

FAST FACTS

Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery



EARLY RECOVERY

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What is the main focus of early recovery?

A: The overall focus of early recovery (ER) is to urgently restore the capacity of national institutions and communities affected by conflict or natural disaster. It encompasses a broad range of needs in areas such as livelihoods, transitional shelter, governance, security and rule of law, environment and other socio-economic dimensions, including the reintegration of displaced populations. It aims to kick-start nationally owned processes for post-crisis recovery that are sustainable, seek to build back better, strengthen human security and address the underlying causes of the crisis to avoid future relapse.



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Q: When does early recovery begin?

A: Beginning in a humanitarian setting, early recovery seeks to build on relief efforts to catalyze sustainable development opportunities. Early recovery represents the first steps of the planning process for longer term development, and as such it should begin in parallel with emergency activities. Early recovery is not a separate phase in the relief-development continuum, but an effort to strengthen linkages. The sooner work on recovery begins, the sooner the affected areas are stabilized, and the shorter and more effective the recovery process is likely to be.

Q: What are the aims of early recovery?

A: For early recovery programmes to be successful as well as sustainable, they must be nationally owned. In order to generate or reinforce nationally owned processes for post-crisis recovery, early recovery programmes aim to:

- 1) Enhance ongoing emergency assistance operations by building on humanitarian programmes;
- 2) Support spontaneous recovery initiatives by affected communities to prevent the reconstruction of pre-crisis risk levels; and
- 3) Establish the foundations for longer-term recovery.

Q: How does UNDP promote early recovery at country level?

A: UNDP provides leadership and support for early recovery by:

- 1) Reinforcing government capacity at the national level to stimulate early recovery and to plan for full recovery;
- 2) Supporting a coordinated approach to early recovery in national processes, as well as among UN and other international players; this includes systematic assessment, analysis, coordination and strategic planning for early recovery activities; and
- 3) Facilitating the early recovery of local administration and of the affected populations through support to local level support of early recovery activities.

Q: What is the IASC (Inter-Agency Standing Committee) Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery?

A: Established in 2005, the IASC Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER) was created against the general backdrop of the humanitarian reform process. One of eleven IASC clusters, the CWGER comprises 26 UN and non-UN active global partners from the humanitarian and development communities, with UNDP as the designated cluster lead to coordinate their efforts and cover critical gaps.

At the global level, CWGER focuses on providing support for early recovery implementation in crisis-affected countries through strengthening partnerships, developing early recovery tools and guidelines, early recovery training and capacity building, and piloting an inter-agency surge capacity mechanism to facilitate the rapid deployment of early recovery experts where they are needed.

At the country level, the CWGER has provided support to a number of countries, including Pakistan, Lebanon, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, CAR, Colombia, Philippines, Mozambique, Madagascar, Bangladesh, Kenya, Kosovo, the Comoros Islands, Tajikistan, the Dominican Republic, Sudan, Burundi, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Georgia and Haiti. This support has taken many forms, such as assistance with early recovery needs assessment and strategic planning; setting up of Early Recovery Clusters and Networks; and enhancing the capacity of local governmental and non-governmental counterparts.



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Call to Action

There are no formal interagency mechanisms for mobilizing resources for early recovery work. Early recovery requires fast, flexible and predictable funding that bridges humanitarian and longer-term development financing.

Comprehensive support should be provided for strategic planning and coordination of early recovery in support of national efforts. Given the strong multi-dimensional nature of early recovery, this should be done in full partnership with national authorities, humanitarian agencies, development actors, international and national non-governmental organizations, civil society, the international financial institutions, the private sector and donors.

National capacity to lead early recovery processes is key and should be supported immediately after the crisis. Where national capacities do not exist to lead early recovery, international actors should work in a way that seeks to build national and local capacity and ensure that their work is informed by a strong understanding of the local context.



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UNDP in Action

In Pakistan, following the earthquake in 2005, the cluster approach was implemented for the first time as a framework for coordinating humanitarian response. The collective Early Recovery Cluster launched a sizeable portfolio of early recovery programmes for income generation, governance support, health, education, disaster risk reduction, transitional housing, rapid income support through an employment recovery project, and a community-based livelihood recovery project. Furthermore, funding from UNDP and other agencies – including the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the UN Development Group Office (DGO) and USAID – provided support for the development of a new government-run institution – the Earthquake Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency.

In Darfur, UNDP established an early recovery programme on rule of law based on development principles such as empowerment, capacity-building, inclusion and participation. The programme empowers internally displaced people in paralegal schemes, supports local lawyers to build up legal aid services, and trains the judiciary to recognize and address sexual gender-based violence while also offering legal information services.

UNDP has engaged in multiple early recovery activities in Somalia, including establishing district and regional authorities to further the reconciliation process; flood control through diversion gates, irrigation, and rehabilitating water reservoirs with community involvement; providing livelihood opportunities; promoting good governance and rule of law efforts in regions where local authorities have been set up to support them; and focusing on reconciliation in conflict areas.

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