



HUMANITARIAN ENGINEERING: INNOVATIVE APPROACHES AND PARTNERSHIPS IN CRISIS RESPONSE

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Introduction: On May 9-13, key stakeholders across the global development community, including FIDIC², UN agencies, the World Bank, and international experts, met in Cyprus, under the sponsorship of the Government of Switzerland at a workshop on *Challenges in Post-Conflict and Reconstruction*.

The overall purpose was to identify how reconstruction of infrastructure and provision of essential services could be more effective, especially in countries, such as Lebanon and Jordan, facing a massive refugee crisis driven by the war in Syria. The attention of the international community is increasingly focused on maximizing effectiveness in crisis response. That is underscored in the communiqué of the recent G7 summit in Japan, and in the recent UN World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, which highlighted the need for the humanitarian and development communities to collaborate in addressing the special needs of growing numbers of people facing long-term crisis conditions. The Cyprus workshop was thus very timely, especially in identifying priority steps to optimize the critical role of procurement, on which the effectiveness of crisis response ultimately depends.

The notion of “Humanitarian Engineering” and the International Humanitarian Engineering Partnership (HEP) were key themes at the workshop. “Humanitarian Engineering” has been defined in terms of enhancing human and community welfare, including in situations of

chronic distress of large numbers of people (e.g., emergencies and refugee crises) and encompassing research, design, manufacturing, construction and service delivery.



HEP engages key stakeholders to develop innovative approaches and tools for more effective crisis response, in particular in the procurement dimension. HEP is creating a supporting framework of standard contract templates, in cooperation with FIDIC, and an online platform for sharing the standard contracts and practical information with the broader engineering community and other stakeholders in humanitarian-construction-related projects, thereby improving effectiveness and efficiency in overall delivery of crisis

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² International Federation of Consulting Engineers

response projects. The World Bank has joined the HEP Core Team preparing those resources.

The critical need for resources being developed by HEP was highlighted by a May 2016 survey conducted across regions³. It revealed that almost half of respondents did not use contracts in construction projects, and three-quarters of respondents wanted online information and tools for effective crisis response procurement. The HEP platform will offer key information (e.g.



register of CVs across specialist areas, vendor data, UN's Long Term Agreements, employment rosters, training material, cluster information per country, design standards and technology, emergency response information, hosting and management by select partners connected to social media). Those tools will be useful for stakeholders in Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV) contexts, including governments, donors, and NGOs and SMEs involved in crisis response.

Practical information about effective crisis response procurement that HEP can disseminate was illustrated at the workshop. World Bank GGP Practice Manager for MENA, Yolanda Tayler, presented on Adaptive Procurement Solutions in Emergency, Post-Conflict and Reconstruction Context, drawing on experience in the fragile context of Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq, and introduced innovative tools such as a Reconstruction and Recovery

Procurement Toolkit and tailored procedures for fragility, conflict and violent situations in the Bank's new Procurement Framework.

Traditionally, development organizations have operated outside the emergency context. However, with the rise in long-lasting crises, it is critical to coordinate with local and regional stakeholders such as NGOs, humanitarian agencies, and private sector, including SMEs. This need is particularly felt in the water and sanitation sectors where demand has risen 7% in Lebanon alone. Jordan too faces critical water challenges, with water losses totaling over 60%.

The World Bank's participation in HEP builds on its commitment to addressing the regional crisis including the [MENA Financing Initiative](#) to support refugees, host communities, and recovery and reconstruction. In partnership with FIDIC, and harnessing its experience in crisis response procurement, the Bank can make a key, cost-effective contribution through participation in the HEP Core Team.

Partnering with stakeholders such as FIDIC in the HEP initiative provides a strategic multiplier for the Bank's efforts in crisis response. FIDIC represents the consulting engineering industry globally, including 1.5 million professionals in 60,000 consulting firms across 100 countries. FIDIC contracts will provide accountability, efficiency and enhanced development outcomes in crisis response, through balanced contractual clauses, fair allocation of risk, and credibility as an international standard with a 50 year proven track record supported by the public and private sectors. Furthermore, FIDIC facilitates dispute resolution options and provides capacity-building.

The dialogue at the workshop suggests key takeaways for the way forward. They point to steps the Bank can take, through HEP and partnering with FIDIC and specialized UN agencies, to make the humanitarian engineering concept a reality in countries in the region and

³ Respondents from Greece, Iraq, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Nepal, Rome, Roving, South Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, and MENA

elsewhere afflicted by fragility, conflict and violence.

The dialogue at the workshop suggests key takeaways for the way forward. They point to steps the Bank can take, through HEP and partnering with FIDIC and specialized UN agencies, to make the humanitarian engineering concept a reality in countries in the region and elsewhere afflicted by fragility, conflict and violence. The takeaways from the workshop include:

- The Bank's engagement in the HEP Core Team will enable greater effectiveness in implementation of crisis response through tools including customizable standardized contracts and an information sharing platform -- resources useful to various stakeholders (public sector, NGOs and the private sector, including SMEs) -- and allowing crisis response expenditures and initiatives such as the MENA Financing Initiative to realize their potential and objectives;
- The Bank's partnership with FIDIC and other stakeholders provides an important opportunity for the humanitarian and development communities to empower effective contracting modalities for crisis response.
- The HEP initiative should provide standardized contracts, other tools and support for international and local stakeholders (e.g., through follow-up dissemination and coordination activities building on the Cyprus event).

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