

E. ISSUES FOR RECONSTRUCTION

125. As the transition from the emergency and relief moves to reconstruction, several key issues emerge for the short to medium term period. The quantification of damage and recognition of needs received, given its sector by sector nature, allows for concrete, specific proposals for action in sector or geographic terms. However, certain cross cutting issues need to be considered in the design of the reconstruction strategy. A guideline on such cross cutting issues can act as tool for determining priorities (importance vs. urgency) and sequencing (timeline for reconstruction process), i.e. restore livelihood conditions while physical reconstruction of housing, production, and infrastructure proceed.

126. These guidelines on cross-cutting issues for a medium term reconstruction strategy can be summarized in the following box:

Table 4. Cross - cutting guidelines for the medium term reconstruction process

1. Post disaster relief
 - Protecting the most vulnerable
 - Making temporary shelters more livable
2. Moving from relief to reconstruction
 - Getting people back to work
 - Restore and upgrade infrastructure and services wherever possible
 - Secure livelihoods with value added
 - Maximize the use of local procurement in recovery efforts
3. Prospective risk reduction
 - A healthy environment for long term security and sustainability
 - Prospective risk management for a multi-hazard context
 - Organize communities to respond to emergency situations
 - Provide timely information on risk and early warning accessible to local communities
4. Governance and policy framework
 - Nationally and local driven recovery
 - Short term rehabilitation and medium term reconstruction not hinged on long term development
 - Balance between government and participation
 - Respect for cultural diversity and specificities
 - Improve equity of access rights and the distribution of productive assets
 - Transparent and effective monitoring of the recovery process (ensure accountability)

127. Timely phasing out of relief into recovery will be closely associated with the release of the “reconstruction packages” for livelihoods, and productive activities (e.g. fisheries and housing) as soon as possible. Since the recovery of livelihoods is the foundation of reconstruction, getting people back to work (either return to pre-tsunami activities or income generation through participation in public works, work for food programs, such as rebuilding infrastructure, clean up of silted soils and water sources, etc.) is key to getting the local economy moving again.

128. Recovery and reconstruction are opportunities to improve living and livelihood conditions—to this end, interventions and program in infrastructure, both public and private, should strive to provide employment and training to those affected, increase energy efficiency, and provide the structures needed for supply and market chain efficiencies; thus recovery in a sense involves the broader community beyond the strict limits of the affected physical area and the directly affected population. Likewise, livelihood interventions that seek to increase value added in the production processes, to improve return to the producer, provide opportunities for skill up gradation and training, and minimize production and transaction costs will be commensurate with broader development goals. This is to say that recovery and rehabilitation do not wholly concern replicating previous livelihoods. Rather, traditional livelihoods should be improved, and where needed, alternative livelihoods, particularly among women, should be supported. Recovery and rehabilitation phases provide opportunities to increase equality within communities, more evenly distribute ownership of assets, and improve the condition of women and other vulnerable groups.

129. The environment of the region is both a resource of national importance and the basis for the livelihoods of a substantial number of people in the affected areas. In this context the process is to find the appropriate balance between environmental rehabilitation/conservation and sustainable livelihoods.

130. Participatory planning will result in plans that meet the needs and have the support of the affected community, and will therefore be the most effective. As an example, tribal groups and fishers that have distinctive lifestyles which are in themselves a part of the cultural heritage of India, will require solutions that are responsive to these societies' need to maintain their integrity, at the same time developing programs that result in the improvement of the quality of their lives.

131. For all the interventions, knowledge of scientifically tested and accepted methods in keeping with internationally agreed values and principles will facilitate the adoption of appropriate solutions. Monitoring mechanisms put in place to assess and advise would facilitate the implementation of these interventions.

132. Local recovery efforts, already begun, should not be tied to the lengthy process of approval of international loans and the development of all encompassing “master plans”. In other words an incremental process of local recovery already in its initial stages is moving in parallel with decision making on more strategic issues (such as vulnerability reduction, sea protection, relocation of affected/displaced households, and restoration of livelihoods).

133. Recovery will be more effective if it maximizes the use of locally available inputs (labor, materials, and services) so that it contributes to the recovery of the local economy. Cash for work programs used in areas such as rebuilding of houses and local infrastructure, cleanup remaining activities, soil recovery, reforestation of mangroves etc. are a way of kick-starting the local economies.

134. Sectoral needs analysis suggests to carefully apply certain principles in detail and further examine certain issues which the JAM considers cannot be resolved in such a short timeframe. These include the need to:

- Embed community participation and apply equity based principles to the reconstruction process in vulnerable communities;
- Consider locational setback taking into account the challenges in the application of the coastal regulation zone;
- Consider the feasibility of uniform building standards across different affected states and union territories (to be further applied to all states and union territories).
- Enable flexible assistance for creative and diversified changes in economic activities, balanced against local realities in such a change process; and
- Provide financial solutions to bridge short-term lack of income / resources due to job and productive capital losses.