GLOBAL CLUSTER ON EARLY RECOVERY

GUIDANCE NOTE ON INTER-CLUSTER EARLY RECOVERY

Draft 24 June 2014
(see Annex attached)
( 

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IASC Principal, Cluster Lead Agency  
(to be completed)
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<td>Accountability to Affected Populations</td>
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<tr>
<td>AGD</td>
<td>Age, Gender and Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCRPR</td>
<td>UNDP/Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPPS</td>
<td>UNDP/Bureau for Policy and Programme Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CERF</td>
<td>Central Emergency Response Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHF</td>
<td>Common Humanitarian Funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLA</td>
<td>Cluster Lead Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Country Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRU</td>
<td>UNDP/Crisis Response Unit</td>
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<td>CWGER</td>
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<td>ERF</td>
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<td>ERA</td>
<td>Early Recovery Advisor</td>
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<td>GHD</td>
<td>Good Humanitarian Donorship</td>
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<tr>
<td>HC</td>
<td>Humanitarian Coordinators</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCT</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDs</td>
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<td>HLP</td>
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<tr>
<td>HoA</td>
<td>Head of Agency</td>
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<td>HPC</td>
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<td>IAHE</td>
<td>Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation</td>
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<td>IASC</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
<td>Internally Displaced Persons</td>
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<td>IMO</td>
<td>Information Management Officer</td>
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<td>INGO</td>
<td>International Non-Government Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>MIRA</td>
<td>Multi-Cluster Initial Rapid Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Government Organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCNA</td>
<td>Post Conflict Needs Assessment</td>
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<td>PDNA</td>
<td>Post Disaster Needs Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRP</td>
<td>Preliminary Response Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC</td>
<td>United Nations Resident Coordinators</td>
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<tr>
<td>SADD</td>
<td>Sex and age disaggregated data</td>
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<td>SRP</td>
<td>Strategic Response Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCT</td>
<td>United Nations Country Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDAF</td>
<td>United Nations Development Assistance Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene</td>
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<td>WFP</td>
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I  INTRODUCTION

Early Recovery is an approach that addresses recovery needs that arise during the humanitarian phase of an emergency, using humanitarian mechanisms that align with development principles. It enables people to use the benefits of humanitarian action to seize development opportunities, builds resilience, and establishes a sustainable process of recovery from crisis. Early recovery is a vital element of any effective humanitarian response. Planning for it should start when the crisis begins. Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Reference Module for the implementation of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle

During and immediately after a crisis, national actors and the international community focus primarily on meeting immediate life-saving needs. Quick action is required to save lives, minimize damage and restore order. At the same time, and from the start of humanitarian response, time critical interventions which lay the foundations for sustainable recovery and a speedy return to progress on longer term development are also imperative. This requires that the response strategies and interventions are designed and implemented in a manner which supports and strengthens local ownership, capacities and resilience, are based on a thorough understanding of the context, promote equality and prevents discrimination, and contribute to strengthening the affected population’s ability to cope better with any future crises.

Background

“Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs: All relief actions affect the prospects for long-term development, either in a positive or a negative fashion. Recognising this, we will strive to implement relief programmes which actively reduce the beneficiaries’ vulnerability to future disasters and help create sustainable lifestyles. We will pay particular attention to environmental concerns in the design and management of relief programmes. We will also endeavour to minimise the negative impact of humanitarian assistance, seeking to avoid long-term beneficiary dependence upon external aid”. Red Cross Code of Conduct Principle 8

The value of ‘linking relief and development’ has been widely discussed in humanitarian and development literature since the 1980’s. Its importance is recognized in the Red Cross Code of Conduct (1994), in multi-government policy positions and in the Good Humanitarian Donorship Principles (2003).

The Global Cluster on Early Recovery (GCER), formerly the global Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER) was created as one of nine (now eleven) clusters as part of the Emergency Relief Coordinator’s Humanitarian Reform in 2005, with the principle objective of ensuring greater predictability and accountability through more effective leadership and coordination of each sector. The GCER is chaired by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and has 34 global partners from the humanitarian and development communities, including representatives of United Nations (UN) Agencies, the Red Cross Movement, and Non-Government Organizations (NGO). The GCER is supported by a Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), chaired by UNDP and consisting of expertise from ten institutional members drawn from UN agencies and NGOs (UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, FAO, OCHA, ActionAid, DRC, IOM, MSB and UNDP). The SAG provides the GCER with direction, develops and adjusts the strategic framework, priorities and work plan on the basis of in-country needs and priorities, and ensures the work of the GCER remains inclusive and representative.

Since the creation of the CWGER, there has been a much greater acceptance and integration of principles of early recovery across all sectors of humanitarian response: “Disaster response and early recovery programming worldwide is now more than 77 million people”. However, despite considerable progress made since 2005, there is still a way to go to establish a consistent

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1 Eg Buchanan-Smith and Maxwell, Linking Relief and Development: An Introduction and Overview, http://www.eldis.org/fulltext/LinkingReliefandDevelopment.pdf
4 Implementing Early Recovery, IASC background document, 15 July 2013, endorsed by the IASC Principals
5 IFRC Secretary General Report to the General Assembly 2013
understanding of it, and achieve real buy-in and systematic adoption of the concept across the humanitarian community. It is hoped that this revised guidance will catalyse significant progress on that goal.

**Objectives and Audience of the revised Guidance on Early Recovery**

This revised Guidance Note on Early Recovery reflects progress in wider humanitarian thinking and policy since 2008 across the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), catalysed since 2010 through the Transformative Agenda process with associated revision of the protocols and tools guiding the international response process. This revised Guidance Note reflects agreements within the IASC and is grounded in experience of the most effective ways of implementing Early Recovery across all sectors of emergency response.

Drawing on more than 55 consultations with inter-agency actors, the revised Guidance Note on Early Recovery aims to provide clear and accessible guidelines to promote and enable more systematic and strategic integration of Early Recovery across all sectors of international humanitarian response. Additional resources, including case study examples and technical notes on integrating ER across different sectors developed by partners and other global clusters, is provided on the [www.earlyrecovery.info](http://www.earlyrecovery.info) website. These web-based resources will be updated and added to as new resources become available, ensuring that the guidance remains current.

The target audience for the revised Guidance is:

- The international humanitarian community:
  - Agencies engaged in humanitarian response
  - International humanitarian actors in emergency settings, especially Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs), Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs), clusters and implementing partners
  - Early Recovery Advisors (ERAs) and Cluster Coordinators deployed to the field
- United Nations Country Teams (UNCT)
- National governments
- Development actors
- Donors

**What the revised Guidance provides**

1. The next section aims to clarify ‘what’ Early Recovery is in the light of recent agreements and in the context of current priorities for humanitarian research;
2. Section 3 examines the Early Recovery ‘enablers’ (the ‘Who’ and ‘What’) that facilitate it;
3. Section 4 looks at the Early Recovery context, its key issues and current debates;
4. Section 5 identifies the key elements of implementing Early Recovery (the ‘How’) with reference to recently revised humanitarian tools and processes;
5. Brief examples of Early Recovery experience are included throughout this revised guidance, with more detailed case studies and lessons learned on the associated resource page of the CWGER website: [www.earlyrecovery.info](http://www.earlyrecovery.info).

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6 Including members of the GCER Strategic Advisory Group, other UN partners (including cluster lead agencies), NGO consortia, Global Cluster coordinators and Early Recovery Advisors.

7 An HCT is composed of organisations that undertake humanitarian action in-country and that commit to participate in coordination arrangements. Its objective is to ensure that activities are coordinated, that humanitarian action in-country is principled, timely, effective and efficient, and that it contributes to longer-term recovery. The overall purpose is to alleviate human suffering and protect the lives, livelihoods and dignity of populations in need. The HCT is ultimately accountable to the populations in need.

8 For the purpose of this Guidance which is relevant for all emergency responses, the term ‘cluster’ is used to mean international (co-)led coordination mechanism for emergency response. In some settings, where clusters are not activated, there may be other coordination mechanisms in place. The process is fundamentally the same for these other mechanisms.
This Guidance is not intended as a step-by-step manual on how to develop and implement Early Recovery projects or on how to coordinate a cluster. More information on projects and the cluster can be found in agency training and cluster coordination manuals\(^9\).

II UNDERSTANDING EARLY RECOVERY

Early Recovery is an integrated, inclusive and coordinated approach to gradually turn the dividends of humanitarian action into sustainable crisis recovery, resilience building and development opportunities. Using an early recovery approach within humanitarian operations is crucial to the first efforts of a community to recover and build their resilience. It eventually serves as a basis for an effective ‘exit strategy’ for humanitarian actors and contributes to ‘durable solutions’ by establishing the base on which nationally-led development occurs after a crisis.

*Implementing Early Recovery, IASC, July 2012*

What is Early Recovery?

Early Recovery is both an approach to humanitarian response which, through enhanced coordination, focuses on strengthening resilience, re-building or strengthening capacity, and contributing to solving rather than exacerbating long standing problems which have contributed to a crisis; and also a set of specific programmatic actions to help people to move from dependence on humanitarian relief towards development. Early Recovery is never just a ‘phase’. It is a multidimensional process of recovery that begins in the early days of a humanitarian response.

An Early Recovery approach means focusing on local ownership and strengthening capacities; basing interventions on a thorough understanding of the context to address root causes and vulnerabilities as well as immediate results of crisis; reducing risk, promoting equality and preventing discrimination through adherence to development principles that seek to build on humanitarian programmes and catalyse sustainable development opportunities. It aims to generate self-sustaining, nationally-owned, resilient processes for post crisis recovery and to put in place preparedness measures to mitigate the impact of future crises.

Early Recovery should be approached in a coherent and comprehensive fashion to avoid isolated and fragmented responses and small standalone projects. This requires better coordination and

partnership within and outside the UN. While the other clusters have their distinctive roles on early recovery, the GCER is mandated to support the integration of the approach across all sectors. Early Recovery focuses on preparing the ground for the transition from relief to development from the start of a humanitarian response.

As part of UNDP’s early recovery initiative in Myanmar after Cyclone Nargis, vital infrastructure was restored in hundreds of communities, including this bridge in Ah Se Gyi Village. Photo credit: UNDP Myanmar.

Early Recovery:

- strengthens the effectiveness of overall humanitarian response by encouraging a ‘big picture’ approach and taking the opportunities for quick wins adding value by implementing immediate, short-term life-saving interventions in such a way as to address root causes;

- puts the people at the centre of the response, in line with international codes of conduct and agreements for international humanitarian response, and the recent commitments of international actors to greater Accountability to Affected Populations. Early Recovery supports the affected population’s own response strategies;¹⁰

- champions national authorities to engage in, own, and where possible lead, humanitarian and recovery programmes as soon as possible after a crisis. Where national or local authorities do not have capacity to lead coordination/response, Early Recovery prepares the ground for an

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¹⁰ By the time international actors are on the ground, many local people have made their recovery choices and are getting on with them.
An effective exit strategy for international humanitarian actors as early as national actors are able to take the lead (with appropriate international support);

- builds directly on preparedness by working with and through national systems and actors. Adopting an Early Recovery approach to the whole response ensures that this capacity continues to be strengthened throughout the response thereby turning a potential ‘disaster’ into a springboard for strengthened resilience to subsequent crises;

- contributes to prevention of future crises, or mitigation of their impacts together with other mechanisms for risk reduction, and supporting durable solutions by establishing/strengthening the base on which nationally-led development occurs post-crisis. Early Recovery provides an opportunity to integrate disaster risk management and risk reduction in the recovery programming immediately after a crisis, at time when these issues typically have a high profile and there is the political will to address them;

- shortens the timespan of emergency responses, avoids the subsequent loss in development and peacebuilding gains and jump-starts the fostering of social cohesion (including through the reduction of inequalities) and restoration of livelihoods, when done effectively;

Fig. 1. Value Added of Early Recovery Approach/Programming

(Taken from UNICEF training on Early Recovery)

avoids the institutionalization of emergencies with a potential protracted state of dependency. Where this is already a reality, Early Recovery reduces peoples’ dependency on relief\(^{11}\) by restoring hope and capacities that affected communities need to rebuild the different areas of their lives and environment in a sustainable way;

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\(^{11}\) GHD objective 1: The objectives of humanitarian action are to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during and in the aftermath of man-made crises and natural disasters, as well as to prevent and strengthen preparedness for the occurrence of such situations...This objective provides an ‘ethical dimension’ to adopting an Early Recovery approach versus solely implementing immediate life-saving response.
✓ augments relief, framing it in a longer-term vision consistent with national development priorities smoothing any transition to development programming;

In Pakistan, the level of enrolment in primary school prior to the 2010, 2011, 2012 floods in areas from which people were displaced, was approximately 45%. As part of the emergency response, many children had their births registered for the first time, entitling them to ID cards and associated services including education. All Temporary Learning Centres were registered by the government as schools, and every student was given an official student number entitling them to a place in the education system when they return home (as far as the education system exists). The services provided during displacement built the demand for education, with levels of enrolment in primary school increasing from 45% to approximately 85%. The greater demand for education which started during displacement has been reflected in a higher take-up of school places in the home areas of returnees. Education Cluster (UNICEF)

✓ supports the concept of ‘Building Back Better’ by creating a longer term demand for more or better services, or by informing affected people of their rights;
✓ Can undertake specific, time critical, programmes that link immediate relief with longer-term development and resilience.
Guiding Principles for Early Recovery

1. Ensure **national ownership** of the Early Recovery process through full engagement (to the extent possible and appropriate) of national and local authorities in the planning, execution, and monitoring of recovery actions.

2. **Use and promote participatory practices** to identify needs, build capacities for empowering communities and create the foundations for sustained and meaningful participation throughout all phases of the response.

3. **Conduct initial assessments of needs and capacity** to ensure that emergency response builds on existing mechanisms and capacities and does not set up parallel systems.

4. Ground interventions in a **thorough understanding of the context** based on the findings of risk and vulnerability assessments and conflict analysis. Building resilience requires that emergency response addresses root causes as well as immediate needs.

5. **Do no harm** through the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of emergency response. External assistance is never neutral, and becomes part of the context in which it is delivered. It can therefore reinforce or start to address inequalities which contributed to, or can exacerbate the crisis.

6. Include **risk reduction and conflict prevention** measures in programming.

7. **Promote equality and develop local capacities to prevent discrimination of any kind** including gender, ethnicity, age, language, religion, politics, national or social origin, disability, property, birth or other status. Early Recovery programming should identify and address the main patterns of discrimination, inequality and exclusion resulting from or contributing to violent conflict.

8. **Promote gender equality** based on a thorough understanding of women’s and men’s, boys’ and girls’ different needs and capacities. Women’s roles in transition and development are profoundly affected by how far the emergency assistance includes their needs in assessments, planning and programming, and builds on their considerable expertise and strengths for recovery.


10. **Maximize synergies between different actors** at all levels where relevant.

11. **Strengthen accountability systems**, so that populations can hold governments, local authorities and humanitarian actors to account in the implementation of Early Recovery plans and programmes as well as find redress if they have a grievance or a legitimate claim which is unfulfilled.

12. **Build on and/or reorient ongoing development initiatives** to ensure development gains are not lost in a crisis, as they contribute to building resilience and capacity in affected communities. As a minimum, review ongoing initiatives to ensure they do not contribute to the further accumulation of vulnerability.
### III EARLY RECOVERY ENABLERS

**Advisory Support**

Strong and informed leadership on the nature and value of integrating Early Recovery throughout the response (across all sectors and at all stages of the response) is probably the single most important factor in its prioritization. The GCER can provide advisory support to the Humanitarian Coordinator, and thereby the humanitarian community, through the deployment of an Early Recovery Advisor (ERA).

ERAs provide high quality expertise on how to integrate early recovery into a humanitarian response to ensure that the dividends of humanitarian work are sustained, and contribute to longer term recovery and development. ERAs work with all humanitarian actors across the spectrum of clusters to develop a common understanding of the ‘big picture’, to encourage them to take into account longer term objectives in their coordinated response.

Heads of Agencies (HoA) have also a prominent role in ensuring that their staff understand the nature and importance of adopting an Early Recovery approach.

**Coordination**

Early Recovery coordination seeks to improve the humanitarian response by generating a decision-making process that is inclusive, transparent, consultative, guided by objectives, and evidence-based. A key aim is to engage operational actors and partners in the planning process in a manner that enables them to influence the direction of the response, and to negotiate priorities and resources in a rational and cooperative manner.

The GCER is responsible for supporting the coordination of early recovery activities through cluster coordination. This function is activated in countries where specific early recovery needs are not covered by the existing (or activated) clusters – for example, the activation of a “Debris Management” cluster following an earthquake. It is also an issue which is critical to permit communities to start the reconstruction and rehabilitation process. The HCT will decide upon the need for such a cluster and decide an appropriate name to reflect the thematic issue it covers. Previous examples are the “Return, Reintegration, and Recovery” Cluster (RRR Cluster), dealing with displacement solutions in Sudan, and the “Community Restoration” Cluster in Pakistan.

Where such a cluster is established the GCER is responsible for providing guidance and resources for cluster coordination, including information management.

**Programming**

Early Recovery programming enables plans and strategies to be translated into concrete actions that support affected populations to regain their way of life, assets and capabilities with enhanced resilience to future disasters. It builds on people’s spontaneous efforts to cope, recover and rebuild after a disaster.

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12 For more details on Early Recovery Roles and Responsibilities, see Annex 3
13 See the IASC Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at the Country Level. For more details on Coordination, see section V, under ‘Implementing Early Recovery’
Early Recovery programmes encompass specific interventions to help people move from dependence on humanitarian relief towards sustainable development. They usually start in the emergency phase, are the key element in the stabilization or consolidation phase in post-conflict settings, and wind down as national institutions take over the direction and guidance of development programming.

Typically (but not exclusively), Early Recovery programmes address issues of livelihoods, governance and restoration of basic services and infrastructure. They are implemented by different agencies and coordinated through different clusters.

**Fig. 2. Early Recovery - type programmes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livelihoods</th>
<th>Basic Infrastructure repairs and rehabilitation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Agricultural and non-agricultural</td>
<td>- Waste management</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Economic recovery</td>
<td>- Utility systems (water, electricity)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Government employment</td>
<td>- Roads, bridges, schools, clinics</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Cash and vouchers for seeds, fertilizer, hand</td>
<td>- Local government buildings</td>
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<tr>
<td>tools, community infrastructure rehabilitation</td>
<td>- Community buildings: prisons, markets</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Rehabilitation of productive assets (e.g.</td>
<td>- Mine awareness and clearance</td>
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<td>fishing boats, livestock)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governance</th>
<th>Capacity-Building</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Rule of Law</td>
<td>Investing in people:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Peace and Reconciliation</td>
<td>- Farmers, health professionals, midwives,</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Community Stability</td>
<td>Community health workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Social Cohesion</td>
<td>- Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Local governance</td>
<td>- Government services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Civil Society</td>
<td>- Small and medium enterprises</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Civil Society</td>
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</table>

**Operational actors, partnerships and networks**

Early recovery requires the participation of all actors involved in supporting affected populations during the humanitarian phase to ensure its integration into all approaches, strategies and activities. Key partners include: the Humanitarian Country Team (including NGOs), the United Nations Country Team, International Financing Institutions (IFIs), government authorities at all levels, national NGOs and civil society. Ultimately the Humanitarian Coordinator is responsible and accountable for ensuring the humanitarian action have sustainable effects so that conflict and/or disaster affected populations receive the kind of support that will measurably improve their longer-term perspectives for recovery.

At the global level the GCER works through its networks to promote an understanding of early recovery and ensure that early recovery perspectives are incorporated into the directives, guidance, tools, decisions and training modules of global Clusters and IASC products. At local level, the Clusters are key entry points to ensure early recovery integration and coherence. The HC – and where deployed, an ERA – will leverage humanitarian actors to incorporate into needs assessments, strategic plans and programmes both a perspective and plan of action that promote individual, household, community and national abilities to recover faster and more sustainably. Emphasis is also on working across Clusters, which simultaneously improve inter-cluster coordination and avoid creating ‘Cluster silos’.

Active engagement with donors can demonstrate that contributing to funds and programmes that have strong early recovery elements will ultimately benefit from a greater return on their investment in the longer term and also shorten the humanitarian phase.

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14 For more examples of Early Recovery programming by various agencies, see Annex 1.
Information Management

Quality information management is a priority for effective early recovery coordination and programming at all stages of the response. Evidence gathered from secondary or primary sources, and used or communicated effectively, can:

- demonstrate the need for early recovery interventions and what capacity already exists;
- provide baselines for early recovery against which progress is measured;
- inform decision making on whether a separate cluster should be activated for specific early recovery activities or whether they can be addressed through existing coordination mechanisms;
- inform the humanitarian programme cycle, strategic planning, advocacy, resource mobilisation products, identifying gaps both for mainstreaming early recovery across all sectors and to identify a need for specific early recovery projects;
- ensure that interventions remain relevant and are being implemented in the most appropriate way;
- demonstrate the impact of Early Recovery across the humanitarian response and through specific interventions to raise awareness of its added value, and to demonstrate the contribution to resilience building.

Sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) is a pre-requisite to understanding the nature of differences between men and women’s, boys’ and girls’ needs and capacities, so that appropriate responses can be designed which build on coping mechanisms particularly from the elderly and women.

Emergency responses provide opportunities to upgrade/introduce national systems for data gathering and for monitoring progress against interventions, introducing good practice with protection of data guaranteeing rights and safety of individuals and populations. The methods used to collect, store and use data should align with good early recovery practice, to contribute to enhanced national IM systems and practices.

Ideally, the activation of an L-3 emergency requires the immediate deployment of an Early Recovery team comprising an ERA, a Cluster Coordinator (when activated) and an Information Management Officer (IMO) as an integral part of the Inter-Agency Rapid Response Mechanism (IARRM). A dedicated IMO would support the cluster coordinator, particularly, but not limited to, preparing early recovery mapping, analysing data from needs assessments and response, and preparing data analyses for reports such as the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) or the Periodic Monitoring Report (PMR). An IMO in support to an ERA would be an asset in producing information products that represent how the humanitarian response, generally, is integrating the early recovery approach.

Information Management Challenges

Given the critical importance of having reliable data with which to advocate for and inform Early Recovery programming, challenges to strong information management for Early Recovery needs to be addressed. The table below identifies some key challenges and suggests approaches to address them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Recovery is seen by some humanitarian actors as an ‘optional extra’ rather than inherent to a quality response. Donors often mention that life-saving is most critical and that Early Recovery can wait.</td>
<td>Monitoring the added value of Early Recovery approaches/programmes provides evidence with which to counter this view. Data on the contribution made to re-establishing livelihoods, social services etc speedily after the onset of the crisis can provide powerful evidence of its contribution to the start of recovery.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The inherent volume of work which emergency personnel are working under means that having to measure additional (Early Recovery) indicators mainstreamed throughout the clusters can seem an unnecessary additional burden.</td>
<td>Deploy an IMO to lessen the burden on overwhelmed personnel and take on the information challenge, get embedded in IM working groups etc. Choosing a few, key indicators which demonstrate contribution of the intervention to longer term recovery is key and reduces the likelihood of monitoring/Early Recovery fatigue. Mainstreaming ER indicators in other clusters is also key to measure and analyse results (a key role of the IMO) and ensure sustainability of results across all sectors.</td>
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Issues around prioritization of IM: collecting evidence and presenting it systematically may indeed demonstrate the value added of early recovery but it depends on having adequate capacity to perform these tasks, ie. people, skills and resources, requiring more funding. At the same time, donors expect to have evidence as a justification for granting funding for both programming and additional qualified staff. The issue is striking the balance between providing evidence with minimum additional resources.

Effective and systematic data collection, analysis and communication can best demonstrate the value added of Early Recovery, both to the response per se and to longer term achievement of goals for greater resilience (including preparedness), durable solutions and effective transitions. IM therefore needs to be prioritized at all stages of the response – and effective use made of communications tools (SitReps, sector reports, correspondence with donors) to ensure that Early Recovery remains at the front of agency and donor decision makers’ minds throughout the response.

IV THE HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT FOR EARLY RECOVERY

“Even in the best case scenario, years of humanitarian, transitional and development resources will be required to help South Sudan recover from this crisis. The crisis has dramatically eroded development gains, and restoring health and nutrition, rehabilitating communities, rebuilding homes, resuming livelihoods and re-establishing trust will take years. It is therefore imperative that resilience and early recovery be prioritized to prevent a complete catastrophe and keep fragile gains from being further undermined”. Neil Buhne, GCER Chair and Director, UNDP BCPR Geneva Liaison Office

Types of emergencies

Early Recovery approaches and programming are equally applicable to all levels and to all types of humanitarian crisis response, albeit with different emphases in different types of emergencies or contexts.

Every emergency response, whether in sudden and slow onset, protracted, disaster or conflict contexts, can be conducted in a way to promote national capacities rather than undermining them, even if the context means that working with the government may not be appropriate in all situations. For instance, building the capacity of non-state actors may be important in contexts where the government is not able to, or is focused on responding to affected communities’ needs.

Key issues and current debates

A number of the current debates around humanitarian action have particular relevance for Early Recovery:

1. **Transformative Agenda**

   In the light of accepted weaknesses and inefficiencies of the international humanitarian response in major emergencies during 2010 (Haiti earthquake and Pakistan flooding), the Emergency Relief Coordinator and IASC Principles agreed in 2011 on a set of concrete actions aimed at transforming the way in which the humanitarian community responds to emergencies. These actions focus on improving the timeliness and effectiveness of the collective response through stronger leadership, more effective coordination structures, and improved accountability for performance and to affected people.

   **Fig. 3.**

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15 See links to various documents explaining the Transformative Agenda in Annex 6
As well as catalysing a set of revised processes/tools for strategic planning and response to emergencies, the Transformative Agenda supports early recovery with:

- its aim of catalysing a more strategic approach to emergency response, minimizing the silo-effect of working in sectors and promoting a ‘whole of response’ perspective to the assessments and response plans which is aligned with the longer-term, holistic approach of early recovery;
- the emphasis on greater Accountability to Affected Populations which supports the systematic inclusion of local actors at all levels in assessments, decisions, coordination of the humanitarian response (as far as is appropriate), and in ensuring feedback mechanisms are integrated into strategies and project proposals. The greater transparency and responsibility to provide information to affected populations on procedures, processes and programme implementation and to seek the views of affected populations actively in decision making are all consistent with early recovery;
- its emphasis on, and support for, empowered leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC). Among the HC’s responsibilities is to ensure the integration of early recovery across the response. This means, among other things, reflecting early recovery priorities and approaches as well as programming in strategic plans.

2. Resilience
There is widespread agreement on the need to build resilience of individuals, communities and institutions affected by crises through both development and humanitarian programming; however, there remains divergence on the definition and scope. Drawing on a number of definitions16, strengthened resilience can be described as the ability of households, communities and systems to anticipate, withstand, adapt to, and recover in the aftermath of shocks, stresses and threats (e.g. natural disasters, epidemics, socio-economic instability, conflict) in ways that support economic and social development and do not deepen vulnerability.

Resilience is not a programmatic activity but the result of a process. Early recovery is a critical step and building block in reaching this objective. Building resilience in a humanitarian context includes

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16 Those of UNDP, UNICEF and the IASC
supporting existing individual, household, community and systemic capacities, tackling issues related to preparedness and prevention, security, governance, local development, risk management and dealing with humanitarian crises in such a way as to stabilize situations as quickly as possible through provision of life-saving and time-critical assistance. Resilience is particularly important as a focus for humanitarian and development programming in contexts of recurrent, complex and dynamic shocks. Resilience is built before, during and after crises.

Early recovery approaches and interventions are the foundation of building resilience during humanitarian response. For both programming for stronger resilience and Early Recovery:

- interventions need to be based on assessments and ongoing (trend) analyses, benefit from robust management for results, depend on multi-partner, multi-sectoral coordination and cooperation to achieve the desired objectives and require a ‘big picture’ (i.e. not project based);
- a strong emphasis is given to national engagement/partnership at all levels, developing programming in the light of conflict, gender, and disaster risk analysis including natural resource management and with conflict and disaster sensitive approaches as well as gender specific elements, and contextualize interventions to tackle underlying and structural causes of recurrent and continuous crises rather than solely addressing immediate results;
- Building resilience includes addressing individual, local and national response preparedness, conducting humanitarian response in a way which harnesses and strengthens local capacities for crisis management and response, and effective transition back to national leadership which necessitates a multi-sector, multi-partner strategy and response. Early recovery contributes to this process during emergency response;
- Disaster risk reduction and management is one focus of establishing a foundation for longer term recovery (i.e. Early Recovery) and is inherent to building resilience;
- Developing interventions through an early recovery lens and with a focus of building resilience is relevant to all emergency settings and at all levels of engagement.

3. Preparedness

“The ability of humanitarian organizations to respond in the immediate aftermath of a humanitarian emergency is frequently hampered by several factors, the requirement to assess needs, mobilise funds, deploy staff, and establish supply pipelines in order to deliver at scale. This can result in an initial humanitarian assistance gap. When humanitarian relief is delivered in a timely manner, and critical needs are addressed swiftly, communities are better placed to focus on recovering quickly from the initial shock. As a consequence, communities can emerge faster from crisis – an essential condition for longer term resilience, especially for communities facing recurring crisis. [Emergency response preparedness] is designed to place an operational focus on the way humanitarian actors prepare to meet the needs of people affected by natural hazards and conflict, including consideration of specific needs of vulnerable population, such as women and children. Experience confirms that effective humanitarian response at the onset of a crisis is heavily influenced by the level of preparedness and planning of responding agencies/organizations, as well as the capacities and resources available to them. IASC Guidance Module for the implementation of Emergency Response Preparedness (Beta version- June 2014)

Inadequate preparedness is widely recognized as a major factor in deepening the severity of humanitarian need and thereby increasing the cost of emergency response. With the increase in the numbers of serious emergency events over the past few years, as well as the current forecasting that humanitarian emergencies will increase in scale in the future, there is an urgent need for better preparedness as part of effective humanitarian response. Early recovery builds on and contributes to strengthened preparedness:

- The increased emphasis on preparedness provides an immediate imperative for development actors (leading preparedness) and humanitarian actors (leading the emergency response) to communicate and work together;
- Preparedness involves long term (building national systems for emergency preparedness and response) and shorter term activities (scenario/contingency/emergency response planning by
International Non-Government Organizations (INGO) and national actors at all levels. Both support the Early Recovery emphasis of building on and strengthening existing local systems capacities;

- Effective preparedness can also inform early recovery planning by providing information on existing national assets and their levels of sophistication, identifying those which can provide coordination/leadership or emergency response and which need building;
- Conversely, if early recovery is well integrated through an emergency response, the levels of preparedness (of both long and short term activities above) will be stronger when the development actors again take the lead supporting national actors, through the knowledge and other capacity gains made through systematic engagement of national actors in the response.

4. Post-Crisis Transition

“For the UN, transition implies a shift away from a strictly humanitarian response to an approach now led by national actors that includes planning and implementation of recovery initiatives, reconciliation and peace consolidation. During transition, the aim of the UN System should therefore be to assist national authorities to initiate immediate priority crisis resolution and recovery actions, and to lay the groundwork, including the capacity, systems and relationships needed to embark on a longer-term development path.” UNDG/ECHA Guidance Note on Funding for Transition, December 2009

Post-crisis transition is characterized by:

- a longer term process that should reflect context specific peace-building and state-building as well as a need to ‘build back better’ after natural disaster crises;
- a non-linear process that presents a paradox between the need to provide rapid peace dividends and lifesaving activities while supporting development of sustainable state structures. The cyclical process of some natural disasters (whether sudden or slow onset) may reflect these non-linear processes;
- shared space between humanitarian and development (and often security/peacekeeping) actors, as countries might experience humanitarian emergencies, longer term development/investment programmes and peacekeeping efforts simultaneously;
- particular challenges in terms of insecurity and capacity deficits; requires better coordination to avoid fragmentation of approaches and instruments.

Adopting an Early recovery perspective contributes to transitional programming with the shared objectives of taking a longer-term view, working across humanitarian-development boundaries and building a more stable foundation for longer term development.

5. Durable Solutions for Displaced People

At the country level: a) the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator will lead the development of a Strategy for Durable Solutions for Displaced People, determining the most appropriate approach based on the Framework and in consultation with national authorities and partners; b) where present and appropriate, the inter-cluster group working on Early Recovery, together with the Protection Cluster, will be the coordination mechanism for durable solutions; and c) UNDP and UNHCR, in their capacities as global cluster lead agencies for Early Recovery and Protection, will provide necessary technical expertise to the RC through existing resources or surge capacity to support the development of the Strategy for Durable Solutions.

At the global level, the Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER), working with the Global Protection Cluster (GPC), will: a) support the coordination mechanisms for durable solutions established at country-level; b) ensure that Early Recovery advisors deployed to support in-country crises response have the necessary expertise on durable solutions; c) develop guidance for the development of Durable Solutions Strategies; and d) act as a repository for the Strategies and lessons learned, including on the most effective models of in-country coordination. Decision of the Secretary-General, Policy Committee (4th Oct 2011)
In accordance with the UN Secretary-General’s decision, the GCER together with the Global Protection Cluster support the development at country level by the HC/RC, with support from UNDP and UNHCR, in developing durable solutions for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and for returning refugees. With this decision, the Secretary-General is calling humanitarian coordination mechanisms (clusters) to work towards longer term solutions. This requires humanitarian, human rights, development and peacebuilding actors to work together to implement a coherent and comprehensive response needed for sustainable solutions to displacement.

The issue of durable solutions to displacement has relevance beyond IDPs and refugees, being applicable to all those affected by displacement (host communities, communities in areas of return and resettlement) and therefore supports taking an Early Recovery approach to programmatic solutions for IDPs and (actual or potentially) returning refugees during humanitarian response.

Programmatic solutions for the displaced include justice, rule of law, livelihoods, youth employment, good governance programmes, all of which are Early Recovery programmatic interventions.

Effective programming for solutions for the displaced involve multi-sector, integrated and coordinated programming which build national capacities and deal with root issues of the displacement if they are to support sustainable progress. Critically, solutions for displaced people involve keeping them informed and providing channels for them to have a voice as part of the solution.

In line with the Secretary-General’s decision on Durable Solutions, Early Recovery Advisors, deployed to support HCs with the integration of Early Recovery in the humanitarian response, can also advise on development of strategies for displaced people in the emergency setting.

6. Rights up Front and the Centrality of Protection

Building on the recognised need for an early response to human rights violations, the UN Secretary General initiated a process culminating in the ‘Rights Up Front Plan of Action’. The Plan aims to improve UN action in safeguarding human rights around the world in all phases of the humanitarian cycle and in development. While it is framed in terms of the protection of human rights, it also includes the task of protection of civilians, putting the imperative to protect people, wherever they may be, at the heart of UN strategies and operational activities, including where our [UN] presence is predominantly anchored in the development architecture. The UN Secretariat, Funds and Programmes are to ensure that the UN System, both on the ground and at HQ, is appropriately prepared – early on – to deal with evolving crisis situations through a rights-centred approach.

In December 2013, the IASC Principals committed to ensuring the centrality of protection in humanitarian action, including in the role of Resident Coordinators, Humanitarian Coordinators, Humanitarian Country Teams and Clusters. The Centrality of Protection commitment is part of a series of measures that will be adopted by the IASC to ensure more effective protection of people in humanitarian crises. Protection must be integrated into all early recovery plans and interventions.

7. Continuum/Contiguum

The debate around how to implement linking relief, rehabilitation and development saw the emergence of two explanatory theories: continuum and contiguum. Early discussions generally accepted that emergencies moved through a linear process in which relief, rehabilitation and development programming followed each other (a ‘continuum’). Latterly, it has been recognized that the reality of emergency responses, particularly conflict related emergencies, is one of complexity with a need for non-linear and simultaneous humanitarian, recovery, development interventions to respond to the different needs of the emergency (‘contiguum’). For example, in protracted crises like in Darfur, Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia, agencies are involved in humanitarian, recovery

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18 A GCER Technical Working Group is currently developing guidance on developing these strategies for displaced persons.
and development programming in different parts of the country, and sometimes in the same areas, depending on the current state of the crisis.

Programming with an early recovery approach during the periods of humanitarian response ensures that all interventions focus on longer term recovery and development goals, contributing to greater stability, recovery and resilience.

8. **Cross-cutting issues and People in the Middle**

Effective early recovery programming currently includes integration of cross-cutting issues – at a minimum: age, gender and diversity (AGD); HIV/AIDs, environment (i.e. avoiding any negative impact on the environment or aggravating conflict over natural resource, but also using opportunities to improve the sustainable use of resources), accountability to affected populations (AAP), protection, preparedness and risk reduction - during the design and implementation of programmes. A human rights based approach must guide every programme’s goals.

Recognising that cross-cutting issues in fact refer to people’s diversity, the term is becoming gradually replaced by the concept of ‘People in the Middle’. This concept holds that viewing beneficiary populations through different lenses allows for a detailed picture of the components that make up that population. They include gender, age and other diversity aspects such as indigenous peoples, people who are chronically ill and the disabled - as well as people-centred issues such as Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP). The concept places the issues raised by each of these lenses as the basis on which to develop humanitarian assistance plans to ensure that those most at risk are considered at the start of the intervention. Plans and programmes are designed around meeting their needs rather than simply bolted onto the end as ‘cross-cutting issues’. It is important to note that not all needs may be met, but then a decision can be made on a case-by-case basis, on which should be included, based on a considered and informed reflection. Early recovery’s foundation is putting ‘people in the middle’ of all its strategies, activities and monitoring.

9. **The Humanitarian Programme Cycle**

The recently developed Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) outlines the process by which all emergencies will be responded to by international actors, operationalizing the Transformative Agenda19. It creates a single strategic process that redefines the way in which international humanitarian actors engage - with each other, with national and local authorities, and with people affected by crises through the entire cycle of inter-agency response. Its aim is for humanitarian assistance to be more strategic and to achieve more effective, efficient, predictable and transparent outcomes in a way which contributes to longer-term solutions. The HPC highlights the need to build on preparedness, including integrating emergency planning in development programming; for a response-wide, strategic framework to guide the international response; the importance of working with and listening to national and local authorities, local NGOs and affected people as well as to organizations already in-country; and the importance of ongoing monitoring with associated adjustments during the response. All of these elements are aligned with early recovery programming.

The HPC recognizes early recovery as a vital element of any effective humanitarian response, and that planning for it should start when the crisis begins. For humanitarian organizations, early recovery can provide a path to durable solutions, and an exit strategy. For both reasons, development programmes that promote sustainable long-term solutions should be integrated into the HPC and explicitly referenced in humanitarian strategies and approaches.

The key phases of the HPC apply to all crises. These phases are preparedness, needs assessment and analysis, strategic planning, monitoring, and operational peer review and evaluation. Implementation covers the operationalization of all these phases.

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19 Reference to Guidance on the Transformative Agenda and other TA links can be found in Annex 6
Figs. 4 and 5 depict the HPC and the phases in the cycle of Early Recovery action:
Fig. 4. The Humanitarian Programme Cycle for both sudden onset and protracted crises
Fig. 5. Key ER activities/responsibilities throughout the HPC EMERGENCY RESPONSE and PREPAREDNESS

**FIRST 30 DAYS**

**Day 0**

**EMERGENCY STARTS**

3. ERA deployed to support HC

5-7. PRELIMINARY RESPONSE PLAN

14. MIRA REPORT

**FIRST 90 DAYS**

**IMPLEMENTATION**

30. STRATEGIC RESPONSE PLAN

**90 days**

**PERIODIC MONITORING REPORT**

**6 Months**

**HUMANITARIAN NEEDS OVERVIEW**

**9 Months**

**INTER AGENCY HUMANITARIAN EVALUATION**

**LONGER TERM**

Capacity mapping of all national response capacities to inform the PSD and subsequent response strategies (Lead: RC/HC & UNCT/HCT including UNDP CO)

Situation analysis incorporates capacity mapping results; recognize local ownership and engagement in response from the start; identify key response priorities including for building back better/ resilience. Incorporate ER-specific activities in other clusters /sectors. Decide whether to activate a separate ER-related cluster.

PRP: As the first document operationalizing the response priorities, the PRP highlights standalone ER activities as well as reflecting ER elements of other sector response. (Lead: HC/HCT supported by ERA or UNDP Rep in HCT/UNCT).

MIRA and other initial assessments – include ER questions/data collection. (Lead: ERA for HC or UNDP CO if no ERA deployed)

SRP: Details of ER activities and approach reflected across all clusters and other ER-related cluster if activated, together with budgets. Objectives for building back better/strengthened resilience should be included. Indicators will measure progress on ER objectives across all sectors. (Lead: HC with ERA/ER or cluster CLA)

HC (with ERA support) functions as catalyst for cross-sector ER integration; advocate for incorporation of ER-related approaches/activities in other clusters; communication facilitation between development and humanitarian actors. (Lead: HC/ERA, all cluster/ sectors/HoA) Separate ER interventions implemented as appropriate. (Lead: CLA of different clusters and/or separate ER-related cluster)

Response monitoring will include progress on ER in all sectors in line with SRP objectives, including contribution to resilience building, durable solutions, and stabilization as contextually appropriate. (Lead: HC/RC with national and international humanitarian partners; ERA support for ER)

If ERA still in place, support to clusters in operationalizing transition to nationally led coordination as appropriate. Support if needed for development actors to revise development plans (e.g. UNDAF) in light of PDNA/PCNA, or outcomes of the recovery which necessitate changed objectives. (Lead: RC/HC with ERA)
V IMPLEMENTING EARLY RECOVERY

Early recovery is implemented both vertically, in a phased manner, with its concepts, strategies and funding requirements mirroring the different phases of the HPC\(^20\), and horizontally, by ensuring the integration of an Early Recovery approach through all sectors’ response interventions.

Integrating Early Recovery across the whole response

While systematic integration of early recovery across all emergency responses is still a way off, early recovery is already incorporated by programmatic clusters to a greater extent than it used to be\(^21\). HCs have the lead responsibility for ensuring early recovery issues are adequately integrated through the HPC at country level in cooperation with national actors.

Effective integration of early recovery throughout the response requires that, as far as is possible and appropriate in each crisis setting, each sector and cluster designs their response with a view to longer term recovery while also addressing immediate, life-saving needs. Critically, this involves building on and supporting local and national response capacities, including preparedness. Capacity mapping developed as part of preparedness (and included in Contingency Response Plans), or collated from secondary sources and including actors already in-country, is an important initial step of the response, and informs situation analysis. One of the purposes of a situation analysis is to initiate a collective and coordinated process of response, recognizing that local ownership and engagement from the start are crucial to the quality of the response and the quality of coordination and decisions. A collective situation analysis informs subsequent steps of the HPC, notably the joint rapid needs assessment and primary data collection which need to include an assessment of early recovery needs. It is vital to have strong advocacy for early recovery across the response at the earliest phase of the HPC, to inform situational analysis and subsequent planning.

Before the findings of the Multi-Cluster Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) are available, the Preliminary Response Plan (PRP) establish the preliminary objectives for the response and set the initial planning framework for response operations and for donor decision making. The PRP also provides the basis for inter-sectoral and inter-cluster programming and sets the direction of the Strategic Response Plan (SRP) which will be completed in both large-scale, sudden-onset crises and in slow onset or protracted ones. It is important that programming takes its direction from the overall strategic priorities of the response and is not a menu of projects cobbled together. All decisions need to reflect sectors/clusters working together towards the strategic priorities. It is therefore important that early recovery needs and objectives are reflected in the PRP and, in more detail, in the SRP.

Early recovery interventions can be implemented as part of the response of different sectors and of a separate cluster. Each sector/cluster and the relevant Cluster Lead Agency take the lead on integrating early recovery within their sector – designing their response in line with early recovery approaches and principles. Annex 1 provides examples of interventions for the different sectors which integrate an early recovery approach.

During 2011, in Turkana district, Kenya, Oxfam implemented activities which stimulated the local market as well as responding to critical levels of global acute malnutrition in the district. Several ‘recognized traders’ were identified in villages of Kalokol who sold fish to communities in exchange for vouchers – an approach which supports the local fishing industry and provides a stimulus to the market, contributing to more sustainable recovery than food distributions. The use of fish as an alternative to the traditional lentils in the general food basket also improved the nutritional value of the food basket. Source: Oxfam.

UNICEF Afghanistan generated considerable added value for a small additional investment by integrating a capacity building element into their emergency education response. UNICEF had constructed a warehouse to store kits for their Back to School campaign. By purchasing a small number of computers and providing training on warehouse management, the value of the emergency

\(^{20}\) For the full set of activities and criteria for each phase, see Annex 5
\(^{21}\) For some sectors, (notably education, food security, health, protection and some elements of the shelter response), there is inherently close alignment between their own emergency response and an Early Recovery approach.
response was augmented and skills which are widely applicable over the long term transferred to Afghans, for relatively little additional funding. Source: UNICEF.

Early Recovery Coordination

The coordination of Early Recovery activities in-country happens in two ways:

(a) For all emergencies the primary mechanism for the coordination of Early Recovery is through existing inter-cluster coordination mechanisms;

(b) In settings where specific Early Recovery needs are not being met within existing coordination mechanisms, the HCT may decide to create a coordination body, e.g. an additional cluster or sector working group to meet these needs, the name of which is determined by the issues to be addressed. The Cluster Lead Agency is selected according to the nature of the cluster or working group activities.

Fig. 6. illustrates how early recovery is integrated into Inter-Cluster Coordination with links to national institutions

Existing inter-cluster mechanisms

In all emergency responses, Early Recovery is integrated into the work of all coordination mechanisms/clusters, with the existing inter-cluster platform being the primary mechanism for its coordination22. Creating a new coordination body for early recovery is never advised. It is important that national actors are involved in the leadership of the coordination mechanism wherever possible.

22 In inter-cluster coordination meetings, incorporation of early recovery approaches across different sectors can be a regular agenda item.
As for all sectors, a key function of the inter-cluster coordination is to maximize synergies among different actors through efficient coordination of stakeholders in the early recovery process through sharing information and promoting integration to avoid duplication and gaps, optimizing the resources available for sustainable recovery.

On behalf of the HC, the ERA can provide support to the inter-cluster coordination on early recovery, and to individual sectors/clusters (as capacity permits). Given their multi-sectoral perspective, ERAs can play a catalytic role in bringing different actors together as appropriate to develop multi-sectoral early recovery interventions. (See Annex 4 for the different Early Recovery roles and functions)

Additional Early Recovery related cluster

In line with the IASC Cluster Coordination Reference Module, the HC and HCT may decide if and when an additional coordination body (cluster) needs to be created in a given setting to meet specific early recovery needs which are not being addressed within existing coordination mechanisms. The HCT, in consultation with the UNDP as global Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) for Early Recovery, determines the name of this coordination arrangement according to the issue(s) being addressed\(^2\), and will designate the agency with the appropriate expertise, capacity and presence to lead it, whose role is confirmed by the Emergency Relief Coordinator during the cluster activation process. The local CLA is accountable for support to the work in-country in line with responsibilities of all CLA\(^2\), for providing (preferably dedicated) coordination capacity for the cluster, and for agreeing on a Cluster transition or de-activation strategy when transitioning to longer-term programming led by the government.

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As part of the response to the 2013/14 emergency in the Central African Republic, the HC and HCR decided that the historic ‘Early Recovery’ cluster should change its focus and name to respond to the specifics of the inter-ethnic violence fuelling the current displacement and instability. A Livelihoods and Community Stability Cluster was activated, co-led by UNDP and the INGO ACTED (Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development). The overarching objective of the Livelihoods and Community Stability Cluster is to support an effective response through a community focus on building resilience and reducing the risk of a resurgence of crisis through the restoration of capacity of affected households and community institutions. Specific objectives are: (i) contributing to the reduction of inter- and intra-community tensions; (ii) Supporting non-agricultural employment/livelihoods for young people and other conflict victims; (iii) reinforcing capacities and structures of local governance and (iv) facilitating consultation and coordination between national and international actors.

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Early Recovery Integrated Programming

Early Recovery interventions are coordinated programmatic activities, implemented in the immediate aftermath of a crisis, to help people move from humanitarian relief towards self-sustaining development and ensure that they are more resilient than before the crisis.

Early Recovery Programme characteristics

An early recovery programme should display some or all of the following features:

- Builds on emergency assistance programmes to ensure that their inputs become assets for longer term recovery and development.
- Addresses the underlying causes of the crisis.
- Builds the necessary foundation required for managing the recovery effort, for example, by rapid restoration of lost capacity at the local government level in the crisis affected area.
- Strengthens existing capacities of local authorities to manage/coordinate crises, for example, through training programmes on local governance responsibilities.

\(^2\) Eg Uganda: Governance Infrastructure and Livelihoods Cluster; Ivory Coast: Social Cohesion Cluster; Kyrgyzstan: Community Restoration Cluster; Sudan: Governance Infrastructure and Economic Recovery

Strengthens state capacities to respect, protect and fulfill the rights of the people and promotes legal, institutional, and policy changes that can have a quick impact on the performance of local authorities and communities – by filling resource, authority and responsibility gaps, for example.

Strengthens the immediate or basic capacities of communities to cope with the crisis, for example, through training of affected populations on construction techniques that would allow them to reduce the risk of further loss from disasters.

Focuses on activities that prepare for the return of displaced communities, for example, repair of minor infrastructure such as small feeder roads and bridges to permit access to markets and access to abandoned housing or farming plots abandoned as a result of the crisis.

Focuses on providing services for returning communities, such as water and sanitation, education, health, etc.

Supports local initiatives to revive livelihoods, through for example agricultural restoration.

Provides security, for example through mine action interventions, and confidence building for communities, such as policy dialogue with police, civil authorities, etc.

Pays attention to sustainability and equality, and includes communities in shaping and implementing activities.

Mainstreams peace-building and reconciliation activities, through for example, facilitation of dialogue among communities and reintegrating populations.

Links into local-level early recovery coordination mechanisms, which are supported by a strong interagency coordination mechanism for agencies supporting service provision at the local level, with a clear allocation of roles and responsibilities.

Utilizes inter-cluster coordination and interdependence of elements according to the partners’ mandates.

Using theories of change to plan early recovery pathways and longer-term development outcomes

Early Recovery is integrated into UNDP’s Strategic Plan for 2014-2017 which proposes: ‘Early recovery and rapid return to sustainable development pathways are achieved in post-conflict and post-disaster situations’ as one of its outcomes. Using a Theory of Change approach, the pathways to achieve this outcome in post-conflict situations lie in early recovery interventions such as enhancing security, access to basic services and the availability of employment and livelihoods opportunities. In theory, and following this pathway, if people can start rebuilding their lives and begin to reap an early ‘peace dividend’, this should stabilize conditions necessary for peace processes and vital governance reforms to take root. Risks inherent in achieving the objective include the very real challenges that are greatest at this early stage: degraded institutions, stunted local economies, fractured communities, increased violence against women, a small and weak civil society and private sector, insufficient human and financial resources. As evidence and experience show, failure to make progress on these issues

Example of Theory of Change – from early recovery to sustainable development

About 50% of WFP’s Kenya emergency programme addresses structural issues which have hindered long-term food security through food/cash for assets programmes. In Tharaka, a water catchment in a seasonal river bed was constructed as a ‘food for assets’ project. The sand dam filters impurities from the water and produces cleaner water. This is mainly used to support crop production which complements and reduces pressure on traditional reliance on livestock (whose condition and numbers have been significantly undermined by the prolonged drought. Excess produce is sold in local markets. The availability of water has reduced nomadic lifestyles which, in turn have reduced tensions and conflict over access of water and pasture for livestock.

Source: WFP

Theories of change are a planning tool. They describe possible pathways to development change based on experience and evidence. By so doing, theories of change help explain and clarify the logic and assumptions underlying the achievement of results over time. This allows governments, other stakeholders and evaluators to check if the argument makes sense and assess if progress is being made, as planned, or requires a change in approach. Theories of change are, therefore, a practical way of anchoring results-based management in the realities of development.
significantly increases the possibility of a relapse into conflict\textsuperscript{26}. Early recovery interventions that need longer-term work can help to reduce these risks, such as cash for work schemes to start rebuilding damaged community infrastructure, sensitizing households to the health benefits of hygiene, initiating small-scale community reconciliation and dialogue sessions to bring about longer-term security, etc.

The logic underlying UNDP’s proposed approach to results is based on three dimensions: first, the scope or coverage of assistance; second, the time line over which action takes place; and, third, the change in focus that occurs as conditions become more stable and prospects for sustainable development improve progressively.

**UNDP Signature Products**

UNDP has developed a series of Signature Products which provide practical guidance for the rapid design of short-term early recovery projects by UNDP Country Offices and their partners for immediate implementation in (post) crisis contexts in coordination with the other actors involved in a common early recovery approach. They address areas of need specific to the emergency setting which can pave the way to a faster transition to full recovery and development. These include:

- **Debris Management\textsuperscript{27}**
  
  Debris management projects directly support affected citizens to rebuild their communities, reflecting their own priorities and linking their engagement to recovery and development planning. New knowledge and skills are learned that empower them to expand their opportunities. Apart from quickly getting the community back on its feet, rapid recovery, including debris management projects, can make a contribution towards strengthening resilience.

- **Emergency Employment and Enterprise Recovery\textsuperscript{28}**
  
  These projects can help crisis affected people to develop or regain sustainable livelihood assets and contribute to the revival of the local economy. Short-term work created under these projects can provide rapid improvements to community infrastructure and services, enabling access to markets and social services while strengthening disaster preparedness.

- **Community Infrastructure Rehabilitation\textsuperscript{29}**
  
  These projects mobilize communities to help restore access to markets and essential services for the entire community. The process of rehabilitating infrastructure can create short-term employment for vulnerable groups (e.g. internally displaced persons (IDPs), ex-combatants, young people, women, and people with disabilities) and can also support longer-term opportunities when a skills development and training component is incorporated.

Integrated into all UNDP early recovery projects are basic principles such as empowerment of women and gender equality; building capacity and social capital; environmental protection; conflict sensitivity, and investing in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and preparedness.

UNDP can provide, on request from the Country Office, technical capacity to design and implement early recovery programming as one of the key elements of its contribution to the work of the ER cluster or to the work of any other cluster where it may be required. The need for such capacity can be

\textsuperscript{26} Demand Driven Approaches to Livelihoods Support in Post War Contexts, ILO/World Bank, 2006.
\textsuperscript{27} http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/crisis-prevention-and-recovery/signature-product--guidance-note-on-debris-management.html. UNDP is also developing a Guidance Note on Solid Waste Management which will complement the note on debris management, and will be published shortly.
assessed by the relevant organisation(s) or by a UNDP advisor deployed to conduct a ‘gap assessment’. UNDP seed funding may be available for certain early recovery activities.

Other elements for effective Early Recovery Coordination and Programming

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are essential components of results-based programming in humanitarian and development contexts, and as such are critical to early recovery programming. Acting on monitoring and evaluation results will increase the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of ongoing and future programmes. The outcome of iterative evaluations of progress towards achieving results should inform strategy and planning decisions, programme realignment, provide tangible feedback to partners and stakeholders, and feed into donor reporting and resource mobilization initiatives.

Monitoring

Since a post-crisis setting is usually dynamic, and the situation is constantly evolving, plans, approaches and programmes need to be constantly monitored and adapted to the changing context. Different kinds of monitoring can be adapted to different objectives, as indicated in the HPC Monitoring Framework and Monitoring Guidance:

- Strategic Plan monitoring entails monitoring the overall response against Strategic Objectives into which Early Recovery objectives are embedded;
- Cluster Performance Monitoring can be used to support clusters in reviewing how well they are performing against the six cluster core functions included in the Cluster Coordination Reference Module. Where a Cluster specifically designated for Early Recovery is activated, a CPM should be undertaken in line with the CPM Guidance Note.
- Periodic monitoring of early recovery plans, strategies and projects can track progress and lead to corrective measures where necessary. The Periodic Monitoring Report (PMR) is linked to the SRP and was developed by the IASC as an HC/HCT monitoring tool to help take stock of the collective humanitarian response. The PMR alleviates the need for the field to do a classic CAP mid-year review (MYR), as was done in previous years.

As well as guiding strategic priorities, needs assessments also guide choice of key indicators on which the ‘success’ of the overall response will be measured. Including ER-related indicators in the monitoring systems, as well as cross-referencing ER with indicators in other sectors, will ensure that it remains central to the response.30

The primary focus of the Transformative Agenda on strengthening Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) supports Early Recovery approaches. The choice of associated indicators therefore provides a powerful mechanism for integrating Early Recovery into overall response plans. Similarly, for specific sectors/clusters, how interventions31 are contributing to laying the foundations for recovery and longer term development should be measured systematically as part of that sector’s contribution to greater AAP.

Good monitoring practice emphasizes using appropriate participatory techniques for the design and conduct of monitoring systems which allow timely identification of corrective measures, and capture the experiences and voices of the target population. Once again, this supports the overall Early Recovery approach.32

30 For the full indicator registry, see: ir.humanitarianresponse.info.
31 Both in their objectives or through the manner of their implementation
32 Tools for monitoring Early Recovery through clusters (developed by the ERA deployed to Afghanistan) are available on the associated resource page as a starting point for developing Early Recovery monitoring tools for different settings.
Evaluation

Both Operational Peer Reviews (which are designed to inform updates of the SRP), Inter Agency Humanitarian Evaluations (IAHEs) and other evaluations of the response, need to include routinely whether and how the response has contributed to longer term recovery and smooth transition into development. Findings will support the evidence base for the value of Early Recovery as well as informing any adjustments to programming which are necessary for progress on desired Early Recovery objectives.

It can often be challenging to determine if early recovery interventions have achieved their stated objectives later ‘down the line’. Iterative evaluations are useful tools to show how interventions have had an impact over time. By returning to the same communities at different time spans after a crisis, it is possible to assess whether and to what extent people have benefited from humanitarian, early recovery and longer-term recovery interventions and to take corrective action should evidence indicate that approaches are not working.

Generic evaluations are periodically undertaken by UNDP’s Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR). These measure the extent to which Early Recovery globally is having a positive impact.

In all cases, evaluations need to reflect how far the response is contributing to Early Recovery principles.

Cluster Exit Strategies/Transition

The cluster approach, as the standard coordination mechanism for responding to large-scale complex and natural humanitarian emergencies requiring a multi-sector response, was never envisaged as a suitable mechanism for coordinating longer-term recovery and development. As the affected area emerges from the emergency, clusters should be phased out or transitioned into structures which are more appropriate for the evolving context.

Planning and executing smooth transitions between internationally led-clusters and national coordination mechanisms is an important element in Early Recovery which needs to be reflected in the PRP and, more fully in the SRP. Exit strategies should be developed in early stages of a response, identifying what conditions must be satisfied in order to end the emergency or begin transitioning into normal development activities, with the leadership and accountabilities shifting from the CLA to the government or other crisis coordination mechanism. The exit strategy should be reviewed whenever needs are assessed or the SPR is evaluated and adjusted in the light of any changing conditions to remain current.

Successful transition of humanitarian coordination mechanisms to national leadership, with the associated change in focus from primarily life-saving towards recovery and longer-term development objectives can be challenging. How the UN, with government and other actors, manages this process can have important repercussions on the longer-term success of development-focused approaches.

In addition to sharing cluster leadership with national counterparts and ongoing capacity development to prepare national counterparts to take the lead, establishing strong links between humanitarian and development coordination bodies, and an awareness of development objectives as outlined in National Development Plans and other development strategies (UN Development Assistance

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33 For example, the Philippines OPR post-Haiyan: http://www.interaction.org/document/operational-peer-review-response-typhoon-haiyan-philippines-summary-2014-findings

34 For an example of an iterative evaluation, see URD’s evaluation in Haiti: Haiti: en quête de réponses adaptées. http://www.urd.org/Key-messages-from-the-three-year


36 “Overall response priorities should emphasize, reinforce and build local capacity for more sustainable responses in future, and should, where feasible, engage with national actors in cluster leadership. Clusters should also engage in building capacity of national counterparts to take over coordination roles for humanitarian as well as recovery and development coordination mechanisms”. (IASC Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at the Country Level, 2012)
Frameworks (UNDAF), World Bank Country Strategies) ensures that recovery approaches are aligned with national development objectives.

Building relationships between humanitarian and development actors provides opportunities for development strategies/plans to be adjusted in the light of the crisis response to reflect a potentially changed situation, capacities or key development priorities which the crisis and response have highlighted or produced. Recovery needs should be directly incorporated into development plans\textsuperscript{37}. Infrequently, there will be a need for a separate recovery strategy. In these cases, recovery strategies should be nationally-owned.

**Resource Mobilization**

Donors who support the Good Humanitarian Donorship Agreements have pledged to: “Provide humanitarian assistance in ways that are supportive of recovery and long-term development, striving to ensure support, where appropriate, to the maintenance and return of sustainable livelihoods and transitions from humanitarian relief to recovery and development activities”. (Good Humanitarian Donorship Principle 9)

Despite this GHD principle, the mobilization of resources for Early Recovery interventions remains a significant challenge. In addition to the widespread challenge of a shortage of humanitarian funding in relation to funds requested in humanitarian appeals, Early Recovery faces the additional challenge that institutional barriers between humanitarian and development financing mechanisms will need to be addressed systematically in order for funding to be released for activities which do not fit easily into either funding source. Despite the existence of pooled funds such as the CERF, CHF and ERF, the most commonly-used fund-raising tool remains bi-lateral donor assistance to NGOs and /or UN agencies and is much higher than any pooled funds made available.

There are some encouraging signs that the funding context is starting to change to support a more holistic approach to affected people’s needs, with a corresponding need for greater flexibility in the funding\textsuperscript{38}.

**Donors should sustain funding for longer-term initiatives, in particular those that strengthen resilience or enhance education, food security, and maternal health. Final Outcome Document, Oslo Conference on South Sudan, 19-20 May 2014**

Another positive step is the evidence of growing recognition that recovery is a multi-year process, and that funding needs to reflect this timeframe\textsuperscript{39}. However, the challenge of attracting sufficient funding for Early Recovery remains significant.

To address these challenges, Early Recovery actors should:

- demonstrate that Early Recovery represents a better use of funding, rather than additional funding. Early Recovery interventions are ‘time critical’\textsuperscript{40} and provide a better return on investment over time than simply meeting immediate needs;
- focus in funding proposals on issues which are both critical for life-saving and supportive to recovery;

\textsuperscript{37} eg National Development Plans as well as Country Programme Documents, UN Development Assistance Frameworks, World Bank Country Assistance Strategies
\textsuperscript{38} The European Commission adopted a proposal for new Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) Regulation (COM(201)840) in December 2011, reaffirmed in the Policy Briefing of July 2012: Linking relief, rehabilitation and development: Towards more effective aid, which states that a holistic approach is needed to address transitional situations. The draft DCI includes provisions which could potentially increase flexibility for funding countries in crisis/post-crisis/fragile situations. The Danish Government has merged humanitarian and development funding streams and the US government is developing joint planning cells for the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, which include humanitarian and development teams focused on building resilience. (see http://www.usaid.gov/resilience/joint-planning-cells ).
\textsuperscript{39} The Strategic Recovery Plan for Mali and the Consolidated Appeal Process for Somalia have 2-3 year time frames. While funding has not yet been committed for the whole of this period, this is currently under discussion.
\textsuperscript{40} Life-saving is typically the priority criteria for humanitarian funding, but time-criticality is also recognized as being important
✓ use language in proposals which reflects donor priorities and indicate connections with life-saving activities which are SRP priorities (eg capacity building to achieve SRP priorities is acceptable while capacity development per se is typically not acceptable);
✓ use evidence of the value added of Early Recovery approaches and standalone interventions to support funding proposals (eg drawing on experience/lessons learned of other emergencies as well as the results of assessments);
✓ advocate for multi-year funding whenever possible, and – wherever possible – back this with evidence to show that recovery, and particularly interventions aimed at supporting durable solutions (eg returns in conflict/post-conflict settings) require a long-term perspective to have any real chance of success. Investments in these Early Recovery interventions need to be considered as contributing to stabilization;
✓ follow the Phased Approach for Early Recovery Programming as a tool for resource mobilization (see Annex 5).

**UNDP Funding Streams**

UNDP has several other funding mechanisms that Early Recovery interventions can draw on.

TRAC 1.1.2 Category II Resources: small allocations (US$100,000 average) made available to Resident Coordinators from UNDP’s core resources for quick disbursement on a case-by-case basis to get priority early recovery activities started as well as to set up essential coordination functions.

UNDAF, Poverty Reduction Strategies, Integrated Planning Frameworks are the usual platforms that UNDP uses for in-country appeals and baselines but are rarely useful for Early Recovery interventions. However, smooth transitioning into longer-term recovery and development requires joining up and integrating ER interventions into these platforms.

Multi-Partner Trust Funds (often administrated by UNDP): such as the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). This is currently supporting more than two hundred projects in 25 countries by delivering fast, flexible and relevant funding. The PBF allocates money through two funding facilities, the Immediate Response Facility (IRF) and the Peacebuilding Recovery Facility (PRF) according to set criteria.

Early Recovery Advisors and Cluster Coordinators must be aware of the different funding streams as well as their criteria for activation in order to advise the HC.

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Between 2010 and 2013, Early Recovery projects were allocated over USD28,500,000 from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). These included projects for rubble/debris removal; clearance of irrigation channels; cash grants for drought affected populations; livelihoods support for IDPs and host communities; solid waste disposal; emergency rehabilitation of community infrastructure; vocational training; removal of livestock carcasses to avoid health risks; disability equipment; security support for UN system including cross-border operations; provision of cooking stoves to crisis affected households; repair of emergency temporary shelter; time critical waste management in emergency settings including: Haiti, Myanmar, Philippines, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Somalia, Madagascar, Eritrea, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Syria, China, Mongolia, Yemen, Chad, Mali, Algeria, Chile, Bhutan, El Salvador, Republic of Congo, Cuba, Comoros and the Central African Republic. A 2010 evaluation of UNDP’s contribution to disaster prevention and recovery in the aftermath of disasters can be found at: [http://www.sasparm.ps/en/Uploads/file/Evaluation%20of%20UNDP%20Contribution%20to%20Disaster%20Prevention%20and%20Recovery.pdf](http://www.sasparm.ps/en/Uploads/file/Evaluation%20of%20UNDP%20Contribution%20to%20Disaster%20Prevention%20and%20Recovery.pdf)