

Core government functions

United Nations Development Programme



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Restoring Core Government Functions

Armed conflicts or major natural disasters often shatter the capacity of governmental institutions to respond and ensure rapid recovery. Weak or inadequate government structures, aid management, coordination, service delivery or inability to restore and pay the civil service can undermine humanitarian, relief and recovery efforts. Crisis-affected populations look at government institutions as critical service providers in recovering from a shock. As a result, when people's needs are not met by government institutions the social contract between a government and its people may be undermined, particularly in fragile contexts where conflict may relapse and peacebuilding may be compromised. It is therefore imperative that international actors, the State and civil society, work together early on at national and local levels to build – or rebuild – the social contract in crisis-affected countries.



Lebanese young man Waleed looks at the informal tented settlement for Syrian refugees that was set up in his land in the village of Gaza, in the Bekaa Valley, east of Lebanon. Photo: Dalia Khamissy/UNDP

UNDP seeks to guarantee strong national ownership of early recovery endeavors and contribute to longer-term development and reconstruction through a rapid, effective, inclusive and participatory approach to recovery. UNDP's objective when assisting government institutions in the aftermath of a crisis is to immediately reinforce national and local government institutions and systems to operate throughout the crisis and to strengthen their capacities to respond more effectively to future ones. UNDP is uniquely placed among development actors due to its flexibility to engage in extension of State authority and restoring core government functions in the immediate aftermath of crisis.

Local Governance: In Lebanon, in response to the Syria crisis, UNDP provided support enabling local authorities and municipalities to expand services to both host communities and 1.2 million Syrian refugees. At the local level, UNDP has scaled up its engagement in 45 most-impacted Lebanese communities hosting Syrian refugees through provision of basic services projects and a capacity-building programme in the areas of governance, dispute resolution, and dialogue. As a result, local development plans have been jointly set up and 45 mechanisms for social stability established, targeting over 80,000 beneficiaries. 241 projects have been implemented, targeting more than 50,000 beneficiaries: 65 related to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) targeting 135,000 beneficiaries, 22 related to municipal services (roads and bridges, for example) targeting 45,000 beneficiaries, 48 related to education targeting 100,000 beneficiaries, 51 related to health targeting 105,000 beneficiaries, and 55 related to livelihood and income generation targeting 115,000 beneficiaries.

UNDP Crisis Response Package

UNDP's Crisis Response Package on Core Government Functions will provide Country Offices with the specific programming advice, operational processes, and technical capacity to establish basic civil service functions such as supporting the capacity to deliver essential services; reinforcing national aid management and coordination systems; restoring the ability to pay civil servants; supporting central and local government recovery planning and policy-making capacity; and setting up systems for inclusive and responsive governance.

This package includes three guidance notes: Restoration of Local Governance; Aid Management; and Extension of Civil Service as well as assessment and project management tools such as capacity assessment questionnaires, monitoring guidelines, and sample project documents and budgets.

Through UNDP rosters and stand-by partners, deployable capacity

will be available to support Country Offices in implementing this Crisis Response Package. Areas of expertise will include local governance advisors, government assessment experts and aid coordination advisors. UNDP can also count on expertise and services of the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) through an existing Framework for Joint Action in Crisis Contexts. In addition to existing Long Term Agreements (LTAs) for procurement of essential goods and services supporting governmental institutions, such as Information Technology software and hardware systems, Office in a Box, UNDP can count on non-UNDP global LTAs from other UN funds or programmes, such as for generators, motor vehicles, satellite images. New LTAs will also be sought for instance on electronic payments providers. Fast Track processes in procurement, financial management and human resources will also ensure rapid implementation of the interventions supported by this package. Communication and advocacy tools, tailored to this specific package will also be available to UNDP managers and national counterparts. With this package, Country Offices will be able to design and implement time-critical interventions that support Local Governance, Extension of Civil Service, and Aid Management.

Local Governance, Extension of Civil Service, and Aid Management

On **Local Governance** UNDP's support includes: repairing infrastructure of local government facilities; supporting temporary staffing for local authorities, in particular for critical service delivery (debris management, for example); boosting capacity for local governance actors (municipality offices, planning and communications, for example); supporting effective coordination and division of roles for leadership/coordination of the recovery between central and local authorities; supporting coordination of service delivery with local governments and other local actors, such as community-based organizations (CBOs) and NGOs; facilitating participatory and collaborative governance mechanisms; supporting delivery of basic services (including infrastructure repairs); strengthening social cohesion; and, reinforcing community security.

On **Extension of Civil Service**, UNDP's support entails: establishing coordination architecture; assessing strength of national systems (payroll, geographic coverage, payment platforms and beneficiary lists, for example); auditing of payroll / registration of payees; making emergency payments through national systems; and reinforcing national payment systems through mobile and electronic banking.

Extension of Civil Service – Ebola Virus Disease crisis response: UNDP supported the payment of Ebola Response Workers (ERWs): health sector workers, hospital staff, or district medical officers that were at the forefront of responding to the Ebola Virus Disease crisis in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. At the height of the crisis, as casualties mounted, many more ERWs were hired to work as part of the emergency response, supporting contact tracing, safe burials and community mobilization amongst other functions. Today, across the three countries, as a result of UNDP's work, between 95 and 100 percent of registered Ebola workers (approximately 38,000 people) are linked to payment mechanisms. In most payment cycles, more than 90 percent of registered Ebola workers are being paid on time. UNDP has supported the harmonization of pay scales, established complaint handling mechanisms and moved to electronic and mobile delivery of money, ensuring that ERWs have access to and control over their Hazard Pay.

On **Aid Management**, UNDP's support includes: setting up aid coordination structures, including assessments, planning, project appraisal process, regular reporting and cluster/ thematic coordination systems; improving organizational capacity of departments responsible for aid management; ensuring that aid links to national policy and the national budget cycle; and improving transparency and mutual accountability of financial information.

Aid Management – UNDP Haiti: In 2008, the Government of Haiti and UNDP agreed on a partnership to promote more transparent and accountable use of international assistance in Haiti. This included the establishment of a publicly accessible financial tracking system. The Government, with the Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation as the lead, decided to install the Aid Management Platform (AMP). The project was implemented after the earthquake by UNDP in consultation with the Office of the Special Envoy for Haiti and the Office of the Prime Minister. The AMP has allowed for transparent, easy information-sharing and storing among all government entities and other participating partners. Reliable aid reports can be generated easily, thanks to enhanced donor discipline. These are now generated quarterly. This included the creation of a pledge tracking module as well as features allowing for humanitarian, recovery and development assistance to be tracked simultaneously, and for disaster risk management to be streamlined.



*In Liberia, UNDP helped the government pay thousands of Ebola workers.
Photo: Lesley Wright/UNDP*

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