



IFRC Recovery programming guidance

2012 – Summary

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 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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1. Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for those who wish to learn about recovery as it is currently understood within the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). The guidance can be used when planning:

- i. early recovery alongside the initial relief response
- ii. recovery programming at the point when communities begin to get back on their feet after disaster and crises
- iii. recovery programming as part of contingency planning and disaster preparedness activities.

This is a summary overview of what is in the IFRC Recovery programming guidance, 2012. It has been designed for use primarily by managers, decision makers and senior practitioners, including National Society and IFRC personnel who may have had limited experience of recovery but who wish to consider this more actively in disaster response. It aims **to promote a common approach to recovery amongst National Societies and IFRC in order to strengthen programme quality in enabling communities to build more resilience as quickly as possible after disasters and crises.** The guidance can be used in conjunction with the IFRC guidelines listed at the end of this summary and in technical manuals that exist elsewhere.

2. What is recovery?

Recovery includes many different terms and is used in different ways. For the purposes of this guidance, the term recovery is used to mean both early recovery and recovery. This is because time frames for different phases of recovery programming are context specific.

Recovery, in the context of disaster response, is a process that results in people's lives returning to normal in a way that they will be more resilient to future disasters. The extent to which people can recover after a disaster depends on the situation beforehand and how robust or resilient their resources are to withstand the effects of the disaster. For some, recovery will be relatively quick; for others it may take years.

Early recovery is the process of people's lives returning to normal in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. It involves providing assistance to people in the earliest stages of a disaster response in conjunction with the provision of relief, improving the effects of the relief and providing the basis for longer-term recovery. It will enable people to participate more readily in longer-term recovery activities.

Individuals, communities and institutions begin to recover immediately after a disaster, relying on their own skills, experience and resources. In contrast, recovery programming is what external agencies do with the aim of supporting people as they recover from disasters. At its best, early recovery and recovery are based on good community-based programming principles and practices that may link to longer-term development.

The following are the key principles or characteristics of recovery programming that need to be considered to improve programming quality and accountability.

Key recovery programming principles

1. Recovery includes many different terms and is used in different ways. The **IFRC recovery programming approach focuses on how things are done rather than on when they are done**. It works in a participative, inclusive and accountable way that does no harm and is timely.
2. Early recovery and recovery programming **borrow ways of working from long-term development** and adapt them to working in a humanitarian context. IFRC policy on integrating relief, rehabilitation and development anticipates that relief activities will 'lay the foundation to rehabilitate livelihoods in such a way that they emerge more resistant to shocks in the future' (2006). Early recovery therefore takes place alongside relief, by applying recovery principles and working methods to ensure the affected communities can participate actively in the recovery process.
3. Recovery programming is founded on **working through the community**. This involves understanding, mapping out and seeking to strengthen community structures prior to, during and at different

stages after the disaster. It also requires working in a participative, inclusive and accountable way with the community as it sets the direction for the nature of the relationship between the National Society, and the broader Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

4. Recovery programming requires a **detailed assessment** at the community level to ensure a good understanding of who is vulnerable and what capacities exist to implement a recovery programme, both in the community and in the IFRC and its member National Societies.
5. The **seven Fundamental Principles** lie at the heart of all the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement does. These are complemented by a number of other strategic issues linked to recovery that guide recovery programming and should be documented in an operational strategy. Choices around these issues will often have to be made early on, making use of situation analysis, even when there may still be limited in-depth understanding of vulnerability in the particular disaster context.
6. There are **nine key strategic issues** that guide recovery programming. These nine approaches are distinct and their consideration must be documented in the operational strategy. They are:
 - i. framing programming within the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement
 - ii. ensuring the programme strengthens resilience
 - iii. building on systematic and ongoing assessment and analysis
 - iv. ensuring integrated or multi-sectoral programming
 - v. considering cross-cutting issues
 - vi. making use of innovative approaches such as cash transfers and market support programming
 - vii. building strong coordination both within and outside the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement
 - viii. securing sufficient and realistic resources
 - ix. building on or contributing to the National Societies' own development.

7. **Strengthening resilience** is a key outcome of recovery programming. This involves building on the community's own recovery efforts. The disaster management cycle calls for an overall longer-term view of disasters so that programming contributes to reducing a community's risk to future disasters and strengthening individual and collective resilience.
8. **Integrated planning** combines different sectors into a common response to help people restore and recover assets and access to services they need to live. The scope of integration can vary depending on the needs, the capacities of the IFRC and its member National Societies and what other assistance is being provided in the community. This is important because it has been shown that disaster-affected populations benefit most from a response that meets the full range of needs that they have.
9. Consideration of **cross-cutting issues** is a key principle of recovery programming because it ensures that all population groups are involved in planning and implementation, that the programme itself does no harm, and that it is accountable and strengthens resilience.
10. Recovery programming lends itself to an increased **use of innovative approaches** to disaster response, so that disaster-affected populations do not become dependent on support from outside the community and that recovery programming is as effective and efficient as possible. There is an increased need for the IFRC and its member National Societies to understand local market dynamics and opt for cash transfers to support market and household level recovery whenever appropriate.
11. Recovery programming offers the opportunity for a **National Society to respond to unmet needs outside its core programme areas as well as needs within their expertise**. There is a range of ways that the National Society can achieve this with support from the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and non-Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners.

12. Recovery programme **targeting refines the geographical areas and specific population groups** that have been identified for relief and early recovery activities. For example, targeting a smaller geographic area and providing a greater range of sector responses to identified needs will often begin a process of household-level targeting. Targeting must be based on detailed assessment results following situation, vulnerability, capacity and needs analysis.
13. There are **three key stages of analysis** involved in recovery assessment and planning:
 - i. situation analysis to guide initial thinking on the response, support decisions on geographical areas to target, the scale and scope of the sectors for the response and potential issues tied to scaling up and scaling down the operation
 - ii. vulnerability, capacity and needs analysis to identify early recovery and recovery needs and the priorities, capacities and wishes of the affected population
 - iii. response options analysis to support necessary decisions about the scale and scope of the recovery programme and to help make realistic strategic choices on where the IFRC adds appropriate and feasible value.
14. Recovery programming has **three main options for transition and exit that must be planned for in the initial programme design stage**:
 - i. retaining a presence in the community (phasing down)
 - ii. passing on relationships and work within the community to another partner either from within or outside the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (phasing over)
 - iii. exiting without sustaining a presence in the community (phasing out).

3. The recovery programming approach and ways of working

Recovery programming builds on people's spontaneous efforts to cope, recover and rebuild after a disaster. The IFRC disaster management cycle clearly illustrates how recovery starts alongside relief and impacts longer-term programming through preparedness and mitigation. All of these share the common goal of reducing risk and strengthening resilience to future disasters. Recovery programming is well-placed to contribute to this goal.

Recovery programming is based on the following specific ways of working:

- **participation** of disaster-affected women, men, girls and boys, who have a right to determine their own future
- **inclusive participation** with equal involvement of members of the community regardless of age, sex, ethnicity, wealth, etc
- **being accountable** to the affected communities, ensuring that affected populations can influence and participate in decision making concerning the operation
- **doing no harm** either socially, economically or environmentally, ensuring that the operation does not make the situation worse for some or all of those affected by the disaster, either directly or indirectly
- **being timely** and starting early to support and complement relief activities whenever possible

Examples of early recovery and recovery programming

Examples of recovery actions taken by individuals and communities on their own in their process of recovery include:

- removing rubble
- repairing latrines
- salvaging crops
- moving animals to higher ground
- providing support to one another in the immediate aftermath of the disaster.

Early recovery includes:

- providing cash for work or tools to support the removal of rubble
- providing tools for crop salvage and basic shelter repairs
- helping to move assets such as animals to safer areas
- providing psychological first aid to community members.

Such assistance supports recovery actions, and builds on what the affected population is already doing. This type of support may prevent actions that put real recovery at risk, such as the selling of assets to create income for basic survival needs.

Examples of relief and early recovery activities that work alongside each other include:

- the provision of an emergency water supply alongside the urgent rehabilitation of ponds for rainwater collection before the next rainy season
- the provision of emergency health services alongside community-based hygiene promotion to prevent an epidemic
- the provision of food alongside the provision of immediate income through cash for work activities, unconditional cash grants, replacement tools or the provision of animal fodder to people who have lost their income
- the combining of needs such as cash for work activities that employ affected community members temporarily to rebuild urgently needed community infrastructure
- the provision of transitional shelter or of conditional cash grants to pay rent or purchase construction materials, which are interim solutions that lead the way to more durable ones.

Examples of early and mid-term recovery support include:

- unconditional cash grants or cash value vouchers to support affected households meet their own diverse essential needs immediately following a rapid-onset disaster
- short-term livelihoods support such as conditional cash grants to enable individuals to get back on their feet economically
- owner-driven housing repair support to those with skills and minor damage
- support accessing health services
- support accessing adequate water and sanitation systems
- psychological support to those ready to move on to the next stage of their recovery.

Examples of longer-term recovery support include:

- livelihoods support that involves training, livelihood services or alternative occupations
- support for rebuilding houses
- preventive community-based health activities
- water and sanitation systems at the community level
- psychological support to those not ready for the next stage of recovery.

The viability and success of each of these examples depends on the capacity of the community to manage and maintain its resources during the recovery process.

Working with communities

The recovery approach stresses the importance of working in a participatory, inclusive and accountable way with the community as it sets the direction for the nature of the relationship between the National Society, the IFRC and the community. Often National Society volunteers live within the affected community and are therefore a part of it. They may themselves have been affected by the disaster and require support or may be available to provide support to the recovery programme.

Some challenges to working in a participatory way with the affected community include:

- identifying who the community is and how to work through its structures
- building trust with the community
- establishing community relationships fast enough to enable early recovery to take place
- avoiding bias by working with members of the community who, even when serving as designated representatives, may reflect only their own perspectives and experience.

The added value of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement

National Societies are rooted in communities and by extension in community-based approaches, which makes them well-placed to design and implement recovery programming. The Red Cross Red Crescent is also well-placed to focus on relief, early recovery and recovery because of its ability to identify which immediate recovery activities people are undertaking on their own following a disaster.

4. Key strategic issues to guide recovery programming

Key strategic issues need to be considered early on in recovery programming and shape approaches to recovery programme implementation. These choices will often be made early on, even when there is only limited understanding of how people are coping with the disaster. Making these choices informs decisions on:

- possible sector interventions based on needs, National Society priorities and capacities to respond
- possible scope of the response for strengthening resilience and responsible exit and transition.
- the geographic areas in which to work and who to target
- possible scale of the response and desired level of community participation
- opportunities for integrated programming and programming partnerships.

There are nine main recovery-related strategic issues that need to be initially considered in order to provide strategic direction to recovery programming:

1. building Red Cross Red Crescent Movement Fundamental Principles into the programme
2. building systematic analysis into the programme throughout the assessment, planning and implementation stages so that the response remains relevant
3. building the strengthening of resilience into the programme so that disaster-affected communities come out of recovery programming being better able to adapt to, withstand and recover from external shocks
4. building sector integration into the programme in a way that addresses recovery needs
5. building an analysis of cross-cutting issues into the programme so that gender, age, disability and the environment are effectively considered

6. building innovative approaches to disaster management into the programme, including market analysis, cash transfers and, where appropriate, unique methods for working in urban settings
7. building stronger coordination into the programme with Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners and external actors
8. building sufficient resources into the programme with a phased planning strategy that expands as human and financial resources become more available
9. building National Society organizational development into the programme so that recovery programming can provide an opportunity for growth.

These issues should be considered and documented in an operational strategy that will need to be developed and updated as new information is gathered from ongoing stakeholder consultations, detailed assessments and analysis in the community. An operational strategy is also a useful tool for coordinating Red Cross Red Crescent Movement recovery plans.

5. Practical application of the recovery approach to the programme cycle

Once key strategic issues have been considered and the operational strategy has been drafted, the recovery approach needs to be integrated into every step of the programme cycle. The table that follows summarizes recovery specific outputs that are linked to the four main steps of the programme cycle.

These programme cycle steps are strengthened by the application of the recovery approach, which places the affected community at the centre of recovery efforts. More information is available in the 'practical application of the recovery approach to the programme cycle' section of this Recovery Guidance.

| Steps in the programme cycle | Recovery specific outputs |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Assessment and analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation analysis (disaster context, local economy and markets, supply and available goods) • Detailed assessment (vulnerability, capacity and recovery needs) • Response options analysis • Targeting approaches (geography, sector, beneficiary) • Accountability, including beneficiary communications | <p>→ Detailed assessment with sector-specific recovery needs, community priorities, National Society capacity, problem analysis and overview of other actor responses.</p> <p>→ Updated operational strategy based on situation analysis and updated with detailed assessment to refine targeting approaches (geography, sector, beneficiary) and programming strategic issues</p> |
| <p>2. Planning and design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting objectives • Mobilizing human and financial resources • Planning for monitoring, evaluation and reporting, and selecting indicators • Developing a transition and exit strategy • Ensuring accountability, including beneficiary communications | <p>→ Programming plan of action (based on situation analysis, detailed assessment & response options analysis)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logical framework • Targeting mechanisms • Activity workplan and timetables • Clear exit and transition strategy with rationale • Stakeholder participation • Programme support plan with support services (security, HR, logistics, IT, communications, fundraising, finance, Movement Coordination) |
| <p>3. Implementation and monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity work plan • Transition and exit management and National Society organizational development • Accountability, including beneficiary communications | <p>→ Programme Planning Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline and monitoring, evaluation and reporting outputs • Activity timetables detailing monthly outputs • National Society organizational development plan • Mid-term review to make needed programme adaptations |
| <p>4. Evaluation</p> | <p>→ Community Participation with lessons for current and future programming, improvements and strengthened resilience</p> |

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Technical sector-specific guides

- Community-based Psychosocial Support: Trainer's book, 2009, IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support, <http://w3.ifrc.org/what/health/psycholog/manual.asp>
- Epidemic Control for Volunteers; a Training Manual, 2008, IFRC, <http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/Health/epidemic-control-en.pdf>
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External

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- Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis Toolkit (EMMA), <http://emma-toolkit.org/>

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- The IASC Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crisis, http://assessments.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/assessments.humanitarianresponse.info/files/ops_guidance_finalversion2012.pdf

Platforms and networks

- Cash and Learning Partnership (CaLP), <http://www.cashlearning.org>
- International Recovery Platform (IRP), <http://www.recoveryplatform.org>
- Interagency Standing Committee Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER), <http://onerresponse.info/GlobalClusters/Early%20Recovery/Pages/default.aspx>
<http://er.humanitarianresponse.info/>
- Interagency Standing Committee Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPPS) in Emergency Settings, <http://www.humanitarian-info.org/iasc/pageloader.aspx?page=content-products-products&productcatid=22>
- Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards, <http://www.livestock-emergency.net>
- Minimum Economic Recovery Standards, Small Enterprise Education and Promotion Network, <http://www.seepnetwork.org/minimum-economic-recovery-standards-resources-174.php>
- One Response website, <http://onerresponse.info/GLOBALCLUSTERS/EARLY%20RECOVERY/Pages/default.aspx>
- The Sphere Project, <http://www.sphereproject.org>

Key definitions

‘Community’ is not easy to define. Typically, it is understood to be a complex mix of allegiances, relationships and social structures. Members of a community may be very different from one another and may have very different life experiences. Communities can be described as differing groups that are united by a common factor such as their geographical location, religion, livelihood, a certain vulnerability or capacity. After a disaster a community may change; people may move, groups may form and re-form, tensions may increase or decrease. Community members will experience the impact of the disaster in various ways because their vulnerabilities as a result of the disaster are different just as their vulnerabilities before the disaster were different.

Early recovery is the process of people's lives returning to normal in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. It involves providing assistance to people in the earliest stages of disaster response, alongside the provision of relief, improving the effects of the relief and providing the basis for longer-term recovery. It will enable people to participate more readily in longer-term recovery activities.

Recovery, in the context of disaster response, is a process that results in people's lives returning to normal in a way that they will be more resilient to future disasters. The extent to which people can recover after a disaster depends on the situation beforehand and how robust or resilient their resources are to withstand the effects of the disaster. For some, recovery will be relatively quick, while for others it may take years.

Recovery programming builds on the affected people's immediate efforts to cope, recover and rebuild. It starts early, alongside relief, seeking to assist people at the peak of the crisis and continues into the mid-term to build greater resilience. Recovery programming includes well-linked actions to protect and restore livelihoods, enhance food security and a wide range of other actions such as community and public health, temporary and longer-term shelter provision, protection and psychosocial support. These activities are undertaken in a way that reduces dependency, mitigates conflict and works towards meeting longer-term risk reduction objectives. (The Red Cross Red Crescent Approach to Disaster Management, Position Paper, IFRC 2011).

Rehabilitation and reconstruction are activities involving the repair and rebuilding of assets. Assets include physical infrastructure such as roads, transport services, utility supplies, public buildings, markets, and housing. These activities may involve minor repairs, infrastructure restoration or major rebuilding and may be undertaken by individuals (repairing their own properties) or by others such as contractors or locally trained artisans.

Resilience is the ability of individuals, communities, organizations, or countries exposed to disasters and crises and underlying vulnerabilities to anticipate, reduce the impact of, cope with and recover from the effects of adversity without compromising their long-term prospects. (Road to Resilience, Discussion Paper, IFRC 2012).

The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Humanity The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary service It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

For further information, please contact:

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