

Livelihoods and Economic Recovery

Overview

In fragile and crisis settings, IOM is often engaged with those directly and indirectly impacted by, or at risk of, instability and displacement to strengthen capacities towards achieving self-reliance and sustainable livelihoods, economic recovery and employment. The focus on livelihoods is a crucial element of IOM's community stabilization efforts and its broader transition and recovery portfolio. Outcomes from livelihoods and employment initiatives often align with broader objectives such as resolving displacement, addressing instability, preventing violent extremism, fostering resilience, promoting social cohesion, supporting recovery, and establishing foundations for peace and sustainable development. IOM's Livelihoods and Economic Recovery initiatives contribute to the global dialogue on the [Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus](#) and align with the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), embodying the commitment to "leave no one behind".

Key Considerations

1. **Market Assessments:** Comprehensive Labor Market Assessments, including Key Informant Interviews, Jobseeker Surveys, and Employer Surveys, are essential for assessing both demand and supply, ensuring the sustainability and relevance of livelihood activities.
2. **Targeted Interventions:** Identifying relevant sectors and targeted individuals for interventions such as Cash for Work, Vocational Training or individual-level small grants is key to ensuring resources are effectively allocated and utilized.
3. **Sustainability:** To ensure the longevity of livelihood activities, both demand and supply must be considered during Market Assessments. Providing targeted individual-level support to at-risk youth, returnees, and host-community members is also crucial in sustaining these initiatives.
4. **Private Sector Engagement:** Revitalizing the private sector is essential for the overall economic recovery of crisis-affected regions. Programs such as the EDF can foster large-scale job creation and drive economic growth.
5. **Area-based Development Approach:** In situations where a particular geographical area has unique or specific problems, an area-based development approach is often appropriate. This approach fosters partnerships between local authorities and citizens, builds local capacities and linkages among actors at the local level, and integrates these efforts into national processes of policy and institutional reform.
6. **Conflict and Disaster Risk Sensitivity:** To enable conflict and disaster risk sensitivity in program development, the prevailing risks need to be identified and analyzed. Information is needed on the root causes and consequences of the crisis, their possible contribution to further conflict and disaster risk, and ways that livelihoods and economic recovery programmes can mitigate or exacerbate the harm associated with conflict or disaster.

Relevance to IOM's Emergency Operations

Livelihoods programs are integral to IOM comprehensive strategy for handling crisis and displacement situations. By providing essential support to affected communities, these programs facilitate the transition from immediate relief to long-term peace and sustainable development. Historically, IOM has implemented livelihood activities in numerous countries grappling with crisis, fragility, or displacement, allocating substantial funds for livelihoods and economic development. The organization utilizes a diverse array of tools and methodologies, which have evolved over time to become increasingly sophisticated. These include initiatives like the Enterprise Development Fund (EDF), an innovative grant mechanism aiming to stimulate private-sector enterprises and create sustainable job opportunities in crisis-affected regions.

Operations

IOM provides contextually relevant livelihood and economic recovery support at the individual and household level, reinforced with efforts at community and policy levels that create conditions conducive to economic activity and job creation. The operational

approach consists of three primary tracks:

1. Crisis Response: Immediate Livelihoods Support

- *Emergency employment creation:* Initiatives like cash-for-work are employed for local employment generation in short-term activities, prioritized by crisis-affected communities.
- *Self-employment support:* Livelihood start-up grants and packages are provided to reestablish or jumpstart micro or small enterprises in the affected areas.
- *Infrastructure rehabilitation:* Support to the construction or rehabilitation of productive community infrastructure which can generate local economic benefits, enhance access to markets and services, and boost security at the community/local level

2. Post-Crisis Strategy: Local Economic Recovery

- *Vocational and skills training and placement:* Technical and vocational training, apprenticeships, job placement services, and self-employment support are offered to enhance the employability of affected individuals.
- *Inclusive private sector development:* Support for small business growth, through providing technical support to institutions or self-help groups to promote equitable access or tailored products, as well as direct financial support, often in the form of grants or micro-credits and awareness raising among institutions and potential clients to identify and address barriers.
- *Enterprise Development Fund (EDF):* Tailored grants to SMEs in targeted sectors for rapid and large-scale job creation. The beneficiaries are the individuals hired as a result of the expansion allowed by the grant.

3. Long-term Strategy: Policy Engagement and Capacity Building

- *Addressing Employment Barriers:* Initiatives such as awareness-raising of rights and duties, supporting mentoring initiatives, or subsidising initial employment.
- *Networking:* Facilitating connections with providers, suppliers, and other stakeholders to expand partnerships and develop market-relevant and innovative businesses.
- *Policy Development:* Supporting States at their request to contribute to policy development and implementation, engaging at national and sub-national levels with a range of counterparts.

References and Tools

- [Livelihoods and Economic Recovery Infosheet \(EN\)](#)
- [Livelihoods and Economic Recovery Infosheet \(FR\)](#)
- [Livelihoods and Economic Recovery Infosheet \(ES\)](#)

Contacts

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