

# OLD ROAD Community Assessment

*For  
Disaster Reduction*

## **The International Federation's Global Agenda (2006–2010)**

Over the next two years, the collective focus of the Federation will be on achieving the following goals and priorities:

### **Our goals**

**Goal 1:** Reduce the number of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.

**Goal 2:** Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.

**Goal 3:** Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.

**Goal 4:** Promote respect for diversity and human dignity, and reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion.

### **Our priorities**

Improving our local, regional and international capacity to respond to disasters and public health emergencies.

Scaling up our actions with vulnerable communities in health promotion, disease prevention and disaster risk reduction.

Increasing significantly our HIV/AIDS programming and advocacy.

Renewing our advocacy on priority humanitarian issues, especially fighting intolerance, stigma and discrimination, and promoting disaster risk reduction

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*Cover photo: International Federation*

2008

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## Introduction


After a number of meetings that involved stakeholders throughout the federation of St.Kitts and Nevis several communities were identified as being extremely vulnerable to disasters and were selected to be considered for 'The Readiness TO Respond' project funded by USAID/OFDA and The American Red Cross. A baseline study was conducted and the data revealed that the community of Old Road was indeed very vulnerable and had experienced a number of setbacks as a result natural and man-made disasters.

In some areas of this community the coastal strip is being eroded at a very fast rate as a result of wave action and in some areas the main road is now only one or two metres away from the sea.

The members of the OLD ROAD community have assessed their area to:

1. Identify hazards and vulnerabilities in the surroundings
2. Recognize skills and resources available
3. Identify actions which the community can implement to reduce risk
4. Prepare micro-project proposals.

What follows are the results of these assessments undertaken by community members over the period March 27<sup>th</sup>-29th from the VCA training at the Old Road Community Centre.

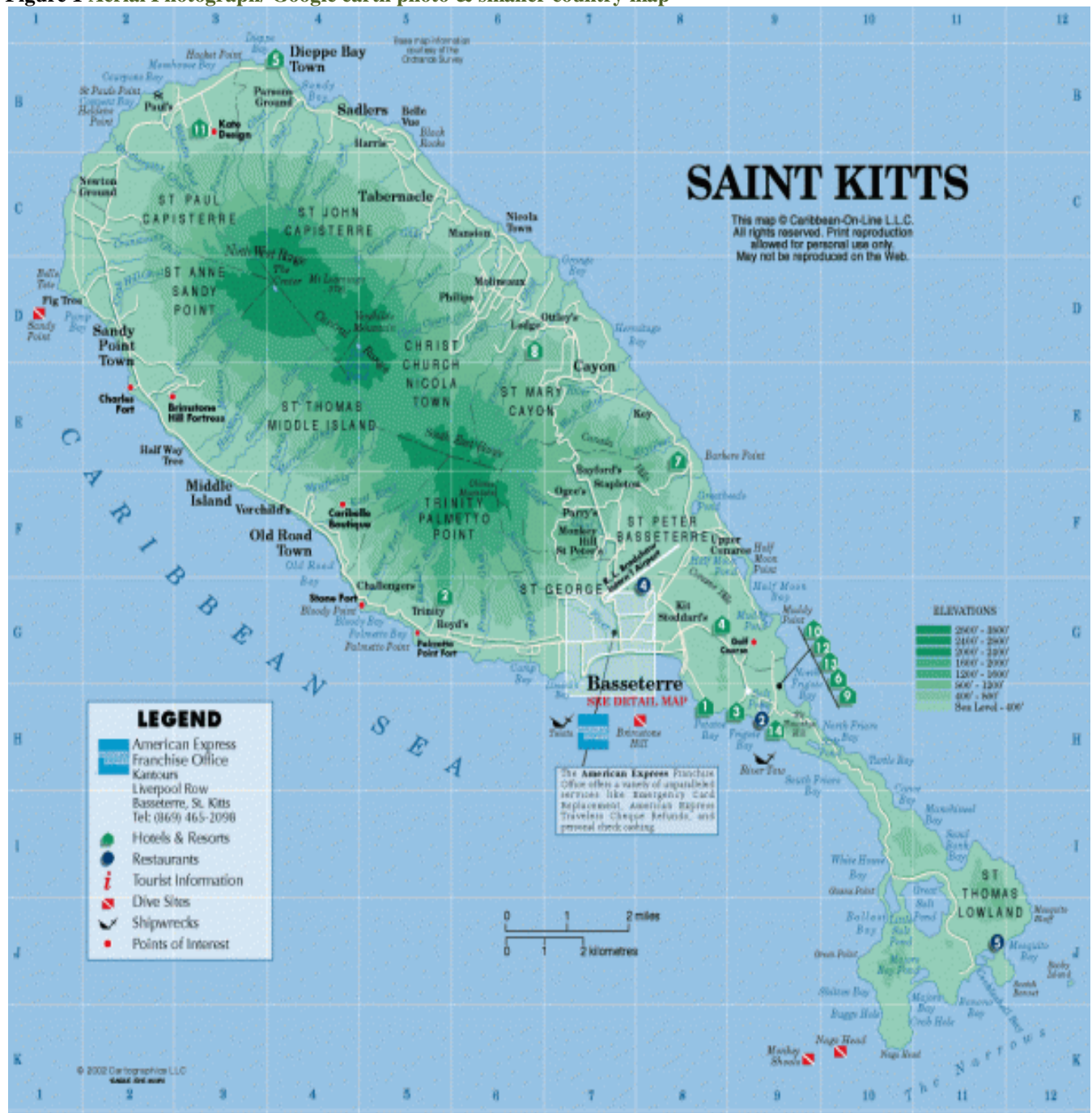
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## Module 1 Better Be Prepared

### COMMUNITY RISK ASSESSMENT – Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA)

*Disasters cannot always be prevented but risks can be significantly reduced through the mobilization of people and hazard reduction efforts at the local level.*

**Figure 1 Aerial Photograph/ Google earth photo & smaller country map**



Spatial Map of the community of OLD ROAD  
Insert spatial map





## Activity no. 2

Direct Observations Ask participants to record on flip chart what they noticed from their field visits through the community

### Old Road Community Direct Observations

- Children were out on the side streets & walk paths playing. Many of them had toys of trucks & cars.
- There was a few vendors on the main road selling ground provision and food (cooked)
- The street was relatively busy
  - vehicular Traffic
  - Groups of young men liming & joking among themselves
  - Medical students conducting community clinic
- Most board structures need repair & poses a threat to those living in them.
- More than five abundant building - most are wooden structures
- Electrical wires lying around on the ground.
- The community has a wide range of fruit trees
- House were built near to the ghaut
- Along the coastline there were fences from galvanise zinc.
- Tall dried trees close to houses with electrical wires / utilities attached to it.
- Children buying beers
- Smoke from burning garbage
- A lot of garbage in Community
- Stagnant water on Heritage Foot Walk
- Men smoking marijuana
- Two main social areas (open areas, drink & smoke)
- There was quite a number of young men in the community.
- Signs of soil erosion
- Total collapse of building
- House with CB Radio that could be used to communicate during a disaster.
- Galvanise shed.
- Old cars by the roadside

**Figure 2 - Hazard & Vulnerability Map of .....**  
 Insert map



### Analysis

The main hazards in Old Road are:

- The threat of sea surge and its effect on the buildings and roads near the sea.
- Flooding as a result of heavy rains and poor drainage.
- Vehicles speeding through the community.

: Members of the community felt that effort should be made by the authorities to preserve the ancient landmarks in the community. There was some concern about Power lines running through trees very close to homes. This was viewed as a being dangerous, because at times strong winds cause branches to break and these lines get busted and remain dangling dangerously for hours, before the matter can be addressed by the electricity department. If left unattended these can cause fire or community members can be electrocuted.

Most community members felt that the distance or space between one house and another was now proving to be very inadequate. In some instances the space was less than six feet and access from the main road was by an alley or footpath about four feet wide. They felt that houses being so close to each other were fire risks and could encourage some social ills.

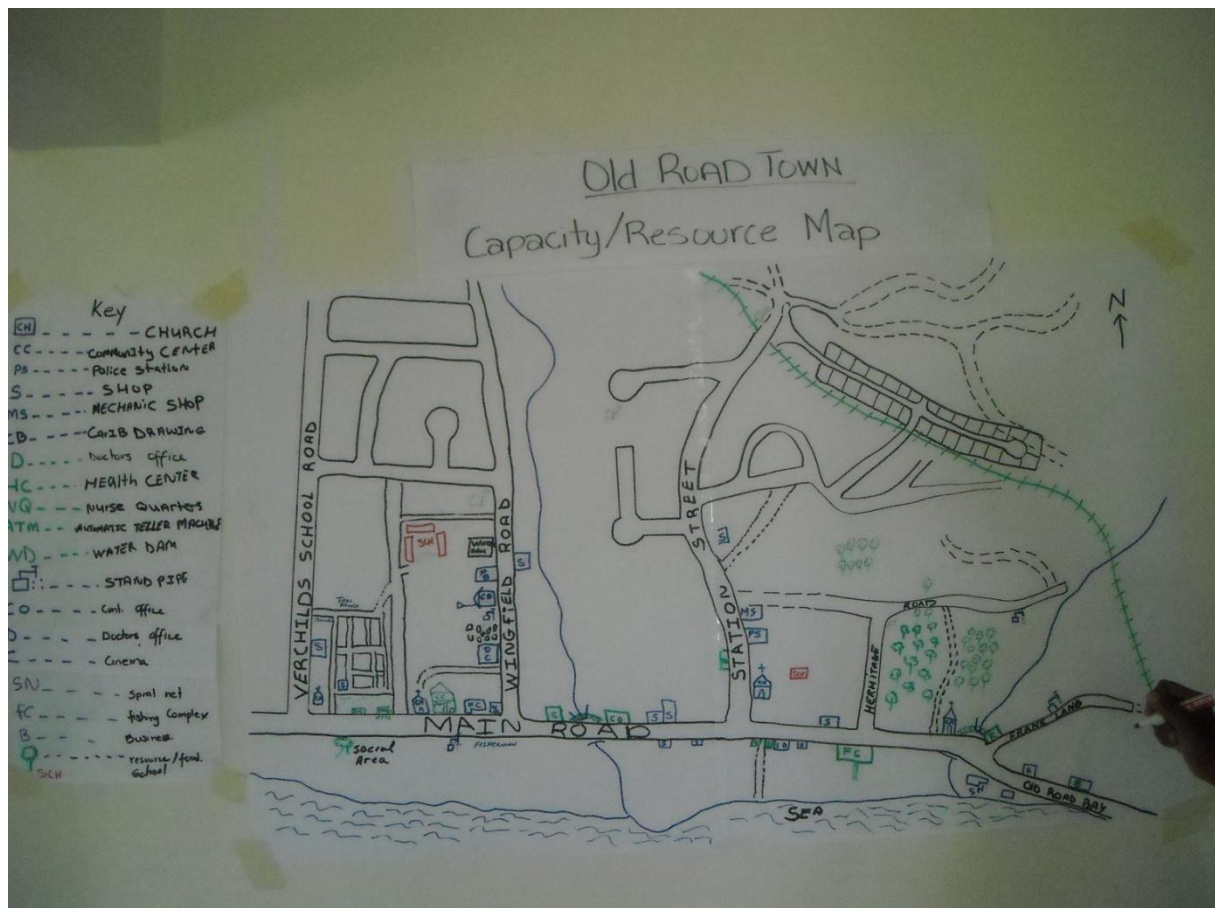


### Activity no. 3 Community resources and skills Map

No community is without skilled people and some items to help in an emergency.

**Figure 3 Resource and Capacity Map**

Insert map



#### Brief statement of observations and analysis

Old Road is home to a number of public buildings and skilled personnel trained has the potential to be

## Activity no.4

### Historical Profile of Old Road

<h1>OLD ROAD TOWN</h1> <h2>HISTORICAL PROFILE</h2>	
YEAR	EVENT
1600 <del>999</del>	Wingfield Estate was the only Estate to use Animal + Water Pressure to Crush the Cane to make Sugar.
1623	Sir Thomas Warner Landed at Fish Bay.
1623	It became the first Town.
1623	Carib Drawings was done by Chief Tegreman which Symbols is a pregnant Woman which means fertile soil.
1700	Land mark of Sir Thomas Warner house (Fish Bay)
1838	Elmazer Methodist Church was built
1883	Chimney was built (Wingfield)
1884	Molasses Making (Wingfield)
	Home of Caribbe Batik which was owned by Samuel Jefferson, great great Grand father of Thomas Jefferson 3 <sup>rd</sup> President of America who later sold the estate to Lord Romney in the early 17 <sup>th</sup> Cent.
1960-1980's	Fredrick Johnson only Wholesale + retail Shop
1967	Varchild High School was built
1924	Both river flood and meet and wash away the Community.
1960	St. Joseph Catholic was built.
1970	Two Children Drowned
1974	Earthquake open a hole in the ground
1980	Manufacturing Batik cloth started.
1988	Road built over River
1997	Guyfest Started.
1993	Green Tree Project started
1994	Tyrell Williams Primary School
2000	Day Care Center built
2006	Fishery Complex built
2005	Old Road Community Center built
2008	Old Road Safari

Activity no. 4: Community Baseline and Secondary data:

**Official Community Name: Old Road**

**Location of Community:** The community of Old Road is located on the western side of the island of St. Kitts. This community rises from the coastal strip inland to the mountain ranges of Mount Liamuigua where one of the island's major water catchment area is located.

A number of tourist attractions centered around not only, the historical aspect but also to the natural landscape can be found in this community. For many years historical artifacts like the Carib Rock Drawings and the ancient structures have been a major attraction, but the recent addition of the Sky Safari running through the lush rain forest has become one of the added thrills.

**Main access route:** Like almost all of the communities on St. Kitts access in and out is by use of the island main road. However, because the roads are narrow, with no plots of empty land spaces on either side it is common for traffic jams to occur during the hosting of any event in the community.

**Population:** Based on the most recent population census figures available Old Road is home to one thousand, one hundred and twenty three (1123) residents. Five hundred and sixty four (564) are males and five hundred and fifty nine (559) are females.

### Secondary Information Needed and Gap Session

• <b>Type of Data</b>	• <b>GAPS</b>	• <b>Who/Where?</b>
• More recent data from population census needed.(last census 2000)	• Detailed information about the breakdown of population not available	• Government Statistical Department
• Information not readily available about the health of the community members	• Listing of persons with special medical needs.eg Diabetics, ,hypertension invalids etc.	• Health department
• Listing of heavy equipment and equipment operators	• A community listing of available equipment and operators should be compiled and readily available.	• This list should be compiled by community group
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•

# Activity no. 5 Seasonal Calendar

Events throughout the year tell us when to prepare; what are the best times to put on aware activities and training or implement project.

OLD ROAD TOWN SEASONAL CALENDAR												
Items	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Fishing 	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///	///
(RENNING) Sports	✓	✓	✓									
Football <sup>10</sup>								10	10	10		
Basket ball <sup>10</sup>						10	10	10				
Domino <sup>10</sup>			10	10	10	10				10	10	10
Hurricane 						10	10	10	10	10	10	
Alcohol Abuse <sup>10</sup>	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Mango 						10	10	10	10	10		
Guy Fest 											10	
Farming 	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Rainy 	10	10	10			10	10	10	10	10	10	10

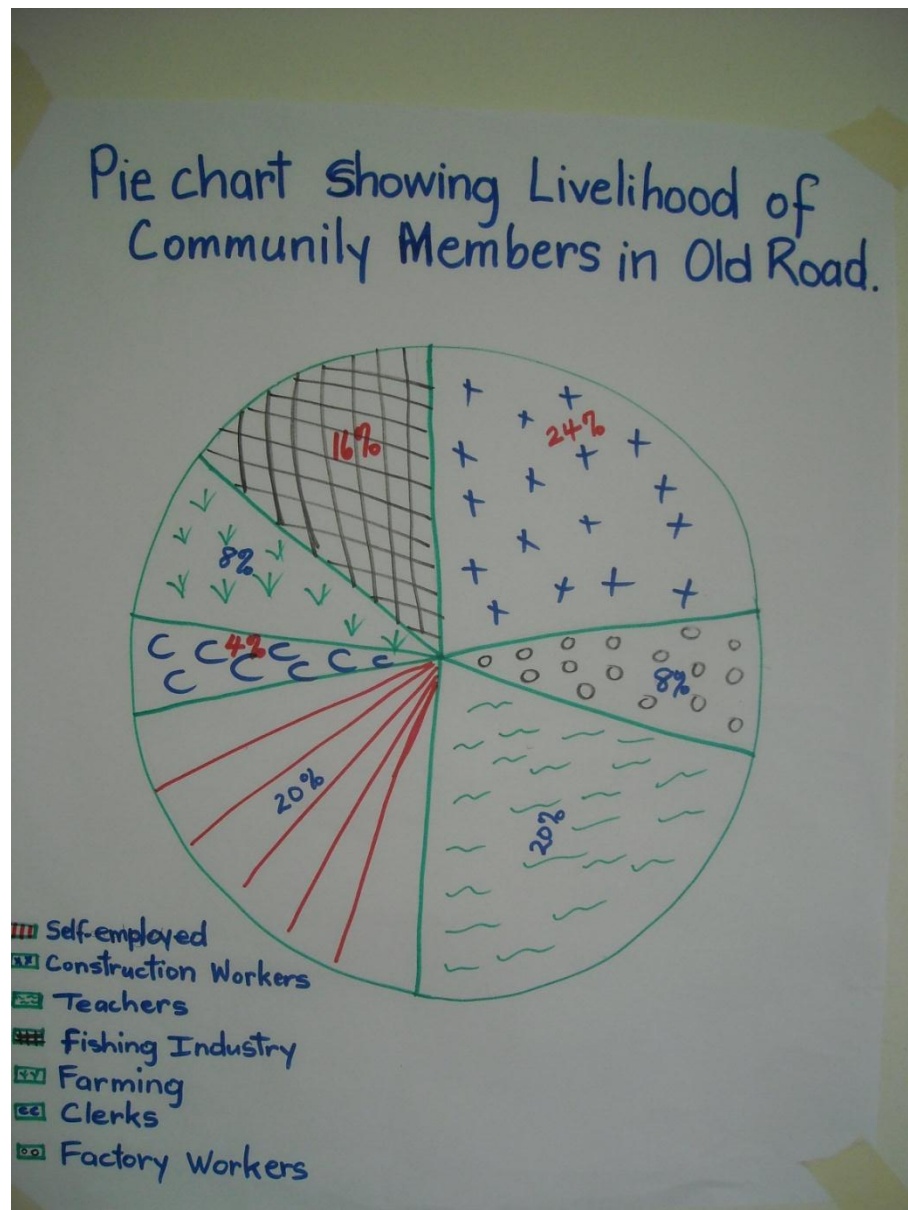


### Analysis:

The months of April and May seem to be the best time for risk reduction activities. During the months of January to March and July to October a wide cross-section of the community is involved in sporting activities. While in the months of November and December the atmosphere becomes very festive as a result of the community festival “GuyFest” in November and the National Carnival in December when alcohol consumption is very high.

To maximize the results of risk reduction activities in the community it is felt that training, mobilization and public awareness activities should be undertaken just prior to the start of the hurricane season.

Activity no. 9 Livelihoods and coping strategies



Livelihood of the Old Road community

B Make a list of how people in the community cope with emergencies and disasters; what strategies are used; what gets reduced first?

1. If the disaster being experienced affects the entire community all sporting and festive activities are cancelled
2. Church attendance normally increases after the occurrence of a disaster.
3. Humanitarian and goodwill efforts increase after disasters and emergencies.
4. After persons have ensured that family members and property are safe and secure skilled community members and available equipment/tools are mobilized to respond to emergencies.
5. If the response required is beyond the capacity of the community the National Emergency Management Agency(NEMA) and Red Cross will be contacted for additional assistance and support.

c) Activity no. 10 Social networks in Old Road , St. Kitts

For example	Groups & Institutions	Point of Contact	Telephone numbers
Government	Tyrell Williams Primary School	Principal	
	Verchilds High School	Principal	
Business	Fishermen's Cooperation	President	
NGOs			
Religious	Girls Brigade	(Minister) Methodist church	
	Boys Brigade	(Minister) Methodist church	
	Pathfinders	(Minister) Seventh Day Adventist Church	

## Activity 11 Reducing risk and make the community stronger

We can transform our community by reducing how much harm a hazard can cause.

<b>Hazard - Scenario</b>	<b>Reasons for damage and or injury</b>	<b>Possible actions to reduce or eliminate risk</b>



Activity 12    Change we can carry out now.

Of the “*Possible actions to reduce risk*” above, pick out the ones we CAN CHANGE and do it for ourselves.


Activity 13 Project Proposals (copy table and add others which CAN be done)

**Title**

**Time:**

**Problem Statement**

**2-3 paragraphs**

**Objectives:**

**Specific, measurable, achievable relevant, time-bound**

**Activities**

Activities	When
1.	

**Budget**

Activities/ Material	Cost	Who?

**Partners**

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## Methodology

The Community Assessment (Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment - VCA) is a participatory investigative process. It is designed to assess the risk that people face in their local areas, as well as the resources and skills the community have to cope and recover from adverse events.

The process is a skills-transfer approach. The community is trained to carry out the assessment and develop solutions which will reduce risk. The output is not only an assessment of community risk and capacities, but also micro-project solutions to reduce the frequency and impact of disasters.

The results of the VCA are developed through direct observation and interaction with other community members over a period of time. Persons gathering the information in the field record and analyze their:

- Direct observations of visits through the community,
- Structured and semi-structured interviews with other community members
- Focus group meetings with target audiences
- Mapping of hazards, vulnerabilities, capacities and resources
- Brainstorming as a team and
- Quick surveys.

The information gathered from the community is cross referenced with secondary statistics, historical records and other materials available.

The intention is to understand the community better and have the residents implement solutions to risk reduction developed by them.

## Glossary

**Brainstorming:** The gathering of as many ideas as possible in a short period of time, usually to solve problems.

**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.

**Coping Strategies:** The ways in which people manage and reduce the impact of a hazard.

**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.

**Direct Observation:** A process of observing objects, people, events and relationships.

**Emergency:** A situation of a threat or actual hazard which requires an almost immediate response, to prevent or reduce harm. Often the affected community has the capacity to respond using their own resources.

**Hazard (H):** A potentially damaging physical event, phenomenon or human activity, that may cause the loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation.

**Historical Profile and Historical Visualization:** Tools for gathering information of what has happened in the past to tell how past events has had an effect on the community. These are represented as lists and a table of sketches respectively.

**Livelihoods:** The way people use the resources they have available to support their lives. For most people this means the method of earning cash income.

**Mitigation:** Structural and non-structural measures undertaken to limit the adverse impact of natural hazards, environmental degradation and technological hazards.

**Mapping:** A visual form to get an overview of the main features of an area in relation to its surroundings (Spatial map). It can also show dangers and exposed homes, services and infrastructure (Hazard and Vulnerability map); or resources and skills available in the community (Capacity Resource Map)

**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. It is sometimes expressed as  $(H \times V) / C = R$

**Seasonal Calendar:** Visualization over the course of the year of weather patterns, social and economic conditions, festivals and other seasonal activities.

**Social Network:** The community's key groups and individuals, the nature of their relationship with the community and the perceptions residents have of their importance.

**Transect Walk:** A walk through the community to observe the people, relief of the land, surroundings and resources. It is represented as a cross-section diagram beneath which are descriptive topics. It helps to understand inter-relationships in a selected section of the community.

**Vulnerability (V):** The conditions determined by physical, social, economic, and environmental factors or processes, which increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards.

## **Bibliography**

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VCA Toolbox with Reference Sheets. International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies 2007



### **Humanity**

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

### **Impartiality**

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

### **Neutrality**

In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

### **Independence**

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

### **Voluntary service**

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

### **Unity**

There can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

### **Universality**

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.