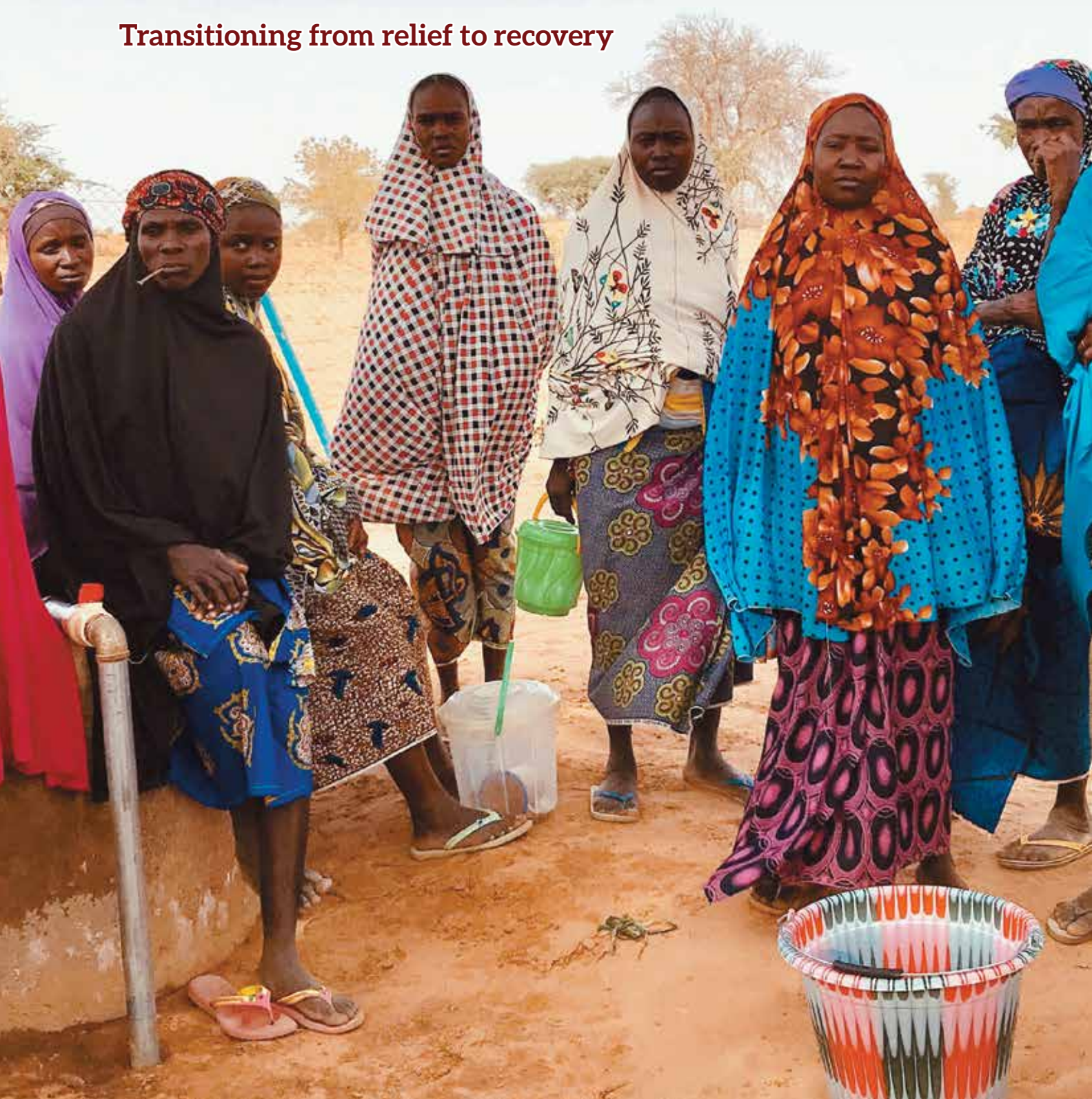




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Baseline study on disaster recovery in Africa

Transitioning from relief to recovery





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UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in nearly 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	5
Chapter 1. Introduction	7
Rationale for the Study	7
Purpose of the Study	8
Methodological Approach	9
Chapter 2. Conceptual Approach to Recovery	10
UNDP's approach to recovery	10
Chapter 3: Africa's Climate and Disaster Risk	12
Trends in urbanization	13
Africa's climate profile	13
Chapter 4. Post-Disaster Recovery Processes in Africa	17
4.1. Analysis and Key Findings	19
a. Recovery policies, including vision and principles at country and regional levels	19
b. General practices/experiences in recovery planning and management at the national and regional level	22
c. Overall allocation of financial resources for recovery from government and bilateral/ multilateral agencies	36
d. Key recovery institutions, both at national and regional level	47
Chapter 5. Conclusions and the Way Forward	51
Key achievements	51
Gaps and opportunities	51
Challenges	52
The way forward	53
Annex I: List of Acronyms	55
Annex II. Case Studies	62
Annex III. References	114
Annex IV. Resources Persons	124
Annex V. Guide for In-depth Interviews	127

List of Figures

Figure 1. How Recovery fits into a positive DRM framework	5
Figure 2. Illustration of where the Africa region is positioned on the transition curve from relief to recovery	6
Figure 3. State of Recovery in the African Region	6
Figure 4. Flood hot spot markings in emerging markets	13
Figure 5. Annual loss in relation to capital investment	14
Figure 6. Urban growth in geographical regions	14
Figure 7. The Most Important Hazard (as perceived by rural households)	63
Figure 8. The Structure of the Commission	65
Figure 9. Illustration of geographic spread of OSNP operating in Ethiopia	68
Figure 10. Linkages between PSNP and Other Food Security Programmes	69
Figure 11. Distribution of ASAL counties in Kenya	72
Figure 12. The Drought Cycle highlighting the period of mitigation and recovery/reconstruction	75
Figure 13. Malawi DRM Mechanism	82
Figure 14. The Policy and Legal Framework for DRM and Recovery	89
Figure 15. Flood map of Nigeria	97
Figure 16. Coordination Structure of the DRM in Nigeria	100
Figure 17. Institutional Framework for Nigeria's Flood Early Warning System	101
Figure 18. National Disaster Preparedness and Management Structure	110

List of Tables

Table 1. Recovery Policies by Regional Institutions	23
Table 2. Experience in Recovery Planning and Management	32
Table 3. Participation of Various Stakeholders in the Recovery Process	37
Table 4. Financing for Recovery	45
Table 5. Establishment of Recovery Institutions	49
Table 6. Types of Public Works' Outcomes and Activities Communities May Select	67



Executive Summary

*Baseline Study on Recovery in Africa: Transitioning from Relief to Recovery*¹ seeks to present a comprehensive review of post-disaster recovery in Africa. The study is meant to contribute to an enhanced understanding and knowledge of recovery processes in the continent. Ultimately, it aims to provide insights on recovery management, policies and programmes to inform and improve future recovery processes in Africa.

Conceptual approach to Recovery

Recovery is defined as “the restoring or improving of livelihoods and health, as well as economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets, systems and activities, of a disaster-affected community or society, aligning with the principles of sustainable development and “build back better”, to avoid or reduce future disaster risk” (UNDRR, 2017). Inherent in this notion of recovery is the notion of resilience, defined as the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management.

The two notions together formed the framework used by this study to evaluate the processes and in some cases the measures with which governments were engaged following a disaster.

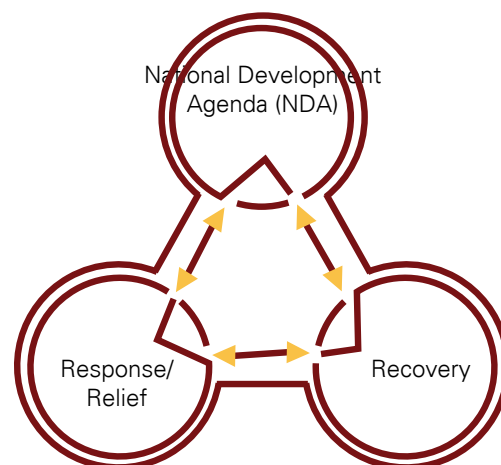
Findings

Much has occurred to shape and transform the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) landscape in Africa over the last decade or so (2005 - 2017). The Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the

Africa Union, the UN system and other international development partners have played their part in assisting national platforms and systems for DRM to develop. However, post-disaster recovery in Africa, as a systematic process within DRM systems and policies, is not yet consolidated, and the approach in the region is still focused on humanitarian response rather than sustainable recovery and risk reduction. In essence, the transition from disaster response to risk-centered recovery approaches is still in the process of consolidation, with clear governmental commitments.

National experiences show that several aspects of the risk continuum, where a transition from the response to recovery is supposed to happen, are not easily integrated into existing national and financial structures established for the purpose of fulfilling the National Development Agenda (NDA). It is the global experience that when risk is properly planned for as part of the NDA,

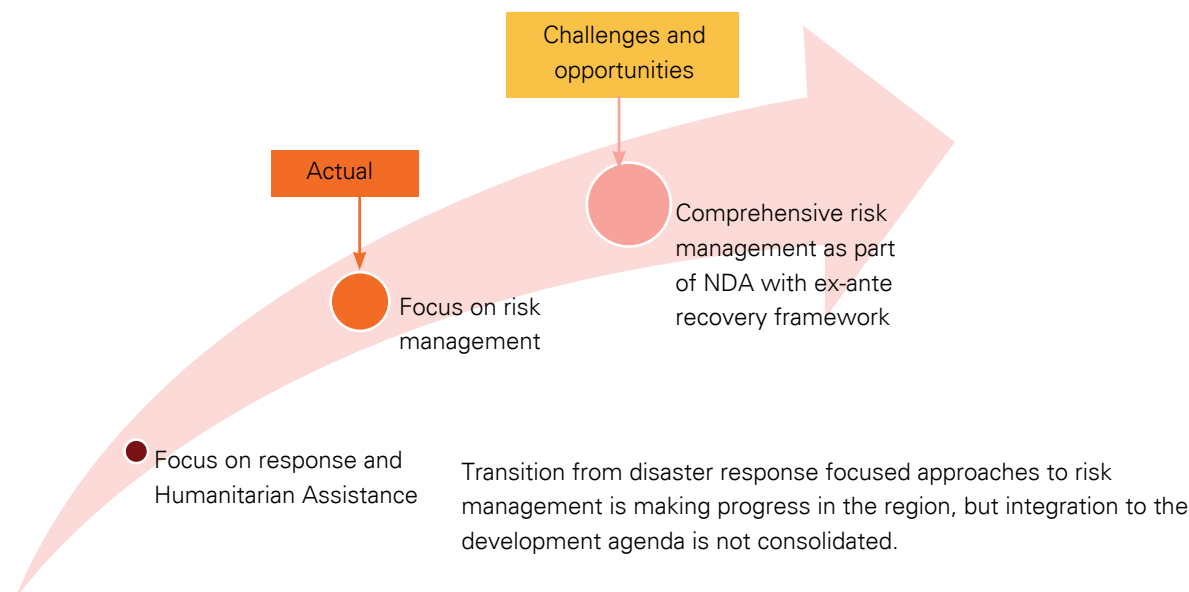
Figure 1. How Recovery Fits into a Positive DRM Framework



Positive Disaster Risk Management exists when Recovery is strongly driven by the NDA and risk is understood and planned for.

¹ The baseline study was meant to capture data and knowledge covering the last decade, on the state of the management of recovery processes in Africa. The Study did not seek to evaluate the success, or lack thereof, of recovery initiatives in the region.

Figure 2: Illustration of where the Africa region is positioned on the transition curve from relief to recovery



recovery too is adequately included within the DRM system. When the national systems do not reflect such an appreciation of risk, inclusion of recovery presents a great challenge for the DRM agenda and the NDA.

Institutional mandates and regulatory frameworks for DRR do not include recovery as a process, or only partially define it.

The organizational, functional and financial structures for recovery differ from those of response—with more operational and humanitarian characteristics—whereas the transition from a state of emergency to a recovery process implies a substantial shift in responsible

Finally, the notion of recovery as including both structural and non-structural aspects is not yet commonly adopted by the region. In fact, most of the countries studied continue to focus mainly on infrastructure repairs or reconstruction, although in many cases, the process is called recovery.

Partially the explanation lies in the pressure to rebuild infrastructure bringing visible, tangible and immediate results highly covered by the media and/or in national or local politics, and this continues to shape the recovery agenda in many countries.

Figure 3: State of Recovery in the African

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