

**CLUSTER WORKING GROUP ON
EARLY RECOVERY**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER), chaired by UNDP, consists of UNICEF, UNHCR, FAO, WFP, WHO, OCHA (including IDD), UNFPA, IOM, IFRC, ICRC, UN-Habitat, UNEP, ILO, UNV, and ISDR¹.

Scope of the CWGER

Recognizing that reintegration and recovery is not a sector *per se* but a multi-dimensional process, the CWGER agreed to focus on “early recovery” within the humanitarian context, covering both natural disaster and conflict situations. An initial working definition of “early recovery” is provided in the report, focused on stabilising the situation from the human security perspective and for laying foundation of a transformation process that integrates risk reduction at the very early stages of the response. While early recovery is a cross-cutting issue, the CWGER took a position that it still requires a separate dedicated attention and development in order to eventually ensure its integration across all the clusters.

Roles/Responsibilities of the Lead Agency

Building on OCHA’s concept note², the CWGER further defined the role of the lead agency as being managerially accountable for developing the capacity of the cluster (knowledge management in support of early planning, mapping of capacities, organization of cluster functions and responsibilities, capacity development, partnership development, surge or stand-by capacity, coordination with other clusters, and resource mobilization) and for facilitating and speeding up the operational response of the cluster (strategy development, deployment of response, monitoring, and advocacy). The CWGER agreed that the lead agency is responsible for ensuring that appropriate actions are taken by appropriate actors (as opposed to undertaking all necessary actions itself) to ensure the rapid, coherent, and all-inclusive deployment of the response to a specific crisis.

Actionable Recommendation and Implementation Plan

In order to promote coordinated and complementary humanitarian and recovery-related interventions and to accelerate the impact of development activities within this context, the CWGER recommended the eleven-step concrete actions, aimed at establishing an “early recovery hub.” It is to serve as the single repository of tools, instruments, methods and approaches for different types of crisis and be accountable for ensuring cluster development and operational functioning mentioned above. It will be supported by the two technical and operational platforms, one for natural disasters (building on the existing International Recovery Platform) and the other for conflict (to be established), with the participation of the current CWGER members as well as international financial institutions and NGOs. The work of these platforms will be organized through a phased approach, focusing first on identifying the priority themes/sectors and *critical gaps* in early recovery and facilitating knowledge management, training, and inter-agency partnerships. It is recommended that such a structure is constituted immediately upon endorsement by the IASC and develops its detailed implementation plan by December 2005.

¹ The last five are not part of the IASC but were invited to participate, given their strong relevance.

² “Developing Cluster Responsibilities and Accountability – A Concept Note,” 11 July 2005.

Issues to be Addressed

The CWGER has adopted an approach of building on with past/ongoing efforts and closely coordinating with other relevant mechanisms/initiatives. Important headway has already been made towards identifying a common working definition of “early recovery” and priority elements within it, mapping the current capacities, and analyzing the critical gaps. To further sharpen its focus of the priority actions to be taken under the phased approach, the CWGER recognized the need to continue its work in very close coordination with the other clusters, especially the Protection and Emergency Shelter Clusters. It also recognized its potentially important link with the UNDG and recommended further dialogue with the UNDGO to clarify the scope of collaboration and the respective roles. Furthermore, it flagged the need for coordinating closely with the ongoing discussions over the Peace building Commission/Support Office.