Post Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment  
(PDNA)  
Methodology and Tool Kit  

Project Outline  

**Goal:** Rapid and sustainable post-disaster recovery in the physical, social, economic and institutional domains as an opportunity to reduce future risks.  

**Objective:** Design and mainstream practical guidelines and tools for assessing damages and needs and planning recovery in post-disaster situations.  

1. Background  

The manifestations of increasing disaster risk negatively affect lives and livelihoods and erode development gains, particularly in high risk developing countries. While efforts are being made to introduce pro-active risk management measures into development planning and practice, experience shows that the post disaster recovery phase remains the critical window of opportunity for re-orienting development in a way that leads to a sustainable reduction of future risk. Post-disaster recovery normally begins in the emergency phase - often in a matter of days after a rapid onset disaster - with the initial restoration of basic services, shelter and governance structures, the reopening of markets and commerce and the start-up of livelihood activities. Recovery, however, may then unfold over years and even decades, as local recovery efforts are complemented by the reconstruction of major infrastructure and strategic economic sectors.  

The international community has developed well-known and accepted procedures and mechanisms to support national governments in risk prone countries, both in the provision of immediate life-saving humanitarian assistance (under the coordination of OCHA) and in the provision of major loan financing for the reconstruction of infrastructure and strategic economic sectors and to cover budget deficits (through the international financial institutions such as the World Bank and regional development banks). UNDP, ILO, FAO Habitat and others, NGOs and national governments have been developing programmes to support recovery but so far, these experiences have not been systematized as a system-wide methodology or guidelines to support the recovery of the local economies and their urban centres. Nor have capacities been developed in high risk countries, in the UN system or amongst a cadre of experts to apply such a methodology in practice.  

In the absence of clearly structured and coordinated technical and financial support from both national governments and the international community, affected populations do their best in coping on their own often aggravating the conditions of risk that generated the disaster in the first place.
2. Post Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment

In view of the above, the International Recovery Platform (IRP) has identified a need to develop a technical sound common methodology to assess damages and post disaster recovery needs in a way that can provide a framework for the planning of coordinated recovery efforts across different sectors (shelter, livelihoods, governance, environment, etc.) with a risk reduction focus.

Likewise, the IASC Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER) has identified the need to develop a post-disaster recovery needs assessment methodology as a key priority. The development of Post Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment (PDNA) methodology, guidelines and toolkit therefore responds to the work-plans of both the IRP and the CWGER.

The PDNA will comprise two different but closely inter-related products that will attempt to fill the gap as described above:

- A set of methodologies and guidelines accurately and reliably assessing disaster-related physical damages and economic losses, identifying and defining early recovery needs on the basis of those damage and loss patterns and for planning early recovery activities on the basis of the needs identified. The guidelines will also address medium and longer term recovery needs and planning including a risk reduction strategy.

- A set of tools to underpin the methodologies and guidelines described above, capable of analyzing and displaying data on physical damages and economic losses with a national level of observation and local level of resolution in the temporal, spatial and semantic domains.

Graph: PDNA, connecting emergency response with longer-term reconstruction and development

![Graph: PDNA, connecting emergency response with longer-term reconstruction and development](image-url)
The primary purpose of the PDNA is to provide all actors in the recovery process, including national and local authorities, international agencies and local communities, with a multi-sectoral, technical overview of the damage and loss patterns and the principal rehabilitation and reconstruction needs and priorities to be addressed during post disaster recovery. Thus, the PDNA will:

- serve as a planning and coordination framework for a multi-stakeholder, mutually agreed recovery strategy, owned by the government and supported by the international community;
- identify prioritized benchmarks, outcomes and desired results as early efforts are made to repair and restore social, physical, institutional and economic systems;
- inform and guide the decision-making process within the donor community with regard to commitments and pledges for recovery, from initial contributions during the humanitarian phase, through to contributions channeled through reconstruction conferences, consultative groups and other resource mobilization mechanisms; and,
- provide the foundation for the formulation of early recovery programmes in each sector and geographic area, identifying opportunities for risk reduction.

3. Implementation

UNDP, as part of its commitment to the International Recovery Platform and in its capacity as Cluster Lead for Early Recovery, will provide overall project supervision and coordination of a broad and inclusive process in the development of the PDNA.

As a first step, an agreement has been entered into with the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC) as the implementing agency for this work, in view of its long experience in disaster evaluation, reflected *inter alia* in the existing ECLAC damage and loss methodology (DALA) for sectoral analysis of damages and losses in a disaster-hit economy.

To ensure that full account is taken of existing disaster recovery methodologies and experience, two *ad-hoc* committees will advise and provide input to the process.

A Technical Oversight Committee (TOC); will contribute to and oversee the implementation of the PDNA. This committee will: (i) review and verify the results of the work; (ii) ensure technical level participation by the relevant agencies; and, (iii) provide a forum to address different issues associated with the development of the methodologies and guidelines. In particular, the TOC will advise the implementing partner with respect to the requirements of specific sector based assessment
methodologies, as the PDNA will act as an umbrella under which specific sector and locality based assessments are carried out and therefore needs to be based on a clear understanding of such methodologies.

A High Level Committee (HLC); will provide political impetus and strategic direction in the PDNA process. This committee will ensure that the PDNA becomes an internationally accepted methodology for assessing recovery needs and for planning recovery activities with the highest possible level promotion by the agencies involved and approval by inter-agency mechanisms such as the IASC and UNDG.

4. Timeframe

The development of the PDNA methodology and toolkit will take place in two phases: (i) a six month pilot phase, starting November 2006, covering an analysis of past experiences and lessons learned, a first draft of PDNA methodology and guidelines, and an initial set of PDNA tools; and, (ii) a two years implementation phase, in which the methodology, guidelines and toolkit will be fully developed on the basis of capacity building, training and mainstreaming activities carried out in risk prone regions.

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