

6. Establishment of the International Recovery Platform (IRP) and its activities

6-1. The Establishment of the IRP and its Background

While UN system capacities for disaster response and humanitarian assistance are widely recognized as well developed, there is currently a vacuum in terms of capacities and accepted system wide mechanisms for post-disaster recovery, particularly those with a risk reduction focus.

Experience increasingly affirms that the post-disaster recovery phase provide a critical opportunity to shift the focus from saving lives to restoring livelihoods, and a time to introduce measures to reduce future disaster risk. Recovery can help close the gap between relief and development and transform disasters into opportunities for sustainable development. This occurs when efforts are made to support local and national recovery processes at an early stage, when risk reduction considerations are factored into all recovery activities, and when the synergies between development, humanitarian and other actors involved in the response phases are properly channelled. A successful recovery effort, then, is predicated on having advance agreements and mechanisms in place so the recovery process is effectively conceived and managed, and is initiated in a timely manner. This includes such measures as appropriate assessment methodologies, pre-established resource mobilization mechanisms, surge capacity to support UN Country Teams and standing co-ordination mechanisms.

Shared concerns related to the UN approach and processes for post-disaster recovery have resulted in the formulation of a joint initiative, the International Recovery Platform by the UN System, ADRC and partners, with the encouragement and support of Japan and other donors, and key programme countries. This initiative was discussed during the WCDR under the thematic session, 4.9 on Post Disaster Recovery. Representatives from UNDP, UN-HABITAT, ADRC, ADPC, ILO, and other concerned UN agencies expressed their respective agency commitment and support to the proposed international platform for recovery. The meeting recommended the International recovery platform

- as a means for international collaboration and cooperation in recovery
- to ensure coordination and assessments of recovery work
- to promote capacity-building activities, including training, within UN agencies, country teams and governments
- establishment of database for good practices on recovery and reconstruction,

Only 4 months after the WCDR, the International Seminar on Post Disaster Recovery, in support of the IRP, was held at the JICA centre in Kobe and the Hyogo House, Japan between May 11 - 13, 2005, and the International Recovery Platform (IRP) has been officially launched in Kobe..

6-2. The Governance Structure of IRP

For an realization of the Hyogo Frame for Action, IRP focuses on the following three functions as priority activities in the initial two years: Knowledge Management and Advocacy; Training and Capacity Building and Enhancing Recovery Operations. These functions will be operated inter linking with IRP partners in Kobe-Hyogo, Geneva and Turin.

- O The Knowledge Management and Advocacy component will be led by the UN-ISDR (Geneva) and ADRC (Kobe). The IRP office in Kobe, Hyogo (hereinafter IRP Kobe) was established during the meeting by the support of Government of Japan and Hyogo Prefectural Government. With close relationship to ADRC.
- O The Training and Capacity Building Component will be led by ILO. GDLN /WB and the DMTP are partners in the design and implementation of the action plan.
- O The Enhancement of Recovery Operations will be led by UNDP and will focus in the first 2 years on the development of a joint assessment methodology and on surge capacity..

UNDP also has the overall lead agency co-ordination responsibility for the IRP. This will involve co-ordination of relevant agencies in the production of outputs of the workplans.

IRP Kobe bears the IRP Secretariat function, located on the 5th floor of the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution (DRI) Building. It has a Programme Advisor from UNDP, a Programme Analyst from UNDP/ISDR, a Recovery Expert from ADRC, a researcher and assistant staff from ADRC. IRP Kobe is responsible for the secretariat of the IRP Steering Committee, which was held twice in 2006 in Tokyo and Turin. The Chairperson of the IRP SC is from UNDP (Mr. Andrew Maskrey) and the Vice Chairperson is from the Cabinet Office of Japan (Mr. Satoru Nishikawa) with the duration of 1 year.

6-3. Activities of IRP in 2006

6-3-1. The 3rd Public Symposium on Post Disaster Recovery - Progress towards Hyogo Framework for Action -

On the occasion of the 1st anniversary of its establishment, a Public Symposium on Post Disaster Recovery will be held. The Symposium introduced the IRP activities carried out, and discuss the IRP towards the implementation of HFA.

- O Date: May 30, 2006, 13:30 - 16:30
- O Venue: Lasse Hall (4-10-8 Nakayamate-dori Chuo-ku, Kobe, Japan)
- O Organizers: IRP Secretariat, Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC),
Cabinet Office of Japan, Hyogo Prefectural Government
- O In cooperation with: Disaster Reduction Alliance (DRA)

Programme and Summary:

- (1) **Opening** Mr. Tomio Saito, Vice Governor, Hyogo Prefectural Government, Japan
Mr. Fumio Takeda, Deputy Director General for Disaster Management, Cabinet Office of Japan

Mr. Salvano Briceno, Director, United Nations Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR)

- (2) **Keynote** Speech Mr. Andrew Maskrey, Chief, Disaster Reduction Unit, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) , UNDP

Mr. Andrew Maskrey highlighted the existence of Risk accumulation in disaster-prone countries, through building techniques, building areas, inappropriate agriculture practice, etc. He stated that facing the reality of risk, there is a need to transform the way to do Development. In his opinion, in case disaster strikes, if people are not prepared to conduct Development that targets the reduction of risk, the same risk accumulation before disaster will be reproduced.

Mr. Andrew Maskrey reminded that to understand IRP, there is a need to understand Recovery which has to be the process of transformation of risk and not simply a physical rebuilding or simply humanitarian assistance. He suggested that IRP's role is to find and generate the imperative to transform risks and recovery.

Finally, Mr. Andrew Maskrey reminded the keys and interconnected tasks to achieve, including the need to spread knowledge on the standing of what recovery is, the need to teach recovery to all levels, and finally the transformation itself based on a coherent set of global international tool.

(3) Presentations

- 1) Book Project for Recovery Support: Mr. Soheli Khan, Programme Analyst, IRP Kobe
- 2) Early Recovery Activities in the Philippines and Pakistan:

Mr. Puji Pujiono, Regional Disaster Response Advisor, UN/OCHA Kobe
<pre-recorded video>

Mr. Masahiko Murata, Recovery Expert, IRP Kobe

- 3) Capacity Building and Training:

Mr. Alfredo Lazarte Hoyle, Director, InFocus Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction, International Labour Organization (ILO)