



Disaster Recovery Guidance Series

Process for Preparing Disaster Recovery Frameworks

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Introduction

A Disaster Recovery Framework (DRF) is a tool for systematically presenting the policy, institutional, financial, and operational aspects of a disaster recovery program.

A DRF serves both strategic and operational purposes in the management of a disaster recovery program. It presents the recovery vision while also describing the results expected from the recovery program and the approach that will take to implement it.

This Process Note explains the process for preparing a DRF. It is intended to support

the government officials, partners, affected population, and other stakeholders who will plan and prepare the DRF. It will help governments make the key decisions and prepare the inputs needed for the DRF. It also provides a roadmap for the process, which starts with a series of stakeholder consultations and ends with approval and dissemination of the DRF.

While the scope of the DRF process will depend on the nature and extent of the disaster, there are standard topics that DRFs cover.

Major Topics of a Disaster Recovery Framework

Recovery vision, principles, and policies

A national vision that guides the recovery effort, supported by principles and policies that align recovery with the nation's strategic development goals.

Institutional framework

The legal, regulatory, and organizational arrangements for recovery, including normal and special laws and procedures.

Recovery financing and accountability framework

The recovery budget and plan for mobilizing, spending, and reporting on recovery expenditures and results

The system for monitoring and reporting on recovery and ensuring transparency

Implementation approach

Arrangements for managing, coordinating, and setting standards for recovery implementation

Preparing for Recovery Framework Development

Developing a DRF is a collaborative process led by the government and supported by the affected communities and partners.

Preparing the DRF not only provides direction to the recovery process, it helps the government establish a spirit of collaboration and mechanisms for coordination with stakeholders.

Before launching the DRF process, it is helpful to prepare terms of reference that describe

the scope of the DRF process, the roles of various parties, and the overall schedule to be followed.¹

Organize the Government Team

The key entities that manage the preparation of the DRF are the lead agency, the core team, and sector teams.

Lead agency

- The best entity to oversee DRF preparation is the government agency that will lead recovery implementation.
- If an official lead recovery agency has not yet been created or designated, the government should identify another appropriate entity or a group of officials to guide the DRF process.
- This entity or group [referred to as the “lead agency” in this Note] oversees the DRF process, ensures coordination within the government and with partners, and manages formal approval of the DRF once it is completed.

Core team

- The core team provides day-to-day support to the lead agency, guides sector teams, and produces the DRF document.
- Core team members can come from government and partner agencies. The team should include members with experience in disaster recovery and recovery planning and relevant technical expertise.
- Members also need knowledge of government and the international development community, and familiarity with the area affected by the disaster. Members from the ministries of local government, finance, and planning are particularly valuable.

Sector team

- Sector teams lead their respective consultation processes, prepare and submit sector plans and priorities to the core team, develop sector implementation strategies, and help set priorities for the overall recovery program.
- Sector teams are generally led by ministries with support from development partners and may comprise the experts who carried out the post-disaster damage and needs assessment.

¹ Sample terms of reference for developing a DRF can be found on GFDRR's Recovery Hub at <https://www.gfdr.org/recovery-hub>.



A UNDP engineer directs local demolition workers in Sindhupalchowk, Nepal. Photo credit: Laxmi Prasad

The DRF sectors and themes are normally the same as those of the damage and needs assessment (social, productive, and infrastructure sectors and cross-cutting themes such as disaster risk reduction and environment).² The sector configuration and team composition are decisions the government makes based on technical and human resource considerations.

Identify Key Partners and Request Their Assistance

The government should identify key government agencies and development partners, both national and international, and request their collaboration in the development of the DRF. Partners can provide valuable support to sector teams—especially in sectors where they already work, mobilize sector experts, and provide information on good recovery practices in the sector. Partners can also support the core team.

Address Logistics, Define DRF Scope and Schedule

The core team will need a dedicated work area with good data connections, and space for meetings with partners and sector teams. The core team will also need support with information management and document production. Proximity to partners and government agencies is an important consideration in selecting a location.

The core team's initial tasks include helping the government develop the scope of work and schedule for the DRF process. These will be needed to mobilize the sector teams. The core team can also begin to gather data and define an information management strategy for the DRF process. Developing a communications strategy is another core team priority. Government or private sector communications specialists will be needed to design and implement the communications strategy, which should include an online presence.

² The PDNA Guide and sector assessment guides are available online. <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/crisis-prevention-and-recovery/pdna.html>.

Developing the Recovery Framework

The recovery program addresses all critical needs of the affected population. Its delivery will depend on having adequate implementation capacity and sufficient resources. But capacity and resources may be limited, especially at the start of recovery. Therefore, an important aspect of the DRF process is setting priorities and allocating the available resources to them.

Define the Vision, Principles, and Policies for Recovery

A recovery vision serves both practical and motivational purposes. By providing a vision of the recovered community to work for, it motivates and unifies those involved in recovery to accomplish shared goals.

To develop the recovery vision and principles, the government and stakeholders can hold a workshop with the help of the core team and consider the following questions:

- Looking back on this event from the future (10-20 years), how do we want to see our recovery experience?
- What are the sources of pride and identity in this country (region, city) that can motivate resilient recovery?
- What are the strategic development objectives that should guide the recovery process?

Principles are rules or beliefs that influence how the recovery process is implemented. The principles of “build back better” or “participatory recovery” are often called for. In developing the DRF, these general principles must be carried through into specific policies and activities.

Policies are frameworks and standards that will be applied to achieve recovery objectives and preserve the community’s interests. For some purposes, recovery policies may be existing national or sector policies. For others, recovery may require new policies.

The government can articulate its recovery vision and propose principles and policies even while the needs assessment is underway. These elements will be validated during the consultation process.

It is not uncommon for leaders to declare specific recovery goals or policies immediately after a disaster strikes. If these goals are feasible, they should be incorporated into the vision and principles.

“Greater Christchurch recovers and progresses as a place to be proud of— an attractive and vibrant place to live, work, visit and invest.” —Recovery Vision from the Recovery Strategy for Greater Christchurch

Recovery Visions from Recent Disasters

2015 Malawi Floods

The government of Malawi prepared a DRF in June 2015 following heavy flooding that affected 1.1 million people and 17 of 28 districts. The DRF process began after the launch of the PDNA. The core team was multi-stakeholder, inter-departmental taskforce. The recovery vision was: “Reinforce individual and community resilience to natural hazards while fostering equitable, inclusive, and participatory reconstruction that builds back better.”³

2015 Nepal Earthquake

After a devastating earthquake struck Nepal in April 2015, the PDNA estimated recovery costs at NPR 669 billion, or over \$6 billion USD. The National Reconstruction Authority of Nepal developed a DRF with the support of international and national partners. The scale of the disaster required changes to policy and development of new structures for recovery management and financing. The recovery vision is “Establishment of well-planned, resilient settlements and a prosperous society.”⁴

Analyze the Context and Gather Key Inputs

Good data and background analysis help ensure the technical soundness of the DRF. Making these data accessible as they are collected saves time and helps ensure coherence between the DRF and the needs assessment and among sectors. The DRF information management strategy should include establishing a data hub that is managed by a dedicated team.

Damage and needs assessment and other data

The data and findings produced by conducting the post-disaster needs assessment (PDNA) or another comprehensive damage and needs assessment process are the most critical inputs for preparing a DRF. These data will be augmented and refined as the DRF process proceeds.

Other information useful for preparing the DRF is listed below.

Social and economic characteristics of the disaster-affected region, such as population, family composition, and sources of income

- Sector-specific data on existing public infrastructure, execution capacity, and organization of the sector
- Information on livelihoods and the local economy
- Hazard maps, maps of disaster impacts, and other geospatial data
- Land use maps and development plans of the affected region
- Land ownership patterns, housing culture, and housing construction practices
- National and sector financial data and information on financial management systems

³ Kita, Stern. Office of the Vice President, Malawi. *National Disaster Recovery Framework: Malawi*. Presentation to the International Recovery Forum. Kobe, Japan. 26 January 2016. Available at: http://www.recoveryplatform.org/assets/meetings_trainings/irf2016/Presentations/13.%20Mr.%20Kita_NDRF_MALAWI_260116.pdf.

⁴ National Reconstruction Authority, Government of Nepal. *Nepal Earthquake 2015: Post-Disaster Recovery Framework*. April 2016. Available: <http://nra.gov.np/uploads/brochure/5EM7J61bj160705112241.pdf> Accessed 17 January 2017.

Legal and regulatory framework analysis

The legal framework for recovery includes a combination of laws and rules used in normal times and those approved specifically for recovery. An analysis of the legal framework can determine how existing laws and regulations will apply to recovery activities and identify any modifications needed to respond to the special circumstances of recovery.

The legal analysis should cover topics such as disaster risk management, public financial management, urban planning and zoning, land use and land tenure, social protection, and disaster-affected sectors. Regulatory modifications are frequently needed in areas such as: (a) budget approval, (b) procurement, (c) project preparation and environmental review, (d) disaster risk reduction, (e) acquisition of land, and (f) approval of land uses. A new law could be required to establish the lead recovery agency.

The government may approve an omnibus recovery law, which then becomes the basis for subsequent regulations and decrees.

Alternatively, it may approve individual laws as needs arise or (where the legal framework allows) make the necessary changes through executive orders and decrees.

Organizational capacity assessment

Agency capacity to execute recovery activities must be understood in order to establish institutional arrangements for the recovery program. A capacity assessment is conducted after agreeing on the capacities required to carry out everyday activities at a greater speed or scale and activities unique to recovery. To facilitate local investment projects, for example, key capacities include planning, community mobilization, public financial management, and capital projects management.

The capacity assessment is usually not a single study but an accumulation of inputs provided to the lead agency from various sources. Because implementation may entail the collaboration of several agencies, the assessment should address capacity at both central and local levels (local governments and other local actors) and focus not only on the government but also on civil society organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), technical assistance providers, and the private sector. For example, if local governments are not equipped to manage cash transfers, local NGOs may be able to assist, allowing this task to be executed at the local level. Sector teams should assess capacity in their respective sectors.

The capacity assessment evaluates: (a) technical and administrative capacities of organizations, (b) adequacy of their administrative systems, and (c) the ability of agencies to manage recovery tasks, while also carrying out their normal functions. It also should consider: (d) the impact the disaster has had on agencies, (e) the scale and geographic distribution of the disaster, and (f) the political context.

The capacity assessment can identify the best agencies to manage critical tasks and define their scopes of work and capacity strengthening needs. It can also recommend where inter-agency coordination will be needed and how to organize it.

The scope of the capacity assessment can extend to the lead recovery agency. If a lead agency has not been designated or created, an assessment can provide input to the decision. If the agency decision has been made, the assessment can help define its functions and identify its organizational strengthening needs.

Define Institutional Arrangements

It is crucial to the development of the DRF that agreements are reached on who will perform which recovery tasks and on other institutional arrangements. Roles and responsibilities must be agreed between and among the lead agency and ministries, central and local government agencies, the affected population, and partners.

The starting points for these decisions are the existing organizational structure of the government—including the degree of fiscal and functional decentralization—and the information provided by the capacity assessment. All institutional arrangements must be supported by law. The legal framework analysis should identify any legal concerns in the proposed institutional arrangements.

The institutional arrangements proposed by the government are reviewed and clarified during the consultation process. Final institutional arrangements should reflect the feedback received and be open to future review based on recovery results.

Develop a Financial Strategy and Accountability Framework

The government has four major finance-related responsibilities in recovery: (a) estimating the cost of recovery, (b) identifying and mobilizing financial resources for recovery, (c) developing and approving recovery budgets, and (d) setting up administrative arrangements to disburse funds and track and report on expenditures and results. Each of these topics should be explained in the finance section of the DRF.

Identify costs and funding sources

The post-disaster damage and needs assessment provides estimates of funding requirements, which are likely to be updated during the DRF process based on the recommendations of sector teams.

The Ministry of Finance normally prepares estimates of financial resources available for recovery. The recovery program can take several years or more to implement, so the estimates should cover this entire period. Government funds can include reprogrammed budgets, surpluses, reserves, donations, and borrowing. ‘Off-budget’ funding (remittances, nongovernmental organization projects, donations, and private financing) may also be included in the estimates.

Financing strategies vary by sector and level of government. Certain sectors depend on government funding alone; others can mobilize alternative funding sources. For example, remittances and bank borrowing are sources for housing reconstruction but not for infrastructure. Certain funding may be earmarked for specific purposes, regions, or sectors. Sector teams should identify funding sources for their sectors and forecast funding requirements by year. Sector requirements may be estimated by identifying specific projects, but they are best aggregated into programs for setting priorities and for presentation in the DRF.

Identify gaps and prepare recovery budget

Funding gaps for periods of time, sectors, and the entire recovery program are identified by comparing investment priorities and available funding over specific periods. The Ministry of Finance will need to identify and mobilize funding to close these gaps until all requirements are met.

The recovery budget is developed by the lead agency once the cross-sectoral prioritization has taken place (described below). Once reviewed with sectors and finalized, the recovery budget is approved.

Recovery budgets require flexibility without forgoing good public financial management practices. Inflation may cause costs to rise and agencies often overestimate their delivery

Elements of the Accountability Framework

Element	Recommendation
Monitoring of expenditures and results	Public financial management (PFM) systems serve this purpose but timeliness is often an issue. Augment existing systems with other monitoring tools, if needed. Require partners to participate in monitoring.
Reporting on progress	Reporting occurs within the government and to the affected population and the general public. Address progress reporting in the communications strategy. PFM systems produce relevant information but formats are not suitable for public use, so consider whether alternative systems are required.
Preventing corruption	Put in place channels for whistle-blowers, financial auditing systems, and mechanisms for community oversight.
Grievance redress	Require grievance redress in all projects that assist households. Provide grievance redress standards for implementing agencies.

capacity, so reasonable flexibility is needed to reallocate funding as the recovery program progresses. The DRF should explain how recovery budget revisions will be handled.

The DRF should describe the flow of recovery funds; that is, how recovery funds will be distributed and procurement managed, especially in priority sectors. If necessary, financial systems should be strengthened to manage these transactions and maintain transparency.

Develop an accountability framework

The public tends to expect a high level of transparency in the use of recovery funds. For this reason, recovery programs require an accountability framework, which includes the elements described in the following table.

The DRF should explain the design of the accountability framework and how it will be operationalized.

Prepare for Consultation

A consultation process held at national, sector, and local levels provides input to recovery programming and allows review and validation of government decisions.

Before launching the consultation process, the lead agency should mobilize the sector teams. The sector teams then carry out the consultations and prepare inputs for the DRF.

Once the DRF scope of work and schedule are prepared, the lead agency meets with the ministries tapped to manage sector teams and sector team members, in order to:

- Explain the sector team scope of work and the DRF preparation schedule
- Advise teams on engaging partners and holding stakeholder consultations⁵
- Provide instructions on preparing sector inputs to the DRF and accessing data and forms for submitting information
- Discuss criteria for setting sector priorities

⁵ A stakeholder analysis can identify those directly or indirectly affected by the recovery program who deserve to be consulted. See the World Bank “Social Accountability E-Guide: A Step-by-Step Approach to Integrating Social Accountability into Projects” web site, <https://saeguide.worldbank.org/>.

Criteria for priority-setting reflect geographic, economic, and social considerations, such as the nature of the disaster impact and the status of vulnerable groups. Criteria may not be identical in all sectors.

The role of local governments in DRF preparation and the consultation process will reflect the country's institutional and legal framework. Where public investment execution is highly centralized, local governments may organize local consultations but have a limited role in recovery planning or implementation. In more decentralized states, where local governments execute a significant share of sector projects, they should have a larger role in managing both consultation and recovery planning. In the latter case, the government may invite teams representing local government to participate in the DRF process along with sector teams. In either case, the DRF budget should reflect a reconciliation of local and sector priorities.

Plan and Hold Consultation Meetings

Outreach is required to launch the consultation process. Good coordination helps to reduce duplication of effort and ensures that all key stakeholders are contacted. To accomplish this, the lead agency and sector teams are supported by those implementing the communications strategy.

Outreach starts with the announcement of the consultation process. Radio, print media, social media, and SMS broadcasts are effective for reaching a wide range of stakeholders. Sectors also may have established communications channels they can employ for DRF purposes. Outreach should be designed to reach a cross-section of those affected, including marginalized groups. Teams also may need support to plan and organize consultation meetings and to consolidate feedback.

In the consultation meetings, those responsible can use presentations and printed materials

to explain the DRF process. Participants work together to define or validate the following:

- Recovery vision and principles
- Strategic recovery objectives and their relation to long-term development goals
- Sector-specific policy and planning issues
- Locality-specific recovery objectives and requirements
- Program and project priorities for both physical investments and social interventions

Teams use the feedback from the consultations in preparing sector and local inputs to the DRF.

Gather Sector Inputs and Prepare Cross-Sectoral Prioritization

Based on the guidance provided to sector teams and the results of the consultation process, sector teams prepare inputs to the DRF including:

- Validation of needs
- Programs to be funded, along with priorities, cost estimates, and expenditure schedules
- Sector capacity assessments and implementation strategies
- Information on available sector funding
- Feedback on prioritization criteria

The submission of inputs can occur in stages. Supervision and support help ensure that the material prepared is of good quality and submitted on schedule.

Cross-sector prioritization. The cross-sectoral prioritization process allows the government to make critical decisions about how the available resources will be allocated for the first phase of recovery (18-24 months) and for what purposes.

Cross-sector prioritization must balance sector priorities with local priorities and those of the nation. The process takes the final DRF vision statement, principles, and policies into account and uses the prioritization criteria reviewed with sector teams.

The lead agency may engage a group of officials in the prioritization process or prepare a proposal for the government to review. In either case, the core team will provide critical support to the process.

Prioritization should take place at the programmatic level, not for specific projects. The allocation of resources to specific projects takes place later, during more detailed sector planning exercises.

With resources allocated to priorities, the government can present a consolidated recovery program for the first 18-24 months and indications about the financing of subsequent phases. This recovery programming should be disseminated to the sector and local teams and the general public, using a communications platform that allows feedback.

Some examples of national recovery priorities from recent disasters are shown below.

Criteria Used to Prioritize Interventions in Selected Disaster Recovery Frameworks

2015 Nepal Earthquake PDRF⁶

Programmes or projects that:

- Deliver priority short term results (3-12 months)
- Are considered a priority by stakeholder groups
- Are considered a priority by government
- Have significant positive social impact
- Have significant positive economic impact
- Have preferential impact on disadvantaged group or contributes to equitable recovery
- Benefit a disadvantaged location
- Are time-sensitive
- Mitigate critical risk factors
- Facilitate other aspects of recovery

2015 Malawi Floods DRF⁷

Interventions that:

- Have potential for direct and wide humanitarian impact
- Support the preparedness and response for the 2015-2016 rainy season
- Offer “quick wins”
- Are in areas most hit by the disaster
- Are pro-poor, pro-vulnerable, and with gender-sensitive agendas
- Have potential to generate sustainable livelihoods
- Show a balance between the public and private sector recovery
- Show a balance between physical infrastructure reconstruction and less visible aspects of recovery (e.g. governance and capacity building)
- Focused on restoring and rebuilding critical infrastructure and services.

6 National Reconstruction Authority, Government of Nepal, *Nepal Earthquake 2015: Post-Disaster Recovery Framework*. April 2016. <http://nra.gov.np/uploads/brochure/5EM7j61bj160705112241.pdf> Accessed 17 January 2017.

7 Government of the Republic of Malawi. 2015. National Disaster Recovery Framework: Building Back a Disaster-Impacted Malawi Better and Safer. Lilongwe: Government of Malawi. <https://gfdrr.org/sites/default/files/publication/Malawi%20National%20Disaster%20Recovery%20Framework%20Report%202015.pdf>



Fiji. Photo credit: OXFAM/Alicja Grocz

Plan for Implementation

The implementation strategy helps ensure that the commitments made in the DRF are fulfilled. Without an adequate implementation scheme, recovery can go off-track and resources will be wasted.

The implementation strategy integrates the institutional framework, the recovery budget, and sector-specific implementation strategies. Using inputs from the sector and local teams, the lead agency crafts an overall implementation strategy that ensures coherence among sector and local implementation strategies. Because the implementation strategy both incorporates and affects other elements of the DRF, including costs and schedules, several iterations may be required before arriving at the final implementation approach.

The implementation section of the DRF should explain the following.

- The distribution of responsibilities among agencies
- The procurement and financial systems to be used

- The coordination mechanisms and communications channels to be used
- Logistical and capacity constraints identified and how they will be mitigated
- The roles of key partner agencies

The implementation strategy is not a recovery plan, but an overview of the implementation approach. Building on the inputs prepared for the DRE, ministries and local governments should prepare sector and local recovery plans, with support from sector teams and partners. These plans can show how the funds allocated to sector recovery programs will be distributed to specific projects. The plans can be made public, along with the DRE, and used as the basis for sector and local results reporting.

Like all elements of the DRF, the implementation strategy should be open to review as the program proceeds. To speed up the start of implementation, standard operating procedures, scopes of work, and memoranda of understanding can be drafted and approved even while the DRF is in preparation.

Final Review of the DRF

Once the cross-sector prioritization is complete and reviewed by the lead agency, the core team, and the government, a draft DRF can be prepared and distributed to teams and stakeholders. Following this, holding a second round of consultations to validate the draft DRF is strongly encouraged. Feedback can be gathered from meetings and workshops and through traditional and social media.

As with the first set of consultations, it is vital to include a broad range of stakeholders, including those both involved and not involved in DRF

preparation and to conduct consultations at the local level. This second round of consultations helps build stakeholder knowledge and ownership of the DRF and lends credibility to the DRF development process.

Following the consultations, the core team can revise the DRF draft to reflect the feedback and prepare the final DRF for publication online and in printed form. If sector and local plans are completed, they can be prepared for publication as well.

Dissemination of the DRF

The dissemination process informs government agencies, partners, stakeholders, and the media that the DRF has been completed and familiarizes them with its content. The communications strategy should cover dissemination of the final document.

Before launching the DRF, the government can issue a communications brief that includes:

- Key messages about the DRF
- Roles and responsibilities of the government, the affected population, and partners
- Overview of the implementation strategy
- Recovery program priorities and sequencing
- Plans for recovery program monitoring and results reporting

The government also can make direct presentations to various audiences on these topics and engage the media. Holding press training sessions on recovery and regular briefings can pay big dividends. These activities help the media provide more accurate information about recovery progress and improve the quality, quantity, and tone of media coverage of the recovery program.

Circumstances other than those anticipated when developing the DRF will make course corrections in the recovery program necessary. The procedures for periodic program reviews and modifications and updates to the DRF should be described in the DRF and incorporated into the monitoring plan. These updating activities might include repeating the consultation process and issuing revised versions of the DRF.

Annex: Proposed Table of Contents for the Disaster Recovery Framework

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF STATE

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Overview

The **Process Note for Developing Disaster Recovery Frameworks** is part of GFDRR's **Disaster Recovery Guidance Series**. This Note builds on GFDRR's **Guide to Developing Disaster Recovery Frameworks**. It provides advice to senior government officials who face the challenge of mobilizing a recovery effort after a major disaster. It explains the key decisions related to recovery policy, planning, financing, and implementation that contribute to an effective and efficient recovery process. The Process Note reflects the World Bank's extensive experience in helping governments plan and execute post-disaster recovery programs.

For more information on implementing recovery programs,
please visit the GFDRR Recovery Hub:

<https://www.gfdrr.org/recovery-hub>



The Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) is a global partnership that helps developing countries better understand and reduce their vulnerabilities to natural hazards and adapt to climate change. Working with over 400 local, national, regional, and international partners, GFDRR provides grant financing, technical assistance, training and knowledge sharing activities to mainstream disaster and climate risk management in policies and strategies. Managed by the World Bank, GFDRR is supported by 34 countries and 9 international organizations.