to date by UN Agencies to support the rehabilitation of community infrastructure, providing decent employment**

Reflections

- **“Right of Access to Decent Work” should be adopted globally as a core humanitarian principle**
- **The humanitarian agencies, donors, the civil society and media should be sensitised about the significance of employment recovery as a crucial need in post disaster settings**
- **Linkages between the disaster management authorities, labour and skill ministries, employers and the humanitarian agencies should be strengthened**
- **The national and sub-national contingency planning and disaster response policies should sharpen focus on the employment related activities**

THANK YOU