

early recovery



Early Recovery Coordination Lessons Learned Exercise Report



Acknowledgements

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Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
Main Findings	5
INTERVIEWS	11
Summary of interview findings	12
Findings from the process orientated objectives	13
Findings from quality of delivery objectives	21
Overall Recommendations from process objectives and quality of delivery objectives	24
List of interviewees	25
ONLINE SURVEY	27
Survey Parts I and II: Survey participation	30
Survey Part III: CWGER process-oriented objectives	33
Survey Part IV. Quality of delivery objectives	47
Survey Part V. Final comments	56

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **Rationale for a CWGER Lessons Learned exercise**

The first Early Recovery (ER) Cluster was set up in Pakistan in October 2005. Since then, ER Clusters or Networks have been established in over thirty countries where the cluster approach has been rolled out. It was time to take stock and document these experiences. The intention was to learn from experience; to improve the way that ER Clusters/Networks operate in response to future crises; and to enhance the way that the global Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER) organizes itself to provide support to country-level Clusters/Networks.

2. **Scope of the exercise**

The lessons learned exercise did not cover all contexts in which ER Clusters/Networks have been established. A number of specific contexts have been selected in order to illustrate a good diversity of models, accomplishments and challenges. An attempt was made to seek a balance between: Clusters vs. ER Networks vs. both; natural disaster vs. conflict scenarios; sudden onset vs protracted crises; regions; old Clusters/Networks vs. new; success stories vs. difficulties and challenges; strong government capacity to engage in early recovery vs. weak government capacity to engage, etc. This lessons learned exercise only provides a snapshot. It was designed to be a light and flexible review of what worked and what didn't. The exercise focused on documenting some of the notable achievements of Clusters and Networks that can be built upon and replicated in other situations; highlighting recurring challenges that Clusters and Networks encounter in the field; and suggesting innovative ways to overcome difficulties and bottlenecks. It is not an in-depth evaluation according to detailed indicators. Therefore, it is not expected to replace an evaluation in terms of demonstrating the impact of ER interventions on communities affected by crisis.

3. **How the exercise was organized**

A small Task Team within the CWGER was set up to oversee the exercise. A team of consultants carried out the bulk of the work. The CWGER lessons learned **online survey** was conducted during a period of three weeks, from 3-25 September 2009. A broad range of early recovery stakeholders were invited (via email) to participate in the online survey. More than 200 responses were received, representing a broad range of early recovery experiences both in the field and at headquarters, across a wide range of institutions and agencies. The second exercise was mainly informed by a **series of in-depth telephone interviews**, structured according to a set of previously agreed questions; backed up by short, generic questionnaires and collation of background materials. More than 45 key actors/practitioners were interviewed from a range of agencies and covering experiences at global level and in DRC, Timor Leste, Kenya, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Zimbabwe, Myanmar, Sudan, Burundi, oPt, Sri Lanka, Madagascar, Georgia, and Nepal.

4. **Follow-up**

A global workshop on Improving the Mainstreaming and Coordination of Early Recovery was held in June 2010. The workshop was attended by CWGER members, Early Recovery Advisors, Cluster Coordinators and representatives of the global cluster lead agencies, who considered the results of the lessons learned exercise together with the findings of the second Cluster Approach Evaluation (CE2), turning findings and lessons learned into strong recommendations for how to improve practice at both country and global levels¹.

¹ See: Early Recovery Inter-Cluster Action Plan, CWGER, October 2010

5. Main Findings

Key achievements to-date

From interviews:

- i. The key successes as articulated by cluster members, humanitarian/resident coordinators, and early recovery advisers/cluster coordinators include elements of strategy, coordination and programme development.
- ii. The work on early recovery has significantly contributed to improving the comprehensive responses by the UN system and providing leadership and more effective coordination and support to national and local government. It has provided the basis for greater collaborative structures and polices to evolve. Response has become faster and less duplication of effort and resources has been observed as a concrete benefit. The contribution of UNDP/BCPR in the immediate response phase is widely recognized at the country level. An increasing number of governments are more open to requesting help for early recovery efforts and there is growing acknowledgement that early recovery has demonstrated added value through identifying gaps in response and its work with local authorities and civil society.

From online survey:

Coordination

- Setting up fora where development and humanitarians work and discuss together
- Cluster strategies that state clearly identifiable relief and early recovery objectives
- Secured transition from humanitarian to development through the reestablishment of UNDP on the ground (joint offices)
- Timely initiation of work (clusters formation and coordination)
- Overall advice and support to the RC in his strategic and coordination functions
- Higher efficiency in aid coordination within UN system and UNDP

Predictability

- Early Recovery Guidelines
- Support to COs in developing national level tools
- Institutionalise within UNDP early recovery policies and tools
- Mobilisation of staff in complex crisis

Advocacy

- Raising the profile of ER globally and at the country level. Whether people like it or not, few can say that they're not aware of ER
- Advocating to the national authorities about the need for early recovery before long term development
- Advocate to the humanitarian community of the need to start early recovery from day one
- Acceptance by the UNCT of early recovery as an integral part post-crisis responses
- Awareness raising over the last three years, with the CWGER appeal as excellent example

Information management

- Professional information sharing / opportunities for members to contribute
- GIS support to Early Recovery
- Mapping/3 W tool
- Information management/sharing and consultation of CWGER members
- Good combination of qualitative and quantitative information

Partnerships

- Bringing actors together who work in the sector
- Partnerships with NGOs
- Revitalization of ER cluster and ER network in the Central African Republic through close coordination with OCHA
- ER strengthening the role of district peace committees and building partnerships with informal structures for peace building
- Having a small but devoted membership base among a few partners

Strategic planning

- ER cluster participated in contingency planning training together
- The elaboration of a multi partners ER mapping of needs, interventions and analysis of ER requirements
- Successful interventions in a number of post-disaster/conflict scenarios - support to UNCTs and other Cluster groups in ER planning and implementation
- National early recovery strategic plan and actions plan

Needs assessment

- Updated information on return zones and priority needs
- Stronger coordination within UN System in conducting joint need assessments and developing ER Strategic Frameworks
- Facilitation of joint detailed ER needs assessment / progress on linking PDNA with WB DNLA (ECLAC)
- Sectors were able to use information from the CERINA assessment to 'support' or back up already formulated strategies
- Integrated needs assessment with the government as key player influencing strengthening district based coordination

Key issues and challenges

From interviews:

- iii. There are global and local issues of early recovery. They are interconnected and play on each other. A great deal of thinking has been done amongst the members of the CWGER on how best to achieve early recovery objectives. The interviews have highlighted the need to review and rethink the architecture to ensure greater levels of ownership and clarity on role of members and cluster. While significant advances are acknowledged across the board on the progress of coordination at the global level, there is still concern that the current architecture of the inter-agency global coordination is not working sufficiently well to meet the emerging circumstances. The concerns include whether the current global level cluster architecture is, at this point, the most appropriate and effective mechanism to move forward and mainstream the early recovery approach in the humanitarian response in the next 3 to 5 years.
- iii. The concept of early recovery is still elusive and complex for many at country level. For agencies with a strong sectoral focus, early recovery is too broad and does not sufficiently reflect their inputs. For others, the concept is not sufficiently grounded on key development principles that define the approach.
- iv. The external environment and country context are highly influential and determinant on how early recovery is perceived and given space. Consideration of these dimensions is underdeveloped in terms of support tools and guidance.
- v. Strategic planning does not always translate into concrete action plans.
- vi. The humanitarian reform includes both relief and early recovery as an integral part of the humanitarian response but in practice early recovery may still be sidelined, put into silos, or inadequately addressed on the ground.

From online survey:

Funding

- Under financing of ER (flexibility of partners/donors)
- Synchronization of recovery funding mechanisms
- Non constructive competition among UN agencies for absorbing more funds from ER strategic frameworks
- Early Recovery financing mechanism (similar to CERF)
- Getting donors on board. Without the funding, all of our efforts will be for nothing
- Lack of speedy resource allocation to ensure ER positioning (bureaucratization of funding mechanics)
- ER proposals and their relevance and ability to attract donor funds

Coordination mechanisms

- Everyone wants coordination but nobody wants to be coordinated
- No clear definition of roles and responsibilities at the level of cluster head
- Sustaining coordination and collaboration with the government and IASC members

- Elaborate policies on UNDP/DOCO role at OCHA phase out
- Improved understanding of inter-agency processes and responsibilities (e.g. coordination and information management) by UNDP field staff
- More strategic and transparent handover/transition, with participation of local/national counterparts

Advocacy

- The sensitivity around early recovery in the country - through advocacy donors and partners can agree on certain forms of recovery initiatives
- Clear understanding of the concept and how different is "early recovery " from "recovery" and how it contributes in post conflict situation as opposed to recovery in post disaster
- Improve country-level sensitization and capacity building for ER
- Lack of initial socialisation of the cluster system means it is widely undervalued and misunderstood

National ownership

- Non existence of a central forum under the government to coordinate all sectors of ER
- Political situation not allowing for ER
- Political will at organizational levels on the need or importance of ER
- Government was not emphasized to take the ownership of the survey at the highest level
- Capacity building of local duty bearers to take over coordination challenges

Leadership

- Clearer, more visible balancing between ER cluster / Network and BCPR/UNDP activities/ responsibilities to avoid misperceptions
- ER cluster coordination mandate of UNDP to be redefined in light of cluster specific coordination roles
- Inter-agency coordination at country level early recovery is multidimensional not UNDP exclusive
- UNDP balance between programmatic and coordination responsibilities as ER cluster lead

Overall Recommendations

- vii. At country level, responsibilities (support to the system, support to the cluster, support to UNDP programmes), and reporting lines (to the RC/HC, the UNDP CD, the Team Leader) - need to be reviewed, delineated, better managed and made more transparent.
- viii. The strong leadership from the HC/RC is important to redress the necessary balance between coordination and advisory functions and ensure greater levels of mainstreaming as the cluster coordination functions can, at times, take over or subsume the advisory functions of early recovery in a crisis.
- ix. Linked to this is the issue of re-naming the 'Early Recovery Cluster' to clarify what is most often done in practice i.e. Community Restoration (CoRe, Pakistan), or Governance, Infrastructure and Livelihoods (GIL, Uganda). This will focus the scope of the coordination of recovery areas not covered by the other clusters.
- x. At global level, there are opinions, debates and proposals for the active development of alternative models to the CWGER, which merits further consultation and discussion. One recommended way forward is the creation of a "Global Early Recovery Inter-Cluster Support Unit" that might be an inter-agency mechanism mandated to innovate and support inter-cluster coordination and move beyond a focus of inter-agency coordination (CWGER). Coordination and technical support staff could be drawn from across the UN system, INGO's and donors with the goal of enriching the Early Recovery approach and support to recovery programmes with a variety of expertise and networks of contacts. This unit is seen either as a complement or an alternative to the existing global cluster.
- xi. Selection, recruitment and deployment of early recovery personnel, should be reviewed and strengthened including strengthening the criteria for the selection of inter-agency ER Advisors and Cluster Coordinators to bring individuals with greater experience on the political dimensions of coordination.
- xii. There is a critical need to consolidate and synergize assessment processes and tools for early recovery purposes.
- xiii. Capacity development is an area that needs strengthening including building capacity of the UN system (as a system) at field level.
- xiv. Formally develop an "Early Recovery Community" to keep expertise engaged and to grow the early recovery knowledge bank.
- xv. Consider the development of joint funding strategies to address mainstreaming, coordination and programming needs and consider the development of a UN system-wide instrument for early recovery funding.

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**Early Recovery Coordination
Lessons Learned Exercise**



Summary of Interview Findings

1 June 2010

EARLY RECOVERY COORDINATION LESSONS LEARNED EXERCISE

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW FINDINGS

1. Background to this review of Lessons Learned

The Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER) was established following recommendations from a review of the global humanitarian system, undertaken by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in 2005. This review identified a gap of unmet needs following crisis, during the transition period from relief to long-term recovery. The unmet needs in the immediate aftermath of crisis are the foci of early recovery and what the CWGER aims to address. Thus, the CWGER sits at the nexus between humanitarian and development contexts and brings together both communities.

The purpose of the exercise was to gather experiences and draw out lessons learned from country experiences setting up and running Early Recovery Clusters and Networks, including all of the inter-agency processes that this entails.

2. Methodology:

The methodology is based on qualitative research that used a semi-structured questionnaire to conduct in-depth interviews. More than 45 key actors/practitioners (RCs, UN Agencies, NGOs, ERA/CC) were interviewed from a range of agencies and covering experiences in DRC, Timor Leste, Kenya, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Zimbabwe, Myanmar, Sudan, Burundi, oPt, Sri Lanka, Madagascar, Georgia, and Nepal.

The interviews conducted by Yvonne Shanahan, independent consultant, were undertaken in order to deepen and expand the findings of Part 1 of the Lessons Learned Exercise that surveyed over 200 members of the CWGER in several countries and at global level in an on-line survey².

The semi-structured questionnaire and interviews addressed two broad areas of enquiry:

a) Process objectives: strategic planning, joint assessment, setting up and running coordination mechanisms, mainstreaming of early recovery in the work of other clusters, information management, knowledge management and funding.

b) Quality of delivery objectives: based on agreed guiding principles for early recovery and the guiding principles of the Cluster approach: partnership, leadership, predictability, accountability and national ownership, capacity building, prioritization and gap filling and crosscutting issues.

² See below CWGER Lessons Learned Exercise Online Survey Report

3. Strategy and Planning

It was recognized that, overall, the early recovery work plan and process has facilitated the development of a common vision to enhance early recovery objectives in different contexts. The momentum generated within the Clusters and Networks in many countries has contributed to enhance a sense of “working together” at a greater scale in a complex crisis. It has also contributed to a shared understanding of the overall needs and the requirements of joint planning in crisis situations (e.g. assessments, information sharing and management, awareness of who is doing what and where, etc).

An additional perceived advantage is the opportunity created to bring together humanitarian and development actors which has the potential to improve response capacity. This has been particularly useful where it has provided a common platform and one voice for joint lobbying and advocacy (findings from the online survey strongly supported this). Respondents commented on the usefulness of early recovery strategic planning in terms of providing an opportunity to increase understanding of early recovery, as well as build a common vision among a range of humanitarian and development stakeholders. Early recovery planning processes were noted for their contribution to the identification of joint early recovery programming opportunities, for the mobilization of resources and as a basis for future planning, monitoring and coordination.

However, while greater coordination is occurring within the IASC system, it was recognized that much greater synchronization is needed between the planning processes of the Cluster system with national actors as in many cases there is a parallel rather than synchronized process. Insufficient attention by the IASC and the cluster system has been given to ensure an effective integration of national and/or local/national planning cycles and how the ER process fits into government’s cycles. This lack of coherence is, in the view of many, a factor that undermines national ownership and thwarts longer-term recovery.

Furthermore, both the strategic frameworks and action planning processes need to focus more on the principle of “build back better”. A critical challenge identified is to engage agencies in forward thinking. Immediate plans do not necessarily translate into programmes that focus on the transformational and transitional elements or enhance rebuilding of local capacities and institutions (e.g. addressing issues of good governance at local level, supporting efforts to increase authorities capacities for responsiveness towards gender equality and inclusive processes to better respond to IDPs and improved community security, etc.). Efforts have not always laid the ground for longer-term recovery. There is a concern that a “cut and paste” approach to strategic frameworks and planning is not sufficiently grounded in humanitarian and development principles or the contextual realities. While this is understood to be difficult, several individuals pointed out that this was due to a lack of clarity as to

how existing humanitarian responses can be adapted (with limited resources and time) to an early recovery approach. Some quoted the lack of “early recovery models” as a gap, particularly for urban settings (e.g. Gaza).

The interviews also highlighted that there is a gap between national and local level planning and that planning and implementation at sub-national level is uneven. In some countries like Sri Lanka, the effort has been on district level planning while in others efforts have remained largely at the national level. This appears to be a critical issue and an area still insufficiently addressed. According to some, this is due to the challenges of setting up cluster coordination at local levels and because the capacities of local actors are insufficient or overstretched. Other intervening factors beyond capital-human resources include issues of limited access and insecurity.

Finally, many people pointed out that there is a need to bring the early recovery approach on board in national and agency planning processes prior to a crisis. For example, through contingency planning, preparedness planning, disaster risk reduction and conflict prevention to avoid having to “sell” early recovery in the heat of the crisis.

4. Needs assessments

A key consideration highlighted in the interviews was the need for consistent high-level support and leadership from the HC/RC in the assessment and planning processes in order to ensure that early recovery is seen and owned by the entire system in country. This is perceived as critical in order to avoid questions of the legitimacy of the process (including UNDP’s role) being raised and to give the early recovery architecture, the needs assessment process and the follow up activities a clear IASC or UNDG systems rather than agency leadership.

In this context, it was also noted that there is an urgency to clarify the role and contributions of the IFIs (particularly the World Bank) in early recovery and transition phases. This was seen as critical for the UN but, most importantly, for national governments, which are looking for coordinated approaches and clarity on who is doing what and where resources may be coming from. Many felt that a way out of the “silo” approach was to re-focus assessments towards helping, facilitating and guiding local actors with agreed common frameworks that build capacity rather than overburdening local resources.

The differentiated needs assessment tools and planning frameworks used by agencies continues to hamper common approaches and the willingness of members to adapt responses, as there are no “common findings”. The range of “parallel processes” has contributed, at times, to an overload of data and a lack of clarity on whose/what data should be used for what purpose. It has also generated different understandings of key problems and priorities. The associated time delays while these frameworks are negotiated have limited buy-in by from different stakeholders. The problem is compounded by having “one set of people doing the assessment” and another “doing the early recovery planning” making it even more challenging to have a coherent perspective and to synchronize responses.

There was awareness of the gap in assessment tools to fit a range of contexts and in particular crisis in urban settings, which are becoming increasingly more common.

Needs assessment processes generate enormous expectations but momentum is lost if donor support is limited and/or delayed. There was consensus that, when left unfunded, outcomes of needs assessments generate widespread disappointment.

5. Coordination and UN Coherence

This exercise focused primarily on exploring issues of coordination at global and country levels, between the UN and national actors as well as within the UN system. Overall, coordination continues to be a major challenge for UNDP and members of the CWGER. Challenges range across limited clarity of roles, business processes, accountability, capacities, profile, competition and trust. There is widespread concern that unless this is systematically improved, the whole early recovery approach and concept may be seriously threatened.

7.1 At Global Level

While significant advances are acknowledged across the board on the progress of coordination at the global level, there is still concern that the current architecture of the global inter-agency coordination is not working sufficiently well to meet the emerging circumstances. The concerns include whether the current global level cluster architecture is, at this point, the most appropriate and effective mechanism to move forward and mainstream the early recovery approach in the next 3 to 5 years. It is recognized that other platforms need to be more proactively engaged so that they “own” and contribute to moving forward the early recovery approach and concept.

There is support for recommending the establishment of a different global ER coordination and country support modality to increase outreach and improve accountability. Examples provided included, inter alia, an inter-agency team (or inter-cluster) on early recovery as opposed to an Early Recovery Team entirely staffed by UNDP. Many were of the opinion that while UNDP continues to maintain a “solo” role in coordinating and organizing early recovery across the system, limited ownership from other agencies would persist. This lack of ownership in turn is translated into limited commitment to bring expertise, declining interest in playing an active role in coordination efforts and limited resources allocated to make early recovery work in country. The issue of UNDP’s high profile and visibility versus what is perceived as “invisibility” of other agencies (which is seen as closely linked to funding potential) will continue to undermine the diligent efforts of UNDP.

7.2 At Country level

In many situations, there is a persistent lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities between the coordination and the advisory functions. The parallel 'early recovery' network and 'early recovery' cluster mechanisms have generated confusion and distrust amongst agencies. The importance of clear TOR's and key messaging from leadership plays a critical part in mitigating these tensions. Weak communication-links between global-national and sub-national clusters and networks has exacerbated the situation and is seen to be very dependent upon the skills and role of allocated personnel.

There are very different perceptions of the implications of working side by side with governments who, for humanitarian actors in particular, are not viewed as neutral actors. Considerations of how a government and/or national authorities may be party to a crisis (particularly but not exclusively in conflict contexts) is a concern. There is the potential for the IASC or the UN system to be co-opted by governments who may use early recovery to promote their own political agenda. There are high expectations of how UNDP is able to manage the process and protect the neutral and impartial space of the IASC. UNDP (under the guidance and support of the HC/RC) is expected to play a critical diplomatic and political role in balancing the political issues with the technical ones. In contexts where governments do not want to recognize the validity of an early recovery approach to needs and rights-for political reasons, UNDP is also expected to play a diplomatic role in creating an early recovery "dialogue space". Interviewees commented that not all deployed advisers may have the experience and expertise to undertake these complex negotiations and therefore technical support needs to be upgraded from the global level.

Overall it was acknowledged that gaining government ownership of early recovery is uneven and there are still low levels of Government buy-in. Political will and commitment from partner governments continues to prove elusive. In some cases, this ownership is linked to a perceived lack of Cluster accountability and the limited synergies of key processes such as planning. Many agreed on the potential value of developing stronger inter-cluster strategies to engage government in a sensitive but effective manner during crisis. In line with this thinking, interviewees recommended to put more emphasis on pre-crisis preparedness and to work strategically at partnership, capacity development and transition/exit strategies during crisis.

The critical role(s) of the early recovery coordinator and/or advisor was a focus of extensive discussion. It was acknowledged that their deployment has been instrumental in the roll out of the policy and that they have provided strategic support to the HC/RC functions in leading the early recovery efforts. However, it was also felt that there are number of issues that require attention. In particular:

The multiple roles of the early recovery "person": The role of the early recovery coordinator and adviser, if assumed by a single person, was seen as problematic as both advisory and coordination functions may suffer. Cluster coordination, in the opinion of many, requires high quality, dedicated capacity to ensure continuity and enhance trust. Given the many demands on the cluster coordinator, it was felt that the inter-cluster advisory dimension has been particularly weak and not sufficiently prioritized i.e. "Inter-cluster coordination tends to be under-serviced in favour of

support to the Cluster mechanism". It is also challenging for the cluster coordinator to play the role of facilitator and convener as well as the technical adviser for the mainstreaming of early recovery. Consequently, the mainstreaming of early recovery is not optimised.

Skills base: Cluster coordinators need to have greater expertise and training on political analysis, political management and coordination/facilitation and negotiation as all these skills are central to their role.

Clarity of the role: The Cluster coordinator is, in some cases, not allowed the full mandate and space to coordinate and their role becomes limited to information exchange rather than informed decision making and strategic development of early recovery.

There are a number of systemic obstacles at the country level that hinder the ability of the early recovery cluster to work effectively:

Clarity on what the Cluster is about: Given the diversity of contexts and actors on the ground, the early recovery cluster tends to have a variety of foci (in many cases it focuses on governance and infrastructure which tend to be the roles of UNDP as an "agency of last resort"). However, when the early recovery cluster has a "gap filling focus" it can generate a great deal of confusion when the approach is also mainstreamed in all other clusters at national and sub-national levels. In addition, the early recovery cluster activities tend to deflect attention from UNDP's direct advisory role on early recovery for all other clusters and focus.

Limited expertise on early recovery approaches: At country level, there are few actors with the relevant knowledge and expertise. This tends to undermine efforts to mainstream "building back better" as there are no standards or clarity on what this means in practice and how to reflect it in programme design.

Political issues: Humanitarian actors may be reluctant to share political information and analysis when UNDP is perceived as having close links to government that may be involved in conflicts.

Programming: Getting beyond agency/stakeholder "business as usual" and "breaking the mold" of how agencies programme and adapt interventions are a critical challenge. Limited capacity and expertise are a factor as well as the limited resources to train partners and re-conceptualize projects.

There is a lack of a common approach between actors within the system on how to transition from humanitarian funding (including early recovery) to recovery, and from international to government-led coordination.

7.3 .UNDP's role as Cluster Lead Agency

All interviewees discussed the role of UNDP as cluster lead agency. Overall, there is ample recognition at global and at country levels of the significant and substantive contribution of UNDP to Early Recovery (policy development, building the architecture, spearheading policy and tools development, deploying expert personnel, etc). However, a number of concerns also emerged both at country and global levels.

UNDP's dual function of cluster coordination and servicing the RC at times generates distrust that could hinder the effective functioning of the Advisors, Cluster Coordinators, the network and the cluster. For example, there are double or confused reporting lines which are perceived to by-pass "firewalls" in the HC/RC offices. The early recovery cluster is the responsibility of UNDP as cluster lead agency while the network is the responsibility of the HC/RC. The UNDP staff is perceived as facing conflicting demands from the RC or the UNDP Country Director.

There are strong perceptions from outside UNDP that its 'Early Recovery' programmes benefit from its lead role in early recovery cluster coordination. Simultaneously, UNDP staff are concerned that its own programmes, especially those implemented during the humanitarian phase, do not benefit enough from the cluster coordination either at the operational or strategic level.

In spite of the many efforts by UNDP to enhance transparency and accountability in its lead role, there are still persistent suspicions and perceptions that UNDP gains more from its role than other agencies in terms of resources allocated to UNDP's programmes and visibility to the agency.

Some interviewees stated that greater recognition and attribution should be given to members (other than UNDP) in terms of "carrying forward the early recovery approach" and enabling it to be mainstreamed across all the clusters and by all cluster leads.

There appears to be a "miss-match" between early recovery principles of "rapid and flexible response" and the perception or reality of UNDP's bureaucracy which is seen as cumbersome, slow and having a negative impact on funding, recruitment and procurement. UNDP's Country offices, which provide a critical support to the system, are seen as too often operating on a "business as usual" mode.

8 Mainstreaming of Early Recovery

What does early recovery look like in a range of crisis types and how can it be understood and advocated for? There are still conceptual problems and political sensitivities in unpacking what it is, how it is different and how to mainstream early recovery. The diverse contexts of crisis require evolving the definitions of early recovery and recovery responses to fit the context.

Many interviewees felt that early recovery does not need or merit a separate cluster due to its crosscutting nature. Instead, more effort should be focused on creating

ownership and action by “mainstreaming” across the clusters so that it is understood and implemented by everyone. When a “gap” is identified an ad hoc cluster should be convened and named according to what needs to be done in that specific situation.

There is an urgent need to generate more evidence-based examples of the added value of early recovery in a variety of contexts. This will help to provide buy-in and develop advocacy tools.

The cluster coordination functions can, at times, take over or subsume the advisory functions of early recovery in a crisis. It was felt that strong leadership from the HC/RC was important to redress the necessary balance between coordination and advisory functions and ensure greater levels of mainstreaming.

9 Information and Knowledge Management

At the country level, the key issue was the need for more timely and strategic use of information. Examples were cited of meetings being too often taken up with extensive reporting and sharing of information that failed to focus on how it could be used in a strategic manner to help make decisions. The speed and availability of information at the earliest possible stage in the crisis to was also considered critical and was linked to the need for greater agreement on common IM standards and tools that are in use.

Monitoring impact and solid reporting with agreed indicators and standards of adherence was considered very weak and neglected and there were insufficient efforts to capture and share lessons learned.

10 Funding

Funding for early recovery continues to be an issue of concern. Misconceptions of early recovery and a perceived downgrading to an “approach” rather than a sector have framed it as a short-term phase between response and recovery. This has resulted in funding gaps and loss of momentum and trust at the local levels. The funding of early recovery is an area for renewed strategy and advocacy with the donor community. Many fear that early recovery has lost traction in the donor agenda due to the lack of an effective global strategy and misconceptions of the concept coupled with the existing limitations of fundraising within humanitarian funding mechanisms.

A key challenge identified in nearly all cases was funding for the implementation of plans. The gap between plans and funded activities impact on the expectations generated through the planning process. The lack of funding support can create distrust in the ability of the UN to fulfill its commitments and in the view of many has limited buy-in from national actors and others. The various funding mechanisms (e.g. CAP appeals, Flash Appeal) need to be adapted for early recovery or a standalone early recovery appeal created. Respondents were very much divided on the best

approach for securing funding but they all agreed that efforts needed to be stepped up in order to bring donors on board in a coherent manner.

More efforts are needed in developing joint funding strategies to avoid competing for existing resources. There is a demand for open discussion within the community, and with donors to clarify positions on funding for early recovery at the global level (e.g. dedicated cluster funding or a revised integrated approach in humanitarian mechanisms). Linked to this is a debate on whether the priority and funding should go to mainstreaming efforts or coordination and how this will be managed.

Greater clarity is needed on the parameters for BCPR providing funding support e.g. early recovery coordination and advice in the RC/HC office.

An overall shift is needed from a focus on immediate/short-term funding for hard deliverables to a more coherent longer-term people-centered approach and focus on supporting institutional change and building capacities.

Findings from quality of delivery objectives

11 Leadership

High-level political support from the HC or RC to early recovery is considered critical to leadership throughout the crisis. To help ensure this, senior personnel should be provided with training and briefings in providing strategic support for the activation and leadership support to the cluster mechanisms.

The Global Cluster's support to leadership and immediate virtual or in-country presence has been essential in helping to backstop a coherent response with staff presence and deployment of expertise. This has helped to establish legitimacy, leadership and a proactive stance with Government and other key players. Timeliness and key messaging are the most important elements in establishing clear leadership and follow-up action.

There are challenges in balancing the leadership demands of the coordination and advisory roles of early recovery in crisis and the accountability and reporting mechanisms between the Cluster and the HC/RC. These need to be strengthened to help avoid misperceptions of UNDP exercising lack of transparency on behalf of organisational interests.

At the global level, there are strong views on the timely need for the evolution of the CWGER into a new kind of institutional entity with an upgraded mandate to support and lead early recovery. This would be able to go beyond the perceived institutional limitations of the CWGER and would seek to generate greater ownership and accountability for early recovery throughout the international system and in the donor community. There are references to the CWGER losing senior participation from agencies because of a perceived resistance to change and a lack of open debate on the evolution of the Cluster and strategies for donor engagement and funding priorities.

At country level, the style of leadership provided by the coordinator and advisory personnel is critical. Creating buy-in from key stakeholders is highly sensitive to perceptions of the lead agency's (UNDP) coordination approach and style. In a few cases, joint leadership of coordination with another agency or government partner was considered to have worked well and countered prevailing distrust of UNDP. It is felt that the profile of cluster coordinators should be strengthened with skills building for facilitative leadership rather than directive styles than may result in alienation.

12 National Ownership

There is broad agreement on limited government ownership with a few notable exceptions e.g. Pakistan, Bangladesh and Kenya. This was largely attributed to the political context of the Government, its relationship to the crisis and international community. A lack of an effective engagement strategy was also identified as a problem. The role and relationship of the HC/RC and the lead agency to national

authorities is seen as critical to secure a positive engagement. The challenge is to engage national authorities that are not legitimate to affected populations or who may attempt to politicise the early recovery response.

Greater levels of awareness and knowledge are needed by deployed personnel and cluster members on how to understand National and local level mechanisms. This was seen as critical to enhance and improve interaction, identify and agree on gaps and avoid duplication of efforts. Advocacy efforts need to be designed to enable Governments and local authorities to see the value added and rationale to allocating scarce human resources to early recovery coordination and action.

The launch of an early recovery cluster in a period of non-crisis (e.g. Timor Leste) was seen as negatively affecting buy-in. Many agreed on the value of developing strategies of how to engage authorities in planning and capacity development for Crisis Prevention and contingency planning during periods of greater stability.

There are missed opportunities for better engagement and outreach with local NGO's, faith-based organisations and the private sector e.g. Kenya. Efforts are needed to redress this situation and will involve acknowledgement of the constraints to participation and the need for flexibility in the style and format of the Cluster's work.

Finally, the issue of evolving exit strategies need to be raised at the earliest possible stage in order to develop better buy-in and ownership. Planning the exit and phasing to recovery is important for partner governments to have a better sense of engagement and the longer-term implications for development and building back better. The early recovery network and the cluster need to strive to be a better partner for "host governments, local authorities, and civil society" through a clear focus on purpose and a commitment to helping build understanding and capacity of local entities in early recovery.

13 Capacity Development of national, local partners and the IASC system

Capacities still need to be built at all levels to help ensure dividends on the ground but there is a critical lack of opportunities, funding and political support for greater capacity development. Critical countries need a bigger push on capacity development and the global level should seek to prioritise this gap.

Capacity development through virtual support was identified as a potential area to help fill the on-going gaps and needs for coaching, active live support and a virtual "life-line" during early stages of the crisis. Responsibility to develop and support this medium should be jointly developed and resourced by the Global Cluster and other parts of the UN system.

The creation of open spaces for training and knowledge exchange between Agencies at the global and country levels is seen as a key future priority to enhance ways of working and the joint development of capacities and approaches. This could also

contribute to a greater degree of openness needed to promote inter-agency advocacy and harmonization.

The short-term deployment (3 months) of early recovery personnel was seen as limiting potential to build capacity of the IASC and partners and risked compromising continuity of institutional knowledge. Country offices are insufficiently aware of the possibilities and procedures for longer-term deployment and this leads to problematic gaps in deployment that exacerbate issues of human resources and ultimately impact on the ground.

There is an expressed request to revise the management of the early recovery roster and the skills profile of deployed personnel in advisory and coordination roles. Pre-deployment training needs to be upgraded to be able to support the broad range of crisis scenarios. Briefings and de-briefings need to be formalized and lessons learned documented. Linked to this, is the suggestion to proactively develop a “Community of Practice” to keep expertise engaged and to grow the early recovery knowledge bank.

14 Overall Recommendations from process objectives and quality of delivery objectives

- a. Responsibilities (support to the system, support to the cluster, support to UNDP programmes), and reporting lines (to the RC/HC, the UNDP CD, the Team Leader) - need to be reviewed, delineated, better managed and made more transparent.
- b. The strong leadership from the HC/RC is important to redress the necessary balance between coordination and advisory functions and ensure greater levels of mainstreaming. The cluster coordination functions can, at times, take over or subsume the advisory functions of early recovery in a crisis.
- c. Linked to this is the issue of re-naming the 'Early Recovery Cluster' to clarify what is most often done in practice i.e. Community Restoration (CoRe, Pakistan), or Governance, Infrastructure and Livelihoods (GIL, Uganda). This will focus the scope of the coordination of recovery areas not covered by the other clusters.
- d. A "Global Early Recovery Inter-Cluster Support Unit" might be an inter-agency mechanism that is mandated to innovate and support inter-cluster coordination and move beyond a focus of inter-agency coordination (CWGER). This unit is seen either as a complement or an alternative to the existing global cluster. The leadership of the global inter-cluster network should be maintained by UNDP, which will uphold the perception of the agency as an 'honest broker'. Coordination and technical support staff could be drawn from across the UN system, INGO's and donors (BCPR + seconded staff) with the goal of enriching the Early Recovery approach and support to recovery programmes with a variety of expertise and networks of contacts. This may also allow for the perceived need for a broadened international interaction, greater levels of accountability and scope for leveraging new financial resources.
- e. Selection, recruitment and deployment of early recovery personnel, could be reviewed and strengthened including strengthening the criteria for the selection of inter-agency Advisors and Coordinators to bring individuals with greater experience on the political dimensions of coordination and strengthening pre-deployment briefings and capacity development.
- f. There is a critical need to consolidate and synergize assessment processes and tools for early recovery purposes. This is key to ensure a common assessment framework that avoids parallelism and, most importantly, to generate a common understanding of priorities and the elements of "building back better". Linked to this is the need for a funding strategy to build local actors capacities for assessments.
- g. Capacity development is an area that needs strengthening including building capacity of the UN system (as a system) at field level. Pre-deployment of coordinators needs to be upgraded and briefings and de-briefings formalized.
- h. Formally develop an "Early Recovery Community" to keep expertise engaged and to grow the early recovery knowledge bank.
- i. Consider the development of joint funding strategies to address mainstreaming, coordination and programming needs and consider the development of a UN system wide instrument for early recovery funding.

List of interviewees

Name, Agency, Role	Duty station
• Angeles Arenas, UNDP	Panama
• Auke Lootsma, Country Director, UNDP	Sudan
• Ben Larke, Cluster Coordinator, UNDP	East Timor
• Bernard Leflaive, ER Advisor	Kenya
• Boubacar Bamba, UNHCR	
• Bradley Foerster, DOCO	NY
• Christophe Legrand, ER Advisor, RCO	Madagascar
• Dick Trenchard, FAO	Rome
• Douglas Keh, Country Director, UNDP	Sri Lanka
• Elisee Wabomundu, International Rescue Committee	
• Elly Oduol, UNDP	Dakar
• Erynn Carter, Mercy Corps	Washington
• Esteban Leon, HABITAT	GVA
• Felipe Camargo, UNHCR	Peshawar
• Fiona Bayat, UNDP	Zimbabwe
• Florentina Debling, OCHA	Geneva
• Francesca Battestin, ILO	GVA
• Happy Moloway, Programme Manager, Care International	
• Jahal de Meritens, CWGER Coordinator, UNDP	GVA
• Japhet litenge, Gov representative	Namibia
• Jennifer Worrell, Chief, ER Team, UNDP	GVA
• Jens Hesseman, UNCHR	Sri Lanka
• Joana Merlin Scholes, Former RC, ER Advisor	
• Joel Boutroue, DSRSG, HC/RC	Haiti
• Laila Baker, UNFPA	GVA
• Laurent Marion, Cluster Coordinator, UNDP	oPt

Name, Agency, Role	Duty station
• Martin Mogwanja, HC	Pakistan
• Miguel Bermeo, Director UNDP Geneva	GVA
• Monique Fienberg, Head of RC Office, UNRCO/UNDG	Beirut
• Oliver Lacey Hall, OCHA, former UNDP	NY
• Oscar Butragueno, UNICEF	UNICEF
• Paul Bonard, ER Advisor, Cluster Coordinator	GVA
• Petra Demarin, RC Office	East Timor
• Pierre Bessuges, Senior ER Advisor, CWGER UNDP	GVA
• Puji Pujiono, UNDP	GVA
• Retno, UNDP	Indonesia
• Sajjad Malik, UNHCR	GVA
• Sanaka Samarasinha, Country Director UNDP	Myanmar
• Savitri Bisnath, ER Advisor, ER Strategic Framework principal writer	NY
• Stephen Kinloch Pichat, UNDP CPRU Darfur	Darfur
• Susan Erb, HelpAge International	UK and GVA
• Theophane Nikyema, HC/RC	Uganda
• Toby Lanzer, Dep. HC	Sudan
• Tom Delrue, UNEP	GVA
• Xavier Leus, RC	Madagascar
• Yolene Vaval Surena, Gov representative	Haiti
• Yvonne Rademacher, ER Advisor	Pakistan
• Zola Dowell, Head of OCHA	Sri Lanka

early recovery

Early Recovery Coordination Lessons Learned Exercise



Online Survey

27/10/2009

1. Introduction

An online survey was conducted by the Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER) in the context of the CWGER lessons learned exercise which aims to obtain a snapshot of the achievements and challenges faced by Early Recovery Clusters and/or Networks at the country level. Combining a range of complementary methodologies to gather information – including country profiles, telephone interviews, country and global workshops, as well as the survey – the lessons learned exercise intends to capture the views of a broad cross section of early recovery stakeholders at global, regional and country levels.

This report presents an analysis of the results of the online survey, summarizing the main comments and feedback, accompanied by a graphic summary of the statistical responses per question.

A final report presenting the overall findings of the lessons learned exercise bringing together the information collected through all of the above-mentioned methodologies will be available in early 2010.

2. Methodology

The CWGER lessons learned online survey was conducted³ during a period of three weeks, from 3-25 September 2009. A broad range of early recovery stakeholders were invited (via email) to participate in the online survey, including those listed below.

Headquarters level

- Global CWGER members
- CWGER Secretariat/UNDP BCPR Early Recovery Team
- Global Cluster leads
- OCHA: Humanitarian Coordination Strengthening Section and Field Information Services Unit
- UNDP Crisis Prevention and Recovery Community of Practice: CPR-net (covers both headquarters and field)
- IFRC Recovery Networks
- IASC Task Force on Information Management

Field (capital/national and field/local) level

- Country level Early Recovery Clusters/Networks
- Early Recovery Advisors (current and former)
- Early Recovery Cluster Coordinators (current and former)
- Country level Cluster/Sector Leads
- National authorities/Government counterparts

³ Information was collected for the online survey using Survey Monkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>). Sincere thanks to OCHA's Field Information Services (FIS) Unit for their support in getting the survey online.

- Offices of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator
- Early Recovery Experts Group/Early Recovery Emergency Roster
- OCHA: Inter-Cluster Coordinators and Information Management Officers

More than 200 responses were received, representing a broad range of early recovery experiences both in the field and at headquarters, across a wide range of institutions and agencies.

The survey was divided into four main sections: parts I and II on individual details of survey participants; part III on questions relating to early recovery process-oriented objectives agreed upon by the global CWGER; part IV on issues around quality of delivery; and part V on general achievements and challenges at both country and global levels.

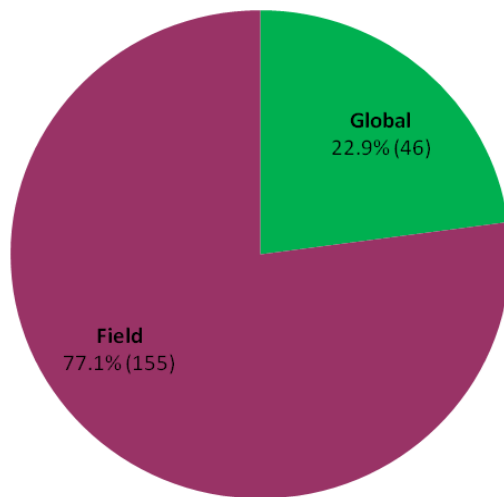
3. Analysis

The section presents a question-by-question analysis of the results of the online survey, highlighting the main comments and feedback received for each question.

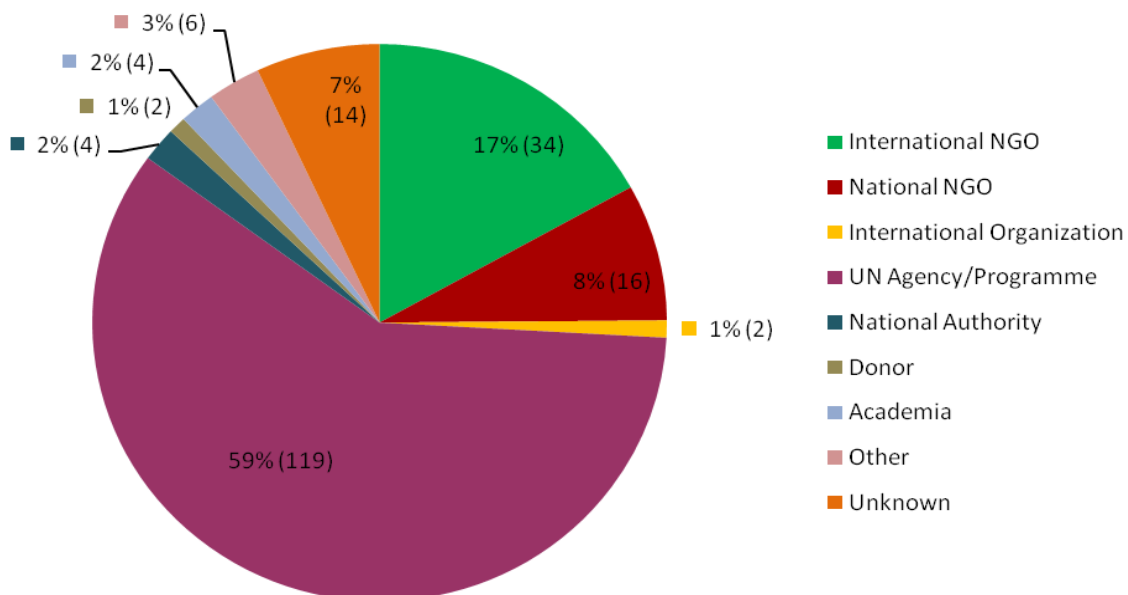
Survey Parts I and II: Questions 1-3. Individual details and early recovery experience(s)

More than three quarters of respondents (154 respondents) are currently based in the field. While the majority (119 respondents) of participants work for UN agencies and/or programmes, the survey also enjoyed healthy participation (50 respondents) on the part of international and national non-governmental organizations. The most represented organizations in the online survey were UNDP (56 respondents), OCHA (11 respondents), followed by UNHCR, UNICEF and UNRCO/DOCO (9 respondents from each organization).

Respondents' current duty station



Respondents' organization



Respondents' early recovery experience(s) to which their responses to the survey relate

The table below shows respondents' early recovery experiences to which their responses to the survey relate. Almost one-quarter of respondents (48 respondents) based their responses to the survey on their early recovery experiences in Pakistan. The occupied Palestinian territories, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar and Uganda were the next countries most cited by respondents. Early recovery experiences at the global level (CWGER) were represented by approximately 12 per cent (24) of survey respondents.

Country	Percent	Count
Global CWGER	12.3%	24
Afghanistan	4.6%	9
Bangladesh	4.1%	8
Bolivia	1.0%	2
Burundi	1.5%	3
Central African Republic	1.0%	2
Chad	1.5%	3
Colombia	2.1%	4
Comoros Islands	1.5%	3
Cote d'Ivoire	2.6%	5
Democratic Republic of the Congo	7.2%	14
Dominican Republic	1.5%	3
Ecuador	0.5%	1
El Salvador	1.5%	3
Ethiopia	2.6%	5
Georgia	2.6%	5
Haiti	5.6%	11
Honduras	3.1%	6
Indonesia	8.2%	16
Kenya	6.2%	12
Kosovo	2.6%	5
Kyrgyzstan	2.1%	4
Lebanon	1.0%	2
Liberia	1.5%	3
Madagascar	0.5%	1
Mexico	1.0%	2
Mozambique	1.5%	3
Myanmar	7.2%	14
Namibia	1.0%	2
Nepal	4.1%	8
Occupied Palestinian territories	8.2%	16
Pakistan	24.6%	48

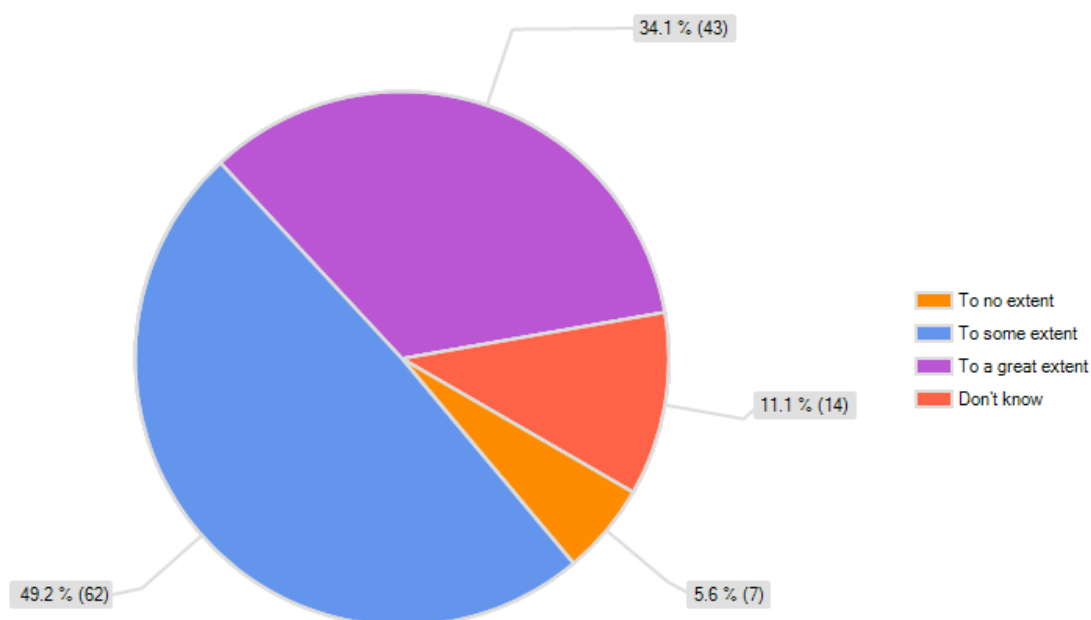
Country	Percent	Count
Peru	3.1%	6
Philippines	2.6%	5
Somalia	3.6%	7
Sri Lanka	2.6%	5
Sudan	6.2%	12
Tajikistan	2.6%	5
Timor-Leste	3.6%	7
Uganda	7.2%	14
Vietnam	0.0%	0
Yemen	1.0%	2
Zimbabwe	2.1%	4
Other: Balkans, Belize, Cambodia, Dominica, Central African Republic, Eastern Caribbean, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Latin America, Myanmar/Thailand border, Nicaragua, Niger, North Caucasus, Regional programme in support of tsunami affected countries, Solomon Islands, Swaziland, Turkey	13.3%	26

Survey Part III: CWGER process-oriented objectives

Part II of the online survey asked questions relating to those process-oriented objectives agreed upon for the CWGER Strategic Framework for 2010/11⁴. While these objectives were only agreed in 2009, they serve as a good basis for reviewing the CWGER's work in terms of ensuring a forward-looking lessons learned exercise with recommendations to improve the future performance of the Cluster.

Question 4. Strategic planning

To what extent do early recovery strategic frameworks, contingency and action plans translate into programmes and projects that address needs identified in early recovery-related assessments?



Respondents commented on the usefulness of early recovery strategic planning in terms of providing an opportunity to **increase understanding** of early recovery, as well as **build a common vision** among a range of early recovery stakeholders. Early recovery planning processes were noted for their contribution to the identification of joint early recovery programming opportunities, for the mobilisation of resources and as a basis for future planning, monitoring and coordination.

Respondents raised a number of challenges in regard to the translation of early recovery strategic plans into programmes and projects. The lack of **funding** for early recovery programmes was cited by a number of respondents as an impediment for their implementation (see question 9 for further discussion on early recovery funding). However, one respondent's experiences suggested the opposite:

⁴ CWGER Strategic Framework for 2010/11 available at: <http://www.humanitarianreform.org/humanitarianreform/Portals/1/cluster%20approach%20page/clusters%20pages/Early%20R/CWGER%202009-2010%20Strategic%20Framework.ppt>

in Comoros, funding received through other planning processes such as the Peacebuilding Fund Priority Plan enabled the implementation of early recovery activities.

From the global CWGER perspective, some respondents commented on the negative impact of the CWGER's tendency to concentrate its efforts on the early months following a crisis – during which needs assessment and strategic planning processes are ongoing – before moving on to the next crisis. Currently there is no system in place to review how early recovery strategic planning and assessment priorities translate into agency programmes and projects, leading to difficulties in terms of follow-up and accountability.

Conflicting priorities among early recovery stakeholders, a **lack of flexibility** to rapidly changing contexts and a **lack of political will** were cited by respondents as reasons why strategic plans are not being translated into programmes and projects. Respondents noted the difficulty in “convincing agencies, with programmes already underway, to revise those programmes in the light of the new realities on the ground and work jointly with new partners. There is often a resistance to this and a push to revert to the previous planned activities as ‘business as usual’”. An experience in Timor-Leste highlighted the challenges faced by the Early Recovery Cluster in defining the focus of its work in the current transitional context.

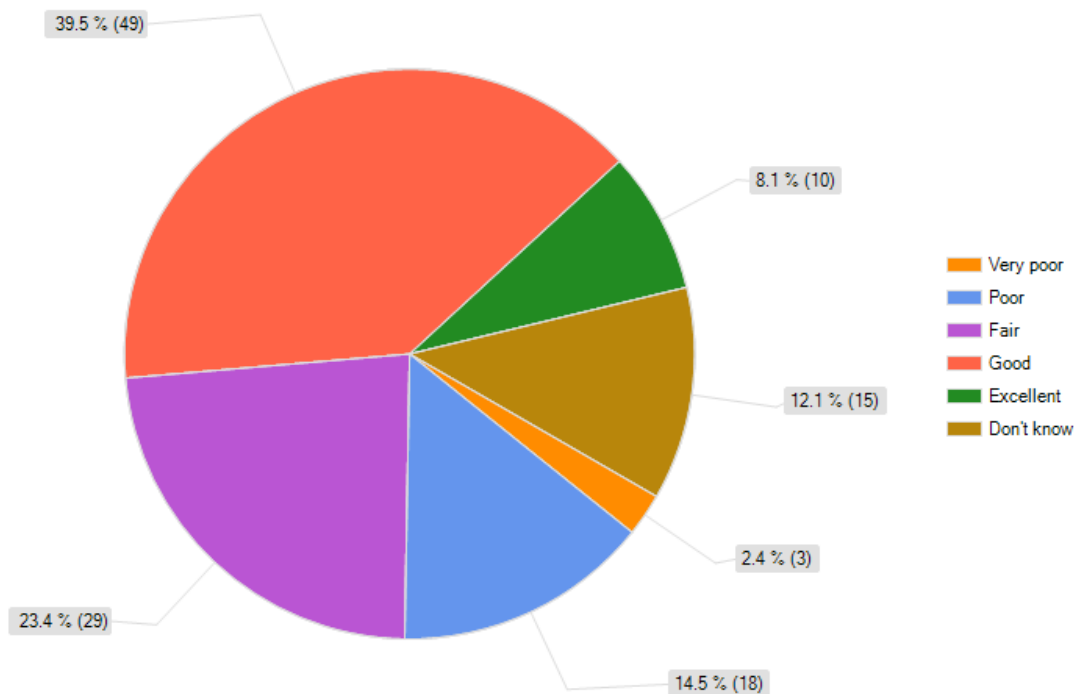
The **local political situation** was also cited by a number of respondents as a key factor that influences the implementation of early recovery programmes and projects. In the occupied Palestinian territories, great effort was invested in developing the Palestinian Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan. However, two main factors seriously impeded the implementation of early recovery activities in Gaza: (i) the political divide between the national authorities and the de-facto authorities in Gaza; and (ii) the ongoing blockade, denying the entry of construction materials into Gaza. An additional challenge faced by the Early Recovery Cluster/Network in the occupied Palestinian territories was that early recovery planning was perceived as potentially competing with two other planning frameworks: the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) and the UN Mid-Term Review Plan (MTRP) that were launched concurrently.

In a similar vein, **security** concerns have an impact on the translation of early recovery plans into action, for example in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where one respondent noted that the insecure environment limited their early recovery interventions in the region.

Reference was made by respondents to the **linkages between early recovery strategic planning to other planning processes** such as the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP), among others. In Cote d'Ivoire, for example, an Integrated Strategic Framework incorporating early recovery was developed, serving as a joint monitoring mechanism on conflict triggers to facilitate strategic discussion on peace building issues, as well as helping to prepare the transition of post-conflict programmes towards the UNDAF.

Question 5. Needs assessment

How would you rate the effectiveness of the Early Recovery Cluster/Network in leading or participating in joint needs assessments with other relevant clusters/sectors?



Respondents shared their experiences of early recovery joint needs assessments, noting that progress has been made even in the absence of specific “prescribed” methodologies (currently under development) to guide their conduct. Myanmar, Haiti, the occupied Palestinian territories, Namibia and Pakistan were noted as major achievements in terms of early recovery needs assessments despite complex and demanding circumstances. The needs assessment conducted in early 2009 in Gaza was noted for its quick mobilisation of partners and technical counterparts and its success in “providing an extremely accurate picture of the situation on the ground....The results of which are still being used to date.”

Respondents generally agreed on the added-value of joint early recovery needs assessments, highlighting the benefits they bring for **partnership building**, complementarity and synergy in response to early recovery needs.

In the Central African Republic, while the early recovery needs assessment benefitted from good NGO participation, participation from UN partners was generally low (with the exception of OCHA). While many partners conducted their own needs assessments, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) successfully collaborated for a joint needs assessment in Sri Lanka. In the occupied Palestinian territories, the management of the needs assessment process was noted for not being “optimum” with regard to partner consultation: one respondent noted that while there were plenty of Early Recovery Cluster

meetings on the needs assessment process, “these were used to communicate decisions much more than to discuss a collaborative approach”.

At the global level, needs assessments are sometimes perceived as ‘belonging’ to UNDP with little or no real participation by early recovery partners. It was acknowledged that as Cluster Lead, UNDP faces the challenge of obtaining a firm and timely commitment from its partners to participate in joint needs assessments, sometimes resulting in the perception that the process is entirely UNDP-driven.

Respondents commented on their experiences vis-a-vis **early recovery integration in other clusters’ needs assessments**, noting success in Zimbabwe due to UN agencies in-country deploying experts in early recovery-related areas who participate in joint needs assessment missions. In Timor-Leste, the nascent Early Recovery Cluster proposed to join forces with the Shelter Cluster for a joint assessment to assess the impact on durable solutions of the direct cash transfer modality applied by the Government to facilitate return of IDPs. The Early Recovery Cluster in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo successfully collaborated with a range of UN and NGO partners on a joint needs assessment. In both Comoros and Madagascar, the Early Recovery Network successfully collaborated with partners and contributed to early recovery coverage in other clusters’ assessments.

Some respondents noted that an ongoing challenge when promoting the inclusion of early recovery in other clusters’/sectors’ needs assessments is the lack of understanding of the cross-cutting nature of early recovery. Another challenge raised by respondents was the need for greater involvement and leadership by counterparts within the local authorities for early recovery needs assessments.

Respondents commented on **needs assessment tools and methodologies** such as the Post-Crisis Needs Assessment (PCNA) and Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) currently being developed at the global level, highlighting the need for commitment from Global Cluster Leads to “send strong messages to their cluster leads on the ground to participate in the needs assessments, not block, but to buy-in to both the process and the results”. In Pakistan following the 2005 earthquake, while coordination and mobilisation for joint needs assessments were generally well done, a lack of technical skills in-country resulted in limitations in the use of assessment results.

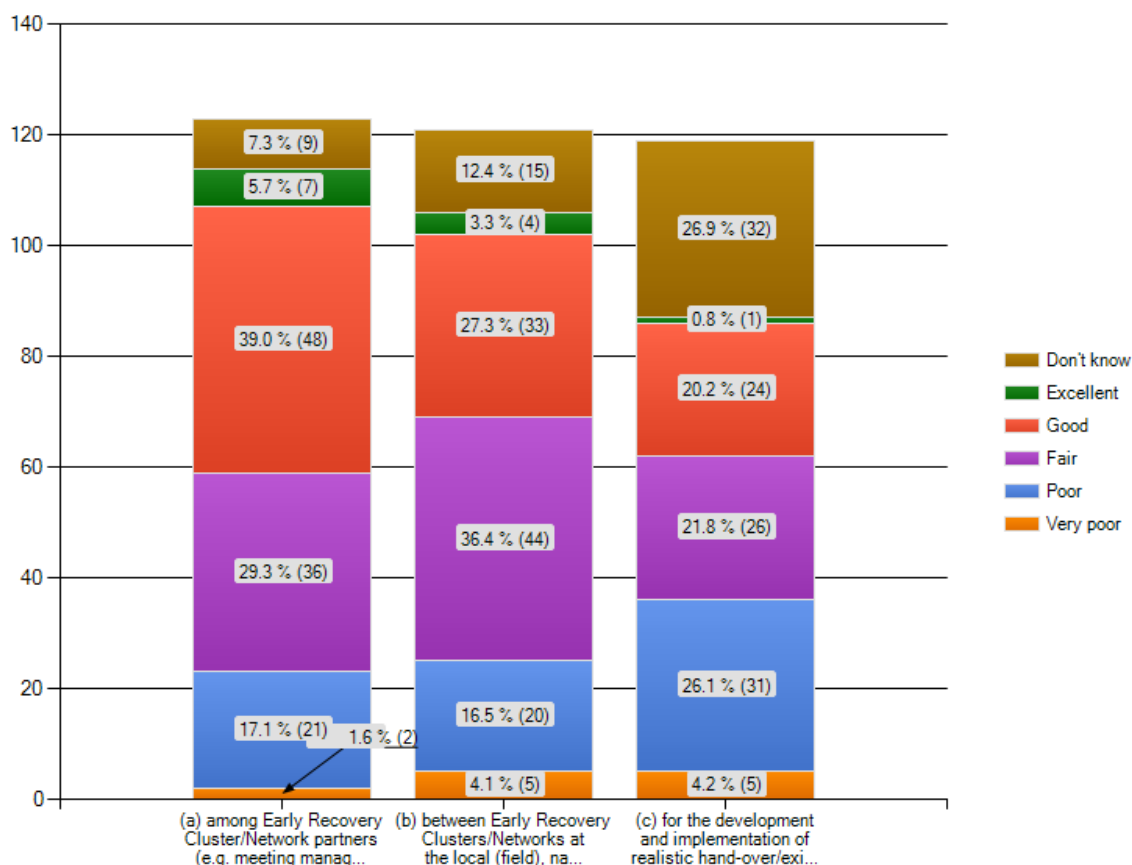
Question 6. Coordination mechanisms

How would you rate the effectiveness of coordination:

(a) among Early Recovery Cluster/Network partners (e.g. meeting management, definition of roles and responsibilities, development of clear terms of reference, etc.)?

(b) between Early Recovery Clusters/Networks at the local (field), national (capital), regional and global levels?

(c) for the development and implementation of realistic hand-over/exit strategies?



Respondents' comments with regard to the clarity of **roles and responsibilities** for early recovery coordination were mixed, with many citing confusion on the concept of early recovery being an ongoing challenge. The simultaneous horizontal (Early Recovery Network) and vertical (Early Recovery Cluster) nature of early recovery coordination was mentioned as a reason for such confusion, which at times has generated a feeling of mistrust and competition among other organizations/clusters. Both the occupied Palestinian territories and Pakistan are examples of where clear ToR were developed early and referred to on a frequent basis to facilitate and improve coordination among early recovery partners.

Early recovery coordination has been challenged by **unclear leadership**. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a sharing of leadership between UNDP and UNHCR has generated some tension and a lack of clarity with regard to the Early Recovery Cluster/Network. Joint leadership of the Early Recovery Cluster/Network in Zimbabwe between UNDP to IOM has led to some confusion in terms of priorities, among other areas.

Double/confusing reporting lines were another challenge noted by respondents. While the Early Recovery Cluster falls under the responsibility of UNDP as Cluster Lead, the Early Recovery Network falls under the responsibility of the Office of the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator. UNDP staff are therefore faced with double and sometimes conflicting demands from the UNDP Country Director and the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator.

Part (b) asked respondents to rate the effectiveness of coordination between Early Recovery Clusters/Networks at the local (field), national (capital), regional and global levels, to which the general response was less positive than part (a).

Capital and field level early recovery coordination faces additional challenges due to a number of factors relating to the distance between the two, such as the geographical distance and accessibility of field locations and unreliable telecommunications. In the occupied Palestinian territories, coordination improved with the transfer of cluster leadership to Gaza (from Jerusalem) as well as increased access to Gaza. The simultaneous post-conflict and conflict scenarios spread throughout the country poses a challenge to early recovery coordination in Colombia, with different areas dealing with different challenges and addressing different priorities.

Respondents noted that the quality of **links between the field and headquarters** generally depend on the individuals deployed for early recovery coordination (Early Recovery Advisors, Cluster Coordinators, Needs Assessment and Information Management Specialists) and those providing technical backstopping from the global CWGER. Respondents generally agreed that links to the regional level are virtually non-existent; however it was noted that in Latin America and the Caribbean there is increasing attention to this area among UN System partners.

Some respondents highlighted the need for **improved OCHA-UNDP collaboration** in the context of local and national level inter-cluster and Early Recovery Network coordination, calling for the creation of more shared field positions based on joint ToRs, as was the case in Myanmar. It was noted that, “While early recovery cluster coordination works well at the local level and reports to the early recovery cluster at the national level, more guidance needs to be provided for Early Recovery Network coordination at the local level. At the local level OCHA has the leading role in inter-cluster coordination and UNDP’s role at the local level in inter-agency coordination is not clear.”

The general response to part (c) regarding the effectiveness of coordination for the development and implementation of realistic handover/ exit strategies suggests that this is an area that requires some improvement.

Respondents generally agreed that handover/exit strategies should be planned from early on and developed in consultation with the local authorities; however, many admitted the **difficulty in identifying ‘good practices’ in this area**. In Uganda, an exit strategy was developed in a participatory manner between UNDP, the Early Recovery Cluster (named the Governance, Infrastructure and Livelihoods – GIL – Cluster) and local government counterparts. Burundi was also referred to as a positive example, where clusters mirrored government coordination structures as far as possible, facilitating the eventual handover process. At the global level, coordination with clusters for the development of handover/exit strategies has proved difficult, “linked to a lack of appreciation by other technical clusters of the CWGER’s role and the importance of addressing cross-cutting issues”.

The clarification of responsibilities vis-a-vis **inter-cluster coordination during transition and upon the phasing out of OCHA** (particularly if the local authorities are unable to take over the leadership and

coordination of clusters) is an area of concern raised by a number of respondents. Respondents highlighted the need for UNDP to play a role in OCHA's exit strategy (including the capturing of OCHA institutional memory, information management mechanisms, contingency planning, etc), requesting support from the global CWGER.

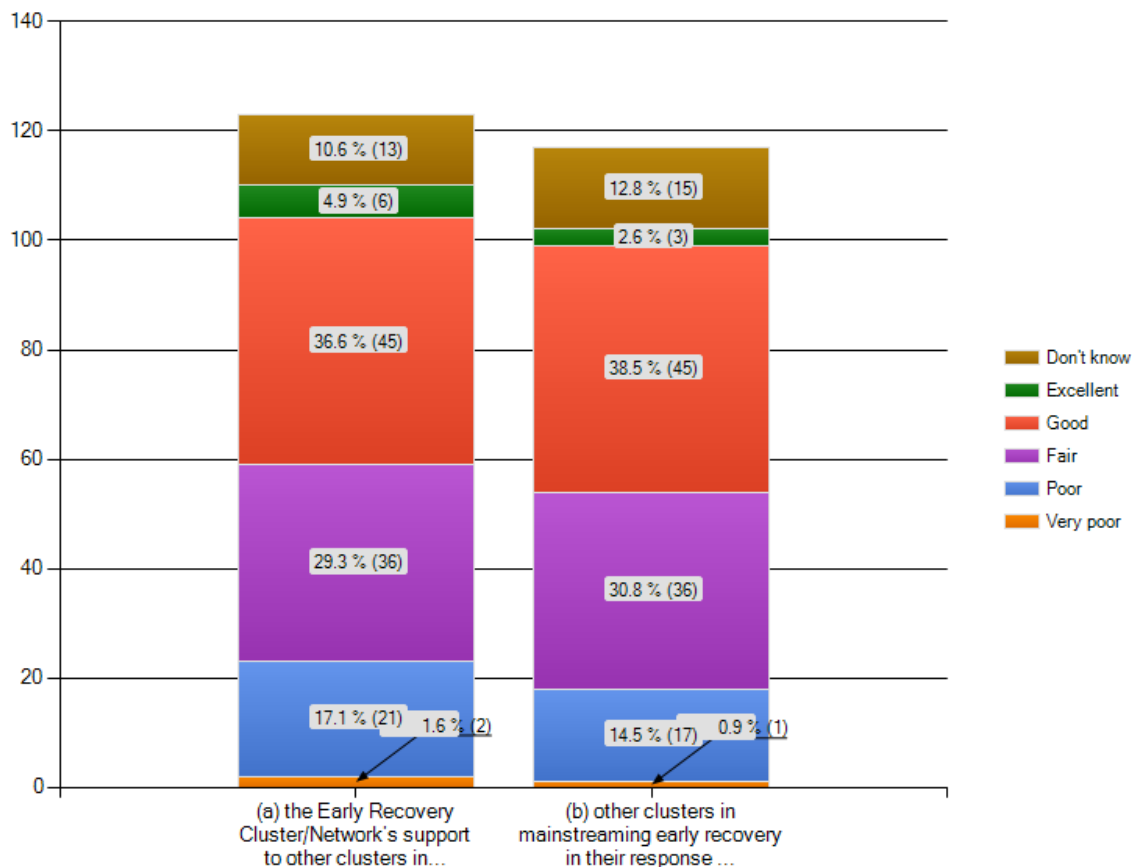
Regarding the **handover of early recovery coordination to the local authorities**, a number of respondents noted difficulty in this area, commenting on the need to align early recovery with local structures at both national and field levels. Comments in this areas included the following statement: "Field level coordination works much better because it is under the umbrella of one structure and leadership (the district commissioner) and functions with or without established national policy because they have to deliver to a demanding population and grassroots political pressure...Fragmented national level structures with too many ministries representing one sector, for example agriculture and environment sectors, with competing needs for resources and without a clear policy for coordination".

Question 7. Mainstreaming of early recovery

How would you rate the effectiveness of:

(a) the Early Recovery Cluster/Network's support to other clusters in mainstreaming early recovery?

(b) other clusters in mainstreaming early recovery in their response plans?



Some respondents recognised that the mainstreaming of early recovery benefitted from **organizing their work around a process** such as conducting joint needs assessments, strategic planning, contingency planning, contribution to and revision of Flash Appeals and/or the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP). In Haiti and Myanmar, the PDNA was highlighted by some respondents as a process through which early recovery was effectively mainstreamed in the work of other clusters. In Timor-Leste, an exercise inviting clusters to identify contingency planning or emergency preparedness-related activities reflected ongoing recovery issues, subsequently increasing understanding and facilitated the mainstreaming of early recovery. In a similar vein, early recovery mainstreaming took place following the development of the Pakistan Early Recovery Plan following the 2005 earthquake. In the occupied Palestinian territories there was strong advocacy for early recovery mainstreaming throughout the Gaza Early Recovery Rapid Needs Assessment, which continues during development of the 2010 CAP.

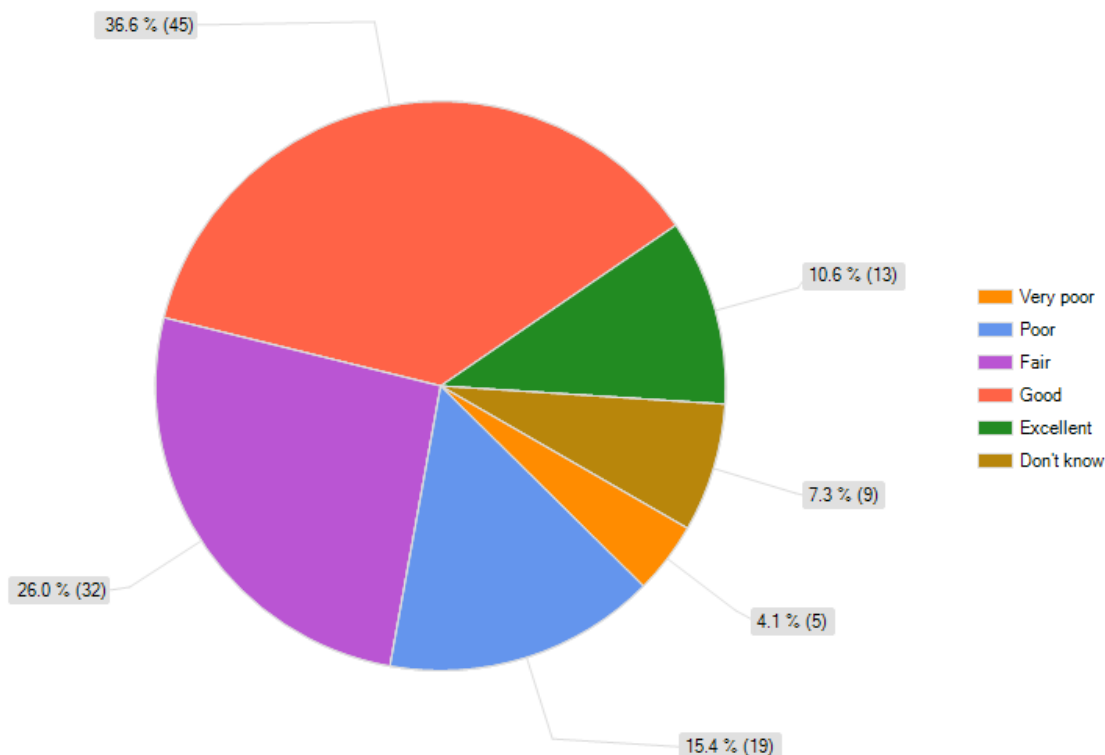
Respondents also highlighted the need for **high-level support** to facilitate the mainstreaming of early recovery, such as a strong directive from the Humanitarian Coordinator. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, advocacy efforts capitalised on the support of the Humanitarian Coordinator, encouraging

Cluster Leads to mainstream early recovery in the work of other clusters. The global CWGER was identified as a useful forum to obtain high-level buy-in and to intensify the dialogue between the CWGER and other Global Cluster Leads regarding mainstreaming of early recovery in their work.

As mentioned in responses to previous survey questions, the **political sensitivities** arising from a lack of understanding of the concept of early recovery remains a challenge for the mainstreaming of early recovery in other clusters' work plans. Examples of advocacy efforts to improve understanding and promote the incorporation of early recovery in other clusters' work include Honduras , Madagascar and Zimbabwe, through training, one-on-one meetings with other Cluster Leads, lobbying for early recovery capacity in other clusters (through the Early Recovery Network) and the preparation of information materials.

Question 8. Information management

How would you rate the effectiveness of the Early Recovery Cluster/Network's information management mechanisms (e.g. Who does What Where, inter-cluster websites/information exchange platforms, etc.) in supporting early recovery coordination and decision making, as well as contributing to inter-cluster information management?



Collaboration with OCHA to collect early recovery information for the **Who does What Where (3W)** database (and related information products, such as maps) was referred to by a number of respondents as a valuable tool to map early recovery activities. As discovered in Cote d'Ivoire, Zimbabwe and the occupied Palestinian territories, the potential for overlap in 3W information collected as clusters reported the same information twice (through their respective clusters' 3W and the Early Recovery Network's 3W). Increased collaboration and further discussion with OCHA was suggested to ensure complementarity between OCHA inter-cluster and Early Recovery Network 3W databases.

Respondents commented on the **lack of early recovery information management capacity** deployed to support Early Recovery Clusters/Networks. In Colombia, OCHA has filled the gap for early recovery information management while pushing the Early Recovery Cluster/Network to designate its own information management focal point in line with the IASC *Operational Guidance of Cluster/Sector Leads and OCHA in Information Management*. Resource constraints prevented the Early Recovery Cluster/Network from having dedicated information management capacity beyond the initial surge support during the early recovery needs assessment in Myanmar. It was recommended that at the global level, the CWGER should increase its deployable information management capacity through the CWGER Early Recovery Experts Roster; while at the country level, there should be better understanding among UNDP

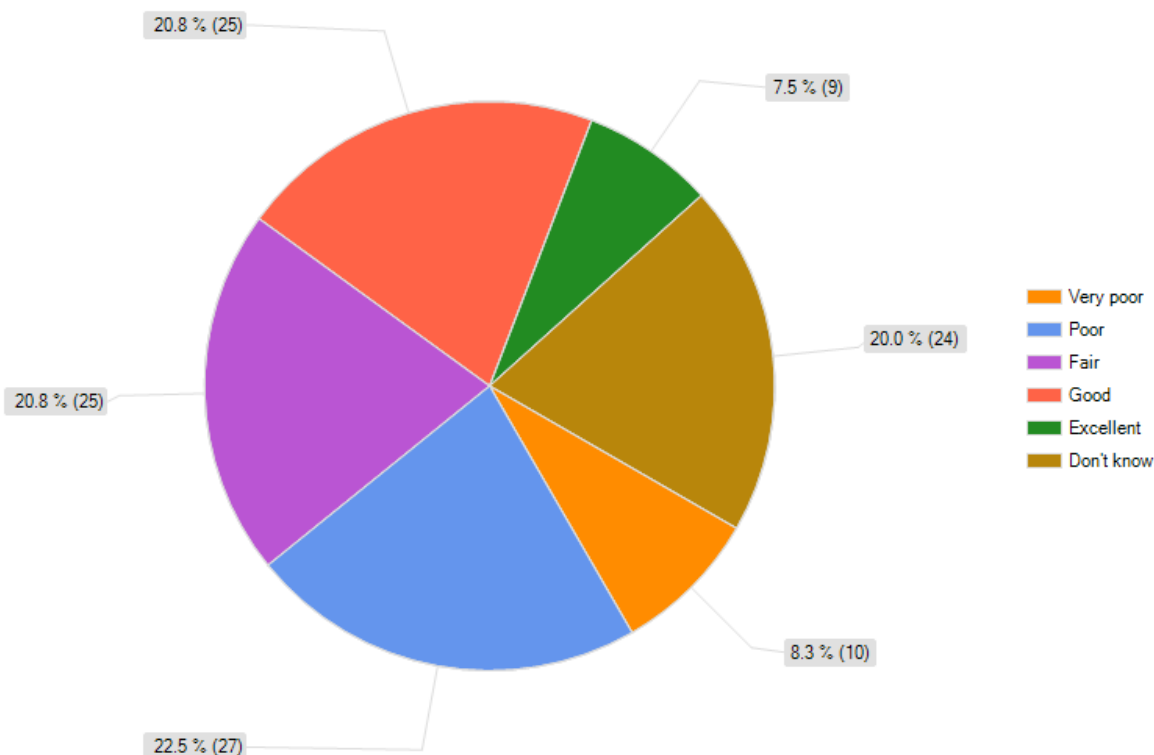
Country Offices with regard to the importance of information management for coordination as well as UNDP's responsibilities as a Global Cluster Lead per the previously-mentioned IASC *Operational Guidance*.

Early Recovery Cluster/Network **reporting** was also an area that respondents noted as requiring attention. It was noted that UNDP staff frequently use inter-cluster situation reports (sitreps) to promote UNDP programmes, rather than highlighting priority areas and achievements by Early Recovery Clusters/Networks.

Where they are available, **inter-cluster websites** were cited as useful tools for information sharing amongst early recovery partners. Respondents noted examples of successful websites in Bangladesh, Madagascar and the Occupied Palestinian territories.

Question 9. Funding for early recovery

How would you rate the effectiveness of the Early Recovery Cluster/Network's efforts to coordinate and mobilise funds (e.g. through the Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP), Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP), Flash Appeal, Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), pooled and multi donor trust funds (MDTF))?



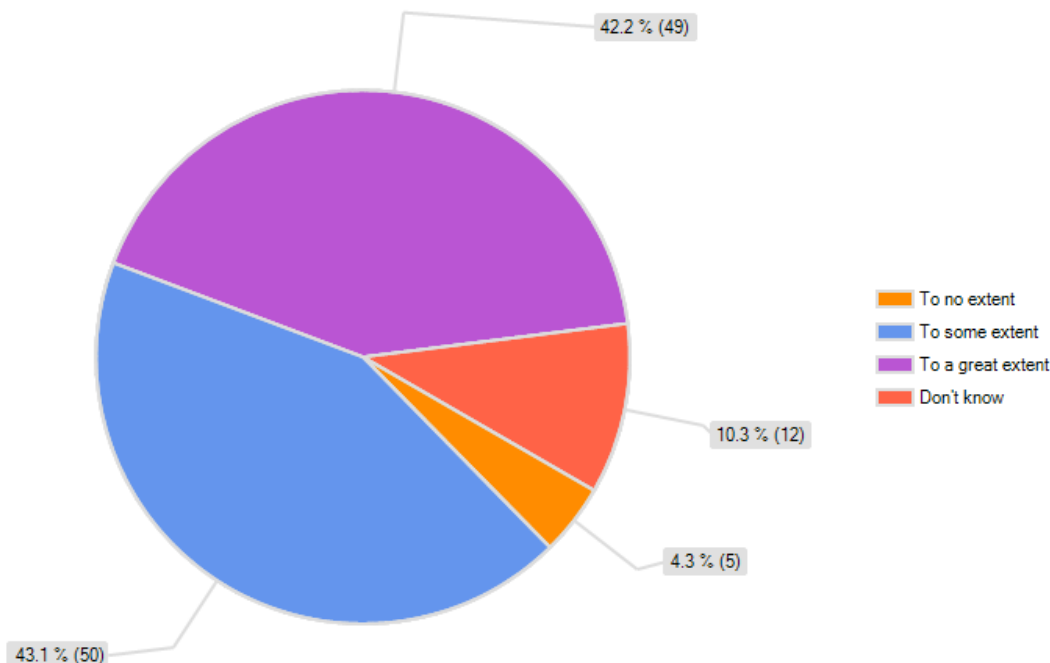
Global guidance on early recovery resource mobilisation was highlighted by respondents for their usefulness in guiding Early Recovery Cluster/Networks' fundraising efforts through humanitarian financing mechanisms such as the Flash Appeal (FA) and Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP). Post-crisis needs assessments in Myanmar, Haiti, Namibia and Pakistan were recognised as useful means of obtaining information for inclusion in the revision of FAs. Early recovery resource mobilisation efforts in the Central African Republic through the CAP were deemed successful; in Sri Lanka they found success through the Common Humanitarian Action Plan (CHAP).

Respondents commented on the importance of **inter-agency collaboration** between UNDP, OCHA and DOCO for effective resource mobilisation for early recovery. In Cote d'Ivoire, such collaboration resulted in a Local Transition Fund launched by the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, raising funds for the consolidation of humanitarian activities and for small capacity-building community projects. Similarly, UNDP-OCHA collaboration in the Central African Republic resulted in an advocacy and resource mobilisation document, raising funds through the CAP. At the global level, UNDP as global Cluster Lead was recognised for its extensive consultation with the CWGER on the issue of early recovery resource mobilisation, and encouraged to continue its advocacy for increased funding of early recovery activities.

Respondents recommended that there is a need to **shift the focus of early recovery fundraising towards donors**, with strong advocacy efforts highlighting the benefits of investing in early recovery such as its cost-effectiveness. Early recovery's firm place within the overall humanitarian response should also be promoted among donors, avoiding framing the concept as a phase between response and recovery and consequently falling between the cracks of donor funding possibilities: "early recovery is part and parcel of the humanitarian response and it should be protected as such".

Question 10. Advocacy

To what extent has the Early Recovery Cluster/Network succeeded in raising the profile of early recovery and advocating for the kick-starting of recovery efforts?



Respondents' comments to question 10 highlighted the **positive impact of early recovery advocacy efforts**, highlighting it as an area of achievement at global and country levels. An example of the impact at the global level is the creation of positions dedicated to early recovery among CWGER member organizations. Also at the global level was the successful advocacy by headquarters staff of CWGER member organizations, resulting in their country level counterparts contributing to early recovery processes such as the Gaza needs assessment in the occupied Palestinian territories. Some respondents noted that institutionally, UNDP has benefitted from early recovery advocacy efforts demonstrated by its staff having a greater understanding of early recovery principles and coordination (Country Office staff as well as short-term experts deployed from the Early Recovery Expert Roster).

At the country level, advocacy conducted through the Early Recovery Network has resulted in a more prominent profile for early recovery making a regular appearance on the agendas of high-level decision makers and fora, including the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, the UN Country Team and country level Inter-Agency Standing Committee. Respondents shared their positive experiences in this regard in Central African Republic, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar, the occupied Palestinian territories, the Philippines, Zimbabwe as well as some countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

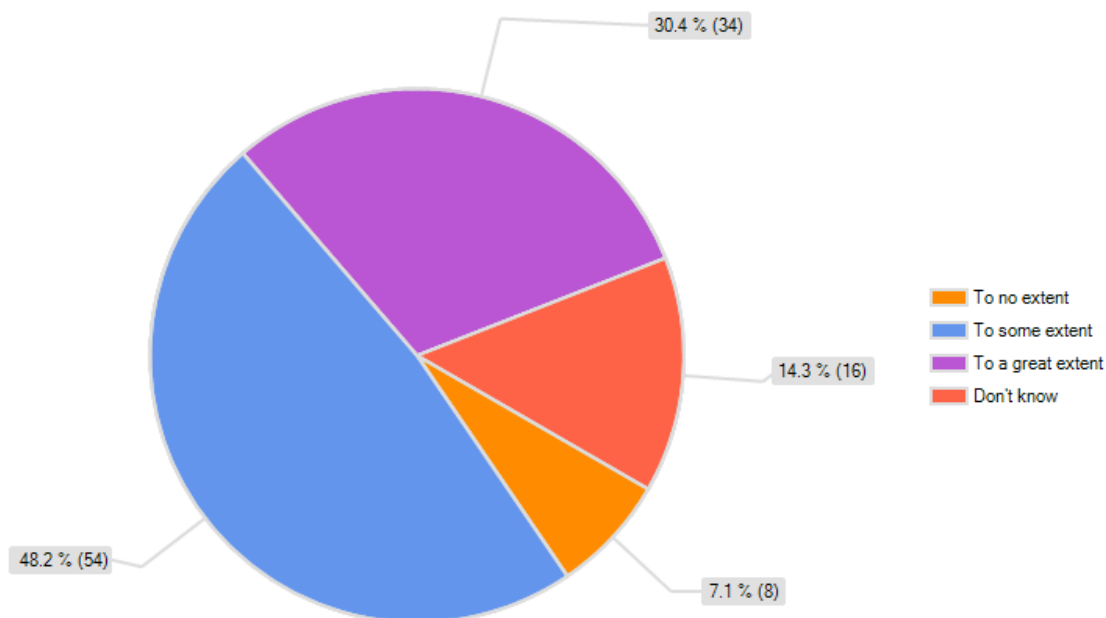
While recognising the achievements to date, respondents highlighted **a number of areas requiring continued advocacy**. For example, at the global level, further advocacy is needed on the part of the CWGER through UN partners such as DOCO and OCHA as well as the UNDG-ECHA Working Group on Transition.

Survey Part IV: Quality of delivery objectives

Part III of the survey asked respondents to reflect on a range of quality of delivery objectives, based on development principles as well as the agreed guiding principles for early recovery⁵, and those of the cluster approach in general⁶.

Question 11. Partnership

To what extent does the Early Recovery Cluster/Network facilitate the development of partnership and collaboration between humanitarian and development actors (e.g. local and national authorities, UN system, NGOs, CSOs, International Financial Institutions (IFIs), etc.)?



Respondents' comments were mainly positive, recognising that Early Recovery Clusters/Networks have done relatively well in terms of **bringing together a range of both development and humanitarian actors**, highlighting the complementarity and the need for collaboration as well as improving coordination. In the north-east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Early Recovery Cluster was noted as being the only cluster in the province that has succeeded in building partnerships between the local authorities (provincial assembly and representatives from three ministries), local, national and international NGOs, UN agencies, as well as a range of donors. In contrast, the view was also expressed that the different ways of working between development and humanitarian actors impeded the development of effective early recovery partnerships.

In the context of **recovery and development processes** such as post-crisis needs assessments, some notable partnerships between the UN system, World Bank, NGOs and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) were built in Myanmar. In Cote d'Ivoire, early recovery partnerships were strengthened

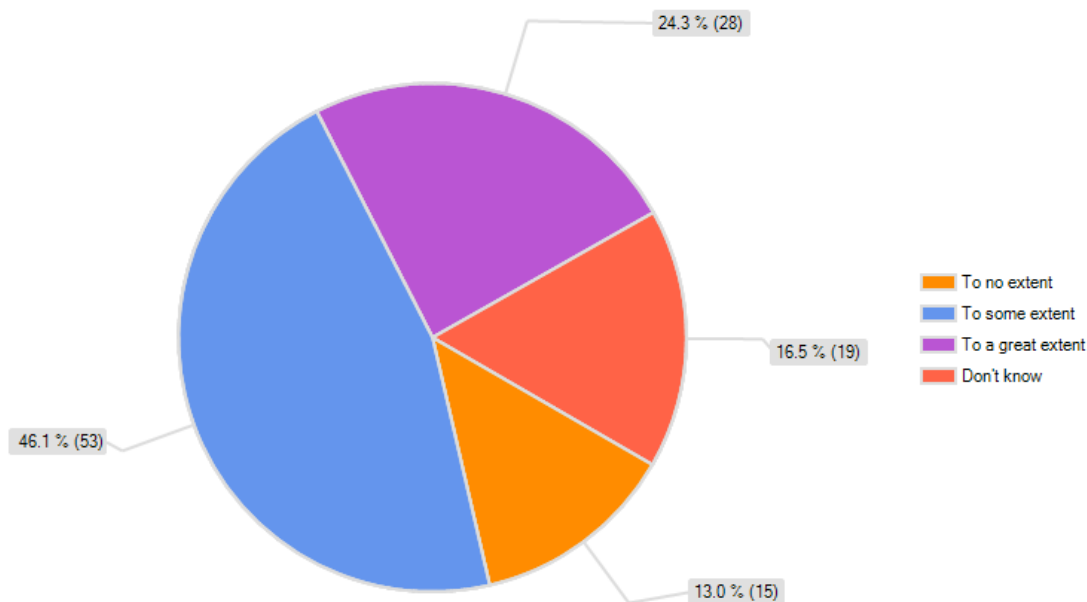
⁵ As stated in the [CWGER Guidance Note on Early Recovery](#), April 2008

⁶ [IASC Guidance Note on using the cluster approach to strengthen humanitarian response](#), November 2006

through the consultation and coordination process for the development of the UN Development Assessment Framework (UNDAF) and the national Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). In Madagascar, successful partnerships were forged between early recovery partners and International Financial Institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). On a less positive note, it was suggested that early recovery partnerships are vulnerable to the whims of funding: as funding decreases, the interaction between early recovery partners also decreases.

Question 12. Leadership

To what extent does UNDP succeed in balancing Early Recovery Cluster/Network leadership responsibilities in addition to its programmatic responsibilities?



Respondents commented on challenges posed by a **lack of early recovery capacity** to fulfil numerous responsibilities related to coordination for both the Early Recovery Cluster and the Network, in addition to UNDP programming. In Zimbabwe, early recovery capacity was deployed to lead the Early Recovery Cluster for UNDP, with no Early Recovery Advisor deployed to facilitate the Early Recovery Network. A similar experience occurred in countries of Latin American and the Caribbean, with a single person responsible for both coordination and UNDP programming. In Uganda, it was found that local early recovery coordination often fared better than national level coordination when it came to UNDP balancing responsibilities, with sub-office staff having more time to dedicate to coordination.

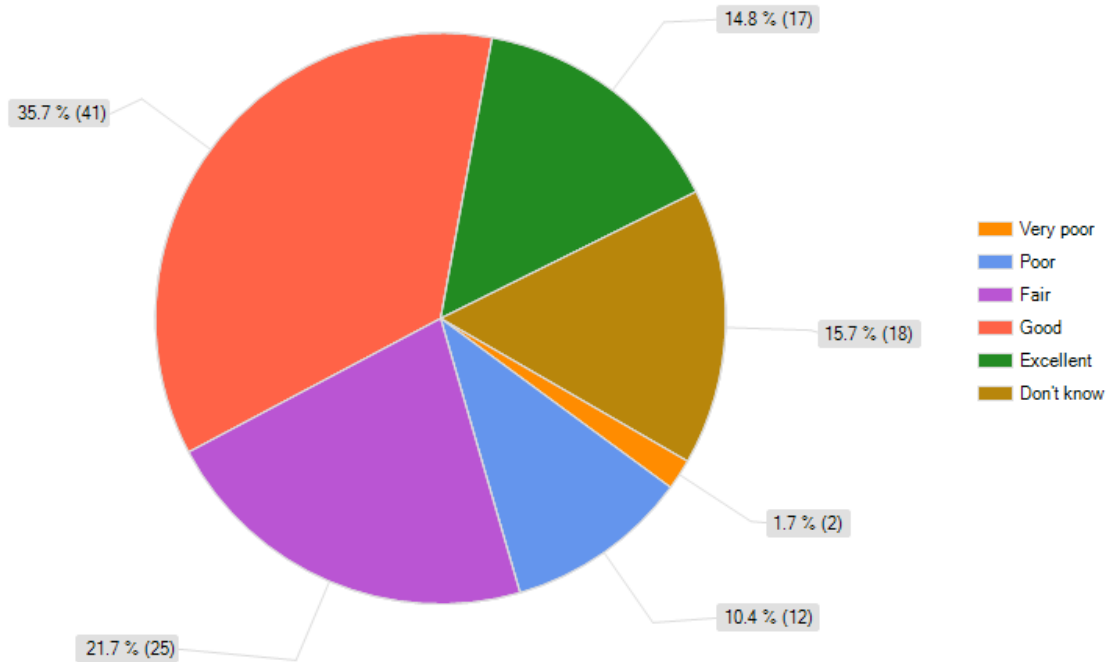
A positive example was provided from Indonesia, following the Central Java/Yogyakarta earthquake, where UNDP was deemed successful in balancing its responsibilities due to the **separation of coordination and programming tasks into two separate teams**.

High-level support was cited by some respondents as a key determining factor for the success of UNDP balancing its early recovery coordination and programming responsibilities. In Comoros and the Central African Republic, the Early Recovery Advisor enjoyed strong support from the Office of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, resulting in access to decision makers and senior staff within the UN Country Team. Conflicting views between the Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative and the Deputy Resident Representative in Madagascar with regard to the importance of early recovery resulted in tensions between the Early Recovery Advisor and UNDP programming staff.

At the global level, UNDP faces questions regarding **lack of transparency** about its leadership of and role in early recovery needs assessment and resource mobilisation processes, with one respondent questioning whether UNDP is acting on behalf of the CWGER or on behalf of its own organizational interests.

Question 13. Predictability

How would you rate the quality of global CWGER support, tools and guidance in terms of their timely dissemination and usefulness in the establishment and ongoing work of the Early Recovery Cluster/Network?



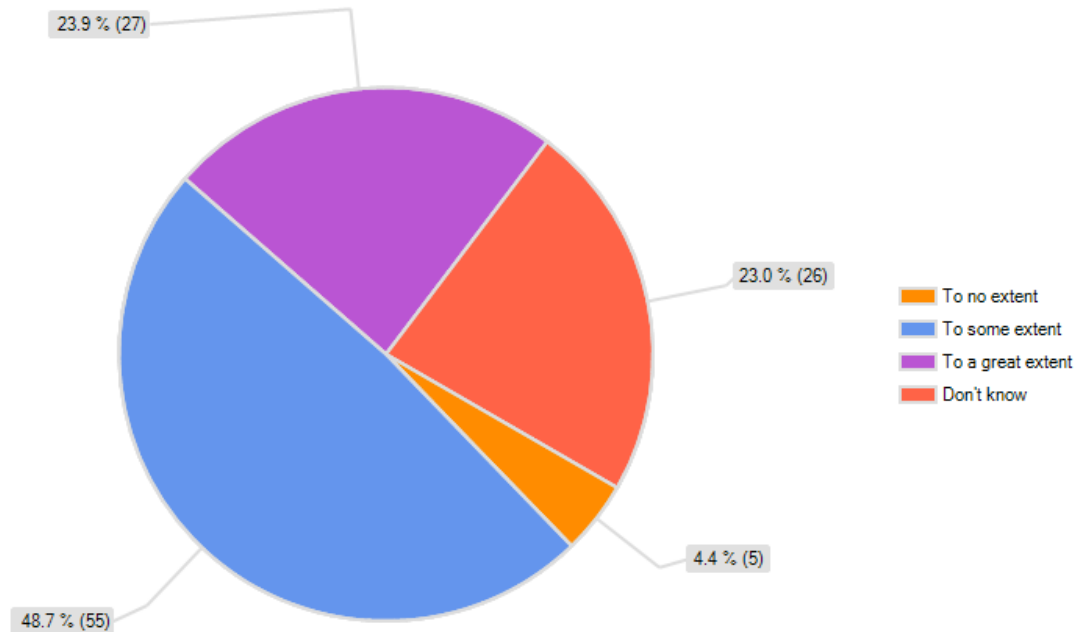
The **CWGER Guidance Note on Early Recovery** was highlighted by respondents as the authoritative tool that provides clarity on early recovery theory and practice. Suggestions for its further adaption include making the distinction between post-conflict (taking into consideration the presence of a peacekeeping mission) and post-natural disaster early recovery coordination, as well as translation into other languages.

CWGER **training and workshops** were noted by respondents as a useful means of providing support to the work of Early Recovery Clusters/Networks, including CWGER expert missions to support their establishment and the conduct of early recovery processes such as needs assessments. Specific training on the actual use of CWGER tools was also suggested by respondents as a means of supporting their application in the field. Some respondents enquired about the status of guidance for post-crisis needs assessments, commenting on the extended process for their development as well as their highly detailed nature, requesting shorter versions for easy adaption and application.

Knowledge management efforts to support the nascent early recovery community of practice were generally commended by respondents, encouraging their further development to enhance support to early recovery practitioners in the field.

Question 14. Accountability

To what extent is the Early Recovery Cluster/Network successful in delivering against stated objectives and in accordance with early recovery principles?

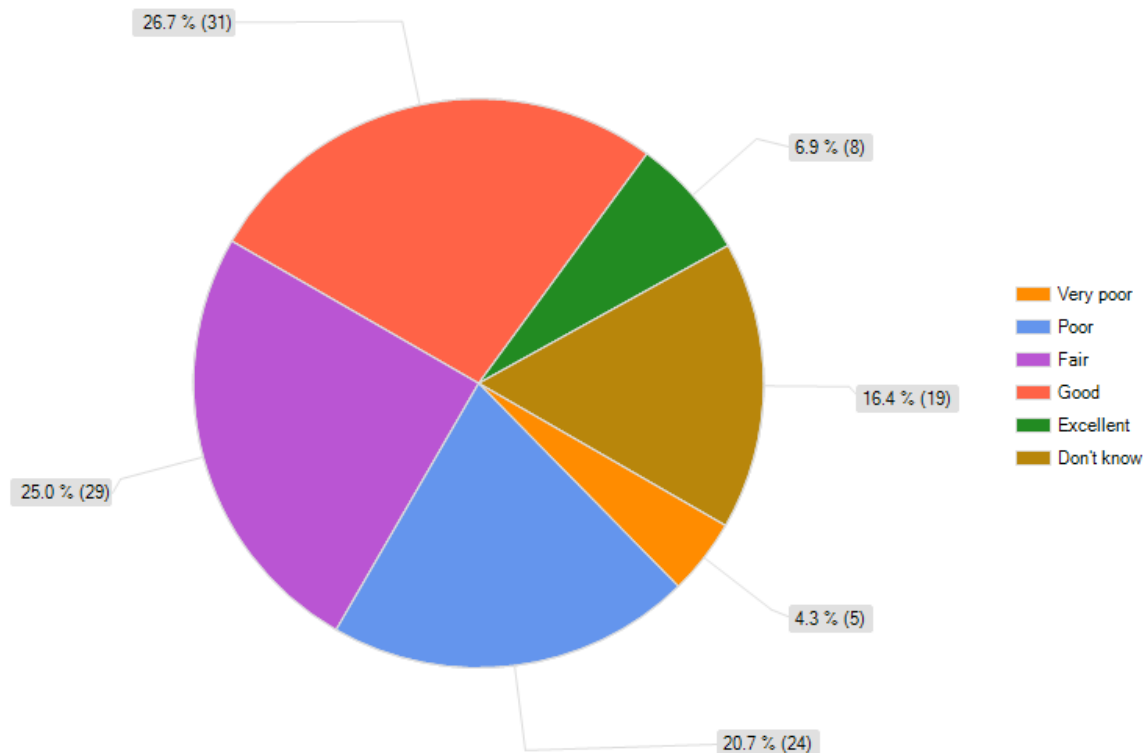


Respondents raised the issue of **lack of early recovery funding** as a key challenge for Early Recovery Clusters/Networks in terms of delivering against stated objectives. It was suggested that success in accountability is about “getting the approach out there and the people thinking differently, but the lack of funding is discouraging people to follow that path...Donors have to start playing the game other than in meetings and signed agreements”.

Other respondents agreed that while the principles have guided recovery frameworks, Early Recovery Clusters/Networks are working under challenging circumstances that often demand the job to be done quickly. As a consequence, **less time and resources are invested in reflecting on the accountability of Early Recovery Clusters/Networks**, and whether they are consistent with early recovery principles. In the Philippines, the presence of an Early Recovery Advisor within the Office of the Resident Coordinator facilitated the ongoing promotion of early recovery principles among the different clusters. It was suggested that CWGER develop guidance in this regard based on experiences to date.

Question 15. National ownership

How would you rate the Early Recovery Cluster/Network's efforts in building ownership and supporting leadership by national and local authorities?



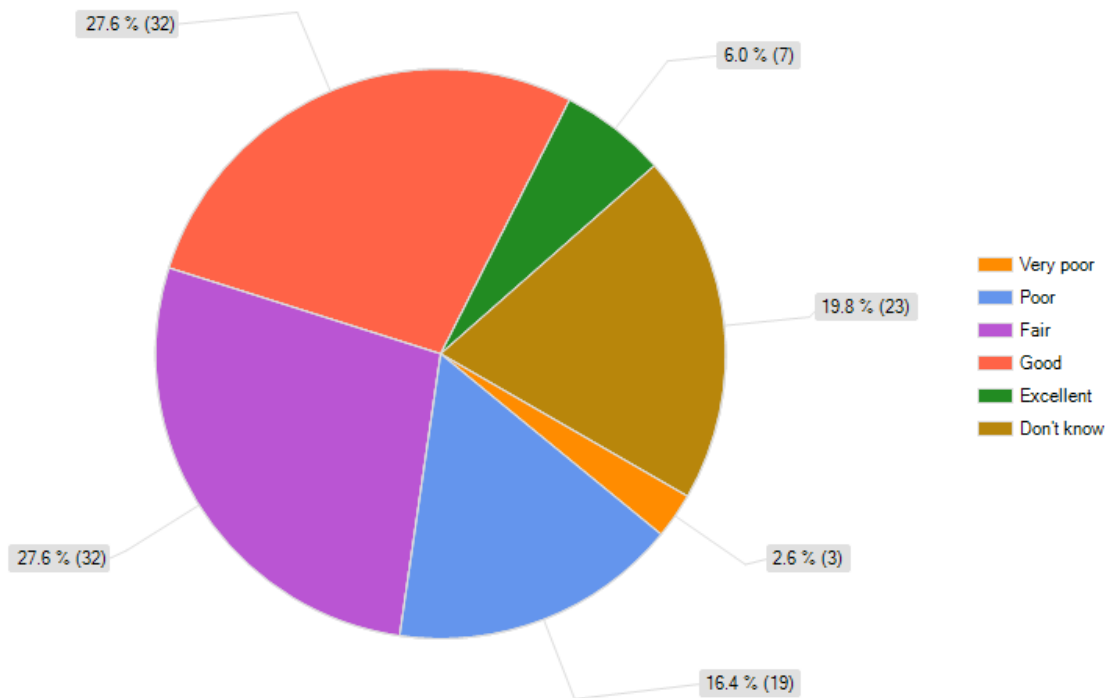
The main issue raised by respondents with regard to national ownership of early recovery was that its success largely depends on the **local political situation**. In Zimbabwe, while the Government was willing to move towards early recovery, donors were unwilling to fund early recovery activities as this would imply supporting the Government before it has made progress in other areas such as human rights and democracy. In the case of the occupied Palestinian territories, the Early Recovery Cluster/Network was unable to engage with the de-facto local authorities in Gaza resulting in limited possibilities of success. In Georgia, most clusters faced similar challenges in terms of building ownership and supporting leadership due to the local political situation.

Bangladesh and Indonesia enjoyed more success in local ownership; Pakistan too, whose Government was reportedly ahead in early recovery planning and implementation, while the UN “remain occupied with theoretical distractions; cluster with UNDP and Network with HC staff”.

Increased advocacy efforts with local authorities were recommended as a means of obtaining increased interest, ownership and the adoption of a leadership role in early recovery. Similarly, promoting co-leadership of clusters with Government counterparts was also cited as a way of securing local authority participation and building foundations for sustainable recovery.

Question 16. Capacity building

How would you rate the effectiveness of the Early Recovery Cluster/Network in supporting, training and building local and national capacities for early recovery?

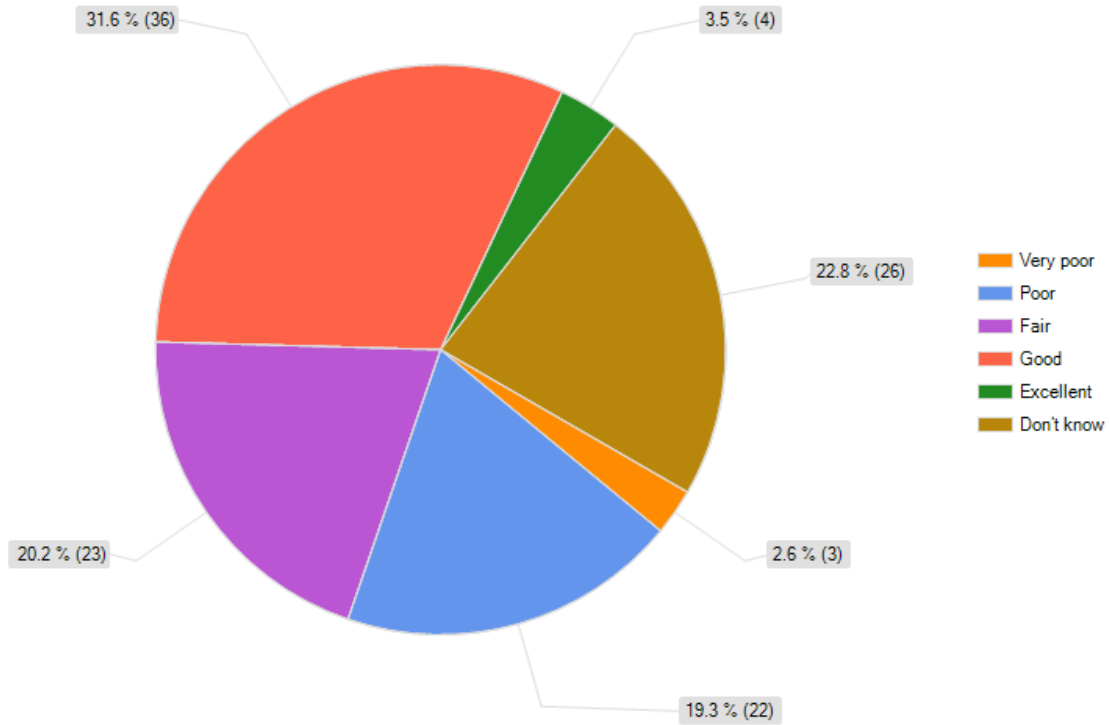


In the cases of Haiti and Pakistan, some success in capacity building was observed **following the conduct of early recovery processes** such as needs assessment. Other respondents confirmed the existence of funding for early recovery training and current efforts to develop training initiatives in Honduras and Timor-Leste as well as at the global level, in some cases offering training in both early recovery and disaster risk reduction.

Some respondents expressed their disappointment at the **lack of early recovery capacity-building opportunities**, for example: “We didn’t do any capacity development. I think we ourselves needed our capacities developed”. At the global level, it is suggested that capacity-building should be conducted in the areas of coordination, planning, monitoring and evaluation and community participation, among others. In this regard, it was suggested that the CWGER convert early recovery operational tools into training programmes for delivery in the field.

Question 17. Prioritization and gap filling

How would you rate the effectiveness of the Early Recovery Cluster/Network in ensuring it has the capacity, resources and commitment to meet agreed priority early recovery needs (e.g. monitoring and evaluation, adjustment of programmes according to needs, etc.)?

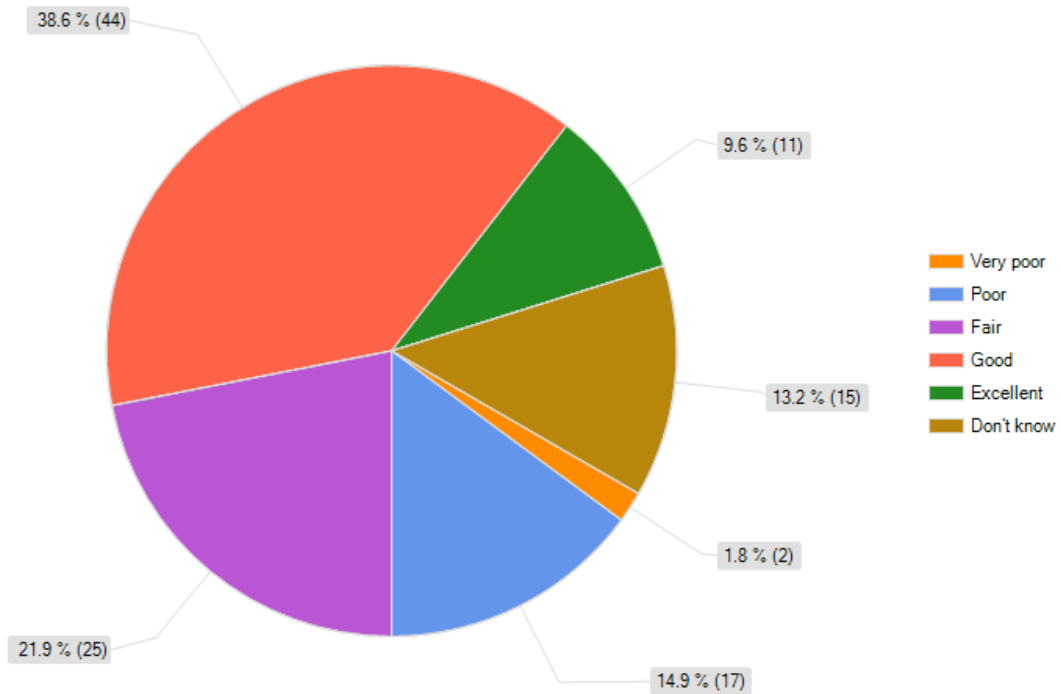


Question 17 generated few comments, with some respondents noting the **lack of early recovery funding** impacting the performance of Early Recovery Clusters/Networks with regard to prioritization and gap filling.

A number of respondents pointed to **training** as a means of building capacity to fill gaps and prioritize activities in response to early recovery needs. Respondents cited monitoring and evaluation as an area requiring particular attention in the development of early recovery training programmes.

Question 18. Cross-cutting issues

How would you rate the effectiveness of the Early Recovery Cluster/Network's efforts in identifying and integrating priority cross-cutting issues (e.g. gender, age, disaster risk reduction, conflict prevention, environment, human rights, HIV/AIDS, etc) into its work?



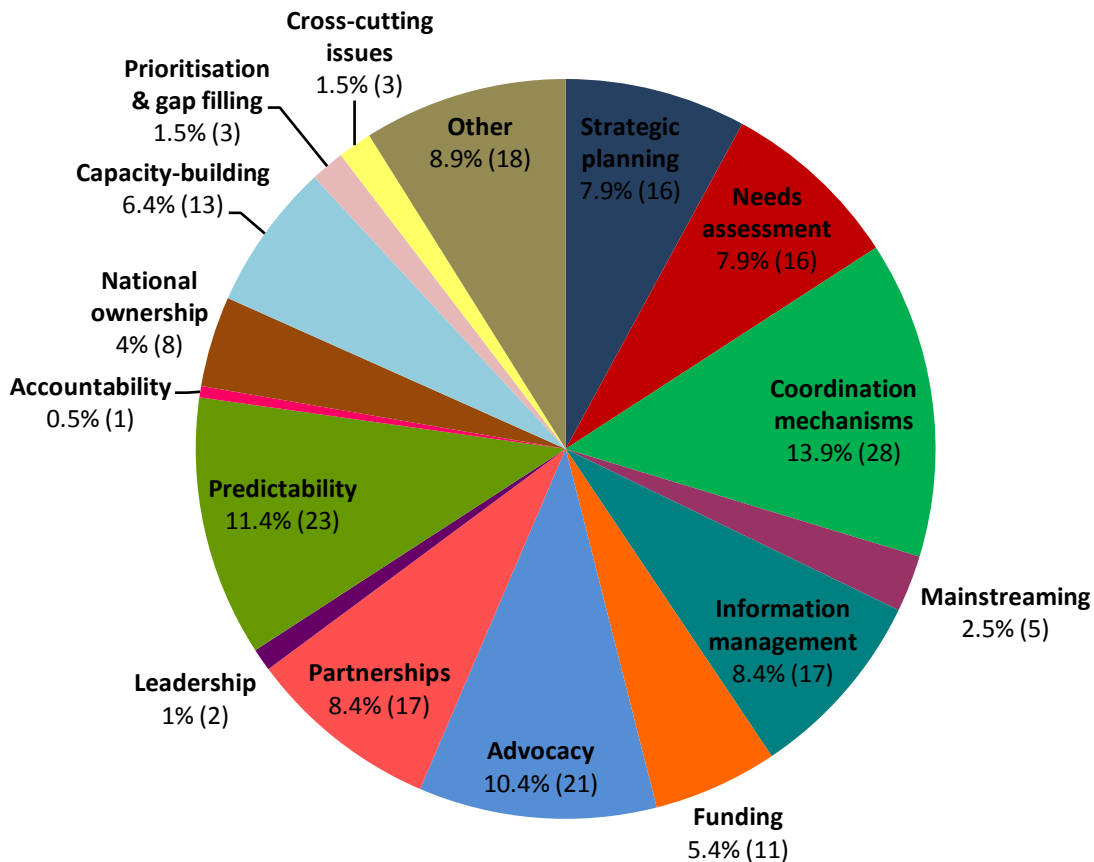
Respondents generally commented on the **natural inclusion of cross-cutting issues** in the work of Early Recovery Clusters/Networks. Gender and disaster risk reduction were the two most cited cross-cutting issues, in addition to environment, HIV/AIDS, human rights, land issues, peace-building and conflict prevention and protection. Bangladesh, Honduras the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Uganda are positive examples given by respondents. A possible explanation for the successful integration of cross-cutting issues in early recovery is the diverse nature of the global CWGER, providing country-level Early Recovery Clusters/Networks with technical support from headquarters across a range of relevant cross-cutting issues.

Part IV. Final comments

Questions 19 and 20 of the online survey posed two open-ended questions, asking respondents to list the three most significant achievements ('best practices') of Early Recovery Clusters/Networks, as well as the three main challenges faced by the Early Recovery Cluster/Network that respondents would like to see addressed in the future. The areas generating most responses are listed below.

Question 19. Achievements

Please list three significant achievements ('best practices') of the Early Recovery Cluster/Network.



Respondents listed what they believed to be the most significant areas of achievement ('best practices') for Early Recovery Clusters/Networks, with the five most cited areas of achievement being coordination, predictability, advocacy, information management, partnerships, strategic planning and needs assessment. Sound bites directly quoted from comments received on these areas of achievement are presented below.

Coordination

- Setting up fora where development and humanitarians work and discuss together
- Cluster strategies that state clearly identifiable relief and early recovery objectives

- Secured transition from humanitarian to development through the reestablishment of UNDP on the ground (joint offices)
- Timely initiation of work (clusters formation and coordination)
- Overall advice and support to the RC in his strategic and coordination functions
- Higher efficiency in aid coordination within UN system and UNDP

Predictability

- Early Recovery Guidelines
- Support to COs in developing national level tools
- Institutionalise within UNDP early recovery policies and tools
- Mobilisation of staff in complex crisis

Advocacy

- Raising the profile of ER globally and at the country level. Whether people like it or not, few can say that they're not aware of ER
- Advocating to the national authorities about the need for early recovery before long term development
- Advocate to the humanitarian community of the need to start early recovery from day one
- Acceptance by the UNCT of early recovery as an integral part post-crisis responses
- Awareness raising over the last three years, with the CWGER appeal as excellent example

Information management

- Professional information sharing / opportunities for members to contribute
- GIS support to Early Recovery
- Mapping/3 W tool
- Information management/sharing and consultation of CWGER members
- Good combination of qualitative and quantitative information

Partnerships

- Bringing actors together who work in the sector
- Partnerships with NGOs
- Revitalization of ER cluster and ER network in the Central African Republic through close coordination with OCHA
- ER strengthening the role of district peace committees and building partnerships with informal structures for peace building
- Having a small but devoted membership base among a few partners

Strategic planning

- ER cluster participated in contingency planning training together
- The elaboration of a multi partners ER mapping of needs, interventions and analysis of ER requirements

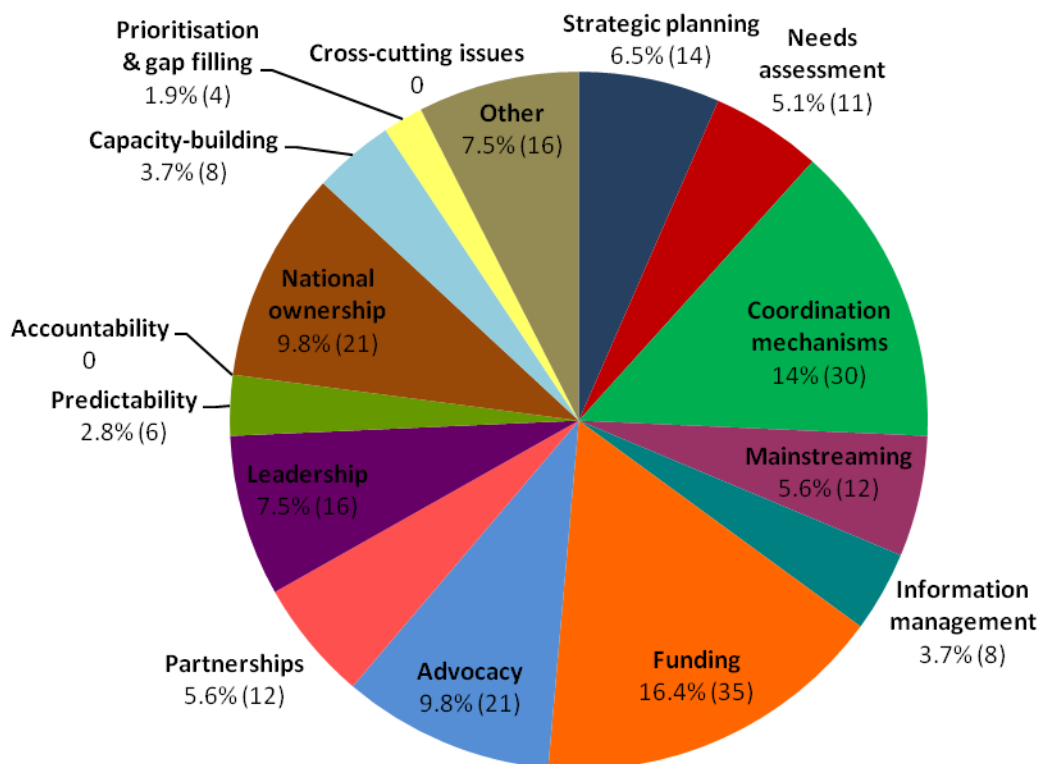
- Successful interventions in a number of post-disaster/conflict scenarios - support to UNCTs and other Cluster groups in ER planning and implementation
- National early recovery strategic plan and actions plan

Needs assessment

- Updated information on return zones and priority needs
- Stronger coordination within UN System in conducting joint need assessments and developing ER Strategic Frameworks
- Facilitation of joint detailed ER needs assessment / progress on linking PDNA with WB DNLA (ECLAC)
- Sectors were able to use information from the CERINA assessment to 'support' or back up already formulated strategies
- Integrated needs assessment with the government as key player influencing strengthening district based coordination

Question 20. Challenges

Please list three main challenges faced by the Early Recovery Cluster/Network that you would like to see addressed in the future.



Respondents listed what they believed to be the main challenges faced by Early Recovery Clusters/Networks, with the five most cited areas of challenges being funding, coordination mechanisms, advocacy, national ownership and leadership. Sound bites directly quoted from comments received on these areas are presented below.

Funding

- Under financing of ER (flexibility of partners/donors)
- Synchronization of recovery funding mechanisms
- Non constructive completion among UN agencies for absorbing more funds from ER strategic frameworks
- Early Recovery financing mechanism (similar to CERF)
- Getting donors on board. Without the funding, all of our efforts will be for nothing
- Lack of speedy resource allocation to ensure ER positioning (bureaucratization of funding mechanics)
- ER proposals and their relevance and ability to attract donor funds

Coordination mechanisms

- Everyone wants coordination but nobody wants to be coordinated
- No clear definition of roles and responsibilities at the level of cluster head
- Sustaining coordination and collaboration with the government and IASC members

- Elaborate policies on UNDP/DOCO role at OCHA phase out
- Improved understanding of inter-agency processes and responsibilities (e.g. coordination and information management) by UNDP field staff
- More strategic and transparent handover/transition, with participation of local/national counterparts

Advocacy

- The sensitivity around early recovery in the country - through advocacy donors and partners can agree on certain forms of recovery initiatives
- Clear understanding of the concept and how different is "early recovery " from "recovery" and how it contributes in post conflict situation as opposed to recovery in post disaster
- Improve country-level sensitization and capacity building for ER
- Lack of initial socialisation of the cluster system means it is widely undervalued and misunderstood

National ownership

- Non existence of a central forum under the government to coordinate all sectors of ER
- Political situation not allowing for ER
- Political will at organizational levels on the need or importance of ER
- Government was not emphasized to take the ownership of the survey at the highest level
- Capacity building of local duty bearers to take over coordination challenges

Leadership

- Clearer, more visible balancing between ER cluster / Network and BCPR/UNDP activities/ responsibilities to avoid misperceptions
- ER cluster coordination mandate of UNDP to be redefined in light of cluster specific coordination roles
- Inter-agency coordination at country level early recovery is multidimensional not UNDP exclusive
- UNDP balance between programmatic and coordination responsibilities as ER cluster lead