

Emergency livelihoods through emergency employment, enterprise recovery and cash based interventions

United Nations Development Programme



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Emergency Livelihoods

Natural disasters and man-made conflicts often leave crisis-affected households with high levels of debt, reduced purchasing power, overall loss of physical and financial assets and, in some cases, death or injury. In the face of a crisis, vulnerable households tend to adopt damaging coping strategies that can increase the risk of falling destitute, becoming food insecure, and losing access to basic social services. This, in turn, undermines recovery and can prolong the need for relief aid.

Stabilizing people's livelihoods represents an essential intervention in reducing the impact of a crisis, and it is a critical first step to reducing vulnerability and building resilience. Large-scale temporary employment generation programmes and unconditional cash transfers targeting households can provide vital income to families that experienced major losses as a result of the disaster or conflict; in the same context, enterprise recovery schemes can rapidly get microenterprises back in business through dedicated grants. These interventions help reduce negative coping mechanisms among crisis-affected communities, restore their confidence, and foster a sense of ownership in the recovery process.

Due to its presence in countries and outreach to crisis-affected communities, along with its operational scale, UNDP is well positioned to engage in the immediate aftermath of crisis through cash based intervention systems.

UNDP Crisis Response Package

UNDP's Crisis Response Package for Emergency Livelihoods through Emergency Employment, Enterprise Recovery and Cash Based Interventions will provide Country Offices with the specific programming advice, operational processes, and technical capacity to stabilize livelihoods in the aftermath of a crisis. This Crisis Response package will include guidance notes on emergency employment and enterprise recovery, cash-based interventions in early recovery, as well as assessment and project management tools such as questionnaires, monitoring guidelines, and sample project documents and budgets.

UNDP has used mobile/electronic payments in close cooperation with the private sector in the Philippines, Jordan, Haiti, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In Sierra Leone, UNDP currently supports 1,050 Ebola survivors and destitute families (widows, orphans) to recover their basic livelihoods through the distribution of discharge packages and social cash transfers. This assistance is delivered through the Ebola Payment Platform developed by UNDP for the payment of Ebola response workers using mobile money.



*Ebola-affected community in Grey Bush - informal settlements in Freetown.
Photo: Dylan Lowthian/UNDP*

Through UNDP rosters and stand-by partners, deployable capacity will be available to support Country Offices in implementing the Crisis Response Package. Areas of expertise will include labor-intensive project experts (e.g. civil engineers), livelihoods experts, and enterprise development experts. UNDP will put into place Long Term Agreements (LTAs) for procurement of essential goods and services like electronic payments providers, cash transfer providers, livelihood assessment services, and work and protective gear. Fast Track processes in procurement, financial management and human resources will also ensure rapid implementation of the interventions supported by this package. Communication and advocacy tools tailored to this specific package will also be available to UNDP managers and national counterparts.

With this package, Country Offices will be able to design and implement time-critical interventions that support rapid assessments (i.e. environmental impact assessments, socio-economic needs assessments, market assessments), the design and implementation of labor-intensive temporary employment schemes, provision of grants to crisis affected microenterprises, other cash grants or unconditional cash transfers to vulnerable households. In some crises, cash based interventions have been used to pay the salaries of public servants providing essential services to crisis affected communities.



Syrian Mohamad Hajj Staify stands in the middle of his tented kiosk where he sells fruits and vegetables at the UNDP-supported Marj market in the village of Marj in the Bekaa Valley, east of Lebanon. Photo: Dalia Khamissy/UNDP

In 2014, UNDP **Lebanon** launched its Host Community Support Program (Syria crisis response) in 138 vulnerable communities, benefiting over 600,000 people by enhancing basic services (water, sanitation, waste collection, health), supporting income generation, improving shelter, and training local actors on conflict prevention. UNDP implemented over 120 interventions to provide local communities with renewable energy solutions, starting a new phase in 2014. The rehabilitation of the Saida waste dump continued on schedule and provided benefits to the local community and fishing cooperatives.

Labor-intensive temporary employment schemes can often support the clearance and disposal of debris and waste in the aftermath of a crisis as well as the rehabilitation or reconstruction of basic community infrastructure that provides essential services to crisis-affected communities, such as health centers, schools, local markets, food storage facilities, water and sewage lines. Coupled with enterprise recovery, labor-intensive temporary employment schemes can support local economic recovery processes. Where possible, emergency employment creation will be supported in environmentally sustainable/ green sectors (renewable energy, re-use and recycling of debris/ waste, including waste derived products).

UNDP implements emergency employment and enterprise recovery using its 3-track approach that ensures the link between immediate livelihood stabilization, mid-term local economic recovery and a rapid return to inclusive and sustainable development pathways. UNDP also fosters local governments' ownership of recovery processes through direct support on coordination, information management, and development of policy frameworks on temporary employment schemes.

Where needed, UNDP will use these activities as an entry point to support social cohesion through participatory planning, community dialogue and outreach to high-risk groups like unemployed youth, displaced and host community members, etc.

In **Haiti**, UNDP has been working with the Haitian government to help communities to rebuild, recover, and become more resilient to future hazards. In 2013, 4,473 jobs were created among communities that suffered displacement and loss of dwellings due to the earthquake; women made up 75 percent of the beneficiaries supported by a combination of skills training, and financial and technical support. UNDP promoted 800 micro, small and medium women-led enterprises to reach out to about 1,500 women, strengthening their leadership and stabilizing or increasing their revenue.