

Transition of GCER and early recovery clusters/sectors
GCCG meeting – 12 July 2018

Main findings as presented:

- Despite the best efforts of the GCER, the concept of Early Recovery and the legitimacy of a dedicated Early Recovery Cluster have not taken hold.
- The horizontal strategic functions of the Early Recovery Advisor were more effective than the vertical functions of the country level Early Recovery Cluster coordination.
- In crisis contexts, the Early Recovery Cluster is a low priority, but Early Recovery work seems to receive appropriate support from other clusters and UNDP's regular programming.
- Early Recovery Clusters (and Early Recovery Advisors) are better suited to sudden onset disasters than to conflict settings, especially when the conflicts are protracted. New models of coordination are emerging in some protracted conflict settings, including area-based planning.
- GCER is not the platform from which UNDP should engage in the Humanitarian Development (Peacebuilding) Nexus.
- UNDP is well-placed to serve as a bridge between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding action.

Main recommendations as presented:

To UNDP as CLA:

- Request the IASC Principals to: a) create a successor body to the GCER, attached to the IASC, that would provide support for the strategic integration of ER into the entire humanitarian response, through the deployment of ER Advisors to support HCs and HCTs, when required, and particularly in sudden-onset crises; b) make appropriate transition arrangements regarding the transfer of knowledge, tools, activities and resources at global and country levels, such that the essential and valued elements of GCER work are carried forward by the successor mechanism and by other clusters; and c) close country-level ER clusters in orderly fashion by the end of 2018.
- Continue to support the GCER at global and country levels, until such time as the IASC has made decisions regarding these recommendations and, thereafter, close the GCER.
- UNDP should retain its membership in the IASC, including the Emergency Directors' Group, retain its membership of country-level HCTs, continue to advocate for ER in the humanitarian area and continue to deliver ER programming both inside and outside the humanitarian appeals.

To the IASC Principals

- Reiterate the importance of ER in humanitarian response and the core of the Principals 2013 guidance on the mainstreaming of ER.
- Sharpen the accountability of HCs for mainstreaming ER into the entire humanitarian response and for ER results.
- Create a successor body to the GCER, attached to the IASC, that would provide support for the strategic integration of ER into the entire humanitarian response, through the deployment of ER Advisors to support HCs and HCTs, when required, and particularly in sudden-onset crises.
- As soon as the successor body is established, hand over the GCER's knowledge, tools, activities and resources to it. Until that date, the GCER shall continue to manage: a) its global tools (including guidance, training and online resources); b) deployment of ERAs to sudden onset crises; and c) support for country-level ER clusters during their orderly transition and closure. Close the GCER when the handover is complete.

Main takeaways:

- Regarding **the timeline of the approval process**, it was clarified that UNDP as CLA is developing a management response plan to respond to the recommendations of the evaluation for the UNDP Administrator to review and endorse. After the UNDP Administrator's approval, he will present the recommendations along with the GCER transition plan to the IASC Principals for their endorsement either at the next IASC Principals meeting scheduled at the end of November or earlier on seeking their electronic approval.

- In relation **to the implementation of the country cluster transition plans and their timelines vis-à-vis the IASC Principals' approval**, it was underscored the GCER has already informally engaged with its cluster coordinators to kick-start the work on the transition plan which is in any event a requirement for all clusters. GCCG stressed the need for the UNDP Administrator to engage with the IASC Principals before November to increase synchronization with the next HRP cycle.
- With regards to an orderly **transition of ER country level clusters**, it was clarified that this transition process focuses on two main elements: 1) the handover of the ER coordination at country-level from the ER cluster to other clusters; and 2) the handover of the coordination of ER projects from the ER cluster to other clusters based on the global arrangements as agreed upon by the Global Cluster Coordinators. It was further noted that the transition at country level will not have an impact on agency annual budget reporting nor on the projects in OPS. It is essential to bear in mind that the aim is to ensure that Early Recovery continues to be integrated into any humanitarian response. It was also noted that country support missions will be carried out where necessary to ensure a consultative process among partners, clusters and CLAs at country level.
- When it comes to the **ER clusters/sectors to transition**, the GCER clarified that the ER Cluster Evaluation considers the shift from clusters to sectors observed over time. By sector, the ER Cluster Evaluation refers to those country-level mechanisms that are more contextually variable and are led or co-led by government agencies in HRP countries. Often, the presence of humanitarian sectors is the result of strong government systems that do not warrant a parallel architecture. In this regard, the Food Security Cluster highlighted the need to ensure also the transition of these sectors. OCHA in turn underscored that a different level of political engagement with host governments would be required to set in motion this process. The GCER also added that the decision to close government-led sectors lies on leadership on the ground. Therefore, a different set of considerations will be needed to move forward with this proposal.
- The evaluation report recommends that **a successor body to the GCER** such as an inter-agency mechanism along the lines of the PROCAP/GENCAP initiative be created to provide support for the strategic integration of ER into the entire humanitarian response, through the deployment of ER Advisors to support HCs/HCTs, when required, and particularly in sudden onset crises.
- Regarding the **transfer of responsibilities from the GCER to other global clusters**, it was noted that the proposed global arrangements by the GCCs will have to be presented and endorsed by the IASC Principals as part of GCER transition plan. The GCCs discussed and agreed on the following:
 - A) Livelihoods:** anything related to the entire food chain (agricultural livelihoods) will be taken over by the Global Food Security Cluster. It would be important to have a meeting between Livelihoods experts from FAO, WFP, and UNDP to define the scope of the non-agricultural livelihood interventions and to work on a mapping of ongoing coordination of non-agricultural livelihood activities at country level.
 - B) Mine action:** all mine action projects, including demining and mine risk education, will be handed over to the Mine Action AOR of the Global Protection Cluster.
 - C) Waste management, debris removal, emergency employment** (cash for work) interventions will be handed over and coordinated by the Shelter Cluster. Prior to any handover, there is the need to assess the capacity of absorption of the Shelter Cluster and to ensure the right level of available expertise, including through UNDP engagement in the Shelter cluster and the deployment of experts from Stand-by-Partners, such as MSB. It was also noted that waste management interventions are often coordinated by the WASH cluster. Therefore, some follow-up conversations should be held with WASH, Shelter and other relevant clusters.

Proposed recommendations moving forward:

- Based on the global arrangements, consider developing a tip sheet for field operations on the handover of the ER projects to other clusters.
- Consider the deployment of an information management capacity to ensure that early recovery is captured and is part of the joint needs and response analysis.
- Develop an official note clarifying the ER Cluster transition process to all clusters at country level.
- Consider ways and means to engage with donors ahead of the next HRP cycle to ensure clarity on the way forward and related funding allocations for early recovery.

Follow-up actions:

- GCER to share with the GCCs the list of crises where the GCER is planning to facilitate the transition of activated clusters/sectors.
- GCER to share the outline of the transition plan with the GCCs
- GCCG to discuss at the GCCG meeting in August how ER will be represented once the GCER has transitioned.