Better be prepared …

International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies®

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies promotes humanitarian activities in the National Societies in favour of the most vulnerable.

Through the coordination of international relief in times of disaster and the promotion of development assistance, the Federation aims to prevent and alleviate human suffering.

The Federation, the National Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross together make up the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Index

Introduction

The "Better be Prepared" series is made up of 14 modules which have been drawn up in the Regional Centre of Reference in Community-Based Education for the Prevention of Disasters with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies through the Regional Representation for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean and its Regional Risk Reduction Programme, together with the National Societies in the region.

These guides in community work arise from the need to implement risk reduction programmes of improved quality which facilitate sustainable development processes in the most vulnerable communities in the region. A methodology with simple, practical, standardized tools was required which could be used by each National Society without losing its socio-cultural identity, enabling its application and adaptation to different contexts.

The modules are aimed at the permanent and voluntary staff of the Red Cross, members of other organizations which work in disaster risk reduction and the community in general.

The modules are revised and updated versions of material originally drawn up by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in 1994; from that time to the present date, there has been support from international organizations which include: the Provention Consortium; UNICEF, PAHO/WHO, UDSMA/OAS and universities.

Some modules have a note-book for field work called a "Work Book", in these cases, the module can be used as material for consultation for the facilitator and for the participant, and the work book is exclusively for the participant to carry out assignments and field work.

Each module can be used independently in accordance with its objectives, or be used as part of the series, in this case module 1 "Education, Organization and Community Preparedness for Risk Reduction" provides the basis for work with the VCA tools, and the others go into more detail on specific subjects such as: school plans, family plans, floods and so forth.

Psychological First Aid and the Community Manual for the Mitigation of Disasters in Rural Aqueducts are materials which deal with subjects which require the direct assistance of technical experts in the area.

Module 1: "Education, Organization and Community Preparedness for Risk Reduction" facilitates the carrying out of a rapid diagnostic which includes the participation of each one of the actors in society (public, private and other organizations) as well as groups of women, young people, children and the elderly who, in many instances, are the most affected when hazards become disasters.

The module contains several activities and "let's get to work" exercises which carry out a review of the most important previous historical events which have occurred in the community since its foundation to the present day; this exercise enables all the participants, on the one hand, to be aware of emergencies and disasters which have affected the population and on the other hand, of the events which have lead to the development of the community.

Organizations and institutions present in and related to the community are considered, taking into account the importance and relevance of the work they are carrying out, enabling the participants to gain an overview of the social fabric which surrounds the community being studied.

Drawings of the community are made which show the location of infrastructure, hazards and vulnerabilities, capacities and resources, as well as other important factors for the reduction of risk in the community.

Finally, a community plan for disaster preparedness is made which facilitates strengthening of the capacities of the population and eliminating or reducing the vulnerabilities of the people at risk.

Education, Organization and Preparation for Risk Reduction

Reflection

"Natural hazards are a part of life. But hazards only become disasters when people's lives and livelihoods are swept away. The vulnerability of communities is growing due to human activities that lead to increased poverty, greater urban density, environmental degradation and climate change.

It is well within our power to do something about this. Better decision-making, improved planning, innovation in development, carrying out disaster reduction activities".

Extract of the speech by Kofi Annan, United Nations' Secretary General, during the celebration of the World Day for Disaster Reduction, 2003

Community Preparedness for Disasters

Activity no. 1

Our feelings in the event of emergencies and disasters

What is the purpose of this activity?

> To share individual, family and community feelings about experiences during situations of crisis

Steps to carry out the activity

> • Divide the group into various sub-groups of people, depending on the number of participants. Ask them to identify a destructive event that they have experienced or which they know a lot about. Discuss with the group what they felt personally, in the family and in the community.

> • Through drawings and newspaper or magazine cuttings, ask the groups to make a summary of the main feelings they experienced, illustrating what they felt on flip-chart paper.

LET'S GET TO WORK

The time to summarize has arrived. Write down the feelings and thoughts expressed and agreed on in plenary (See the work book, Exercise # 1).

PERSONAL	FAMILY	COMMUNITY

Activity no. 2
Our Communal History

What is the purpose of this activity?

To promote a better historical understanding of the most relevant events in the development of the community, and to discover with the community a communal identity and historical cultural heritage.

Steps to carry out the activity

a) Four working groups will be formed as far as possible with the same number of men and women, children, adults and elderly people.

b) Each group will start to work on the history of the community taking into account that the year and the event in question should be mentioned. Make sure to include the largest number and variety of situations as possible.

c) Afterwards, the results of each group will be presented in plenary

d) Finally, the information from all groups will be consolidated in a single document, agreed on by all. ·

Historical Profile

Example of the drawing up of "Our Communal History"

1944	The first ten families arrived in the community.
1951	Construction of the railway. Approximately 20 labourers arrived.
1954	Once the construction of the railway line was completed, the railway company donated the villa which housed the workers in order to build the first school.
1957	A fire in the community destroyed two houses.
	The same year a church was built with the support of community members.
1960	The water system which provides potable water for 1/3 of the population facilitated access to water for some 200 houses.
1980	The community access road was paved and linked to the main road.
1987	The earthquake destroyed many houses and services.
1989	A clinic with 50 beds was inaugurated.
1990	First outbreak of dengue killed four people.
1991	Hurricane Roberto severely affected the community, destroying 120 houses and leaving 50 others damaged.
1992	The disaster prevention group was created in the community.
1994	Severe drought resulted in loss of jobs and affected the capacity of heads of households to mange their home, which created a wave of migration to the capital of the country.
1999	The sewerage system collapsed as a result of heavy build-up of garbage.
2003	A sports centre was built.

The time to summarize has arrived

Taking as an example the table above, the group needs to analyze and respond to the following questions

➡ **What have we learned about our community?**
➡ **What can we do with this information?**
➡ **How can we put this information to good use?**
➡ **In what way does it help us?**
➡ **What does it tell us?**

LET'S GET TO WORK

Work on the history of your community
(See the work book, Exercise # 2)

Activity no. 3
Drawing the History of our Community

What is the purpose of this activity?

To reconstruct the past of our community and understand the present with regard to factors related to disasters and development.

Steps to carry out the activity

a) To carry out the work we will split up into groups made up, as far as possible, of the same number of women and men.

b) Each group must look for information on the history of the community, locating, identifying and interviewing people who have lived for the longest in the community as well as previous generations.

c) In a group session, a historical overview of the community will be built, using drawings which reflect elements and events in the communal history.

d) Once the exercise has been completed, results must be placed in the work book.

Imagine that:

You will now go around your community and during your search for information, talk to many people who can tell you about life in the community many years ago.

Now you find newspaper clippings, photographs and/or documents which show how life was in your community over the years.
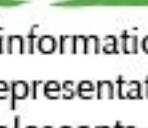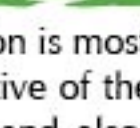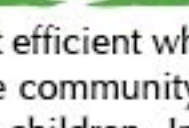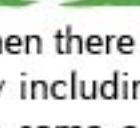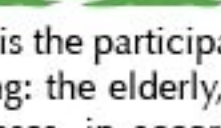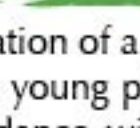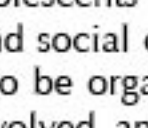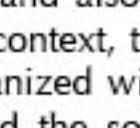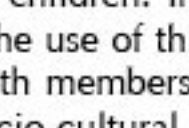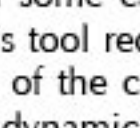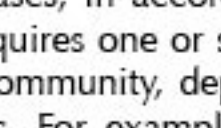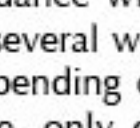
After this search for and compilation of information you now have sufficient details to have an overall idea of communal history as it was previously and how it has developed over time.

The following table is the result of your investigation. What do you think of it?

Historical Calendar
Example:

	Trees	Houses	People	Rivers	Animals	Disasters
1960						
1970						
1980						
1990						
1995						
2003						

Historical information is most efficient when there is the participation of a group which is representative of the community including: the elderly, young people, adults, adolescents and also children. In some cases, in accordance with the cultural and social context, the use of this tool requires one or several working meetings to be organized with members of the community, depending on the people involved and the socio-cultural dynamics. For example, only elderly people or only women or children.

The time to summarize has arrived

Taking as an example the previous table the group must analyze and respond to the following questions:

➤ **What does this information tell us?**

➤ **What has happened?**

➤ **Why?**

➤ **What are the major aspects which are highlighted?**

➤ **What are the initial conclusions?**

LET'S GET TO WORK

In the work book (Exercise # 3), define the historical calendar of your community, once the visual analysis is completed, answer the five questions above and make a summary of your analysis.

Activity no. 4
Seasonal Calendar

What is the purpose of this activity?

Visualize the different events (hurricanes, floods etc.), experiences (accidents), activities (harvests, carnival etc.), and conditions (social, economic etc.) during the year.

Steps to carry out the activity

1) It is now time to make a mental journey through the months of the year, seeking out the events or situations that take place in each one of them.

2) The natural phenomena that normally occur need to be identified, for example, rains, floods, periods in the year in which there is more violence, more alcohol is consumed etc. This is then related to life in the community.

3) Once the exercise is completed, place the results in the calendar table. In addition, answer the following questions:

a) What does this information tell us? Make a vertical and horizontal analysis

b) What actions should be considered in the months of low and high risk?

c) How does one situation connect to another?
   For example, traffic accidents with an increase in alcohol consumption and festivals, floods with skin infections, forest fires with drought etc.

The results of the group work are to be included in the seasonal calendar as shown in the following example.

Information
Seasonal Calendar

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Hurricanes							X	X	X	X	X	
Floods	X	X						X	X	X		
Drought	X	X										
Forest Fires	X	X										
Alcohol consumption	X	X	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X
Traffic Accidents	X	X	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X

Instructions

1) Make a list of social, natural, economic, cultural and recreational events together with those linked with health, emergencies and other issues which occur each year in your community.

2) Indicate in which months these events take place.

3) There are events which take place throughout the year, however, some of these are more frequent in certain months and will be identified with a large X; on the other hand, in the months in which these events are less frequent they will be identified with a small "x".

4) Carry out an analysis of the Seasonal Calendar which shows the months of higher and lower risk, the strategies and actions to be put in place.

LET'S GET TO WORK
Work on the Seasonal Calendar of your community
(See the work book, Exercise # 4).

Activity no. 5
Better Understanding our Risks

What is the purpose of this activity?

> To become familiar with concepts and terminology used in disasters and analyze the use of these terms for risk reduction.

Before continuing, let's go over the following concepts:

Hazard

This refers to the potential occurrence of a natural event or one that is man-made and which has negative consequences, impacting on people, possessions and/or the environment.

Vulnerability

Conditions determined by factors or physical, social, economic and environmental processes which increase the susceptibility of a community on the impact of a hazard.

Capacity

Combination of all the strengths and resources available within a community, society or organization which can reduce the level of risk or the effects of an event or disaster.

The concept of capacity can include physical, institutional, social or economic means as well as personal or collective qualities such as leadership and management. Capacity can also be described as an aptitude.

Resources

All objects and/or elements possessed by a person, organization or community, State or country to deal with any emergency or disaster situation.

Risk

Probability of detrimental consequences or expected losses (deaths, injuries, damage to property, livelihoods, interruption of economic activity or environmental deterioration) resulting from interactions between natural or anthropological hazards and conditions of vulnerability.

Conventionally, risk is expressed by the following equation:

$$Risk = hazards \times vulnerability / capacity$$

Some disciplines also include the concept of exposure to refer principally to physical aspects of vulnerability. Beyond the expression of the possibility of physical harm, it is crucial to recognize that risks can be inherent; they appear or exist within social systems. It is also important to consider the social contexts in which risks occur, and as a result, the population does not necessarily share the same perceptions of risk and its underlying causes.

Risk Reduction

Series of administrative and organizational decisions and operational knowledge developed by societies and communities to implement policies and strategies which help to strengthen their capacities with a view to reducing the impact of hazards and disasters.

Steps to carry out the activity:

1) Identify a hazard per group and write down in the table marked with an "H" for Hazard (for example: floods).

2) Determine the existing and identified conditions of vulnerability.

3) Identify the main risks.

4) Identify all existing capacity.

5) Identify immediate needs.

6) Determine the main measures that are needed for risk reduction.

The time to practise has arrived

It is time to work with the "risk table" and lean more about these terms. The example will help you to familiarize yourself with work that your community ought to carry out after this.

RISK

$$H \times V/C = R$$

Hazard
Floods

×

Vulnerability
Houses close to river banks, crops which are easily flooded.

No evacuation plan, no early warning systems or response plans.

Communities which live mainly from their own crops etc.

Capacity
A school situated in a high area of the community which serves as a shelter, health centre in high areas, a tractor and two trucks, a functioning VHF radio system: men and women from the community know about preparedness and disaster response measures; community census etc.

Risk
Destruction of crops, economic losses, destruction or damage to housing, possible loss of human life, economic crisis, schools affected by floods, increase in skin and stomach illnesses, more expenditure and less income etc.

LET'S GET TO WORK
The time to work on risks in the community has arrived (See the work book, Exercise # 5)

The inclusion of the word "capacity" in the table aims to recognize people's aptitudes, resources and potential which exist in the community; the word gives people dignity and recognizes them as useful and capable of converting vulnerabilities into capacities.

With the risk table **HxV/C = R** the aim is to demonstrate that, through a participative process which recognizes capacities, it is possible to make changes and transformations which benefit the communities themselves.

A community or family group which has more capacity and resources helps to reduce vulnerability and as a result, reduce disaster risk. From transformation processes which are a result of the strengthening of community capacities, the aim is to promote more sustainable processes which have their origins in the nucleus of the community.

Activity no. 6
Transforming Vulnerabilities into Capacities

What is the purpose of this activity?

> To recognize specific actions which enable the transformation of vulnerabilities into capacities.

After groups have made the presentation of the previous task, emphasis should be made in how to transform vulnerabilities into capacities. Once specific vulnerabilities have been identified in relation to specific scenarios, it is necessary that vulnerabilities are broken down further, in terms of concrete action.

Steps to carry out this activity:

1) Divide the group into sub groups

2) For each vulnerability identified, select specific actions which may increase capacity, just as is shown in the following example.

Hazard – Scenario	Identified Vulnerabilities	Actions to transform vulnerabilities into capacities
Earthquake	Poor construction quality	1. Analysis of structures in the type of construction used in the community. 2. Knowledge of minimum norms so that families themselves may assess the quality of construction of their houses
	Unplanned urban settlements in risk zones	1. Access to information about high risk zones and design of mitigation plans. 2. Identify safe and unsafe zones. 3. Knowledge of response plans etc.

LET'S GET TO WORK

Work on transforming vulnerabilities into capacities. For each hazard identified, choose three major vulnerabilities, in turn, for each vulnerability list all the actions which you consider it necessary to take. (See the work book, Exercise # 6)

Identifying prevention, preparation and mitigation actions

What is the purpose of this activity?

To define if the actions defined as necessary to transform vulnerabilities into capacities, correspond to prevention, preparation or mitigation actions

To carry out this activity, bear the following concepts in mind:

Prevention: All action which avoids the possibility of a risk being created.

Mitigation: All action which is to protect, reinforce, rehabilitate or reconstruct.

Preparation: All action which strengthens the capacity of community to respond efficiently and effectively.

Considering the factors above, let's look at the following example:

Actions to transform vulnerabilities into capacities	Prevention	Preparation	Mitigation
1. Analysis of structures in the type of construction used in the community	X		
2. Access to information in the communities about high risk zones	X	X	
3. Knowledge of minimum norms so that families themselves may assess the quality of construction of their homes		X	
4. Identify safe and unsafe zones	X	X	X
5. Knowledge of response plans		X	
6. Strengthening of roof structures			X

In addition to placing actions in accordance with the concepts of prevention, preparation and mitigation, as we saw in the example, determine which of these actions can be changed or developed with the participation of the community, which can be influenced so that other agents make changes or which definitely cannot be changed or influenced. For this purpose, use the following concepts:

CHANGE (C)

These are actions which can be carried out with the participation, resources, capacities and other means from within the community

INFLUENCE (I)

These are actions whereby the community cannot directly change reality, but can influence third parties (municipalities, businesses and other public and private institutions) so that they provide solutions to the needs identified.

TRANSFORM (T)

These are actions whereby community resources and the support of third parties (municipalities, businesses and other public and private institutions) is insufficient since as a result of laws, decrees and regulations of the country, it is not possible to carry out the action.

C: Change, I: Influence, T: Transform

Actions to transform vulnerabilities into capacities	Prevention		Preparation		Mitigation	
1. Analysis of structures in the type of construction used in the community	X	I				
2. Access to information in the communities about high risk zones	X	c	X	c		
3. Knowledge of minimum norms so that families themselves may assess the quality of construction of their homes			X	c		
4. Strengthening of roof structures					X	I

LET'S GET TO WORK

Let's identify prevention, preparation and mitigation actions, classifying them into those which can be changed, influenced or transformed (See the work book, Exercise # 7)

Steps to carry out this activity:

1) Transfer the actions defined in the exercise on "Transforming Vulnerabilities into Capacities".
2) Categorize these actions as appropriate in the areas prevention, preparation and mitigation.
3) Determine and note down whether these actions can be changed, influenced or transformed, with the support of the community.

Activity no. 8
Community Mapping

What is the purpose of this activity?

To learn and make community sketches and understand better the relation between the environs and existing risks.

Steps to carry out this activity:

Let's make the community sketches and place the following information in them:

- The different hazards.

- People's vulnerabilities.

- The human and material resources present in the community.

- The capacities which are available to us.

Remember that the sketch is a very useful tool so that people from the community become aware of their relationship with their environs and plan measures to prevent or reduce existing risks.

For this activity, we will use the following sketches:

- Spatial
- Hazards and Vulnerabilities
- Capacities and Resources
- Cross-section

Spatial Sketch

Legend:
- Telephone
- Animals
- Market
- Vegetation
- Church
- Florist
- School
- Sports ground
- Bar
- River
- Street
- Entrance to the community
- Police station
- Red Cross
- Crops
- Volcano
- Port
- Clinic

N

Instructions:

1) Place yourself in the highest area of the community which allows you to observe everything well.

2) Make a drawing of your community on the basis of your observations (housing, roads, petrol stations, businesses, vegetation, recreational areas, rivers and so on) and design a symbol for each one.

3) Make a general analysis of what is happening in the community on the basis of observations, highlighting aspects relating to the environment, the distribution of housing, public places, services, access roads and so forth.

Hazards and Vulnerabilities

Hazards

- Delinquency
- Drugs
- **STI** Sexually Transmitted Illnesses
- Contamination
- Volcanic Eruptions
- Hurricanes
- Dangerous roads
- Earthquake

Identify all possible dangers and the places which are most likely to be damaged if the hazard takes place.

⃠ Vulnerabilities

Instructions:

1) Copy the spatial sketch.

2) Identify the threats and vulnerabilities with their respective symbols on the map.

3) Make an analysis in which hazards and vulnerabilities are noted.
Think about these in relation to risks which the population could face.

Capacities and Resources

Legend:
- Telephone
- Church
- School
- Sports ground
- Port
- Clinic
- Police
- Red Cross
- Street
- Entrance to the community

Identify all the resources and capacities which exist in your community Buildings, vehicles for transportation, land, piping systems, as well as capacities in place, for example, organized community groups, meeting places etc.

Instructions:

1) Copy the spatial sketch.

2) Identify the capacities and resources with their respective symbols on the map.

3) Make an analysis whereby capacities and resources are noted (which they are and how they can help the community in risk reduction activities in case of different events).

Cross-Section
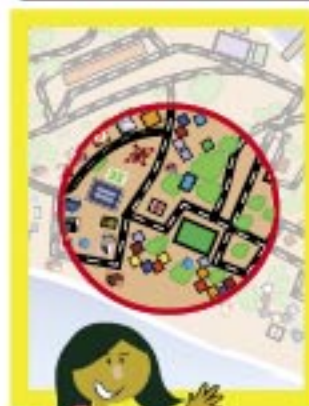
Now go around your community or the area exposed to the highest risk that you have identified, making a cross-section so that you can see the community from a different angle. Identify the behaviour of the community, what people do, how they live, what can be seen, as well as the most probable risks.

Problems				
Capacities and Resources				
Vulnerabilities				
Others				

Instructions:

1) From the drawing of hazards and vulnerabilities.
   Identify the most vulnerable zone.
2) Make a drawing of the zone you have chosen and divide it into as many columns as you think necessary for the study.
3) In the column on characteristics note down those that you plan to analyze (infrastructure, businesses, services, population and so forth).
4) Taking into account each one of the characteristics analyzed, draw up a proposal which can help to lessen the problems which exist in each area studied.

After going round the community, note down in detail everything that you have found, so that when you return to your working group you can analyze the following points together.

Family situation	Housing situation	Dangers in the community	Safe areas in the community	Capacities in the community	Human resources available	Material resources we have at our disposal

LET'S GET TO WORK

Work on the sketches of your community
(See the work book, Exercises #8 to #13)

Steps to carry out this activity:

1) The group working on the mapping will walk around the community with the objective of defining the hazards, vulnerabilities, capacities and resources.

2) Agree on the time when you will meet again with the members of the group.

3) Obtain key information from people who live in the community or who know the past history of the community.

4) Prepare in advance a list of questions to help prompt you.

5) Identify: houses, buildings in general, avenues, open spaces and sports fields, health services, water, electricity and so on.

6) First make a spatial sketch and once finished, make two similar sketches, one for threats and vulnerabilities and another for capacities and resources and include the information as relevant.

7) Analyze the three sketches and identify the most vulnerable zone with the highest risk of disaster in the community. Once this specific zone has been identified, the group will make a sketch in cross section of this area, as is explained in the explanatory example about the cross section.

8) Once the spatial sketch is completed, fill out the corresponding analysis table.

Activity no. 9
Community Organization

What is the purpose of this activity?

To recognize the importance of community organization in the creation of mechanisms for dialogue which promote risk reduction at community level through a multi-sectorial and inter-institutional approach.

To transform these conditions of risk, it is necessary to carry out actions which connect people and institutions with local governments and private businesses so that all of these as a group can provide concrete solutions related to risk reduction with the active participation of the community. This process is possible and can be more long-lasting and sustainable if it has its roots in the community and it is the community which plans the actions to take place (see the following image).

An idea, a plan

STEP ONE

Analysis of the Social and Institutional Fabric

Draw a diagram which includes organizations, groups and key individuals in the community, the nature of their relations and their level of importance.

Steps to carry out this activity:

1) In plenary, the participants will identify between six and eight key organizations which are the most prominent in the community.

2) Explain that a vote will take place, with 5 as the highest score and 1 as the lowest.

3) Each of the persons interviewed will rate the organizations or institutions in accordance with how they see their level of importance or relevance, whether these are public, private or non-governmental bodies.

4) Remember that by relevance we mean the degree of participation which these organizations offer for the benefit of the community (projects, training, level of coordination, work plans) and people's perception of the hierarchical importance of these organizations.

5) First, the participants will be asked to rate between 5 and 1 the organizations or institutions in relation to their degree of importance.

6) After this, the participants will be asked to rate between 5 and 1 the organizations or institutions with regard to their relevance.

7) Add up the points which each organization has received in the column for relevance and then in the column for importance. Following this, divide this between the number of people who made the rating for each organization, for relevance and for importance. All organizations must benefit from the same number of people interviewed.

8) Once the sample is complete, explain to the participants that there are organizations which could be highly relevant for the community, but which are far removed from their needs, and that there are other organizations which work closely with the community, but which are not recognized by the community as relevant.

9) The sample must represent at least 10% of the total population and bear in mind all groups making up the community (women, children, young people, leaders and so forth).

10) It must be clear that the results obtained reflect a determined period of time and that they must be completed with other elements of the social fabric.

The general idea of this exercise is to reflect how some organizations can continue being as important as they are, but at the same time focus more on the necessities of the community and its development, and in this way also become more relevant. On the other hand, those organizations that are perceived as relevant can increase their degree of relevance and as a result the perception of the community regarding their importance.

Analysis table of the social and institutional fabric

The more important the organization is for the community, the more the circle grows, and the more interested it is in the needs of the community, the closer it is. Make a table according to the reality of your community.
(See the work book, Exercise # 14)

List of Institutions	Importance	Total	$\bar{X}$	Relevance	Total	$\bar{X}$
Ministry of Health	3+4+5+1+2 =	15	3	4+3+2+2+5=	16	3,2
Red Cross	5+4+3+4+5=	21	4,2	3+1+2+2+3=	11	2,2
Civil Defense	4+3+2+2+5=	16	3,2	2+4+3+4+5=	18	3,6
Ministry of Education	2+2+3+4+5=	16	3,2	1+4+5+4+3=	17	3,4
Police	3+1+2+2+3=	11	2,2	5+4+3+4+5=	21	4,2
World Vision	1+4+5+4+3=	17	3,4	3+4+5+1+2 =	15	3
Local Government	4+3+2+3+4=	16	3,2	3+3+3+3+4=	16	3,2
Banana plantations	2+4+3+4+5=	18	3,6	2+4+3+4+5=	18	3,6
Religious organizations	3+3+3+3+4=	16	3,2	3+1+2+2+3=	11	2,2

STEP TWO

Analysis of the Social and Institutional Fabric

Once the institutions (public, private and non-governmental) have been identified and categorized by their level of importance and relevance, go on to design a diagram which includes a visual presentation of these organizations.

To carry out this exercise, take the following recommendations into account:

1. Make a large circle and in the centre of this, a small circle. This last circle represents the community; the space between the circles will be used to identify the different institutions named by the community. Diagram 1

2. Divide the circle as is shown in diagram 2

3. Divide according to the scale 1 to 5, one being the edge of the large circle and 5 the edge of the small circle, as is shown in diagram 3.

Diagram 1
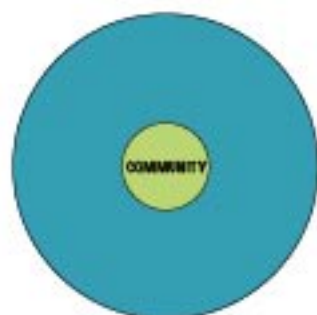
Diagram 2
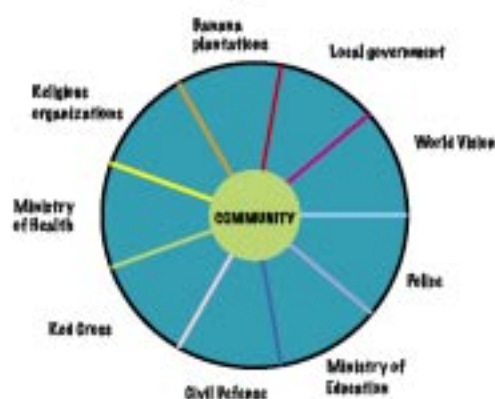
Diagram 3
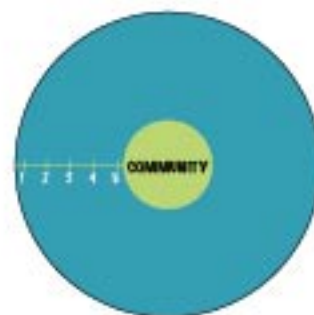
4. Using the results from table 1 (rating by importance and relevance) that you obtained previously, place a circle that, in accordance with the importance of the organization to the community, grows in size, and in accordance with how relevant it is for the community, it will be closer to it. See diagram 4.
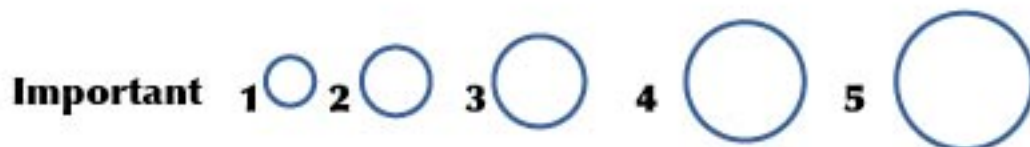
Important   1 2 3 4 5

Relevant   1   2   3   4   5   Closer to the community

Diagram 4

Banana plantations

Local government

Religious organizations

World Vision

Ministry of Health

Police

Red Cross

Ministry of Education

Civil Defense
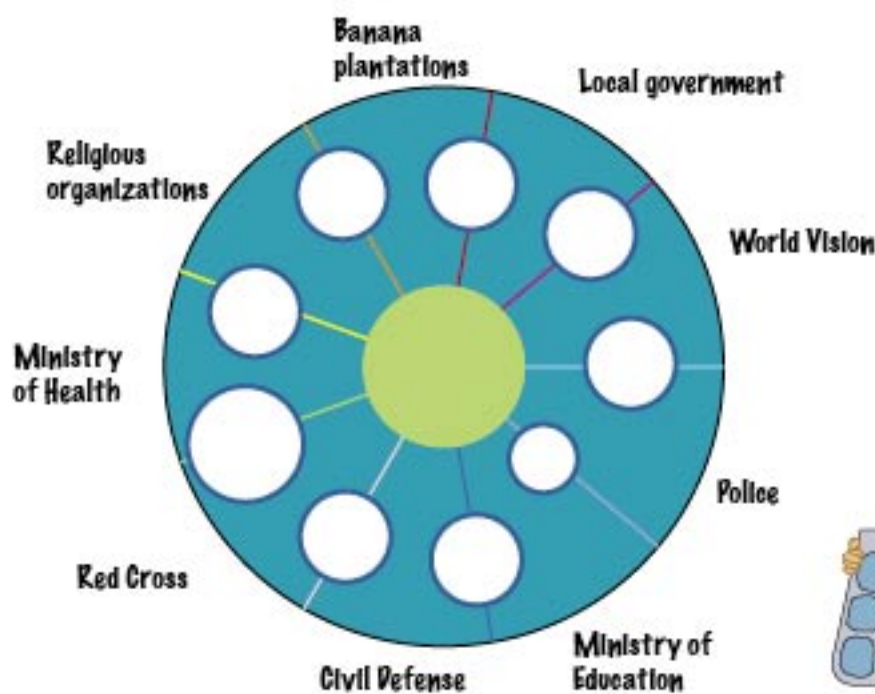
Instructions:

Once the final diagram is completed, the participants need to make an analysis of the relevant and important institutions that can contribute to the search for solutions to problems in the community. You need to examine how a greater connection between these institutions and the community can be achieved. Ask the participants that during their analysis they define:

Who do we need?

How do we contact them?

In what way do we all benefit?

This analysis is linked to the search for common solutions which includes the involvement of institutions, communities and different actors in the construction of change processes in the community.

LET'S GET TO WORK

Work to identify the social fabric of your community, remember to take into account all the institutions which are present. (See the work book, Exercise #15)

STEP THREE

Analysis of the Social and Institutional Fabric

Determine the type of organizational support and the structural needs of the communities to manage their problems and risks, gradually defining their management capacities.

It is important to ensure that the networks can develop and work jointly based on the analysis.

To this effect, follow the recommendations below:

1. The workshop participants will divide themselves into sub groups to visit the organizations which are present in the community and will apply the questions guide which is set out further on.

2. The group of participants will consolidate the results and make an analysis of possible actions which connect the needs identified by the group and the actions undertaken by each organization, in order to seek common solutions.

Questions Guide:

Evaluation of the capacities of communal organization
(See the work book, Exercise #16)

1. What is the history of the communal organizations?
2. When was it established?
3. What was the objective of its creation?
4. How many members does it have? Are they passive or active?
5. Is this number increasing or decreasing?
6. Is attendance at meetings continuous?
7. How are decisions taken?
8. Does the group have a community development plan?
9. Are its committees functioning?
10. How has the group contributed to the community?

Activity no. 10
Let's make our Disaster Preparedness Plan

What is the purpose of this activity?

To design collectively a Communal Plan for disaster preparedness with the aim of avoiding and diminishing the impact of disasters on the community.

The community must have a Communal Disaster Preparedness Plan for each hazard which is identified, taking into account people's vulnerabilities, capacities and resources at our disposal and respective communal prevention actions.

The community plan for disasters must include the following data:

- What should be done before, during and after in relation to hazards and risks?

- Identify safe zones and evacuation routes.

- Survey of people, houses, buildings and types of construction.

- Calendar of activities and responsibilities to be implemented.

- List of members of the community (name, family composition, ages and sex).

- Volunteer team within the community.

- Directory of private and state organizations.

- Organization, structure and functions of the working committees

STEP ONE

a) With the backing of the analysis and the results from previous sessions, we will design our Communal Plan for Disaster Preparedness.

b) Let us make a list of the major hazards to which our community is exposed in line with previous analysis and which is set out in the drawing on hazards and vulnerabilities.

c) In accordance with the number of hazards identified, we will divide ourselves into groups to develop the community plan.

d) In working groups, we will think about what we can do in the community to face this hazard. Let's base our work on the following example:

Example: Forest Fire Hazard.

Hazard	Identified Risk	What to do? BEFORE	What to do? DURING	What to do? AFTER
Forest Fire	• Destruction of cultivated areas • Deforestation • Loss of housing • Soil erosion • And so forth	• Community preparation • Warning and alarm system • Location of water collection points • Education in first aid and fire fighting • Simulations • Definition of roles and responsibilities	• Activate alarm system • Fire brigade activated and fighting the fire • Contact with local authorities and emergency systems • Evacuation to safe areas	• Damage assessment • Assessment of warning, alarm and response systems • Community planning to reforest affected area • Education and community preparedness

LET'S GET TO WORK

Work on the plan for your own community, based on the information from the previous exercise.

Use the results of the previous activities to ensure use of relevant information and thereby seek possible solutions.

(See the work book, Exercise #17)

It is time to connect the actions analyzed in the previous table with the identification of people in the community who will take on concrete responsibilities in the before, during and after phases.

Steps to carry out this activity:

These actions form part of the putting into operation of the community disaster plan. Take note that it is not a question of a plan exclusively for response, but more of a wider plan which includes prevention, mitigation, preparation and also response.

Example: Forest Fire Hazard

Hazard	ACTIONS	Who will do what and how? BEFORE	Who will do what and how? DURING	Who will do what AFTER
Forest Fire	Warning and alarm system	*Community emergency brigade* How: Prepare various members of the community on the whereabouts and functioning of the warning and alarm systems Dissemination of information on this system in schools, churches, sports centres, community centres and other places identified.	*People where the alarm system is situated* How: According to the procedures protocol.	*Community disaster brigade* How: Following assessment of how the system worked during the disaster.

LET'S GET TO WORK

Determine the actions and responsibilities in your community. Divide the group in sub groups and each will work on a specific hazard which has been previously analyzed.

(See the work book, Exercise #18)

STEP TWO
Identify Safe Zones and evacuation areas in the neighbourhood or community

Taking into account the geography of your neighbourhood or community, you can identify the safest areas which can be used as meeting points in the event of a hazard; in addition, safe zones can be identified for evacuation as well as shelters, in case this is necessary.

Hazard	Safe Zones (Neighbourhood, Community)	Safe Areas for Evacuation
1. Floods	Sports plaza High area according to the geography of the place	School Community hall
2. Landslide	Sports plaza Area at a distance from the landslide according to the geography of the place	School Community hall
3. Fire	Safe place depending on the area where the fire broke out	School Community hall Church

LET'S GET TO WORK

Now identify the hazards in your community and the safe areas which can be used as meeting points as well as evacuation zones.

(See the work book, Exercises #19 and #20)

STEP THREE
Organize work teams with concrete responsibilities

For this section, you need to designate a person who will lead the work teams to be set up. The suggestion for minimum work teams per area of action is as follows:

1. Health	2. Evacuation	3. Temporary shelters
4. Safety	5. Damage assessment	6. Training and information
7. Prevention and mitigation	8. Response	

The following example will allow you to understand better the issue of "teams, responsibilities and actions".

Teams and Responsibilities	Actions
Health **Person responsible: María Pérez**	Assess the health infrastructure and basic needs in normal times. In times of disaster, assess the conditions of the infrastructure as well as the needs. Provide support in prevention and preparedness actions to control possible epidemics in the phases before, during and after. Propose measures for disposal of garbage and to ensure hygiene etc.
Evacuation: **Person responsible: Carlos Ramírez**	During quiet times, organize evacuations and practices to improve the communities' response. Ensure that people know the warning and alarm system. Put signs up to indicate safe evacuation routes etc.

LET'S GET TO WORK

Now identify your own teams and responsible persons and also determine the corresponding actions.

(See the work book, Exercise #21)

STEP FOUR

Design an evacuation plan and carry out a simulation

An evacuation refers to organized mobilization of people from an area at risk to a safe place. Not all hazards involve the need to evacuate to protect lives or possessions. An evacuation does not take place from one moment to the next; it is put into place at different times depending on the alarms which are given. The Emergency Committee must promote these evacuations based on:

1. Imminent warning that a hazard requires that people are prepared to evacuate.

2. Have previously established meeting points.

3. Have identified a safe zone.

4. Be aware that it is necessary to stay in the place of evacuation until the authorities indicate otherwise.

5. Know that it is only possible to return to your houses or other places when they are no longer at risk.

The team or assessment committee must design an evacuation plan and implement it on the basis of the following points:

1. Identify a safe place for evacuation.	🏠
2. Identify the shortest and safest routes.	➡
3. Identify and prepare alternative evacuation routes.	▸►►
4. Identify meeting points.	▪
5. Place signs along the evacuation route.	➡ ▪
6. Determine actions for the evacuation of animals and evacuation points.	🐓🐄
7. Prepare a list of those evacuated.	
8. Identify and prepare minimum requirements for evacuation (transport, fuel, food, water, medicine, signs along the evacuation routes, communication systems etc).	

Example points 1 to 6

Legend:
- Telephone
- Animals
- Market
- Vegetation
- Church
- Florist
- School
- Sports field
- Bar
- River
- Street
- Entrance to the community
- Volcano
- Port
- Clinic
- Police
- Red Cross
- Crops

LET'S GET TO WORK

All the members of the group will participate in drawing up an evacuation plan in the work book, together with the actions to be carried out. In the spatial drawing of the community the replies to points 1 to 6 will be added (Exercise #22); following which replies to questions 7 and 8 are needed (Exercises #23 and #24).

STEP FIVE
Early warning in the community and public advisories

A community early warning system contributes in a direct way in order for the community to benefit and understand that these can save lives. It is necessary and vital to activate different levels of warning and, in general, there are four levels:

Level 1:	First warning received: people prepare to evacuate
Level 2:	People are ready to evacuate and go to the meeting points
Level 3:	Begin evacuation, people move from dangerous areas to safer areas.
Level 4:	People are in a safe place before the hazard affects the community.

A specific warning system is effective when:

- The warning is designed in line with the type of threat
- The advisory or warning identifies a place and specific groups which are more vulnerable.
- The advisory or warning is carried out ahead of time targeting a place and specific most vulnerable groups.
- The advisory or warning is carried out by a visible source.
- The advisory or warning is short and clear.
- The members of the community know, understand and are familiar with the signs of the advisory or warning.
- Advisories (as far as possible) are carried out in stages as the phenomenon takes place.
- A specific committee is responsible for advisories or warnings, as well as for monitoring the situation.
- Regular simulations are carried out with members of the community
- Early warning and advisory systems are assessed periodically.

STEP SIX

Carry out a survey of people, houses, buildings, public places etc.

To do this, use the following as an example:

Name of Family	# of family members	Type of housing	Buildings	Public Services	Educational Facilities
	6	Mixed	A single building	Health Centre	
	9	Daub and wattle	Church	Telephone Centre	Paulo VI School
	5	Cement	5 family complexes Bank Clinic		
	4	Wood			Federico Pérez School

LET'S GET TO WORK

Work on the general survey of your community. (See the work book, Exercise #25)
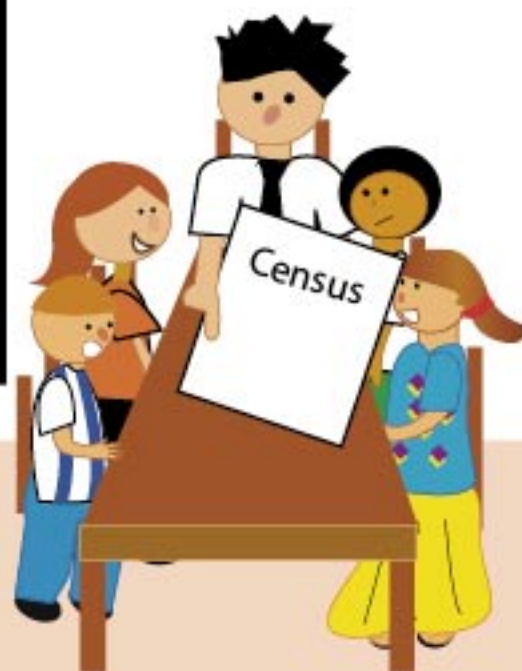
STEP SEVEN
Make a directory of organizations and institutions

This involves making a list of institutions with telephone numbers and contact names for use by the community in the event of emergencies:

Institution	People in charge	Telephone numbers
Police	Leonel Castañeda	225-6484
Red Cross	Claudio Marín	295-3469
Church	Paulo Sánchez	248-5691
School	María Abarca	287-4465
Municipality	Ana Lucía Brenes	284-5485

LET'S GET TO WORK

Make the institutional directory for your community in the work book, Exercise #26.

STEP EIGHT

Hand over the plan to the local authorities and ensure that each one of the families know this plan for disasters, in the same way, that the main actions proposed in the plan are easily accessible for different people.

Use centres where people gather such as markets, sports centres, places of worship, to disseminate the plan for disasters in the community.

Glossary

Alarm: Is the advisory or sign which is made when an event is imminent or is occurring; instructions must be followed which form part of the family plan and the community plan.

Warning: State declared with the aim of carrying out specific actions given the probable, close or real occurrence of an event which may cause damage to the environment and loss of human life and goods.

Temporary Shelter: is the place where, on a temporary basis, shelter, food, clothing and health care are provided to people who were vulnerable prior to or during a disaster, or following the occurrence of a disaster.

Hazard: Physical event, potentially harmful phenomenon and/or human activity which can cause death or injury, material damage, interruption of social and economic activity or environmental degradation.

Seasonal Calendar: Visualization of the months in which events take place (hurricanes, floods etc), experiences (accidents), activities (harvest, carnivals etc) and conditions (social, economic etc) over the course of the year.

Capacity (C): Combination of all the strengths and resources available within a community, society or organization which may reduce the level of risk, or the effects of an event or disaster.

Sketch of Hazards and Vulnerabilities: Graphic representation of the possible effects of a hazard in the vulnerable areas of a community.

Cross-section sketch: Graphic visualization of the most vulnerable zones in a community and analysis of the behaviour in the zone analyzed.

Disaster: Serious interruption of the functioning of a community or society which causes loss of human life and/or important material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the capacity of the affected community or society to manage the situation using their own resources.

Directory of organizations: List of institutions present in the community, with telephone numbers and contact names, for use in the event of emergencies.

Emergency: Adverse event which alters people's state, possessions and the environment as a result of either a natural or man-made event in which the community has response capacity.

Evacuation: Security measures to distance people in a community from a danger zone to provide them with a safe place, in which individual or group collaboration of the population is anticipated.

Mitigation: Measures taken in anticipation of a disaster with the aim to reduce or eliminate its impact on society and the environment. It includes engineering and other measures of physical protection, as well as legislative measures to control the use of land and urban settlements.

Preparation: Actions which are carried out before emergencies or disasters occur, with the aim of strengthening community response capacity.

Prevention: Activities designed to provide permanent protection and avoid damage to people, possessions and the environment.

Risk: Probability of harmful consequences or expected losses (deaths, injuries, property, livelihoods, interruption of economic activity or environmental deterioration) as a result of interactions between natural or anthropological disasters and conditions of vulnerability.

Evacuation Routes: Routes selected to distance the population from a risk zone to a pre-designated safe area.

Social Fabric: Diagram which includes the organizations, groups and key individuals in the community, the nature of their relations and their level of importance and relevance.

Vulnerability: Conditions determined by physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes which increase the susceptibility of a community on the impact of hazards.

Safe Zones: Place previously designated, situated in an area which is safe from hazards.

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First Aid Kit

1. Medicines should not be within the reach of children. This could be dangerous.

2. Let's prepare a box or home first aid kit with:

- Scissors
- Gauze
- Bandages
- Plasters
- Sticking plaster
- Tweezers
- Latex gloves
- Alcohol
- Thermometer
- Soap
- Paracetamol
- Saline solution
- Torch or candles
- Matches
- A first aid manual

First Aid Kit

3. We need to check the expiry date of the medicines that we have at home to avoid poisoning.

Never treat yourself. Consult a doctor

Emergency Information

Home Address _____

_____

_____

Telephone _____
Telephone Numbers _____
Red Cross: _____
Nearest Clinic or Hospital _____
Fire Brigade _____
Emergencies _____
Police _____
Taxi (24 hours) _____

	Name	Telephone Number
Family Members		

_____

_____

_____

Neighbours _____

_____

_____

Family doctor _____

_____

Information or special precautions (if you need medicine on a regular basis or occasionally, please write down the name of the medicine and the dose required).