

Managing the Transition: Supporting Early Recovery and Linking Relief to Development

Fred Tabung*

Abstract:

The concept of a chronological continuum that hitherto defined the sequence of the different types of international engagement (including relief, recovery, security, reconstruction, and development) in environments affected by crises has not been an effective tool in linking relief to development - because it assumed that crises are discrete events, or breaks in the normal development process - thus leaving the problems of the humanitarian-development gap unaddressed.¹ Attempts to fill this gap have re-emerged with the concept of early recovery. The dynamics of crises situations are non-linear, as states or particular territories can move in and out of crisis, with no clear dividing line between crisis and post-crisis. Different forms of engagement may be utilized simultaneously when dealing with complex protracted crises.

This thematic brief presents the main challenges in early recovery efforts as international aid actors try to link relief to development. The brief begins with a general discussion of early recovery that examines the main background concepts of early recovery, the importance that international aid actors place on early recovery as an approach to linking relief to development, and the related challenges. The brief then presents a case study of early recovery on Somalia.

Fred Tabung is currently a doctoral student at the Arnold School of Public Health at the University of South Carolina. He has over eight years experience working in clinical and public health and development projects. For the past two years He has worked in Somalia on the Somalia Community Driven Recovery and Development (CDRD). He has worked in collaboration with a variety of UN organizations as well as international NGOs and several donor agencies and is the recipient of many academic awards including the highly competitive Fulbright Foreign Student Program award for an MSPH in Epidemiology. Fred Tabung's published works include, Empowering Somali Communities to Freely Decide on the Planning and Implementation of their Development Projects, results story published by the Africa Communities of Practice for Managing for Development Results (AfCoP-MfDR) in May 2011.

Table of contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Introduction | 2 |
| 2. Early recovery as an approach to linking relief to development..... | 4 |
| 3. Linking relief to development in Somalia: A case study | 7 |
| 3.1. The socio-political context in which aid activities are carried out in Somalia | 7 |
| 3.2. Coordination | 9 |
| 3.3. National and local ownership and participation | 10 |
| 3.4. Funding | 12 |
| 4. Conclusion..... | 13 |
| 5. References..... | 15 |

List of Boxes

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Box 2.1: Commonly cited definitions of early recovery | 6 |
| Box 3.1.1 Challenges of operating in South Somalia..... | 8 |
| Box 3.1.2 More stability in Somaliland and Puntland | 9 |
| Box 3.2.1 The early recovery phase for Somalia is defined as | 9 |
| Box 3.3.1: The outcome of the participatory approach to early recovery and reconstruction | 12 |

1. Introduction

The concept of a chronological continuum that hitherto defined the sequence of the different types of international engagement (including relief, recovery, security, reconstruction, and development) in environments affected by crises has not been an effective tool in linking relief to development - because it assumed that crises are discrete events, or breaks in the normal development process - thus leaving the problems of the humanitarian-development gap unaddressed.¹ Attempts to fill this gap have re-emerged with the concept of early recovery. The dynamics of crises situations are non-linear, as states or particular territories can move in and out of crisis, with no clear dividing line between crisis and post-crisis. Different forms of engagement may be utilized simultaneously when dealing with complex protracted crises.

This thematic brief presents the main challenges in early recovery efforts as international aid actors try to link relief to development. The brief begins with a general discussion of early recovery that examines the main background concepts of early recovery, the importance that international aid actors place on early recovery as an approach to linking relief to development, and the related challenges. The brief then presents a case study of early recovery on Somalia.

Somalia presents a unique choice for a case study because of the nature of its complex emergency, in which different parts of the country exist in various phases of the transition, partly due to the capacities and ideologies of the respective independent or semi-autonomous de facto governments in various regions of Somalia and partly due to natural catastrophes, such as severe drought and floods. To place the discussion in context, the case study begins with a brief description of the prevailing socio-political situation in Somalia. Challenges identified in section 2 provide the basis for the analysis of early recovery efforts in Somalia. The briefing note concludes with suggestions for a way forward.

The briefing note is based on a review of the available published literature and on the author's experiences in Somalia as a senior development worker. A list of the literature consulted is available at the end of the briefing note. Due to space constraints the briefing note is a short, analytical piece and does not intend to provide an exhaustive coverage of all the issues pertaining to early recovery.

¹ Working effectively in Conflict-Affected and fragile Situations A DFID Practice paper, 2010

2. Early recovery as an approach to linking relief to development

The issue of linking relief to development has preoccupied the international community for some time. In 2005, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly and the UN Security Council requested the Secretary-General to report on the issue of transition from relief to development, with the aim of improving the international community's efforts to better respond to transition situations.² The Secretary-General's report identified three main challenges — national ownership, coordination, and financing — in linking relief to development. In the same year, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) created a Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER) against the general backdrop of the humanitarian reform process. The main objective of the CWGER is to strengthen the coordination of humanitarian relief and early recovery efforts and cover critical gaps.³ The CWGER is composed of 26 UN and non-UN active global partners from the humanitarian and development communities, with UNDP as the designated cluster lead.

In 2008, the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/DAC) guided specific discussions on the effectiveness of aid in situations of fragility and conflict. The discussions include the Kinshasa Round Table 7 of the High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (July 2008), which adopted the “Kinshasa Statement;” and the 3rd High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra (September 2008), which adopted the “Accra Agenda for Action.” These discussions have led to the decision to establish a specific DAC Financing Working Group on ‘Improving Delivery of International Assistance in Situations of Fragility and Conflict.’ This can be seen as both one of the triggers and a consequence of important events/processes that are going to impact the way early recovery and recovery programs are designed and implemented.⁴ At the end of 2011, OECD/DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness again guided discussions at the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, Korea. The Busan forum followed meetings in Rome (2003), Paris (2005) and Accra (2008). The Forum culminated in the signing of the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation by ministers of developed and developing nations, emerging economies, providers of South-South and triangular co-operation and civil society, marking a critical turning point in development co-operation.⁵

The Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP), which is the primary fundraising tool for humanitarian emergencies in the UN system, recognized the potential of early recovery programming in bringing

² The transition from Relief to Development: report of the Secretary General, 2005.

³ Fast Facts: UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, 2008

⁴ Inter Agency Standing Committee 72nd Working Group Meeting: Early Recovery and Recovery in Transition Situations; November 2008

⁵ Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness: Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation; Nov 29- Dec 1, 2011, Busan, Republic of Korea.

crises to an eventual close. The 2012 CAP guidelines indicate that early recovery programming is often under-emphasized in CAPs.⁶ The same guidelines emphasize the identification and mainstreaming of early recovery support opportunities — and related needs and projects — within each CAP cluster as appropriate, in line with the responsibility placed upon all clusters by the IASC Working Group. Specific early recovery response plans will incorporate early recovery areas of intervention that would fall outside the clusters' scope of response, or could not be effectively mainstreamed (e.g., governance, rule of law, non-agricultural livelihoods, land and property, reintegration, basic and community infrastructure, etc.) In other words, there may be no need to present a separate “early recovery” sector response plan, as each cluster would be pursuing early recovery within its scope.

In order to break the cycle of Somalia's dependence on humanitarian assistance and to take a more coordinated approach to supporting post-crisis planning for recovery, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (UNOCHA) in 2006 reached a broad consensus to make early recovery one of the two main pillars in the Somalia 2007 CAP.⁷ This approach sought to; address the underlying causes of dependence, increase the resilience and coping capacities of communities, and to establish platforms for stabilization and sustainable capacity development. The approach could lay also, the foundation for the successful implementation of the Somali Reconstruction and Development Program.⁸

Despite the long period of the debate on early recovery, there is still considerable confusion about what early recovery entails. There are two commonly used definitions of early recovery (see box 2.1 below) that vary considerably in scope. The IASC definition⁹ focuses on the complementarity between humanitarian and development approaches, while the other definition, emphasized in a report by the New York University Center on International Cooperation (CIC),¹⁰ presents a broader scope for early recovery. The CIC report equally identified three major challenges or gaps – strategy, capacity, and funding - in implementing early recovery responses. In many ways, these gaps are related to the challenges identified by the Secretary-General's report.

⁶ Donors often find it difficult to fund within the confines of their regulations for use of humanitarian funds, even though failing to do so may necessitate greater or more prolonged funding for direct relief.

⁷ Source: The October 2006 CWGER Information Update

⁸ In 2005, the Transitional Federal Government and the international community asked the UN and the World Bank to co-lead for Somalia a post conflict needs assessment, which in this instance, named the Somali Joint Needs Assessment (JNA). The main objective of the JNA process was to assess needs and develop a prioritized set of reconstruction and development initiatives to support Somali-led efforts to deepen peace and reduce poverty. The Somali Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) is the resultant document coming out of the JNA process.

⁹ UNDP Policy on Early Recovery, 2008; CWGER Guidance Note on Early Recovery, 2008

¹⁰ Recovering from War: Gaps in Early Action; a report by the NYU Center on International Cooperation for the UK Department for International Development (DFID), 2008.

Box 2.1: Commonly used definitions of early recovery

Early recovery as defined by the IASC: “Early recovery is a multidimensional process of recovery that begins in a humanitarian setting. It is guided by development principles that seek to build on humanitarian programs and to catalyze sustainable development opportunities. It aims to generate self sustaining, nationally owned, resilient processes for post-crisis recovery. It encompasses the restoration of basic services, livelihoods, shelter, governance, security and rule of law, environment and social dimensions including the reintegration of displaced populations.”

Early recovery as described by CIC: The report describes early recovery as “early efforts to secure stability; establish peace; resuscitate markets, livelihoods and services and the state capacity to foster them; and build core state capacity to manage political, security and development processes.”

Responding to crisis situations and promoting recovery involves a web of actors, objectives, and tools that cannot be separated into neat categories. Consider, for example, a series of aid activities that leads to the provision of emergency shelter kits to a community and assistance to repair the damaged roof of a school that now acts simultaneously as an evacuation centre and a school. Blue plastic was adequate for the first few days, but a timber-framed, corrugated-iron clad roof was soon installed. There were future plans for more secure wind- and weather-proof roofing. Is this relief, early recovery, or rehabilitation? There is no straight forward answer to this question. One might argue that the blue plastic is relief, the corrugated iron is early recovery, and the typhoon-proof roof is long-term recovery or rehabilitation. However, these activities would mean different things depending on whether the implementer is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) or government authorities, and whether the activities are targeted at an area in response to a specific need or because doing so might build confidence in the local government.

Despite the difficulty in clearly defining early recovery and its constituent activities, there is clarity in the basic aims of early recovery, including ending conflict (stabilization), institutionalizing peace (peace-building), and enhancing state capacity and legitimacy (state-building).¹¹ A well-managed transition often involves the simultaneous delivery of humanitarian assistance and fast-tracked recovery programs as national authorities develop the capacity to provide leadership that consolidates peace dividends and helps to reduce vulnerability long-term reliance on relief, thus laying the foundations for sustainable development.

¹¹ Sarah Bailey et al. Early Recovery: An overview of Policy Debates and Operational Challenges, 2009.

The rest of this briefing note examines the implementation of early recovery in Somalia. The discussion unfolds in the context of the prevailing socio-political situation in the country, and is centered on some of the current dilemmas, including national ownership and participation, coordination, and funding.

3. Linking relief to development in Somalia: A case study

3.1. The socio-political context in which aid activities are carried out in Somalia

Somalia is a highly challenging environment for development practitioners. The causes of conflict in Somalia's twenty years of war are deep and complex. Although Somalia has known periods of stability and security in recent decades, and large parts of the country remain relatively free of violence, multiple levels of armed conflict and insecurity exist. These levels include localized communal clashes over resources, political conflicts over control of the state, and regional proxy wars. These conflicts not only cause instability in Somalia but also threaten security in the region and more broadly.

Years of conflict and the absence of a functioning central government in Somalia have led to serious security concerns - including large-scale displacement, lack of livelihood opportunities, and few essential services - for much of the population. Severe drought followed by overwhelming flooding has compounded problems and led to increased environmental degradation. The protracted emergency situation in Somalia has been worrisome for a long time, with different parts of the country facing a humanitarian emergency almost continuously over the past several years. In mid-2011, the situation culminated in the generalized severe drought that affected the entire Horn of Africa. The humanitarian crisis in Somalia is the largest in the world. Four million people, of which three million are in southern Somalia, lack basic necessities.¹²

The extent and scope of these challenges are not uniform across Somalia. Accessibility, security, and the political situation vary greatly between Somalia's three regions (Somaliland, Puntland, and South Central Somalia). Additionally, there are corresponding differences in the way aid agencies operate and in their ability to achieve results.

Of the three regions, South Central Somalia - where many aid workers have been abducted or killed - presents the most challenging environment for aid agencies (see box 3.1.1 below).¹³ Much of southern Somalia is under the control of Al Shabaab - a non-state armed group designated as "terrorist" in various domestic and international mechanisms - while in the center new clan-based

¹² OCHA Somalia. Key messages in the Somalia CAP 2012

¹³ The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) CDRD Project- Quarterly progress report July - Sept 2010

semi-autonomous regions of relative stability are beginning to emerge. Funding agencies are concerned that humanitarian and development funds in South Central Somalia could provide resources to combatants, in contravention of OECD-DAC¹⁴ principle 2 - “do no harm.” The principle states that international interventions can inadvertently create societal divisions and worsen corruption and abuse, if they are not based on strong conflict and governance analysis, and designed with appropriate safeguards.¹⁵ Armed groups exert pressure on local communities and local employees of aid agencies to pay registration fees in return for continuing to operate.¹⁶

Box 3.1.1 Challenges of operating in South Somalia

In June 2010, Al Shabaab forces took over control of most of the Hiraaan region of South Somalia, where aid agencies were working with communities to promote reconstruction and development projects. In August 2010, Al Shabaab imposed a registration fee of US\$10,000 on all non-governmental organizations operating in the area, as well as a 20% tax on all works contracted by agencies. As a result, some aid agencies suspended work on their projects in the area.

Translating early recovery policies into effective programs in South Central Somalia is particularly challenging to international aid agencies as they have to make (often) difficult decisions about suspending and continuing aid-financed activities following serious cases of corruption or human rights violations.

Compared to aid agencies in South Central Somalia, aid agencies in Somaliland - and to a lesser extent in Puntland - can operate more freely and with less risk (see box 3.1.2 below). In the latter two regions, central and local governments have a greater degree of legitimacy and are better able to deliver services. In these environments, aid agencies can much more easily translate early recovery policies into effective programs. These two regions have ministerial departments that serve as line ministries to coordinate the work of aid agencies and provide “national” leadership for sustainable development work. This is crucial for the success of any early recovery programs given that the development of local capacity to foster ownership, participation and accountability need to occur in a stable environment in which the security of investments can be predicted to higher degree.

¹⁴ OECD-DAC is the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee

¹⁵ OECD. Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations. 2007

¹⁶ The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) CDRD Project- Quarterly progress report July – Sept 2010

Box 3.1.2 More stability in Somaliland and Puntland

Somaliland declared its independence in 1991 and functions as an independent state, although it is not recognized as such by the international community. Somaliland has an elected central government and a weak but generally functioning system of local government. In June 2010, Somaliland held successful presidential elections for the second time since 2003, and power was peacefully transferred to the winning opposition candidate. Governance is considered to be better than in some African countries that have held general elections recently.

The semi-autonomous region of Puntland, established in 1998, is less stable than Somaliland, with a recent increase in localized conflicts, the emergence of militia groups, and pirates operating offshore. Puntland has political and administrative structures, but both central and local governments are weak.

3.2. Coordination

Effective coordination among international and national actors in post-conflict transitions is critical to ensuring ownership of the transition process within the government and local communities. Coordination requires inclusive processes that entail line ministries, central banks, local government, and community groups. Coordination structures and processes (from needs assessments to strategic planning to funding mechanisms) must be designed and implemented with, and in support of, national development plans and budgets. Coordination also requires that the delivery of services supports, rather than duplicates, national efforts.¹⁷

Box 3.2.1 The early recovery phase for Somalia is defined as:

- Access and security have been negotiated with legitimate or de facto authorities.
- Sustained reduction of armed conflict with initial conditions for peace building in place, so that foundations for stabilization and later development can be laid;
- Conditions for the emergence of nascent governance structures are present;
- Need for stabilizing or consolidating emerging peace and continuing support to communities and populations recovering from conflict, and for initiating strategic planning, coordination, and capacity building for the rule of law and security;
- Stable conditions for development have not yet emerged but planning for development is possible.

¹⁷ The transition from Relief to Development: report of the Secretary General, 2005.

The early recovery coordination platform for Somalia brings together key national and international partners around requirements for an integrated response and provides a space to elaborate detailed area-based action plans. UNDP (in its early recovery cluster lead capacity) convened a Working Group on early recovery with members from cluster lead agencies, as well as international NGOs, and local NGOs. The Working Group put together a set of criteria¹⁸ (see Box 3.2.1 below) that defines the early recovery phase for Somalia. Since clusters implement early recovery activities, the Working Group coordinates those activities that do not fall under any specific cluster. Additionally, the various line ministries coordinate in Somaliland and Puntland, where government capacity for such responsibilities has developed to a greater extent. This capacity is almost non-existent in South Central Somalia.

The UN Joint Program on Local Governance and Decentralized Service Delivery (JPLG), a project implemented by five UN agencies, supported the establishment of a District Development Framework (DDF) through the District Participatory, Planning, and Budgeting Process (DPPB) that is aligned with Somaliland, Puntland, and South Central legislation, respectively.¹⁹ The District Councils establish and use the frameworks with the support of JPLG. To others - government ministries, trainers, advisers and facilitators, external agencies, and NGO/community-based organizations (CBOs) - the frameworks indicate what is expected of the specific District Council and therefore how the council can best be supported, as well as what they depend on from others as inputs into their planning and implementation of development initiatives.

Coordination of early recovery programming with national authorities is extremely difficult in South Central Somalia in view of the complex political, clan, and military situation. The absence of credible and widely accepted line ministries is a significant constraint, as the normal policy elaboration, norm setting, and guidance role that national authorities play is non-existent. In some areas, local health boards or local councils of elders (“*Ugas*”) serve to coordinate NGO and UN activities.

3.3. National and local ownership and participation

National ownership of the transition process in post-crisis transition countries must be both a general principle and a priority guiding international assistance efforts. Without such a focus, the transition’s main goal (the consolidation of a sustainable and just peace) is unlikely to be achieved. Without national ownership providing a vision of the sort of country for which the transition process ostensibly lays the groundwork, sustainable peace is highly unlikely.²⁰

¹⁸ CWGER October 2006 Information Update

¹⁹ A Report on the Assessment of the opportunities for cooperation and harmonisation of CDRD and JPLG, commissioned by the Danish Refugee Council for the CDRD and JPLG programs, 2009.

²⁰ The transition from Relief to Development: report of the Secretary General, 2005.

In 2008, the UN and World Bank (WB) finalized a Joint Needs Assessment (JNA) that resulted from participation by all parts of the country, including extensive consultations with many Somali groups. The JNA teams held in-depth discussions with key representatives from donors, international NGOs, and representatives of the Government,²¹ as well as with UN agencies and WB missions. To ensure additional ownership and participation of Somali stakeholders, the JNA teams organized consultations, questionnaires, and workshops to identify and discuss the JNA methodology, priority needs, and proposed areas of interventions.²²

The resultant document of the JNA process — the Somali Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) — identified three sets of high-priority needs:

- To deepen peace, improve security, and establish good governance;
- To strengthen basic social services (especially education, health, and the water supply); and
- To rebuild infrastructure, together with other actions, in order to sustainably expand economic opportunities, employment, and incomes.

As expected, the relative emphasis on these three key sets of needs varies by location because of the different stages of reconciliation, peace building, recovery, and reconstruction. Moreover, the different stages of recovery of South Central Somalia, Puntland, and Somaliland create different challenges and opportunities with regard to the possibilities for effective implementation of sustained reconstruction and development initiatives. Improving the national capacity to act is (or should be) the primary focus of early recovery efforts. The level of national capacity affects the planning and management process and the type of projects that can be executed. At the planning level, weak counterpart capacity usually results in a lack of ownership that creates the risk that programs will not directly respond to needs.²³

Participation as used in this briefing paper is the active engagement of stakeholders (individuals, communities, government) in decisions that affect their lives. These stakeholders take an active part in the planning, implementation learning and evaluation of their development projects. Participation has been shown to lead to ownership of early recovery program outcomes and international aid agencies widely utilize it to different levels in Somalia as an approach to project implementation. The Somalia Community-Driven Recovery and Development project (CDRD), implemented by the Danish Refugee Council and UNICEF in all three regions of Somalia with service delivery and governance objectives; empowers communities to take charge of decision-making

²¹ This refers to the transitional Federal Government, the only internationally recognized government for Somalia, Defacto governments of Somaliland and Puntland were equally consulted but NOT in the capacity of recognized governments.

²² Somali Reconstruction and Development Programme: Deepening Peace and Reducing Poverty, 2008.

²³ Recovering from War: Gaps in Early Action; a report by the NYU Center on International Corporation for the UK Department for International Development (DFID), 2008.

through participatory processes. In order to ensure that their concerns are aligned with government priorities, communities identify their needs in consultation with their respective local councils (DDF in section 3.2). These local councils take stock of their existing resources and develop action plans, which are implemented through community level informal institutions.

Box 3.3.1: The outcome of the participatory approach to early recovery and reconstruction

The central role of the communities in identifying needs and resources, formulating interventions, carrying out implementation, and ensuring accountability leads to community ownership of the development process, to more completed projects, and to sustainable recovery of local services and infrastructure. The multiplier effect of this outcome in many communities nationwide leads to a consolidation of peace dividends at the national level in the long term.

3.4. Funding

Early recovery requires fast, flexible, and predictable funding that links humanitarian and longer-term development financing. The adequate and timely funding of transitions is essential to meet enduring humanitarian, recovery, and peace consolidation priorities while simultaneously building national and local capacity.

Since the launch of the cluster approach in 2006, in the context of the response to the humanitarian crisis in Somalia, the coordination of the clusters seems to have been effective in ensuring a certain level of coherence and in limiting the duplication of activities in Somalia. However, the CAP funding schedule, uniform worldwide, is not optimal in relation to the agricultural and climatic cycles of Somalia. The preparation of a draft appeal in September, with finalization in October, makes it difficult to “capture” the most recent data on the second rains (September to November) in a country without high quality statistics for reliable prediction. This becomes important when the “*Gu*”, or long rains (March to June), have already failed and a reasonable “*Deyr*” rainy season is needed to ensure some recovery. This led implementing partners to request that donor support immediate actions to address emergency needs that may result from a second failure of the rains. The request challenged the continued use of the CAP as the most appropriate (or accepted) mechanism for mobilizing resources since it is a global mechanism that is not tailored to meet specific needs of countries like Somalia. Furthermore, there are no formal interagency mechanisms for mobilizing resources for early recovery work.²⁴

²⁴ Fast Facts: UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, 2008

Pooled funding mechanisms, such as the multi-donor trust funds that could be more appropriate to respond to early recovery needs, are not available for Somalia. Accountability issues have also prevented funds from being moved in response to changed circumstances. For example, when some areas in South Central Somalia become non-operational for security or political reasons, a frequent occurrence, implementing partners can not simply transfer funds to deliver dividends in peaceful areas and the funds often languish in donors' coffers. Earmarking, where donors drive programming based not on shared strategy but on pure self-interest, has distorted priorities because, as implementing agencies struggle to secure funding "at all costs" to keep themselves in business despite predefined area-based strategies. This has also led to implementing partners operating on a project rather than a program, basis.

The hybrid funding model available to fund the Somalia CDRD project is between the purely bilateral model and the multilateral (trust fund) model. Several donors fund the project. The donors accept a common reporting framework from the implementing partners but are completely independent of each other in terms of funding cycles, predictability of funding, amount of funds delivered, and geographic location of implementation. The establishment of a pure multi-donor trust fund to pool the funds would thus make funding of this kind to be timely, flexible, and predictable.

4. Conclusion

All transition situations are unique and therefore require flexible responses adapted to the specific contexts and circumstances of the country. All types of transition processes, however, share a common feature: national ownership of the transition process is the key to a successful and sustainable recovery and development effort, an ultimately to establishing lasting peace. Aid agencies operating in a complex environment like Somalia need to be highly flexible, adapting their objectives in response to on-the-ground political and security changes. Security is improving especially in areas in the South where Al-Shaabab militia recently lost control, but is still likely to remain a major constraint on the capacity of aid agencies to operate, for some time.

With the cluster approach to the implementation of early recovery, issues of ownership, participation, and accountability are bound to arise. The different clusters may be willing to coordinate and complement their programs, but co-optation by the early recovery cluster and accountability to it may not be easily achieved. Also, whether the IASC clusters should be integrated more effectively with other sectoral coordination structures remains an open question, especially given the need to reconcile short-term and long-term perspectives. Furthermore, multi-sectoral coordination at the field level within defined operational areas, working towards a common

strategy, would be much more effective than clusters at the field level, which for practical reasons include only a small number of organizations (and not relatively as many Somali organizations).

Though translating early recovery into context-specific action (with more tangible results) has not been a straightforward task for practitioners, many aid agencies already are working across programming divides though not necessarily under the banner of early recovery. Framing activities and strategies in terms of early recovery has a high potential to fill the gap between relief and development, thus focus should move away from conceptual issues of definitions, and more attention given to how best to mainstream early recovery, whether at the cluster level or at the sectoral level with more participation of local partners.

Despite about a decade of work on early recovery, donor funding remains inflexible, unpredictable and untimely. The lack of these ingredients highly limits progress towards successful early recovery implementation. Donors recognize this fact but continue to earmark and have patchy approaches to early recovery. Donors lack clear policies and guidance that is focused on early recovery; rather, they continue to focus on bilateral approaches. Donors must address these issues to facilitate progress in the translation of early recovery policies into effective programs.²⁵

Lastly, amid ongoing insecurity in post conflict situations, there is a need for caution about what early recovery programs can achieve in terms of laying lasting foundations for recovery: the access constraints, high staff turnover, lack of credible statistics, logistical challenges, and limited resources and technical capacity facing many aid agencies all pose considerable challenges in Somalia.

²⁵ Recovering from War: Gaps in Early Action; a report by the NYU Center on International Corporation for the UK Department for International Development (DFID), 2008

5. References

1. Recovering from War: Gaps in Early Action; a report by the NYU Center on International Corporation for the UK Department for International Development (DFID), 2008.
2. Sarah Bailey et al; Early Recovery: An Overview of Policy Debates and Challenges: HPG Working Paper, 2009.
3. François Grünewald *et al*, Somalia: Real Time Evaluation of the 2006 Emergency Response, 2006.
4. United Nations: Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) Guidelines for 2012, 2011.
5. The World Bank: Somali Reconstruction and Development Programme: Deepening Peace and Reducing Poverty, volume I, 2008.
6. The Asian Development Bank: International Perspectives: Implementing Early Recovery in Asia, 2006.
7. OCHA Somalia: Key messages in the 2012 Somalia CAP, 2011.
8. Report of the Secretary-General: The Transition from Relief to Development, 2008.
9. OCHA Somalia: Somalia Funding August 2011: Trends and Analysis, 2011.
10. United Nations: United Nations Transition Plan for Somalia 2008-2009, 2007.
11. Ad-hoc CWGER Meeting Notes on the Drought Response in the Horn of Africa 04.08.11, 2011.
12. CAP Somalia 2012: Early Recovery Guidance Notes for Cluster Leads and Participating Agencies/NGOs, 2011.
13. IASC Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery October 2006 Information Update, 2006.
14. IASC 72nd Working Group meeting: Early Recovery and Recovery in Transition Situations, 2008.
15. Danish Refugee Council for CDRD and JPLG: Assessment of the Opportunities for Cooperation and Harmonisation of CDRD and JPLG: Final Roadmap for Harmonization, 2009.
16. Working effectively in Conflict-Affected and Fragile Situation: A DFID Practice paper, 2010.
17. Somalia CAP 2007 - Early Recovery Response Plan, 2006.
18. UNDP Policy on Early Recovery, 2008.
19. CWGER: Guidance Note on Early Recovery, 2008.
20. Fast Facts: UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, 2008.
21. Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness: Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation; Nov 29-Dec 1, 2011, Busan, Republic of Korea.