

Working Paper

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Early Warning:

Employment and related ILO concerns

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PREFACE

For its timely and effective crisis response work, the ILO's Infocus Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction (IFP/CRISIS) has found it necessary to enhance its crisis preparedness. Developing a barometer – an early warning system – and early response tools constitutes an integral part of this preparedness.

This report on *Early Warning: Employment and related ILO concerns*, by David Nyheim and John Sislin, and with an input on ILO's supervisory machinery by Lee Swepston (ILO's Equality of Rights Branch – EGALITE) marks the beginning of the IFP/CRISIS' work on early warning.

The bulk of the report reviews a sample of early warning systems existing outside the ILO and their inadequate coverage of ILO's concerns. It also briefly examines some current ILO activities which can contribute to early warning. It makes a number of recommendations for the IFP/CRISIS' follow-up action.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report examines the role of the ILO in further developing a capacity for early warning and early response for crises involving violent conflict. The report reviews early warning systems, indicators, early response processes and tools in relation to the ILO's areas of interest.

Overall, the ILO is already defining and implementing its niche in early warning and early response. The recommendations provided in the report call for a bolstering of this work and highlight some new areas for ILO engagement.

On *Early Warning*, it is proposed, for example, that the ILO should:

-  seek to strengthen outreach to the academic and policy communities engaged in early warning and risk assessment research;
-  expand its research on the relatively neglected area of employment and related issues as causes of, and consequences of, crises;
-  develop an annual barometer showing countries at risk on the basis of socio-economic problems and prospects; and
-  make full use of the reports of the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations and the complaints considered by the Governing Body Committee on Freedom of Association as they can throw light on a country's political temperature.

With regard to *Early response*, the ILO should:

-  sustain efforts to develop its analytical base for responding to conflicts, and share its labour/employment data with other organizations involved in conflict early response;
-  increase its role in organizing and engaging in inclusive and conflict specific planning forums. This role should involve bringing in a broad coalition of its constituents – workers and other civil society groups – for operational planning;
-  ensure a streamlined organizational set-up for effective implementation of response plans;
-  undertake further propagation and assessment of impact of the means of action (tools) at its disposal and also explore the development of additional conflict prevention tools and competencies, as well as its role for creating conflict prevention entry-points; and
-  commit to and document its proactive responses to early warning.

1. INTRODUCTION

Four types of crises that threaten countries are armed conflicts, abrupt financial or economic downturns, difficult political and social transitions, and natural disasters. During 2000, for example, armed conflicts occurred in Chechnya, Afghanistan, Burma, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Algeria, Israel/Palestine, Turkey, Angola, Burundi, Chad, Comoros, Congo-Kinshasa, Liberia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, and Columbia (Gurr et al, 2000). Natural disasters occurred in 72 countries in the same year, grouped into three main categories. This type of emergency consisted of weather related disasters (cold or hot spells, droughts, floods, tropical storms, and land and mudslides), earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic activity, and waste (including oil) spills. Severe financial problems have loomed in Argentina during 2001, and in some South East Asian countries, recovery from such crisis is far from over. Disruptive political transitions were underway in such countries as Afghanistan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, and Somalia. It should be noted that some countries experience more than one type of crisis in any given year. These crises threaten decent work for men and women, the observance of the fundamental principles and rights at work, social dialogue and social protection. Conversely, factors including unemployment, poverty, poor working conditions, inequality and discrimination, lack of social dialogue, repression of workers' freedom of association and violations of other international labour standards can contribute to some of these crises, especially armed conflicts.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is concerned with these crises, in the pursuit of its overall goal of decent work. This goal includes the strategic objectives of: promoting and realizing fundamental principles and rights at work; creating greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income; enhancing the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all; and strengthening tripartism and social dialogue. The organization has a comparative advantage in recognizing and responding to armed conflicts and other crises. First, while the nature, structural and proximate causes of crisis may vary, a common element as noted above in all the crises is deterioration of employment and poverty conditions, social protection and observance of the core labour standards, a major pre-occupation of the ILO. Second, the Organization's tripartite structure (involving governments, employers and workers' organizations), its emphasis on social dialogue and observance of international labour standards such as on equality and other human rights, and its proven capacity for programmes necessary for the socio-economic reintegration of crises-affected groups, rebuilding of institutional capacity, rehabilitation of infrastructure and recovery of local economies also call for an enhanced ILO role in the management and prevention of crises. Above all, the ILO is a multidisciplinary and inter-sectoral development organization.

To concentrate and integrate ILO activities in response to crisis, the ILO has created an international focus programme (InFocus) on Crisis Response and Reconstruction. The programme's overall development objective is: sustainable socio-economic and political stability and development of states through employment-sensitive, equitable and socially inclusive crisis preparedness, reintegration and reconstruction processes. The programme's four immediate objectives include:

- Developing a coherent ILO framework and comprehensive capacity to respond speedily and effectively to the different crises.
- Promoting socioeconomic reintegration and poverty alleviation of crisis-affected groups through employment intensive investment programmes, skills training, retraining, small enterprise development, local economic development, social dialogue, social safety nets and protection and mobilization of increased volume of resources mobilized for such interventions.
- Increasing awareness at the national, regional and international levels of the importance of employment, social inequalities and other social concerns in crisis situations and of the unique ILO expertise in this area to be in demand for advice, policies, involvement in inter-agency and other activities in crisis situations and for relevant publications, guidelines and other tools.
- Building ILO and its tripartite constituents' capacity to play a greater role in crisis monitoring, prevention and tackling of the adverse consequences.

To meet these four immediate objectives and to enhance the ILO's rapid response capacity, the Programme's workplan includes development of a "barometer" or early warning system to facilitate tracking and prediction of the potential eruption of man-made crises and mobilizing a preventive response. Such an early warning system can be linked to other UN and non-UN organizations' early warning systems. The Programme also has to build capacity in early response by surveying and utilizing knowledge and relevant tools, a rapid needs' assessment, and implementation; and by advocacy on the importance of employment and other relevant ILO concerns in the comprehensive and effective tackling of crisis.

This report is organized in three sections. First, early warning systems are identified in relation to the interests of the ILO. Indicators for early warning are identified and discussed. Second, an overview to early response is presented. Early response tools are discussed. This report will focus primarily on armed conflict. The report concludes, in the third section, with policy recommendations.

2. EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS AND INDICATORS

2.1. Introduction

Any crisis can be conceptualized as containing four phases: a pre-crisis phase, a crisis phase, a termination phase, and a post-crisis phase¹. The transition from pre-crisis to crisis phase may be considered the “outbreak.” Two approaches exist to alert the international community of an impending crisis, so as to permit them to prepare a timely response.

- ⊕ *Risk assessments* are longer-term assessments of the likelihood of a crisis occurring in a specific country or region. Risk assessments are based on “static” data, such as annual measures of economic, political, social, security, or climatic indicators. Risk assessments are undertaken during the pre-crisis phase.
- ⊕ *Early warning* is a short-term, sometimes near real time, assessment of the likelihood of the outbreak of a conflict or the likelihood of a specific escalation within an ongoing crisis. Early warning assessments are typically guided by prior risk assessments, which suggest what countries or regions are at high risk for a crisis. Early warnings are based on dynamic data, that is, events that change on a daily basis. Early warnings can be generated during the pre-crisis phase or during the crisis phase. Where risk assessments provide the international community with a year or years to react, early warning offers weeks, or months or even days (as in some natural disasters under crisis identification) at the most to form an appropriate response.

Both risk assessments and early warnings attempt to alert the international community to the impending onset of a crisis. Early warning has more uses, as it may be used both prior to and during and after a crisis, but the trade-off with risk assessments is that policy makers have less time to respond. These two approaches should thus be seen as complementary. Risk assessments suggest a first-cut at which countries or regions should be focused on, while early warning analysis peers more closely at those “at-risk” areas.

Early warning and risk assessments are processes consisting of several steps.

- ⊙ *Crisis identification.* Both analyses start by identifying the type of crisis they want to alert their clients of. Examples of events include: regime collapse, outbreak of internal, violent conflict, natural disasters, financial or economic collapse, etc².
- ⊙ *Model building.* The second step in creating an early warning and risk assessment system is to make a model, which lists the factors that are thought to cause the event. Those factors can be thought of as “indicators” of the particular event. Other areas that can be modeled include: contagion, where a crisis becomes a cause of another crisis in a

¹ All conflicts are thought of as consisting of phases. Different scholars offer contending definitions as to how many phases there are.

² Clients may be governments, donor agencies, NGOs, etc.

neighboring area or country; and recurrence, where a crisis becomes a factor in predicting a subsequent crisis³.

- ⊙ *Data Identification/Collection.* The third step is to identify a source of information, which can be used to see those indicators happening. Sources include media reports and field monitoring reports (raw data) as well as statistical data, such as trade data, labour market information, weather patterns information, or GNP data (processed data).
- ⊙ *Data Manipulation.* In the fourth step, analysts examine the information and look for evidence that one or more indicators are occurring. This is the “coding” phase of the early warning or risk assessment system.
- ⊙ *Analysis.* In the fifth step, analysts analyze the collected data to create an early warning profile or a risk assessment for a country or region and for a particular type of crisis, for example, the risk of a regime collapse in a country.
- ⊙ *Evaluation.* A possible final step is evaluation. Once risk assessments or early warnings are generated, it is useful to compare them with what events actually transpired. Both risk assessments and early warning are predictions. Once sufficient time has passed, these predictions can be compared with real, past events. In this way, it is possible to adapt the model by including important, but previously neglected indicators (or by removing superfluous indicators); to see if better or different data sources would be useful; and to assess the particular analytic approaches to see if different types of analysis would be useful.

Development of an appropriate model or framework may be the most important step in the above process. The model informs analysts as to what events (or indicators) are useful in predicting the chances of a crisis occurring in the future. The model also indicates how those factors fit together. For example, some events might be weighted more heavily than other events, or some events might push a country towards a crisis; while other events might pull it back from the brink. Without a model, there is no way to filter and interpret information coming in from diverse sources.

2.2. Existing systems

Each type of crisis noted in the introduction has been the subject of an early warning system(s)⁴. In this section, we offer selected examples of early warning systems for armed conflict, economic crises, difficult political transitions, and natural disasters. We conclude this section with lessons learned from a review of the sum of these individual early warning projects.

³ Much of these later effects relate to the notion of feedback, where the consequences of a crisis factor into the causes of the next one.

⁴ Most early warning systems focus only on one type of crisis. The field would benefit from studies on how crises interrelate, since often times, as noted in the introduction, countries experience more than one type of crisis during overlapping periods.

2.2.1. Early warning for armed conflict

Early warning for armed conflict is divided into three categories:

- 1) Risk assessments for armed conflict (that is, the likelihood of a conflict breaking out a year or two in the future);
- 2) Early warning of the outbreak of conflict; and
- 3) Early warning of particular types of escalation.

Peace and Conflict 2001. An example of a longer-term risk assessment is the recent Peace and Conflict 2001 report, released by the Center for International Development and Conflict Management. The report divides countries up among three categories: red, which are at risk of armed conflict and political instability; yellow, which are at less risk; and green which are at the lowest risk. Countries are assessed in terms of six characteristics: presence of armed conflict, efforts to settle self-determination conflicts, type of regime (how democratic or not), the durability or maturity of the country's political institutions, wealth, the location of the country in a "good" or "bad" neighborhood. Together these measures lead to the country's "peace building capacity," which is judged as red, yellow, or green. Such a measure can be seen as a first stage in early warning. From this risk assessment, interested parties can determine which countries to pay attention to or which countries to offer aid and other assistance to.

FAST. A second example is the Swiss Peace Foundation's FAST project. The project was launched in 1998, and is primarily geared towards a government (Swiss) client. The project is designed to alert policy makers to potential crisis situations, which may erupt into armed conflict, as well as to identify "ripe moments" in conflicts where peace building would be most effectively pursued. The FAST approach utilizes country risk profiles, based on a careful review of the political, socioeconomic, and historical background of the country at risk. A series of political, economic, social, and demographic indicators enhance these efforts. Finally, media reports and field local monitoring reports are brought in to generate a dynamic measure of the degree of cooperation and conflict between the state and domestic actors to detect whether a crisis is imminent. In addition, FAST produces Updates, which are country or region-specific risk assessments for the likelihood of escalation or de-escalation within a conflict.

Early warning for genocide and politicide. A final example is Barbara Harff's work on predicting genocide and politicide. Geno/politicides are defined as "sustained policies by states or their agents and, in civil wars, by contending authorities that result in the deaths of a substantial portion of members of communal or political groups." Harff's model consists of several parts. First, there are international and internal background conditions that increase or decrease the risks of a genocide or politicide. Examples of these factors include how durable and strong are the democratic features of a country and the international economic status (wealth and trade relations) of a country. A second component of the model consists of intervening variables, which also affect the probability of a genocide or politicide in the mid-term. These include fragmentation of the governing elite and the degree of legal restraints on state security agencies. Finally, the third component of the model focuses on events that are more short-term and may be the catalysts for systematic violence. These are called "accelerators," such as military aid to the targeted group, or rioting by the opposition group; "de-accelerators," which include cooperative, security-building or conflict reducing events; and "triggers," which are single events that can push a crisis to the next level of escalation.

2.2.2. Early warning for economic and financial crises

The push for early warning of economic and financial crises grew out of a series of largely unforeseen crises in Europe (1992), Mexico (1994), and most significantly Asia (1997-98), as well as a growing realization that in an era of increasing globalization and greater movement of capital, policy makers had substantially reduced time to react to threatening financial situations. As a result, scholars and international organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) delved into the possibility that an early warning system could be created to predict economic crises, such as banking or currency crises.

Basic components of economic and financial early warning systems:

Similarities:

- They are all interested in some element of a financial crisis, usually involving a country's currency, banking system, or balance of payments.
- Second, they employ a series of "indicators," which are thought to be the causes of such crises.
- Third, models use statistical methodology (such as probit or logit regression) to aggregate their indicators within the model.

Differences across systems:

- * There is disagreement as to what constitutes an economic or financial crisis. First and foremost, scholars have some difficulty in defining just what is a "crisis." There are some cases, such as the Asian economic problems of 1997-98, which would be included by most scholars as an example of the type of crisis that an early warning model should warn of. There are however, many other events, such as significant currency problems faced by Argentina in 1995 or 2001 and Brazil in 1997, that may or may not be examples of crises.
- * Disagreement over the best way to build a model of the causes of economic crisis. Some approaches are inductive. They look at past crises and list what factors were present just prior to the crisis, assuming future crises will also be preceded by those factors. Others use deductive approaches, where economic theory suggests what factors cause economic crises⁵. One also needs to examine macro-economic variables including balance of payments and trade and also at competitiveness of the economy as well as exchange rates. This brings into consideration the "real" costs, and productivity of factors of production.

2.2.3. Difficult political transitions

Difficult political transitions focus on countries which are having difficulties moving towards democratic systems or which are back-sliding towards non-democratic systems. Developing an early warning system for difficult political transitions is hindered by a difficulty in defining exactly what the crisis to be predicted is.

The State Failure Project. One approach is to examine how stable states are and how states transition between full democracy, partial democracy, and autocracy. This is the

⁵ Examples of economic early warning indicators include: increase in domestic inflation rate, overvaluation of the real exchange rate, a decline in FDI, terms of trade, imports, exports, and the government budget as percent of GDP.

approach used in the State Failure Project, funded by the U.S. government and created as the result of a request from then-Vice President Al Gore in 1994. The project defined a “state failure” as the occurrence of one of four different kinds of political crisis: revolutionary wars, ethnic wars, adverse or disruptive regime transitions, and genocide or politicide. Adverse or disruptive regime transitions were defined in the sense that the country experienced governance problems, institutional failures, elite or regime instability, or collapse of the state. In addition, states moving from democracy towards authoritarian government were considered “adverse.” The goal of the project is to generate models that warn of impending full or partial state failures.

2.2.4. Natural disasters

Early warning for natural disasters is different from early warning systems for man-made emergencies described above. First, there is a greater focus on the mechanics of data collection. People who want to provide early warning for a tornado are interested in the application of monitoring technologies to detect a tornado as well as technologies for disseminating early warning. Second, early warning frequently targets the vulnerable group, as much as national or international policy planners. Third, early warnings occur in a much shorter time frame than for any other early warning system. Weather events, such as El Nino, may be predicted months in advance. Volcanic eruption warnings are in terms of weeks or days, so too for hurricanes. The *potential* for tornadic activity or severe thunderstorms can be predicted one to two days in advance, but specific events may only be forecasted with warnings of several minutes.

GIEWS and FEWS NET. Two other examples of early warning systems are the Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS), under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET), funded by the U.S. government. Both of these endeavors focus on food scarcity and food security. GIEWS is a global endeavor, FEWS NET (which superseded FEWS, which ran from 1985-2000) is focused on 17 drought-prone African countries. GIEWS dates back to 1975. Essentially, the project monitors food production, supply, and demand, as well as trade and food aid for all countries. The project then issues regular reports related to food security, as well as special reports if food-related crises develop.

2.2.5. Observations

- ✦ The most important conclusion from the above discussion is that while there are existing systems, much more work remains. Warning for armed conflict stands out in this regard. Some of the existing systems are largely geared to government clients, such as foreign policy or development agencies, and the warnings may not be disseminated outside these institutions. Political transitions and financial crises still suffer from definitional problems. The ILO has less capacity for early warning of imminent natural disasters, although the ILO can play a role in identifying and warning of the consequences of such disasters on vulnerable citizens, including the poor, unemployed, and socio-economically excluded.
- ✦ Each type of crisis requires its own model.

- ✦ A two-stage process is called for. In the first stage, analysts determine which countries or regions are at risk of the crisis, through longer-term risk assessments. In the second stage, analysts use early warning models to predict the likelihood of a crisis developing in the short run.
- ✦ The timeliness of early warning depends on a variety of factors, including what type of crisis one wants to predict and how accurate the warning must be to satisfy the clients.
- ✦ Finally, there is a tension between accuracy and parsimony. Analysts should seek simpler models, all other things being equal, which will consume fewer resources, but still be reasonably accurate.

2.3. Existing indicators

There are two types of indicators that the ILO Crisis Response and Reconstruction (IFP/Crisis) Programme could collect:

- ◆ *Indicators for risk assessments.* These data consist of annual data. Annual data are generated either by national governments, by international organizations, and by scholars and policy centers.
- ◆ Government-produced data include population and economic data, such as Gross National Product.
- ◆ International organizations collect data on trade, employment, and so forth, and often compile annual data in yearbooks. These organizations perform two additional value-added benefits. They at times will present formulae for dealing with missing data. In the population data, for example, they will offer an estimate of population growth to generate values for the size of a population in years during which there is no census. Second, they occasionally make new data based on country data. A good example of this is the UN's Human Development Index, which is a composite variable based on annual country-level data.
- ◆ Since data on national militaries tend to be treated as state secrets (to a lesser or greater degree), analysts looking for military or security indicators often turn to think-tanks, policy centers, and scholars, who collect military or political data. The International Institute of Security Studies collects data on national military stockpiles. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute collects data on arms imports and exports. J. David Singer at the University of Michigan and Peter Wallensteen at PRIO are often associated with their efforts to catalogue conflicts (both international and internal) and their participants.
- ◆ *Indicators for early warning.* A second type of indicators that the ILO IFP/CRISIS can collect is data to be used in an early warning product (either of the ILO or contributed to someone else's report). Data for early warning are dynamic, that is usually thought of in terms of daily "events" which are recorded and subjected to analysis using some form of time series, statistical methodology. Sources for early warning data are found in media reports, field monitoring reports, and interviews with experts. Most current early warning projects employ media reports as their primary source of data.

The basic approach of collecting early warning data, as mentioned above, is as follows.

- i. First, the Programme would identify a model, for example, the outbreak of armed conflict. The model would lay out a variety of factors that are associated with an increased chance of violence as well as several factors that promote peace. An example of an event promoting war might be a riot, while an event promoting peace might be negotiations between the government and a domestic opposition group.
- ii. Second, a source of data, such as REUTERS news articles or United Nations' IRIN reports, is identified.
- iii. Third each article is examined to identify which events, if any, are present. Coding of articles can be done by researchers or by computer.
- iv. Fourth, the list of coded events is stored, preferably in a spreadsheet or database package. Analysis of the data is used to suggest the likelihood of upcoming violence.

In this work, the Programme can focus more on turning raw information (news) into data, within the parameters of an existing model, to generate an early warning report. The goal in this work is the report. It should be noted that the Programme may choose to out-source the coding, which can be done off-site.

One of the problems to be considered by IFP/CRISIS is the fact that each existing early warning system for armed conflict has its own list of indicators. The Forum on Early Warning and Early Response, for example, has generated a series of indicators that promote armed conflict and that promote peace. A typical model for predicting armed conflict might have several categories and each category might have as many as a dozen indicators. What follows is a list of FEWER's *categories*, with a sample indicator.

List of indicator types:	Example:
⤴ Regional/Interstate	— Rivalries over control of region's resources
⤴ Strategic and Military	— Arms trafficking
⤴ State Sovereignty and Monopoly of Power	— Human rights abuses
⤴ Political Opposition	— Corruption
⤴ Ideological Factors	— Conflicting ideological systems
⤴ Social/Geographical Spread of Conflict	— Civilian movement across border
⤴ Displaced Population/Refugees	— Influx of refugees/IDPs
⤴ Violence	— Increase in terrorism
⤴ Exclusion/Ethnic tension	— Conflict over land or other resources
⤴ Economic Factors	— Increasing poverty/economic disparity or declining wages, increasing unemployment

In the FEWER model, there are eleven categories of factors that may lead to an increased chance of armed conflict occurring. In each category, there are multiple indicators. Analysts, in using this model, need to pay attention to the possibility that approximately one hundred specific types of events are occurring. In addition, the FEWER model specifies factors that promote peace.

2.3.1. Observations

Two points stand out from the preceding analysis. First, a lot of organizations and individuals already collect a broad range of data, which can inform early warning analyses. Second, the ILO need not attempt to duplicate most of these efforts. One area where the ILO, through the Programme, might collect data, lies in socioeconomic and labour market indicators.

2.4. ILO monitoring efforts and indicators

A key strength of the ILO is its tripartite structure, consisting of members in governments, workers' and employers' organizations. This enables the IFP/CRISIS to work from both the "top down" and the "bottom up" by forming relationships with other organizations and associations in carrying out monitoring of labor-related indicators and in dissemination. When we speak of the capacity of the ILO, therefore, it is important to remember that the ILO can draw on the strengths of its constituents to build that capacity. For example, the ILO can monitor indicators of the outbreak of armed conflict at the local level, through its local social partners. Equally important is the ILO's ability to monitor the consequences of crisis at the local level. The ILO—particularly through the work of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Standards and the reports submitted to this ILO Committee by member states on their application of international labor standards—can also monitor international labor standards, which can provide indications of tension and instability. The point is that by working with entities at the international, governmental, and local level, the ILO has its capacity for conducting early warning significantly increased. In general, the ILO has three basic capacities in conducting early warning.

2.4.1. Research capacity

The ILO is a recognized leader in the study of socioeconomic problems related to employment issues. The ILO maintains partnerships and linkages with scholars and practitioners. The ILO Library provides access to a wide array of resources on employment issues.

2.4.2. Data collection capacity

The ILO is internationally recognized in compiling and analyzing statistics and other data relating to the world of work. The ILO has partnerships and linkages with a variety of organizations and institutions, which also gives the ILO access to a wide range of data on political, economic, social, and security factors.

2.4.3. Product capacity

The ILO is developing or envisions developing a range of products, which would be useful in terms of early warning. Such products include an expanded version of the statistical reports that the ILO currently produces, which take the issues salient to the InFocus Programme on Crisis and Response and Reconstruction into fuller account. The ILO could expand and further disseminate databases on employment information. The Programme can generate, through its first two capabilities, occasional papers on such issues as the relevance

of different, work-related indicators for early warning and risk assessment. Fourth, the ILO is exploring the possibility of developing country-specific early warning reports. Finally, the ILO seeks to develop a risk assessment barometer.

2.4.4. ILO supervision

The ILO's highly-developed supervisory machinery can also provide early warning of looming problems, even if these bodies themselves do not specifically signal emerging crises. This can come from several sources.

First, the *Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations*, the ILO's monitoring body composed of 20 independent experts, examines governments' reports on the Conventions they have ratified. There are more than 7,000 ratifications, and the committee examines some 2,000 reports a year, on such subjects as ethnic, racial or religious discrimination (the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)), forced and compulsory labour (the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)), and others with a direct link to economic and political aspects of human rights. The Committee's comments will give an indication of rising tensions, and situations of exclusion and repression that may boil over into civil conflict. The Committee of Experts' reports are then examined by the *Conference Committee on the Application of Standards*, which calls governments before it to discuss their problems, giving an additional look at such problems.

Another aspect of growing political tensions may come from the supervision of the ILO's principles and standards on freedom of association and collective bargaining. Trade unions are often bellwethers of conflict and dispute at the national level, and the degree of repression practised against them may carry indicators of larger political tensions. The application of Conventions Nos. 87 and 98 on freedom of association and collective bargaining are examined by the Committee of Experts and the conference just as are all other Conventions. In addition, a special mechanism established in 1951, the Governing Body Committee on Freedom of Association, receives complaints of violations of freedom of association from trade unions and employers' organizations, even in the absence of ratification of the relevant ILO standards. The frequency, source and seriousness of complaints submitted to the Committee will be a reliable indicator of the political temperature in a country.

Finally, it should not be thought that only the ILO's "human rights" Conventions provide indicators of rising tensions. The supervision of the more technical Conventions, such as those on employment policy (Convention No. 122), protection of wages and labour administration (Conventions Nos. 95 and 150), and many others, will often reveal rising unemployment, problems in paying ordinary workers their wages, and disintegration of basic government services, that should be taken into account in assessing the likelihood of crises arising.

2.5. Areas of overlap and ways forward

The ILO InFocus Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction can choose the direction and degree of involvement in early warning. Three general directions are possible.

- First, the Programme can collect data to support risk assessments or early warning.

Within this area, there are a few choices that can be presented. First, should the Programme collect data for inclusion in a risk assessment or early warning product? Risk assessments tend to be easier to construct and the data, which make them up, are easier to find, compile, and analyze. Our recommendation is that the Programme undertakes an effort to create a risk assessment product that would be produced as an annual or possibly biannual product.

A second issue is whether the Programme should employ a narrow or broad definition of its range of expertise in terms of determining what types of data should be collected? Basically the best data to be collected would focus largely on socioeconomic-related issues, such as poverty levels, unemployment levels, labour market conditions, issues related to social protection, and social dialogue, violations of principles enshrined in international labour standards, inequalities, etc. Some of these data are already collected by other organizations, but the ILO Crisis Programme could perhaps better integrate the data with its own.

A final issue is convincing someone who is currently making a risk assessment or early warning product to utilize the ILO data in their product. At this stage, the programme needs to be less concerned about the type of crisis, since, for example if the programme collected economic data, it could be used in generating reports predicting armed conflict, financial or political crises. This is the most serious issue if the Programme decides to collect data. There are no guarantees that others would incorporate the data, although this is likely to be the case. This suggests that the Programme, if it seeks to be a data provider, should take steps now to form a collaborative partnership with other organizations to facilitate the use of the data in a product.

- Second, the Programme can build or refine models, which emphasize employment issues as either an antecedent to crisis, or the type of crisis to be predicted.

In the short term, the best course for model development may lie in the studies that are undertaken by the Programme. Such studies might focus on a list of economic factors currently utilized in existing early warning and risk assessment products and how the authors of those systems see such economic factors playing a role in crises. Studies might additionally focus on neglected socioeconomic factors, with some demonstration of why such factors should be included in early warning projects.

In the longer term, the Programme may wish to develop full or partial models on the causes or consequences of crises. Model building should depend on the analytical resources of the Programme. For armed conflict, there are already existing models (risk assessments are done by CIFP, FAST, etc.; early warning projects are done by the KEDS Project, FAST, etc.) that the ILO Programme can use. One area that is underdeveloped here is in models predicting the *outbreak* of armed conflict. A second underdeveloped area lies in developing models for successful post-conflict reconstruction. There are also a number of models being tested currently for predicting financial crises, as noted above. It would seem to be a bit duplicitous for the Programme to develop its own model, though it might want to work with an economic institution, such as the IMF in adding variables of interest to the Programme to their models. Political transitions are the least well modeled. The State Failure Project run out of the University of Maryland is a good exception. However, the project is connected to the U.S. government, and the data and analysis tend to be circulated within Government circles, at least at present.

The Programme's best course of action, therefore, seems to be to either build a model of threats to employment or to try to get the variables that it cares about incorporated into existing models.

- Third, the Programme can apply existing or developed models to generate its own risk assessment or early warning product.

Existing early warning systems employ a range of mechanisms for distributing data. First, it should be noted, distribution depends often on the whims of the client, for whom the prediction is made. If the client is the public at large, then distribution can proceed in its widest sense. However, government clients (e.g. donor agencies) or private sector funding organizations may not want the data to be distributed widely. There may or may not be good reasons for restricting distribution. One good reason is that sometimes predictions of crises can become self-fulfilling prophecies. Assuming that the Programme seeks to distribute the information in its predictions widely, there are two basic approaches. The ILO Programme should rely on both strategies. One approach is dissemination via the Internet. Web-based reports are efficient and can have global reach, although they do not always filter down to the local level. The other approach involves hard copy reports, which are more expensive, but can be distributed to the local level through the ILO's tripartite constituents. In addition, the ILO can work with these constituents to ensure that information flows in both directions, perhaps through meetings, workshops, etc.

3. EARLY RESPONSE PROCESSES AND TOOLS

3.1. Introduction

This section reviews processes and tools for early response. Emphasis is placed on providing a comparative perspective on existing processes/tools in governments, inter-governmental organizations, and NGOs. ILO processes and tools are subsequently reviewed, and gaps and opportunities are then outlined. However, unlike the previous section, emphasis here is placed exclusively on response processes and tools that are associated with violent conflict.

As an introduction to the concept of “early response”, it is important to review the definitions used for conflict prevention or peace-building and highlight constraints particularly in relation to political will for action.

3.1.1. Definitions

According to Schmidt (1998), conflict prevention is “a broad concept which refers to the anticipation and aversion of escalation and violence in social, political and international conflicts”. He distinguishes between primary, secondary and tertiary prevention:

“Primary prevention (i.e. minimizing the chances of a violent conflict occurring), including:

- proactive measures to prevent the emergence of conflict formation among parties; and
- prophylactic measures to prevent the likely outbreak of conflict between parties.

Secondary prevention (i.e. containment and mitigation), including:

- active measures to prevent the vertical escalation of existing conflicts;
- reactive measures to limit the horizontal escalation of already on-going conflict to other areas; and
- palliative measures to mitigate the consequences of an outbreak of conflict.

Tertiary prevention (i.e. preventing the recurrence of armed conflict), including revalidation measures aimed at preventing the renewal of the conflict cycle in the post-conflict phase.”

The recommended definition of conflict prevention offered by Schmidt is drawn from Lund (1997):

“Actions, policies, procedures or institutions undertaken in particularly vulnerable places and times in order to avoid the threat or use of armed force and related forms of coercion by states or groups, as the way to settle the political disputes that can arise from the destabilizing effects of economic, social, political and international change. Conflict prevention can also include action taken after a violent conflict to avoid its recurrence. (...) Conflict prevention strives to intervene before threats to use force or coercion are made or before [either party] resorts to significant armed force or coercion.”

The concept of peace building is similarly complex. A useful definition is offered by International Alert (1995), where peace building is defined as “the employment of measures to consolidate peaceful relations and create an environment which deters the emergence or escalation of tensions which may lead to conflict.”

The implications of these definitions for early response is the need to look at a range tools and processes (capacity building, awareness raising and accountability, confidence building, and intervention) that are applied in different sectors (political, security, economic, and socio-cultural) and at different levels (local, national, international). An illustrative matrix is provided below.

	Political and security	Economic	Socio-cultural
Capacity-building	<i>Local/national/international</i>	<i>Local/national/international</i>	<i>Local/national/international</i>
Awareness-raising and accountability	<i>Local/national/international</i>	<i>Local/national/international</i>	<i>Local/national/international</i>
Confidence-building	<i>Local/national/international</i>	<i>Local/national/international</i>	<i>Local/national/international</i>
“Hard” intervention	<i>Local/national/international</i>	<i>Local/national/international</i>	<i>Local/national/international</i>

3.1.2. Political will

The “lack of political will” is frequently quoted as the chief obstacle to early response. Unpacking the concept, particularly in relation to its causes, is important after understanding its implications for early response.

3.1.3. Know-how

- ✦ *Complexity of conflict situations.* Conflict situations are highly complex and dynamic. As these situations change quickly, a three-month old fact-finding report will quickly be outdated. Policy makers cannot keep up with developments.
- ✦ *Not knowing what works or what is relevant.* Conflict prevention and peace building is a complex exercise, requiring action at multiple levels (local to international), sectors (security, diplomacy, development) and by a range of actors (state and non-state). Often policy makers will not know what it is they can do that will have an impact.
- ✦ *Not knowing who is doing what.* The range of actors and activities involved in conflict prone/affected areas increases the difficulty of implementing concerted peace-building/making efforts. Actions appear (and often are) disjointed, ad hoc, and unstrategic, sometimes with unfortunate negative consequences and wasted resources.

3.1.4. Politics

- ✦ *Political pressures on decision-making.* It is clear that decisions taken with respect to crises are often based on agendas that do not concern themselves with peace and the well being of people. Conflict and crisis decision-making is rarely evidence-based, i.e. based on a peace-focused situation analysis.

- ◆ *Not wanting to interfere in other state's domestic matters.* In conflict situations, the affected state will often be very sensitive about outside interference. Governmental and inter-governmental agencies are therefore hesitant or unable to engage in named “conflict prevention” activities.
- ◆ *Not wanting to invest in unstable situations.* A number of donors are highly risk averse as they manage tax payers' money. Investing substantial funds in pre-conflict situations (e.g. infrastructure development) is often seen as a bad and risky investment that cannot be justified.
- ◆ *Not wanting to create a self-fulfilling prophecy.* Making an explicit and public statement that a region is in a “pre-conflict phase” may actually precipitate conflict, for example, either by leading to the withdrawal of investments or by encouraging war-mongers to act.
- ◆ *Lack of accountability.* Information and analyses on potential conflicts have traditionally remained out of the public domain. There is consequently limited pressure on key players to act or not to engage in inappropriate action.

3.1.5. Institutional set-ups

- ◆ *Restricted mandates.* Often key conflict factors (war economies, arms flows, and poor governance) require concerted action from multiple agencies and different departments in the same agency due to institutional/departmental mandates. Prevailing institutional incoherence reduces the ability of governments and inter-governmental organisations to play an effective role in conflict situations.
- ◆ *Slow response time.* The response time to a potential or actual conflict, for example, to deploy United Nations peacekeeping forces is estimated to be between 6-12 months (PIOOM Foundation, 1999). A number of organisations are also very slow at disbursing funds for urgent conflict prevention activities. Such slow response time to rapidly changing and escalating situations often undermines efforts to capitalise on “windows of opportunity” for peace.
- ◆ *Short-term versus long-term focus.* Given the multitude of priorities faced by decision-makers, and limited human resources, the focus is often on short-term crisis management, rather than long-term conflict prevention. Institutions are chronically “reactive” in nature.
- ◆ *“Early warning noise”.* Decision-makers are often swamped with information. Furthermore, often it is felt that there is too much early warning and too many false ones. This “noise” reduces the credibility of those groups engaged in effective early warning.

An “unpacked” understanding of political will sheds light on issues of know-how, politics, and institutional set-ups that have to be dealt with to pave the way for effective ILO engagement in early response. These issues will be revisited in the sections on overlap gaps and directions for the ILO in early response.

3.2. Processes

An early response process refers to response formulation and implementation. Often these are highly institutionally specific, but can with some value be reviewed in relation to inter-governmental and non-governmental processes. The examples given below are drawn from the United Nations Inter-Agency Framework Team for Co-ordination (New York), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe/High Commissioner for National Minorities, and the process developed by the Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER).

Before the summary overview of these institutional response processes, it is important to specify what constitutes “good practice” for defining and implementing early response. Three principles drawn from FEWER are outlined below:

1. *Dynamic, shared and peace-focused evidence base for policy development and programming.* Our ability to effectively respond to conflicts is greatly enhanced if we can base our policies and strategies on analyses that are regular, shared with other partners, and focused on the needs of communities affected by conflict.
2. *Integrated action at multiple levels/sectors and by multiple actors.* Effective peace building requires integrated and co-coordinated action. It means having a common strategy and working together with diverse groups to implement it.
3. *Local ownership of peace-building strategies and programmes.* Peace-building strategies and programmes that are not owned by local communities in conflict areas are never sustainable. Strategies, policies and programmes have to be “grounded” to be effective.

3.2.1. United Nations Inter-Agency Framework Team for Co-ordination (IAFTC, New York)

Initiation of early response. The IAFTC planning process is triggered when OCHA or anyone in the Framework Team believes that there is a substantial risk of a crisis. But contingency planning is encouraged for all, so almost anyone (UN RC, UN Country Team, agency headquarters, agencies) can request an initiation of a planning process.

Inclusiveness. Ideally, the IAFTC members would want to include in the planning process a range of actors, including the concerned government, international organisations (ICRC, IFRC, National RC), NGOs, etc. This depends on the willingness of the actors to make a positive contribution. However, often when the emphasis is on a potential crisis, many do not encourage conflict prevention efforts. The minimum group included is then the UN Country Team.

Issues covered. A range of issues are covered in the planning process:

- ✦ Risk scenarios and consequences.
- ✦ Constraints and how to mitigate them.
- ✦ Sectoral/geographic distribution of co-ordination and response responsibilities.
- ✦ Key inter-agency services, including communications, security, information management, public information etc.
- ✦ Follow-up on preparedness action plans, including sectoral/agency conflict prevention.

✦ Preparedness plans.

Implementation. Implementation is decentralized, where each operational agency (UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR) has its own methodologies for agency planning.

3.2.2. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

Initiation of early response. The key principle for the initiation of early response in the OSCE is consensus, all countries have to agree to the approach taken, including the one where the conflict is taking place. The consensus-building process leads to different approaches taken in relation to particular conflicts:

- ✦ the High Commissioner on National Minorities is appointed to deal with specific pre-conflict issues involving minorities (e.g. Macedonia, Baltic states, Moldova, etc.);
- ✦ the Minsk Group was formed to facilitate a political solution for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict; and
- ✦ a special team of observers monitored Kosovo.

Inclusiveness. The OSCE uses different sources for gathering information on conflict situations (Centre for Conflict Prevention, Fact Finding Missions), and seeks to draw on a broad constituency for input into planning processes (e.g. RAPs, or Research and Analysis Projects involving civil society groups). However, political decisions are taken by the Permanent Council, a council of representatives of all the member states based in Vienna.

Issues covered. There is no fixed set of issues covered, as these depend on the situation at hand, and which of the OSCE institutions are involved.

Implementation. The implementation of emerging plans of action similarly depends on the situation and engaged OSCE institutions. However, implementation efforts are usually informed by RAP activities.

3.2.3. The Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER)

Initiation of early response. Early response processes are initiated by FEWER lead members in the regions covered by the network. Response processes will be launched in four cases: (a) where an urgent early warning has been issued; (b) where a window of opportunity for peace has been identified in an on-going conflict; and (d) where there is slippage in peace-building efforts (often in post-conflict situations) or deadlocks that potentially can be broken by launching a process.

Inclusiveness. The underlying principles of the response processes launched by FEWER are inclusiveness and consensus. Each response process normally involves three roundtables with different stakeholders (governments, IGOs, NGOs, civil society groups, non-state actors), thus gradually building consensus around key response priorities.

Issues covered. FEWER's response processes are for peace-building, responses to early warning and contingency planning. Participants at roundtables will normally be provided with

a situation analysis and a survey of who is doing what. Based on this material, they will agree on the following elements:

- * Key problem areas and positive developments.
- * Longer-term peace-objectives.
- * Spoilers and spoiling factors.
- * Scenarios.
- * Responses (adapted to different scenarios) to address problem areas, support positive developments, reach objectives, manage spoilers.

Implementation. FEWER as a network does not engage in direct implementation of the plans developed, although its members may do so on an independent basis. The network, however, puts in place an implementation support mechanism that has two components: (a) three yearly information sharing meetings (based on the developed plans) among donors and implementing agencies; and (b) a restricted on-line work-space (web) and e-mail listserver for roundtable participants (and other interested groups) to facilitate the flow of information.

3.2.4. Observations

Based on this review, some generic observations can be made:

-  All institutions draw on situation analyses for their planning efforts. These are either developed internally, based on internal-external hybrid assessments, or “bought in” from external sources.
-  The response definition processes used involve in all cases a degree of consultation, ranging from discussions among sister agencies (UN example), to limited donor-IGO-NGO consultations, and active planning efforts in broad multi-actor coalitions.
-  The implementation processes, with one exception (FEWER), are generally driven within each institution. The consultative processes in the response definition phase are thoroughly followed through in the implementation of plans. In addition, FEWER’s systematic use of information technology to further implementation is an innovation in the field.

Additional observations on the effectiveness of different approaches can be made in view of the above-mentioned facets of “lacking political will:”

-  Response processes based on internal and/or one-off fact-finding analyses will be less efficient than those fed by on-going monitoring.
-  Internal planning efforts are likely to suffer from later coordination problems unless they are linked to more inclusive response processes.
-  The less open a process is, the greater is the potential for political interference in response definition efforts and reduced accountability.
-  Governmental and inter-governmental response processes may suffer from the need not to interfere in the domestic matters of another sovereign state.
-  Depending on organizational structures and departmental mandates, response processes may be more or less efficient.

3.3. Tools and instruments

The definitions and principles raised above highlight the need for a broad review of the tools and instruments available for early response. The matrix provided in the introduction above serves as an important reference point. The matrix highlights three important characteristics of early response, where tools and instruments can:

- deal with political/security, economic and socio-cultural issues;
- be applied at a local, national and international level; and
- range from softer actions (capacity building, awareness-raising and accountability, confidence-building) to “hard” interventions (e.g. military action, structural adjustment, etc.).

3.3.1. Matrix of tools

The matrix completed provides sample preventive responses from governments, IGOs, and NGOs and gives several useful insights provided below under “observations”.

	Political and security	Economic	Socio-cultural
Capacity- building	<i>Support human rights training for army and/or police</i> <i>Support human rights training for prison personnel</i> <i>Support development of appropriate laws and regulations and institutional procedures that allow parliamentary oversight</i> <i>Support establishment of regional dispute resolution mechanisms</i>	<i>Support decentralization programmes</i> <i>Promote economic reform</i> <i>Strengthen capacity of local organizations to deal with root causes of conflict</i>	<i>Support media training</i> <i>Support training of judges and members of the legal profession</i> <i>Support internal review and debate on the constitutional role and competence of the judiciary</i> <i>Support development of appropriate laws and regulations that strengthen the role and power of judges</i>
Awareness-raising and accountability	<i>Support human and civil rights campaigns for affected segments of the population</i> <i>Support regional conferences on the role of the military/police in society</i> <i>Support media campaigns on the causes of violent conflict</i> <i>Support internal debate on the constitutional role and competence of parliament in controlling the executive branch of government</i>	<i>Promote economic rights and benefits awareness</i> <i>Strengthen business legislation</i>	<i>Support environmental awareness Programmes</i> <i>Support documentation centres and libraries</i> <i>Organize visits by eminent organization/ individuals (embarrassing witnesses)</i>
Confidence-building	<i>Support military-to-military/police-to-police contacts (on role, rights and responsibilities in society)</i> <i>Support parliamentary regional cooperation</i> <i>Support mediation efforts</i> <i>Support negotiation efforts</i>	<i>Support economic cooperation/ integration</i> <i>Support inter-communal trade</i>	<i>Support exchange Programmes for personnel responsible for regional organisation’s dispute resolution mechanisms</i> <i>Support joint investigative reporting projects</i>
“Hard” intervention	<i>Send observers/monitoring/ verification teams</i> <i>Send pre-emptive peacekeeping forces</i> <i>Support DDR programmes</i> <i>Engage in targeted deterrence</i> <i>Support the establishment of demilitarized zones</i> <i>Institute arms embargoes/blockades</i>	<i>Support structural adjustment Programmes</i> <i>Institute economic embargoes</i> <i>Sponsor and promote private economic investment</i> <i>Implement development Programmes that deal with the root causes of conflict</i>	<i>Engage in systematic human rights monitoring</i> <i>Send civilian peace monitors</i> <i>Support commissions of enquiry/war crimes tribunals</i> <i>Support constitutional commissions</i>

3.3.2. Indicators and tools for Chechnya and Guinea-Conakry

Additional insights (see below) can be gained by looking at concrete cases. Below follows a brief review of key indicators and related tools identified for Chechnya (May 2001) and Guinea-Conakry (September 2000). The review is based on the work of FEWER lead agencies in the Caucasus⁶ and West Africa⁷.

Chechnya (May 2001)		Guinea-Conakry (September 2000)	
Key indicators	Identified tools	Key indicators	Identified tools
Widespread human rights abuses	Initiate political settlement processes	Oppression of opposition leaders	Monitoring of the trials of opposition leaders
Military preparations	Encourage military restraint and accountability	Election irregularities	Support to democratization programmes
Changing power alliances	N/A	Politicization of the refugee problem	Increased international support to refugees
Manipulation of public opinion	Support independent media initiatives	Strained relations in the Manu River Basin	Implementation of regional confidence building efforts
Increased hostage taking activities	N/A	Growing indiscipline in the security forces	Strengthen civilian oversight of armed forces and training of military personnel
Threat of economic recession in Russia	Initiate reconstruction efforts in Chechnya and monitor Russian government military expenditure	Fuel price increases	Support to income generation activities and national resource management

3.3.3. Observations

Several useful observations can be made in relation to the matrix of tools:

- ⊙ Engagement in conflict prevention efforts can be direct (often the case with hard interventions) or indirect (funding support to softer responses), depending on the level of exposure desired and the mandate/capacity of the intervening agency.
- ⊙ There is a greater understanding of the role and impact of “hard” political-security interventions as these are most frequently oriented towards crisis and conflict management (**secondary prevention**). “Soft” interventions (economic, socio-cultural) are either oriented towards the root causes of a conflict, or as part of a peace-building effort (**primary and tertiary prevention**), and are less measurable in terms of impact.
- ⊙ A specific tool will have varying degrees of impact depending on the context in which it is used and what other instruments are applied. The strategic framework developed for response, therefore, is a key determinant of impact.

The Chechnya and Guinea-Conakry examples also shed light on important issues:

- ◆ Field realities are complex and demand the integrated use of a variety of tools. This necessarily means inclusive strategic planning processes and a specified division of labor among peace-builders.

⁶ Russian Academy of Sciences/EWARN (Russia) and the Peace Mission to the Caucasus (Russia).

⁷ West Africa Network for Peace-building (Ghana).

- ◆ In many cases, some key conflict indicators cannot be effectively tackled (e.g. increased hostage taking or changing power alliances in Chechnya), or only partially/indirectly addressed (e.g. fuel price increases in Guinea-Conakry).
- ◆ Certain situations, characterized by high degrees of polarization and entrenched agendas, require innovative thinking about non-threatening entry-points for response.

Additional observations can be made in relation to the above-mentioned facets of lacking political will:

- The peace-building field is still quite young. Consequently, issues of know-how are prevalent, and it is difficult to know what actions may work in different and complex situations.
- Engaging in situations like Chechnya or pre-conflict Guinea-Conakry requires substantial political courage. Donor governments and inter-governmental organizations managing public funds often do not want to invest in unstable or uncertain environments.
- In many cases, early warnings (e.g. Guinea-Conakry or Chechnya) have not been headed. Policy-making in many institutions is chronically reactive, and an early warning is usually followed by a very late response.

3.4. Aspects of ILO's response processes and means of action (tools)

The principle for ILO engagement in early response is one that emphasizes integrated and multi-disciplinary programmes that tie immediate action to long-term recovery and development. The ILO InFocus Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction leads the organization's work on crisis issues. The Programme's activities are centered around the four pillars of: country-level rapid needs assessment, programme formulation and implementation for socio-economic reintegration of the crisis-affected groups; knowledge and tools development; capacity building of relevant bodies for crisis response; advocacy on the importance of decent work and ILO's role in effective crisis prevention and resolution.

The ILO response process has several facets. A few are mentioned below:

- ⤴ Country-level rapid needs assessment, programme formulation and implementation to reintegrate the diverse conflict-affected groups (refugees/returnees, internally displaced people, demobilized combatants, female heads of households, disabled persons, child soldiers, war-affected youth, "remainees") in to civil society through employment and income-generating efforts.
- ⤴ Research and advocacy on the employment and other ILO concerns that are adversely affected by crisis.
- ⤴ Building the capacities of ILO's constituents and others.
- ⤴ Rehabilitating the socio-economic and physical infrastructure.
- ⤴ Promoting social dialogue and political negotiations, reconciliation between the diverse groups.
- ⤴ Rebuilding the community's social fabric and institutional capacity of the ILO's constituents, skills reservoir and relevant labour market information systems.

- ✧ Promoting equity and social justice, relevant international labour standards; and supporting human rights, including the promotion of appropriate labour law framework.
- ✧ Broad efforts at development and peace building that tackle the root causes of conflict.
- ✧ Supporting employment and income-generating efforts.
- ✧ Strengthening social protection and social security, including the improvement of policy and legislation.
- ✧ Supporting social dialogue, including work with civil society, employers' and workers' organizations, and governments.
- ✧ An Officewide Network of Crisis Focal Points to ensure coherent institutional responses to conflict and the other crisis situations.
- ✧ Linkages to sister agencies within and outside the UN system.
- ✧ Linkages to governments and civil society groups (e.g. labour unions, ministries of labour, employers associations, business groups, and women's groups) in most countries.

3.4.1. Observations

The emerging response matrix is provided below.

	Political and security	Economic	Socio-cultural
Capacity-building	N/A	<i>Capacity-building of ILO constituents (skills and labor market information systems)</i> <i>Support employment and income-generating efforts</i>	<i>Strengthen social protection and social security systems</i>
Awareness-raising and accountability	<i>Support human rights and labor rights</i>	<i>Promote international labour standards</i>	<i>Promote equity and social justice</i>
Confidence-building	<i>Support social and political dialogue</i>	<i>Social dialogue</i>	<i>Support social and political reconciliation</i>
“Hard” intervention	<i>Reintegrate conflict affected groups</i> <i>Development efforts on the root causes of conflict</i>	<i>Rehabilitate socio-economic and physical infrastructure</i> <i>Development efforts on the root causes of conflict</i> <i>Reduce social impacts of Structural Adjustment Programmes</i>	<i>Development efforts on the root causes of conflict</i>

It is clear that the ILO provides an important contribution to the “tool-box” of responses to conflict. The most developed contributions are in the social and economic sectors. It is important to note (see Chechnya and Guinea Conakry examples) that ILO’s emphasis on reduction of unemployment is a cross-cutting measure of great importance to peace-building. A targeted ILO contribution can also be seen in the political-security sector, with emphasis on rights, dialogue, reintegration, and development efforts on the root causes of conflict.

3.5. Areas of overlap and gaps

3.5.1. Processes

The ILO's InFocus Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction is currently engaged in a number of internal and external processes for responding to crises. Internally, an Officewide Network of Crisis Focal Points has been established. Externally, the Programme is engaged in inter-agency and other forums, such as the Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction (CPR) Network as part of its planning and outreach efforts.

The critical niche of the ILO in response processes lies in its tripartite engagement with governments, employers and workers' organizations. This niche can enable the ILO to play a leadership role in filling the critical gap in crisis response processes; namely helping to develop integrated response plans. Such an engagement has the following advantages:

- ✦ It helps integrate ILO concerns in the overall conflict prevention agenda, where it might sometimes be marginalized by emphasis on "hard" measures.
- ✦ It helps to tackle and to place emphasis on the structural root causes of conflict, whereas attention is given to the more "symptomatic" facets of a crisis.
- ✦ It capitalizes on the ILO's role as a non-threatening convener, and the entry-points of employment and labor issues as a way of tackling some of the more politically sensitive issues around a given crisis.

Nonetheless, there are several pitfalls associated with such engagement:

- ✦ ILO's concerns may be "buried" in a broader conflict prevention strategy.
- ✦ ILO's concerns may become politicized, and consequently the organization's ability to promote its mandate in the crisis sphere may be compromised.
- ✦ A leadership role not backed up by adequate resources may lead to an "overstretch" of the limited human and financial resources it currently allocates to crisis response work.

3.5.2. Tools

The tools developed fully (and strategically) reflect the ILO's mandate and comparative advantage. The degree of specialization reflected in ILO tools is an advantage compared to groups with broader mandates and activities, as the know-how required in their application can be sustained.

The gaps identified in political-security capacity-building, as well as economic awareness-raising and confidence-building need to be verified. For example, economic confidence-building activities (e.g. inter-communal trade, movement of labour) may offer new advantageous entry-points for the ILO. Similarly, political and security capacity building (e.g. development of dispute resolution mechanisms among ILO constituents) may offer the ILO another approach to build on its comparative advantage and engage in the conflict prevention field further.

The issue of partners (allies) in the response field should be explored further beyond the ILO's natural constituents. At an operational level, a key question is how (or whether) greater synergy can be created between ILO's tools/means of action and those of other agencies. The synergy question should look at not only joint programming and linkages between efforts, but also the role of the ILO at a strategic level with the use of its tools as non-threatening entry-points for conflict prevention. The concept of the ILO as an "opener" for conflict prevention engagement by the broader peace-building community needs to be explored further.

In relation to the facets of political will mentioned in the introduction, two observations can be made:

- ⊕ The ILO's means of action for conflict prevention raise questions of whether the institution sees these as relevant for its engagement in early response, and whether the know-how (people)-base in the organization are sensitized to the use of these normal ILO means of action to promote peace-building.
- ⊕ The ILO's profile in conflict prevention is now increasing, although external awareness of its capacity to be a full-fledged player is still quite limited. The organizations governing body should capitalize on this momentum.

4. POLICY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Early warning systems and indicators

4.1.1. Policy issues

Five basic policy issues are raised regarding the ILO and early warning capacity.

- (i) *In preparing the various early warning products suggested here, what crises should the InFocus Programme focus on?* As noted above, models on adverse political transitions and economic crises are still relatively embryonic. For these crises, the best approach may be for the Programme to concentrate on more basic research regarding the causes of these types of crises. Natural disasters, while clearly impacting on employment and its related issues, may also be an area, where the Programme does not have a clear comparative advantage unless one considers the degree of vulnerability of the people before the disaster. The latter greatly determines the extent of impact the disaster will have on the people. Armed conflict may be the best topic for initial Programme products in the area of early warning.
- (ii) *How best should models for early warning and risk assessments be developed?* Again, there are many competing models, especially for the outbreak and escalation of armed conflict, to choose from. Three options open to the Programme are to: develop a new model in-house, apply an existing model or models (and consequently stress the benefits of adding Programme indicators), and adapt existing models by adding new indicators. These approaches are not mutually exclusive, given sufficient resources.
- (iii) *What should an ILO early warning product look like?* The Programme's approach to a barometer would best serve as a risk assessment product. Early warning analysis requires substantially more data collection, analysis and the production of reports. The shape of an early warning product, which might consist of periodic country studies for example, has yet to be pinned down.
- (iv) *How can the ILO best utilize indicators for risk assessment and early warning?* First, the Programme needs to gain access to others' indicators and data analysis. For a model predicting the outbreak of armed conflict, there will be several indicators that others already collect. The Programme needs to identify an appropriate mechanism to cooperate with others doing early warning research. Second, the Programme needs to identify ways to distribute the indicators that it collects so that those doing early warning can incorporate the Programme's data in their own products.
- (v) *What data sources will be used to create a barometer and other early warning products?* The Programme needs to identify sources of data, particularly for early warning that it has access to.

4.1.2. Recommendations

From the above issues and discussion, four basic recommendations follow.

- ✚ The ILO should seek to strengthen outreach to the academic and policy communities engaged in early warning and risk assessment research.
- ✚ The ILO should contribute, through expanding its research, to focus on the neglected area of employment and other related issues as causes of, and consequences of, crises.
- ✚ The ILO should develop an annual barometer ranking countries on the basis of socio-economic problems and prospects.
- ✚ The ILO should develop a series of country reports tracking trends in socio-economic issues. Initial studies might be historical in nature.

4.2. Early response processes and tools

4.2.1. Policy issues

The policy issues raised in this report on early response are summarized below in relation to processes and tools.

In terms of early response processes, the most salient policy questions include:

- ** *How to best inform response processes?* It is clear that response processes based on internal and/or one-off fact-finding analyses will be less efficient than those fed by on-going monitoring. The current ILO evidence-base for planning can be further bolstered by, for example, the development of an internal early warning capacity, or the “buy-in” of regular analyses from external sources. The ILO can contribute to UN and the early warning systems of other organizations with employment, labour and other economic data.
- ** *How to ensure that the response processes are inclusive?* Internal planning efforts are likely to suffer from later coordination problems unless linked to more inclusive response processes. Can the ILO further externalize its planning efforts, in terms of engaging in broader planning forums, drawing its constituents into these efforts, as well as by providing an example of IGO engagement with civil society groups in early warning?
- ** *How to link planning with implementation?* The effective implementation of response plans depends on organizational structures and departmental mandates. Can the ILO’s organizational set-up for response be further optimized?

Policy issues that relate to response tools include:

- ** *How can ILO’s tools or means of action in early warning and early response be integrated with those of other organizations at a field-level?* Field realities are complex and demand the integrated use of a variety of tools. This necessarily implies a specified division of labor among intervening groups. What additional planning and

implementation forums can the ILO participate in to ensure such integration — and what forums should be avoided in order to effectively use requisite resources.

- ** *How can the ILO contribute further to the knowledge base regarding the use and impact of its tools?* The peace-building field is still quite young, and we still know little about the relevance and impact of different tools for conflict prevention. What additional research and contributions can the ILO undertake to raise awareness about the tools it uses?
- ** *What additional tools should the ILO develop on the basis of its mandate?* The ILO has chosen to develop a set of tools that are primarily based in the social and economic (capacity-building and “hard” intervention) sectors, with some political-security activities. Should the ILO develop additional tools relating to political-security, capacity-building and economic awareness-raising/accountability and confidence building?
- ** *How can the ILO use its non-threatening mandate as an effective entry-point for conflict prevention?* The ILO’s mandate on labor and employment issues provides for an important role in conflict prevention. Concomitantly, it offers a non-threatening entry-point for conflict prevention in highly polarized situations. A key question is what processes, alliances, and competencies should the ILO develop to capitalize on this comparative advantage.
- ** *How can the ILO become a leading IGO for pro-active response?* In many cases, early warnings (e.g. Guinea-Conakry or Chechnya) have not been headed as policy-making in many institutions is chronically reactive. The relatively small size of the ILO’s Crisis Response Programme, non-threatening mandate, and tools give it the potential for rapid response to early warnings. What processes, alliances, and competencies are required for the ILO to further realize this potential?

4.2.2. Recommendations

- ☐ The ILO should sustain efforts to develop its analytical base for responding to conflicts, and share its labor/employment data with other organizations involved in conflict early response.
- ☐ The ILO should increase its role in organizing and engaging in inclusive and conflict-specific planning forums. This role should involve bringing in a broad coalition of IGOs, governments, NGOs and other civil society groups for operational planning.
- ☐ The ILO should ensure a streamlined organizational set-up for effective implementation of response plans.
- ☐ The ILO should undertake further research on the value and impact of the tools at its disposal. As part of the knowledge-development work of the InFocus Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction, research should be undertaken, on the value and impact on early warning of reintegration efforts, rehabilitation of socio-economic and physical infrastructure, social and political negotiations, dialogue and reconciliation, rebuilding social fabrics and institutional capacity of ILO constituents, promotion of equity and social justice, and development and peace-building.
- ☐ The ILO should explore the development of additional conflict prevention tools, means of action and competencies, as well as its role for creating conflict prevention entry-

points. A number of possible tools and competencies can be developed, including dispute resolution skills for ILO constituents, business-business partnerships as a confidence-building measure, etc. Emphasis should also be placed on understanding the entry-point role of the ILO for conflict prevention.

- ☐ The ILO should commit to and document its proactive responses to early warning. This needs to involve the strengthening of necessary processes, alliances, and competencies to further realize this potential.

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