

Guidance Note on Recovery

GOVERNANCE



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IRP was conceived at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan in January 2005. As a thematic platform of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) system, IRP is a key pillar for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, a global plan for disaster risk reduction for the decade adopted by 168 governments at the WCDR. The key role of IRP is to identify gaps and constraints experienced in post disaster recovery and to serve as a catalyst for the development of tools, resources, and capacity for resilient recovery. IRP aims to be an international source of knowledge on good recovery practice. IRP promotes “Build Back Better” approaches that not only restore what existed previously but also set communities on a better and safer development path and support development of enhanced recovery capacity at regional, national, and sub-national levels with particular focus on high-risk low-capacity countries.

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Introduction

Purpose

There is currently an abundance of documents, plans and policies that address common issues faced in the mitigation, preparedness and relief phases of natural disaster management. Yet for disaster recovery planners and policy makers, there is no cohesive documented body of knowledge. It is conceded that preventive measures are vital to reducing the more costly efforts of responding to disasters. Nevertheless, in the post disaster situation, the availability of knowledge products reflecting past practices and lessons learned is critical for effective and sustainable recovery. Unquestionably, a wealth of experience and expertise exists within governments and organizations; however the majority of this knowledge is never documented, compiled, nor shared. Filling this knowledge gap is a key objective of the International Recovery Platform and The Guidance Note on Recovery: Governance, along with its companion booklets, is an initial step in documenting, collecting and sharing disaster recovery experiences and lessons. IRP hopes that this collection of the successes and failures of past experiences in disaster recovery will serve to inform the planning and implementation of future recovery initiatives. The aim is not to recommend actions, but to place before the reader a menu of options.

Audience

The Guidance Note on Recovery: Governance is primarily intended for use by policymakers, planners, and implementers of local, regional and national government bodies interested or engaged in facilitating a more responsive, sustainable, and risk-reducing recovery process. Yet, IRP recognizes that governments are not the sole actors in disaster recovery and believes that the experiences collected in this document can benefit the many other partners working together to build back better.

Content

The Guidance Note on Recovery: Governance draws from documented experiences of past and present recovery efforts, collected through a desk review and consultations with relevant experts. These experiences and lessons learned are classified into five major issues:

1. Ownership
2. Participation
3. Communication
4. Capacity
5. Accountability

The materials are presented in the form of cases. The document provides analysis of many of the cases, highlighting key lessons and noting points of caution and clarification.

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The case study format has been chosen in order to provide a richer description of recovery approaches, thus permitting the reader to draw other lessons or conclusions relative to a particular context.

It is recognized that, while certain activities or projects presented in this Guidance Note have met with success in a given context, there is no guarantee that the same activity will generate similar results across all contexts. Cultural norms, socio-economic contexts, gender relations and myriad other factors will influence the process and outcome of any planned activity. Therefore, the following case studies are not intended as prescriptive solutions to be applied, but rather as experiences to inspire, to generate contextually relevant ideas, and where appropriate, to adapt and apply.

A Working Definition of Governance

The concept of governance is complex and controversial. It is a general ‘catch-all’ term used in a wide array of contexts to mean and justify many things, including particular forms of governance (such as democracy). In an attempt to focus on governance issues rather than advocating for a particular type of governance, this document uses a simple definition of governance adopted from internationally relevant norms.

Governance: the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented) (UNESCAP, 2009)

In applying this definition to the disaster recovery context, two observations should be made. First, governance is not government. Governance, as a concept, recognizes that power exists inside and outside the formal authority and institutions of government. Therefore government is a major actor, but not the sole actor influencing decisions and how they are implemented. Other actors may include such entities as religious organizations, private enterprise, unions, cooperatives, financial institutions and political parties. Second, governance emphasizes ‘process’. It recognizes that decisions are made based on complex relationships between many actors with different priorities. It is how these competing priorities are reconciled that is the essence of the concept of governance (UN-HABITAT, 2002).

Why Consider Governance?

Chapter

2

The post-disaster environment is commonly a period requiring intense decision-making based on limited information, about complex issues with very powerful and long term impacts. In the immediate aftermath, the extent of damage and recovery needs is uncertain and the residual iterative effects of the disaster and repercussions of relief or recovery efforts create a constantly changing environment. Additionally a large influx of resources need to be coordinated, allocated, and tracked, while all the while ensuring minimal waste and maximum sustainability. Finally, pre-existing governance structures are often overwhelmed by the demands of managing recovery and the urgency to show visual progress, particularly when they have been adversely impacted by the disaster.

Within the disaster recovery context, governance is the overall process by which affected governments, organizations and populations 1) determine what is to be done, how it is to be done, and who it is to benefit and 2) apply themselves to implementing these decisions. Within such a dynamic and unpredictable environment, the impacts of these decisions and their implementation can be profound, drastically changing lives, social systems, economies, and the recovery process itself - either for the better or the worse. Summarized at the 2010 International Recovery Forum by the Minister of a disaster prone south Asian nation, "Governance is everything".

Governance Issues in Recovery

Introduction to key issues

Over the past two decades, governance has become a major focus of development efforts. OECD governments are now spending over US\$ 10 billion a year on governance interventions (upside down). Much of this is due to a realization that without an enabling environment, the sustainability of social and economic development is limited. Considerable experimentation and research has been conducted in an attempt to identify what makes up good governance and how it can be achieved. Yet, as of present, there is little consensus on either issue. Donors and other organizations engaged in efforts to improve governance have adopted a host of different frameworks for defining and operationalizing good governance. Yet, a large share of initiatives remains supply-driven, failing to consider the very complex contextual nature of governance.

This new attention to governance has begun to emerge in the realm of disaster recovery. While its importance is regarded by virtually all recovery actors, very little research and few evaluations exist to provide governments with practical guidance to improve governance and the recovery efforts. Within such a nascent field of study and practice, what documentation does exist is fragmented and sparse – much of which either 1) advocates for a particular set of ideals (e.g. decentralization, transparency, predictability) with often little or no evidence base or 2) focuses on a very specific issue such as combating corruption.

Nevertheless, drawing experiences from the existing documentation on governance in disasters and from the more general literature on recovery, potentially useful lessons may emerge for the reader.

The following content is not an exhaustive overview of governance. Rather it is the first iteration of a larger attempt to collect and disseminate documented experiences in disaster recovery. The following issues have been chosen for inclusion based on the availability of useful case study materials.

1. Ownership
2. Participation
3. Communication
4. Capacity

5. Accountability

Due to the complex nature of governance, these issues are not treated as mutually exclusive, but rather inter-related and often mutually reinforcing themes. Additional issues (such as planning, coordination, equity, trust, and corruption) will also emerge throughout the ensuing discussions.

Issue 1: Ownership of recovery initiatives

Sub Issue 1: Asserting country ownership

Disaster management is the overall responsibility and right of state. The right and responsibility of governments to exercise leadership over the recovery process is internationally recognized. The UN humanitarian Resolution 46/182 articulates:

“The sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of States must be fully respected in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. In this context, humanitarian assistance should be provided with the consent of the affected country and in principle on the basis of an appeal by the affected country. Each State has the responsibility first and foremost to take care of the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies occurring on its territory. Hence, the affected State has the primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination, and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory” (UN General Assembly, 1991).

Likewise, the IFRC Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance outline the right and responsibility of the affected state.

- 1. Affected States have the primary responsibility to ensure disaster risk reduction, relief and recovery assistance in their territory. National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, and domestic civil society actors play a key supporting role at the domestic level.*
- 2. If an affected State determines that a disaster situation exceeds national coping capacities, it should seek international and/or regional assistance to address the needs of affected persons.*
- 3. Affected States have the sovereign right to coordinate, regulate and monitor disaster relief and recovery assistance provided by assisting actors on their territory, consistent with international law. (IFRC, 2008, p.12)*

Although clearly defined and internationally recognized, the question of who drives recovery-related decision-making is not always easily answered. When the coping capacity of a state is overwhelmed and it requests external assistance, a new group of actors arrive. These actors, in the form of other states, donors, and INGOs are accountable to their own public or funding bodies and have objectives, processes and procedures, and certain conditions they deem necessary to provide the assistance they offer. In such cases, post-disaster conditions, existing state capacity, political landscapes, international disaster management trends, external funding conditions, and conflicting agendas all influence the nexus of leadership.

Case studies and evaluations of disaster response and recovery repeatedly identify a tension between national governments and international actors in regards to ownership of disaster management efforts. Donors and INGOs commonly argue that affected governments do not possess the necessary capacity to plan and implement relevant recovery programs in a timely fashion. Additionally, the lack of transparency and accountability are cited as obstacles to working effectively with or through national governments. On the other side of the argument, many governments argue that international actors often directly implement programs outside the framework of national recovery plans. This autonomous decision-making by external actors cultivates further dependency on foreign aid and resources, and can undermine civic trust in the government and international legitimacy. Sustainability in such cases may be sacrificed as well when the opportunity for institutional capacity development is not sufficiently integrated in relief planning and programs.

The following two cases illustrate some of the challenges for both governments and external actors in realizing country ownership of recovery programs.

Case 1: Inadequate government leadership in the wake of Hurricane Mitch

Following are extracts from a multi-sector evaluation of the Honduran recovery from the disaster unleashed by Hurricane Mitch in 1998. The evaluation was prepared by the ProVention Consortium and the World Bank.

Hurricane Mitch was an exceptional event. It hit Honduras (and other areas of Central America, especially Nicaragua) from 25 October to 1 November, 1998. The hurricane remained static over the isthmus for days, resulting in the largest natural disaster experienced in Honduras in recent memory. Honduras was particularly vulnerable to its effects because of environmental degradation (such as deforestation), rapid population growth, inadequate infrastructure (especially for flood management), and massive disparities in the distribution of wealth, which resulted in extremely vulnerable living conditions for the poorest. Economic losses were estimated at some US\$ 4 billion.

A policy of “all aid is welcome” was adopted. This resulted in a supply driven recovery phase (i.e., the recovery was driven largely by what was offered) rather than a demand driven process (i.e., that Honduras would plan clearly what should and should not be done and provided). No clear criteria existed to determine who was affected by Mitch, to what degree, and therefore who might be eligible for what state and/or international assistance. Without such a basic requirement, coherent, nation-wide strategies and programs could not be established. This was compounded by the fact that the public at large did not receive regular, clear, and unequivocal information on their entitlements to assistance and how to access support.

While the coordination support role by the UN was weak, the donor G-5, subsequently G-15 mechanism, is considered to be a model in that it achieved a significant level of discussion, networking, information exchange, and division of tasks and responsibilities.

Nonetheless, coordination in the group was mainly limited to bilateral donors, and competition and duplication was evident among many international agencies. International recovery efforts worked best where international agencies already had a presence in the country, since they knew partners and the local context. Some international organizations arrived with little or no prior experience in the country, and with staff unable to speak Spanish.

Donors implemented construction projects directly as well as through NGOs and municipal offices. Many bilateral donors funded companies from their own countries. Similar to NGOs, donors “adopted” municipalities. Direct implementation was often favored due to a perceived shortage of national capacity (a perception shared by some government officials), a desire to retain financial control, and a desire to benefit from both the visibility and from the return of a portion of their investment to their own economies. It also reflects a broader international trend to move away from multilateral channels and mechanisms in all phases of international aid. A considerable opportunity to boost national capacity, which in itself would have contributed to transformation, has thus been lost. (p. 20)

The state was unprepared in terms of policy, systems, and resources for rapid recovery. Government leadership, organization, and overall capacity have been inadequate. Occasionally, individual leadership capacities compensated somewhat for an absence of preparedness. The municipal and community level has been key in the recovery phase. The capacities of municipalities varied widely, however. While most were chronically weak, some displayed greater capacity and were able to respond in the absence of external assistance.

Source: Learning Lessons from Disaster Recovery: The Case of Mozambique, Retrieved from http://www.proventionconsortium.org/themes/default/pdfs/recovery_Mozambique.pdf

For an analysis of the progress and achievements in Nicaragua in the 10 years since Hurricane Mitch and the Stockholm Declaration in which donors committed to supporting transformation please see:

Learning from Recovery after Hurricane Mitch: Experience from Nicaragua.

IFRC & ProVention Consortium

http://www.proventionconsortium.org/themes/default/pdfs/Learning_from_Mitch_extended.pdf

Case 2: Recovery leadership following the Mozambique floods

Following are extracts from a multi-sector review of the Mozambique recovery from the 2000 and 2001 floods. This review was also sponsored by the ProVention Consortium and the World Bank.

The government of Mozambique’s objectives and strategies for recovery after both the 2000 and 2001 floods were similar. They aimed to move as quickly as possible from the relief mode to a recovery agenda. Recovery was seen by the government as an

opportunity to move parts of the country forward, acting as an engine for development. Recovery should not merely restore the previous level of development but promote activities that will lead to reducing the vulnerability of the population and infrastructure to future disasters. In general, recovery took place in line with and in support of national reconstruction and development policies (p.6).

There is a long history of donor coordination in Mozambique and a continuing high level of coordination that has increased significantly over the last few years. Every sector has a donor or donor/government focal group. Increasingly, donors and government are moving towards coordinated sector-wide approaches and common mechanisms for appraising, monitoring, and funding sector programs. Health, education, agriculture, roads, and macro-financial support all have particularly strong donor or donor/government groups. Non-sector specific groups also exist, such as the EU Heads of Cooperation Group (DFID 2001). In spite of the scale of donor support and the power that lies in donors' hands, there is a sense of partnership with the government in which the latter keenly exerts its sovereignty. Much of the donor-supported assistance is focused on working with and in support of government departments. However there have been some concerns that donors have weakened public administration by using semi-autonomous project management units and by hiving off government staff to their own projects (Montes 2000).

The agencies involved in post-emergency recovery activities recognized and worked with the local government structures. In some areas that were included in the field work, collaboration has been institutionalized. For example, in northern Inhambane the coordinating committee meets regularly to discuss the post flood situation. The north of Inhambane continues to suffer from natural disasters and is at present in the grip of a severe drought. This is no doubt one of the reasons that the coordination mechanism has survived the initial post flood period. In general there was a willingness by NGOs to work under the chairmanship of the district authorities in the recovery period, a situation not necessarily true of the emergency period. This may be for a number of reasons:

- ✓ NGOs working in the recovery period usually have a history in the area or have the intention to stay in the area for longer than a brief relief effort. It is therefore important to create and maintain good relations with the local authorities.
- ✓ During the relief period there is pressure both to spend money and save lives. Due to a lack of time, collaboration is consistently traded off. Therefore, if there are not strong, pre-existing coordination mechanisms in place, there is little likelihood that they will be created. However, in the recovery period it is necessary that interventions are durable, emphasis begins to change, and collaboration become essential to ensure program success.

Source: Learning Lessons from Disaster Recovery: The Case of Mozambique, Retrieved from http://www.proventionconsortium.org/themes/default/pdfs/recovery_honduras.pdf

The above two case studies illustrate a spectrum of issues that contribute to and arise from the quality of state leadership in recovery efforts. Several potential lessons can be highlighted.

Lesson 1: The development of recovery management capacity throughout sectors and across all levels of government can ensure that the state achieves its right of leadership and is prepared for the responsibility of fulfilling that right.

Lesson 2: Country ownership of disaster recovery requires that the government be prepared to negotiate goals, modalities, and conditions of collaboration with external actors, initiating with the PDNA. While country ownership of recovery efforts is imperative, countries also must recognize that “donor” countries may also face strong expectations from their own public that assistance will be used effectively.

Lesson 3: A clear vision, detailed plan, and knowledge of existing capacity as well as capacity gaps will strengthen a government’s leadership role and will help to guide negotiations with external partners.

Lesson 4: Partnerships with agencies possessing extended experience and established relationships in country can lead to more relevant and timely recovery efforts.

Lesson 5: It is also important that international assistance be cast as “mutual support” rather than international aid. With aid there exists significant political baggage and many countries have refused international assistance because they want to avoid the implication that they do not have sufficient capacity. In reality, catastrophic disasters overload the capacity of any country, whether it is developed or developing, and there is a strong desire among the public in different countries to provide support and solidarity. Thus even “donor countries” should be willing to accept assistance when it is offered.

For further reading on country ownership of the recovery process, please see:

Towards good humanitarian government: The role of the affected state in disaster response. Harvey, Paul. Additional case studies can be accessed as well.

<http://www.odi.org.uk/work/projects/details.asp?id=341&title=role-affected-states-humanitarian-action#resources>

IFRC Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance. IFRC

<http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/idrl/resources/guidelines.asp>

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action

[http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,3343,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00&&en-US\\$01DBC.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,3343,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00&&en-US$01DBC.html)

Sub Issue 2: Identifying the role of local government

Ownership of the recovery process is not only important at the country level, but at the sub-national and regional levels as well. The role of local government in the disaster recovery process is one of the more widely-documented topics regarding governance and disaster management. Like much of the literature, these documents are advocacy documents that promote increased decentralization and greater decision-making power to local government. Underlying many of these arguments is the concept of subsidiarity. Subsidiarity is an organizing principle which says that action should be taken at the lowest effective level of governance. In other words, those tasks which local government have the capacity to manage, should be led by local government, and higher levels of government should only take on responsibilities local officials cannot assume.

Without the capacity to manage the huge commitment of resources necessary for post-disaster recovery, local governments are often cast in a more passive role and their existing capacity is overlooked (at least initially) by centralized recovery management bodies and international organizations (Bollin, Cardenas, Hahn, & Vatsa, 2003). Additionally, it is important to recognize that local governments' own capacities may have been impacted as the result of the disaster event – through deaths or injuries to their staff or the families of the their staff, damaged assets and diminished revenue flows – and identify the means to reinvigorate and strengthen local capacity through international assistance and the recovery process.

Examples of the diminished role of local governments include Sri Lanka and Maldives following the 2004 tsunami (UNDP, 2006) and Peru after the 2007 earthquake (UNISDR, 2010). While local governments may lack the capacity to manage large-scale recovery initiatives, their potential contributions to long term sustainable recovery and increased disaster resilience are significant:

- Local governments are more familiar with local social, economic, environmental and political systems. This means that they are frequently better placed to assess the needs of the affected communities and devise more relevant recovery programs and risk reduction measures.

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- Local government leaders (particularly when elected) are often more accountable to their constituencies than central governments. This provides them with an incentive to ensure greater quality of recovery services.
- Local governments are typically responsible for development planning of their respective constituencies. Their leadership is critical if 1) recovery efforts are to be effectively aligned with long term development goals, and 2) risk reduction measures are to be mainstreamed in both recovery and development plans.
- Local governments are on-site. Their established presence makes them ideal candidates to coordinate recovery efforts.

When defining the role of local government two important considerations are:

1. *The legal and institutional framework for decentralization* as this is likely to be an important factor in determining the effectiveness of local government in the post-disaster recovery phase. If government is not decentralized, the disaster recovery period may not be the most appropriate time to decentralize authority (yet this should not prevent local officials from playing other key roles). Decentralized governments come in many forms, not all of which possess equal authority or support from the central government. Experienced decision-making and planning of complex initiatives are crucial components of effective recovery management.
2. *Local government capacity both pre- and post-disaster.* Local governments in a weakened state prior to a natural disaster may not have the leadership, infrastructure, public trust, or resources to play a major role in the recovery process. Poor pre-existing governance is only made worse by a disaster and the recovery process should be perceived as an opportunity to strengthen local institutions. Likewise, local governments heavily impacted by a disaster may require considerable capacity-building before taking on a leadership role in local recovery. The establishment of a nationally-led coordinating body in Aceh and Nias, following the Tsunami, was a result of limited local government capacity (See Case 3).

Case 3: The case for a national recovery agency in Aceh

In Indonesia district governments carry a major responsibility for delivery of public services. Due to its special autonomy, the district of Aceh also had quite significant resources. However, in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the district government of Aceh was quickly overwhelmed due to poor planning, low capacities and incidences of corruption (World Bank, 2005). Due to the conflict in Aceh, the district governments had been struggling to discharge their decentralized functions already prior to the disaster (ibid). Service delivery was particularly poor in rural areas (BAPPENAS, 2005), there were gaps in the legislative framework, and the region-centre relationship was unclear. Additionally, assessments indicated that district governments in both Aceh

and Nias did not even possess the capacity to maintain and rebuild meso-level infrastructure (e.g. district-level roads, dykes, sewerage and water-supply), which was normally the preserve of local government (World Bank, 2005).

A team led by the National Planning Development Board (BAPPENAS) formulated a Master Plan for the recovery of Aceh and Nias, involving a wide range of stakeholders in the process – including line ministries and local government representatives. Reflecting the weakness of local governments in the Tsunami stricken areas, the Master Plan provided for the establishment of the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency (BRR). The BRR was initially tasked to coordinate recovery efforts – with its core function being to match resources with priority needs. However as the massive process progressed, BRR also took on implementation responsibilities. Headquarters were established in Aceh, but after a year BRR realized the need to open district level offices.

As part of its initial strategy the BRR focused on developing the capacity of local governments to manage their affairs and deliver effective services – reflecting the weakness of local governments discussed above. In addition to this the BRR also focused on enhancing the effectiveness of the relationship between central government agencies and local governments (World Bank, 2005:20-21).

Sources:

Local governments and disaster risk reduction, Retrieved from:

http://www.preventionweb.net/files/13627_LocalGovernmentsandDisasterRiskRedu.pdf

After the tsunami: Lessons from reconstruction, Retrieved from:

http://www.sbeneworleans.com/news/article.cfm?content_id=1143

Building Back Better: What To Do with Capacity in Crisis, Retrieved from:

http://www.capacityisdevelopment.org/docss/UNDP%20capacity%20development%20global%20event_speech_Kuntoro%20Mangkusubroto.pdf

Lesson 1: By physically establishing BRR in Aceh and Nias, and providing it with sufficient authority, the agency was exposed to “on the ground” realities and could make appropriate decisions without being burdened by excessive bureaucracy that can impede nationally-led recovery missions.

Lesson 2: Engaging local government in the recovery process while progressively building their capacity is critical where local government is responsible for development planning and dealing with the consequences of recovery initiatives.

For further information on the role of local government in the recovery process, please see:

World Bank Community Driven Development toolkit. World Bank

<http://www.worldbank.org/socialfunds>

Local Governments and Disaster Risk Reduction -Good Practices and Lessons Learned. UNISDR

http://www.preventionweb.net/files/13627_LocalGovernmentsandDisasterRiskRedu.pdf

The role of local institutions in reducing vulnerability to recurrent natural disasters and in sustainable livelihoods development – Philippines. ADPC

http://www.preventionweb.net/files/8317_a0879e.pdf

Local Governance in Tsunami Recovery: Lessons Learned and Emerging Principles. UNDP

http://www.recoveryplatform.org/assets/recoverycases_reports/Local_Gov_Tsunami_Recovery_2006.pdf

Local governance: Preconditions for effective disaster risk management

http://www.recoveryplatform.org/assets/recoverycases_reports/local_gov_preconditons_for_effective_disaster_risk_management.pdf

Issue 2: Participation

Sub Issue 1: Participation and governance

To what extent people have a say in decisions that affect them, how they are involved in implementing them, and who the decisions finally benefit are critical questions when reflecting on governance in the disaster recovery context. Building on theory and practice in the context of development, advocacy for increased public participation in disaster recovery initiatives has resulted in a widespread acceptance of its benefits and a growing use of participatory approaches. The arguments for participation are many, but they can be roughly grouped into two categories: those that view empowerment of people as the primary goal and those that view policy and program effectiveness as the defining purpose. These two arguments are by no means mutually exclusive, but rather should be viewed as a means to better understand the spectrum of meanings given to participation in practice.

Arguments for participation as a means to empower people focus on transforming structures and institutions that marginalize some people while benefitting others. Associated approaches attempt to create a greater balance in decision-making, the access to and control over resources, and the opportunities afforded to people to improve their well-being. In this sense, active participation in decision-making and implementation can empower people (although this is not always the case). Recently, such arguments and approaches are most notably espoused by entities (government or otherwise) that take a rights-based approach to development. From this perspective, people's participation in making decisions that will affect them is considered a universal human right. Within the context of disaster recovery, 'participation for empowerment' approaches ideally attempt to:

1. Empower individuals and groups to take greater control over decisions that may profoundly affect their ability to recover;
2. Ensure that recovery efforts are equitable; particularly benefitting those in greatest need; and
3. Address the many social, political, and economic vulnerabilities that expose people to greater disaster risk.

Arguments for participation as a means of improving the effectiveness of policies and programs are, in general, a reaction to decades of largely ineffective top-down approaches to development. This instrumental argument for participation postulates that people themselves possess the important contextual knowledge and skills necessary to make services relevant and sustainable. In the post-disaster context, when issues and needs are even more complex, proponents for participation argue that participation is even more critical. Top-down, one size-fits-all approaches not only limit the potential impact of recovery aid and waste valuable resources, but in many cases, they

inadvertently create new obstacles for people struggling to recover their lives and livelihoods. From this perspective, participation strengthens the recovery process by:

1. Aligning policies and programs with the actual needs and priorities of those they intend to serve.
2. Engaging a broader array of skills, knowledge and experience to address development challenges.
3. Increasing the beneficiaries' sense of ownership of an initiative, thus enabling greater sustainability.
4. Identifying, engaging, and developing local capacity to design and implement recovery initiatives.
5. Making policies and initiatives more accountable to those whom they intend to benefit.

Sub Issue 2: Managing Haste

The participation of intended beneficiaries in disaster recovery planning and programming is now generally considered to be good practice and is cited as a common component in most project and program proposals. However, in spite of the many noted benefits of community involvement, the lack of participation has been consistently cited as an impediment to effective and sustainable disaster recovery programming. One of the major reasons for this is the haste with which the recovery process is frequently carried out. A World Bank research report on gender in the reconstruction of Nicaragua and Honduras following the 1998 hurricane Mitch noted that:

Most NGOs and government agencies reported that, due to time and resource constraints, they 'shortened' the consultative process and relied on formal political leaders to convey municipal or local needs. In Honduras, most decision-making about housing resettlement took place at meetings between mayors and elected shelter leaders, who were almost exclusively male. In Nicaragua, organizations claimed that they lacked the capacity to reach local communities and relied on mayors as "interlocutors" of their needs. This resulted in an observed decrease in participation in general, and in women's participation in particular. All of these actors reported a constant pressure to act more quickly (Delaney & Shrader, 2001).

Several important factors that contribute to the overwhelming pressure to respond and rebuild quickly include:

1. Donor funding periods are often unrealistically short. This places pressure on recovery actors to act quickly, in order to ensure the funds are used.

2. Showing visible results is often deemed necessary to secure additional funding and assistance. This pressure may be felt by governments, I/NGOs, and donors who may forfeit a longer, more involved assessment process, in order to achieve visible and quantifiable results.
3. Affected communities almost immediately take action to rebuild their homes, replace and rebuild assets, and search out means to recreate a livelihood. Without the benefit of new knowledge, and technical support, these efforts may simply recreate the same pre-existing vulnerable conditions.

Examples abound of situations where initiatives have proven irrelevant and even harming when community involvement has been forfeited for the sake of haste. One of the better-known illustrations of this is the widespread replacement of fishing boats following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. Poor or no consultation with the beneficiary communities led to: 1) boats of substandard quality which were often unused or abandoned, 2) an oversupply of boats, 3) the replacement of shallow water boats but not larger deep water boats, 4) the failure to provide other necessities such as nets, and in some cases, even motors, 5) a disregard of the many livelihood needs of others along the market chain. In many cases, this resulted in overfishing which subsequently diminished the economic and environmental sustainability of fishing-related livelihoods. One report noted that many NGOs continued to provide boats, despite their awareness of the oversupply issue and its potential consequences (Jayasuriya et al. 2005).

Although it cannot be refuted that this sense of urgency exists, research, based on the analysis of sixty case studies, indicates that the perception that participatory methods are too time-consuming is a myth (Jeffries, 2000). In fact, “the most effective humanitarian interventions capitalized on existing resources, wisdom and methods already put to use by residents” (Ibid, pg. 6). This argument is based on the fact that affected populations are typically the most familiar with their physical, social, and economic environment and that they begin their own processes of recovery, with or without external assistance. Furthermore, most of the recovery resources and sweat equity will ultimately come from the community itself and its broader support network and not from agencies providing international assistance. Therefore assistance that does not build upon these efforts, risks impeding self-help activities, fostering dependency, and diminishing the potential for sustainability. Conversely, recovery assistance that supports local initiatives can be a more effective and efficient means of aiding affected populations as illustrated by the Government of Indonesia’s housing reconstruction initiative following the Yogyakarta earthquake.

Case 4: Gotong Royong and community driven reconstruction in Yogyakarta

On May 27, 2006, a 6.3 magnitude earthquake occurred just southwest of the city of Yogyakarta, Indonesia on the island of Java. In addition to the 5,749 deaths and 38,000 injuries, over 127,000 houses were completely destroyed and more than 450,000 were damaged. In the immediate aftermath, women and men worked together to organize

their communities to respond to immediate needs in the absence of external support. This manifestation of mutual support is deeply rooted in Javanese culture. It is referred to as *gotong royong*, and has been translated as ‘volunteerism’, ‘mutual and reciprocal assistance’, ‘labor exchange’, and the ‘cooperation of many to achieve a shared goal.’

Following the 2006 earthquake, the Indonesian government initiated a housing reconstruction initiative in the Special Region of Yogyakarta that complimented the principle of *gotong royong*. Elected village boards identified the beneficiaries, prioritizing the most vulnerable and divided them into groups. Each group consisted of 10 to 15 families, who would chose amongst them a leader, secretary, and treasurer to oversee the reconstruction process. Upon approval of its implementation plan, each group received funding in a collective bank account. The funding was distributed in three tranches, based upon progress levels identified in the plan. Group members would work together as a unit helping one another to rebuild their houses. As the government insisted that houses be built to disaster resistant standards, the reconstruction program included a Community Empowerment Program (CEP) which provided training for both homeowners and skilled trades-people in disaster resistant building methods. Additionally, Housing Task Force teams were established to help the community groups ensure that seismic building standards were met.

Source: IRP Recovery Status Report 01 Yogyakarta, Retrieved from http://www.recoveryplatform.org/assets/publication/RecoveryStatusReport/RecoveryStatusReport_Yogyakarta.pdf

Lesson 1: This cultural value and tradition of mutual help was a key enabling factor for the rapid recovery process that took place in Yogyakarta. The housing reconstruction initiative illustrates the importance of designing recovery initiatives that reflect community values not just in the outcomes, but in the process as well, aligned to local traditions.

Lesson 2: An outstanding outcome of well-designed community driven initiatives is the building of social capital. Such initiatives can strengthen bonds between community members, provide the opportunity for affected populations to provide aid and mutual support, and encourage continued community driven development.

Sub Issue 3: Defining participation in practice

Often, heroic claims are made for participatory approaches (Cleaver, 2001). While many participatory-based recovery initiatives have achieved some of these claims, such as sustainability, increased effectiveness and even empowerment, many more have failed to realize participation’s promises. At the heart of most of these failures lies a misalignment between how participation is practiced and what project/program

initiators hope, and realistically can expect, to achieve through participation. Much of the cause of this misalignment is due to a poor understanding of what participation means in practice.

As already evidenced by the various arguments for participation, the term is not easily defined. Participation in practice is a portmanteau of different objectives, approaches and methodologies. Participation may refer to information sharing or a one way consultation with participants. Equally, participation may be manifest as community-defined and led initiatives in which agencies provide selected financial and technical support. A widely-recognized framework for participation in practice is illustrated in Box 1 below. This framework, usefully classifies various levels of participation within the post-disaster environment.

Box 1: Types of participation

<i>Type of Participation</i>	<i>Description</i>
<i>Passive participation</i>	The affected population is informed of what is going to happen or what has occurred. While this is considered by many as a fundamental right of the people concerned it is not one that is always respected.
<i>Participation through the supply of information</i>	The affected population provides information in response to questions, but it has no influence over the process, since survey results are not shared and their accuracy is not verified.
<i>Participation by consultation</i>	The affected population is asked for its perspective on a given subject, but it has no decision-making powers, and no guarantee that its views will be taken into consideration.
<i>Participation through material incentives</i>	The affected population supplies some of the materials and/or labour needed to operationalise an intervention, in exchange for a payment in cash or in kind from the aid organisation.
<i>Participation through the supply of materials</i>	The affected population supplies some of the materials, cash and/ or labour needed to operationalise an intervention. This includes cost-recovery mechanisms.
<i>Interactive participation</i>	The affected population participates in the analysis of needs and in programme conception, and has decision-making powers.

Local initiatives

The affected population takes the initiative, acting independently of external organisations or institutions. Although it may call on external bodies to support its initiatives, the project is conceived and run by the community; it is the recovery agency or aid organisation that participates in the population's projects.

Source: Participation by Crisis-Affected Populations in Humanitarian Action - A Handbook for Practitioners, Retrieved from www.alnap.org/pool/files/gs_handbook.pdf

Noting the many levels of participation, it becomes apparent that the extent to which each level of participation will contribute to meeting participation-oriented goals is quite different. For instance, an initiative that solely incorporates participation by consultation may gain a better understanding of recovery needs, but should not expect to facilitate greater ownership of the initiative's outcomes nor enhance its sustainability.

As popular as participation and its claimed outcomes have become in disaster recovery initiatives, too often plans and proposals lack a clear strategy that identifies the type and tools of participation to be applied and their linkages to recovery goals. This ambiguity can quickly result in frustration for all involved and even a disregard or abandonment of participation altogether. The example in Case 5 of a 'participatory' reconstruction initiative in El Salvador illustrates how the failure to carefully develop a participation strategy led to unrealistic expectations and increased hardships for the participating households.

Case 5: Participatory housing project in El Salvador

On January 13, 2001, an earthquake of magnitude 7.6 on the Richter scale shook El Salvador. About 3000 homes were completely destroyed in the municipality of Lamaria, and 13,440 people were affected. A project, called La Hermandad, was launched as a participatory housing reconstruction project in which 50 eligible families would receive food for the work involved in constructing the houses. The families chosen earned no more than two minimum salaries and had never have owned a house or a plot of land in their life.

Overall, the participants' input in project design was limited to endorsing the housing design proposed by the NGO but with one extra demand: to add a wall around each individual plot of land. One adult per nuclear family had to work 150 hours per month, family members were to reside full-time on the construction site, and they had to respect a series of regulations.

In order to have access to a new anti-seismic house, 80% of the beneficiaries had to abandon their other remunerated activities in order to comply with the mandatory working hours and receive the food aid. This entailed a major or total loss of income for the entire duration of the reconstruction process. Due to various problems such as an

overall increase in physical fatigue and health problems, partially due to irregularity in food distribution and an unbalanced diet, project completion was delayed by several months.

The project also included a social component - the creation of six “social committees” organized by a social worker. The purpose of this component was to foster a sense of community in La Hermandad, an objective which was regularly insisted upon during the monthly general assemblies, where project supervisors would encourage beneficiaries to get along better, work harder (as the project was lagging behind) and realize that they were now forming part of a “new community”.

This communitarian ideal, a standard in both development and reconstruction projects, remained precisely that, an ideal. With little decision-making authority the social committees remained ineffective, divisions between beneficiaries increased over time as lack of income and physical exhaustion became difficult to endure, while at the same time workers were asked to perform harder and faster. Furthermore, project leaders banned a participants’ initiative to form a local representative body with official legal status, so long as the construction process was still underway. In other words, they did not wish to see their authority undermined by an initiative, which could have indeed enhanced a sense of social cohesion among the beneficiaries.

Sources: Truths and myths about community participation in post-disaster housing projects, Retrieved from <http://www.cbr.tulane.edu/PDFs/davidsonetal2006.pdf>

Lesson 1: With an almost exclusively top-down management approach, the objective of building social cohesion was virtually impossible to achieve. Social cohesion is a result of negotiated decisions made amongst a group of people that benefit the group as a whole. Although participation was an explicit piece of the project, the level of participation was inadequate to meet the objective of strengthening a sense of community.

Lesson 2: By failing to negotiate the terms of participation with the participating households, the project created excessive demands on them; thereby delaying completion, creating health problems, and most importantly, obstructing the recovery of livelihoods.

Lesson 3: The ban placed on community organization illustrates an important consideration in participatory approaches – that of power. Greater participation, necessary to achieve such objectives as social cohesion, requires greater trust and a greater transfer of decision-making authority. If projects are unwilling to accord this authority to participants, than it is advisable to refrain from attempting to achieve such goals and potentially creating frustration, conflict, and event rejection of the project as a result of false expectations.

Who is being asked to participate in what? Too often participation is still viewed as a program component, which can quickly lead to multiple actors supporting community action planning efforts in the same towns and villages. Fully embracing participation means supporting communities' own recovery plans and looking at how agency resources can help contribute to those local recovery plans.

Sub Issue 4: Creating a participation strategy

Preparing a strong and clear participation strategy will help to prevent the loss of valuable time and resources towards unrealistic outcomes while limiting false expectations, conflicts, and mistrust between recovery agencies and affected communities. A participation strategy should define:

1. The desired objectives of the initiative;
2. The various actors involved;
3. The purpose of participation;
4. The level or type of participation to be applied;
5. The participatory methodology, tools, and activities to be used and how they contribute to the outcomes; and
6. The means of engaging with communities – directly or via other agencies, NGOs, etc

One example of a well-detailed participation strategy is the Government of Pakistan's Livelihood Recovery Plan for populations affected by the 2005 Kashmir Earthquake (See Case 6). Recognizing that affected populations typically possess the largest share of knowledge concerning their livelihood needs and means of recovery, the government initiated a community-driven livelihood recovery approach

Case 6: Government supported and community-driven recovery in Pakistan

The Government of Pakistan established the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) on October 24, 2005 to lead the recovery efforts following the Kashmir Earthquake. Based on extensive research of prior post-earthquake reconstruction initiatives, ERRA developed a community-driven livelihood recovery strategy comprised of four objectives:

1. To restore livelihoods in the affected areas to, at least, pre-earthquake conditions;
2. To effectively coordinate livelihood rehabilitation activities, preventing duplication and ensuring equitable coverage;
3. To strengthen CBOs and communities in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating community livelihood rehabilitation plans; and
4. To restore and enhance the capacities of livelihood related line departments.

One of the key components of ERRA's Livelihoods Rehabilitation Strategy is the Community Investment Funds (CIFs). These funds are a resource that is made available by ERRA where high priority needs of the affected populations have not met with support from other sources – NGO, Government or other donors. The distribution of funds is determined on the basis of the Community Livelihoods Rehabilitation Plans (CLRPs). These plans are intended to support communities' access to resources where they set priorities, conceptualize, plan, implement and evaluate development initiatives.

Local level community based organizations (CBOs) in each village are the basic medium for designing and carrying out the CLRPs initiatives. Support is provided to these CBOs through appropriate line agencies and local government and partner NGOs. For villages that have no established CBO, the respective partner NGOs are responsible to work with communities to facilitate the organization of community groups. In these cases, the partner NGOs also provides organizational development training (e.g. accounting, book-keeping, community management and local level resource mobilization mechanisms like credit, savings and other extension support) for the newly formed CBOs. Where no partner NGO is available for organizing the communities, the task is undertaken by line agencies like Agriculture Extension or Livestock Department.

Livelihood coordination units (LCUs) are established within the national, provincial and state levels within the ERRA. Livelihood Working Committees (LWCs) are established within each District Reconstruction Unit (DRU) and are comprised of all the agencies (line departments, I/NGOs, local government) supporting livelihood rehabilitation in the district. Together these bodies determine which agencies will support which communities to draw up their CLRPs, ensuring that no areas are omitted. They also maintain ongoing coordination, networking and data management responsibilities as well as the review and approval of the CLRPs for funding.

Once the CLRP is approved and funding is distributed, the village CBO, with assistance from their partner NGOs and appropriate government agencies, are responsible to implement, monitor and evaluate the project. The village CBOs and partner organizations sign a MoU with the respective DRU and the partner organization is provided a 10% service charge. Some examples of the type of projects are: setting up of kitchen gardens, tree nurseries, fruit orchards; skill development and vocational training, such as in embroidery; provision of community facilities such as grinding mills, bridal paths, irrigation channels, micro-hydroelectric projects, and suspension bridges.

ERRA's Livelihood programme is unique in the sense that it not only benefits the community directly, but is also being implemented, with active participation and collaboration of all concerned, in the earthquake affected areas. ERRA and its partners have experienced various challenges and learnt important lessons, while implementing its Livelihood Programme. ERRA, therefore, intends to share its experiences locally as well as internationally to get feedback for refinement and further improvement

Sources: ERRA website, Retrieved from <http://www.erra.pk/aboutus/erra.asp#EA>

ERRA Livelihood Strategy, Retrieved from http://www.erra.pk/Reports/Livelihood_%20strategy111206.pdf

Build Back Better: Lessons Learned From the Experience of ERRA - Part B, Retrieved from <http://www.erra.pk/Reports/Publications/Leasons%20Learnt/PartB.pdf>

Lesson 1: Large-scale bottom-up participatory approaches cannot be effective without significant top-down support. In addition to financial support, technical and organizational support may be required to enable communities to realize their recovery objectives. Additionally, higher level organization can connect communities to each other, allowing them to share ideas and experiences to improve their own processes and objectives.

Lesson 2: Community-driven approaches require commitment and trust. This may be challenged by the pressure to show progress quickly. However, this should be balanced by the potential outcomes the participatory approach intends to achieve. Understanding that community ownership of the initiative would greatly increase the likelihood of sustainability, the ERRA extended its projected completion date when certain communities required considerable capacity development to design, manage, and evaluate their recovery plans. This trade-off between time and quality is an important consideration, but one which should be determined in the initial planning stages. Taking control of projects from communities can result in frustration and even rejection of project outcomes.

Lesson 3: Learning from prior experiences and adapting ideas appropriately can help initiatives to avoid pitfalls and provide useful perspectives. Evaluating and documenting the process and outcomes further develops local, national and global understanding of good recovery practices, benefitting governments, populations, and other recovery actors in responding to ongoing and future disasters.

Sub Issue 5: Facilitating participation

A wide variety of partnerships have been developed to engage beneficiaries in the recovery process. Civil society has played an important and effective role in engaging communities in recovery initiatives. Governments have worked through locally elected officials, cooperatives, I/NGOs, trade unions, religious groups and other organizations and leadership bodies within affected communities to identify opportunities and facilitate participation.

In most any community, a whole range of organizations are operating: formal or informal, traditional or modern, indigenous or externally established. All these have different functions, be they productive, social, religious, or otherwise. It is often through these organizations, that demand is expressed, participatory processes organized, and development services delivered. Some of the most active community organizations are informal. They are not listed in any documents and they maybe unknown even to people familiar with the communities (extension agents, local development agency staff, and so forth). Learning about these groups entails visiting the communities and talking with inhabitants about the decision-making units present (World Bank, 1996).

Case 7: Partners facilitating participation

In Bangladesh, the government partnered with a local NGO called BRAC to facilitate community-led livelihood recovery. BRAC had established long standing relationships with local communities since the 1970's through a wide range of services (including micro-finance, education, health and others) (Beck, 2005).

Following the Gujarat earthquake of 2001, the Government of India partnered with SEWA, the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) to implement a seven-year community-driven livelihood security project for rural households. SEWA, a trade union providing services to women working in the informal sector, was chosen because of its presence in the project area, its reputation for community capacity building and its widespread membership base in the form of women's federations or self help groups (IFAD, 2005)

In the capital city of Nicaragua, an initiative to upgrade and protect public infrastructure from flood damage, collaborated with the Sandinista Defense Committees - neighborhood groups formed during the Nicaragua Revolution. Because of their structure, motivation, and the cohesion of their members, they proved an extremely effective instrument for reaching and involving the local population (World Bank, 1996).

After a series of devastating typhoons hit the Philippines, the department of education developed a program to rebuild schools to disaster resistant standards wherein principal or school heads, along with Parent Teacher & Community Associations, took charge of the implementation and management of the reconstruction (Luna et al., 2008).

Based on experience in disaster recovery and development, several factors are worth consideration when identifying community organizations or other partners to facilitate participation:

1. What formal and informal organizations exist within the affected community? How do they make decisions? Who participates in the decision-making process and who is represented?

2. How well does the organization represent the affected community? Is it an inclusive or exclusive organization and does it/can it work to engage the voices of all those affected, including socially/economically/politically marginalized peoples. Is it recognized and respected by the community?
3. Does its rationalization for participation align with the initiating agency? Do the initiating agency and the potential partner organization agree on the purpose and level of participation? Some organizations may view participation primarily as empowerment, which could put them at cross purposes with an initiative whose goal is to improve its effectiveness and vice versa.
4. If the partner is not community-based, does it have an established presence in the community? How well does it understand the local governance system, the community's organizational structures, and its cultural values and practices? Can it work effectively with these systems, structures, and values?
5. What experience does the organization have in facilitating decision-making and implementation? What skills and training does it require to do so? Can it effectively facilitate the process without trying to direct it?

Working with traditional authorities can be particularly effective. The example in Case 8 describes how a partnership with traditional fishing authorities was able to strengthen the fishing sector and the individual livelihoods of boat owners, captains, and crew. However, even within traditional governance systems, certain groups may lack representation. Therefore, it is crucial to probe deeply to ensure that participation is inclusive and those groups at greatest need are provided equal opportunities to benefit.

Case 8: Collaborating with traditional authorities to recover livelihoods in Indonesia

When a tsunami struck Aceh in Northern Sumatra, Indonesia on 26 December 2004, it killed 186,000 people and caused widespread destruction. Many fishers died and, as a consequence, much knowledge of coastal areas, fishing grounds, ocean currents and navigational hazards disappeared. Over the centuries, such information had been transferred from father to son. With its loss, fishers often damaged or lost their nets on underwater obstructions, and faced difficulties in identifying their position at sea. This impacted the livelihoods of boat owners, captains, crews, and families.

To recover fishing know-how, the project partnered with the Panglima Laot, Aceh's traditional fishing authority, to undertake a community-based bathymetric survey and map the ocean floor.

In existence for more than 4 centuries, the Panglima Laot is a network of local fishers' associations that share a strict set of rules and regulations. There are currently 193 Panglima Laot in Aceh, each one centered on an estuary or a harbor. Panglima Laot is both the name of the institution as well as the title of the elders who lead the organization. Their responsibilities include arbitrating disputes, regulating fishing areas, and organizing rescues. Should a fisher violate its strict code of conduct, the Panglima

Laot can “ground” the boat. If the fisher continues to disobey rules, the Panglima Laot can forbid him to sell fish in the market, confiscate the catch, and, in rare cases, prohibit a fisher from operating in the area.

The survey used readily available and affordable technology. The participating captains were provided with 63 Global Positioning System (GPS) sounders that are locally available at a cost of \$750 per boat. With the installation of the sounders on artisanal fishing boats selected by the Panglima Laot, fishers could navigate more easily and automatically gather the data needed to map the ocean floor. In return for installation of the GPS sounders, facilitated by training, captains allowed project staff to come aboard, download map data, and copy catch logs. New navigational maps were drawn from the data. These were then distributed at navigational training courses to over 486 captains, fisheries department staff, and enforcement officials. It was the first time that many had ever seen such maps.

The survey’s bottom-up approach worked better than expected. In a little over 7 months, fishers were able to collect over 5 million data points and produce a better map of the area than had ever been made before. Comparing their collective traditional know-how with currently available navigational and scientific knowledge, they were able to identify three previously unmapped sea mounts, 4 unmapped geologic faults, and a large number of formerly “unknown” coral areas. A significant direct benefit was that the incidence of damaged nets fell from an average of 38 per year to just one.

Survey-related project activities built capacities sector-wide. Fishers learned to frame and respond to a variety of organizational, technical, and scientific questions. The Panglima Laot also developed more transparent accounting practices and reporting procedures. As a group, the fishers greatly improved their relationships with the provincial Department of Fisheries, the Marine Police, the Department of the Interior, and local academic institutions.

Several beneficial outcomes from the project had not been anticipated:

- fishers saved fuel by navigating directly to and from fishing grounds
- one of the 3 previously unmapped sea mounts may add about 13,000 square kilometers to Indonesian waters, thereby extending the country’s boundaries
- in one case, and there may have been more, knowing exactly where they were saved the lives of a captain and his 18 crew members who were able to radio their position after their boat broke
- close cooperation between the Panglima Laot, government agencies, and local universities set the stage for better management of Aceh’s coastal resources

Source: Mapping the Sea: Knowledge for Natural Resources Management, Retrieved from <http://www.adb.org/Documents/Information/Knowledge-Showcase/Mapping-the-Sea.pdf>

Lesson 1: Governance is not the exclusive practice of formal governments. Other institutions exist, formal or otherwise, by which populations take decisions and designate authority. Working with and through these governance systems (when they are respected and respect those they serve) can help to better align government led recovery efforts with those of individuals and communities.

Lesson 2: Developing sustained relationships with traditional governance bodies, such as the Panglima Laot can help to ensure that recovery initiatives correspond with locally-identified needs values and longer term development plans.

There is no clear prescription for facilitating participation for success, however several common factors exist that are found to enable the process. Participatory approaches to disaster recovery have met with considerable success, particularly when:

- The reason for employing a participatory approach is clearly defined and aligned with an appropriate level of participation, facilitation, and support.
- The commitment to participation is valued and uncompromised; ensuring that the extent of participation is mutually agreed upon and respected throughout the initiative, in spite of other pressures such as time.
- The initiative is willing to adapt and alter its objectives and processes based on the input of participating populations.
- The flow of information is transparent, accessible by all, and multi-directional.
- The local skills, knowledge and capacities are actively sought after, recognized, engaged, and built upon.

For further information on participation of affected populations in the recovery process, please see:

Participation by Crisis-Affected Populations in Humanitarian Action - A Handbook for Practitioners. ALNAP
www.alnap.org/pool/files/qs_handbook.pdf

Participatory Planning Guide for Post-Disaster Reconstruction. Environmental Planning Collaborative et al.
<http://www.tcqilc.com/tcqidocs/TCGI%20Disaster%20Guide.pdf>

Truths and Myths about Community Participation in Post-Disaster Housing Projects. Davidson, C.H. et al.
<http://kerrn.org/pdf/davidsonetal2006.pdf>

Women's Participation in Disaster Relief and Recovery. Yonder, A. Akcar, S. & Gopalan, P.
<http://www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/seeds/Seeds22.pdf>

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The Sustainable Community Rehabilitation Handbook. Shaw, R. & Okazaki, K.
<http://www.hyogo.uncrd.or.jp/publication/pdf/Guide/HandBook.pdf>

Community participation in rebuilding in the Maldives. IFRC
http://www.proventionconsortium.org/themes/default/pdfs/IFRC_Maldives_recovery07.pdf

Issue 3: Communicating

Sub Issue 1: Communication and governance

Communication can be defined as “the imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by speech, writing, or signs”. With respect to governance, communication serves as the means to raise issues and needs; inform decisions; raise awareness of resulting actions; and evaluate both the decision and the actions taken.

Within the disaster recovery process, data, information and effective communication are the basis for:

- Conducting sound assessments,
- Developing relevant policies and programs,
- Engaging and coordinating the assistance of recovery actors,
- Building trust and support,
- Curbing corruption,
- Learning and improving practice,
- Promoting sustainability, and
- Reducing future risk.

Effective information exchange is particularly critical in the constantly changing post-disaster environment. Damage and loss occurring throughout complex and interdependent systems (e.g. economies, ecosystems, and social systems) require a wide range of information needs and significant dialogue to prevent new shocks and stresses to recovering populations. Where many different actors are involved - partnering and providing multiple services to multiple groups often under short deadlines - the quality of communication becomes increasingly important. Furthermore, the unique impacts of a disaster on each individual, household, and community require highly contextual approaches. Ensuring that the right amount and type of information is exchanged and accurately presented at each point of transfer will directly impact the effectiveness and efficiency of the recovery process.

Sub Issue 2: Encouraging greater dialogue with affected populations

The aforementioned definition of communication makes reference to two types of communication, that of imparting information and that of interchanging (or exchanging) information.

1. Imparting, or disseminating, information is a one-way form of communication, particularly useful for informing large and dispersed populations of relevant

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policies and available assistance. Additionally, one way communication should be used when the information is not subject to discussion or change.

2. Exchanging information is a two way form of communication that focuses on dialog and tends towards greater mutual understanding. Two-way communication is particularly useful, even necessary, to effectively navigate the many needs, priorities, and constraints associated with recovery programming.

Consequences of limited dialogue

Both types of communication have appropriate applications throughout the recovery process. However in practice, a much greater share of communication with affected populations is one-way, even when dialogue would result in more appropriate and effective policies and programs.

This reflects a continued tendency towards top-down decision-making and the failure to recognize the critical role communities play in their own recovery. Examples abound of large-scale recovery initiatives providing irrelevant and unsustainable assistance due to a lack of consultation and dialogue with affected peoples about their own recovery needs and priorities.

Case 9: Impacts of one-way communication on project relevance

Mozambique

The subsequent floods of 2001 affected an additional 500,000 people, of which 223,000 were displaced. In total, over 40,000 families were resettled to less flood-prone areas. Due to a lack of consultation, and a resulting sense of helplessness and dependency, the resettlement created significant hardship for individuals now forced to reinvent new livelihoods or migrate long distances to their farmlands or to distant cities for work. This also disrupted social and family dynamics, particularly when men were forced to leave their families throughout the week to earn a living. Many families simply refused to leave their lands, and rebuilt their homes within the floodplains (Wiles, et al., 2005).

The Maldives

There was an unprecedented investment by aid agencies in infrastructure (non-existent prior to the tsunami). However, the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition found that in most cases, these facilities were lying abandoned and unused – the fish markets were intended to be run by fisheries cooperatives in a context where cooperatives have historically not existed, while the construction of the waste management facilities was not accompanied by any awareness-raising campaigns on hygiene and civic responsibility, or the potential economic benefits of waste recycling (Brusset, et al., 2009, p. 68).

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While many initiatives do consult those they intend to serve, this does not always constitute dialogue. Impact evaluations of recovery efforts worldwide consistently cite the frustration of affected populations - fatigued by surveys and left with little or no sense of who is conducting them and to what end. The following quotes in Case 10 illustrate the lack of two-way communication in recovery initiatives and the resulting impacts.

Case 10: Frustrations of inadequate information sharing

Solomon Islands

- × “Awareness about international aid should be shared equally among the rural populace. For example, we hear about funds for a cattle project only after all the funds have been used.” *Education officer, Auki, Malaita*
- × “NGOs and government made too many promises which did not eventuate. A lot of interviews were done in communities, but nothing forthcoming. We were given high hopes that assistance will be coming. Days, months, years passed by, still no green light. No moa trust lo olketa nao [We don’t trust them anymore now].” *Women leader in Visale, West Guadalcanal*

Aceh, Indonesia

- × A large number of people expressed their dismay that they did not have enough information about aid and aid processes. “I do not want to blame anyone; I just want information,” said one man as he commented on problems with aid distributions. Another said, “If people are getting different aid, they need to know why.” Others said: “If we understand, then we can be patient.”
- × “They gave our village ten boats. But why ten boats? It just seemed arbitrary.” “I do not know the system of aid, and cannot read and write, so I cannot get help.” “The process of receiving aid is not clear to the beneficiaries.” “How aid works is confusing.”
- × Because people do not feel informed, they often cited rumors that they had heard. “We heard this, but we are not sure.” Some noted that they get their information from other villages, rather than from the NGOs. Others noted that, although the NGOs do visit their villages often, “it seems they do so just to cross it off their list.”
- × One group described how an NGO had come and “collected information and took pictures” but never came back. Another man told how an NGO had come and “filled out forms” but never returned. He actually had gotten a business card from this group and so went to their office to find out what they intended. When he got there, no one would meet with him. He reported that “no one had any time for me or any interest.”

Sources: CDA Collaborative Learning Initiative Field Visit Reports – Solomon Islands and Aceh Indonesia, Retrieved from http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/pdf/casestudy/lp_si_final_report_20100107_Pdf.pdf and http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/pdf/casestudy/lp_aceh_field_visit_report_english_Pdf.pdf

While this by no means reflects the practice of all government agencies and I/NGOs engaged in disaster recovery, it is clearly a problem. People require certain types of information to navigate their own recovery process such as: whether they can begin rebuilding and where, what type of assistance is to be provided, by whom, and under what conditions? Without information to act upon or the opportunity to inquire, many are left with a sense of dependency on those making decisions. Unclear and unmet expectations foment distrust, a lack of public support and cooperation, all which can create significant barriers to effective, sustainable and risk-reducing recovery.

Approaches to improve communication with affected populations

“One feature of good institutions and policies is that they not only facilitate the transfer of knowledge, but also enhance the likelihood that such knowledge will be used effectively” (Stiglitz 1998).

Many governments have recognized the need to improve communication and have experimented with mechanisms that facilitate a clear and timely flow of information both to and from affected communities. One of the more successful models has evolved in India, in which leading government agencies collaborate with civil society to establish information and coordination centers throughout the affected regions. The primary purpose of the centers is to ensure strong and clear communication between communities, the government, and implementing organizations. The most well known example is the SETUs established after the 2001 Gujarat earthquake. Case 11 describes a further iteration of the model, established to facilitate the 2004 tsunami recovery in Nagapatinam, Tamil Nadu.

Case 11: Coordination and information management in Tamil Nadu

The South Indian Federation of Fishermen Societies (SIFFS) and SNEHA, two NGO's with long established histories working in area communities, initiated the NGO Coordination and Resource Centre (NCRC) to improve coordination of local NGOs in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean Tsunami. Senior officials of the Tamil Nadu state government, partnered with NCRC to facilitate coordination and information exchange between the government, affected communities and other recovery actors. NCRC's organizational structure consisted of:

A Front Office:

- Provided vital data from the affected communities to NGOs and the district administration, ensuring that adequate support and attention was focused towards priority areas and communities.

- Collected all government policies, (general and department-specific), segregated them thematically, translated them into the vernacular and ensured that the information reached the communities so that they could make informed decisions about their lives and livelihoods.
- Advocated to government, on behalf of affected communities regarding issues such as shelter and livelihood compensation norms. Advocacy was always backed by village level validated data.

Village Information Centres - led by Village Facilitation Units:

- Collected information from the communities on details of damages, compensations, allotment of houses, etc. at the village level and provide them with information through appropriate mediums on support and services available
- Provided information to the front office and other stakeholders on process and progress issues of initiatives within the villages
- Reached out to vulnerable communities and populations to ensure that they had access to support and that their needs were accounted for in the rehabilitation process
- Coordinated with support organisations and service providers whenever support and services were required
- Followed-up on petitions and grievances related to relief and rehabilitation

Sectoral Teams:

- Provided coordination, technical, communications, advocacy, and policy development support in community prioritized sectors

Scheduled to dismantle in 2007, the steering committee of NCRC, in consultation with other internal and external stakeholders, decided to set up a longer-term legal entity that would take forward the initiatives launched by NCRC. This new trust, Building and Enabling Disaster Resilience of Coastal Communities (BEDROC) builds upon its initial work, focusing on the integration of Disaster Risk Reduction into the mainstream development agenda of this highly vulnerable coastal district.

Source: NGO Coordination and Resource Centre website. Retrieved from <http://www.ncrc.in/>

Lesson 1: NCRC was a separate, non-implementing organization. This placed it in an ideal position to carry out social audits of recovery activities, and advocate for the intended beneficiaries of recovery assistance.

Lesson 2: NCRC founding members had an established history in the district,

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advocating for and providing services to numerous populations. This gave them a much deeper understanding of the local complexities influencing the recovery process and the need for more nuanced and comprehensive approaches.

Lesson 3: NCRC, through its village information centers, established a sustained presence amongst the affected communities. Furthermore, NCRC engaged community members to manage the centers, thereby giving the community a more direct platform to engage in determining its needs and how they should be addressed.

Lesson 4: NCRC's continued presence in the area, now as BEDROC, capitalizes on its recovery work to help communities become more resilient to the effects of climate change and other natural hazards.

Lesson 5: NCRC's transition to BEDROC has ensured that the valuable lessons learned during the recovery phase are not lost. NCRC and BEDROC, in conjunction with academic institutions and international organizations, have conducted a variety of studies and published numerous reports, sharing their experiences and lessons.

Lesson 6: In general, greater resources could be invested by international agencies to ensure that coordination activities involving international agencies are conducted or translated into local languages to enable greater engagement by local organizations and representatives.

Potential partners to provide similar advocacy and information exchange services might include:

- Local civil society organizations;
- Gender specific trade unions;
- Local level governance structures, formal or traditional, in which women are active participants;
- Women's collective organizations such as self help groups and livelihood cooperatives; and
- NGO networks.

Even more excluded from recovery-related information are socially, economically, and/or politically marginalized groups. This commonly includes women, children, the urban and rural poor, as well as ethnic minorities. Ensuring that the needs of these

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groups are addressed requires a pro-active commitment. Recovery agencies have, in many cases attempted to reach these populations by working with civil society advocacy groups. Case 12 describes an organization that provided avenues for dialogue between tsunami-affected women and a range of recovery actors in Sri Lanka.

Case 12: Engaging advocacy groups to reach marginalized populations in Sri Lanka

In Batticaloa and Ampara districts in Sri Lanka, the Women's Coalition for Disaster Management (WCDM), which was initiated by Suriya, a local women's organisation in Batticaloa, in mid-January, played an important role in post-Tsunami relief and reconstruction work. The WCDM initially lobbied for a women's committee to be set up in every camp. The committees then identified the basic needs of women, such as private space, appropriate facilities (such as private bathing and toilet facilities) and access to supplies.

The WCDM also formed an action group called Gender Watch, involving local and international non-government organisations. The initiative enabled women to report domestic violence, sexual harassment and discrimination to the group. Gender Watch documented violations in the camps and distributed the information to international agencies and the government. Remedial action taken included: suspending a government officer for violations; protecting five orphaned children; ensuring women have access to oral contraceptives; facilitating access to the police in the case of domestic violence; providing temporary shelters to single women who were originally excluded because they did not possess the right papers; and registering women for the provision of ration cards to provide them with access to goods.

A review of the Gender Watch, after six months of operation, concluded that this process "turned out to be a credible bottom-up network which attracted large number of INGO's and government representatives to come in and bounce their ideas with them before designing new initiatives".

Source: SWS FACT SHEET: WOMEN AND DISASTER, Retrieved from <http://www.socwomen.org/socactivism/factdisaster.pdf>

Critical success factors identified by the Gender Watch review included:

Lesson 1: Gender Watch was only network in the area that was driven, run and managed by local women. Not only did this serve to empower local women, but it lent credibility to the network, resulting in broad support of decision-makers such as government representatives, INGOs, and UN agencies.

Lesson 2: The network provided a platform for discussion unavailable elsewhere.

Lesson 3: Unlike most official forums that took place, the Gender Watch forum was not sector-specific but looked at all issues affecting women, including housing, gender-based violence and employment opportunities.

Dialogue with communities is an essential component of participatory approaches to disaster recovery and improved accountability mechanisms. Additional approaches to improving communication with affected populations, such as public hearings, social audits, and community led recovery projects, can be found under Issue 2: Participation and Issue 5: Accountability, as well as throughout the companion Guidance Notes on Recovery.

Sub Issue 3: Disseminating information more effectively

“The messages that governments and project managers send out to affected communities about reconstruction have less influence over how the communities behave than do the messages that these communities receive, whether from government or other sources”(Jha et al., 2010).

Equally important as a message, is the medium by which it is transmitted. In the aftermath of the Bangladesh cyclone of 1991 it was found that early warning signals had not reached large numbers of women. The information had been disseminated primarily in market places to which, in this highly sex-segregated society, many women do not have easy access. In the absence of timely and relevant information, women were unable to minimize the risks to themselves, their children, and whatever productive assets they could otherwise have saved (D'Cuna, 1997). Although the example concerns disaster preparedness it effectively illustrates the need to cater information media to the targeted audience.

A wide array of media has been used in efforts to ensure that information reaches and is understood by the intended audience. In addition to print formats translated into local languages, governments and I/NGOs have used radio and television; newspapers, newsletters, and brochures; as well as internet, email and SMS text messaging to disseminate information. Important messages have been imparted through political leaders, local officials, traditional and religious leaders, via schools and other community institutions. Innovative mediums such as demonstrations, drama, song, and pictorial guides used to raise-awareness have met with success amongst the illiterate and literate alike.

No single medium is inherently better than another. Rather, the right medium is a function of the:

- Objectives – What are the objectives of the initiative?
- Stakeholders – With whom is communication occurring? What is their involvement? What are their interests?
- Type/level of desired change – Is the intention to raise awareness, develop capacity, change attitudes and behaviors, mobilize or collaborate, or mediate?

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- Communication approaches – Is the communication to be one-way or two-way?
- Communication channels/media – What are the most appropriate media given social, economic, political, and geographical considerations? With respect to the type/level of desired change, how does communication typically occur amongst the stakeholder group?

The development of a flexible communication strategy at the earliest stages of planning can enable greater public support, facilitate implementation, and prevent setbacks and stakeholder frustration. Case 13 describes the Government of Pakistan’s experience implementing a communication plan. The challenges faced during the process illustrate the importance and benefit of flexibility and two-way dialogue (especially with the affected communities) in any communications strategy.

Case 13: Communication strategy of seismic resistant housing initiative in Pakistan

To facilitate the massive owner-driven and seismic resistant housing reconstruction initiative, Pakistan’s Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority developed a communication strategy to meet the information needs of the many different stakeholders. The communication strategy identified the audience, the type of information, and the purpose of communication:

- Modern seismic construction techniques had to be explained to the artisans and self-builders.
- Traditional building techniques had to be made plain to the engineering community.
- The inspection teams of the army had to be trained to be able to assess the compliance of reconstructed houses with the established rules.
- Authorities had to be convinced that rules had to fit local potentials to be followed.
- The public at large had to be made aware that solutions to earthquake resistant buildings did exist.
- International donors had to be reassured that their financial support was used to ensure safe and sustainable construction methods.

Furthermore for each stakeholder group, both the content and medium of communication had to be contextually appropriate. Mediums included technical presentations for engineers and model structures and presentations for local builders.

By the end of the first few months it became apparent that there was not a sufficient number of NGOs or engineers capable or willing to work in these very remote areas. Therefore, the initiative was forced to revise its plans and thus recast its communications strategy based on the newly-defined roles of engineers and builders.

Feedback from initial activities led to further updates to the strategy. Several key changes were made:

1. PowerPoint presentations in English, intended for the engineers were simplified, both in their technical jargon and in the illustrations.
2. Highly illustrated manuals were developed that local builders could bring home after the training sessions and use for reference in the future.
3. Full scale models of seismic resistant technologies were made more realistic allowing builders to refer them to their real construction experience.
4. Small scale models were developed to facilitate understanding of seismic-resistant building technologies.
5. In lieu of watching a PowerPoint presentation for an extended period in a hot tent, on-site training on real construction sites proved a more effective means of disseminating seismic 'know-how', particularly for local builders used to learning with their hands.
6. Finally, and most importantly, the engineers working with the local builders had to be trained to use a simple everyday language instead of the technical jargon. This proved to be a tricky task, as they were used to expressing themselves in their professional language, and speaking in lay terms was a potential threat to their social standing.

A further challenge emerged when the people of the northern part of the affected area were invited to rebuild their houses using a modified indigenous building style called Dhajii. Dhajii was encouraged by ERRA as concrete and other building material were inaccessible in these remote areas. Although effectively used in other affected regions, inhabitants of this area energetically refused - "Such buildings with their thin 10cm walls are not bullet-proof!" Their local risk analysis told them that shootings were a much greater risk to their lives than earthquakes. They wanted to have their solid stone buildings with 60cm thick walls. Further research into other indigenous building techniques, led to an appropriate style, called *Bhatar*. New communication challenges arose as engineers balked at using a technique with little scientific backing to confirm the seismic resistant properties. Finally, due to advocacy on the part of military damage assessment teams, modifications were made and the technique implemented.

Source: Good Engineering without Appropriate Communication doesn't lead to Seismic Risk Reduction: some thoughts about appropriate knowledge transfer tools, Retrieved from <http://www.unesco-ipred.org/gtfbc/S23-006%20Paper%20T.%20Schacher.pdf>

Lesson 1: Building back better typically requires a change of behavior and practice based on new knowledge. When such information, especially of a technical nature, is not communicated in a familiar and meaningful way to intended recipients, the desired changes are unachievable. In

the case of the built environment, houses and other structures can only provide protection from natural disasters when those who use them understand and value their protective properties and know how to maintain them.

Lesson 2: A good communication strategy is flexible with feedback mechanisms to identify changing conditions and corresponding communication needs of stakeholders.

Lesson 3: The case of the *Bhatar* housing illustrates the necessity for two-way communication to account for critical social and economic factors as well as other potential hazards facing a population. Identifying and negotiating such factors, helps to develop more sustainable and risk-reducing solutions.

Sub Issue 6: Facilitating coordination through improved access to information

Central to strong coordination of the recovery process at any scale, is the effective management of information. When often hundreds of actors may be involved in recovery activities, the potential for duplicated efforts and gaps in assistance is amplified. Effectively defining and allocating appropriate resources to address recovery needs requires a carefully planned information management system that establishes “a permanent dialogue and consensus building mechanism [between] government agencies, civil society, cooperation agencies, donors and lending institutions, where priorities are defined and an adequate picture of who-is-doing-what-where is drawn and systematically updated. (UNDP, n.d., p.5)

Information and communication technology (ICT) has advanced immensely in the past 30 years, and provided powerful information management tools to assist managers coordinating disaster relief and recovery efforts. Multi-user, internet accessible databases with simple interfaces, such as the Development Assistance Database (DAD) have been used to align resources with identified needs and track the progress of recovery efforts following major disasters in the past 10 years. Such tools are no magic solution; they require a commitment to keep the information constantly updated. However, where the use of contextually appropriate systems is enforced, it can provide extremely valuable information for planners and decision-makers from the local to international levels. An excellent example is the RAN Database, a tool developed by the Agency for Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (BRR) to facilitate the coordination of nearly 1000 partners engaged in the 2004 tsunami recovery of Aceh and Nias.

Case 14: Facilitating coordination through information systems in Aceh

To collect and analyze data on reconstruction projects implemented by delivery partners, the Recovery of Aceh and Nias (RAN) Database, a relatively low - tech, robust ICT system was designed. The information held in RAN Database was intended to assist

the BRR to coordinate more effectively, pinpoint gaps and overlaps in the recovery process, and work to resolve bottlenecks and issues that are holding agencies back. The online system also enabled partner organisations to enter and access data themselves.

Data entry was initiated through a project concept note (PCN), which each implementing partner was obligated to submit for approval before initiating a recovery project. From these notes, critical information on key performance indicators, funding source, sector, location, and budget allocation was registered into the RAN Database. The RAN Database system automatically captured all data as supplied by PCNs to the database. It contained information on approval and progress of all projects based on the BRR PCN approval system, as well as monitoring data based on key performance indicators.

To facilitate its use and to answer questions regarding all reporting obligations, an outreach team was established within BRR and a focal point assigned to each organization. To raise awareness in the recovery community, presentations were made by the outreach team at each of the main recovery forums to emphasize the key dates of data collection and the message of mandatory submission. An awareness leaflet regarding the process of data submission was also circulated and additional Q&A sessions provided across the islands.

Over 1,100 donor and implementing partners participated in this online data sharing, directly providing up-to-date, transparent and accountable information on the progress of reconstruction works. With the RAN Database, BRR, the involved organizations, and the general public had access to a real-time information base to support the overall reconstruction process by: measuring progress, identifying gaps, addressing implementation problems and improving the planning of interventions.

Sources: UNDP Emergency Response and Transitional Recovery Report, Retrieved from <http://www.undp.or.id/pubs/docs/ERTR%20Annual%20Report%20251205.pdf>

OCHA Situation Report, Retrieved from [http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFFiles2005.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/EVOD-6HQDBW-ocha-idn-31oct.pdf/\\$File/ocha-idn-31oct.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFFiles2005.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/EVOD-6HQDBW-ocha-idn-31oct.pdf/$File/ocha-idn-31oct.pdf)

Information flow and coordination mechanisms in rehabilitation work in Aceh: An overview of the FAO Role , Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/docrep/010/ag116e/AG116E16.htm>

Lesson 1: For this type of information-sharing mechanism to be effective, implementing agencies must enter the necessary data in a timely manner. One of the weaknesses of the RAN system was that many organizations failed to update their actual accomplishments. While the submission of the project concept notes was mandatory to initiate projects, no similar mechanism existed which provided an incentive for users to update progress data. By August 2007, only 46.5% of total commitments had been updated, however a renewed effort resulted in an increase to 90.5% by the end of January 2008 (Cox, 2008).

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Lesson 2: Consideration should be given to the information technology infrastructure required to support online tools such as this. There have been many cases, including Aceh, in which local and district governments were unable to access the database due to poor or non-existent internet connectivity. Because of this, many had an incomplete understanding of the projects conducted within the geographical areas they managed (Saman, 2006).

Lesson 3: Where such systems are intended to provide affected populations with information concerning policies, programs, and available services or serve as a complaint-handling mechanism, forethought should be given to the medium and presentation of information. To enhance the relevance and accessibility of information provided, a good practice is to consult affected communities about the type of information they require and the form in which they would like to receive it (ADB & OECD, 2005).

For further information on communication and disaster recovery, please see:

Topic Guide on Communications and Governance. Mcloughlin, Claire & Scott, Zoe

www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/CommGAP1.pdf

The Role of Communication in Governance: Detailed Analysis. Coffey International

http://www.dcern.org/portal/documents/GovernanceSummaryPaper_003.pdf

A Stitch in Time? Volume 1: Main Report Independent Evaluation of the Disasters Emergency Committee's Southern Africa Crisis Appeal. Valid International

[http://www.validinternational.org/demo/reports/DEC%20Southern%20Africa%20Evaluation%20\(Report\).pdf](http://www.validinternational.org/demo/reports/DEC%20Southern%20Africa%20Evaluation%20(Report).pdf)

Development Communication Sourcebook: Broadening the Boundaries of Communication. Mefalopulos, Paolo

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTDEVCOMMENG/Resources/DevelopmentCommSourcebook.pdf>

Two Years after the Java Earthquake and Tsunami: Implementing Community Based Reconstruction, Increasing Transparency. Java Reconstruction Fund

http://www.javareconstructionfund.org/documents/pdf/2008-07-07_JRF-2nd%20Progress%20Report_ENG.pdf

Issue 4: Strengthening Implementation Capacity

Sub Issue 1: Capacity building and governance

Government agencies from the local to national level can be quickly overwhelmed by the impacts of a disaster and the demands of recovery. Achieving governance objectives of meeting the needs of society while making the best use of available resources can be an immense challenge. In the post-disaster setting, new and additional skills and resources will be required to 1) rebuild the governance infrastructure, 2) undertake a potentially large and complex recovery initiative, and 3) ensure that efforts prove both sustainable and risk-reducing. Identifying the needed resources and building the corresponding capacity in-country to accomplish this will not only facilitate a stronger recovery but prepare governments to manage future disasters more effectively.

Sub Issue 2: Planning before a disaster happens

The single most effective means of strengthening the capacity to plan and implement sustainable recovery efforts is preparing and planning for disaster recovery before a disaster happens. Integrating recovery planning throughout the entire disaster management process can expedite well-informed decision-making through the:

- ✓ Identification of existing vulnerabilities and capacities;
- ✓ Formulation of a vision and framework for post disaster planning;
- ✓ Engagement and capacity building of potential partners; and the
- ✓ Development or strengthening of institutions and regulations to facilitate disaster operations.

When governments do not engage in recovery planning until a disaster occurs, typically the result is:

- × Hasty and reactive decisions that sacrifice relevance and sustainability or
- × Careful, but delayed planning that sacrifices the need for urgency and must address potentially conflicting recovery efforts that have taken place in the waiting period.

In the cases of the Yogyakarta earthquake and the 2001 Mozambique floods (See Case 15), both countries reported being better prepared for recovery operations due to recovery policy, planning and legislation developed after previous disasters.

Case 15: 2000 Flood lessons improve 2001 flood management in Mozambique

The government of Mozambique made three successive appeals totaling US\$ 160 million for emergency assistance during February and March 2000 with a response of over 100 percent. On February 21, the government of Mozambique declared a flood emergency and appealed to the international community for US\$30 million in emergency assistance.

By mid May 2001, 93 percent of the appeal had been met (GoM 2001d). Agencies were better prepared to respond to the 2001 floods because the systems and contacts established in 2000 were in place. The rolling nature of the disaster made it a somewhat less daunting emergency than the 2000 floods. The government, the UN system, and the major agencies, such as the Mozambique Red Cross, had all undertaken lessons learning exercises and developed contingency plans, which resulted in significant improvements in responses (UNICEF 2002d).

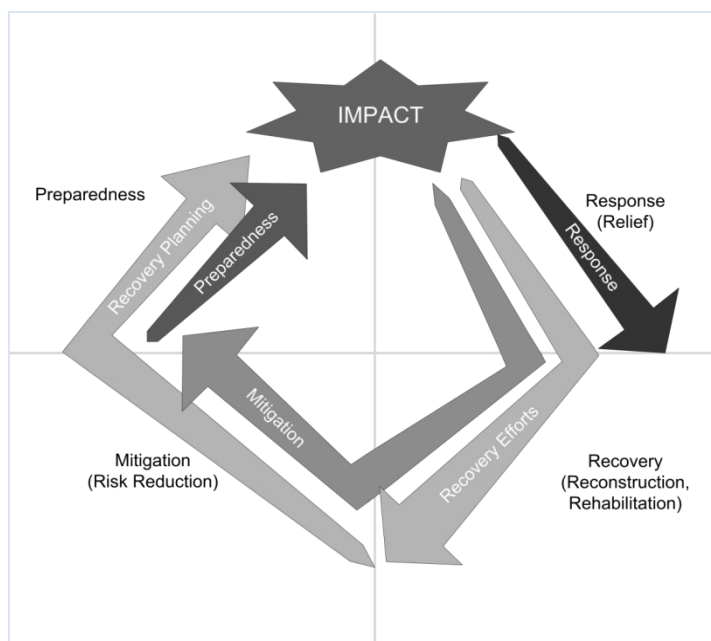
Source: Learning Lessons from Disaster Recovery: The Case of Mozambique, Retrieved from: http://www.proventionconsortium.org/themes/default/pdfs/recovery_Mozambique.pdf

Due to the unpredictability of disasters and their impacts, post-disaster recovery planning is a necessity; however several governments have developed recovery planning frameworks based on potential disaster scenarios. These frameworks greatly reduce the demands of planning in the disaster aftermath. In some cases, a strong framework may only require fine tuning to initiate recovery activities.

In addition to the aforementioned benefits, pre-disaster recovery frameworks that clearly define recovery objectives help ensure that relief efforts build the necessary foundation to achieve longer term recovery goals without creating significant new challenges. The World Bank evaluation of its disaster assistance notes that: 'Actions taken during the first weeks and months after a disaster have a major impact on the recovery process to follow, and they need to be planned and implemented accordingly'. Furthermore, pre-disaster recovery planning allows governments the time to consider recovery in the greater context of future development planning. This enables the definition of recovery goals and objectives that align with strategic development goals. These transitions between disaster relief, recovery, and development remain some of the greatest obstacles to a rapid and sustainable recovery.

Box 2 illustrates a more holistic disaster management cycle in which recovery is considered not only after a disaster but prior to it as well.

Box 2: Recovery planning and the disaster management cycle



Recovery and mitigation: When a disaster strikes, it often reveals chronic weaknesses, or areas of poor resilience. Such vulnerabilities may include substandard building practices and materials, fragile livelihoods and economies and poor land use regulation. These vulnerabilities are the true challenges facing recovery planners. Considering recovery is a logical next step to mitigation efforts. Drawing on hazard, vulnerability and risk assessments, a rough estimate of the potential damage and losses for various scale disasters can be calculated. Based on these scenarios, policy makers and planners can identify the potential scope and scale of recovery needs.

Recovery and Preparedness: The preparedness stage need not limit itself to preparing for the disaster event and immediate aftermath. As recovery is commonly the overriding challenge following most disasters (ALNAP, 2008), it would seem a critical component of preparing for a disaster. As part of the preparedness efforts, policy makers and planners can formulate recovery policies, develop organizational infrastructure, assign roles and responsibilities, and identify and build the necessary capacity to coordinate and implement recovery efforts. Without the pressure existing in the post-disaster environment, pre-disaster planners have more time to research and analyze good and bad practices of others, to inform their decision-making.

This is also an opportune time to identify civil society and private sector partners and encourage the establishment of similar recovery planning frameworks at the community level. Following the 2000/2001 floods in Mozambique, the government established

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community disaster management groups as a component of an overall strategy to address disasters within their development plans. These community groups not only served to promote mitigation and preparedness, but were also trained and equipped to serve as information coordinators during the relief and recovery phases (Benessene, 2007).

As beneficial as pre-disaster planning is, few governments have committed to putting it into practice. Challenges cited include insufficient resources and competing demands, and the diminished will to invest in pre-disaster management. In some cases, the impetus to pro-actively prepare for recovery has only come about due to recent recovery failures. The poor performance of the U.S. government in managing the 2005 Hurricane Katrina recovery pressured the legislature to pass the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006. This Act charged the Federal Emergency Management Agency with developing a National Disaster Recovery Framework (in draft as of August 2010).

However examples do exist of government agencies that have developed recovery frameworks as a pro-active measure to accelerate a more sustainable social and economic recovery. Described in Case 16, the city government of Los Angeles committed funds and resources to establish a permanent process of developing and revising an earthquake recovery framework.

Case 16: Pre-planning for post-earthquake rebuilding in Los Angeles

In 1987 William E. Spangle and Associates released a study, Pre-Earthquake Planning for Post-Earthquake Rebuilding, (PEPPER) which is the theoretical foundation for the City of Los Angeles recovery and reconstruction planning effort. This study documented research on the feasibility and practical limits of pre-earthquake planning for rebuilding. The authors of the study concluded the high annual probability of a damaging earthquake in Los Angeles requires a continuing program of pre earthquake planning for post earthquake recovery. They recommended that the planning process include periodic re-evaluations of anticipated problems and necessary responses, and development of policies and procedures for post earthquake land use planning and rebuilding. The authors also recommended that the City establish a Rebuilding/Recovery Team to be activated immediately following a major disaster. To function effectively, this Team would require a well defined role, responsibility and authority for rebuilding and restoration, and pre-established guidelines to follow. A model earthquake recovery program was offered, as well as a model ordinance for a rebuilding and recovery organization to be established prior to an earthquake.

The City of Los Angeles adopted many of the recommendations contained in the PEPPER study. Upon the release of the PEPPER Report, a Recovery and Reconstruction Subcommittee was established within the EOO. This Subcommittee was charged with developing a work program to address the major recovery and reconstruction problems following a damaging earthquake. These problems include:

1. Organization and Authority
2. Residential, Commercial and Industrial Rehabilitation
3. Public Sector Services
4. Economic Recovery
5. Land Use/Re-use
6. Psychological Rehabilitation
7. Vital Records

These seven issue areas formed the basis for the City draft Recovery and Reconstruction Plan. Under each topic, policies and action or implementation programs are defined. The “lead” and other agencies responsible for each of the action programs are also noted.

The draft Recovery and Reconstruction Plan continues to be refined and expanded. Various areas of the draft Plan still contain unresolved issues. City studies of the recovery process of other disaster impacted communities and the lessons learned from their own recovery experiences and training exercises also contribute to regular updating and revision of the plan. Following the Loma Prieta Earthquake, for example, the following new sections were developed for the Plan:

8. Inter-Jurisdictional Issues
9. Traffic Mitigation
10. Public Information Plans

Source: City of Los Angeles Emergency Operations Organization Recovery and Reconstruction Plan, Retrieved from http://www.emergency.lacity.org/pdf/epa/Recovery_and_Reconstruction_Annex.pdf

Lesson 1: Few natural disasters occur just once, rather they happen on a cyclical basis. Records of past disasters give important clues for estimating the likelihood and magnitude of future hazard events. Developing scenarios based on these prediction and planning accordingly lies at the core of pre-disaster planning

Lesson 2: The Los Angeles example illustrates the importance of maintaining continuity and improvement over time. This is a key challenge to effective recovery planning. One of the interesting highlights from Hurricane Katrina shows that capacity development is not a one-time effort. The capacity of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) had been significantly stronger in the past and had deteriorated over time, leading to many of the performance issues during and after Katrina.

For further information on pre-disaster recovery planning, please see:

Natural Disaster Recovery Planning. Brewster, Roger

<http://www.commonwealth-planners.org/papers/recovery.pdf>

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Pre-disaster Planning for Post-disaster Recovery. Organization of American States

<http://www.oas.org/pqdm/document/preplan.htm>

Post-Disaster Recovery Planning Forum: How-To Guide. Oregon Natural Hazards Workgroup

http://nctr.pmel.noaa.gov/education/science/docs/Reports/OR_Post-Disaster_Guide_20070716_Draft.pdf

Sub Issue 3: Identifying existing capacity

Decades of new and passing trends in development strategies have led most governments and a majority of the international community to agree that utilizing and strengthening internal capacity not only improves the effectiveness and efficiency of development efforts, but contributes to greater sustainability and overall growth. For many, recognizing and developing the capacity of individuals, communities, society, governments, and institutions is the best approach to development. According to the UNDP, “countries should own, design, direct, implement and sustain the [development] process themselves” (UNDP, 2010).

In the context of disaster recovery, identifying and engaging ‘in-country’ capacity provides numerous benefits:

- ✓ The use of existing capacity increases local, sub-national and national ownership of the recovery process.
- ✓ In-country capacity is typically more grounded in the historical, cultural, economic and political contexts of the affected area. This enables programs to avoid pitfalls, identify gaps, and develop more contextually relevant approaches to recovery.
- ✓ Local and national organizations and individuals frequently can draw upon established and trusted social networks to facilitate: information exchange, community mobilization, logistical needs, and the identification of potential partners and resources.
- ✓ When strong, building on pre-existing administrative and institutional capacity may prove more efficient as new organizations, policies, and procedures take considerable time to develop, test and learn.
- ✓ Using internal capacity from local to national levels, contributes to greater sustainability, by allowing for the creation of longer term partnerships and the institutionalization of strong and effective initiatives.
- ✓ Orienting recovery programs around in-country capacities is critical to establishing replicable models for continuing safe building practices, maintaining

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risk sensitive land use planning, and ensuring ongoing public awareness and education about relevant risk issues. Too much orientation on external assistance tends to focus recovery on one-off efforts which may do little to change underlying dynamics and decision-making which lead to situations of vulnerability in the first place.

Sub Issue 4: Challenges to mobilizing internal capacity

The three most commonly cited challenges to mobilizing in-country capacity are:

1. *The inability to identify existing capacity* - The inability to identify existing capacity is most frequently due to a weak or non-existent disaster management institution - either because disasters are not frequent in the area, or the government has not supported the development of a strong institution.
2. *The poaching of human resources by international partners* - The problem of international poaching of local and national human resources is well documented and can be difficult to solve. This requires negotiation between the government and international partners, strong government leadership of the recovery process, and potential incentives to keep key national and local human resources. Following the tsunami, the Indonesian government paid employees of the Agency for Reconstruction and Rehabilitation (BRR) salaries competitive with international organizations to prevent losing human resources to international partners.
3. *An over-reliance on top down approaches to disaster recovery* – Top down approaches to disaster recovery typically focus on speed and efficiency at the sacrifice of local context, therefore efforts to identify local capacity may be forfeit. This is probably best illustrated by reconstruction initiatives that contract international and national firms to rebuild destroyed and damaged houses on a large scale.

Sub Issue 5: Increasing capacity through partnerships

In recent disasters, governments have increasingly expanded their recovery resource base to partner with a greater range of civil society organizations, academic institutions and the private sector to develop more comprehensive approaches to the complex recovery of livelihoods, social systems, and the built and natural environments. A sample of partners has included:

- ✓ Universities and other academic institutions – Universities and research institutes in Sri Lanka helped local rope-makers expand their markets through product diversification (OXFAM,2008), and in Cuba, the government has partnered with a university department to develop simple, affordable, eco-

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friendly, and hurricane resistant building materials which can be made by local communities (World Habitat Awards, 2007).

- ✓ Regional organizations – The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) played a central leadership role in the Cyclone Nargis recovery in Myanmar. ASEAN, along with the Myanmar government and the UN, formed the Tri-partite Core Group which oversaw the assessment, coordination of resources, operations, monitoring and reporting (Creac’h & Fan, 2008).
- ✓ Local, national, and international businesses – Tata conducted capacity building for masons in India, Toyota has provided financial support to an environmental restoration/livelihood promotion initiative in the Philippines (Conservation International, 2010) while Exxon partnered with artisan jewelers in Indonesia to develop international markets (IRP, 2009).
- ✓ Trade associations and unions – The coffee growers’ association in Columbia facilitated an owner reconstruction program, and Fishermen cooperatives managed livelihood asset replacements in tsunami affected areas of Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ Banks and utility providers – Banks and other financial institutions in India have worked with government agencies to develop and/or support micro-finance services to disaster affected communities.
- ✓ Religious organizations – Churches in areas devastated by Hurricane Katrina, generated an enormous flow of volunteers from across the United States to assist house-owners repair or rebuild their homes.

This broadening of potential capacity can provide recovery planners with a whole new set of skills, knowledge and resources to improve and accelerate recovery. Furthermore, when such collaborations have been formalized they have created unique opportunities for longer term engagements, necessary for sustainable and risk-reducing impacts. An excellent example comes from the 2006 Yogyakarta earthquake, in which the Gadjah Mada University actively engaged in the government’s recovery efforts.

Case 17: University's role in Yogyakarta recovery

The Gadjah Mada University played a central role in the recovery of Yogyakarta and the affected regions of Java following the 2006 Java earthquake. Bringing to bear their knowledge and resources in the fields of health, the built environment, social science, and economics they served as a key partner to the local governments, the National Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Agency, as well as donors and INGOs.

One such area where GMA provided assistance was the community driven reconstruction initiative. GMA noted that the community needed technical support and training on the practical aspects of building earthquake-resistant housing, while the government needed to establish a system to facilitate and control the process to assure the quality and products of the reconstruction effort. The Faculty of Engineering at UGM

established a technical support unit called POSYANIS (*Pos Pelayanan Teknis*, Technical Support Unit) to assist and support government policies related to the community-based reconstruction effort. POSYANIS was established in the first week after the earthquake to mobilize students and staff in assisting with building safety assessment.

Upon realizing that many of the victims had already started to try rebuilding their destroyed houses on their own, without any technical knowledge or know-how related to earthquake-resistant building design, POSYANIS established a unit that could provide technical information and guidelines that would be easy to understand and implementable by the community.

In order to ensure that self-constructed houses met the earthquake safety requirements, POSYANIS developed simple technical guidelines for lay readers and provided earthquake resistant construction training through mobile housing clinics. The mobile housing clinic would move from one sub-district to another providing training, technical assistance, and advocacy services, as well as disseminating government information on recovery policies and procedures.

In addition, POYSANIS worked with the District Office of Public Works to develop an accelerated building permit issuance process to ensure quality control of earthquake resistant methods without delaying the reconstruction process.

Source: IRP Recovery Status Report 01 Yogyakarta, Retrieved from http://www.recoveryplatform.org/assets/publication/RecoveryStatusReport/RecoveryStatusReport_Yogyakarta.pdf

Lesson 1: Much of the forward-thinking and readiness for new approaches that were demonstrated in Yogyakarta built to a significant extent on experience from the tsunami recovery in Aceh. Many agencies, both national and international, had staff with considerable experience in Aceh and were already steeped in these issues. Many of the universities as well had some experience in trying to engage in Aceh.

Lesson 2: In places where there is no immediate recovery experience to build on, one key question to address would be how to catalyse this type of partnership. This might be done through pre-disaster partnerships to promote recovery using scenarios as mentioned earlier in this section, but such partnerships need to be galvanized by real champions. This requires looking into ways to identify and enable such champions and cultivate longer-term partnerships.

For additional information on private-public partnerships, please see:

Private Sector Activities in Disaster Risk Reduction: Good Practices and Lessons Learned. UNISDR

<http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/publications/v.php?id=7519>

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In addition to partnering with civil society, some governments have developed innovative intra-governmental mechanisms to provide the necessary surge capacity following a disaster. China's 'twinning' policy, described in Case 18, illustrates such an innovation.

Case 18: Twinning cities for surge capacity in China

Following the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, The Government of China implemented a strategy to provide additional resources to affected populations throughout the relief and recovery phases. The strategy, called 'twinning', linked several badly impacted counties and cities with other Chinese provinces and municipalities. These partnerships aimed to assist affected areas with resources, personnel and moral support for recovery. Teams of doctors, public health professionals and sanitation and disease control experts were immediately dispatched to the affected partner county; a reported 1–3% of the annual gross domestic product of sponsor provinces was pledged towards long-term recovery efforts in the affected county for at least three years. For example, Wenchuan County, the epicentre of the earthquake, was paired with wealthy Guangdong Province for long-term reconstruction assistance, including the provision of medical personnel to replace staff lost in the earthquake, and the training of Wenchuan-based staff in teaching hospitals in Guangdong

Source: Lessons from the Sichuan Earthquake, Retrieved from <http://www.odihpn.org/report.asp?id=3008>

Sub Issue 6: Institutional capacity for managing recovery

At the institutional level, the extent of existing capacity is critical to consider when developing an organizational model for managing the recovery. IRP has identified several general models used to manage disaster recovery. Following is a list of these models and capacity-related considerations.

Box 3: Recovery planning and the disaster management cycle

<i>Organizational model</i>	<i>Capacity considerations</i>	<i>Example</i>
<i>Work within existing governmental structures</i>	Appropriate where there has been significant prior experience of recovery management, or where there are strong disaster management systems in place. Its success is very much dependent upon there being a high level of preliminary planning or well-practiced administrative and operational procedures. Arrangements equally need to be in place to	Mozambique Floods, 2000 - 2001

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	ensure additional capacity in government departments to cope with the increased demands, which may stretch over a considerable time period.	
<i>Form a new recovery task force or "special" commission</i>	Typically composed of designated representatives from existing ministries or government agencies led by a senior government official. This pattern is often followed at first, but its inherent capabilities can be overwhelmed by the scale and complexity of the task. In such a situation, the task force or commission may evolve into a modified form or new organization. This model can provide greater latitude for participation by civil society or private sector organizations as task forces tend to be more flexible than permanent government structures.	Mexico earthquake 1995 Philippines volcano 1991 (became organization) Sri Lanka tsunami 2004 (became organization)
<i>Create a new interim recovery organization</i>	Requires significant pre-existing capacity to establish an effective and efficient body. There is a limited margin for error in both the political arena and the public eye to meet recovery needs. Therefore it is best placed at the apex of political power and authority but with strong representation from the implementation ministries. May be a good option if few resources can be drawn from on-going government operations. Presents a unified continuity particularly if it can draw non-partisan support. One noted challenge is the difficulty in drawing support from other ministries or departments when new organizations are created. This can reduce the sustainability of efforts in the long-term that require input from many different "sectors" within government.	Indonesia tsunami 2004
<i>Create a new recovery</i>	Similar capacity requirements and risks as above, however this model can capitalize on	Columbia earthquake 1983

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<i>organization that evolves into a permanent body</i>	capacity building gains to improve future recovery efforts. Once temporary task forces or organizations have dissolved, too often the experience and learning is lost, forcing governments to reinvent the wheel with each new disaster. Transforming organizations into permanent bodies can help governments learn from past recoveries, develop stronger disaster risk management practice, and improve future recovery efforts.	(became regional environmental body) Gujarat earthquake 2001 (became state disaster management authority)
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Compiled from Learning from disaster recovery, retrieved from http://www.unisdr.org/eng/about_isdr/isdr-publications/irp/Learning-From-Disaster-Recovery.pdf

Sub Issue 7: Building capacity

In large scale and extended disasters, and/or when governance has been weak or severely impacted by the disaster, the skills, knowledge and resources necessary to manage the recovery process may overwhelm existing capacity. International entities such as donors and INGOs are frequently called upon to fill these gaps. Both governments and the international community have increasingly demanded that ‘capacity building’ be incorporated into international assistance as a means to improve sustainability and to strengthen a country’s ability to provide public services.

The term *capacity building*, or capacity development, is very fluid, meaning many different things to different people. It can refer to training, education and awareness-raising; it can be applied to the building or strengthening of institutions, it can be seen as a means of social transformation and empowerment. A useful general definition of capacity development is the “process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in the fast-changing world” (Philbin, 1996). With respect to disaster recovery, two common over-arching goals of capacity building are:

1. to strengthen the government’s and/or civil society’s ability to recover effectively and efficiently
2. to increase the resilience of individuals, communities, and institutions to future disasters

Challenges/obstacles to effective capacity building

In spite of the many promises embedded in the notion of capacity-building and its place

as a staple ingredient in many recovery plans and proposals, evaluations indicate a clear lack of priority given to capacity development. An ALNAP review of evaluations states that the “declarations of the importance of developing and utilising local capacities were being quietly forgotten in field-level operations” (Christoplos, 2005). While this issue is widely recognized, there is not, as of yet, consensus on why this is so. Without a stronger commitment to document and evaluate the impacts of capacity-building measures in disaster recovery, there will be little ‘hard’ evidence to inform improved approaches. Nevertheless, several obstacles to effective capacity development have begun to emerge, two of which are:

- *Whose capacity is being developed?* Initiatives that incorporate capacity-building into programming commonly possess different priorities than those identified to benefit from these efforts. This frequently results in a supply-driven form of capacity building, in which implementing agencies determine what capacity needs to be built rather than allowing the intended ‘beneficiaries’ to determine their own capacity needs. A related problem occurs when non-local partners ‘invest’ in local capacity solely to implement their own projects. The Tsunami Evaluation Coalition’s 2009 evaluation indicated that, “Few initiatives sought to improve an institutions’ own capacity to manage recovery effectively, whether they were programmes of donors, national ministries, INGOs, local NGOs, or communities” (Brusset, et al., 2009).
- *Is training alone sufficient to build capacity?* Training remains the most consistently used method of ‘capacity building’. Although knowledge is an essential ingredient of strengthening capacity, it is not the only ingredient (and may not be the most appropriate one) necessary to realize desired impacts. Limited efforts to address areas such as the development of institutional norms, incentives, opportunities, and sanctions; advocacy, joint analysis and fundraising; and even material support such as office supplies and communication systems, can render useless the knowledge gained through successful training initiatives (Christoplos, 2005).

Holistic approach to capacity-building

Although the above issues have been cited at a global level, there are good examples of demand-driven initiatives that take a more holistic approach and promote long term sustainability and increased disaster resilience. One such example, described in Case 19, is a capacity-building initiative jointly designed by Peruvian local government officials and UNDP to enhance the ability of local leaders to manage recovery efforts and ensure the integration of development and disaster risk concerns.

Case 19: Local government capacity building initiative in Peru

After the 2007 Peru earthquake, external stakeholders – e.g. public institutions, national and international NGOs – followed the pattern of implementing recovery programmes in

an isolated and dispersed manner, with no consideration of the local capacities and their recovery efforts. Affected themselves by the earthquake, this top down approach forced local government institutions (who are responsible for the development of their localities) into a passive role. This posed a significant obstacle to making sure development and long-term risk reduction concerns were factored into recovery planning and implementation.

The UNDP Country Office recognized this gap and working with local officials developed a two year capacity-building project to enable local authorities to lead recovery, coordinate local and national stakeholders, and integrate development and risk reduction into the recovery efforts.

The main component of the intervention was the provision of full time staff positions to provide technical recovery and disaster risk reduction assistance to municipal governments, with particular focus on the specific areas identified by the local governments themselves. The Technical Assistants, serving for two years are responsible for reinforcing municipal abilities to promote recovery initiatives, leading work with central government in each sector of focus- training, permanent assessments, coordination, and preparation of ad-hoc proposals.

UNDP also transferred the leadership of pre-established UN Coordination Centres to local governments. This placed local government at the nexus of all local recovery activity consistent with the decentralization process being implemented in Peru.

- ✓ The Municipalities have initiated a process for updating and redesigning their Development Plans (10 years) and Annual Plans for promoting sustained recovery and risk reduction. A multi-stakeholder participatory process for assessing and defining strategies and activities is taking place.
- ✓ Through full-time technical assistance, risk management has been incorporated into recovery. Local governments are becoming less reactive and dependant, and more proactive in leading, promoting and incorporating risk reduction into recovery.
- ✓ In addition to the traditional infrastructure reconstruction approach, the initiative has included development and capacity-building issues, such as livelihoods, gender, information management and institutional strengthening.
- ✓ With contributions from different sectors, local and central government have defined and adopted better policies, strategies and mechanisms for planning, implementing and monitoring the reconstruction.
- ✓ The project has mainstreamed gender throughout all of its activities and supported the initiatives of 20 women's organizations.

Source: Local governments and disaster risk reduction, Retrieved from:
http://www.preventionweb.net/files/13627_LocalGovernmentsandDisasterRiskRedu.pdf

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Lesson 1: In reconstruction and recovery, short-term, immediate and visible results are prioritized by national and local political interests. The challenge is to combine short-term activities with strategic longer-term initiatives to reduce risk, using political interests as an opportunity for gaining real commitments to risk-sensitive development.

Lesson 2: Recovery stakeholders often intervene in an isolated manner, disconnected from development initiatives and with no inter-institutional coordination. It is important to coordinate different actors for joint interventions in ways that integrate with development work.

Lesson 3: In a decentralized government, it is crucial to reinforce local capacities as a main goal of recovery as local governments are the institutions that will sustain development once external supporters leave. Equally important is trusting local leaders to identify their own capacity needs.

Lesson 4: Recovery planning and implementation should be a part of the development planning and implementation. This is needed to make disaster risk reduction sustainable far beyond the reconstruction stage

Additionally, the Peruvian capacity-building example above, illustrates an adherence to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, both on the part of UNDP, as well as the local governments. The Paris Declaration (See Box 4) clearly places country governments at the helm of determining development plans and policies while pressing donors to align their capacity building assistance with a government's planned development trajectory.

Box 4: Capacity building and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness

The joint commitment in the Paris Declaration towards more effective support for capacity development clearly specifies the roles of partner countries and donors:

"23. Partner countries commit to: Integrate specific capacity strengthening objectives in national development strategies and pursue their implementation through country-led capacity development strategies where needed.

24. Donors commit to: Align their analytic and financial support with partners' capacity development objectives and strategies, make effective use of existing capacities and harmonise support for capacity development accordingly (Indicator 4)."

Source: Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, Retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/11/41/34428351.pdf>

Affected governments receiving assistance play an important role in ensuring that capacity building efforts meet actual needs and produce sustainable impacts. Doing so requires

- ✓ Strong leadership;

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- ✓ A clear vision for recovery and its linkages to development and increased disaster resilience;
- ✓ A pro-active role in planning and overseeing capacity-building interventions; and
- ✓ A willingness to hold external capacity-building partners to account to international standards such as the Paris Declaration.

For further information on identifying and building capacity in the recovery process, please see:

Capacity Development: A UNDP Primer, UNDP

http://content.undp.org/go/cms-service/download/asset/?asset_id=2222277

International Disaster Response Law

www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/idrl/

A ripple in development? Long term perspectives on the response to the Indian Ocean tsunami 2004. Tsunami Evaluation Coalition

<http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/a-ripple-in-development-main-report.pdf>

Issue 5: Accountability

Essential to effective governance is the concept of accountability. According to Gray, accountability can be defined as:

The duty to provide an account (by no means necessarily a financial account) or reckoning of those actions for which one is held responsible'. Thus accountability involves two responsibilities or duties: the responsibility to undertake certain actions (or forbear from taking actions) and the responsibility to provide an account of those actions.

Although the notion of accountability is relatively straightforward, defining it operationally in the post-disaster environment can be a complex and time-consuming task. Frequently existing accountability mechanisms are inadequate to deal with the huge flow of funding and the urgent needs of often hundreds of recovery actors attempting to provide services in an efficient manner. Additionally, the development of new mechanisms can retard efforts to initiate an early and comprehensive recovery plan. Representatives from the 2004 tsunami affected countries noted that the time and resources needed to devise adequate accountability measures retarded efforts to respond quickly to the recovery needs of affected populations (ABD, OECD, 2005).

Yet accountability is a critical component of the recovery process. A system of accountability provides a means to ensure that funding and other resources are used as intended, to minimize opportunities for the willful misuse of recovery resources, and most importantly, to serve as a tool for understanding and improving the quality of recovery initiatives.

Sub Issue 1: Clarifying roles and responsibilities

Two crucial questions which need to be addressed when developing a system of accountability for the disaster recovery process are: “who is accountable for what?” and “to whom are they accountable?”

Accountable for what?

Establishing accountability requires aligning recovery goals and objectives with available human resource capacity and defining a clear set of responsibilities for the various entities involved. However, this can prove challenging in the complex and constantly changing post disaster environment, particularly when it entails a set of new and often unfamiliar policies, organizational structures, and procedures. Understanding this new governance context and working effectively within it requires considerable time. Additionally, when insufficient attention has been paid to recovery planning prior to a disaster, new recovery policies, procedures, and lines of accountability may conflict with pre-existing. Finally, a wide array of new actors may engage in the recovery process from the national to the local level. The challenges of coordinating a diverse group of actors, both inside and outside the government and at the various levels of government

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can leave many without a clear sense of what they should do and how to go about it. The case of the Maldivian recovery from the 2004 tsunami, illustrates how an unclear attribution of responsibility can result in considerable confusion, frustration, and ineffective efforts.

Case 20: Unclear roles and responsibilities impede recovery in Maldives

In Maldives, island level service delivery (apart from health and education delivered by central government ministries) is typically organised by the Island Chiefs with user committees involved in the production of the services. However, following the 2004 tsunami, the central government managed a large portion of the recovery efforts and the functional roles of the island chiefs were not clearly defined. This lack of clarity seems to have hampered the recovery process in two major ways.

First, the respective responsibilities for planning, implementation and management of large scale infrastructure projects was not made clear. Traditionally the central government left the responsibility for community infrastructure to the island chiefs who transferred it to user committees called Island Development Committees. As per instruction from the central government, the Island Chiefs established new user committees called Recovery Committees. In the islands covered by the study, the committees typically comprised only 1-2 members of the Island Development Committees, thus limiting the obvious advantages of building on tested governance systems already in place. Furthermore, the tradition of heavy reliance on user committees made it difficult for the new and overburdened Recovery Committees to take on major reconstruction activities.

Secondly, the Island Chiefs and their administrations had been named the focal points for recovery. Yet due to unclear roles and responsibilities and a lack of supervision and necessary support, many of them were left to decide on their own which tasks they could carry out. The research found that on one island, an active Island Chief was able to organise many elements of recovery, while in another, many of the same tasks had not been taken on (e.g. a desalination plant, donated was for unknown reasons, was not installed by the bilateral donor and the Island Office has not taken action to complete this work).

This lack of a formal planning role for local governments who typically delivered island services led to additional confusion between local governments and NGOs. Reference was made to NGO representatives showing up and saying that “the government has given us these islands to develop”. Without a pre-defined role to play, many of the local governments felt that the contributions by NGOs were poorly coordinated. For example, on one island a doctor had been provided after the Tsunami, but without any of the equipment or facilities to set up a practice.

Source: Local Governance in Tsunami Recovery: Lessons Learned and Emerging Principles, Retrieved from: http://www.recoveryplatform.org/assets/recoverycases_reports/Local_Gov_Tsunami_Recovery_2006.pdf

Accountable to whom?

Accountability typically works in many directions. The two most evident directions are “upwards” and “downwards” (MANGO, 2010).

- *Upward accountability* – This is accountability to senior managers, high level government officials, and donors
- *Downward accountability* – This is accountability to those whom recovery efforts intend to serve – the ‘beneficiaries’.

Upward accountability serves to report to those who provide the funding and resources to carry out recovery responsibilities. Downward accountability mechanisms are typically established as a means to better align recovery initiatives with the needs and priorities of the intended beneficiaries and improve practice by incorporating feedback into future initiatives. Strong downward accountability mechanisms can also help to ensure that recovery efforts are more inclusive, and actively engage vulnerable and marginalized communities, whose voice might otherwise not be heard.

The emphasis on downward accountability is growing amongst the broader community of humanitarian and development actors, including many governments. A growing number of recovery plans and policies now explicitly call for community driven participatory approaches. The first of nine principles cited in the Indonesian government’s master plan for rebuilding Aceh and Nias stated that the reconstruction and rehabilitation was to be “community-oriented and participatory (Rep. of Indonesia, 2005). Such statements clearly indicate the need and create the policy justification for greater downward accountability mechanisms. Nevertheless, in practice, balancing upward and downward accountabilities can prove difficult. Far too often, accountability to those in less powerful positions (i.e. the beneficiaries) is dropped or given little priority, in order to meet the conditions of those more powerful stakeholders who provide funding and other needed resources. This diminishes the relevance and sustainability of recovery initiatives (ALNAP, 2000).

In addition to upwards and downwards accountability, there exists a relational accountability between various government units, organizations, and donors, as well as civil society, the media, and the private sector who may work together and rely upon each other to achieve the larger recovery goals. These multiple accountabilities are important to consider during strategic planning when recovery initiatives rely on several different stakeholders. In this multi-stakeholder environment, making clear ‘who is accountable to whom’ is critical as well as defining where the ultimate responsibility lies. Without policies and agreements that clarify these relationships, situations can quickly arise in which nobody is held accountable, as illustrated in the Maldives example in Case 20.

Sub Issue 2: Taking action

Even when roles, responsibilities and accountability mechanisms are clearly defined, recovery actors may still face significant challenges to initiating the activities for which they are accountable.

One of the more commonly cited obstacles is a lack of capacity, support, and resources. This challenge appears to be most notable amongst local government actors who, prior to a disaster, relied on their own revenues to fulfill their responsibilities (See Case 21). With severely decreased revenues due to the disaster, and a centralized recovery process, many local governments have been incapable of taking on the large-scale recovery projects or even prepare accurate assessments and reconstruction cost estimates without additional assistance.

Case 21: Inadequate support to local government following the 2004 Tsunami

In Sri Lanka, implementation responsibilities at the local level have almost exclusively been assigned to the District and Division Secretariats – the extensions of the line ministries through the deconcentrated structure – with very limited additional financial and human resources provided to assist the Pradeshiya Sabhas and Urban/Municipal Councils (the lowest tier of local government) to reconstruct the heavily damaged local government infrastructure, which provides the basis for a large range of services that are crucial for local poverty reduction and achievement of the MDGs.

In the aftermath of the tsunami, the Pradeshiya Sabhas and Urban/Municipal Councils as well as the Departments of Local Government at the Provincial level provided the rough estimates for the first needs/damages assessments and subsequently carried out the detailed design and cost estimates for the repair work. However, they were not able to start construction since only very limited funding had been made available to them. Their own source revenues and limited grants/reimbursement of expenditures had, in the past, enabled them to engage in some development activities, and gradually expand the infrastructure base. However, as the Tsunami destroyed many years of incremental development, the infrastructure could not be rebuilt without a substantive increase in budgets, especially at a time when the tax base has been significantly reduced.

Funding was provided on an ad hoc basis and earmarked for specific things (e.g. Rs. 50,000 to replace damaged light bulb in street light) and had been grossly insufficient leaving local governments to negotiate bilaterally with NGOs and donor agencies, making it impossible for them to effectively set priorities and manage implementation of recovery. Furthermore, a lack of coordination between the various levels of local government resulted in their inability to play more than a marginal role, decreasing the overall effectiveness of the recovery process.

Source: Local Governance In Tsunami Recovery: Lessons Learned And Emerging Principles, Retrieved from: http://regionalcentrebangkok.undp.or.th/practices/governance/documents/Local_Gov_Tsunami_Recovery-200601.pdf

Sub Issue 3: Accounting for actions taken

Reporting on recovery initiatives is generally conducted internally and/or externally. Internal reports are prepared by individuals within the implementing agency, mostly by those responsible for the activities but sometimes by in-house or consultant evaluators and auditors. External reporting is carried out by outside actors, independent of the implementing agency upon which they report. These may be auditors or evaluators assigned by the government or an independent firm. Additionally many other external actors serve an auditing or reporting role, including the media, special interest groups, and beneficiary populations. These groups, although rarely solicited to play this role by the implementing agency, can exert significant influence on the policies, procedures and practices of recovery actors.

With respect to reporting on activities, the disaster recovery environment presents a number of challenges.

- Because the authorities to whom an agency is upwardly accountable have the power to provide additional funding or other benefits, program and project evaluations tend to portray overwhelming positive impacts while omitting errors and failures that might jeopardize political favor or future funding opportunities.
- These same authorities are frequently managing myriad other programs and initiatives, working from locations that are geographically distant from the where the activities are taking place, and lacking in particular subject matter expertise. Because of this, there may not be the time, resources, or contextual knowledge needed to verify whether reports accurately reflect realities on the ground.
- The many actors involved in recovery often have their own accountability and reporting systems and standards. Consolidating this information can be an arduous task when no single standardized format is followed.

Recognizing the gap between reported outcomes and actual impacts has led many governments and other recovery actors to develop new and innovative reporting mechanisms to better evaluate the impacts of their initiatives, improve their effectiveness, and ensure that resources are neither wasted nor misused. Two notable trends are the use of fund-tracking systems and the increased integration of social (or downward) accountability mechanisms.

Developing financial tracking systems

Financial tracking systems have become a common tool used to consolidate the myriad financial flows and provide real-time reporting on financial inputs and outputs. These tools not only serve to inform decision-making and coordinate efforts, but to increase the accountability of fund use.

Case 22: Financial tracking system to improve coordination and increase accountability in Haiti

The Haitian Government, in partnership with UNDP, launched an online portal to promote the efficient use of the more than \$9 billion pledged by donors to help the country recover from devastating earthquake in January 2010.

This database, called "The Haitian Platform for Public Investment" is intended to help the Haitian government to:

1. Track funds pledged by over 60 donors;
2. Hold donors to their promised pledges; and
3. Ensure the transparency and accountability of the use of the funds.

The system was tailored to the context specific needs of the Haitian government while addressing the conditions of the many donors. The online portal, was developed by the same authors responsible for the Development Assistance Database, and has incorporated changes based on lessons learned from use in over 25 countries.

The system tracks the money from pledge to impact, showing how funds are planned and actually spent, by whom and for what. It also includes contributions and support from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well as the private sector.

The system which incorporates data from the Post Disaster Needs Assessment and the Reconstruction Plan will assist decision-makers to match pledges with needs based on empirical data and using advanced analytics. The system will provide details on past and current projects as well as any gaps that might exist in areas of development and humanitarian assistance.

Publically accessible, the portal will allow people of Haiti, as well as the national and international media to monitor the use of the funds, report on the progress, and hold their elected representatives and other recovery actors accountable for how those funds are spent. The site can be accessed at <http://www.refondation.ht/>

Source: UNDP, Retrieved from <http://content.undp.org/go/newsroom/2010/april/new-online-portal-to-promote-efficient-use-of-aid-in-haitian-earthquake-recovery.en;jsessionid=a0RZO5p59eca>

The Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery has consolidated several key lessons drawn from the use of similar tracking tools in past disaster recovery initiatives (Cut Dian, 2008).

Lesson 1: Strict *quality control* and a proactive data-gathering approach are vital in ensuring the sustainability of the database system. Quality can be maintained best by establishing a close working relationship between the database team and the donors/NGOs during the process of collecting, updating, and verifying data and discussing any issues and problems related to data.

- Lesson 2:** A financial tracking system *works best if donors/NGOs are obliged* to submit all their project details. Establishing a system in which such an obligation exists can help to support the process of data collection and input. One way of achieving this can be through a policy whereby donors and NGOs are required to submit their project concept notes to the government. These project concept notes should then include all the funding information for the project. In that way integrated initial information on funding commitments and allocations from all sources can be collected.
- Lesson 3:** The database system should be kept *simple*. Highly sophisticated systems have often failed, particularly in poorer countries with weak infrastructure. It is necessary to focus on the specific objectives of the database system when collecting data and avoid being overambitious by trying to capture all the available information. Being selective in precisely which data can feasibly be used in the database helps to maintain data quality.
- Lesson 4:** Although informational technology can help, *ultimately, people need to track the money*. A dedicated labor-intensive team responsible for collecting, updating, and analyzing the data is more effective in scrutinizing the data and minimizing errors (e.g., double counting) than a self-input data mechanism.
- Lesson 5:** Links between data collection, analysis, and reporting need to be established. Good data alone are insufficient because the database requires the participation of stakeholders to *update and validate* them. Through this interaction, real information in the field can be verified and further processed. Finally, the analysis results need to be packaged and communicated in a simple, yet comprehensive manner.
- Lesson 6:** Solid reporting can play a crucial role in decision making. Providing an accurate picture of projects and their performance can have a major impact on the planning and budgeting processes of the government, donors, and NGOs. Reports based on reliable data can become the *basis for reconstruction* players to allocate funds most effectively. Clear mapping of sectoral and geographical funding can provide information on where additional projects may be needed, while also *avoiding project duplication*. Having reports that identify top players/projects and show the highest allocation of funds by sectors and players is a highly effective fund-mapping tool.

Further references on financial tracking systems:

Tracking the money: International experience with financial information systems and databases for reconstruction. Augusta, Cut Dian
http://www.preventionweb.net/files/2474_TrackingMoney.pdf

Increasing social accountability

Numerous simple and innovative social accountability mechanisms have been developed and implemented as a means to create a more accurate picture of the impacts of recovery initiatives. The growing use of such mechanisms is a result of:

- The surge of interest of participatory appraisal and planning, a set of new approaches which stress the importance of taking local people's perspectives into account;
- Pressure for greater accountability, especially at a time of scarce resources; and
- The shift within organizations, particularly in the private sector, toward reflecting more on their own experiences, and learning from them.

These mechanisms range from simple efforts to increase transparency all the way to full-fledged community-driven recovery projects, and are grounded in giving beneficiaries a greater say in decisions that affect their lives.

1. Improving transparency

Downward accountability must be founded on mutual trust to be effective. The first step to building trust with affected populations is to make recovery information and operations transparent. The Government of Haiti's online portal, described in Case 22 is one means of making information public at a global level. However, this passive form of information-sharing may serve only a limited audience (those with access to internet connectivity and sufficient technical skills). More pro-active approaches can be taken to ensure that affected communities, particularly poor and marginalized peoples, can access and understand the material shared. Following the 2001 Gujarat earthquake in India, the national and state government partnered with NGO networks to establishing teams, called SETUs, throughout villages and towns. A major responsibility of the SETUs was to ensure that information concerning government policies, assistance schemes, and beneficiary lists reached all affected people in a contextually appropriate medium. (http://www.abhiyan.communicationcrafts.com/Setu_a.php).

Specific mechanisms to increase transparency may include:

- ✓ Public notice boards – Placed in community-identified locations, notice boards have included information on assessment results, project objectives and plans, stakeholders and their backgrounds, community representatives, beneficiary lists with criteria, financial resources, and regular updates on progress and any changes.
- ✓ Public Meetings – As recovery actors make decisions on policies and programs, regular public meetings can serve to ensure that affected communities are thoroughly informed of initiatives that may impact their lives. In preparing a Master Plan for the recovery of the tsunami stricken islands of Aceh & Nias, the Indonesian government partnered with a local

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university in Aceh, which organized a 10-day series of workshops open to all to discuss ideas and proposals drafted by the Master Plan Working Groups.

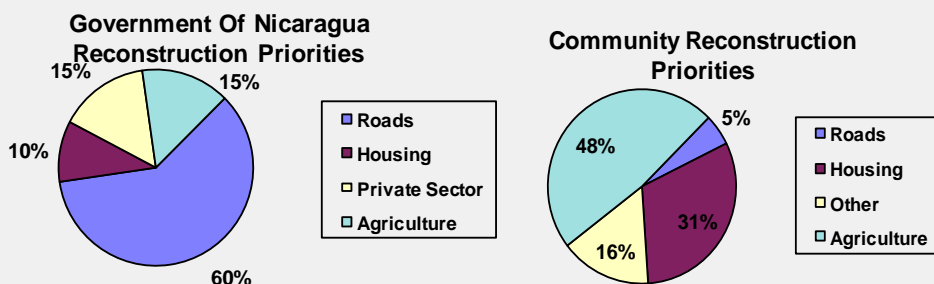
- ✓ Citizen Advisory Boards – Advisory bodies formed of volunteer community representatives to monitor and/or participate in decision-making, procurement processes, and budget allocation.

2. Conducting Social Audits

One of the simplest means of gathering information on the performance of recovery efforts is by soliciting feedback from beneficiaries. Several appropriate participatory monitoring and evaluation tools have been used to enhance the social accountability of projects and programs. One well known tool is the social audit. Social audits, in their simplest form are surveys in which citizens rate the quality and effectiveness of public services. The example of the Hurricane Mitch reconstruction plan in Nicaragua (See Case 23) illustrates how one social audit illuminated some radical differences in the recovery priorities established by the government relative to those of the affected communities.

Case 23: Social audit of recovery priorities in Nicaragua

Following Hurricane Mitch, the Nicaraguan government, with assistance of various international entities, put together a team of individuals to conduct the damage and loss assessments. The team consisted almost exclusively of engineers and physical infrastructures specialists. Based on these assessments, the national government developed its reconstruction plan. The plan focused 70% efforts on the reconstruction of roads and housing. To ensure that the national plan aligned with the reconstruction priorities of the affected populations, a civil society coordinating group called Coordinadora Civil para la Emergencia y la Reconstrucción (CCER) conducted a social audit. CCER, through its many member organizations ensured a representative sample of individuals and an equitable inclusion of the opinion of affected men and women. The results of the audit noted remarkably different reconstruction priorities.



Unlike the government, which allocated at least 60% of funding to the construction of roads, affected communities identified their agricultural livelihoods as the top priority (road reconstruction only received a 5% priority rating)

Source: Gender and Post-Disaster Reconstruction: the Case of Hurricane Mitch in Honduras and Nicaragua,

Retrieved from http://www.gdnonline.org/sourcebook/chapt/doc_view.php?id=7&docid=646

One specific social audit methodology is the Citizen Report Card. Citizen report cards are surveys in which particular aspects of policy and programs are rated by affected populations. Initiatives in Bangalore, India (Paul, 2007) and the Philippines (See Case 24), have met with considerable success; have been adapted for use in other countries and at various scales; and have been institutionalized. Although little documentation exists on similar government initiatives in the post-disaster context, ‘citizen report cards’ (with contextual modifications) could be equally useful for understanding the impacts of recovery programs.

Case 24: Using citizen report cards in The Philippines

The Report Card on Pro-Poor Services was undertaken as a follow-up to the World Bank’s Philippines Poverty Assessment in 2000. The survey was conducted at a national level through Social Weather Stations (SWS) to obtain information on clients’ satisfaction with public services targeted at the poor. The survey was conducted during March-April 2000 and covered a sample of 1,200 households divided into 4 main areas depending upon population distribution: Manila, the rest of Luzon (excluding Manila), the Visayas, and Mindanao. The primary poverty measure in the Report Card was based on household expenditures. Households with expenditures at the bottom 30 percent were classified as poor, those in the next 30 percent as middle-income, and those in the top 40 percent as rich. The Report Card questionnaire asked for information on awareness, access, use, and satisfaction related to pro-poor public services in five areas: healthcare, primary education, housing, water, and subsidized rice distribution. For improved governance and accountability, the government committed itself to treat the Filipinos as clients and not as beneficiaries, moving away from a paternalistic approach to a more entrepreneurial one where service provision is linked to user satisfaction. Regular feedback from “citizen-customers” and its subsequent use were identified as key components of the government’s agenda.

The feedback obtained through report cards showed a high degree of dissatisfaction among the poor regarding the public services. However, the report card tool emerged as a strong means to obtain credible and collective citizen feedback on the performance of the services provided by public agencies in the five areas. The feedback on public services was very revealing.

- Despite the fact that a larger percentage of the poor were sick, they used health facilities less than those with higher incomes. Satisfaction with healthcare was lowest in urban areas.
- Tuition fees in private schools were ten times those of public schools.
- Water supplied by all sources was considered unsafe for drinking. A third of the population had to look for their own water.

- The government subsidy on rice benefited the non-poor more than the poor.

In general, it was found after the first year that the Lingap Para sa Mahihirap (or Caring for the Poor) poverty reduction program proved more beneficial to the non-poor than the poor. This was mostly contributed to an ineffective beneficiary selection mechanism. According to the respondents the program required a major overhaul or termination.

The Report Card findings are already being used by the new administration in revising the Philippines Medium Term Development Plan, crafting the new poverty alleviation strategy, and designing the poverty programs. The national government is now piloting performance-based budgeting and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) has agreed to use the Report Card as one way to assess the performance of public agencies. This would bring the aspirations and concerns of citizens directly into the budget allocation process. A number of “localized” report card initiatives have been implemented in various cities across the Philippines. The Filipino experience has also generated considerable interest among a number of other countries, like Vietnam and Albania.

Lesson 1: The Filipino Report Card experience shows that governments that keep a wide range of stakeholders informed about the process and content of their policymaking and implementation tend to have greater credibility in civil society and can hold the stakeholders’ interest for a long time. Governments are able to implement their programs more effectively by building trust between various stakeholders, both within and outside the government.

Lesson 2: The public can provide useful feedback on programs meant to benefit them. While participants may not be able to comment on technical matters, they are experts on whether programs meant to serve them meet their expectations. They can judge whether specific services are satisfactory or unsatisfactory and whether the concerned agency is responsive, accountable, and reliable.

Lesson 3: The inclusion of other participants, outside the target audience can provide a means to compare impacts and identify the constraints and discrepancies. For instance, it was found that poor households spent higher proportions of their monthly expenditure on water than rich households.

Lesson 4: Treating citizens as customers or clients rather than beneficiaries requires that their voices are counted in the design, delivery, and assessment of public services. In situations, where no competition exists to provide a particular service, client feedback is crucial to check deficiencies and improve services.

Lesson 5: Experience shows that similar assessments in the past have failed to make a lasting impact because they were one-time exercises that lacked follow-through. Incentives for reform and improvement are more likely to succeed

if service providers know they will be monitored again.

Lesson 6: Civil society can play a critical role in conducting comprehensive surveys regularly.

For more detailed information on conducting social audits, please see:

Community Score Card Process - A Short Note on the General Methodology for Implementation. World Bank

<http://www.sasenet.org/documents/SM/Books%20&%20Articles/SM%20Ar5.pdf>

SCORECARD. Communities First Association

http://www.cfavideos.org/CRWRC_Videos/Tools/pdfs/ScorecardInformation.pdf

Surveys or evaluations that target a more general situation analysis in the recovery process rather than just an evaluation of specific program interventions can help to 1) spot broader dynamics that influence recovery success, 2) situate the specific program interventions in question in this broader context, and 3) identify ongoing gaps. Often agencies focus their evaluation efforts on narrow programmatic questions and overlook these broader issues. Examples of such surveys include:

The Fritz Institute Surveys

<http://www.fritzinstitute.org/researchCenter.htm>

The Listening Project – CDA Collaborative Learning Projects

http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/project_profile.php?pid=LISTEN&pname=Listening%20Project

Tsunami Evaluation Coalition

<http://www.alnap.org/initiatives/tec.aspx>

3. Establishing complaint mechanisms

Just as disasters affect everyone differently, so do disaster response initiatives. Therefore it should be expected that complaints exist. Establishing a complaint-handling mechanism provides a formalized means for those impacted to voice legitimate concerns which may not be apparent to project designers, implementers and outside evaluators. This can be a highly effective method to expose corruption, to identify problems before they escalate, and most importantly, to improve the services provided by recovery actors. Although not extensively documented, both governments and other service providers have begun to recognize the utility of such mechanisms in the post-disaster setting to enable a more relevant, uncompromised and sustainable response to post-disaster needs. Case 25 illustrates the combined effort of a government, donor, and various implementers to pro-actively field and address public complaints.

Case 25: Comprehensive complaints mechanism in Indonesia

The Earthquake and Tsunami Emergency Support Project (ETESP) was a multi sector rehabilitation project primarily funded by the Asian Development Bank and managed by the Government of Indonesia's Agency for the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (BRR).

Additional implementing partners included local and international NGOs. The ETESP, consisting of approximately US\$329 million in grants plus US\$65 million in reallocated loans, comprised various sub-projects in the following general sectors: livelihood restoration, social services, community infrastructure, physical infrastructure, and fiduciary oversight. Because of the complexity of the project, ADB and BRR built upon existing mechanisms to develop a more thorough complaints-handling system.

Within the system, complaints could be made through several intake points.

1. At the village level - Village and sub-district leaders, religious leaders as well as village and community facilitators, oversight consultants and project implementation units
2. At the sub-project level - Each of the implementing partners were required to establish complaint-handling mechanisms
3. At the project level – through sector specific grievance focal points and directly to the ETESP project office
4. At the management level – Through BRR’s existing grievance system, including the anti-corruption unit and the agency’s supervisory body.
5. At the donor level – through representatives of ADB’s Extended Mission of Sumatra

Once received, the complaints were categorized as one of four types

- *Type A*: queries, comments, suggestions
- *Type B*: allegations of violation of rights, non-performance or poor performance of obligations against any or all recovery actors; conflict between beneficiaries; or quality of goods and works
- *Type C*: allegations of fraud and corruption
- *Type D*: allegations of violation of law and criminal activities

Queries, suggestions, complaints on performance and works were addressed through working and coordinating with those involved with project implementation (Type A and B). In some instances, help would be sought from heads of the village or sub-district or religious and traditional leaders to help resolve the issue or conflict. However, complaints involving allegations of corruption or criminal activities (Type C and D) were forwarded to the national corruption unit or the local police. Results of the actions taken were reported back to the complainant.

Complaints were generally handled at three different levels. If the complainant did not agree with a decision, the complaint would be taken to the next higher level. Complaints at the first level were typically addressed by village facilitators or committees and traditional conflict resolution mechanisms (through village leaders or imams). If

unresolved, complaints would be addressed by the site advisors or community mobilization specialists in partnership with the appropriate project implementation unit. If still unresolved, the complaints would be forwarded to the BRR.

In addition to the many individuals at several levels who were trained and available to field complaints, affected peoples could also lodge complaints via a toll free phone number, SMS text messaging, email, letters, and the media.

Source: Earthquake and Tsunami Emergency Support Project (ETESP) Grievance Mechanism, Retrieved from: www.adb.org/documents/reports/etesp/ETESP-Grievance-Mechanism.pdf

Lesson 1: For a complaint-handling mechanism to be effective, the public must be willing to engage in the process. An experience-based study by the International Finance Corporation has found that complaint-handling mechanisms work best for communities when the process is (Aizawa et al., 2009):

1. Dedicated to respect, consider, and act on complaints
2. Perceived as trustworthy and responsive to their customary ways of resolving problems
3. Easily understood - neither too complex nor too simplistic for the nature of the issues
4. Culturally appropriate
5. Easily accessible
6. Not costly
7. Transparent

For further information on complaint-handling mechanisms please see:

Complaint Handling in the Rehabilitation of Aceh and Nias.

<http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Complaint-Handling-Rehabilitation/>

For further information on accountability in the recovery process, please see:

Bottom-Up Accountability and the Tsunami

<http://www.enqagingcommunities2005.org/abstracts/Roche-Chris-final.pdf>

Curbing Corruption in Tsunami Relief Operations

<http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Curbing-Corruption-Tsunami-Relief/default.asp>

Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Operations

http://transparency.org/content/download/49759/795776/Humanitarian_Handbook_cd_version.pdf

Mapping Accountability in Humanitarian Assistance.

<http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/praccountability.pdf>

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