OVERVIEW: Supporting enterprises in conflict-afflicted zones

What is the Conflict Resilience (CR) Toolkit?

The CR Toolkit is a set of resources for enterprises, their workers and their families to help to build resilience to risks and vulnerabilities posed by conflict or the threat of conflict.

Why is it necessary?

In many conflict affected countries, businesses have been operating with risks primarily related to safety of staff, security of assets and disruption of markets. While some regions have experienced prolonged large-scale violence in others, there has been sudden escalation, de-escalation, or on-going low intensity conflict. Irrespective of the nature and severity of the conflict, businesses are often ill-equipped to make sudden changes to their planning and operations in advance to cope with the emerging risks.

Multinational companies working in conflict affected regions often have dedicated staff to deal with challenges related to conflict risks. They also have strong internal processes and networks with important stakeholders to sustain business interests. International businesses also benefit from various guidance documents that have been developed to encourage conflict-sensitive and ethical business practices in conflict affected and fragile contexts. At the other end of the business spectrum, micro-enterprises often work intuitively and focus on targeted markets. While their size and localized networks allow micro-entrepreneurs to take decisions quickly, when there is a sudden change in the conflict situation. However, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and large local firms are in need of the most assistance, to deal with conflict risks.

Support to SMEs is critical especially given that they are the ones that hold the local economy together, bridging value chains and providing most of the employment, goods and services to the local affected communities. Currently, few tools exist to assist SMEs to manage their business in conflict-affected regions and to cope with conflict related risks. While SME owners and managers may have informal and instinctive ways of dealing with conflict risks, often the risk mitigation actions that are employed are not insufficient; sudden changes in conflict dynamics could leave businesses at the risk of closure.

This suite of tools will assist small and medium enterprises to better manage their operations in conflict affected zones. They will enable businesses to quickly assess and understand how their vulnerability may be changing, make prudent decisions about whether additional management actions are required in the future, and support them in implementation of risk mitigation actions.

What's in the CR Toolkit?

There are three main sections to the CR toolkit.

The first is a package of easy to use level tools to assist enterprises identify risk and vulnerabilities to their business, and then advice on how to manage and minimize those risks and vulnerabilities. Accompanying the tools are support materials such as case studies, fact sheets and guides. The main tool that can be a used directly by enterprises is a self-assessment tool. This tool has also been developed as an APP for maximum accessibility and use.

Second, is a package of tools to assist employers and business membership organisation (EBMOs) in identifying the main issues or problems faced by the private sector (e.g. road closure, ports disrupted, arbitrary taxes levelled, etc.), and strategies on how to ensure positive outcomes and change.

Third, are the training materials that EBMOS can run and use, with enterprises, to support resilience along with checklists, guides, and case studies.

What do the tools do?

They provide enterprises with the ability to:

- assess the level of risk and vulnerability from conflict to the business and workers and their families;
- map and assess the importance of key stakeholders to their business, and to develop a plan to deal with them, in the event of a change to the security environment;
- develop a security plan to manage threats to the business and workers and their families ;
- help develop and sustain a safe and neutral workplace;
- build an effective risk and contingency system for the business

Are there different types of approaches for use?

Yes, the tools have been designed to be used in a flexible and adaptable way. The toolkit has an initial self-assessment, through which enterprises can use to identify their level of vulnerability. Specifically the toolkit will help participant enterprises develop a bespoke business continuity plan. Certification is granted following the successful and verifiable completion of training modules. In total, there are FOUR kinds of training packages: BASIC, STANDARD, ADVANCED and GROUP.

- ➢ The **SELF-ASSESSMENT Package** has been developed to enable users to undertake a rapid assessment of the preparedness and resilience to conflict and emergencies, within their enterprise. This easy to use package is targeted at small enterprises with limited resources.
- ➢ The **STANDARD Package** allows enterprises to complete the training and become certified without attending a formal training. This easy to use training package is targeted at small to medium enterprises. A short guide will assist them in successfully navigating the training. *Successful users can become certified.*

> For the **ADVANCED package**, enterprises will have the opportunity to complete the training and become certified, without attending a formal training. However, this training is more robust and is geared at providing a deeper approach. An accompanying guide will assist these users navigate the training. *Successful users can become certified.*

> For the **GROUP package**, an entirely different approach is used. A small group of enterprises will conduct the self-assessment in advance of attending a short training of 60-90 minutes. This is the peer to peer approach and is favored by enterprises in a region with a high risk of conflict, by like-minded or similar firms, or a cluster of enterprises. *Successful users can become certified.*

How does certification work?

All users who have completed the training/planning module(s) - **STANDARD/ADVANCE/GROUP** – and have successfully developed a "Business Continuity Plan" for their business are eligible for certification. The **BASIC package** is for guidance only and therefore is ineligible for certification. The certificates will be awarded by the national implementing partner(s) - the EBMO, an external donor, and/or government for example, in collaboration with the ILO.

To receive certification, users must register their completed BCP with the implementing partner. This, once verified, will then be registered on the ILO's public register of "BCP-ready" enterprises. This then allows firms to highlight and brand their enterprise as BCP ready.

Who should use the toolkit?

The toolkits should be used by small, medium and large businesses that operate in or near a conflict affected zone. It may also be used by businesses in zones that are at risk of violence, to plan and prepare their staff and operations in event of a rapid escalation of violence. The main target are enterprises and their workers. Enterprises can use the tools directly. Smaller enterprises may only have the capacity to use the self-assessment tool and the specific **STANDARD TOOL**, both of which have been designed to be quick and easy to use. Medium sized and larger firms may use the wider suite of material in a more structured way.

When should the tools be used?

The tools should be used prior to or along with the development of other strategic business plans. They can used during times of change in the conflict dynamics, such as a rapid escalation of violence or nature of the relationships among relevant institutions in the region.

How do EBMOs use it?

EBMOs can disseminate the tools directly themselves or in partnership with other private sector organisations, workers organizations, NGOs, donors, local government (if no risk); or other stakeholders. A support package of handouts, information, guides and other resources is available to support implementing partner EBMOs.

How to use the tools

The toolkit is has been designed in a way that enables the tools to be customized or adapted to national, regional and/or sector-specific contexts and circumstances, even to suit firm level specifications.

How is it a different approach?

Developing the private sector in a high risk context of weak/absent institutions requires approaches that are immediately relevant and applicable. By developing local networks of enterprises, using adaptable capacity building models, crucial knowledge can be disseminated by trusted actors in a context that can be both absorbed and applied by local businesses.

The tools are in line with ILO's overall approach to decent work and private sector development in conflict affected contexts. The Toolkit supports ILO's work with employers to catalyse entrepreneurship; assist business growth; improve productivity, and working conditions and social dialogue; and complements activities promoting post-conflict development and employment creation. Moreover, taking forward recommendations from the 2017 *International Labour Conference on Employment and Conflict*, the tools have been adapted with consultation to support employment creation in conflict zones – to catalyse the transition from war to peace.

Who owns the material?

The ILO is the sole owner of the tools and related material. An agreement that acknowledges ILO's ownership and the EBMOs' implementation role, must be signed before starting toolkit delivery.

The toolkit is located at the following on-line platform: https://conflictdisaster.org/

List of Tools

Enterprise level Tools, Guides, Checklists

- TOOL 1: Self-assessment
- TOOL 2: Business Continuity Planning (BCP) – STANDARD
- TOOL 3: Business Continuity Planning (BCP) – ADVANCED
- TOOL 4: Business Continuity Planning (BCP) in 8 steps

BCP Support Tools

- TOOL 1: Stakeholder assessment and management plan
- TOOL 2: Identify internal threats
- TOOL 3: Identify external threats

Additional Enterprise Support material

- CHECKLIST: BULLYING in your enterprise
- CHECKLIST: EQUALITY in your enterprise
- CHECKLIST: Is my enterprise prepared to respond to security threats?
- FACTSHEET: Emergency kit
- GUIDE: Assessing and monitoring risks and threats
- GUIDE: Dealing with discrimination-related complaints
- GUIDE: Dealing with harassment & bullying in the workplace
- GUIDE: Developing a security plan
- GUIDE: Evacuation plan
- GUIDE: Managing equality in the workplace
- GUIDE: Recruitment practices that promote equality

Policy support

- TOOL 1: Identifying priorities for action by the EBMO
- TOOL 2: Assessing receptivity to an EBMO's proposals
- TOOL 3: Stakeholder analysis
- TOOL 4: Formulating an advocacy effort
- TOOL 5: Using Coalitions for conflict resolution
- TOOL 6: Developing a public statement for action in crisis
- TOOL 7: Assessing the needs of enterprises post conflict

Case studies

- CASE STUDY: Role of Employers and business organization's (Nepal)
- CASE STUDY: Role of Employers and business organization's (Sri Lanka)

Support material for implementing Employers and Business membership organizations (EBMO)

- FACTSHEET: Key Terminology

- FACTSHEET: Strategies to manage trauma in the workplace
- GUIDE: Managing Trauma in the workplace
- GUIDE: Responding to the needs of enterprises in Conflict Zones (EBMOs)
- TRAINING TOOL: Managing Trauma in the workplace
- PRESENTATION: Trauma training

Training Tools

- TRAINING TOOL: Business Continuity Plan (BCP) for small enterprise (Philippines)
- TRAINING TOOL: Business Continuity Plan (BCP) for medium sized enterprise (Afghanistan)
- TRAINING TOOLS: Contingency plan for EBMO
- TRAINING TOOL: Medium sized enterprise (Philippines)
- TRAINING TOOL: Recovery plan for EBMO post conflict
- TRAINING TOOL - Small enterprise (Somalia)