



International Labour Office

**ILO Project**  
**on**  
**Rapid Income Support through Employment (RISE) in quake affected areas of**  
**Balakot**

**Rationale & Background:** The direct and indirect effects of the 8 October earthquake and its aftershocks are enormous. Quantitative assessments are difficult at this stage; however, it is estimated that the 3.2 - 3.5 million displaced people require immediate accommodation, health care and basic public services in temporary camps at a number of separate locations. This initial requirement is being addressed by a number of agencies. At the same time, given the onset of winter, it is imperative that preparation for the rehabilitation and reconstruction in each community is planned and actions taken to commence as soon as possible.

ILO estimates that 1.1 million livelihood and employment losses have ensued due to the earthquake. As such, early livelihoods and jobs recovery is central to helping people to rebuild their shattered lives, have income support and at the same time participate in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of their destroyed communities. The rapid re-introduction of economic activities also helps to promote social stability and minimise psycho-social trauma.

Given the urgency of needs, the ILO commenced a pilot project in Balakot on 22 October 2005. Balakot was selected due to the very high level of destruction and displacement there. The focus of the project is on the immediate term. But the aim is also to link early livelihood recovery with longer-term skills development and sustainable decent employment creation. This early livelihoods and jobs recovery project addresses the *Prime Minister's 12 Point Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Plan* (18 October 2005) in the immediate term but in the long term it is expected to also contribute directly also to the *Prime Minister's skills for employment programme* (which the ILO was assisting in before the earthquake struck).

**Project Summary:** ILO's core project team comprises of an International consultant, a national project officer and three locally hired project assistants. The project is back stopped closely by the ILO Office Islamabad. The entire team is located at a Relief Compound established by the armed forces in Balakot, where all other international agencies are located. The project team works very closely with the armed forces and the other relief agencies working there to ensure

*While interviewing participants and others about the importance of employment, the benefits of the program, and images of women and men at work, in Muzafarabad and Balakot, time and again, we heard things like: "We don't want charity. We don't want to stand in line or beg. We want to work and earn with our own hands. That's what you are providing us. We're receiving 300, but it feels like 3000 because we are earning it on our own."-Sameer Afridi*

complementary and optimal results. Moreover, the project team has received a vast amount of support from the armed forces establishment there in terms of logistics, security, utilities and location of activities.

**Objective & Activities:** The objective of the pilot project is to address the rehabilitation and recovery process through quick impact, RISE interventions. Activities include accessing appropriate organisations that are contributing to the overall relief efforts at the Relief Compound; assisting in initiating employment related activities for debris removal and critical small infrastructure repair and rehabilitation by commencing labour intensive RISE activities;

**Progress & Achievements:** The ILO RISE project (entirely funded through ILO resources) is the only one of its kind in the area. The project directly pays workers each day and aims to inject cash back into the local economy while helping people get back to work and support themselves. Since the programme commenced on 22 October 6,342 people, including 869 women, have been engaged on a daily basis. A total of 403 men have been registered in Balakot while reportedly more than 1100 people (men and women) are so far registered in Muzaffarabad. The fact that women are taking part is a positive development because the project pays special attention to vulnerable groups and the needs of women. Women are contributing in sorting debris for reuse and collecting and re-hashing the large amounts of unusable warm clothing for preparing tent insulation. Whilst the men are removing debris and preparing latrine pits for sanitation purposes.

The project faced initial difficulties as people were too traumatised to actively participate in work. Pace of work on RISE has reduced and the daily average number of workers has dropped from 400+ to 100+. Daily wage rate has also been reduced from Rs: 300 to Rs: 250 from November 25, 2005

In collaboration with NTB and EEIC, ILO has been able to explore opportunities where resource persons for all the construction related courses (Masonry, Steel-fixing, Carpentry, Welding, Brick-making, Brick-laying can be identified from the Provincial Pool and posted at Balakot. These Resource Persons would be conducting Trainings in constructing Earthquake-sensitive structures and ILO shall pay them a monthly stipend of Rs: 5,000 per person.

ILO has sub-contracted "RISE" in five villages in district Mansehra to NCHD. These villages are: Kandraila, Batang, Mori, Haveli Saeeda and Lass Mera. All the local villagers have keenly taken part in RISE and are doing well on all aspects. Some of the villagers have worked till late night for clearing the debris. ILO has provided them necessary pre-cautions about late working and timely payment of wages to the workers. NCHD is preparing a video tape of all the locations – based on three stages, i.e., pre-project stage, project currency stage and post-project stage.

Work in nine villages has already been sub-contracted to Pakistan Workers Federation. These villages include: Shaotar Upper, Shaotar Lower, Soberia, But Korher, Kharh, Toheed Abad, Upper Hassa, Lower Hassa and Shaghi. Work in all these villages started on December 5, 2005. ILO's Balakot-based team would monitor the progress.

ILO has also initiated a survey in eight tent-villages of Balakot to understand the pre-Earthquake employment trends of women in the area and to work out the future potential opportunities for women employment in the post-earthquake scenario. The survey has completed in nine (instead of 8) villages and data has been handed over to ILO. A team of Consultants has been hired under WEC-PK Project to develop comprehensive Project Documents to start at least 4 employment sectors for women in the area.

In Balakot, more than 6 national and international organizations including UNHCR, IOM, The Lighthouse Association, Zindagi Trust, Dosti Welfare Trust, ACTED and ILO have formed a sub-cluster for the specific purpose of “Women Empowerment”. ILO will be the secretariat to host this sub-cluster and to hold all future meetings in ILO camp. Support would also be provided in terms of preparing action plans and follow-up on activities.

**Project Significance:** The project has received recognition and appreciation from the highest cadres of government as well as the military as being an example of a concrete intervention that assists not only in terms of area development and economic recovery but most importantly in terms of human psycho-social recovery from trauma. The project was lauded by his Excellency the President of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf at a meeting on 2 November 2005 after the ILO Director for Pakistan reported the project progress in Balakot. In addition, the ILO project directly addresses the priority accorded to RISE and labour intensive reconstruction approaches articulated in the Prime Minister’s 12 Point Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Plan and finally RISE is identified as the most appropriate mechanism for recovery and rehabilitation in the recent international organisation’s assessment report.

Sufficient coverage of ILO project in Balakot has already taken place and a number of national and international TV Channels including CNN, BBC, Discovery and PTV have relayed documentaries based on ILO’s work in Balakot.

The ILO plans to replicate the same model in Muzzafarabad, Bagh and other affected areas in November.