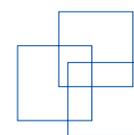


International  
Labour  
Organization

## Recovery of the World of Work in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone

Bringing ILO support to Decent Work  
for the post-Ebola social  
and economic recovery





“ We have to provide all sorts of supplies and medication, equipment. We have to fund the training of health care workers, and we have to reinforce the resilience to this type of epidemic. ”

Alpha Condé, President of Guinea



“ We know that the present Ebola response is an emergency response, but sustainability must be integrated into each in order to enable us to respond more quickly to the recurrence of Ebola after the current one. ”

Ernest Bai Koroma, President of Sierra Leone



“ This will require stimulation of our productive sectors, particularly agriculture. This will also require significant support for completion of ongoing infrastructure projects, primarily power, roads, ports, and water, which are vital to improved access to and quality of health care. ”

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia



“ Our energy must now focus on effective action to eliminate Ebola, the revival and strengthening of health systems, and ensuring the resilience of communities in the face of future threats: these are a precondition for sustainable and durable recovery. ”

Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General



“ Social protection is the most powerful driver of inclusive and equitable economic growth. It must not be seen as just an expense but rather as a human right and an investment in the human capital. ”

Aeneas C. Chuma, ILO Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Africa



## The impact of the Ebola virus disease on the world of work

The recent outbreak of the Ebola virus disease (EVD) in parts of West Africa is the largest, longest, most severe and most complex in the nearly four-decade history of the disease. As of July 2015, there have been almost 27,514 reported, confirmed, probable and suspected cases of EVD in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, with almost 11,220 reported deaths according to the World Health Organization<sup>1</sup>. Ebola has proven to be a global “threat to international peace and security” as stated by the UN Security Council<sup>2</sup>.

The unprecedented shock around the world following the EVD crisis has rung alarm bells highlighting the fact that all societies need at least a minimum social protection system and accessible public infrastructures for social services. Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone are no exception. Prior to the EVD crisis, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone were working towards rebuilding their weak systems and strengthening their populations’ confidence in the social and political systems affected by political challenges.

The world of work has been hard hit: businesses have seen their activities significantly reduced or stopped, workers have lost their jobs, and many households now struggle to find new ways of earning a living. Women engaged in small businesses were most hard hit. In addition to the tragic loss of lives, a dramatic decline in economic growth, increase in the number of bankrupt businesses, loss of jobs and livelihoods – particularly in the mining and agricultural sectors – has been observed.

With lack of social protection measures and the means to get organised, workers and communities face dire situations. Communities and lives of individuals have been shattered, social unrest and industrial conflicts have taken place. EVD has aggravated poverty, unemployment and informality, creating a vicious circle leading to even greater fragility. While the cases of new Ebola infections have declined, it is going to take time and important resources will need to be devoted to structural reforms to recover from the consequences of the crisis.

<sup>1</sup> <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/view.ebola-sitrep.ebola-summary-20150701?lang=en>

<sup>2</sup> Resolution 2177 (2014). S/RES/2177(2014)



## Road to recovery

### Sierra Leone's National Ebola Recovery Strategy (ERS)

The National Ebola Recovery Strategy (ERS) for Sierra Leone focuses on getting to and maintaining zero infections, restoring access to basic health services, ensuring children are back to school, strengthening social protection, re-establishing a robust and sustainable macro-fiscal framework, supporting enhanced private sector development and higher economic growth rates.

### Guinea's Post-Ebola Priority Action Plan (PAPP)

The key objective of Guinea's post-Ebola strategy in the gender, child and social protection areas is to strengthen the self-reliance of the most vulnerable populations, building their resilience to future shocks. Key actions will be conducted around six areas: prevention, support to victims, social protection and social work, addressing inequalities and gender-based violence, support for women's empowerment, and institutional support to the Ministry of Social Action, Advancement of Women and Children.

### Liberia's Economic Stabilization and Recovery Plan (ESRP)

The Economic Stabilization and Recovery Plan (ESRP) in Liberia aims mainly to revitalize growth to pre-crisis levels whilst ensuring that it is more inclusive and that it creates more and better jobs; provide support for the poor and other at-risk groups to strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability; and rebuild and strengthen the capacity to deliver core social services including education, social welfare and health with better coverage in the rural areas.

## Recovering from the Ebola crisis: ILO's added value



## Supporting national socio-economic recovery and resilience strategies

As part of the UN and global community the ILO can muster the specialized expertise necessary to build up and strengthen national institutions to prevent other large scale crises. The ILO actively promotes Decent Work with a special focus on social infrastructure projects included in National Strategies and their Plans of Action in order to broaden social protection by drawing lessons from the consequences of the EVD, promoting a culture of prevention in the area of Occupational, Safety and Health (OSH) and remobilising constituents around the urgency of recovery through national social dialogue.

**ILO's support to the Ebola recovery process will be coherent with and reflect the Office's technical support within the framework of the:**

- ▶ African Union Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development;
- ▶ African Union Declaration on "Social Protection for Inclusive growth";
- ▶ Ebola Recovery Assessment framework, in partnership with the UN, EU, the World Bank and the African Development Bank; and
- ▶ Implementation of the MoU signed in 2014, between the ILO and the g7+ group of Fragile States.

## Supporting the recovery of the world of Work

Beyond and alongside the ongoing emergency response, the Recovery Plans include efforts towards sustainable and inclusive recovery in the longer term, through addressing the preexisting structural weaknesses that facilitated the fast spread of the disease. These efforts start by strengthening health systems, on the supply and access sides. The ILO is confident that it can contribute to revigorate employment and earnings capacities and livelihoods of families, namely for the most productive segment of the population, as people aged 15 to 45 years constitute the vast majority of confirmed cases of Ebola.

**The ILO programmatic work focuses on five thematic areas:**

- ① Creating Decent Work through Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programmes for a productive and sustainable environment;
- ② Strengthening social protection systems for universal coverage with special focus on child protection;
- ③ Building national consensus on national priorities through social dialogue;
- ④ Reinforcing delivery and access to basic services; and
- ⑤ Promoting the culture of prevention through occupational safety and health programmes.

## 1 Creating Decent Work through Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programmes for a productive and sustainable environment

Regarding economic and jobs recovery, which is among the priorities, all Recovery Plans place the private sector as the main driver for recovering economic growth; bringing people back to work while creating new job opportunities for the youth, and rebuilding the tax base. Access to Decent Work can be a critical factor for laying the foundations for the construction of stable communities.

Therefore, attention should be paid to promote entrepreneurship, vocational training, and to make available the funds earmarked in the Recovery Plans to replenish the cash flow of the enterprises that had to lay off staff due to the economic downturn.

The creation of opportunities for Decent Work through reconstruction and rehabilitation of health, social and economic infrastructure is one of the major axes of ILO's intervention. The ILO supports the affected countries mainly to create employment opportunities through the use of labour-based approaches (HIMO).



### **ILO Post-Ebola Recovery and Resilience Support Objectives:**

Create decent job opportunities through construction and rehabilitation of health, social and economic infrastructure under the Post-Ebola Recovery Plans.

### **Activities/projects under the Post-Ebola National Recovery Plans to which the ILO is making a contribution:**

- ▶ Creating a tool for programming and implementing local infrastructure and basic services based on the existing ones, the existing capacities and the determined priorities and modalities of implementations;
- ▶ Developing a strategy to integrate Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programmes (EIIIP) into the existing investment and infrastructure programmes;
- ▶ Analysing the capacity constraints;
- ▶ Implementing Water, Hygiene and Sanitation (WHS) infrastructure;
- ▶ Capacity building of all stakeholders in the (WHS) sector, and of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs);
- ▶ Constructing storage and preservation facilities in the major production basins, and markets; and
- ▶ Rehabilitation of feeder roads.

## 2 Strengthening social protection systems for universal coverage with special focus on child protection

Filling the gap in social protection coverage is among the main priorities for all three Ebola affected countries. Social protection is viewed as the most powerful driver of inclusive and equitable economic growth. A rights-based approach to fulfilling the human right to social protection is acknowledged by all stated through the quasi-unanimous adoption of the Social Protection Floors Recommendation (No. 202) in 2012 by ILO constituents (governments and

workers' and employers' organizations) of 185 ILO members States.

The design of national social protection policies should define and integrate a national social protection floor to cover the most vulnerable, particularly in the informal and rural economies through national dialogues bringing together all stakeholders including governments and social partners. The ILO together with other UN agencies has developed a tool to facilitate the national dialogue process. Furthermore, in defining their social protection policies, priority should be given to access to universal health care,

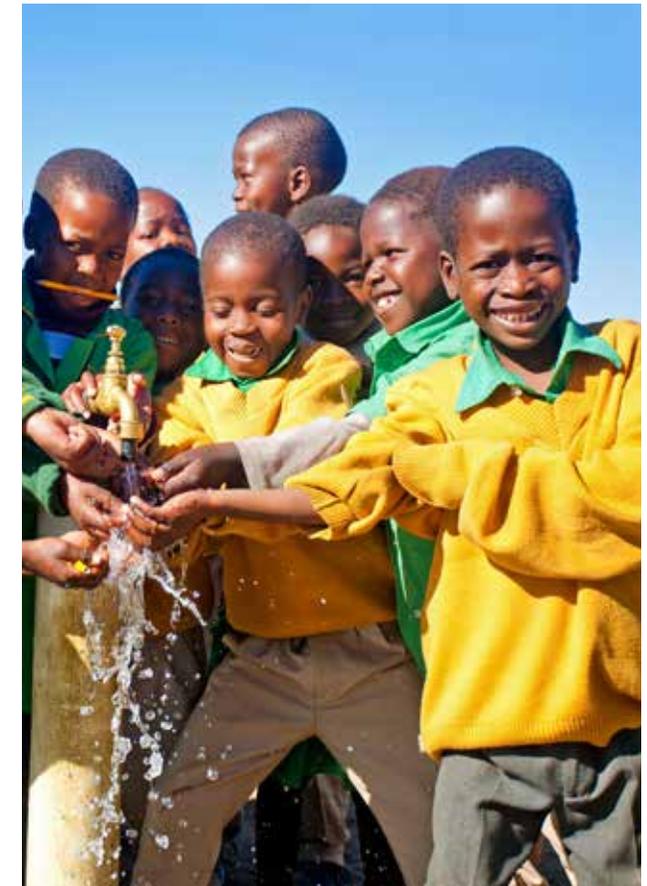
thus preventing future health crisis. Children, orphaned by Ebola, and women, exposed due to their caregiver role, deserve specific tailored social protection. Furthermore, appropriate legal frameworks are required to prevent child labour. With regards to social health protection, ILO's experience in setting up and strengthening health insurance systems will be valuable to support the governments' efforts in setting-up national health insurance systems needed to make the Universal Health Coverage campaign by the World Bank and the World Health Organization a reality in the context of Post-Ebola recovery.

### ILO Post-Ebola Recovery and Resilience Support Objectives:

Ensure good social protection coverage for the entire population with particular emphasis on affected workers, the youth, women and rural dwellers.

### Activities/projects under the Post-Ebola National Recovery Plans to which the ILO is making a contribution:

- ▶ Supporting the back to school campaign through the scale-up or the design of conditional cash transfers programmes through the costing and feasibility study, the definition of the institutional and legal framework of the programme (or child welfare committees), and the strengthening of positive norms for social protection;
- ▶ Developing a strategy for the mobilisation of additional resources to finance social protection floors for children through seminars and the promotion of international conventions and recommendations;
- ▶ Strengthening existing social protection systems by developing and scaling-up social protection benefits such as social pensions to old-age persons as well as assessing the benefits and impact of integrated policies on women, children and other vulnerable groups;
- ▶ Finalising the process of developing and implementing a gender sensitive National Social Protection Policy;
- ▶ Reviewing the number and geographical distribution of the health, education and social staff deficit and the cost of salaries and training of the staff required; and
- ▶ Monitoring the social protection systems.





### 3 Building national consensus on national priorities through social dialogue

The extent and the urgency of the reconstruction tasks call for sincere and dynamic synergy, constructive unity among the tripartite constituents for large-scale and effective actions. The ILO is confident national dialogue can facilitate and recognize the efforts of all workers, employers and civil society organisations to the post-Ebola recovery plans.

#### **ILO Post-Ebola Recovery and Resilience Support Objectives:**

Revitalize social dialogue to facilitate the participation of workers' and employers' organizations in post-Ebola recovery.

#### **Activities/projects under the Post-Ebola National Recovery Plans to which the ILO is making a contribution:**

- › Restoring confidence among the population and institutions through social dialogues;
- › Ensuring that an efficient early warning and rapid response mechanism covers the entire country;
- › Strengthening the capacities of tripartite constituents in the area of health risk prevention and management; and
- › Establishing a framework for discussion for SMEs to share EVD prevention experiences and practices.

## 4 Reinforcing delivery and access to basic services

While facilitating the decentralisation and addressing the vital issues of delivery and access to basic services, the priority given to socio-economic infrastructure should also be seen as an opportunity to promote employment intensive investment approaches, by reinforcing the capacities of the local entrepreneurs and creating jobs and livelihoods in rural and urban communities.

Building quality assets for sustainable development and creating the much needed employment and business opportunities to support recovery efforts in the short and long term, will require to mainstream employment intensive approaches into government sectorial strategies and investments.



### **ILO Post-Ebola Recovery and Resilience Support Objectives:**

Restore basic socio-economic services across the country with special focus on restoring access to basic health services, to schools and vocational training, strengthening social protection and re-establishing a robust and sustainable macro-fiscal framework.

### **Activities under the Post-Ebola National Recovery Plans to which the ILO is making a contribution:**

- ▶ Restoring health services and assisting in efforts towards building robust health care systems that are resilient and strengthened to ward off emergencies and recurring tropical diseases;
- ▶ Expanding Employment-Intensive Investment Programmes (EIIPs) for the provision of water, sanitation and hygiene services; and
- ▶ Enhancing food security initiatives.



## 5 Promoting the culture of prevention through occupational safety and health programmes (OSH)

ILO's support in the area of occupational safety and health aims to assist the tripartite constituents of the ILO (the social partners and labour administration) to use workplaces as focal points for the dissemination of information, communication, sensitization for the prevention of EVD and occupation-related risks. The ILO will assist countries to raise awareness and disseminate information to communities, health personnel, patients, pupils and parents of pupils on good hygienic practices and to maintain good health and hygienic behaviours by means

of community engagement. The aim is also to protect already existing jobs through good OSH policies by targeting the most affected sectors (SMEs, informal economy and the agricultural sector) and the most affected health services to promote anticipatory resilience against the resurgence of the EVD or other infections at the workplace. Taking into account the central role played by trade unions in advocating for prevention and safety at work, the ILO is coordinating with WHO to bring to its tripartite constituents the support required on occupational safety and health at the workplace, including business continuity plans and the application of International Labour Standards.

### **ILO Post-Ebola Recovery and Resilience Support Objectives:**

Promote a preventative safety and health culture in healthcare facilities, SMEs and the agricultural sector.

### **Activities/projects under the Post-Ebola National Recovery Plans to which the ILO is making a contribution:**

- ▶ Financing and implementing response capacity against EVD;
- ▶ Strengthening and improving the National Health System through costing studies of the remaining supply gap, of the extension of health coverage to workers with contributory capacity and to subsidise the vulnerable groups;
- ▶ Improving health information and implementing new health care protection financing mechanisms;
- ▶ Strengthening the epidemiological surveillance and response capability sub-systems for improved response when confronted with epidemics;
- ▶ Raising awareness and disseminating information to communities, health personnel, patients, pupils and parents of pupils on good hygienic practices;
- ▶ Maintaining good health and hygienic behaviours by means of community engagement; and
- ▶ Establishing or scaling-up programmes to nurture positive social behaviours such as providing funeral grants in order to encourage safe burial practices and conditional cash transfers in order to promote access to health services for maternal and neonatal care.

## Funding social programmes and institutions

The current state of public financing in the affected countries is facing the double pressure of reduced tax revenue caused by the dramatic fall in economic activity, and of increased health expenditures. On top of this is the pressure generated by public debt. In this situation, the successful implementation of the Ebola Recovery Plans critically relies on the funding expected by the governments and the people of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone from the international community.

Not only are countries losing income but they are facing a higher need for social benefits and unprecedented spending, especially in the health and social sectors. It is crucial that more accommodating macroeconomic frameworks, central budget support and grants be provided to invest so the critical mass in the social sectors can be kick-started seriously for sustainable institutions.

Governments and the people of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone need this investment support from the international community until they rebuild their domestic revenue base capable of providing the fiscal space for ensuring decent societies. Investment plans should rely on job-friendly approaches such as through Employment Intensive Investment Programmes and Cash-for-work social protection guarantees.

## Policy reforms of public institutions

Technical support to the Ebola affected countries should be demand driven and based on solid successes in other countries. Therefore policy reforms will need setting priorities that not only take into account the availability of resources but also consider the actual needs of people for adequate jobs. Measures to take into account the needs of the business sector and Social protection provisions, with a focus on social health protection, should be an integral part of any reform.

It will be crucial to set up institutions that are adequately staffed with trained personnel receiving fair wages for their work to ensure good service delivery. This requires solid experience and national dialogue to ensure that the trust of people is established in its institutions and encourages further investments into public labour market and social protection institutions. The ILO has extensive experience in these areas of work that are relevant for the concerned countries.

## Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

The programme implementation is carried out through coordination with national tripartite partners in each of the countries and in collaboration with partners of the United Nations system. The project management will ensure that tripartite constituents are involved (both as stakeholders and beneficiaries of the programme) throughout the programme duration. It will involve the agencies of the UN system based on their comparative advantages and their interest in the different aspects of the programme (WHO, UNAIDS, UNDP, FAO, UNICEF, UNIDO). It will seek national ownership by collaborating with national, public and private or community structures with the capacity to implement actions that will contribute to the attainment of the goals of the programme.

The monitoring/evaluation of the programme will be ensured by a steering committee which will provide orientations and guidance on the programmes implementation. A mid-term review and final evaluation of the programme will be carried out. Their objective will be to evaluate the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, the impact and sustainability of the ILO contribution to the national recovery priorities.

Together, changing the lives of  
people affected by Ebola.

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