



Community Risk Reduction



Safer, Healthier  
Communities

# Desbarras

## VULNERABILITY AND CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

*April 2010*





## **Acknowledgements**

The dedication of persons from the Desbarras community, who attended and participated in the VCA training, and the support from the Principal of the Desbarras Combined School, who made the school available for conducting the weekly sessions, were paramount in getting this document finalized. The community members of Desbarras reflected the camaraderie and spirit that has been synonymous with St. Lucian communities especially the youth sector of the community. The service given to the process by the volunteers from the St. Lucia Red Cross National Intervention Team continues to reflect the dedication of the organization in ensuring that our communities are safer and healthier.

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## Table of contents

<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Foreword .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Part 1: Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment of Forestiere Village .....</b>	<b>7</b>
What is VCA? .....	7
How is the VCA carried out? .....	8
1. Gathering data from secondary sources .....	9
2. Direct observation .....	10
3. Focus group discussions .....	11
<b>Part 2: Risk assessment in Forestiere Village .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Methodology for a Risk assessment .....	16
1. Identifying hazards and their potential impact on the community .....	17
2. Local capacity to respond to hazards .....	19
3. Type of measures to mitigate disasters .....	21
4. Ability to act on hazards (CIT analysis) .....	24
5. Plan of action .....	27
<b>Conclusion: The next steps .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Annex 1: List of participants in the Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment .....</b>	<b>30</b>



## **Abstract**

Initial focus group sessions and community meetings commenced in December of 2009 to mobilize the community and build an awareness of the VCA process and the project within the community. The actual VCA sessions started in January of 2010. During the early stages of the VCA training, the initial participation was indeed low and comprised predominantly of young people; however, with some community sensitization, a final core group of twenty (20) participants became regular attendees. The core group of VCA participants came from a wide cross section of the community and their various professions added to the diversity of the group.

The training sessions took place predominantly on Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm at the Primary School, which is also an emergency shelter and serves as a focal point for community activities. During the time period from January to April, a total of twelve data collection sessions were carried out with the project team and the community members. A number of other meeting sessions were organized by the participants themselves to facilitate the data collection which included engaging the rest of the community members in discussions.

The group members continue to meet as they finalize plans for the execution of the community micro project and put other plans in place for the sensitization of the community especially during the hurricane season.



## **Foreword**

The present VCA study was carried out through a series of community meetings from December 2009 to April 2010 with various organizations in Desbarras and the residents of the community

This study is part of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) regional project “Improving the preparedness of Caribbean communities to respond to disasters affecting their locality”. This program, implemented in 2010-2011, covers the National Societies of Trinidad & Tobago, Surinam, Bahamas, Guyana, St. Kitts and Antigua, through the support of the European Commission Office for Humanitarian Aid (ECHO) and the United States Office for Disaster Assistance (OFDA).

## **Acronyms**

CIA	Change / Influence / Accept
CIT	Change / Influence / Transform
ECHO	European Commission Office for Humanitarian Aid
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
OFDA	United States Office for Disaster Assistance
VCA	Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
NEMO	National Emergency and Management Organisation
SLURC	St. Lucia Red Cross
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
CDRT	Community Disaster Response Team



## Introduction

In January of 2010, Desbarras embarked on a journey of self-analysis, examining its strengths and weaknesses, the external and internal threats and the resources it has to cope with these threats. Heads of households, local leaders of religious and sports groups, and workers of all trades discussed the history of their community and the problems they encounter. They shared their experiences and their tips for overcoming daily difficulties. As a group, they identified the main problems ahead and discussed the future of their common home.

The process was organized by volunteers and staff of the St. Lucia Red Cross Society (SLURC) as part of a region-wide attempt to improve community-based disaster preparedness. The community work was based on the methodology known as “Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment,” or VCA. The purpose of this assessment is to identify and understand the most pressing issues and threats in the community (vulnerabilities) while simultaneously identifying the local and external resources available to minimize the risks to the villagers (capacity).

The VCA approach is composed of a series of tools for community-based participatory consultations to ensure a better understanding of how the community functions. Behind this process lies the assumption that a community more aware of its own limitations can better organize itself to overcome them. In the context of the SLURC project, the stated objective was to improve the capacity of the community to cope with the disaster-related risks in its environment.

To this end, the first section summarizes the results from the VCA process, as carried out in Desbarras. It presents the history, the local dynamics and the coming challenges as perceived by the people who live in Desbarras. Although this program specifically focuses on natural disasters and hazard mitigation strategies, the results presented in this first section provide guidelines for a broader approach towards sustainable community development.

The second section focuses on the output from the community focus groups in relation to the risks faced by the community: What are the main risks? Can they be mitigated? By whom? Using the results presented in the proposed Action Plan, the community members – supported by SLURC teams – will identify and implement strategies to mitigate these risks. The information gathered here will also provide the necessary baseline information for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the community.



## Part 1: Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment of Desbarras

### What is VCA?

Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) is a participatory investigative process designed to assess the risks that people face in their locality, their vulnerability to those risks, and the capacities they possess to cope with a hazard and recover from it when it strikes. Through VCA, National Societies can work with vulnerable communities to identify the risks and take steps to reduce them by drawing on their own skills, knowledge and initiative. **In sum, VCA helps people to prepare for hazards, to prevent them from turning into disasters and to mitigate their effects.**<sup>1</sup>

***Vulnerability*** can be defined as:

*The characteristics of a person or group in terms of their capacity to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impact of natural or man-made hazards.*

The

definition of vulnerability suggests that it cannot be described without reference to a specific hazard or shock. So, the question that must always be asked is, "Vulnerability to what?" People living along coastal areas or rivers may be vulnerable to seasonal storms and flooding, while the inhabitants of countries with social, political and economic problems may face difficulties in achieving a satisfactory and sustainable quality of life.

*The reverse of vulnerability is **capacity**, which can be described as:  
The resources of individuals, households, communities, institutions and  
nations to resist the impact of a hazard.*

The coping strategies of people in response to various hazards will differ from one society to another and will often change over time. People in chronically-prone countries facing multiple hazards, such as drought, locust infestation and civil unrest, find their capacity levels weakening, reducing their ability to mitigate the effects of the next crisis.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted from *VCA toolbox with reference sheets*, IFRC, Geneva, 2007, page 6.

<sup>2</sup> Quote and definitions from *Vulnerability and capacity assessment, An International Federation Guide*, IFRC, Geneva, 1999, page 11-12.



## How is the VCA carried out?

The VCA process relies on a few key principles:

**Data collection:** Preliminary data can be collected through the use of questionnaires developed specifically for each community or for each type of hazard. However, as information is not always immediately available on the ground – because of time constraints, security issues or financial resources – the VCA process also relies on the gathering of secondary data. Precious information about the community can be gathered from research by government bodies, the United Nations and other development- and research-based organizations.

**Community participation:** The goal of the VCA process is to empower the community to allow it to respond on its own to the risks to which it is subjected – or allow it to identify those who can help it to respond. For this reason, community members constitute the core of the process. The main criterion for a successful VCA is the receptiveness of the local community and its willingness to be an active part of the process. Only if all vulnerable groups are included can they find collective answers to the threats they face.

**Sharing information:** The VCA process helps the community understand its relation to its environment. Through discussions among neighbors and the collection of data, the community members will be better able to understand – and therefore reduce – the threats to which it is subjected. The final VCA document also offers an opportunity to share information beyond the community by bringing up issues to the relevant authorities, partner organizations or local leaders.

The VCA is mainly used ***to identify in advance, and change where possible, the conditions that create or contribute to the state of vulnerability of at-risk populations.***<sup>3</sup> As such, the main usefulness of VCA comes from an improved understanding of the risks and of measures to mitigate those risks. To gather all information relevant to a better understanding of the community, the following steps have been followed:

1. Review of secondary sources: this first crucial step consists in collecting information that already exists, to avoid duplicating efforts already carried out. Most of this phase consists in collecting written material, or identifying all resources relating to a better understanding of the community;
2. Direct observation: A summary presentation of the community, by someone external, often allows to get a first impression of the local dynamics and main issues;
3. Focus group discussions: The heart of the VCA process lies in this phase of community interaction, using tools for the involvement of all stakeholders.

Based on these three steps (presented hereafter in points 1, 2 and 3), disaster-related information has been gathered and is presented in part 2.

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<sup>3</sup> Idem, page 12, emphasis added.





## 1. Gathering data from secondary sources

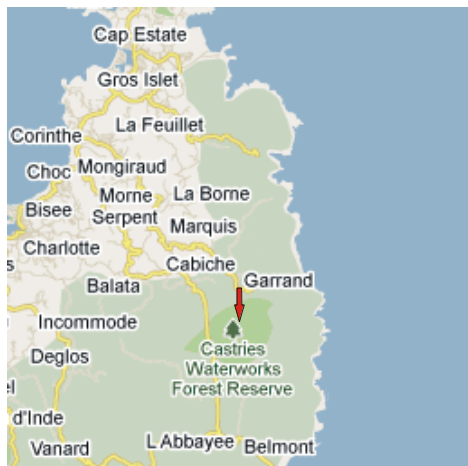
### Location of the community



The community is located in the Northeast interior of the island within the Castries Waterworks Forest Reserve: 13.976099, -60.907545

### Population of the Community

300





## ***2. Direct observation***

The small community of Desbarras is located in the interior North-East portion of the island and is located within the Castries Waterworks Forest reserve, just about 16Km away from the main City of Castries. The community is considered rural with a large portion of lands being allocated to agriculture. The community also had a high number of persons involved in other forms of employment with the government and private sector.

- The dominant Christian denominations are Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist and Pentecostal;
- The community is located within a forest reserve with high rainfall;
- The Primary school serves as the church for the community;
- 2 other churches in the community, Pentecostal and Seventh day Adventist;
- Very poor transportation system in and out of the community;
- One Primary School – Debarras Combined School which has a total of 23 students;
- Community is rather prone to landslides due to its precipitous nature;
- There is an absence of a health Center;
- 1 makeshift playing field;
- 1 Mothers and Fathers Hall;
- 3 stand pipes;
- Community youth engaged as tour guides for a turtle watching programme;
- Communities beach plagued with illegal sand-mining and turtle harvesting, however that has been curbed dramatically with the communities involvement
- Large presence of underground streams thus the community always has water;
- High presence of wooden and wall houses;
- Absence of hurricane retrofitting on wooden houses;
- A percentage of houses still use pit latrines;
- Very poor drainage within the community except for the main road;
- 4 main entrances into the community, one via Boguis, Dennery, Grand Anse Beach and the main road, however only the Boguis Road and the main road can accommodate vehicle with ease;
- Very narrow main road with numerous hairpin bends and poor lighting at most points;
- Good garbage collection system;
- A major concern over the absence of community groups
- Community disputes over the use and ownership of the Mothers and Fathers' Hall
- 6 shops
- 4 Poultry farms
- Rastafarian farm



### ***3. Focus group discussions***

***A focus group discussion is a qualitative information-gathering tool whereby a group of selected individuals, guided by a facilitator, are invited to give their thoughts and views on a specific issue.***<sup>4</sup>

To facilitate the process of interaction with key community stakeholders, the International Federation has developed a series of tools for participatory appraisals. These include, but are not limited to:

- a. Historical profile;
- b. Historical visualization;
- c. Seasonal calendar;
- d. Institutional and social network analysis;
- e. Livelihoods and coping strategies analysis;
- f. Mapping;
- g. Transect Walk/Cross Section;
- h. Household/neighborhood vulnerability assessment;
- i. Assessing the capacity of people's organizations;
- j. Venn diagram.

Not all tools are used every time, nor are these tools the only ones used to encourage community mobilization. More than the tools, the success of the VCA is measured by the mobilization it induces within the targeted community.

Tool I and J were not used during the VCA process. The analysis of the other tools used are reflected below;

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<sup>4</sup> From *VCA toolbox with reference sheets*, IFRC, Geneva, 2007, page 66.



## a. Historical profile

Year	Event
1960	no school at Des Barres
1967/76	first truck Santa Maria
1970s	Road was built/school used as Church
1971	first school built
1980	hurricane Allen destroyed first school
1980s	* Church of God built * Community Centre (Mother's & Father's Hall) built * Sand Mining in Grand Anse
1982	New primary school built (Jean Hess)
1989/90	Electricity via generator
1990	* Copra House closed * Amerindian Artifacts discovered
1990s	Community nurse start visits
1992/6	Farms destroyed by animals
1993	Electricity

Year	Event
1994	* Landslide on La Suiza / Road blocks * Dance Hall Destroyed also used as a pre-school
1996	Telephone
2001	* Proud Project (Road Development) * Turtle watching Programme
2001/2	Turtle Drive Pipe Band Water
2004/7	Paving of Road
2006	SDA Church built
2008/9	Cable Television

## b. Historical Visualization

Year	Pop	Road	Rel	Housing	Farms	Forests
1960	***			▲▲▲	■	✱✱✱
1970	*** **			▲▲▲	■	✱✱✱
1980	*** *** ***	==		▲▲▲	■	✱✱✱
1990	*** *** *** ***	==	==	▲▲▲	■	✱✱✱
2000	*** *** ***	==	==	▲▲▲	■	✱✱✱
2001	*** *** ***	==	==	▲▲▲	■	✱✱✱
2010	*** *** ***	==	==	▲▲▲	■	✱✱✱

Year	Copra	Cassava	Charcoal	Pork	Buttery	Cattle
1960				1	1	
1970				1	1	
1980				1	1	
1990				1	1	
2000	1			1	1	
2001	1			1	1	
2010	1			1	1	



### c. Seasonal Calender

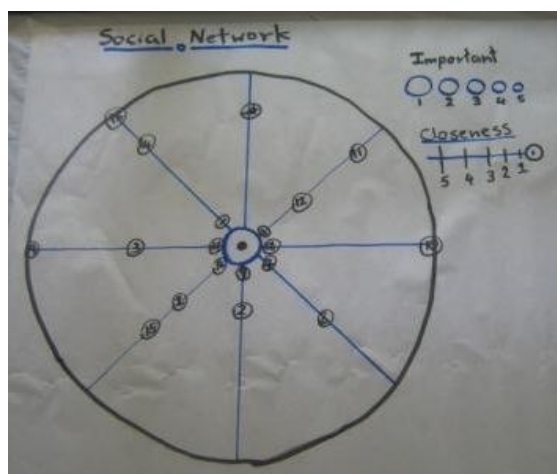
Event	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Jouvert	X											X
Cricket	X											X
Animal Attacks		x	x									
Beach Cleanup			x									
Turtle watching				x	X	X	X	X				
Mothers day activities					X							
Fathers day activities						X						
Desbarras Day							X					
Football	X								x	x	X	X
Jounen Kweyol										X		
Animal Attacks										x		
Kont/Solo Activities											X	
School Annual Fundraising												X

Seasonal Calender

Month	Event/s
Jan - Dec	Jouvert, Cricket
Feb - Mar	Lenten Retreats, Animal Attacks
Mar	Beach clean-up
Apr - Aug	Turtle Watching
May	Activities {Mothers' Day}
June	Activities {Fathers' Day}
July	Des Barras Day
Aug	
Sept - Jan	Football Season
Oct	Jounen Kweyol Activities, Animal Attacks
Nov	Kont/Solo
Dec	Jouvert, House 2 House, Solo School's Annual Fundraiser

### d. Institutional and social network analysis

- Des Barras Primary School
- Mother's and Father's Group
- Turtle Watch Group
- Church of God
- Seventh Day Adventist
- Catholic Church
- Sports Club
- Dance Group
- PTA Group
- Gilberttha Shop
- Mount Everest
- Progress International
- Daphne Place
- Edna J
- Joyce Place
- Zimbabwe Roots Farm
- Field
- Mother's and Father's Hall
- Poultry Farmers



This small community is predominantly surrounded by small community organizations and small businesses and religious based organizations. The following organizations play a pivotal role in the growth and development of Desbarras and form the basis of the social institutions

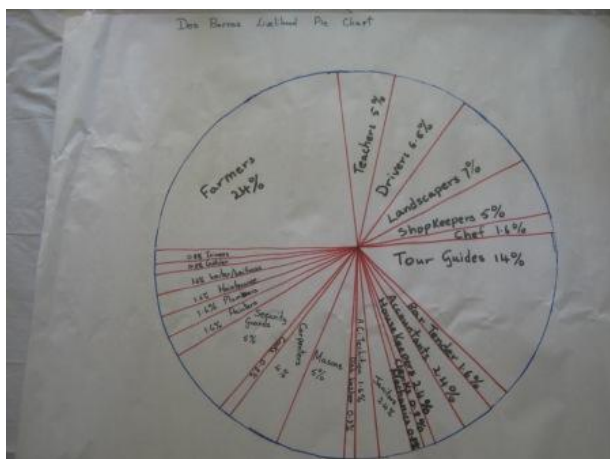
- Desbarras Primary School
- Catholic Church
- Zimbabwe Rastafarian farm
- Seventh Day Adventist Church
- Church of God
- Parent Teacher Association
- Mothers and Fathers Hall

A number of other institutions offer some level of assistance and employment in Desbarras:

- Sports Club
- Poultry Farmers
- Mount Everest
- Joyce Place
- Edna J
- Daphne Place
- Dance Group

Within the community exists a close and neighborly spirit even without a number of social institutions, life in the community is focused around the beach, the church and the school

### e. Livelihoods and coping strategies analysis



Desbarras, still remains a very rural area with a large percentage of the community being involved in agriculture.

Community members are involved in a wide range of employment with, with the more youthful population being involved in the following areas:

- Hotel workers
- Private Sector and Government workers
- Tour Guiding
- Construction workers
- Mechanics/Technicians
- Teachers

The older population is predominantly involved in the following:

- Farming
- Small community shops owners
- Government Workers





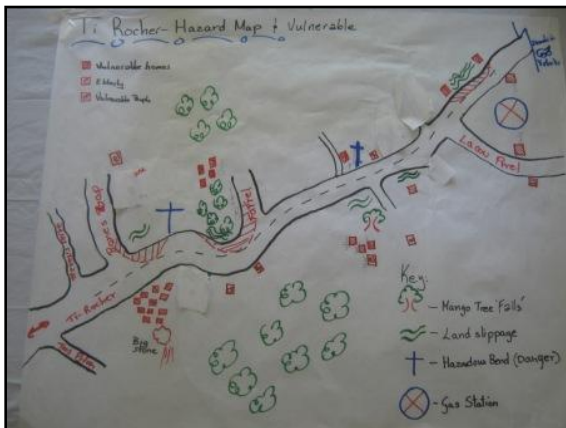
While there are a number of community organizations within Ti Rocher, during the time of disasters or emergencies area of assistance comes from the following sectors of the population;

- a. Church members
- b. Family
- c. Friends
- d. Neighbours
- e. Other outside organizations(private or governmental)

The major concern when it comes to disasters in this community due to past experiences has been lost of livelihood because of crop damage and landslides affecting access to and from the community. Because of its unique and elevated location, Desbarras can be easily cut-off via the main road from the rest of the island. During such disasters the major areas which get affecting in relation to sustenance and other factors of community life are as follows:

1. Amount of monies spent on transportation; therefore, less travelling
2. Purchasing of processed foods (milk, cereals, flour and canned foods)
3. Fuel

## f. Mapping



(Hazard map of Desbarras)



(Resource map of Desbarras)



### **g. Cross Section/Transect Walk**

The Cross Section/Transect Walk of the Desbarras Community focused on four major areas;

- a. Turtle Drive**
- b. Demarie**
- c. Louvette**
- d. Desbarras main road**

Within the three main areas, it was difficult to ascertain which part of Desbarras is most vulnerable. However the sections of Louvette and Demarie seems to share similar concerns:

<b>Type of Ground</b>	Hilly and sloping
<b>Livelihoods</b>	Bus drivers, farming, private and government sector workers, construction and technicians;
<b>Risk/hazards</b>	Soil erosion, landslides, groundwater contamination, fallen trees and electrical poles;
<b>Conditions that increase vulnerability</b>	Sloppy ground, absence of drains and proper access roads, poorly constructed houses, closeness of houses, construction of homes close to trees and electrical poles;
<b>Beliefs and values</b>	Religious views, volunteerism and community oriented
<b>Capacities</b>	Rain water harvesting, disaster response training, transportation;
<b>Natural environment</b>	Water, forested area, lots of agricultural crops

### **h. Household/neighborhood vulnerability assessment**

The assessment highlighted the major vulnerabilities of the community with respect to the households and neighborhood. The precipitous nature of the community and its location being in a forested region of St. Lucia has left it vulnerable to a number of events:

- Tropical Storm Debby: 1994 (crop damage)
- Land Slide : 1998
- Tropical Storm Lenny: 1999 ( crop damage/land slides)
- Hurricane Ivan: 2004
- Hurricane Dean: 2007

The assessment of the community identified the following vulnerabilities as being major issues of concern for residents:

- Close proximity of houses to the main road;
- The presence of poultry farms in close proximity to the community;
- A presence of Pit latrines in all of the major parts of the community especially in Demarie and the Louvette road area;
- The slippage of land in sections of Louvette road and Demarie;
- Absence of drains and guttering for houses;
- The lack of access roads for emergency vehicles in Demarie
- Absence of guard rails along dangerous road curves and on the bridge leading into Desbarras;





- The absence of a bus shelter;
- The lack of lighting and safety signs along the Desbarras main road;
- The vulnerability of the Seventh Day Adventist Church to landslides and strong winds;
- High percentage of houses in Demarie and the Louvette road area are poorly constructed roofs and also vulnerable to land slippage;
- Lost for forest area to farming and the construction of homes;

Another concern for the community is the vulnerability of its major physical resources. The following list shows the vulnerabilities of the community's major resources:

- |                                        |                          |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <b>Access Road</b>                  | : Prone to land slippage |
| 2. <b>Seventh day Adventist Church</b> | : Prone to land slide    |
| 3. <b>Main Bridge</b>                  | : Prone to flooding      |

## Part 2: Risk assessment in Desbarras

The VCA process made it possible for the St. Lucia Red Cross Society (SLURC) to get to know Forestiere, while allowing the community members to share their knowledge, fears and ideas. At the same time the project has offered a unique opportunity to go from theory to practice.

The SLURC – in collaboration with partner agencies and local community stakeholders – has used the VCA method to identify and solve problems within their capability. In particular, as the following pages will show, the implementation of the VCA tools improves understanding of:

- ✓ the nature and level of risks that vulnerable people face;
- ✓ where these risks come from;
- ✓ who will be the worst affected;
- ✓ what is available at all levels to reduce the risks; and
- ✓ what initiatives can be undertaken to strengthen the impact of programs to raise the capacity of people at risk.

## Methodology for a Risk assessment

The following five-step approach was used with the Desbarras community members:

1. The first step meant identifying for each hazard the **Potential Risks to the community**: the areas of vulnerability and the capacity that exists within the community.
2. The second step required identifying for each Hazard **Actions that could be undertaken** to transform vulnerabilities identified into capacities.
3. The third step consisted of differentiating the types of measures, whether they related to prevention, mitigation or preparation for response.
4. The fourth step involved a CIA Analysis, in which participants considered each and every action to transform vulnerability into a capacity and decide whether such changes were realistic.
5. The fifth and final step involved identifying a Plan of Action that could be implemented by the community. While a number of actions were identified, this final step identified realistic actions. It should be noted that the information gathered and the specific actions identified below, while not reflected in the final plan of action, are still relevant and needed and could be utilized by other agencies.



The results of these five steps are presented hereafter (points 1 through 5 below).

### ***1. Identifying hazards and their potential impact on the community***

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Potential Risk</b>	<b>Vulnerability</b>	<b>Capacity</b>
<b>Access Route into Demarie</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loss of life</li><li>• Loss/damage of property</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Homes and property</li><li>• Persons living in the area</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Construction workers</li><li>➤ Transportation</li><li>➤ Heavy equipment</li></ul>
<b>Land Slippage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loss of lives</li><li>• Loss of farms</li><li>• Loss of homes</li><li>• Loss of utilities – power and telephone</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Homes in Demarie</li><li>• Homes in Louvette road</li><li>• Seventh Day church</li><li>• Farms along the main road</li><li>• Utility Poles along the main road</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Construction workers</li><li>➤ Transportation</li><li>➤ Heavy equipment</li><li>➤ Technicians</li><li>➤ 3 Emergency shelters</li></ul>
<b>Deforestation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loss of property, homes and lives due to land slippage</li><li>• Loss of utilities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Homes and property in the Louvette and Demarie area</li><li>• Areas with the forest</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Construction workers</li><li>➤ Transportation</li><li>➤ Heavy equipment</li><li>➤ Technicians</li><li>➤ 3 Emergency shelters</li></ul>
<b>Overhanging Trees near residential area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loss of utilities</li><li>• Damage to property and homes</li><li>• Loss of lives</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All areas in Debarras</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Construction workers</li><li>➤ Transportation</li><li>➤ Heavy equipment</li><li>➤ Technicians</li><li>➤ 3 Emergency shelters</li><li>➤ Chainsaws and cutlasses</li></ul>
<b>Debarras Main Road</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loss of lives</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drivers using the road</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Construction workers</li><li>➤ Transportation</li><li>➤ Heavy equipment</li></ul>



<b>Absence of drainage in Demarie and Louvette Road</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• Loss of lives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homes and property in the areas</li> <li>• Seventh Day Church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Construction workers</li> <li>➤ Transportation</li> <li>➤ Heavy equipment</li> <li>➤ Technicians</li> <li>➤ 3 Emergency shelters</li> <li>➤ Chainsaws and cutlasses</li> </ul>
<b>Absence of guard rails on the Debarras Bridge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of lives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persons using the bridge whether as pedestrians or via vehicles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Construction workers</li> </ul>

## 2. Local capacity to respond to hazards

HAZARD	Vulnerabilities identified	Actions to transform vulnerabilities into capacities
<b>Access Route into Demarie</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Homes and property</li> <li>✚ Persons living in the area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Construction of access route and drains;</li> <li>✓ Regular clearing of drains;</li> <li>✓ Education of community members of emergency preparedness;</li> </ul>
<b>Land Slippage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Homes in Demarie</li> <li>✚ Homes in Louvette road</li> <li>✚ Seventh Day church</li> <li>✚ Farms along the main road</li> <li>✚ Utility Poles along the main road</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Regular clearing of drains;</li> <li>✓ Education of community members of emergency preparedness;</li> <li>✓ Construction of drains along the Louvette road;</li> <li>✓ Replanting of trees within the areas;</li> </ul>
<b>Deforestation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Homes and property in the Louvette and Demarie area</li> <li>✚ Areas within the forest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Education of community members on effects of deforestation;</li> <li>✓ Replanting of trees;</li> </ul>
<b>Overhanging Trees near residential area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ All areas in Debarras</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Education campaign on emergency preparedness;</li> <li>✓ Community task groups to trim trees;</li> <li>✓ Assistance from Ministry of Communications and Utility Companies to trim trees;</li> </ul>
<b>Debarras Main Road</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Drivers using the road</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Community road safety education;</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assistance from the Ministry of Communications and other partners to install road safety signs;</li> <li>✓ Lobbying for LUCELEC to add lamps to electrical poles;</li> </ul>
<b>Absence of drainage in Demarie and Louvette Road</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Homes and property in the areas</li> <li>✗ Seventh Day Church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Construction of drains along various points;</li> <li>✓ Regular community cleanups;</li> <li>✓ Emergency preparedness education;</li> </ul>
<b>Absence of guard rails on the Debarras Bridge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Persons using the bridge whether as pedestrians or via vehicles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Road safety campaign in the community;</li> <li>✓ Installation of guard rails along bridge;</li> </ul>

### 3. Type of measures to mitigate disasters

The third step consisted of separating the types of measures into three categories:

- Prevention actions: action which tries to reduce the probability of a disaster in the community;
- Mitigation actions: action that attempts to protect, strengthen, rehabilitate or reconstruct;
- Preparation actions: action that aims to strengthen the capacity of the community of Forestiere to respond in an effective and efficient manner

Identifying prevention, preparation and mitigation activities

Actions to transform vulnerabilities to capacities	Prevention	Preparation	Mitigation
<b>Access Route into Demarie</b>	Construction of access route and drains;	Education of community members of emergency preparedness;	Regular clearing of drains;
<b>Land Slippage</b>	Construction of drains along the Louvette road;	Education of community members of emergency preparedness;	Replanting of trees within the areas;
			Regular clearing of drains;



<b>Deforestation</b>		Education of community members on effects of deforestation;	Replanting of trees;
<b>Overhanging Trees near residential area</b>	Community task groups to trim trees;	Education campaign on emergency preparedness;	
	Assistance from Ministry of Communications and Utility Companies to trim trees		
<b>Desbarras Main Road</b>	Assistance from the Ministry of Communications and other partners to install road safety signs;	Community road safety education;	Lobbying for LUCELEC to add lamps to electrical poles;
<b>Absence of drainage in Demarie and Louvette Road</b>	Construction of drains along various points;	Emergency preparedness education;	Regular community cleanups;
<b>Absence of guard rails on the Debarras Bridge</b>		Road safety campaign in the community;	Installation of guard rails along bridge;



#### 4. Ability to act on hazards (CIT analysis)

The fourth step involves a CIT Analysis<sup>5</sup> in which participants considered each and every action to transform vulnerability into a capacity and decide whether such changes were realistic. Each problematic situation had to be categorized according to the three possible options:

- the situation can be **changed** with the participation of the people at risk;
- the situation cannot be changed directly, but could be **influenced** by the people at risk so that third parties can offer a solution to the identified need; or
- the situation cannot be changed or influenced and the community needs to **Transform** the threat.

Actions to transform vulnerabilities into capacities	Prevention	C I T	Preparation	C I T	Mitigation	CIT
<b>Access Route into Demarie</b>	Construction of access route and drains;	I	Education of community members of emergency preparedness;	C	Regular clearing of drains;	C
<b>Land Slippage</b>	Construction of drains along the Louvette road;	I	Education of community members of emergency preparedness;	C	Replanting of trees within the areas;	C
					Regular clearing of drains;	C
<b>Overhanging Trees near residential area</b>	Community task groups to trim trees;	C	Education campaign on emergency preparedness;	C		
	Assistance from Ministry of Communications and Utility Companies to trim trees	I				
<b>Deforestation</b>			Education of community members on effects of deforestation;	C	Installation of guard rails along bridge;	I

<sup>5</sup> CIT: C = change, I = influence, A = Transform.



<b>Desbarras Main Road</b>	Assistance from the Ministry of Communications and other partners to install road safety signs;	I	Community road safety education;	C	Lobbying for LUCELEC to add lamps to electrical poles;	I
<b>Absence of drainage in Demarie and Louvette Road</b>	Construction of drains along various points	I	Emergency preparedness education;	C	Regular community cleanups;	C
<b>Absence of guard rails on the Debarras Bridge</b>			Road safety campaign in the community;	C	Installation of guard rails along bridge;	I



## 5. Plan of action

### Plan of action:

Hazards/Issues	Vulnerable Areas		Action Plan		
(1) Access Route in Demarie	✓ Demarie area and homes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Construction of access route and drains into Desmarie;</li> <li>➤ Education campaign with residence of emergency family plans;</li> </ul>		
(2) Land Slippage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Along Main Desbarras road</li> <li>✓ Homes in louvette area</li> <li>✓ Seventh day church in louvette</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sourcing of additional funding to build retaining wall and fix gabion baskets near gas station;</li> <li>➤ Educational campaign of landslides and protective measures;</li> <li>➤ Assist community members in developing emergency family plans;</li> <li>➤ Establishing agreements with heavy equipment operators and bus drivers to use vehicles if such an event occurs;</li> </ul>		
(3) Overhanging Trees near residential area	✓ Entire Community		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Form task gangs to cut overhanging trees;</li> <li>➤ Engage utility companies to facilitate the trimming of trees near utilities poles and lines;</li> <li>➤ Seek support from Ministry of communications and utilities company to facilitate the trimming of trees</li> </ul>		
(4) Deforestation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Louvette area</li> <li>✓ Demarie</li> <li>✓ Turtle Drive</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Replanting of trees in the community</li> <li>➤ Education campaign with residence</li> </ul>		
(5) Main Road	✓ Entire community		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Road safety campaign;</li> <li>➤ Engaging Ministry of Communication to discuss the installation of guard rails and safety signs along road and lights</li> </ul>		
(6) Absence of proper drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Louvette</li> <li>✓ Demarie</li> </ul>		➤ Construction of drains on louvette road and in the Demarie community;		
(7) Absence of guard rails on the Debarras Bridge	✓ Entire community		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Installation of guard rails on bridge;</li> <li>➤ Road safety Campaign;</li> </ul>		





## **Conclusion: The next steps**

The completion of the VCA training for the community of Desbarras has indeed positioned them to be a safer and healthier community. The group has now completed the CDRT training along with the Disaster Simulation and has put together an executive committee to execute the duties of the group and better facilitate their operations within the community.

A major next step for Desbarras has been the development of the Family emergency plans with community members. So far 100 households have been targeted to develop the plans with them and the group is in the process of doing the following:

- CDRT Open Day – August 2010
- Community Simulation Activity 2010

The group has finalized its micro project which would encompassed the construction of drains along the louvette road coupled with a replanting of trees in the once forested areas of the community.



## Annex 1: List of participants in the Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment

### Resource Personnel

#	Names	Addresses
	Hubert Pierre	St. Lucia Red Cross
	Terencia Gaillard	St. Lucia Red Cross
	Bennet Charles	St. Lucia Red Cross
	Rupert Fletcher	St. Lucia Red Cross
	Mr. Fabian Lewis	St. Lucia Red Cross



### Focus group meetings – Dates & participants

Dates	Names	Addresses
Jan 13 <sup>th</sup> 2010	Sharline Hamson	
Jan 20 <sup>th</sup> 2010	Daisy Desir	
Jan 27 <sup>th</sup> 2010	Danzy Desir	
Feb 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2010	Dictorid Alberty	
Feb 10 <sup>th</sup> 2010	Kemeon Wilfred	
Feb 24 <sup>th</sup> 2010	Jane Shirnett Jeremie	
Feb 17 <sup>th</sup> 2010	Dillan Wilfred	
Mar 10 <sup>th</sup> 2010	Tara Lambert	
Mar 24 <sup>th</sup> 2010	Per Sherrianna Wilfred	
Mar 30 <sup>th</sup> 2010	Shereen Nicholas	
Mar 31 <sup>st</sup> 2010	Marcus Paul	
	Trystan Paul	
	Marala Simon	
	Andrew Joseph	
	Patricia Joseph	
	Martha Simon	
	Natty Desir	
	Kersha Wilfred	
	Nckale Nelson	



	Marie F. Dubois	
	Coelilia Nelson	
	Alex Joseph	
	Ginette Wilfred	
	Victor Laurent	
	Genner Jules	
	Johanne Jules	
	Arlette Finistere	
	Vernus Ferman	
	Kersha George	
	Shire George	
	Alicia Valasse	
	Kimea Chastanet	
	Baggio Desir	

**The Executive Members of the Desbarras CDRT include:**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>CONTACT</b>
	Chairperson	
	Deputy Chairperson	
	Secretary	
	Treasurer	
	Public Relations Officer	