

Panel: Post Conflict Reconstruction of Livelihoods in Conflict Affected Countries of South Asia

Violent conflicts have profound impact on lives and livelihoods of people who face it. It increases vulnerability by disrupting routines, eroding asset bases and limiting choices. In today's world, internal conflict has increased manifold. According to the World Development Report 2011 (The World Bank 2011), almost one-and-a half billion people live in areas affected by large scale political or criminal violence. The countries which have experienced violence are poorer than countries which have not. Same applies to the areas within national boundaries.

Almost all of the South Asian countries, especially Afghanistan, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have experienced (or are still experiencing) internal conflicts in the recent past. Some countries are out of protracted crisis while some are still struggling to overcome it. The internal crisis has affected development negatively in these countries. Afghanistan, Nepal and Pakistan are lagging behind to achieve most of the MDGs goals, whereas Sri Lanka is slightly better positioned.

Conflict affected countries are often characterised by large movements of people—refugees returning home, and displaced persons attempting to resettle (Goovaerts et al 2005). In post-war contexts, livelihood interventions are a key protection tool for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), as this contributes towards their social, emotional and economic well-being, their long-term food security and their ability to protect themselves against shocks and vulnerability (Women's Refugee Commission 2009).

Recognizing the need for livelihoods development in post conflict situations, DFID UK is supporting a six-year research project (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium – SLRC) in eight countries which are still in conflict or have just come out of conflict. The core objective of SLRC research is to understand what do livelihood trajectories in conflict-affected situations tell us about how poor and vulnerable people make a living and what role governments and aid agencies are playing to support them in making and rebuilding their livelihoods? Of the eight countries working under this project, four countries are from South Asia including Afghanistan, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The purpose of organizing this panel discussion is to bring together a group of experts from South Asia and other regions to share their research results and build upon each other's best practices to reform policy and practice for better outcomes.

References:

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