1.1. Intervention Strategies

Interventions must be based on a thorough understanding of the problem, clear programme objectives and an analysis of response options and associated risks. The decision to provide food, cash, a combination, or something else entirely should be based on an objective problem analysis and clear objectives. The starting point for interventions should be a clearer understanding of the livelihoods of these households and how these might be supported. Areas close to poor people’s livelihoods – such as agricultural wage rates, access to natural resources and productive assets, and access to non-exploitive credit – may be useful starting points.

The global report of the UNDP’s Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) spells out interventions that could reduce poverty and disaster exposure at the same time and these are:

- Strengthening and diversifying livelihoods
- Encouraging responsible foreign investment and job creation
- A flexible and participatory approach to urban planning
- Building social security including access to health and education
- Provision of a risk/loss spreading mechanism for those who are excluded from insurance.

A. Employment

There is a necessity to get people back to work quickly to avoid exacerbating already existing and chronic poverty in many of the affected areas. In addition, we are also concerned over the prospect of prolonged unemployment leading to a serious long-term setback to development. (Juan Somavía, Director-General, ILO, 2005)

Different experiences from past disaster recoveries show that “Build back better” means “Return to work.” For the poor and vulnerable groups, disasters have robbed them of their livelihoods. They have lost employment, income-earning opportunities, and if they are in the agricultural sector, harvest, crops, equipment and inputs. For them, work is not a pre-existing destination but a means of living that needs to be restored. Employment in recovery and reconstruction is multi-dimensional. Challenges are multi-level both at the institutional and the individual level. Different interventions are required for work in the formal and informal economy to suit various groups of workers. The disaster often quantifies the number of vulnerable workers whose (re)entry into the job market will need specific support. For these reasons employment interventions in recovery and reconstruction will have to be addressed at the policy level and reinforced through institutional capacity building and careful programme design.

Most Common Initiatives Addressing Special Needs Related to the World of Work [Lazarte, 2008]

1. Emergency social protection scheme
   - Regular unemployment and disabilities entitlements
   - Temporary Emergency Employment Schemes
2. Employment & Livelihoods Recovery:
   - Mainstreaming Employment Recovery in Recovery and reconstruction investments
   - Emergency Employment Services Centers

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1 ALNAP 2007
2 [Beck 2005]
3 [NIVARAN, 27 March 2009]
4 Juan Somavía, Director-General, ILO, January 2005 [http://irp.onlinesolutionsltd.net/themes_in_recovery/12/livelihood](http://irp.onlinesolutionsltd.net/themes_in_recovery/12/livelihood)
• Enabling Employability in recovery and reconstruction Works through short cycle specialized training activities
• Focalize business recovery support (construction, trade, production of basic goods, etc), including SIYB, Micro Finance, BDS, etc.
• Restore capacity of Labor Market institutions

Cash for work
Cash for work was a prominent component of the immediate response to the tsunami in Aceh. CFW program contributed to community recovery by supporting clean-up and reconstruction projects. CFW provided a substantial infusion of cash which helped to restart the local economy and provide support to economic markets. CFW provided an essential source of income, and for the majority of program participants and their households, CFW was the only source of income in months following the tsunami. CFW provided a critical source of cash for tsunami victims and helped empower displaced populations to return to their pre-tsunami residences. Other reported psychosocial benefits of CFW included providing productive activities for tsunami survivors and giving communities an opportunity to work together.

Challenged
Lack of technical expertise, equipment and untimely delivery of materials and tools were limiting factors in CFW. Timely delivery of wages was particularly difficult, especially in the first month of the program when support mechanism was still being put into place and Cash For Work was rapidly expanding.

The basis of payment of CFW is initially paid to the workers for fix amount of laborer time usually eight hours per day, and there was no flexibility in the compensation system, mostly due to lack of adequate personnel and the difficulties anticipated in managing work days of varying length. On unannounced visits to work sites, it was often observed that workers were starting late and departing early and not working a full eight hour day. It influence the project progress.

Best Practice
Cash for Work in Aceh
Cash for work was a prominent component of the immediate response to the tsunami in Aceh. CFW program contributed to community recovery by supporting clean-up and reconstruction projects. CFW provided a substantial infusion of cash which helped to restart the local economy and provide support to economic markets. CFW provided an essential source of income, and for the majority of program participants and their households, CFW was the only source of income in months following the tsunami. CFW provided a critical source of cash for tsunami victims and helped empower displaced populations to return to their pre-tsunami residences. Other reported psychosocial benefits of CFW included providing productive activities for tsunami survivors and giving communities an opportunity to work together.

Lessons Learned
• Lack of technical expertise, equipment and untimely delivery of materials and tools.
• The lack of sufficient or appropriate tools and building materials suggest that ‘non-wage’ costs and logistical issues are important considerations
• There was no flexibility in the compensation payment system, mostly due to lack of adequate personnel and the difficulties anticipated in managing work days of varying length. On unannounced visits to work sites, it was often observed that workers were starting late and departing early and not working a full eight hour day. It influence the project progress.
• The lack of control over how money is spent is a common concern of CFW programs
Suggestion

- Limit the need for technical expertise in the initial phases by focusing labor on projects that require minimal technical oversight.
- Contracts with skilled workers to help ensuring adequate technical support.
- Training of worker and improve oversight by skilled foreman.
- Consider work groups with no more than 25 workers and a ratio of no more than four work groups to one supervisor (overall maximum ratio of 100 workers: 4 group leaders: 1 area supervisor) to ensure quality and efficient work.
- Payment for partial days where participants received a rate for four hours of work each day; and
- Output based labor payments instead of hourly wages as a means of increasing households accountability.
- Making CFW payments can be a time-consuming activity, weekly or less frequent payments may be more workable from a management perspective once the immediate crisis and daily need for cash is past.


B. Food Aid

The example of food-based include food for work, food for training, etc. the Key points in livelihood approach for food aid

- Food aid can save lives (Steering Committee, 2004; WFP, 2006c; C-SAFE, 2007), particularly when general distribution rations are adequate in both nutritional quality (including micro nutrients) and caloric quantity (greater than 2000kcal) (Duffield et al, 2004).

- Food aid can also support livelihoods. School feeding, food for work, even free food distribution, can be used to protect or create the livelihood assets people rely on: educated children, fertile soil, and good roads and so on. Free food distribution should start early, last long enough, and be reliable and plentiful enough (like other livelihood support) to serve as an income transfer during food crisis (DFID, 2006a).

- There is a concern that food aid can have negative impacts on markets, causing a decline in prices. One result may be to deter farmers who would otherwise sell their crops at a higher price. The private sector may also be affected as it would, without food aid, import, process, trade and sell more food. However, there is not yet enough evidence to settle this point (Maunder, 2006). It is clear that it matters how food aid is programmed and where it is purchased. Food aid distributions need to be well targeted – to the right people in the right way – and well timed so as not to coincide with harvests (Jere, 2007; Hammond et al, 2002). Local and regional purchase of food aid reduces the cost and delivery time, and may also help local producers. Coordination reduces the risk that local purchases will drive up prices (REDSO, 2004 WFP, 2003a).

- When there are delays in a livelihood response and the situation deteriorates, the humanitarian system tends to fall back on what it knows works to save lives – food aid. This will change if the humanitarian system gets better at protecting livelihoods during an emergency and as experience with other types of assistance increases.

Source:
Further reading regarding technical approach of food for work:
**C. Livelihood Relief Fund**

Financial services enable the poor among victims to leverage their initiatives and accelerate the process of rebuilding lives and livelihoods, as we have learned from our Livelihood Relief Fund (LRF), which reached 15000 small businesses after a 2001 earthquake.

Key Points in microfinance according to UNISDR 2005

1. Through its long-term impacts of reducing poverty and supporting sustainable development, microfinance reduces the vulnerability of the poor to disasters.
2. Microfinance cannot, however, provide standalone protection against disasters. It must be part of a greater strategy of disaster risk reduction.
3. In the aftermath of a disaster, microfinance can quickly provide relief, and then support sustainable recovery and rehabilitation. Microfinance institutions (MFIs) can additionally provide post-disaster communication and coordination through their established community networks.
4. Microfinance requires a degree of self-management by clients and is normally community based, thus fostering recovery ownership, dignity and community cohesion during traumatic and unstable times.
5. Microfinance can reduce the cost of post-disaster recovery financing, while reducing aid dependency. At the same time, however, post-disaster aid can distort markets, adversely affecting microfinance performance.
6. MFIs must be prepared for disasters by developing disaster management plans that ensure the survival of the MFI and sustainable delivery of its services. Post-disaster activities must be carefully considered to prevent negative long-term impacts on local markets and MFIs.
7. To best reduce disaster impacts on a community, MFIs should offer a suite of flexible products to adapt to specific needs and situations.
8. Links and/or partnerships with the formal financial sector are needed to enhance liquidity and support institutional and managerial capacity.
9. Microfinance must be linked to disaster mitigation, especially during rehabilitation when the links between recovery and preparedness are clearly evident.
10. Education on microfinance and disaster mitigation is needed for both successful poverty reduction and disaster impact reduction.

Expand the effectiveness of microfinance & to develop into a sustainable product for disaster risk education

- Microfinance services have not penetrated deeply enough into rural, isolated and vulnerable areas. There is an urgent need to replicate, develop and expand innovative products and setup service networks that can function at breakeven.
- Microfinance products can only become sustainable from a disaster risk reduction perspective when they are perceived as risk transfer investments and converged with micro mitigation and micro insurance in order to pull a greater variety of risk and recovery initiatives.
- Develop a stabilization fund for microfinance institutions to help them respond to the overwhelming demands for loans and services immediately after a disaster and to develop a demand-driven approach and to make them self sustaining.
- link the poor and microfinance institutions with a formal financial system
- microfinance programmes must combine the developmental and disaster recovery needs of the poor


Examples of cash-based responses include cash grants, cash for work, providing cash to microfinance institutions for low-interest loans, and vouchers for goods such as seed and livestock. Here are some key findings from evaluations of cash based responses particularly relevant to slow-onset disasters and food insecurity. (ALNAP 2007)
Knowledge for Recovery Series
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- Where markets can provide enough food, and food insecurity is a result of lack of
- Purchasing power, cash can work. During the crisis stage of an emergency, cash is most often
- The combination of food plus cash can provide all the benefits of both while avoiding the limitations of each.
- Cash may be more appropriate for certain groups such as pastoralists.
- Accurate market analysis and monitoring is crucial to ensure that cash provided will meet needs as intended (Oxfam, 2006b; World Bank, 2006a)
- There must be realistic assessment of the capacity to distribute cash, and sufficient funds for capacity building.
- Monitoring the impact of cash distributions requires gender sensitivity

Experience of Livelihood Relief Fund in some countries

Lesson Learned [Shannon, etc 2005]
- Equipment and Labor; The lack of sufficient or appropriate tools and building materials suggest that
  ‘non-wage’ costs and logistical issues are important considerations
- The availability of engineers and other skilled labor was also a limiting factor in some project sites, especially in reconstruction projects such as house and bridge building or drainage projects. To address this issue, some suggestion that might useful are
  1. Limit the need for technical expertise in the initial phases by focusing labor on projects that require minimal technical oversight.
  2. contracts with skilled workers to help ensuring adequate technical support
  3. training of worker and improve oversight by skilled foreman
  4. Consider work groups with no more than 25 workers and a ratio of no more than four work groups to one supervisor (overall maximum ratio of 100 workers: 4 group leaders : 1 area supervisor) to ensure quality and efficient work.
- Payment: timely delivery of wages was difficult in the first month
  1. payment for partial days where participants received a rate for four hours of work each day; and
  2. output based labor payments instead of hourly wages as a means of increasing households accountability
  3. Making CFW payments can be a time-consuming activity, weekly or less frequent payments may be more workable from a management perspective once the immediate crisis and daily need for cash is past.
- The lack of control over how money is spent is a common concern of CFW programs

Good Practice:
A Second Incarnation of the Cash for Work Programme: Flood affected Kheda [Chakrabarti, Kull, Mihir.R.Bhatt 2005]
When the July 2005 floods struck the slum community of Indiranagar in the Kheda region of Gujarat, AIDMI were able to respond quickly and using their ‘Cash for Work’ experience in southern India, were able to implement the programme almost as soon as the waters receded. This time, 49 individuals benefited from being able to earn a daily wage again after the floods took away their earning capacity. Under the Cash for Shelter programme, 22 households benefited from both employment and habitat reconstruction. In this livelihood relief programme, youths under the age of 18 were able to be remunerated for their contributions to reconstruction. In addition to the repair of flood damage to property, infrastructure and livelihoods, perhaps one of the most significant benefits of the programme is the opportunity it has given to construct a new drainage system. The first one of its kind in the region, it will make dramatic improvements to public health, sanitation, and disaster mitigation in the community, and would have been unattainable had it not been for the Cash for Work programme since it would cost
around Rs. 60,000/-. There is a sense of enormous pride apparent as they proudly display the drainage canal system. It has given the community a renewed sense of optimism, and members have expressed that they feel a little more secure now that these measures are in place.

**Micro Finance**

Microfinance is proven anti-poverty solutions that can help poor families improve their socioeconomic condition through entrepreneurship. It has been an especially powerful tool in helping the poor get back on their feet after natural and man-made disasters. In general, it is recommended that funds for on-lending to clients be provided to the MFIs as loans, and funds for training, capacity-building, software installation, and asset transfers by provided as grants.  

"Sustainable access to microfinance helps alleviate poverty by generating income, creating jobs, allowing children to go to school, enabling families to obtain healthcare, and empowering people to make the choices that best serve their needs" (Kofi Annan, Secretary General, UN)

The basic approach will be to follow the following guidelines:

- Implement a standard MIS system
- Direct that initial funds be used to assist the selected agencies in developing the systems and staffing they need.
- Deviate from normal MFI financing guidelines by being willing to provide at least part of the funding to NGOs as grants.
- Deviate from normal microfinance best practice by allowing MFI partners to provide financing to clients that might include a mixture of asset transfers (grants), subsidized loans and loans at market rates for a limited period, as long as they are in the context of a medium-term plan to become sustainable and follow generally accepted best practices.
- Coordinate efforts among potential partners and stakeholders in the initiative.

*Source:*  
http://www.proventionconsortium.org/themes/default/pdfs/AIDMI_workshop_Revised.pdf

Grameen Foundation USA believes that microfinance has tremendous potential, still largely untapped, to play a critical role in helping people and communities recover from the tsunami:  

- Fisher folk needs loans to rebuild their boats and repair or replace equipment that was damaged or lost;  
- Farmers need funds to reclaim flood-soaked lands and purchase livestock and equipment;  
- Shopkeepers and traders need to replace depleted inventories and purchase food and other items for resale; and  
- Craftspeople need money for supplies, new sewing machines and more.

Through a National Strategy for Microfinance and the subsequent related laws and issuances, What Key Organizations are doing in the Field of Microcredit the following policy principles were set forward [Chakrabarti, Kull, Mihir. R. Bhatt 2005]

1. Greater role of the private microfinance institutions in the provision of financial services,  
2. Market oriented financial and credit policies  
3. Non-participation of government line agencies in the implementation of credit programmes  
4. The creation of an enabling policy environment that will facilitate the increased participation of the private sector in microfinance.

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5 Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development through Microfinance Special Report May 26, 2005  
6 What Key Organizations are Doing in the Field of Microcredit, Special Issue, October 12, 2005, p.13, http://www.southasiadisasters.net
Good practice of Micro Finance in Srilanka
Cooperatives remain the key microfinance service providers (over 8000) in Sri Lanka, serving over 800,000 people. Local NGOs (200) and commercial banks (39) also have a small coverage at national level. There is widespread reinvestment of deposits by cooperatives in community-based lending programmes, and NGOs have been working towards eradicating poverty by empowering the poor to develop individual and collective self-reliance through mass mobilization.

Lesson Learned: Micro Finance Challenges during Bangladesh Post Flood Recovery 1998
- Loan rescheduling resulting many smaller MFIs suffered temporary cash flow crises.
- Clients may not have had the capacity to take on more debt if they had already committed to repaying relief loans.
- MFIs that had difficulty accessing funds for relief loans also had problems finding recovery loans. Lack of access to recovery loans is perhaps surprising given the reputation and good relations with donors of some of the largest MFIs, as well as high repayment rates. Zaman (1999) for example found that BRAC clients placed a high priority on making loan repayments even during the relief phase, as they saw this as a way of obtaining larger loans. BRAC needed to delay its recovery loan program until April 2000 because it was waiting to receive approval for a grant from a donor.

Lesson Learned: Insufficient credit during Recovery period in Bangladesh
In the term of livelihood recovery in Bangladesh, there was insufficient credit available during the recovery period. The nexus of exploitation and lack of resources which ensures the proliferation of poverty in Bangladesh is maintained in part by the vulnerability of poorer households to floods. One key way for these households to escape this net is to receive credit to buy productive assets. This is an area on which donors could usefully concentrate greater activity during the recovery phase.

Box: Lesson Learned
During this period, most MFIs were essentially experimenting with new types of relief and recovery loans, and most MFIs used loan rescheduling – allowing clients to delay several repayments on their existing loans – as an effective means of supporting clients and also allowing them to avoid substantial losses and defaults on their existing portfolio. In almost all cases, rescheduling was conducted on a case by case basis, and loans were rescheduled from three to ten weeks. However, as a result of rescheduling, many smaller MFIs suffered temporary cash flow crises. After the floods, many clients withdrew compulsory savings from their accounts – e.g. Grameen Bank members withdrew 95 percent of their compulsory savings, and BRAC members more than half.

Lesson Learned: NGO intervention in Micro finance in Bangladesh 1998-1999
The ECHO (2000) evaluation of four NGOs whose work included provision of seeds, livestock and housing, between November 1998 and May 1999 (i.e., including about the first four months of the recovery period) focuses specifically on the rehabilitation phase. It does not provide details of funds disbursed, but notes that the rehabilitation work was intended to reach some 1 million individuals, with the main focus again being on agricultural development and housing. This report also noted a relatively high degree of success as a result of the NGO interventions. Long-term involvement in the affected areas meant that the local organizations supported by ECHO partners were able to accurately identify the most vulnerable people.

Source: Learning Lessons from Disaster Recovery: The Case of Bangladesh.
D. Self Help Group Model and Self Help Bank Model
This is one of the most widely used and fastest growing models of micro finance. SGH are informal groups of people usually women who share a common concern or skill and join together. Network support and peer pressure to repay is the main advantage in the self help group model which is essential for local economic development and the development of social capital. Self help group bank linkage programme: National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development model of micro finance

Further reading regarding micro finance case studies

E. Agriculture [Rajendra Aryal, FAO]
Recovering the agricultural sector in the aftermath of a national disaster is a race against time as the planting season is fixed. Farmers need to harvest and plant new crops. But the soil conditions may have changed and identification of alternative crops and livestock. Difficulties abound in getting the necessary expertise to carry out the damage assessment, replacement of assets, procurement of agricultural inputs and tools, and technical assistance to farmers.
Local level early recovery programmes for farmers have proven efficient in addressing their need for incomes and quick return to agricultural production. Farmers have to wait many months after the planting season before they receive earnings from their harvest. It is in this waiting period that some early recovery activities can be introduced.

Lessons learned from Weichuan Earthquake recovery and reconstruction programmes:
Institutional:
Tailored interventions have always been useful. Surge capacity is necessary to ensure timely assessment and assistance delivery. An emergency fund is accessible for livelihood support to the agricultural sectors, as agricultural work is dictated by natural harvest cycles. Timely delivery of support helped shorten dependencies. The time pressure has been best met through partnerships arrangements between government institutions, international nongovernmental organizations, community-based organizations and universities. The partnerships also reduced overlapping and duplication of resources.

Technical lessons learned:
• Rapid assessments need to be followed by detailed assessments using the livelihood-based approach
• Food security-centered approach, blending food aid and agricultural production is effective in efforts to target assistance to the most vulnerable: careful dialogue and evidenced based.
• Technically robust, locally adapted solutions need to be identified to bridge the emergency-rehabilitation gap.
• Appropriate gender considerations when selecting beneficiaries are essential to minimize the social exclusion of women.
• Livelihood programmes in agriculture need to link short and long-term perspectives – transit from emergency support to medium-term rehabilitation for “building back better.” At the same time, mainstreaming disaster risk reduction by setting up early warning systems, preparedness and contingency planning is important to minimize future risks.

Source: http://www.un.org.cn/public/resource/1ebcf0e9980429f519eeec9727152b9d.pdf

F. Livelihood Counseling
It is one of the required services, for those, especially women, who have not decided how they will make a living. This may have to go hand-in-hand with psychological counseling – the trauma suffered by many is likely to contribute to uncertainty about and possibly lack of interest in livelihood choices.
G. **Non-financial business development services** that are likely to be required include assistance in developing business plans (especially when credit is required), business counseling, advice on technology, and linkages to suppliers and markets. The relatively small group that will start a business for the first time would benefit from basic business skills training and support to develop a business plan.

1.2. **Exit Strategy in Livelihood Recovery**

Without an exit strategy, the shift from crisis to recovery activities is more difficult. Exit strategies should be based on an understanding of changing conditions and not on artificial timelines. Knowing when to end an emergency response can be as important as knowing when to begin one (WFP, 2004b). This is particularly true where a relief response may end, but the underlying causes of vulnerability persist (DEC, 2004). Many emergency interventions do not include exit strategies (ECHO, 2004; DFID, 2004).

**Key points for Successful Exit Strategies**

a. **Link to objectives.** If recovery is an objective, it is important to be clear from the outset what this means. Recovery can be a return to the same degree of food or livelihood security experienced before the crisis, or to an improved capacity to cope.

b. **Choose indicators that reflect changes in livelihoods, and include these in regular monitoring.** The choice of indicators must reflect the programme’s objectives, requiring significant commitment to baseline studies and monitoring.

c. **Begin at project inception and involve communities.** A late start risks haphazard implementation of the exit strategy. Involving communities in the design, implementation and monitoring of the strategy helps them understand from the beginning the conditions for exiting. Participation also contributes to the selection of more relevant indicators.

d. **Map out a strategy for the development of local partnerships** to facilitate the shift to longer-term programming when the agency leaves (ECHO, 2005). CSAFE Zimbabwe (CARE) developed strong links with traditional leaders and action committees to continue support to families affected by HIV/AIDS. Government services on agricultural extension continued technical advice on vegetable and fruit production, provision of seeds and basic tools after CARE phased out (C-SAFE, 2005).

e. **Be coordinated.** During transition from relief to recovery activities or phasing out, it is important to coordinate with others and not implement exit strategies in isolation. Agencies can analyze together what activities become less important.

**Box. Good Practice: An example of livelihoods-based humanitarian response – Kenya in 2000/01**

A large programme of intervention related to livestock took place in Kenya in 2000/01, targeting drought affected pastoral areas. Here are some of the activities included, and reasons for their success.

- De-stocking was the most successful intervention due to strong community interest and involvement.
- The livestock-feed programme was successful where agencies had previously implemented the activity. Providing feed concentrates was more cost-effective than re-stocking after the drought was over.
- The transport subsidy was effective where traders had been undertaking this activity during non-drought years, and where the implementing agency worked closely with the traders. However, there were problems of fraud with traders. Lessons learnt include the need for strong, credible and transparent community-based institutional structures for a transport subsidy to be successful and for community members and representatives to manage the operation themselves.
- The animal-health component was successful because of the involvement in both planning and implementation of local communities, the Kenyan government veterinary department and the community-based workers on animal health.
• The border operation enabled pastoralists to use resources across international borders as a result of an ongoing initiative that was stepped up during the drought. Movement and migration, including cross-border utilization of water,


Box. Good Practice: The Mercy Corps Cash for Work Program in Post-Tsunami Aceh, 2005
The Mercy Corps exit strategy included 1) decreasing the number of work days in a week from five to four (beginning in June) and 2) restructuring labor payments based on fixed contracts (output based labor payments or OBLPs) with specific deliverables that had to be achieved in order to receive payment (beginning in July). Because of the realization that the demand for casual labor existed beyond the ‘artificial’ CFW end date of July 31 and the understanding that many people would become unemployed, a methodology change—from CFW to OBLPs—was required to address these issues. The main distinction between CFW and OBLPs is that OBLPs are paid as progress is achieved or completed and there is an agreed fixed budget for completion of the project which restricts the number of workers employed. In CFW, all individuals that wanted to work could be engaged in a CFW project and payments were made based on the number of hours worked. The extensive rehabilitation and reconstruction work post-tsunami has resulted in increased demand for casual labor as compared to pre-tsunami. Performance-based OBLPs accommodate demand driven casual labor requirements where CFW that pays a wage is a supply driven approach which has a greater risk of influencing day-labor rates if implemented in the long-term. In addition, to phase-out strategies within the CFW program, Mercy Corps’ livelihoods and cash grant program were expanding in communities where CFW had been implemented and were seen as a means of facilitating sustainable economic recovery and thus promoting a return to pre-tsunami livelihoods. Some CFW participants transitioned

1.3. Select case studies
Quick and effective recovery from the impact of floods depends significantly on how quickly livelihoods are restored. There is no single way to protect livelihoods in the post-flood context. Often it is feasible and desirable to combine relief and recovery in a flood context because recovery can start as soon as floodwaters recede (WFP, 2000). However, adopting a livelihoods approach (in the operation) is harder to implement where agencies have a limited presence in the affected areas (Oxfam, 1999).

A. Livelihood assistance in floods
Adapted appropriately, these approaches might serve as models to strengthen livelihood resilience:

Agriculture:
• Methods for drying and preserving seed stocks can facilitate the continuation of farming (ITDG).
• Promotion of flood-resistant crop varieties and cultivation practices and provision of seed stock can strengthen resilience.
• Crop insurance systems can enable farmers to spread their risk (Hellmouth, 2007).
• Provision of fodder, vaccinations and deworming can ensure livestock survival (ITDG).

Fish culture:
• Pens and trap ponds can help to retain fish during floods (ITDG).
Small business and alternative livelihoods:

- Repair of roads and other infrastructure, improved access to credit and support for re-skilling can provide a base for developing marketing opportunities or alternative income sources less prone to flooding (World Bank, 2005b).

Suggested further reading

1. The ProVention CRA toolkit includes livelihoods tools. [www.proventionconsortium.org/CRA_toolkit](http://www.proventionconsortium.org/CRA_toolkit)

B. Asset protection

Helping people to protect their assets during and after a flood not only makes it easier for them to recover quickly but also reduces future vulnerability and poverty. However, according to evaluation reports, people are often forced to sell their productive and household assets to cope, as post-flood support is frequently overlooked.

Floods also destroy productive or livelihood assets. A study by the International Food Policy Research Institute (2001) after the 1998 Bangladesh flood found that 55 per cent of households lost assets, equivalent to 16 per cent of their pre-flood total value of assets. In Mozambique the World Bank noted that ‘during the recovery period these assets were, in general, not replaced, leaving the households more vulnerable to subsequent disaster episodes’ (World Bank, 2005b). Nevertheless, good practices do exist. Many agencies practise ‘asset protection’ as a key part of their flood response in Asia and Africa. This includes supplying livestock fodder, restocking livestock, reconstructing community and household assets and distributing agricultural/business tools (ActionAid, 2002; DEC, 2000a; DFID 2001a; WFP, 2000; Oxfam, 1999; World Bank, 2005b).

C. Household food security

How floods affect food security is a complex matter to which there is no straightforward response. Floods destroy standing crops. Prolonged flooding often limits people’s ability to earn money and replant quickly after floodwaters recede because either the cropping season is over or agricultural support is not available. **Vulnerable people should be given various financial and material options, so that they can choose what works best for them.** The decision to provide food, cash, a combination of both or something else should be based on an objective problem analysis and clear aims and not on what resources are available, what the agency has the capacity to distribute or the donor’s preferences (ALNAP and ProVention, 2007).

Selected key lessons

1. **Mozambique flood 2000.** The greater use of cash, distributed directly as either grants or part of kits, or in payment for work, would have allowed beneficiaries to respond better to their own needs (DEC, 2000a; World Bank, 2005b).
2. **Ethiopia food security crisis 1996.** Food aid can save lives and support livelihoods, particularly when used early and long enough to protect the livelihood assets that people rely on (DFID, 2006).
3. **Kenya flood 1996–1997.** Cash schemes allowed households to avoid taking exploitative loans from moneylenders and to clear their debts, to buy essential items and to invest in small-scale income generating activities. This provided economic benefits for individual households and local businesses in addition to benefits for the whole community (Oxfam, 1999).
4. **Bangladesh flood 1998.** More than half of poorer flood-affected households resorted to buying food on credit. This maintained the value of household expenditures vis-à-vis pre-flood levels but, because of higher prices, poor households consumed fewer calories per capita per day than households not exposed to floods, suggesting that targeted cash transfers and credit programmes could have been an effective complement to direct food distribution (IFPRI, 2001).
D. Agricultural rehabilitation

Many flood-prone areas are also rich agricultural lands. **Assistance in the form of tools, seeds, fertiliser, capital and training, for example, can help people to restore their agriculture.** Flood trends are changing and more frequent flooding impacts on cropping seasons, making people food and livelihood insecure. In such cases, a possible response is to distribute alternative, nutritious varieties of seeds (DEC, 2000b; Oxfam, 2003).

**Selected key lessons**

1. **Central America and Caribbean.** After Hurricane Mitch, some people decided to move away from affected areas permanently or send a family member away to find work. They dismantled their new houses and sold the valuable parts (ECHO, 2001). The provision of seeds, agricultural inputs and, in some cases, cash, helped farming families remain in their communities, despite massive harvest, soil, housing and livelihood losses (DEC, 2000b).

2. **Nicaragua.** After Tropical Storm Michelle, the distribution of new varieties of seeds allowed women to sow and improved the quality of seeds used in the area. The crops the women produced enabled them to store part of the harvest, for both their families’ consumption and the next sowing cycle (Oxfam, 2003).

3. **Mozambique.** Agencies carried out extensive consultation and follow-up before introducing new crops. For example, as part of its food security and nutrition initiative, the national agricultural research institute distributed a variety of sweet potato in flood-affected areas. Agency activities, such as training in planting techniques and preparation of the potato, were aimed mainly at women, as the crop had a high potential for improving infant feeding (World Bank, 2005b).

4. **Zimbabwe.** Mapping out a strategy for the development of local partnerships facilitates the shift to longer-term programming when an agency leaves. Government services on agricultural extension continued technical advice on vegetable and fruit production, provision of seeds and basic tools after CARE phased out (C-Safe, 2005).

Source: **Flood disasters:** Learning from previous relief and recovery operations, ProVention and ALNAP; January 2008

**References**

References


18. The ProVention CRA toolkit includes livelihoods tools. www.proventionconsortium.org/CRA_toolkit


20. Flood disasters: Learning from previous relief and recovery operations, ProVention and ALNAP; January 2008