

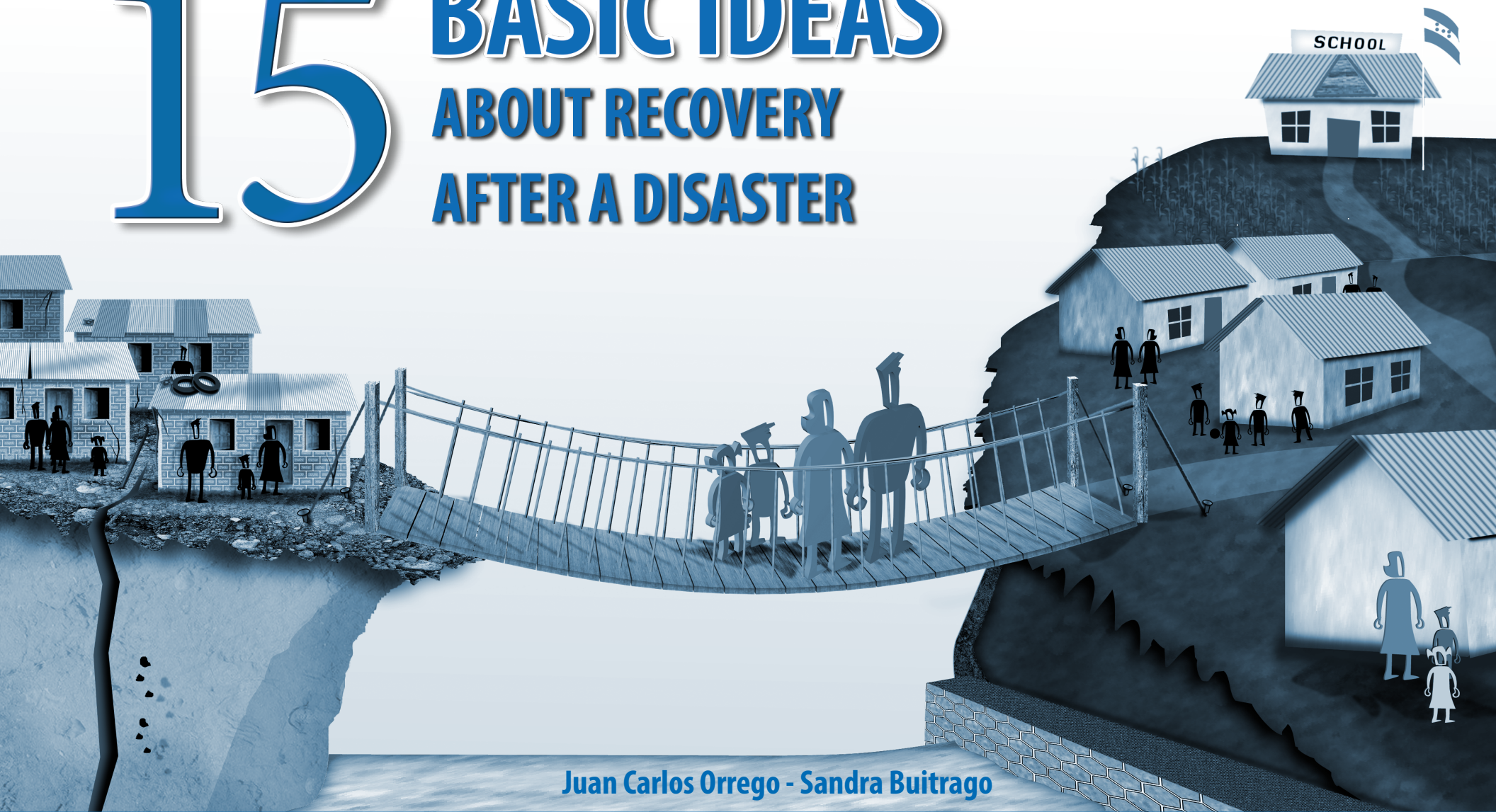
15 BASIC IDEAS ABOUT RECOVERY AFTER A DISASTER



Early Recovery Policy Implementation Project, Honduras, 2009-2012

*United Nations Development Program – UNPD – Honduras
Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery – BCPR*

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Juan Carlos Orrego - Sandra Buitrago

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*United Nations Development Program – UNPD – Honduras
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This document was prepared under the supervision of:
Environment and Risk Management Unit, UNDP Honduras.
Juan José Ferrando

Authors:
Juan Carlos Orrego
Sandra Buitrago

Illustrator:
Wilmer Cruz

Translation:
Nathan Weatherdon

English layout:
Sahady Mencía

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United Nations Development Program – UNDP – Honduras
Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery – BCPR
Basic Ideas
Early Recovery Policy Implementation Project

Introduction:

The Early Recovery Policy Implementation Project took place in Honduras over 2009 to 2012, with the support of the United Nations Development Program UNDP and its Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery.

This project was one of six pilot projects worldwide supported by the UNDP, and ultimately supported post-disaster recovery while facilitating the development of local and global learning about Early Recovery (ER) policies and practices. The main knowledge resulting from this project and lessons learned are compiled and systematized in a Summary Document, a general document on the systematization, a documentary video and the present document.

It is worth noting that progress in knowledge production and in the development of risk reduction experience has advanced in recent years. However, developments to address post-disaster recovery have been limited, and many gaps remain which have not received due attention, despite highly regular disaster-related crisis year after year. Risk reduction is a development theme which has been incorporated into the development agenda over the last two decades, but recovery has yet to be included.

The current trend is characterized by a lack of timely analysis of the most basic needs of the affected following a disaster, and there has also been little development of skills and knowledge which make it possible to plan to be aware of and to address these needs, and that is to say nothing of the accompaniment needed for this recovery process, which is largely spontaneous, anarchical, neglected and is taken on directly by disaster victims.

However, it must be noted that we are on the verge of a paradigm shift in how post-disaster recovery processes are understood and addressed. Real social and institutional change requires cultural transformation in the ways in which social and academic leaders think about post-disaster recovery processes and their relationships with development.

This publication aims to present 15 of the main ideas about recovery processes, which the Early Recovery Policy Implementation Project in Honduras is based on. It is an effort to summarize, in very few images and words, sometimes-complex ideas in an informal language that can reach the general public. The intention is to facilitate communication about ideas on recovery to a public, which is increasingly interested in achieving the main principles of recovery.

We invite you to use the messages provided in this document and the series of digital publications and documents that are part of the systematization of the Early Recovery Policy Implementation Project.

Contents

<i>Section</i>	<i>Page</i>
1. Recovery policies are also our responsibility. Disasters affect the entire population, not only those directly involved.	9
2. All disasters count, both small and large.	10
3. Disasters can be mitigated. Achieving this will require promoting implementation of risk management and recovery policies.	11
4. When risks accumulate, as is currently the case, disasters are likely to follow, with greater accumulated losses and reduced capacity to respond.	12
5. A State, which can best respond to the recovery needs of its inhabitants is one which is prepared, not one which improvises.	13
6. Preparing for recovery is to count on policies which specify who will act and how the recovery process will proceed.	15
7. The recovery must begin early, to allow rapid transition to development.	16
8. Indifference to the recovery needs of those affected by disaster is not an option.	17
9. Recovery is far more than reconstruction,	18
10. Public policies must ensure funding of post-disaster recovery in a complete, suitable and balanced manner across sectors and regardless of the funding situation.	19

11. It is necessary to identify those affected, to know their needs and to plan for recovery.	20
12. The affected population is not homogeneous. Needs and capacities must be defined by gender, age and limitations.	21
13. Recovery processes must strengthen governance and capacities for disaster risk management and adaptation to climate variability.	22
14. Recovery requires a network of partners working with the State to address the complexity of the challenges and to ensure the sustainability of successes.	23
15. It is necessary to generate knowledge and to learn from every disaster.	24
Summary and lessons learned	25

1

Recovery policies are also our responsibility. Disasters affect the entire population, not only those directly involved.



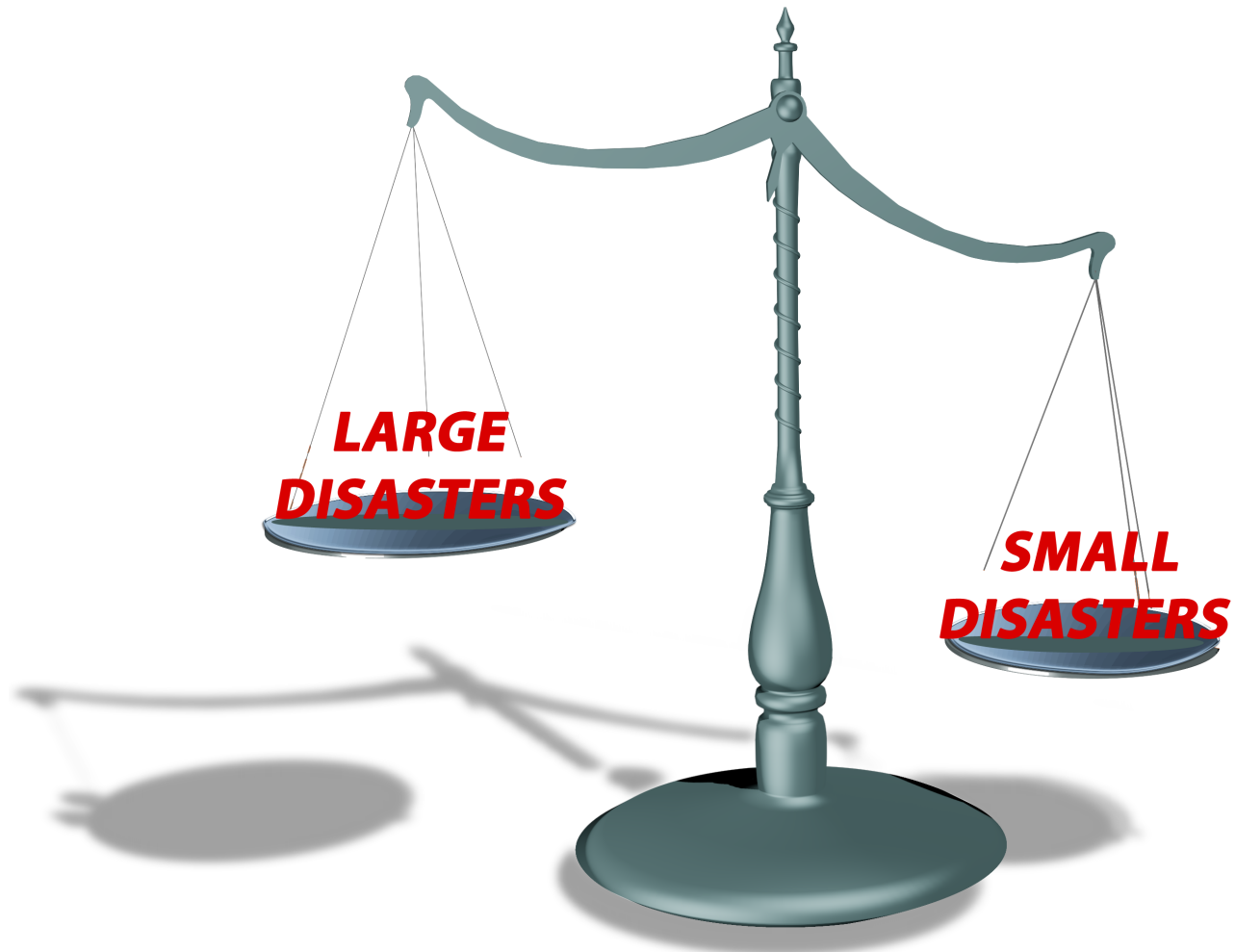
A full 75% of people in the world live in areas affected by a tropical cyclones, floods or droughts between 1980 and 2000. Disasters cause more than grief in the affected communities. Many families experience greater poverty, lose employment, burn through savings and see their health deteriorate. Disasters delay achievement of the Millennium Development Objectives.

Hurricane Mitch (1998) took Honduras twenty years backwards in terms of social and economic progress and caused an increase in the incidence of poverty. The national Human Development Index (HDI) fell from 0.551 in 1998 to 0.544 in 1999 and the national poverty rate increased by 8%, from 69 to 77%.

We need to change our way of viewing disasters. It is necessary to respond to major disasters, and also to reduce risk and address small and medium sized disasters. Small disasters are very frequent and have cumulative impacts which are as harmful as major disasters.

2

All disasters count, both small and large.



We need to change our way of viewing disasters. It is necessary to respond to major disasters, and also to reduce risk and address small and medium sized disasters. Small disasters are very frequent and have cumulative impacts which are as harmful as major disasters.

3

Disasters can be mitigated. Achieving this will require promoting implementation of risk management and recovery policies.



High Risk
Zone

Safe
Zone

Disasters can be avoided, or impacts can at least be reduced.

The best policy is one which reduces risk factors, although it must also support recovery from disasters. One dollar invested in risk reduction saves between 9-13 dollars in damage repairs and losses.

Risk reduction and post-disaster recovery policies protect life, reduce poverty and inequality, improve competitiveness and help achieve national development.

4

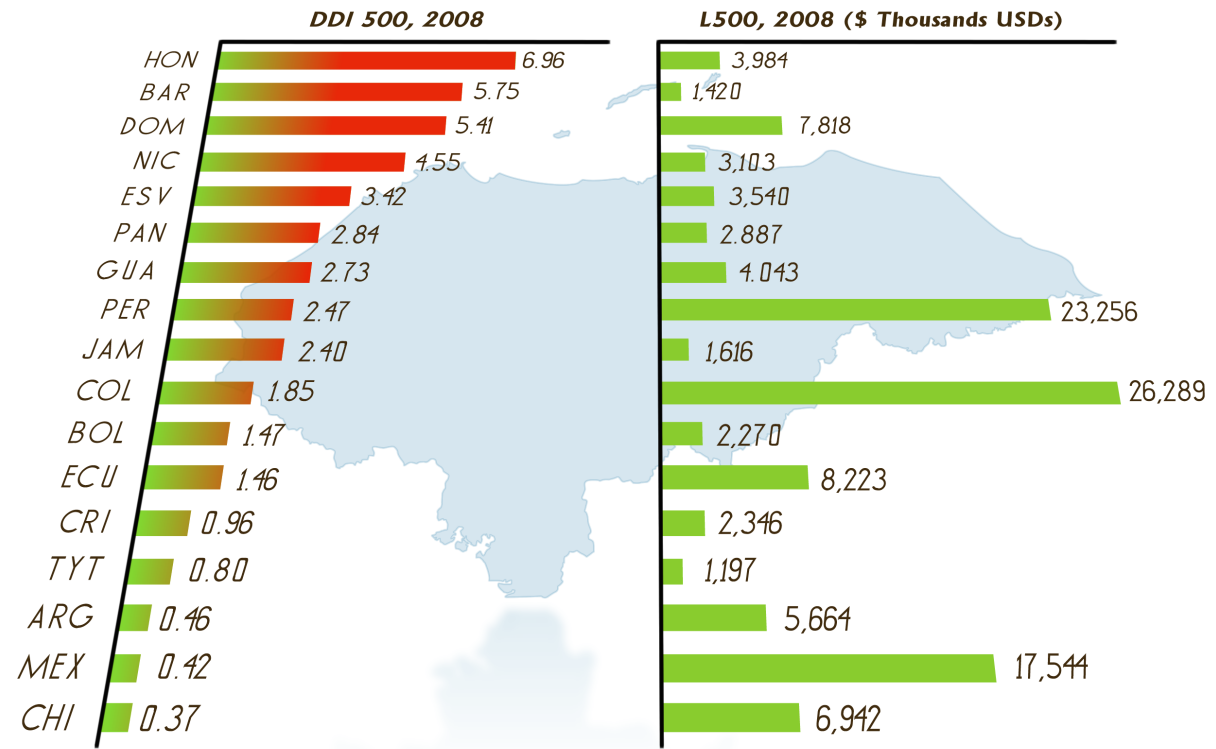
When risks accumulate, as is currently the case, disasters are likely to follow, with greater accumulated losses and reduced capacity to respond.

Honduras has elevated disaster risk relative to the size of its population and economy. Various studies situate the country as among the most vulnerable. The data on damages over the last four decades shows Honduras to have experienced greater economic losses from disasters than any other country in the region.

These losses are anticipated to rise due to climate change and the high vulnerability of the country.

With a failure to counter the current risk conditions, and with a continued upward trend in risks, we can only expect new disasters with damages and funding needs equal to or greater than in the past.

DDI (Disaster deficit index – (losses / economic resilience))



The DDI involves the relationship between the amounts of funds required to cover losses caused by a 500-year event and the availability of or access to internal or external funds to carry out repairs and replace inventories.

Source: Inter-American Development Bank (IBD)

5

A State which can best respond to the recovery needs of its inhabitants is one which is prepared, not one which improvises.



RECOVERY

- **Governance**
- **Recovery Sectors**
- **Livelihoods and Income**
- **Gender and Participation**
- **Sustainable Environmental Conditions**

BASES

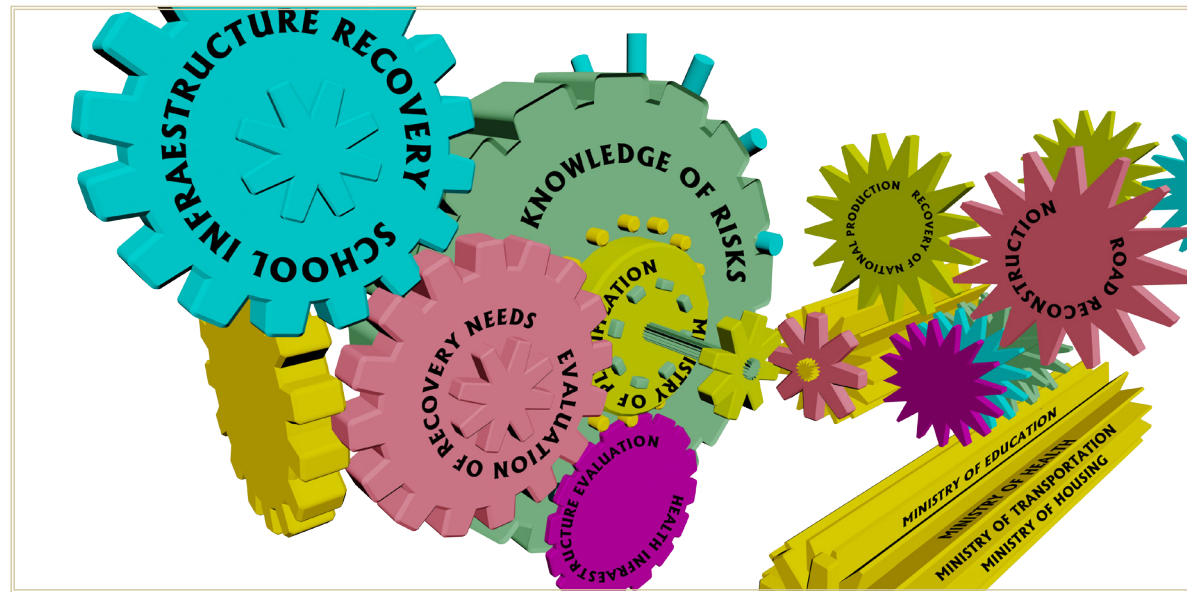
- **Governance**
- **Environmental Management**
- **Planning**
- **Participation**

Recovery is a complex process which requires preparation. There are many needs, all requiring urgent resolution, and numerous actors and regions are simultaneously involved. The best alternative is to accumulate knowledge and experience, and to prepare the ground for a solid recovery which involves actors at the national, sectoral, regional and local levels, as well as international cooperation and civil society.

The Early Recovery Project supports:

- » Recovery planning
- » Incorporation of risk management into recovery and development
- » Recovery capacity of livelihoods and housing
- » Training of resources

Preparing for recovery means responsible distribution between institutions, sectors and communities and involves new actors. In Honduras, current efforts focus on carrying out sustained accompaniment and linking it with strategic sectors, planning, public investment and risk management.



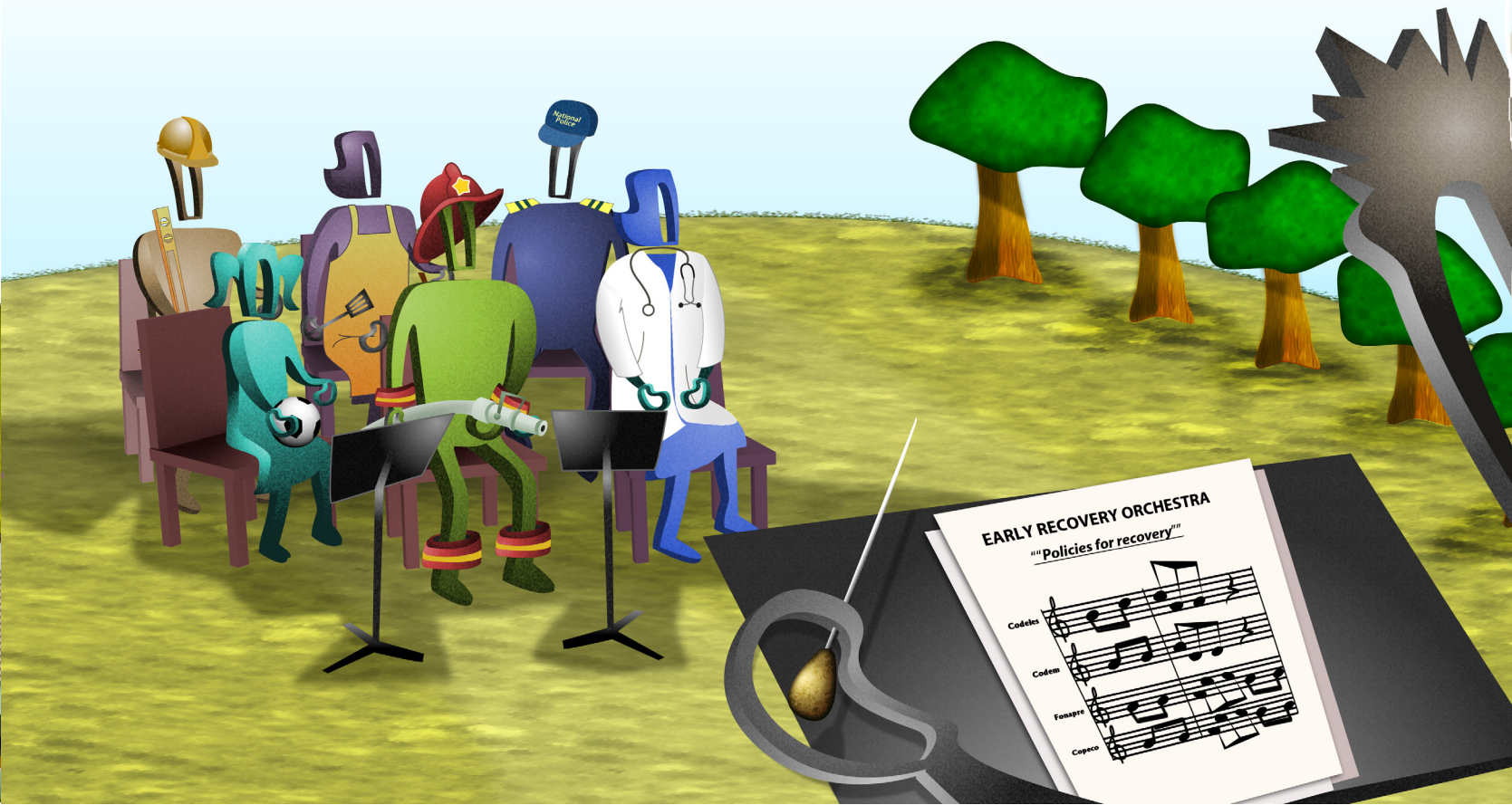
Preparing for recovery ensures that the affected population has options to restore their livelihood, particularly their sources of income to cover household operating costs. There are schemes to support basic conditions for decent work, cash for work for the affected and development of reconstruction works. Honduras passed the Complementary income law, and carried out community pilot projects.



6

Preparing for recovery is to count on policies which specify who will act and how the recovery process will proceed.

Preparing for recovery is to count on public policies. It is important to specifying which institutions make which decisions in early recovery, which coordinate the recovery when the disaster occurs, which types of plans will be developed, the timeframes, how to make the transition from emergency management institutions to ones of recovery and rehabilitation, and how to support the population while transitioning from emergency to definitive recovery.



Honduras has defined key policies, norms and guides specifying who leads the recovery process:

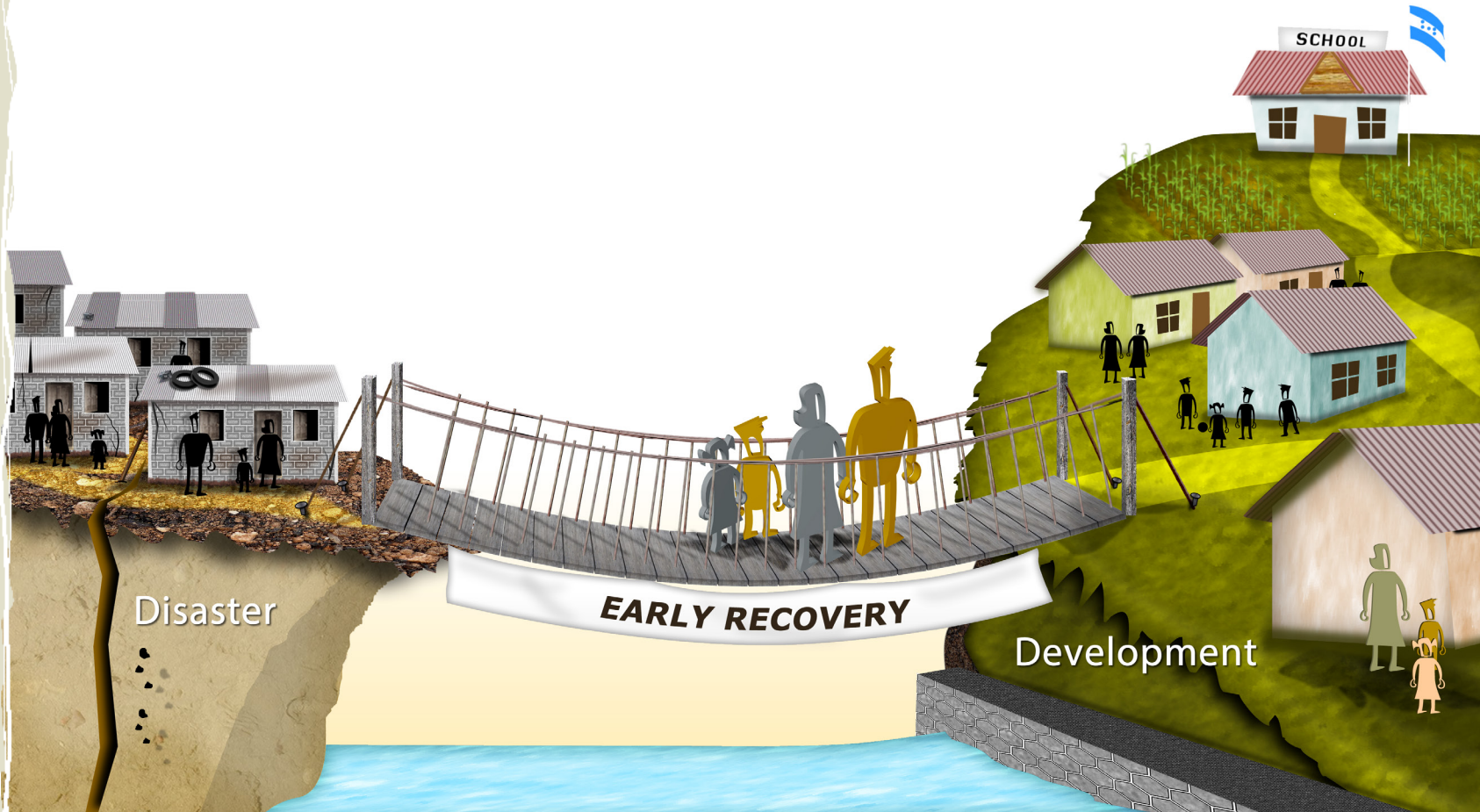
- In a disaster situation, it falls upon the Secretariat of Planning and Development SEPLAN, to formulate an early recovery plan, with the support of COPECO
- SEPLAN coordinates national evaluation processes for recovery needs

7

The recovery must begin early, to allow rapid transition to development.

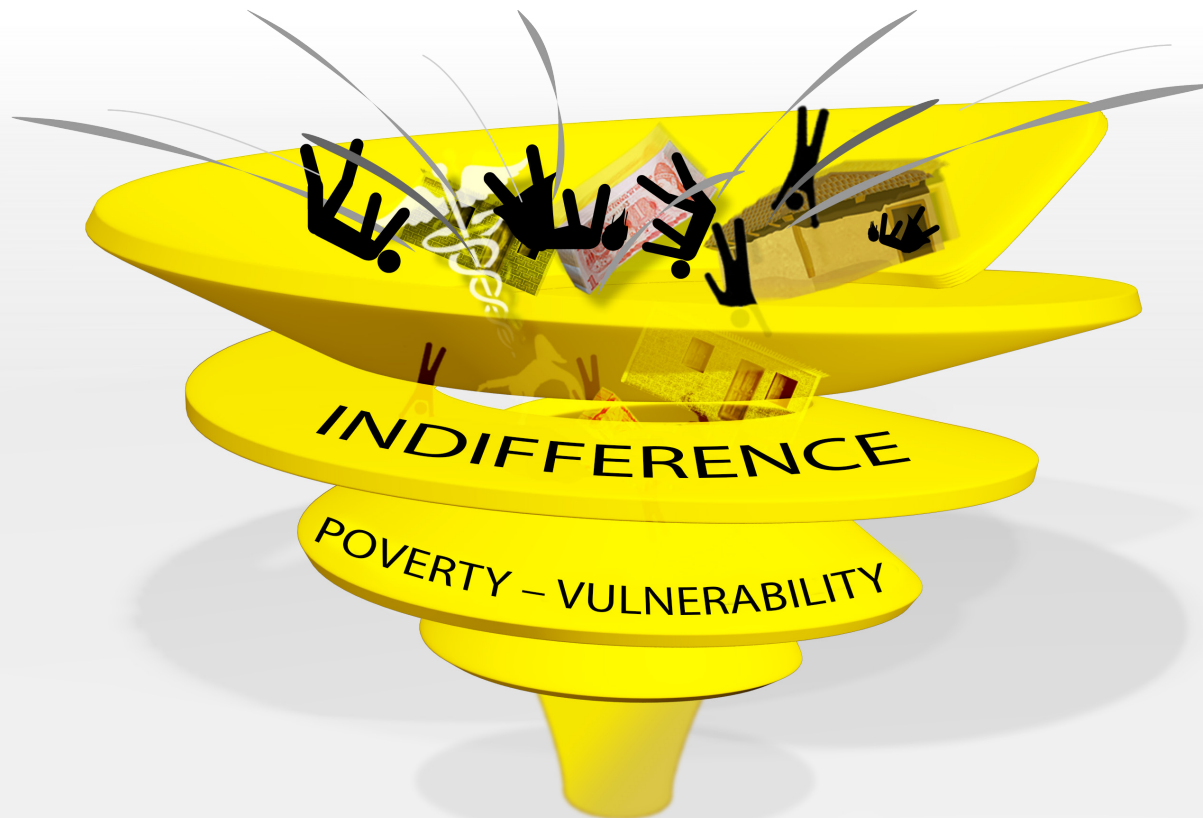
Early Recovery is a multidimensional process initiated in a humanitarian context and guided by development principles with the purpose of developing humanitarian programs and to catalyze opportunities for sustainable development. Its objective is to generate strong and self-sustaining national processes for recovery after a crisis. It includes the restoration of basic services, livelihoods, shelter, governance, security, rule of law, and environmental and social dimensions, including reintegration of displaced populations.

Many disasters exceed the adaptive and recovery capacities of households and communities. The State ensures security, life, heritage and social protection, and holds a fundamental role in avoiding deterioration of material and social conditions and ensuring fundamental human rights.



8

Indifference to the recovery needs of those affected by disaster is not an option.



... is everyone's responsibility

Many recovery processes basically operate spontaneously, implying worse vulnerability and fragility of the population. Often, delayed and/or incomplete processes expose the population to greater deterioration in their living conditions and greater insecurity with respect to disaster, disease, violence and conflict.

There is increasing social and political awareness of recovery processes in Honduras. There is awareness of mistakes and lessons learned from previous experience, and there is less room for indifference. Progress has been made in public policy, human resources training, communication methods and social organization, with a better understanding of the needs of those affected.

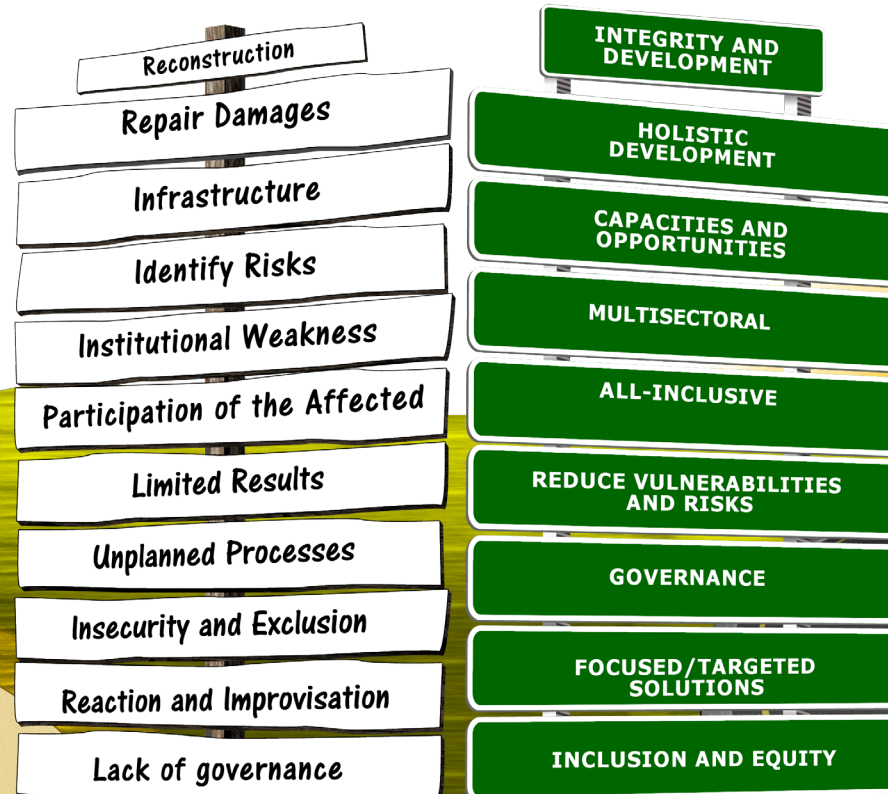
9

Recovery is far more than reconstruction.

The concept of reconstruction focuses on physical repair and replacement. As for recovery, it is a key process which establishes and improves social functions and capacities, particularly those which allow the affected population to obtain livelihoods and income, health, education, and to maintain a socio-affective network and governance, among others. It is a commitment to transformation based on human rights.

Many disasters exceeded the adaptive and recovery capacities of households and communities. The State ensures security, life, heritage and social protection, and holds a fundamental role in avoiding deterioration of material and social conditions of those affected and in ensuring basic human rights.

There are many roads to traverse!



And you ... which road do you prefer?

10

Public policies must ensure funding of post-disaster recovery in a complete, suitable and balanced manner across sectors and regardless of the funding situation.



Funding demands for recovery processes are more predictable than one may think, and must be accounted for as a regular item in public finances.

It is key to strengthen funding of strategies which ensure planning of the recovery and the post-disaster recovery, including in times of fiscal constraint.

The lack of adequate policies and mechanisms to target public investments in recovery can exacerbate problems which become chronic in time and can contribute to the fiscal vulnerability of the State. It is also important to optimize the support of the international community and the private sector.

Knowledge of the population and its differentiated needs is key to accompaniment, monitoring and for implementation of policies and strategies.

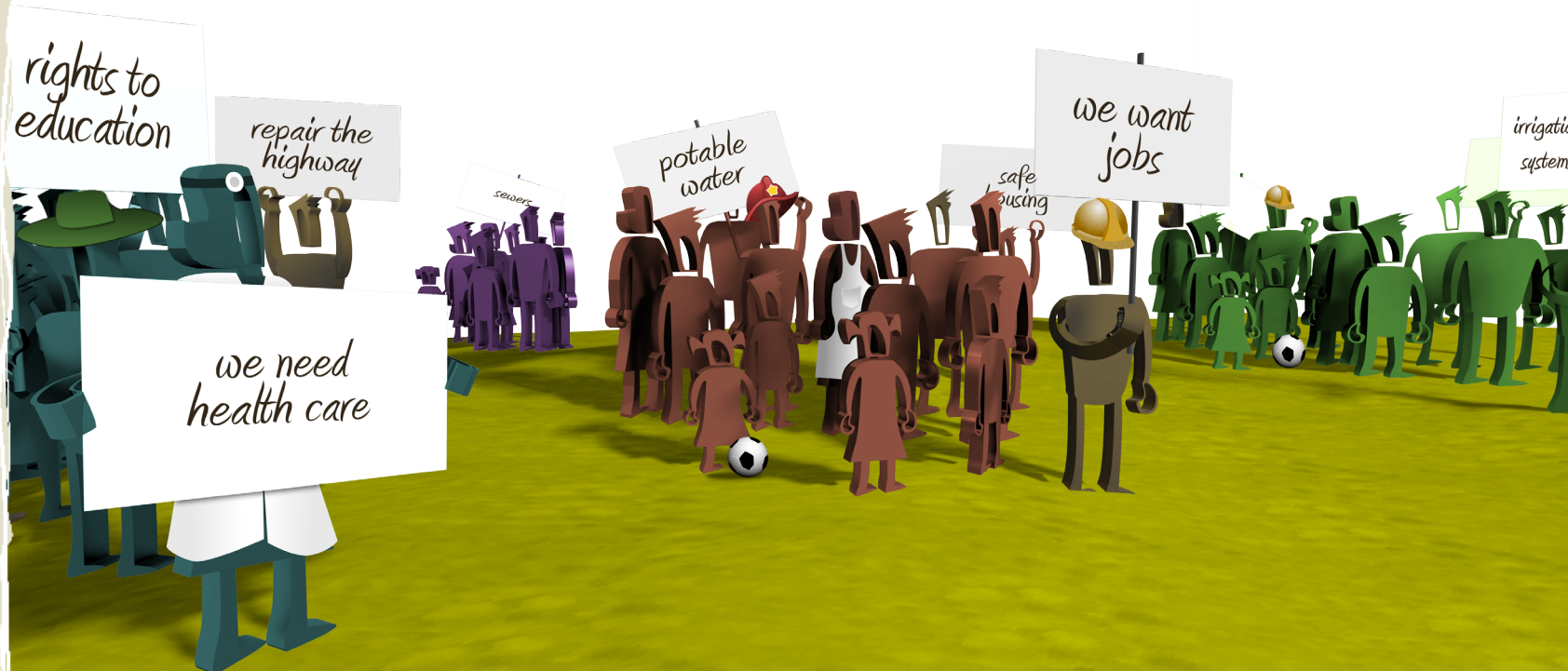
Evaluation of recovery needs begins in the humanitarian phase and forms the basis of the recovery in the medium term.

11

It is necessary to identify those affected, to know their needs and to plan for recovery.

In Honduras, the development of skills has improved the ability to identify the affected and evaluate needs.

- » HENFOCAR – Methodology to evaluate Early Recovery needs
- » SISMICEDE – Risk management and Early Recovery Information Management System
- » MAC – Methodology to map social actors
- » Pilot Models for Strategic Frameworks for Recovery in Critical Municipalities



12

The affected population is not homogeneous. Needs and capacities must be defined by gender, age and limitations.

One recent advance in social policy is to recognize that the population is not homogeneous, although strategies often still are. Differences must be considered in terms of current realities by area, skills, economic opportunities and in particular their relationships with household structure and household vulnerabilities.

Gender differences are particularly important due to the key role of women in communities and household care, and thus it is important to strengthen their ability to define and lead solutions in the recovery.



Through the Project, gender sensitive actions were developed.

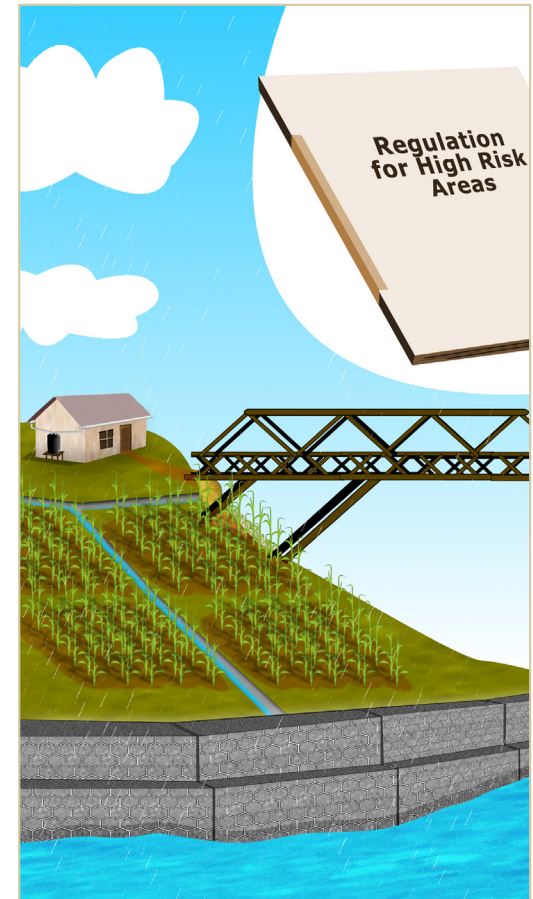
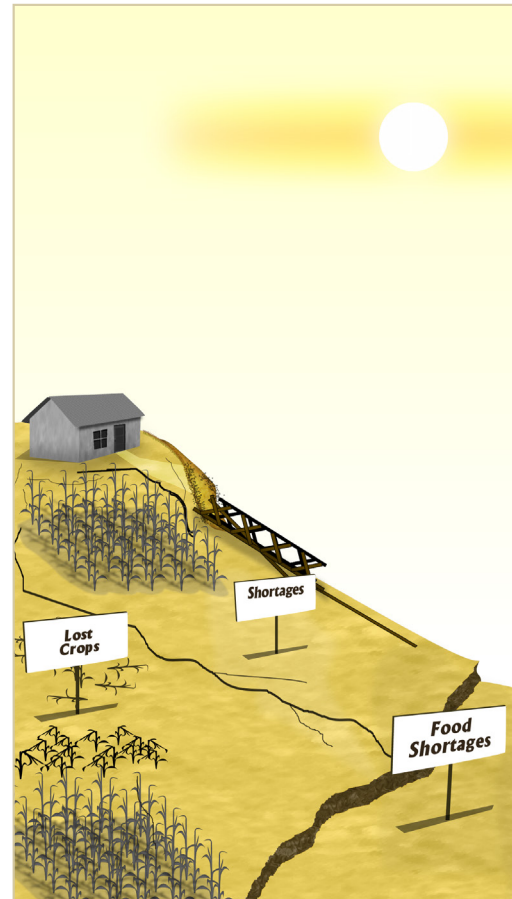
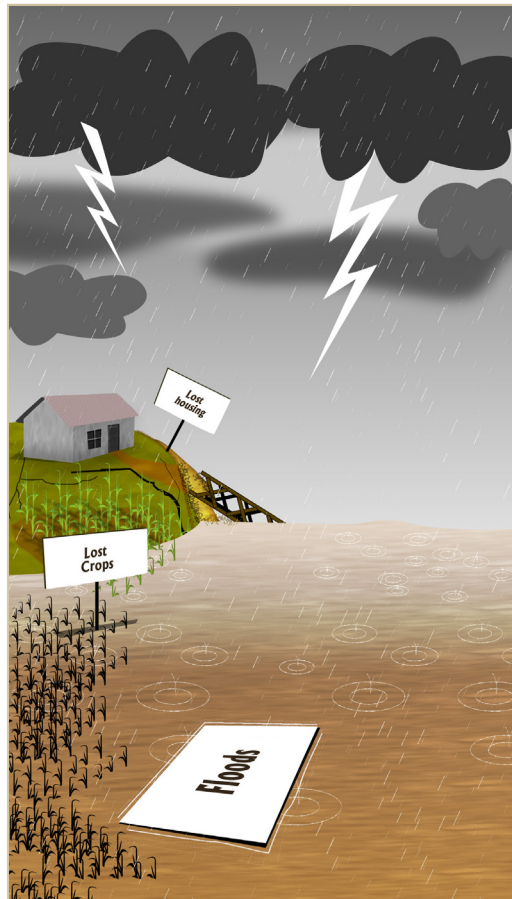
- » Gender and disaster risk management audiovisual materials
- » An online course
- » Basic guide for advocacy on public policies
- » Basic guide to assess capacities and evaluate risks

Local, subnational and national governments must ensure that interventions and actions are not made in unreasonably risky conditions. Accomplishing this requires significant preparation, and knowledge of threats, weaknesses, risks and the rate of phenomena which are becoming more frequent and extreme.

It is necessary to plan the recovery and define secure areas in municipalities and practical uses of sites, and also how to implement measures to limit inhabitation of insecure areas along with measures to adapt to climate risks.

13

Recovery processes must strengthen governance and capacities for disaster risk management and adaptation to climate variability.



The Gulf of Fonseca region in Honduras suffered losses of housing, crop and fishing infrastructure and livelihoods due to extreme rain events and dry seasons in 2011 and 2012.

14

Recovery requires a network of partners working with the State to address the complexity of the challenges and to ensure the sustainability of successes.

Recovery processes involve rebuilding complex societies and this requires strong involvement on the part of those affected, together with a large variety of state and non-state actors.

Everyone must contribute to the formation of networks to manage risks.



In Honduras, there has been an increase in the number of actors who are involved and aware of disaster risks and early recovery: state entities, non-governmental organizations, municipal associations, universities, academic and professional associations, and international cooperation organizations, all of which are part of a network operating within the National risk management system. This network has been developing techniques, specializing in key themes and supporting sectoral and local management.

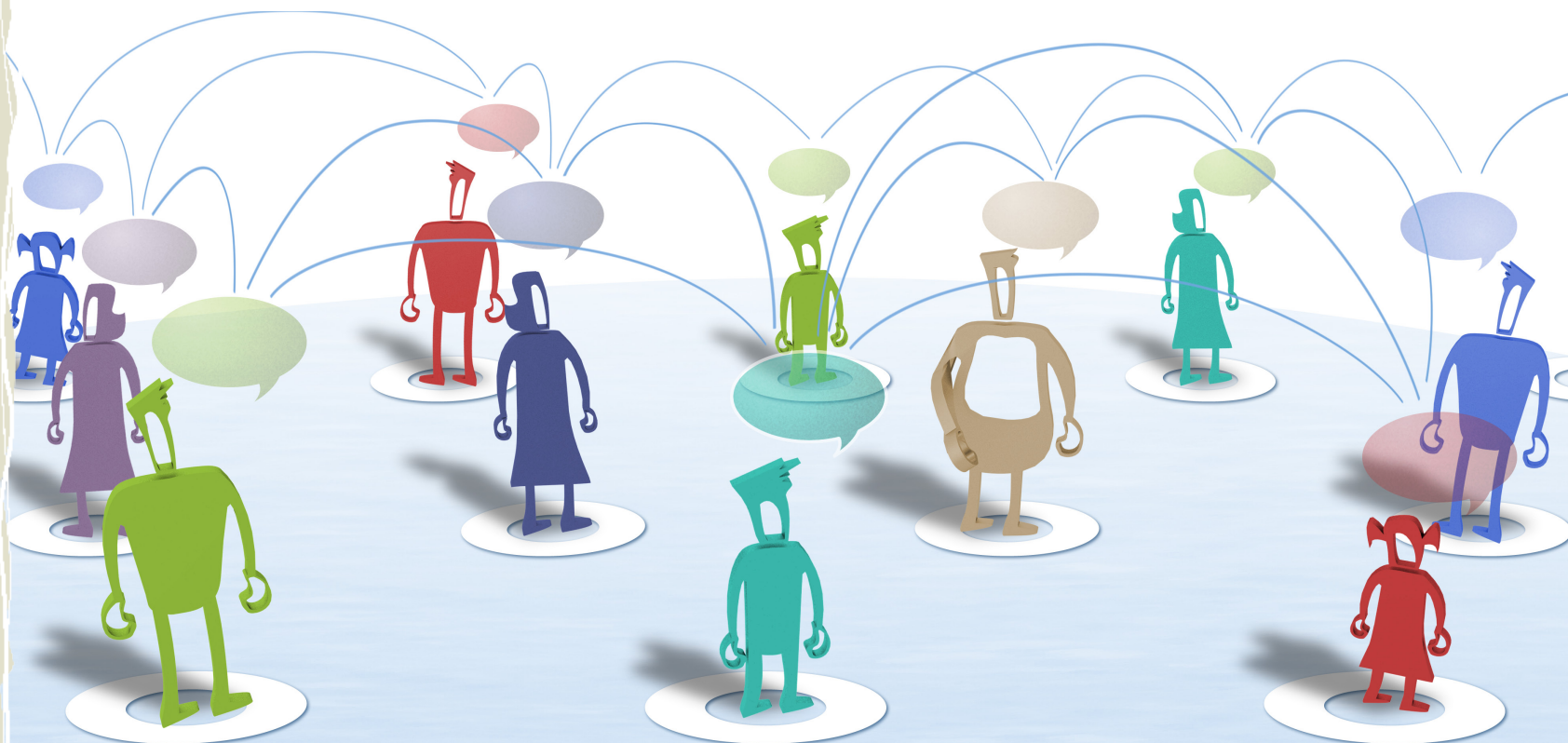
Capacity development involves progress in three respects: (i) creating and processing knowledge, (ii) generating management tools and instruments and (iii) training capacities.

Generating knowledge involves transforming the culture of institutions and citizenship in relation to the most important themes and needs for disaster risk reduction and recovery.

15

It is necessary to generate knowledge and to learn from every disaster.

The experience of Honduras has taught that training in sectoral techniques is more suitable when based on themes relating to common tasks and when methodologies and the availability of academic programs make it possible to use knowledge and perform research in practice. Training experts also makes it possible to build recovery teams.



Summary and Lessons Learned

- Early recovery management requires important dedicated efforts to seek partners with whom to build an operational network to address the variability and complexities of recovery challenges.
- Achieving change at the national level regarding post-disaster recovery which focuses on human development requires an undertaking of gradual and sequential processes in the modification of public policies, development capacities, and in changing the way of thinking of the public, experts, and political actors.
- Training of sectoral experts is more suitable when training programs focus on development planning as the basis upon which to develop strategies for risk management and early recovery.
- Adequate management of knowledge for early recovery requires balance between development of national capacity and access to international knowledge.
- A support project or process for early recovery must be flexible and adaptable to highly uncertain institutional conditions, until opportunities appear for changes which make it possible to build stable management structures, rendering recovery somewhat more predictable.
- Efforts to support national actors in early recovery must develop together with a new focus on recovery and concrete practices in the most relevant institutional sectors.
- Studies and technical research which investigate the relationships between development, disasters and recovery processes are needed to improve the interest in and awareness of a need for change in policies and capacities relating to recovery.
- Larger cities have much potential for change in the development of policies and capacities for Early Recovery and Disaster Risk Reduction.
- The visibility and presence of social communication methods of the management of recovery, in particular actions by the government and partners, facilitates mobilization and development of capacities to bring about post-disaster recovery.



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Resilient nations.*

United Nations Development Program
One United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017, United States of America

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