Post-Conflict Reconstruction of Agricultural Education

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“One of the strongest factors conditioning post-conflict reconstruction and setting it apart is the pervasive sense of urgency. Yet peace building is a long-term activity” (Buckland, 2004)
Outline

• Goal is to give context to our workshop
• Some general lessons learned from post-conflict environments
• Avenues to building peace on the ruins of conflict – through agricultural education
• Stimulate our thinking about general and specific strategies for different countries to meet their development challenges
Some General Lessons Learned

• Macroeconomic factors contributing to conflict
  1. Low levels of per capita income (PCI)
  2. Stagnation in per capita income growth
  3. High dependence on primary commodity exports

• Violent conflict typically reduces GDP by 15%

• 40% of post-conflict countries return to conflict within 10 years
  – PCI of $250, likelihood 15%
  – PCI of $600, likelihood 7.5%
  – PCI of $1250, likelihood 4%
  – If PCI drops 5%, likelihood increases to 12% next year

• Stimulating economic growth must be a top national priority
General Lessons Learned (cont.)

• Although all post-conflict situations are unique, in general:
  – Human and institutional capacity is much reduced
  – Physical infrastructure severely damaged
  – Severe short-term food security and medical care issues
  – Remaining pockets of active conflict
  – Youth unemployment a major problem
  – Gender-related problems may be exacerbated
  – In the education sector:
    » Primary education has stagnated
    » Secondary education seriously affected
    » Higher education largely destroyed
    » Skilled teachers and administrators scarce
    » “Knowledge economy” adoption delayed
General Lessons Learned (cont.)

• In the agriculture sector
  – Domestic input and output markets seriously disrupted
  – International input and output markets destroyed
  – Agriculture information service providers severely damaged or destroyed
  – Indigenous agricultural knowledge may be forgotten
  – Land tenure and access to land and water resources may be greatly complicated
  – Natural resources may be under threat
  – Labor shortages due to absence of young men
  – Steep productivity declines
  – Subsistence food scarcity exacerbated
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• Given the importance of economic growth and the condition of the economy, what can be done?
  – Why Agriculture?
    • Primacy of need for food security
    • Preponderance of sector within economy
    • Vast majority of national employment
      – 80% of incremental growth in employment due to Ag and its multipliers
    • Safeguard natural resources
    • Undo policy legacy of the past (e.g., urban bias)
    • Need to demonstrate competence of post-conflict governance structure (get early wins)
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• Training or Education? ("know how" vs "know-why")
  – Need for training more obvious than education
    • High unemployment, especially among young men
    • Short-term training programs for scare and immediately needed skills
• Different times, different skills needed
  – Some post-conflict, high skill needs are temporary (not needed in ‘normal society’).
    • Best provided by specialized international organizations:
      – Resettlement, emergency food/medical programs
      – Accelerated learning programs
    • Leave once immediate the post-conflict emergency is over
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— “Outsiders” cannot provide the internal skills necessary for rebuilding civil society and long-term growth and peace

— Education priorities

1. Basic (primary)
   — Easiest to re-start
   — Learned skills translate to many, broad areas
   — Millennium Development Goals

2. Secondary
   — Enhanced basic skills and knowledge
   — Involve vulnerable youth
   — More expensive to re-start

3. Tertiary
   — Longer term/most expensive
   — Future oriented
   — Need educated agricultural population
Conclusions

• Post-conflict country development is unique in complexity and requires special attention

• Both Training and Education are required
  • “Clean slate”?

• Agricultural training and education is a major driver of short and long-term agricultural development
  • Must be a high priority in post-conflict developing countries
    • Predominant size of agriculture sector
      o Employment generator
      o Incomes producer

• Essential to food security
• Improves health and productivity
• Facilitates continued peace and wide-scale development
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Thank you for your attention

Questions/Comments?