

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

7-1 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 channeled. 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 establishment of International Recovery Platform (IRP)

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, IRP has been officially launched in Kobe.