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Bridging Urban Planning Knowledge into Post-Disaster Response

Early Recovery Road Map within the International Humanitarian Cluster System

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1. Introduction

Despite the increasing volume of planning literature addressing post-disaster recovery and the valuable association between planners and emergency management experts in industrialised societies (Schwab ed. 2014, Smith 2011; Mileti 1999; Godschalk et al. 1998; and Haas et al. 1977); connecting the humanitarian response with local planning in urban disaster settings is overlooked in the international humanitarian response system. While the humanitarian response system has been through several evolutionary phases, the sectoral approach still dominates the humanitarian response operations. It is observed that the response framework is usually focused on the administration of narrowly defined post-disaster aid programs (Bailey et al. 2009; IFRC 2006) rather than concentrating on the means necessary to build local capacity; facilitate inter-organizational coordination or address risk and vulnerabilities issues in land use planning (Schwab ed. 2014; Smith 2011). Humanitarian assistance efforts have provided valuable assistance to affected communities in crisis. They have done so without consideration of possible unintentional increases in overall disaster risk and the need for future assistance by increasing aid dependency, vulnerability, and reducing coping capacities (Bailey et al. 2009; Twigg 2004; and Mileti 1999).

Operating organizations are required to quickly establish strategic recovery goals in partnership with local governments, local NGOs, and communities with the aim to plan for a proper exit strategy of the international humanitarian organizations. The strategic goals in the post-disaster response operation are aiming to link emergency response with recovery at an early stage. They are supposed to pave the way for the transition from response to recovery and enable the handover of operations to local and development actors. Linking emergency response with recovery concepts is defined as Early Recovery (ER) by the International Humanitarian Cluster System (GCER 2014), and Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) as defined by the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) (Ramet 2012). While both notions conceptualize the bridging of humanitarian response with long-term development, their aim is yet to be operationalised and achieved (Nouredine Tag-Eldeen 2015; Thomas 2015; Barham et al. 2011; IASC 2010; and Bailey et al. 2009). Notwithstanding the goodwill and humanitarian intentions of the international organizations and donor agencies, it appears that their starting point is mainly focused on a “quick delivery - high impact” rather than being predicated on any coherent early recovery program that integrates well with long-term economic and societal sustainable development goals.

This paper explores the viability of employing well-established planning knowledge to provide systematic ways to integrate the sectoral response activities that, especially in complex urban settings, help linking the humanitarian response with recovery and development. A conceptual and operational framework named Early Recovery Road Map (ERRoMap) using urban planning knowledge is suggested as a new dimension to be added to

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