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Early Recovery in Humanitarian Appeals

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About the Humanitarian Policy Group
The Humanitarian Policy Group at ODI is one of the world's leading teams of independent researchers and information professionals working on humanitarian issues. It is dedicated to improving humanitarian policy and practice through a combination of high-quality analysis, dialogue and debate.

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Contents

List of Boxes, Figures and Tables

Executive Summary

The term 'early recovery' recognises that humanitarian assistance goes well beyond life-saving priorities. While agencies often have different activities in mind when they use it, there is growing consensus that early recovery in humanitarian settings is both necessary and under-funded. As humanitarian appeals are a principal means by which donors fund humanitarian activities for particular crises, understanding how early recovery is funded through these appeals is of crucial importance.

This paper analyses how early recovery activities are financed through humanitarian appeals, focusing primarily on Consolidated Appeals (CAPs), so that donors and aid agencies can better understand what is being financed and why. It uses the Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER) definition, while also recognising that interpretations vary. Early recovery is defined as a multidimensional process of recovery that begins in humanitarian settings and is guided by development principles, building on humanitarian programmes and catalyzing sustainable development opportunities, encompassing the restoration of basic services, livelihoods, shelter, governance, security and the rule of law and environmental and social dimensions (CWGER, 2008b).

Background: early recovery coordination and financial tracking

Born of the 2005 Humanitarian Response Review, early recovery was rolled out through the cluster system in 2005/2006. The label 'economic recovery and infrastructure' had been used as a category in appeals since 1994 (OCHA, 2009a). Early recovery though represents a wider set of activities, focused less on infrastructure and more on issues such as livelihoods, community recovery and rule of law.

Most clusters correspond closely with humanitarian sectors. However, it is clear from the CWGER definition of early recovery that such activities can take place in any sector. Early recovery is therefore unique in that it is both mainstreamed though the other clusters and it is a distinct cluster in many crisis contexts. Early recovery clusters are meant to fill early recovery gaps not being met through other clusters.

Analysing what early recovery activities are being financed through appeals therefore has its challenges. The 'gap' activities done through early recovery categories in appeals are easy to identify, as OCHA's Financial Tracking System (FTS) tracks these under the old label of 'economic recovery and infrastructure'. Tracking the early recovery activities taking place in other sectors is much more difficult, as FTS and most appeals do not make a distinction between early recovery and non-early recovery projects. In the absence of commonly accepted criteria for identifying early recovery projects in other sectors, deciding what is in fact 'early recovery' has a certain element of subjectivity, particularly given the breadth of the early recovery definition and the often murky boundaries between early recovery and core humanitarian activities. Given these limitations, it is important that findings related to these activities are treated with a certain amount of caution. For early recovery activities in other sectors, this paper uses data from a study already undertaken by the CWGER (CWGER, 2008a).

Key findings

The study identified the following key trends regarding the financing of early recovery in humanitarian appeals:

Early recovery in appeals

- Donors have long been funding early recovery activities, even if appeal categories and projects prior to 2006 had a stronger emphasis on economic recovery and infrastructure.
- There is increasing consistency in how early recovery is addressed in appeals, generally as activities done through other sectors and through an early recovery/economic recovery cluster or funding category.
- Some appeals, notably DRC and Uganda, have moved away from early recovery language and reaffirmed their humanitarian character, due to the longer-term focus of recovery activities, the lack of funding for early recovery and the existence of alternative financing mechanisms.

Early recovery activities in early recovery and economic recovery categories

- Early recovery activities under early recovery/economic recovery headings received an average of 45% of their financial requirements between 2005 and 2009. While they are undoubtedly underfunded, this is on a par with activities in the protection, education, agriculture, health, WASH and shelter sectors, which received on average 42–50% of their requirements. Food assistance far and away receives the largest amount of financing, both in nominal terms and as a percentage of requested funds.
- There is a wide range of early recovery projects in appeals, with a strong focus on community recovery, livelihoods and displacement, return and reintegration, in terms of nominal requirements and funding.
- On the whole, the type of activity does not appear to be a significant factor in determining whether early recovery projects are funded, and there are substantial regional variations.

Early recovery activities in other sectors

- Early recovery projects in other sectors received an average of 47% of their financing requirements, which is similar to projects in early recovery and economic recovery categories in appeals.
- Early recovery activities across different sectors are diverse; infrastructure, capacity-building, livelihoods support and displacement, return and reintegration were common activities.
- The funding of early recovery activities varied substantially by sector, with multi-sector activities receiving the highest percentage of their financing requests and education and shelter receiving the lowest.
- Funding of early recovery activities in other sectors also varied by region.

Recommendations

Early recovery activities and strategies in appeals should be firmly grounded in the reality of what assistance achieves. Laying foundations for recovery is an ambitious task, because how and why households and communities recover from crisis involves much more than international assistance. It is important that those planning and funding early recovery activities recognise the limitations of what one-year projects can achieve in crisis contexts, and that activities alone cannot be responsible for achieving recovery.

Clearly link early recovery activities in appeals to context-specific analysis and assessments. A stronger evidence base, and one that incorporates an understanding of political and economic factors, will make a stronger case for funding. Assessments should have support from humanitarian, development and government actors.

Any decisions on explicitly flagging early recovery activities in other sectors need to be made in close consultation with other clusters. Flagging projects in other appeal sectors as being early recovery would provide donors with a better understanding of early recovery projects not under early recovery categories and enable better tracking of these projects and their financing. However, this should only be done if other clusters agree that it is useful.

Do not become bogged down in what is humanitarian versus early recovery; pay more attention to early recovery versus recovery. Discussions about what is 'humanitarian' and what is 'early recovery' can get mired in labels and language that hide as much as they reveal. Moreover, early recovery and humanitarian projects all end up in humanitarian appeals, meaning that they all have the opportunity to receive financing from humanitarian donors. Perhaps more important is the distinction between 'early recovery' and 'recovery' activities. Crisis-affected governments (and donors) may prefer to use recovery mechanisms for early recovery activities. While this will ensure more national ownership, time-critical responses could be delayed if they are left solely to recovery mechanisms or significantly scaled back in humanitarian appeals.

Get to the bottom of why early recovery activities receive less funding in some crises than others. Funding early recovery is obviously more difficult in some crises than in others, but statistics on under-funding do not explain why this is the case. Do donors not think the activities should be prioritised, or are they concerned about how early recovery is being led, strategised and implemented? Statistics on underfunding in certain contexts should provide an impetus for understanding what is happening on the ground.

1. Introduction

'Early recovery' is a relatively new term, but it is not a new idea. In emergency settings, aid agencies have always provided assistance that moves beyond immediate life-saving priorities in order to respond to the diverse needs of people affected by crisis, including promoting recovery. However, there has been some confusion about what 'early recovery' is and how it differs from previous efforts to link relief and development. Agencies and individuals often have different boundaries and types of activities in mind when they use the term.

The Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER) defines early recovery as a multidimensional process of recovery that begins in humanitarian settings and is guided by development principles, building on humanitarian programmes and catalyzing sustainable development opportunities. Early recovery aims at generating self-sustaining, nationally owned and resilient processes. It encompasses the restoration of basic services, livelihoods, shelter, governance, security and the rule of law, as well as environmental and social dimensions (CWGER, 2008b).

The focus of early recovery on humanitarian settings was reinforced by the Report of the Secretary-General on Peacebuilding in the Immediate Aftermath of Conflict, which refers to early recovery as a component of humanitarian response (UN, 2009). Other discussions on early recovery have been much broader, encompassing stabilisation, peace-building and state-building elements in conflict and transitional contexts, rather than focusing solely on humanitarian settings and mechanisms.[1] Early recovery is also described in terms of immediate post-conflicts interventions – activities undertaken after peace agreements but before longer-term recovery and development strategies are up and running.

While there are varying interpretations of early recovery, there is a clear sense among aid agencies and donors that such activities are both necessary and under-funded in humanitarian appeals. There is a need for more detailed analysis that maps and analyses financing trends in appeals. This is the objective of this background paper. Humanitarian appeals are a primary means by which UN agencies and INGOs receive humanitarian financing for a specific crisis. How early recovery activities are funded through these appeals – which activities, whether they are included under 'early recovery' categories or under other sector headings, and the extent to which they are financed – all have implications for the design, implementation and funding of appropriate responses. This paper utilises the CWGER definition of early recovery, which is generally used in appeals, though noting that understandings vary, particularly at the field level.

1.1 Methodology

This paper is based on a desk review of appeal documents, humanitarian financing data and literature on early recovery and humanitarian financing. In all, 74 appeals from 2006–1010 were reviewed, including 68 Consolidated Appeals (CAPs), Consolidated Humanitarian Appeals (CHAPs), Humanitarian Action Plans (HAPs), Common Humanitarian Plans (CHPs) and Work Plans, as well as six Flash Appeals. Telephone interviews were also conducted with eight informants from UN agencies, NGOs and independent consultants with experience in appeals processes at headquarters and field levels.

All financing statistics that are not otherwise referenced are from OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS) database. FTS was used to compile financial data and identify funding trends, including project-level data. The FTS database relies on voluntary reporting from donors and aid agencies. This means that there are certain limitations on the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the data, though reporting has improved in recent years. For the project-level analysis of activities under 'early recovery', 'economic recovery' and 'community recovery' headings in appeals, the FTS category 'economic recovery and infrastructure' was used as no separate 'early recovery' category exists. Only appeals that had activities in the economic recovery and infrastructure category were used in that project-level analysis. For the financing of early recovery projects in other sectors, the paper uses CWGER data and the report Financing for

1. See for example Chandran et al., 2008; Bailey et al, 2009; Bailey and Pavanello, 2009.

Early Recovery: Highlighting the Gaps (CWGER, 2008a).

1.2 Structure

Section 2 provides a brief overview of early recovery coordination and broader humanitarian financing trends to situate the analysis. Section 3 explores how early recovery has been presented in humanitarian appeals from 2006 to 2010. Section 4 analyses early recovery financing trends at project and global levels. Section 5 discusses conclusions and recommendations.

2. Background

Before analysing early recovery financing trends in humanitarian appeals, it is important to locate this discussion within the context of how early recovery is coordinated within the cluster system and broader humanitarian financing trends.

2.1 Early recovery: coordination and financial tracking

Emerging through the 2005 Humanitarian Reform Review, early recovery was rolled out through the cluster system in 2005/2006. The label 'economic recovery and infrastructure' had been used as a category in appeals since 1994 (OCHA, 2009a). Early recovery represents a wider set of activities, focused less on infrastructure and more on issues such as livelihoods, community recovery and rule of law.

Early recovery is unique in how it is coordinated within the cluster system, as it is both mainstreamed through the other clusters (e.g. health, shelter, education) and it is a distinct cluster. In the first instance, as the 2010 CAP notes, each cluster has a responsibility to integrate early recovery within its own sphere of work because early recovery is not limited to a single sector (OCHA, 2009a). Early Recovery Inter-Cluster Networks, which have representatives from different clusters, support the development and coordination of sector-based strategies. They also provide support to the Humanitarian Coordinator /Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Country Team on incorporating early recovery into the overall response (CWGER, 2010). Second, distinct early recovery clusters exist at the global level and in many contexts. Led by UNDP, they are meant to cover early recovery activities not addressed by other clusters, such as non-agricultural livelihoods, reintegration, infrastructure and governance (ibid.). For activities in these early recovery clusters, FTS continues to use the label 'economic recovery and infrastructure' (hereafter shortened to 'economic recovery').

Tracking financing for early recovery in appeals faces two main challenges: 1) FTS has not updated its terminology to reflect the fact that early recovery (and not economic recovery) is the current approach to framing activities; and 2) FTS does not track early recovery projects in the other sectors/clusters. The first challenge is easily surmountable. It simply requires that people interpreting financial data (and those reading this paper) keep in mind that the term 'economic recovery' refers to the group of activities submitted under 'early recovery' and 'economic recovery' headings in appeals. These are the early recovery 'gap' activities that are not covered by other sectors.

The second challenge – tracking financing of early recovery activities in other sectors – is more difficult, for two reasons. The first is the absence of a system to identify early recovery projects in other sectors. As they are not flagged as being early recovery, there is no readily available data on the extent to which they are being financed. The second problem is that, in the absence of commonly accepted criteria, tracking such projects requires making a judgement about which activities are in fact 'early recovery'. The breadth of the early recovery definition, which incorporates activities in all sectors, leaves much room for interpretation, as do grey areas like supporting livelihoods.

This report addresses both sides of the early recovery coin – the 'gap' activities submitted under early recovery/economic recovery categories in appeals, and early recovery activities in other sectors. As the former are tracked through FTS under the label 'economic recovery', there is a substantial amount of data available on these projects; FTS has this project-level information from all appeals going back many years. For trends in early recovery projects in other sectors, this study uses data and information from Financing for Early Recovery: Highlighting the Gaps, which is the most thorough analysis of these activities in other sectors.[2] This data set is more limited, as it looks only at a sample of appeals from 2007 and 2008.

2.2 Humanitarian financing trends

To fully understand early recovery financing in humanitarian appeals, it should be placed within the context of broader humanitarian financing trends. Humanitarian funding has grown

2. The researchers for this report attempted to flag early recovery projects in other sectors based on project descriptions in appeals. However, it was felt that the results were too subjective to use.

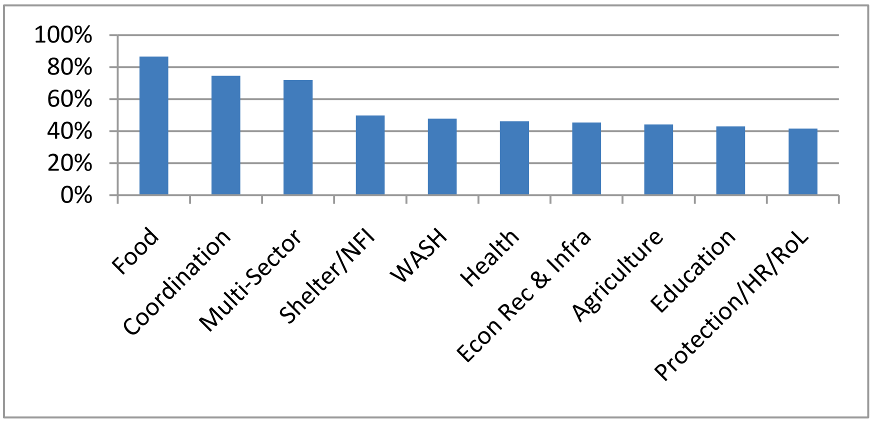
considerably in the past decade. Total official humanitarian assistance surpassed $11 billion in 2008, nearly double the figure for 1998.[3] The growth of humanitarian assistance is more than simply financial, as humanitarian operations have expanded outside of core sectors (e.g. food aid, shelter, health) to include a range of other activities, such as protection, agriculture, income generation and infrastructure rehabilitation (Borton, 2009).

Despite the increase in financing, funds are not sufficient to meet the total financial requests in humanitarian appeals. From 2007 to 2009, 69% of consolidated appeal (CAP) requirements were met. In 2009, these funds were more evenly allocated among crises compared to preceding years, and only Côte d'Ivoire was less than 60% funded (OCHA, 2009a). The major discrepancies are rather among sectors. Food assistance far and away receives the largest financing, both in nominal terms and as a percentage of requested funds. From 2006 to 2009, total food sector requirements increased from $2 billion to $3.8 billion annually, and nearly 90% of the food sector requirement was met by donors during this four-year period.[4] By comparison, agriculture, economic recovery, health, protection, shelter and WASH sectors rarely received half their financing requirements in this same period. With the exception of health, financial requirements in these sectors also stayed well under $1 billion annually.

As Figure 1 shows, all of the main sectors aside from food and coordination are neck and neck in terms of funding shortfalls, receiving 42–50% of requirements in appeals from 2005 to 2009. For economic recovery, obtaining 45% was actually a sizeable jump compared to previous years. From 2002 to 2004, less than 25% of requirements were financed, indicating that funding has increased for economic recovery (Stoddard, 2008). However, the extent to which economic recovery requirements were financed varied considerably year to year: 53% in 2006, 30% in 2007, 39% in 2008 and 50% in 2009.

The above economic recovery funding data refers to projects categorised as economic recovery and early recovery in appeals. Therefore it does not incorporate the many early recovery activities that appear in other sectors, such as coordination (e.g. early recovery coordination), agriculture (e.g. restoring agricultural livelihoods), multi-sector (e.g. multi-sector reintegration projects), shelter (e.g. owner-driven housing reconstruction), WASH (e.g. restoring water systems with local authorities) and so on. When early recovery activities in these sectors are included, the CWGER concluded that 56% of early recovery funding requirements were met. This is nearly identical to the financing of projects in economic recovery categories. By comparison, the study found that 78% of humanitarian requirements were met, concluding that early recovery projects receive less funding than humanitarian ones (CWGER, 2008a). This finding is probably influenced by the heavy funding of the food sector, as many appeal sectors receive less than half of their requirements. Project-level data will be explored in more detail in section 4.

Figure 1: Average percentage of requirements funded per sector (2005–2009)



3. Development Initiatives, http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org.
4. There is a discrepancy in this figure between FTS and OCHA 2010 CAP. For 2009, the 2010 CAP lists food as having received $3.1 billion (and thus 82% funded), while FTS as of February 2010 puts this figure at $3.4 billion (89% funded).

Box 1: Early recovery and transitions

While this paper looks only at the financing of early recovery within humanitarian appeals, it is worth briefly highlighting recent studies that look beyond humanitarian financing systems. A report by the Center on International Cooperation concluded that gaps exist in funding early efforts to foster recovery, with a need for financing that is realistic, flexible and responsive (Chandran et al., 2008). Examining transition financing mechanisms, a report commissioned by the OECD/DAC International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF) notes that the division of the aid architecture into humanitarian and development systems is itself a problematic starting point when a less linear approach to transitions is needed, together with a stronger focus on objectives rather than available financing instruments (INCAF, 2009). INCAF has commissioned a follow-on study that examines the political economy of aid in transitions and issues around the risk tolerance of development-oriented funding mechanisms. The breadth of these studies underscores the importance of looking at all of the available mechanisms to enable recovery, as no single instrument can meet all of the diverse financing needs required.

3. Early recovery in humanitarian appeals (2006–2010)

Following the roll-out of early recovery through the cluster system in 2005/2006, appeals have shifted from a focus on economic recovery to early recovery. This shift has been subtle and not without confusion.

In 2006, early recovery received only passing mention in appeals. Only one, the Philippines Flash Appeal, had a specific early recovery category for projects and funding. A year later, early recovery terminology was more prominent in appeal documents, but in different ways: as a concept, phase, or type of activity; as a separate funding category; as an overarching classification (e.g. early recovery versus humanitarian activities); and as a term used interchangeably with 'economic recovery'. Just over 40% of appeals in 2008 had an early recovery category, but again with substantial variation. In 2009/10, early recovery was a solid fixture in appeals, with more than one-third having strategic objectives related to early recovery. Early recovery has been incorporated in appeals in diverse ways, appearing as a cluster, funding category and/or cross-cutting theme; some appeals also split all projects between 2–3 'mega categories', such as humanitarian, early recovery and recovery. The Sri Lanka and Sudan appeals continue to use economic recovery and basic infrastructure headings, rather than early recovery.

Appeals in 2009/2010 often explain their approach to early recovery and delineate the boundaries with other activities. Some of these discussions are general, such as in the 2009 Sudan Work Plan: 'early recovery is defined as recovery that takes place in a humanitarian setting … all projects in 2009 have been defined as either humanitarian or early recovery … [this] helps implementing partners keep an eye on long-term goals' (OCHA, 2008b: 36). The Zimbabwe 2010 appeal clarifies that early recovery is addressed both through other clusters and through the early recovery cluster:

> *How to implement early recovery is contingent on needs as well as the socio-political context in which one operates. Moreover, the cross-cutting nature of early recovery suggests that the cluster must advocate for the inclusion of recovery initiatives within the other clusters … The early recovery cluster [ensures] that early recovery aspects are integrated into planned initiatives by other clusters and it covers sectors otherwise not included … these sectors have been identified as economic livelihoods, infrastructure and capacity-building of local structures (OCHA, 2009c: 48).*

Some appeals have 'passed on' early recovery activities to non-humanitarian mechanisms. In 2008, the Somalia CAP noted that the majority of early recovery activities would fall under the United Nations Transition Plan. This appears to have raised concerns about overlaps in the mechanisms, as the following year the appeal stated that the 'grey area namely the early recovery element found with the CAP and the UN Transition Plan has been clarified within the 2009 CAP in order to remove overlap in funding requests … Included in the CAP 2009 are only the early recovery component of the overall project' (OCHA, 2008a: 19). The 2008/2009 Côte d'Ivoire appeals cite UNDP trust funds, World Bank post-crisis assistance projects and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) as vehicles for early recovery and development projects.

Some appeals have moved away from early recovery language, reaffirming their 'humanitarian-ness'. The Uganda 2009 appeal refocused on humanitarian activities because of the limited impact of recovery-oriented activities in 2008 (due to their longer-term nature) (OCHA, 2008c). The 2009 Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) appeal introduced a strategic objective for the short-term promotion of community recovery. It deliberately removed this objective in the 2010 appeal because of limited funding for early recovery in 2009 and the creation of a government Stabilisation and Reconstruction Plan (STAREC):

> A major change in 2010 is the intention to re-focus the HAP on purely humanitarian objectives. Therefore the absence of the 5th objective introduced in 2009 (promotion of short-term community recovery), which foresaw interventions in post-crisis and pre-crisis situations, is explained by the new initiatives by the government (STAREC) and MONUC (UNSSSS) that take on numerous aspects (OCHA, 2009b: 1–2).

While early recovery is still portrayed in diverse ways in appeals, language has certainly become more standardised in recent years. Humanitarian appeals agree on the broad strokes: that early recovery takes place in humanitarian settings and through humanitarian mechanisms, and that it generally constitutes a cross-cutting approach, but activities can also appear specifically in the early recovery cluster/funding categories. This still leaves a wide margin of interpretation, as discussed in the next section.

4. Early recovery financing trends

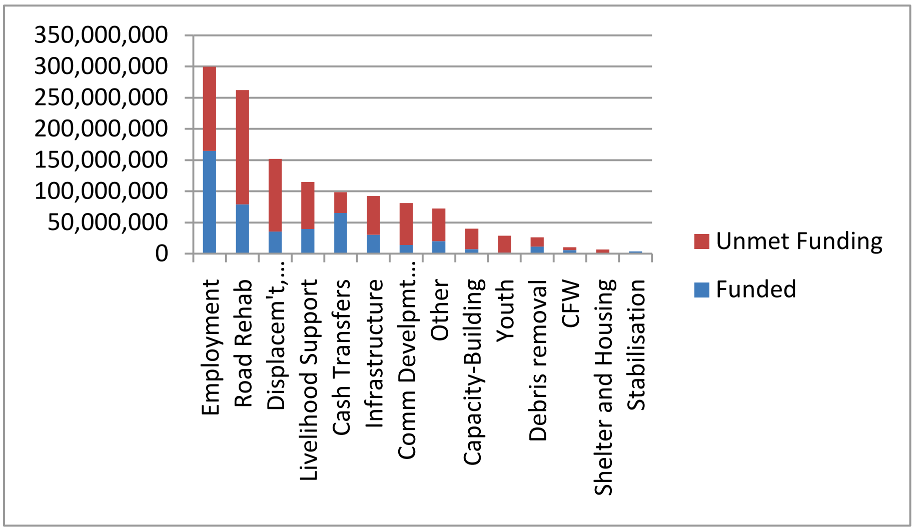
This section examines financing trends for early recovery activities in early recovery/economic recovery categories in appeals and those in other sectors. As noted previously, more data is available on activities in early recovery/economic recovery categories, as FTS uses the label 'economic recovery' to track project-level data from these categories and does not flag early recovery projects in other sectors. Promoting early recovery through other clusters – and using the early recovery cluster to fill any gaps – is the approach currently being encouraged by CWGER and OCHA.

4.1 Projects under early recovery and economic recovery categories in appeals

There is considerable diversity of projects in economic and early recovery categories: assessments, basic needs, capacity-building (national and civil society), cash transfers, Cash for Work, community development/recovery /poverty reduction, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration, debris removal, disaster risk reduction, displacement/return/reintegration, employment, environmental management, early recovery planning and coordination, enterprise development, financial services, health, income-generating activities, infrastructure, justice/rule of law, landmines, livelihoods support, markets, peacebuilding, protection and security, road rehabilitation, safety nets, shelter/housing reconstruction, stabilisation, waste management, women's empowerment and youth programmes. As Figure 2 shows, from 2006 to 2009 the vast majority of funding requirements and actual funding went to employment and road rehabilitation, followed by displacement, return and reintegration; livelihood support; cash transfers; infrastructure; and community development/recovery (the category 'other' comprises the many types of projects that constituted less than 1% of total funding).

The data implies that employment and road rehabilitation are a significant component across appeals, and that employment in particular is well funded. However, this data is skewed by sizeable economic recovery requirements and funding for Sudan and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). Road rehabilitation requirements alone were $240 million for Sudan between 2006 and 2009, of which one-third was met. OPT had $292 million in employment projects, which were 56% funded. By comparison, the total requirements for all economic recovery projects in all of the other appeals examined for this study totalled $280 million.

Figure 2: Funding for activities in economic recovery/early recovery funding categories (2006–2009)



A different picture emerges when OPT and Sudan are excluded from the calculation, as Figure 3 shows. Community development and recovery, displacement, return and reintegration and livelihood support have the largest requirements. They also have the largest nominal funding, though in the reverse order: livelihood support and displacement, return and reintegration projects received a higher percentage of their requirements than projects describe in terms of promoting community development and recovery. There is a high degree of overlap in these categories, as most community development involves supporting livelihoods and both are a strong component of addressing displacement and promoting reintegration. However, projects framed most explicitly as livelihoods support appear to be receiving more funding.

Bearing in mind the significant differences in nominal requests, some types of projects have fared much better than others in attracting funding. The previous section noted that an average of 45% of economic recovery financing requirements was funded between 2005 and 2009; this suggests that any project type receiving above this percentage is doing better than average. However, that calculation included economic recovery data from OPT, which was well funded. This helps to explain why very few project types were funded over 45%. Excluding OPT and Sudan, road rehabilitation and infrastructure respectively received 72% and 50% of their total requirements.

Figure 3: Funding for activities in economic recovery/early recovery funding categories (2006–2009), excluding OPT and Sudan

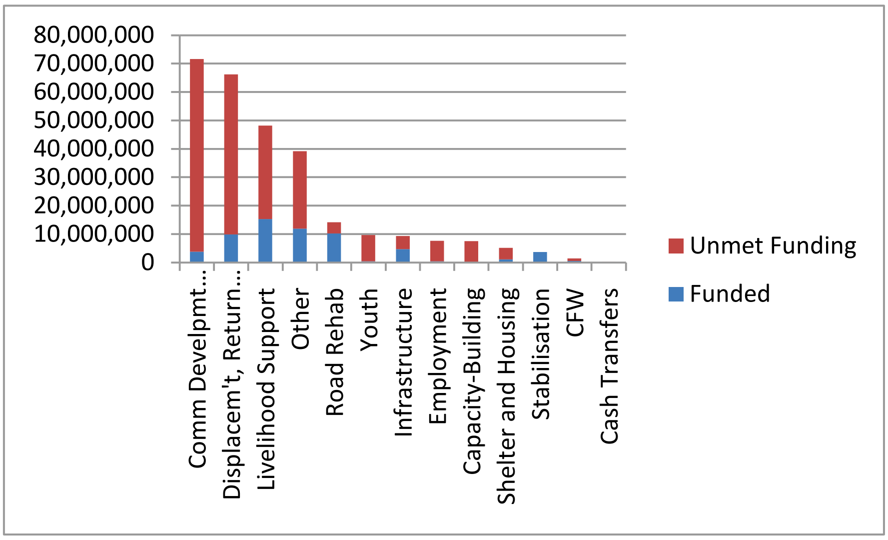
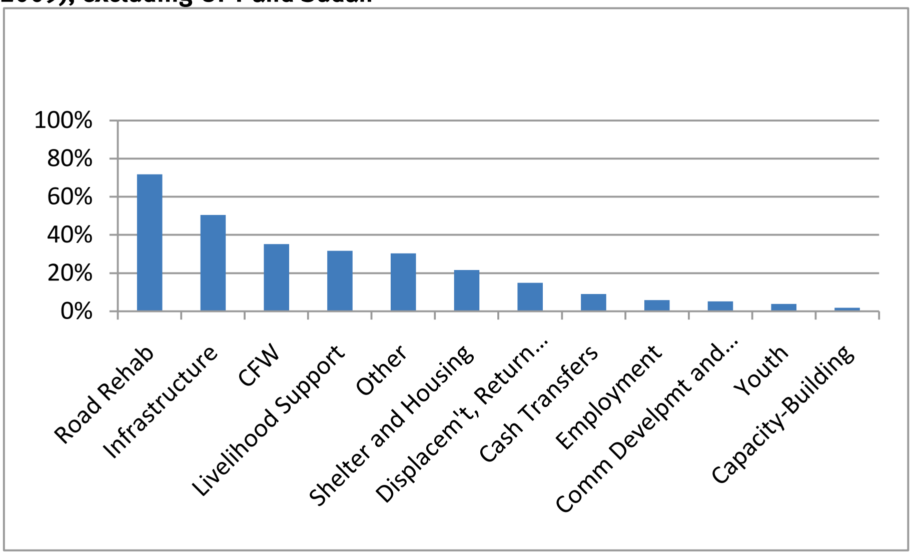


Figure 4: Average percentage of requirements funded per project type (2006–2009), excluding OPT and Sudan



Since 2006, projects have had a stronger focus on displacement, return and reintegration, livelihoods and community recovery. New interventions include Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), peacebuilding, safety nets, waste management, debris removal, assessments and waste management. These newer types of projects make up a small fraction of overall requirements. Aside from the sizeable cash transfer programmes in OPT, the only other cash transfer project found was in the Sri Lanka 2008 appeal; it received 9% of the $167,500 requested. Fifteen DRR and early warning projects in Uganda, Somalia and Zimbabwe received 5% of their combined $7.8 million requirements. Peacebuilding projects in these same three countries received 42% of the total $2.7 million requested.[5] A $500,000 safety net project in the Central African Republic in 2008 was 80% funded. The 14 financial services projects in appeals received only 4% of their requirements.

from 2006 to 2009, it is the only type of project where a high proportion of financing requirements was met in both time periods, indicating that it has done well in attracting funding since 2002. Livelihoods support and displacement and reintegration feature less strongly, with projects being framed more often in terms of economic development.

That early recovery is a wider concept than economic recovery is visible in how projects have evolved since 2005, with the move away from infrastructure and a greater emphasis on livelihoods, community recovery and displacement/reintegration. Community recovery projects, which had difficulty attracting funding before 2005, have struggled even more subsequently as requirements have increased.

Figure 5: Economic recovery project types and funding in CAPs (2002–2005)

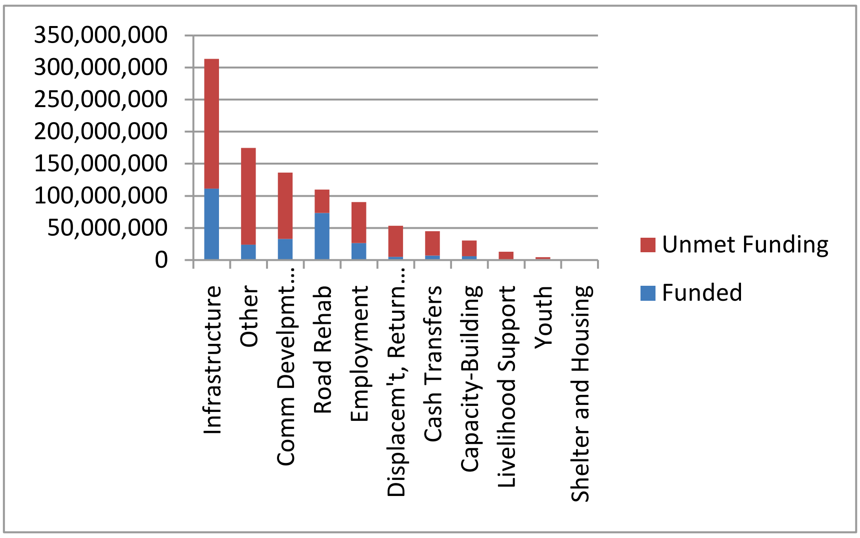


Figure 5, which depicts economic recovery activities included in appeals from 2002 to 2005, confirms the shift away from infrastructure projects, or their inclusion in other sectors such as education and health. Somewhat surprisingly, cash transfers were being funded, even though they only gained significant traction in humanitarian assistance after 2005. Much like the period 2006 to 2009, cash transfer interventions were concentrated in OPT. Setting aside that road rehabilitation was only one-third funded in Sudan

5. The peacebuilding project in Zimbabwe did not receive any funding.

4.2 Early recovery activities in other sectors

As discussed, understanding how early recovery activities in other sectors are being financed is a very challenging task. CWGER guidance on early recovery groups activities into the following broad categories: livelihoods and income recovery; social services (including access to health services, education and water); displacement, return and reintegration; shelter; land and property; coordination; infrastructure; security; and governance and rule of law (CWGER, 2008). These activities can take place in any of the humanitarian appeal sectors (food, health, education, coordination, WASH, nutrition, shelter, logistics, protection). The CWGER makes a distinction between early recovery and core humanitarian activities, based not only on the type of activity, but also on how activities are implemented, as early recovery activities utilise developmental principles like ownership, sustainability, participation and working through local authorities.

This leaves substantial room for interpretation as to what is and is not early recovery. An additional complication is that those putting projects in appeals are inclined to package activities in ways that not only describe objectives and needs, but also increase the likelihood of funding. There is a general perception that labelling projects as early recovery reduces the chances of receiving funding, as humanitarian donors naturally prioritise core humanitarian activities within appeals, particularly in under-funded crises. Some also feel that poor strategising and programming in certain contexts has led to a loss in confidence in early recovery activities, further diminishing the likelihood of financing for projects explicitly described as early recovery. That said, some humanitarian agencies, particularly WFP, have moved towards much more recovery-oriented language and objectives.

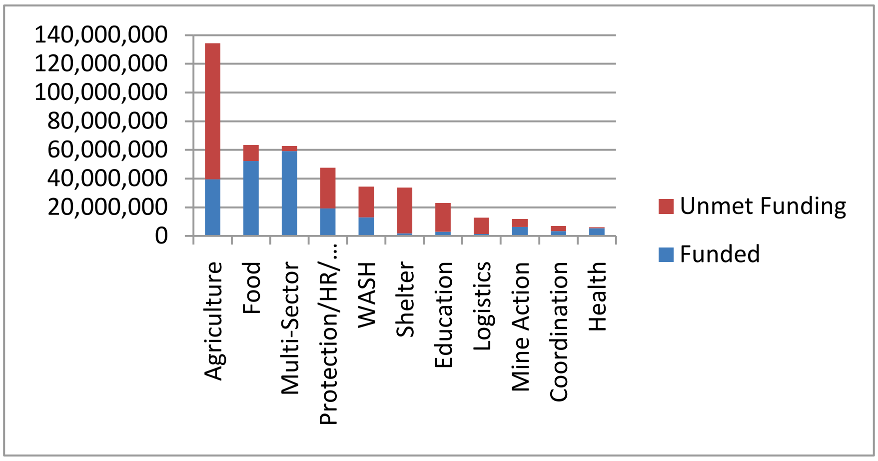
To assess levels of funding for early recovery projects in other sectors, CWGER went through all the projects in 15 CAPs from 2006 to 2008, and determined that 377 out of a total of 1,292 were early recovery (CWGER, 2008a). Of these, 100 were in early recovery and economic recovery categories, meaning that 277 were in the other sectors. Activities were very diverse. Infrastructure, capacity-building, livelihoods support and displacement, return and reintegration were common across different sectors. Table 1 depicts the broad range of early recovery activities in the different sectors.

Table1: Types of early recovery activities in other sectors

Sector	Types of early recovery activities
Agriculture	Markets, IGAs, seed/agricultural inputs, livestock, food security, environment, CFW, displacement/return/reintegration, other agricultural livelihood support
Coordination	Disaster preparedness, assessments, infrastructure, data surveillance
Education	Access to education, capacity-building, infrastructure, vocational training, school gardens
Food	Food security, livelihoods support
Health	Access to healthcare, capacity-building, infrastructure
Logistics	Road rehabilitation
Mine Action	Demining, mine education
Multi-Sectoral	Displacement/return/reintegration, food security, livelihood support, WASH, peacebuilding, youth
Protection	GBV, displacement/return/ reintegration, capacity-building, women's empowerment, demining, coordination, justice/human rights, peacebuilding, rule of law
Shelter/NFI	Housing construction, shelter repair, emergency/temporary shelter, displacement/return/reintegration
WASH	Infrastructure, capacity-building, waste removal, hygiene promotion, well construction

The 277 early recovery activities identified in CAPs received 47%[6] of their total financing requests, while the rest of the activities listed (i.e. humanitarian activities) received 78% of their financial requirements (CWGER, 2008a). Figure 6 shows the breakdown of financing for early recovery projects across sectors. When the total financing requirements for these early recovery activities are examined by sector, those in agriculture had the highest funding requirements, followed by food, multi-sector, protection, WASH and shelter.

Figure 6: Funding for early recovery activities in other sectors in sample CAPs (2006–2008)



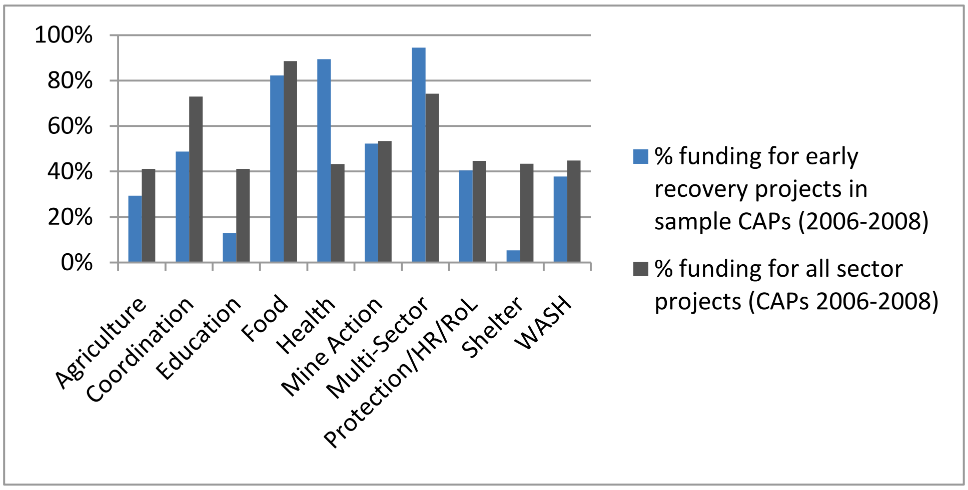
The findings suggest an interesting trend, at least for the time period of the study (2006–2008). Early recovery activities in other sectors received 47% of their total financing requests, while data from FTS incorporating all appeals indicates that projects under early recovery and economic recovery headings received an average of 40% of their requirements during this time.[7] Early recovery activities in other sectors therefore fared similarly (though marginally better) in terms of attracting funding.

Exactly how well they fared varies considerably by sector. Figure 7 shows the percentage of financing requirements that were met for the early recovery activities identified in the CWGER study. It compares this with overall financing of all projects in all appeals for each sector. Early recovery projects in multi-sector, health and food received a large percentage (82–94%) of their total requirements. For early recovery activities in protection and WASH, 41% and 38% of early recovery project requirements were met, slightly less than the average for all projects in those sectors. Early recovery activities in agriculture (29%), education (13%) and shelter (5%) received the least funding against their requirements.

Levels of financing also varied substantially by crisis. The early recovery activities identified in the Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Uganda and Zimbabwe appeals received less than 15% of their funding requirements. Those in Somalia, the OPT, Nepal and Liberia received 20–41%. Early recovery activities in Iraq and Guinea received approximately half of their requirements, while those in Chad, Côte d'Ivoire and the Central African Republic received 60–65%. Projects in Burundi fared by far the best, with 83% of total financial requests for early recovery being met (CWGER, 2008a).[8]

6. This figure does not include early recovery activities in early recovery and economic recovery categories. When those projects are included, the CWGER study found that 44% of requirements were met (CWGER, 2008a).
7. Based on FTS data for 2006–2008. This is lower than the calculation in Figure 1, which looks at 2005–2009
8. The country findings cover all 377 projects, including the 100 that were in economic recovery and early recovery categories.

Figure 7: Average funding for early recovery projects compared to average funding of all sector projects (2006–2008)



It is important to note that large projects can influence the findings for certain sectors. For example, the bulk of the financial requirement for early recovery activities in the food sector is represented by a single request for $54 million for the WFP Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) in Burundi, of which $49 million was met. Of the early recovery agricultural projects, the largest one – a $29 million project in Zimbabwe – received only 7% of its request, bringing down the overall funding average. Early recovery activities in the health sector received 89% of their requirements and therefore appear to be extremely well financed, but only because a $5.4 million project in Uganda was fully funded.

While not downplaying the importance of understanding financing trends in different sectors and regions, these findings on early recovery financing in other sectors therefore should be used with a good amount of caution, given the constant evolution of how early recovery is addressed in appeals and the many different factors that impact financing of activities. It is risky to assume that the same trends held true for 2009, or will hold true in 2010.

Box 2: Early Recovery in the Haiti Earthquake Revised Humanitarian Appeal

While CAPs are the primary focus of this paper, the Flash Appeal process to respond to the devastating January 2010 earthquake in Haiti deserves attention in its own right. The original Haiti Flash Appeal had an Early Recovery Cluster with projects totalling $41 million in funding requirements (7% of the total appeal). At $34 million, CFW for rubble removal made up the majority of these requirements. This activity is consistent with the flash appeal policy of including early recovery projects in an appeal's initial rapid edition only for needs that are already evident and if there is a strong advantage in beginning the activity at the earliest opportunity. Many clusters were in fully funded in the original flash appeal; early recovery cluster activities received 66% of their requirements.

In the revised flash appeal, the Early Recovery Cluster presented an expanded set of proposed actions. These were based on needs identified in assessments and restricted to activities deemed high priority and feasible within the revised appeal's 12-month planning and budgeting horizon. With a major recovery and reconstruction effort due to begin in Haiti, the problem of drawing the boundaries of early recovery in this context (as distinct from actions more by reconstruction actors and less eligible for humanitarian funding) could have been vexing. The Early Recovery Cluster addressed this potential obstacle by focusing on five priority areas whose urgency was uncontested and for which humanitarian actors were determined best positioned to implement immediately:

- Employment and livelihood opportunities
- Clearance of rubble and accumulated debris
- Disaster risk reduction and emergency response plans
- Crisis management capacity of key public institutions
- Mitigation of environmental impacts and protection of natural resource-based livelihoods.

The revised Early Recovery Cluster response plan seeks $157 million, making it the second largest sector request within the appeal (the largest is the food sector). For early recovery projects in other clusters, the CWGER estimates their proportion in each cluster as follows:

Cluster/sector	Est. value of early recovery projects per sector	Est. % value of ER project per sector
AGRICULTURE	25,698,415	36%
CCCM	8,156,724	11%
COORDINATION	2,083,750	6%
EARLY RECOVERY	157,564,378	100%
EDUCATION	41,527,895	55%
EMERGENCY SHELTER/NFI	35,544,380	30%
EMERGENCY TELECOM	375,000	5%
FOOD	120,104,637	25%
HEALTH	41,299,104	30%
LOGISTICS	5,250,000	5%
NUTRITION	4,692,078	10%
PROTECTION	9,985,000	16%
WASH	5,697,929	7%
Total	**457,979,290**	**32%**

4.3 Global financing trends[9]

The previous sections confirmed that early recovery includes a broader range of activities than had previously been included in appeals under 'economic recovery'. Even with early recovery activities in other sectors, it is logical to hypothesise that expanding the scope for recovery-oriented projects in appeals would lead to nominal increases in funding requested under economic recovery and early recovery categories, particularly given efforts by the CWGER to ensure that early recovery needs are adequately captured in appeals. However, this has not consistently been the case, as economic recovery requirements have risen and fallen with more volatility compared to other sectors since 2007. As Figure 8 shows, there is a sharp rise in requirements for economic recovery in 2008 and a dip in 2009. This is a noticeable departure from the comparably steady rises in other sectors from 2007 to 2009.

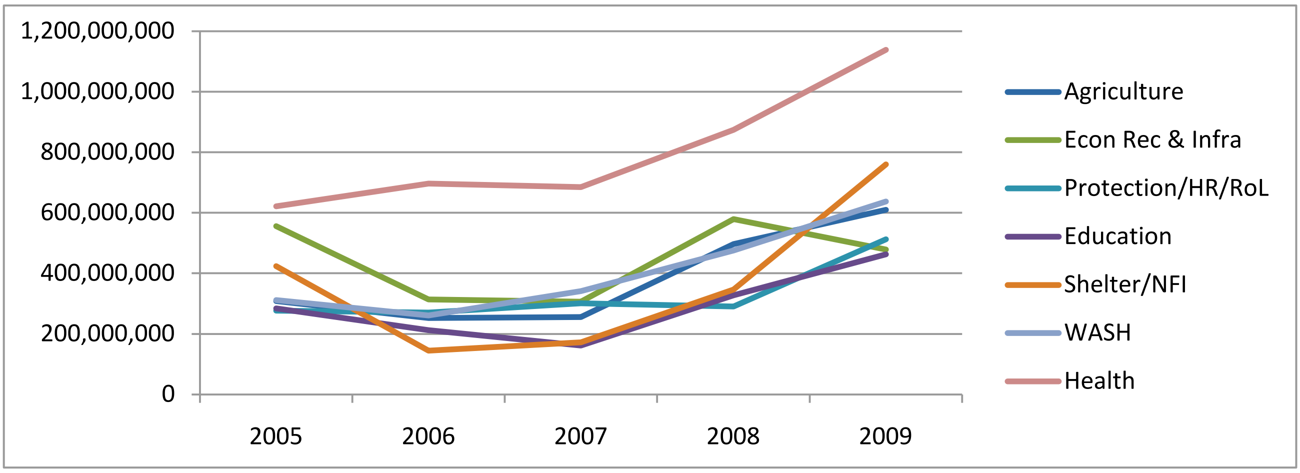
Understanding economic recovery financing trends in appeals therefore requires understanding why certain years had much larger requirements than others. As Figure 8 shows, economic recovery requirements and funding spiked in nominal terms in 2005 and 2008. The 2005 increase is a result of the Indian Ocean Tsunami appeal, with requirements in 2006 and 2007 notably decreasing. These trends were also evident in other sectors. However, the sharp increase in 2008 and subsequent decrease in 2009 appear to be unique to economic recovery requirements.

One explanation for this discrepancy is that economic recovery requirements were unusually high in 2008 and/or unusually low in 2009. In 2008, the spike can be mostly attributed to increasing economic recovery requirements in the Sudan Work Plan. Owing to developments in Southern Sudan, the recovery requirement in the Sudan Work Plan increased 20-fold in 2008, from $12 million in 2007 to $264 million. In both 2007 and 2008, only 15% of the requirement was meant.

It is also possible that the rise in 2008 was influenced by global and country-level debates about how early recovery fits into the appeals process. In late 2007 and 2008, there was momentum from the CWGER and other actors to ensure that early recovery activities were adequately represented in appeals. At the same time, there was substantial confusion as to what early recovery is and how it differs from the previous economic recovery categories used in appeals. The combination of increased attention to early recovery and varying interpretations could have led to more activities being included.

In 2009, economic recovery was the only major funding category where requirements were lower than the preceding year. While this drop can be partially explained by the larger than usual

Figure 8: Fund requirements in various sectors (2005–2009)*



*This figure does not include the food sector, which had requests of $2.1 billion in 2005 and $3.8 billion in 2009.

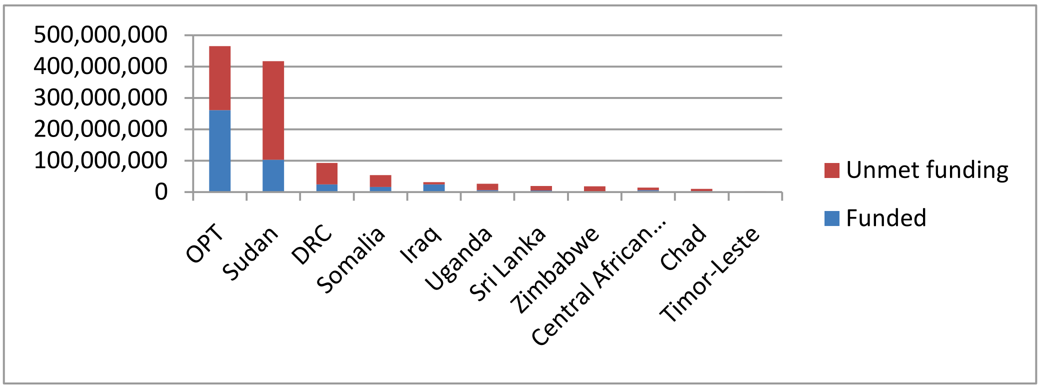
9. This section uses only data listed as Economic Recovery and Infrastructure, and does not include early recovery projects in other categories.

requirements in 2008, nominal economic recovery requirements also were lower in relation to other sectors compared to previous years. Between 2005 and 2008, economic recovery requests were nearly always greater than shelter, WASH, agriculture, protection and education. In 2009, education alone had a lower requirement. Once again, changes in the Sudan Work plan played a part here. At $140 million, the 2009 economic recovery request was nearly half what it was the year before.

The decrease in early recovery funding requirements in 2009 could also be related to changes in how early recovery activities were included in appeals. During this period, early recovery clusters began shifting their strategy to encourage the inclusion of projects in other funding categories (e.g. health, agriculture), using the 'early recovery' category only for activities that did not fit well in other sectors. There was also increasing clarity among agencies that long-term recovery issues should not be included in appeals as they were beyond the shorter-term scope of early recovery.

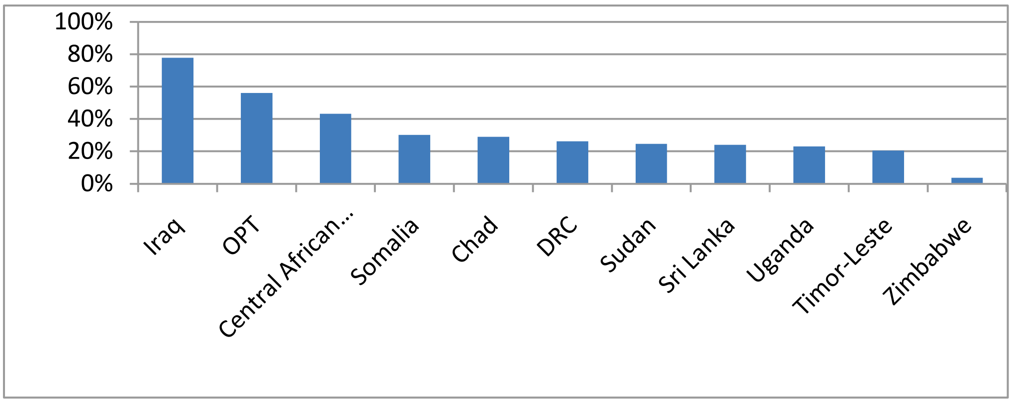
A final important trend is the variation in early recovery requirements and funding between different crises, shown in Figures 9 and 10. That OPT and Sudan have the highest requirements has already been discussed. Between 2007 and 2009, DRC had the third-largest economic recovery requirements, of which only one-quarter was financed. In 2009, early recovery was only 9% financed in DRC, undoubtedly playing a role in the decision to remove early recovery as a strategic objective in the HAP and pursue early recovery financing through the newly emerging stabilisation plan. Sri Lanka is another notable example. While its economic recovery requirement was considerably lower than that of DRC, it too received less than 10% financing in 2009.

Figure 9: Funding for economic recovery by crisis (2007–2009)*



* Some countries did not have economic recovery requirements and/or appeals for the entire period 2007–2009. With regard to the following countries, these years were included: Uganda (2007–2008), Iraq (2009), Timor-Leste (2007) and Zimbabwe (2007, 2009).

Figure 10: Average percentage of economic recovery requirements funded (2007–2009)



5. Early recovery in appeals: conclusions and recommendations

This final section looks at how trends in early recovery financing inform the way early recovery projects are identified and incorporated in appeals. The study highlights the following key trends:

Early recovery in appeals

- Donors have long been funding early recovery activities, even if appeal categories and projects prior to 2006 had a stronger emphasis on economic recovery and infrastructure.
- There is increasing consistency in how early recovery is addressed in appeals, as activities are done through other sectors and through an early recovery/economic recovery cluster or funding category.
- A few appeals, notably DRC and Uganda, have moved away from early recovery language and reaffirmed their humanitarian focus.

Early recovery activities in early recovery and economic recovery categories

- Early recovery activities under early/economic recovery headings received an average of 45% of their financial requirements between 2005 and 2009. While they are undoubtedly underfunded, this is on a par with activities in protection, education, agriculture, health, WASH and shelter sectors, which received on average 42–50% of their requirements. Food assistance far and away receives the largest amount of financing, both in nominal terms and as a percentage of requested funds.
- There is a wide range of early recovery projects in appeals, with a strong focus on community recovery, livelihoods and displacement, return and reintegration in terms of nominal requirements and funding; in Sudan and OPT, there is a strong focus respectively on road rehabilitation and employment.
- With the possible exception of road rehabilitation, the type of activity does not appear to be a significant factor in whether early recovery projects are funded.
- There is substantial regional variation in how early recovery is funded. OPT has the highest requirements and a higher percentage of these requirements are met than in most other appeals; DRC, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe met less than 10% of their early recovery requirements in 2009.

Early recovery activities in other sectors

- Early recovery projects in other sectors received an average of 47% of their financing requirements, which is similar to projects in early recovery and economic recovery categories in appeals.
- The types of early recovery activities across sectors are extremely diverse. Infrastructure, capacity-building, livelihoods support and displacement, return and reintegration were common types of activities across different sectors.
- The funding of early recovery activities varied substantially by sector, with multi-sector activities receiving the highest percentage of their financing requests, and education and shelter receiving the lowest.
- Funding of early recovery activities in other sectors also varied by region, with Zimbabwe having the lowest and Burundi the highest percentage of financing requirements met.

The above trends provide a solid picture about how early recovery has been included and financed in appeals. However, they offer little insight as to what makes for success in the funding of early recovery activities. In fact, no one interviewed for this study felt that the type of early recovery activity had much to do with whether funding was secured. Rather, they emphasised other factors:

- Strong communication with donors and good understanding about how an appeal incorporates early recovery, including how early recovery projects differ from recovery and why they should not be incorporated into recovery mechanisms.
- Adapting project language to donor and country priorities, whether emphasising ‘humanitarian-ness’ or ‘recovery-ness’, environmental components, peace-building impacts, etc.
- Clearly linking projects to context analysis, needs and ideally needs assessments.
- Confidence in agencies leading, planning and implementing early recovery activities and demonstrable added value.
- Political factors, including the extent to which donors and crisis-affected governments want to support recovery-oriented activities through humanitarian channels.

Donors are interested in further exploring how early recovery activities can be most appropriately incorporated into appeals, including whether a set of 'control questions' should be applied. Other than a general explanation and shared understanding as to how early recovery projects are included in an appeal, there was little enthusiasm for having sets of control questions specific to early recovery activities. As one informant noted, to make such questions meaningful they would have to be incredibly detailed and context-specific; anything that could be broadly applied to different contexts would be too generic to be useful. Another interviewee stated that projects can always be tailored to meet different criteria; failing that, activities could be incorporated into another part of the appeal. It was also noted that mountains of guidance on early recovery already exist.

Several interviewees noted a lack of consensus around what early recovery means in their particular context, but some felt that efforts to further 'define' early recovery were not necessary as the variety of prevailing interpretations would make consensus impossible. Rather, they felt that the focus should remain on (or be redirected towards) planning and implementing activities that respond to context-specific needs, priorities and capacities in the most appropriate manner. In line with this thinking, there was little support for an average set proportion in appeals funding for early recovery, as allocating a quota would shift attention away from planning activities that respond to beneficiary needs (an oft-cited weakness of humanitarian appeals).

5.1 Recommendations

These recommendations are based on the financial trends findings and interviews carried out for this study, as well as interviews conducted for previous research on early recovery. They are not meant to be a comprehensive roadmap for planning, implementing and funding early recovery activities; rather, they are practical suggestions to donors and those planning appeals on key issues surrounding early recovery in humanitarian appeals.

Early recovery activities and strategies in appeals should be firmly grounded in the reality of what assistance achieves. Laying foundations for recovery is an ambitious task, because how and why households and communities recover from crisis involves much more than international assistance. It is important that those planning and funding early recovery activities recognise the limitations of what one-year projects can achieve in crisis contexts, and that activities alone cannot be responsible for achieving recovery. If expectations are too high, early recovery activities will struggle to meet them. Donors and those creating appeals should therefore set objectives that are appropriate and modest, and tailor subsequent monitoring and evaluation accordingly.

Clearly link early recovery activities in appeals to context-specific analysis and assessments. The challenge of basing activities on needs and a strong understanding of the crisis context is hardly unique to early recovery, though early recovery projects seem to be held to higher standards than projects such as food aid. A stronger evidence base, and one that incorporates an understanding of political and economic factors, will make a stronger case for funding. Assessments should have support from humanitarian, development and government actors, lest they risk being seen as driven only by early recovery clusters. Current efforts to include an early recovery module in Post-Conflict Needs Assessments/Disaster Assessments (PCNA/PCDAs) should be supported and closely monitored. Early recovery clusters should also utilise and promote existing tools, such as the Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis (EMMA), which uses basic market assessments to inform programming.

Any decisions on explicitly flagging early recovery activities in other sectors need to be made in close consultation with other clusters. Some appeals signal which projects are early recovery by grouping all projects as 'humanitarian' or 'early recovery'. A similar option being discussed is flagging projects in other appeal sectors as being early recovery, so that donors have a clearer understanding of early recovery projects not under early recovery categories. Flagging projects in other appeal sectors as being early recovery would provide greater transparency, allow for a better understanding of early recovery projects not under early recovery categories and enable better tracking of these projects, their financing and impact. However, this should only be done if other clusters agree that it is useful and feasible. Labelling projects as early recovery is often thought to render them harder to fund. This fear is not unfounded. In DRC in 2009, for example, donors asked for early recovery projects to be made more explicit, but provided little funding once they were. The critical test is whether flagging projects as early recovery will ultimately improve assistance to affected populations through better programming, coordination and/or increased funding.

Do not become bogged down in what is humanitarian versus what is early recovery; pay more attention to early recovery versus recovery. Discussions about what is 'humanitarian' and what is 'early recovery' can focus over-much on labels and language that hide as much as they reveal. Moreover, early recovery and humanitarian projects all end up in humanitarian appeals, meaning that they all have the opportunity to receive financing from humanitarian donors. Perhaps more important is the distinction between 'early recovery' and 'recovery' activities in settings like Haiti, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Sudan, where significant recovery mechanisms are or will be in place. Activities which are deemed too recovery-oriented for humanitarian appeals therefore are directed towards recovery mechanisms.

Crisis-affected governments (and donors) may also prefer to use recovery mechanisms for early recovery activities, as financing for early recovery in appeals does not go through government channels. Activities targeted to recovery financing mechanisms will have more national ownership, but are also much more onerous and less rapid than humanitarian mechanisms. There is a risk that time-critical responses such as delivering basic services or promoting livelihoods recovery could be delayed if they are left solely to recovery mechanisms or significantly scaled back in humanitarian appeals. Southern Sudan unequivocally demonstrates the dangers of scaling back basic services through humanitarian channels when recovery mechanisms are not yet flexible enough to meet these needs. Donors and those planning appeals should therefore ensure that decisions to direct early recovery activities to recovery mechanisms are made because these are the most appropriate channels, and not solely because early recovery was not being adequately funded through humanitarian appeals.

Identify why early recovery activities receive less funding in some crises than in others. Funding early recovery is obviously more difficult in some crises than in others, but statistics on under-funding do not explain why this is the case. Do donors not think the activities should be prioritised, or are they concerned about how early recovery is being led, strategised and implemented? Statistics on under-funding in certain contexts should provide an impetus for understanding what is happening on the ground. For example, the surge in early recovery requirements in Sudan in 2008 can be explained by rapidly increasing recovery and reintegration priorities in Southern Sudan. Likewise, poor financing could be related to donors' preference for supporting recovery-oriented activities through the numerous funds being created around that time, or concerns about prioritising core humanitarian activities amidst shrinking humanitarian budgets. Understanding the recent failure to attract financing in DRC should be a top priority, as early recovery will now be programmed primarily under the auspices of stabilisation, which will have implications for what types of activities are funded, who they target and where they take place. It is also crucial to focus on and learn from positive examples.

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