

## **EXPERT MEETING ON DAMAGE AND NEEDS ASSESSMENTS FOR POST-DISASTER RECOVERY**

### **BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

UNDP, ILO, ISDR and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs have successfully organized the first IRP Expert Meeting on Damage and Needs Assessment for Post-Disaster Recovery. It took place on 30 -31 January 2006 in Rome, within the framework of the International Recovery Platform - IRP (see agenda in Annex).

UNDP, ILO, FAO, OCHA, ISDR, UNHCR, WFP, UNITAR/UNOSAT, UNSSC, UNEP, IFRC, ECLAC, GTZ and representatives of Governments and other national actors presented their key experiences on the management of post-disaster data and the development of early recovery frameworks. The workshop was an important opportunity to identify lessons learned and best practices in post disaster needs assessments, with a view to design common assessment methodologies and tools.

A brief summary of the proceedings conclusions of the Rome Meeting is presented below.

#### **BACKGROUND OF THE WORKSHOP**

Recent disasters have evidenced a gap in the UN response to natural disasters as regards institutional capacities and common approaches and mechanisms for post-disaster early recovery. Early-recovery – starting as soon as possible after the disaster, including during the relief phase - is essential to bridging relief and development, and to transforming disasters into opportunities for sustainable development and risk reduction. Early recovery requires synergies between humanitarian and developmental actors involved in the response. Common approaches and integrated mechanisms able to foster and facilitate coordination and coherence of the interventions are therefore critical.

The UN system is in the process of spelling out appropriate methodologies to assess the social and economic impact of disasters on local communities after disasters. Shared concerns related to the UN and international approaches and processes for post-disaster recovery have resulted in the creation of an International Recovery Platform (IRP). This interagency framework includes the UNDP, ILO, UN-ISDR, the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre (ADRC) (as founding members) as well as OCHA, the IFRC, the World Bank, and the Governments of Japan, Italy and Switzerland. The IRP has its Secretariat in Kobe, Japan, hosted by ADRC, and is structured around three hubs and axes of work: *knowledge management*, led by ADRC and ISDR in

Kobe; *training and capacity building*, led by ILO; and *enhanced recovery operations*, led by UNDP in Geneva. The IRP underpins the work of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER). The CWGER is a vehicle for the operationalisation of tools, knowledge and capacities developed by the IRP in concrete recovery situations, as recently seen in the Pakistan earthquake.

A key component of the IRP work-plan refers to the development of methodologies and tools for damage and needs assessments for early recovery. Notable concrete needs include a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment Methodology and a Disaster Damage Data Management Tool. A longstanding methodology exists for assessing the direct and indirect economic impact of a major natural disaster, developed by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), which is usually applied by the World Bank and regional development banks in order to provide the basis for their multilateral reconstruction loans. The ECLAC methodology is not exempt from reservations from some agencies involved in planning and implementing early recovery programmes, as regards either the overall approach or specific gaps. In particular, they consider that the methodology is excessively based on computing macroeconomic direct and indirect costs of the damages.

It is clearly recognized by the agencies that a widely accepted methodology for assessing the recovery needs of local communities in key sectors such as livelihoods/employment, shelter and governance, and for planning early recovery interventions beginning in parallel with the provision of emergency assistance, could be very useful. While UNDP and UN partners, such as ILO and UN-Habitat, have been developing *Early Recovery Frameworks* on an ad-hoc basis following different disasters for at least 5 years, these experiences have not been systematised as a methodology or guidelines. Nor have capacities been developed in high risk countries, within the UN system or among a cadre of experts to apply such a methodology in practice.

Similarly, while the application of the ECLAC methodology requires data on damages and losses aggregated sector by sector, early recovery needs assessments and planning require highly disaggregated data on disaster losses at the local level. One of the key unresolved challenges in post-disaster contexts refers to the management of this data. Currently different organizations and agencies collect data independently at different periods and at different scales, duplicating efforts and hampering data integration and interfacing. For example, there is currently little synergy between the data collection efforts of UNDAC during the emergency phase, the UN-supported national government data collection for recovery and the data collected during IFIs' assessment missions. While different tools have been applied to handle damage and loss data following different disasters, these experiences likewise have not been systematized.

The recent case of the estimation of livelihoods losses due to the earthquake in Pakistan showcased a dramatic discrepancy in the employment and livelihoods impact figures provided by the ILO and the World Bank. While the

ILO estimated these losses at 1.1 million, the WB figure was 324,000<sup>1</sup>. Such a discrepancy further highlighted the need for a more systematized approach towards rapid impact assessments within the ILO and among international stakeholders.

The technical meeting held in Rome opened the first step of a consultative process in developing a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment Methodology and a Disaster Damage Data Management Tool by the IRP. The meeting, which gathered a wide range of experts from various agencies involved in recovery planning and programming, allowed participants to share experiences and discuss a possible way forward.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORKSHOP**

The January 2006 meeting in Rome consisted of the presentation of key experiences referring to the management of disaster data and to the development of early recovery frameworks following major disasters. On the basis of the comparison of experiences, the participants were able to discuss the topics in working groups and outline the key characteristics and parameters of both instruments. They also agreed on the Terms of Reference for the design of common methodologies.

The meeting was officially opened by Mr. G. Deodato, Director General of the Development Cooperation Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy. Welcome addresses were given by Mr. C. Lenoci, Director ILO Rome and Mr. A. Maskrey, Chief, Post-Disaster Operations, UNDP/BCPR, and Chairman of the IRP Steering committee.

The key note on the scope of the workshop has highlighted the need for common damage assessments tool to serve recovery planning needs. These common tools should ensure interfaces and linkages to existing OCHA-UNDAC HIC assessments, which serve humanitarian needs; interfaces with reconstruction and development planning; and linkages with recent tsunami, earthquake and hurricane experiences. This methodology should be developed within the framework of the IRP and the WGER work plans for the next year.

A review of current experiences and case studies of Early Recovery Frameworks was presented by international agencies and national government officials, highlighting results as well as gaps, improvisations made, and templates used. They also indicated the extent of the involvement of the government, local administration authorities and cooperating agencies, and identified the lessons learnt as well.

The following experiences were presented:

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<sup>1</sup> From GET Brief, October 2005.

**Gujarat earthquake 2001 - Tsunami experience**

*P.K. Mishra, Member Secretary, NCR Planning Board*

**Peru earthquake 2001 (UNDP, ILO and Habitat)**

*Fernando Ramirez, La Red – Red de estudios sociales en prevencion de desastres en America Latina*

**Caribbean hurricanes 2004 (UNDP)**

*Angeles Arenas, UNDP*

**Tsunami affected countries: Experience of Joint WB-UN Needs Assessment**

*Praveen Pardeshi UNISDR (Indonesia), Hossein Kalali UNDP (Maldives), Kamal Kishore UNDP (India), prepared by Claudia Coenjaerts and presented by D. Kiniger-Passigli ILO (Sri Lanka)*

**Pakistan earthquake 2005 (Experience of UN system assessment)**

*Rashid Amjad, ILO, Jennifer Worrell, UNDP, Peter Reid, FAO*

Examples were been presented of the application of decentralized damage assessment methodologies used by various agencies, highlighting the lessons learnt in the application of these methodologies and in designing recovery frameworks. The following cases were presented:

**Data collection and management in the humanitarian phase (UNDAC/HIC methodologies)**

*Ricardo Mena, OCHA/UNDAC*

**Recovery assessment experience and lesson learnt from Bam to Pakistan (IFRC)**

*Robert Mister, IFRC*

**Livelihoods and employment rapid assessment and monitoring**

*Jeff Johnson, ILO*

**Poverty and social impact assessment methodology**

*Michael Cichon, ILO*

**Improved food security needs assessment**

*Gunter Hemrich, FAO*

**Data collection for recovery by national governments, regional organizations and UN system in Latin America**

*Andres Velazques, La Red – Red de estudios sociales en prevencion de desastres en America Latina*

**Data collection methodology in Tsunami Assesment**

*Julio Serje de la Ossa, UNDP*

**Applications of the ECLAC methodology in Latin America and Asia:**

## **review of the progress and adaptations in light of recent experiences**

*Ricardo Zapata, ECLAC*

The second day of workshop was dedicated to plenary discussions and the work of two parallel working groups:

WORKING GROUP 1: *Parameters and characteristics of a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment Methodology* (facilitated by ILO and ISDR)

WORKING GROUP 2: *Parameters and characteristics of a Disaster Damage Data Management Tool* (facilitated by UNDP and ILO)

The two groups presented their conclusions to the plenary.

### WORKING GROUP 1:

Working group 1 on “**Post-disaster Needs Assessment Methodology**” has reviewed the TORs presented by GTZ and UNDP for designing a Needs Assessment methodology and developing a practical guide. In its conclusions, the working group recommended that the TORs be reviewed, introducing the following contents:

- a) the need to operate not only for the recovery but also for the reduction of risks
- b) the need to consider and make reference to the most relevant existing methodologies
- c) the need to include an analysis of markets as an essential element in the design of recovery plans (FAO highlighted this point)
- d) the importance of adopting a participatory approach and including in the assessment a variety of international actors involved in recovery and reconstruction, including international NGOs, the WB and other IFIs, other international organisms and donors.

Moreover, the TORs for the design of the methodology should include:

- e) the clarification of the steps for transforming a needs assessment into a planning process
- f) the identification of the priority interventions on the basis of the limited resources available in a given period (being realistic)
- g) a clear connection with the national policies and plans for recovery, reconstruction and development
- h) the identification of the different targets to whom the methodology is addressed (government officials, specialized institutions’ staff, UN and other international staff, donors...)

A first draft of the TORs based on these recommendations is attached here and a calendar for the elaboration of the proposed study has been advanced:

- ✓ by July 2006, a first draft of the methodology should be ready for review

- ✓ by December 2006, final review will be conducted

## WORKING GROUP 2:

The charge to working group 2 was to discuss data requirements for post-disaster early recovery and to define a process for developing a “**disaster damage data management tool**”.

The working group focused on the definition of tools for the different stages of assessments: 1) Quick assessment, 2) Rapid response surveys and 3) Surveys and procedures for medium and long term monitoring.

The discussion within working group 2 highlighted a variety of concerns and questions about the data collection process in various phases of the stages of intervention.

It was suggested that the data management process for damage and loss assessment should be split into two phases, pre- and post-disaster:

- a) *In pre-disaster situations*, it is necessary to assemble information such as hazard mapping and data relating to vulnerabilities to hazards, and effort should be deployed to build the capacities of data gathering. A list of the most disaster-prone countries should first be agreed upon. Building capacities in these countries should be addressed first.
- b) *In post disaster situations* data on damages and needs should be collected and the emphasis should be placed on methods of producing, sharing, managing and monitoring of data and information for response and recovery operations. The disaster damage data management process will very much depend upon the planning objectives and requirements of the recovery process. The data management tool should therefore be directly linked with the damage and need assessment process and with the recovery planning methodologies that are used.

Four time periods can be defined for assessing the impact of a disaster, a pre-disaster (preventive) phase and three post-disaster phases:

- a. Preventive – Improving the ability of those countries/areas most at risk for natural disasters. This is not part of the IRP work plan; however it is an area that could possibly be linked with other ongoing initiatives, including the ongoing UNDP-supported project on “ Global Risk Identification Program (GRIP)”.
- b. Quick Evaluation – Preliminary assessment and analysis immediately following a disaster (1 – 10 days).
- c. Rapid Assessment – Joint effort by the international community to put in place a rapid assessment survey to evaluate the situation on the ground (within the first 10 - 90 days).

d. Monitoring - Joint international effort to support the national and/or local government to put in place a more scientific approach to monitoring key issues during the recovery phase (possibly 2 to 5 years).

For each of the last three time periods (quick evaluation, rapid assessment and monitoring) the following key areas need to be discussed and agreed upon:

- a. *Clear definitions* (of Early Recovery phase, transitional phase, etc)
- b. *Key Topics* (livelihoods, housing, health, etc.)
- c. *Tool Kit* (an appropriate tool kit on data management to be developed)
- d. *Roles and responsibility for each time frame and topic* (determination of:
  - Where should data be produced?: Local / National level
  - How should they be produced?: What methodology
  - Who should be producing them?: Government, UN agencies, NGOs)
- e. *Methods of production* (the data management tool should be flexible enough to encompass existing individual agencies' tools and methodologies)
- f. *Information sharing* (there is a need for an inter-agency common data management tool).

It was suggested that further analysis of the salient characteristics and requirement for each of these phases be carried out separately. The working group n therefore called for the creation of two separate working teams:

- i) the first team would focus on "*capacity building*" for strengthening statistical capacity for the countries and regions at risk (in a number of countries most likely to be affected by disasters);
- ii) the second team would develop the "*tool box and methods*" for the international agencies to work alongside the national governments in developing quick, rapid assessment and long term monitoring.

## CONCLUSIONS OF THE WORKSHOP

The meeting in Rome laid the groundwork for the development of a common UN Post-Disaster Needs Assessment Methodology and a Disaster Damage Data Management Tool, within the framework of the IRP. The key characteristics and parameters of both instruments were examined and new features proposed, suggesting recommendations for their design. These instruments will be designed and approved within the next few months. Once finalized with the participation of all interested agencies, both instruments would be tested in the field and validated. They will then become centrepiece of the "training and capacity building component" of the IRP.

The concluding remarks of the workshop were presented by the representative of FAO and the Chairman of IRP. ILO/CRISIS closed the session. The main recommendations of the workshop are:

- The TORs of a Post-disaster Damage and Needs Assessment Methodology prepared by GTZ will be amended as per the recommendations of the workshop. Thereafter UNDP, in collaboration with ILO and the other co-interested agencies, will proceed to

elaborate the Needs Assessments methodology, as well as the Disaster Damage Data Management Tool, as per the agreed TORs.

- On the issue of the data base management
- it was decided to establish two working teams in support of national authorities. The TORs of these two working groups will be prepared by UNDP in collaboration with ILO and all the other agencies involved. They will take into account the methodological comments made at the workshop.
- ILO and FAO, in collaboration with the other agencies involved, will contribute to the consolidation of the overall methodological approach, including specific attention to the livelihoods, employment and income generating components of the assessments;
- The IRP Steering Committee will take a decision on how best to move forward with the work of the two working groups;
- Other UN partner agencies - like WFP, UNICEF, UN-HABITAT, WHO, and others - which have technical capacities to contribute to the development of a post-disaster damage data base and needs assessment methodology - will be actively involved in the development of the methodology
- It was suggested to submit a technical proposal to donors for funding within the framework of support to the IRP and the IASC-WGER. This would provide capacity building support to UN Agencies, national Governments and local authorities likely to undertake damage and needs assessments after disasters.