



Community risk reduction



Empowering communities to
take charge of their destiny

Claverty Cottage Portland, Jamaica

VULNERABILITY AND CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

May 2010



Date of VCA

May 15-16, 2010

Acknowledgements

Special acknowledgement is extended to:

Mr. Ivor Minott who represented the Social Development Commission and provided secondary data on behalf of the community.

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Mr. Newton Tyrell who prepared and provided the meals for participants, facilitators and partners who were involved in the VCA exercise.

The Rural Agriculture Development Authority that transported the partners to the VCA exercise.



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Foreword

The present VCA study was carried out through a series of community meetings in May 2010 with the residents of Claverty Cottage.

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 was implemented in 2010, through the support of the European Commission.

Acronyms

CIA	Change / Influence / Accept
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
ODPEM	Office of Disaster and Emergency Management
MLSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
PDC	Parish Disaster Coordinator
RADA	Rural Agriculture Development Authority
CBO	Community Base Organizations
JFB	Jamaica Fire Brigade



Introduction

On May 15-16, 2010, Claverty Cottage 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, 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 solutions.

The process was organized by volunteers and staff of the Jamaica Red Cross 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 organize itself better to overcome them. In the context of the Jamaica Red Cross 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 Claverty Cottage. It presents the history, the local dynamics and the coming challenges, as perceived by the people who live in Claverty Cottage. Although this program explicitly 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: Which are the main risks? Can they be mitigated? By whom? Using the results presented in the proposed Action Plan, the community members – supported Jamaica Red Cross teams and local partners – will identify and implement strategies to mitigate these risks. The information gathered here will also provide the necessary baseline information for monitoring and evaluation the progress of the community.



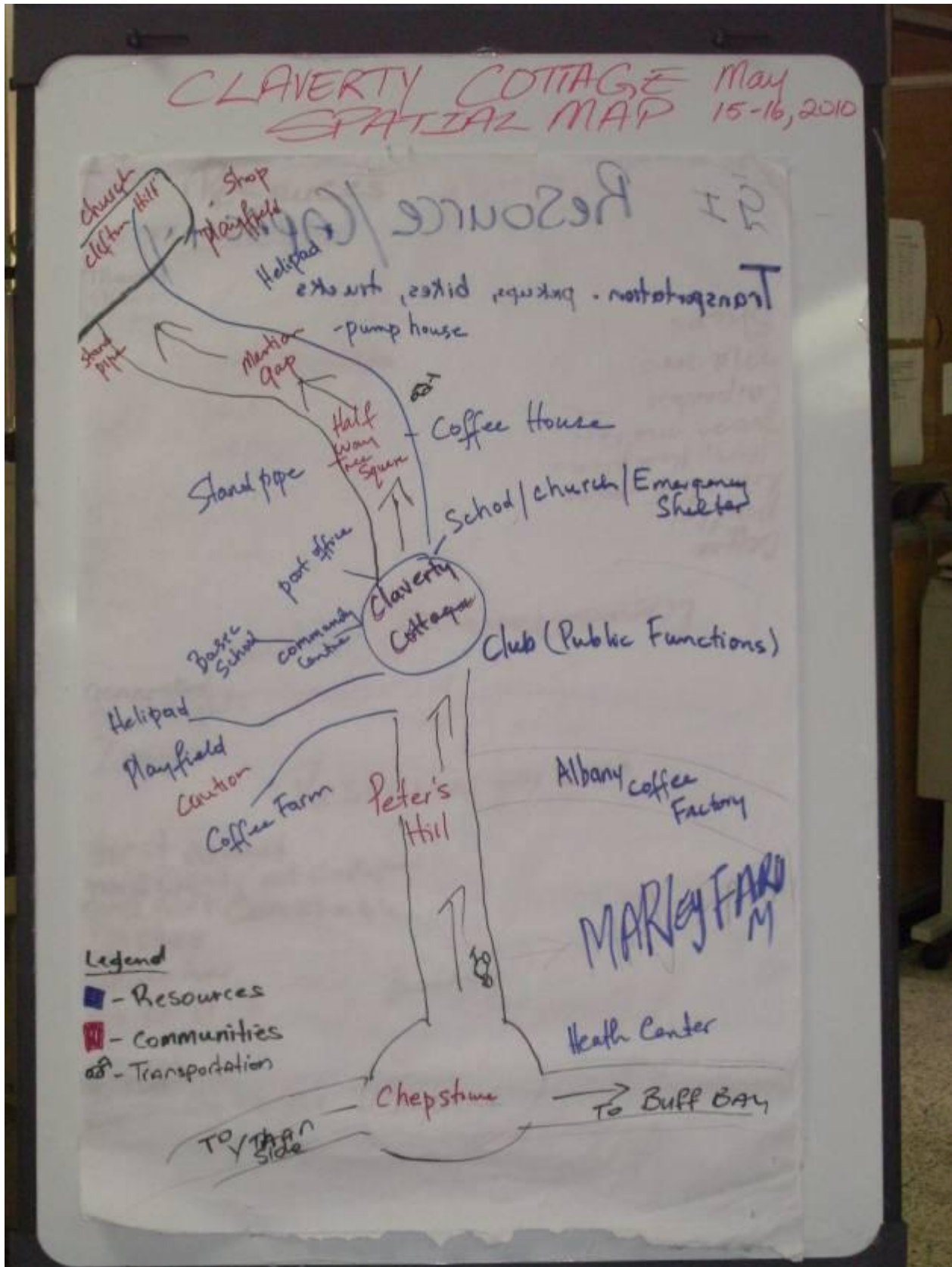
Part 1: Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment of Claverty Cottage

Location of the community:

The Claverty Cottage neighbours (Clifton Hill) is spread out along the road for a distance of three miles from Peters Hill to Thompson Gap at an elevation of about 2000 feet above sea level. The rainfall level is measured at 90-125 inches per year and particularly heavy from October to March. The topography is mountainous with most slopes over 30 degrees the area is drained by the Spanish and Mabess rivers.

The main economic activities involve farming, small business, shops tailoring, cabinet making, and dress making. However, coffee is the main crop that is produced by the residents. There are two schools serving the community which includes, Claverty Primary and the Cottage Hill Basic schools. The community has limited public transportation due to the poor road conditions which is a major deterrent to the development. The main modes of transportation are small trucks and motorcycles. There are five Community Base Organizations (CBO) operating in the community with the most vibrant being the youth club. Rada , J.A.S Church, and P.T.A.

- 1. Road Improvement**
- 2. Unemployment**
- 3. Health Care**
- 4. Education and**
- 5. Environmental Protection**





Population of the village

There are approximately 600 residents living in the community of Claverty Cottage. The population is made up of:

Male: 57%

Females: 43% of the community

Children attended Basic School ages 3-6 , Total 8.

Children attended Primary School ages 6-12 Total 35

Total Babies are 20

1. Direct observation

Claverty Cottage is a small remote farming village with mountainous terrain. Access to village is by a rough winding road which is desperately in need of repairs. The community is located on the North Western slopes of the Blue Mountain peak, 14 miles South East of Buff Bay and 31 miles from the capital (Port Antonio) in Portland. It is bounded on the North of Chepstowe, East of Shirley Castle, South of Blue Mountain, and West of Bangor Ridge, Bybrook.

The population ages ranges of young children from age 1-12-yrs, attending both basic and primary schools. All of the children ages between the ages of 12-19 yrs are attending school outside of the community. These students live closer to the central parts of the parish to have easier access to secondary and tertiary schools.

Most of the community members are adults in the age range 20s-60s yrs. They are all involved in farming activities. The community is united by school and church activities, and parties.

The type of houses and infrastructure within the community are mainly made up of board and concrete structure, there are approximately 600 houses located on this mountain range.

The type of road which allows for access to the community is very rocky and poorly maintained, which is the only entrance and exit to the community. The main issues of concern are for the most vulnerable person living in the community, which are the elderly, pregnant woman, children, sick, shut-in.



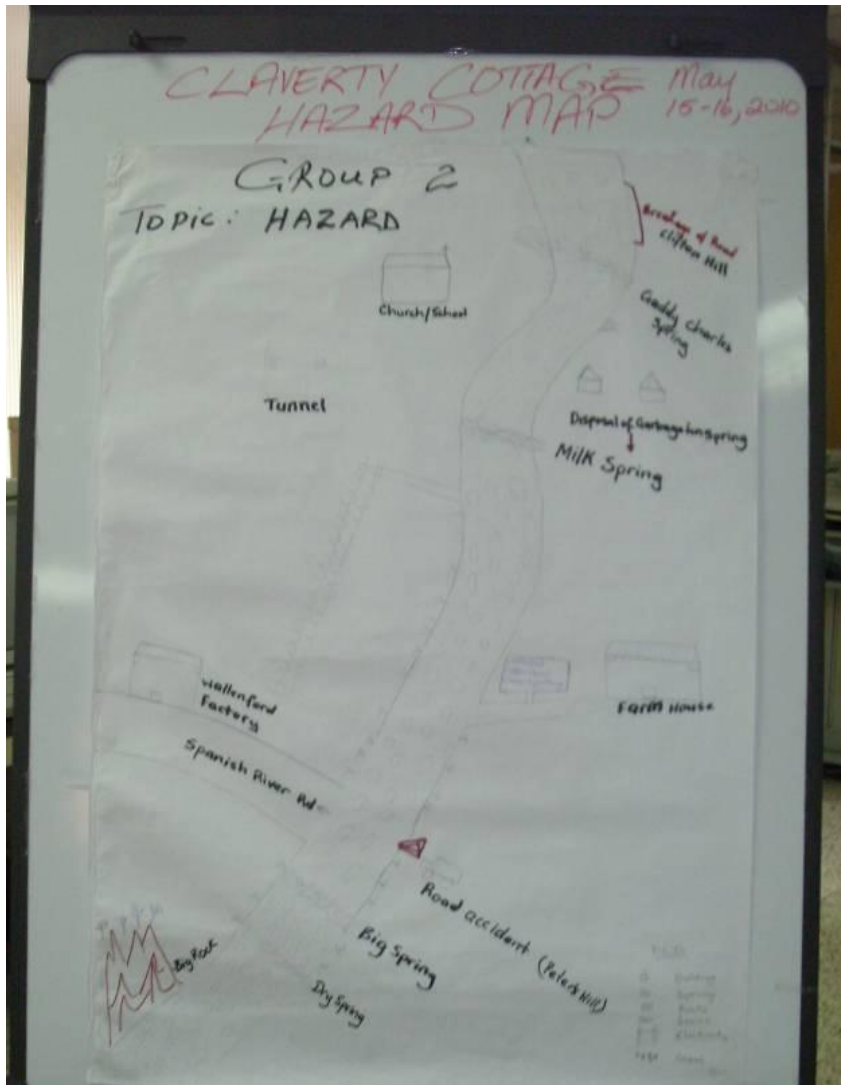
Focus group discussions

The focus group discussions were facilitated by the VCA trainers with the community member as participants. Based on the consultation with the participants, the following tools were used:

Historical profile

YEAR	EVENT
1875	Community was settled by father McClaverty (Anglican Priest)
1907	Earthquake ,two died
1944	Hurricane Flora destroyed crops, school ; temporary school constructed
1951	Hurricane Charley destroyed houses
1953	New school built on church land.
1980	Electricity provided for community.
1986	Coffee farming became the main source of employment.
1988	Hurricane Gilbert caused major damage to houses and roads
2001	Major flooding resulting in landslide , villagers marooned for three months.
2004	Hurricane Ivan destroyed crops, one death occurred.
2005	Hurricane Dennis and Emile
2007	Hurricane Dean destroyed crops.
2008	Hurricane Gustav

Main hazards include hurricanes, earthquakes and severe weather generating floods and landslides. The latter is made more often by the big number of springs in the area. The impact of these events have caused loss of life, services and homes. These have also damaged the livelihoods of the community.



Picture: Community hazard map



a. Seasonal calendar

ACTIVITIES	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
LOW INCOME	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
HIGH INCOME									X	X	X	X
CASH CROP	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	x				
RAINFALL PERIOD	X	X	X							X	X	X
FLOOD	X	X	X									X
COLD TEMPERATURE	X	X	X						X	X	X	X

Seasonal employment dominates the society. But this offers the opportunity to deliver preparedness education in the slower periods of May to August.

a. Livelihoods and coping strategies analysis

The livelihood and coping strategies for the community are to supplement income with cash crops, these include planting , sweet pepper , peas ,corn, banana apples, jackfruits ,yam , cabbage, red peas, carrots. From September more formal employment (coffee) offers increased wages.

b. Institutional and Social Network Analysis

- A building that is used as a school and church and is also a designated Emergency shelter
 - Small community centre which housed the basic school
 - A post agency
 - A playfield that is used as a helipad (used for food drop in past disaster)
 - A coffee farmhouse that provides employment
 - Club house building used for social events eg. weddings & parties.
- There are 1 coffee factories and 4 farmhouses



Part 2: Risk assessment in Claverty Cottage

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

The Jamaica Red Cross Society 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 Claverty Cottage community members:

1. The first step meant identifying for each hazard the **Potential Risks to the community**; the areas of vulnerability and 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 in differentiating the types of measures, whether they related to prevention, mitigation or preparation for response.
4. The fourth step involves 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

Hazard	Potential Risk	Vulnerability	Capacity
Landslide & soil erosion	People, ,property and livestock	Persons living above and below hillside	Community farmers....chainsaw, shovel, ground forks, and pick axes and machetes .shelter manager. Some technical support required
Flooding	Access road and houses	Houses ,roadway ,farms	Community resources include the tools and ability to construct their own homes. However low income hence outside assistance would be required for materials.
Hurricanes	House Damage e.g. Ms....		
Earthquakes			

2. Local capacity to respond to hazards

HAZARD	Vulnerabilities identified	Actions to transform vulnerabilities into capacities
Landslides and soil erosion	Residents Farms livestock	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education and awareness 2. Plant grass to hold soil 3. Contouring of land 4. Chose safe location to build houses 5. Gabion baskets 6. Grading the land
Flooding	Residents Farms Livestock.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clean existing water table 2. Make improvised Channels to direct flow of water
Hurricane	Residents Agricultural crops Livestock	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disaster preparedness education and awareness 2. Adhere to building code 3. Strengthen community capacity to manage disaster 4. Retrofitting most vulnerable homes?

3. Type of measures to mitigate disasters

The third step consisted in differentiating the types of measures, along three categories:

- Prevention actions: action which tries to reduce to 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 Bamboo to respond in an effective and efficient manner



Identifying prevention, preparation and mitigation activities

Actions to transform vulnerabilities to capacities	Prevention	Preparation	Mitigation
Education and awareness	X	X	X
Plant grass to hold soil	X	X	
Contour land to direct flow of water	X	X	
Build houses at safe location	X		X
Adhere to building code	X	X	X
Clean water tables	X	X	
Make new water tables	X	X	X



4. Ability to act on hazards (CIA analysis)

The fourth step involves a CIA Analysis¹, 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 **accept** the threat as it is.

Actions to transform vulnerabilities into capacities	Prevention	CIA	Preparation	CIA	Mitigation	CIA
Education and awareness	X	I	X	I	X	I
Plant grass to hold soil	X	C	X	C		
Contour land to direct flow of water	X	C	X	C		
Build houses at safe location	X	C	X	C	X	C
Adhere to building code eg use of hurricane straps and correct shape of roof	X	C	X	C	X	C
Clean water tables	X	C/I	X	C		
Make new water tables	X	C/I	X	C		

Other

1. Planting of grass.
2. Foot Bridge needed at Milk Spring.
3. Gaddy Charles need a water channel
4. Improved access road

¹ CIA: C = change, I = influence, A = accept.



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

Resource Personnel

#	Names	Addresses
01	Ms. Morine Thompson	Morine Thompson; JRC Headquarters
02	Mr. Curtis Palmer	VCA Trainer, JRC Headquarters
03	Mr. Ansel Williamson	Field Officer, JRC Headquarters
04	Ms. Nicole Brooks	Information Officer, JRC Headquarters

Focus group meeting – May 15, 2010

#	Names	Addresses
1.	COLLIN TYRELL	Claverty Cottage , Portland
2.	CARLOS TYRELL	Claverty Cottage , Portland
3.	DEYON WILLIS	Claverty Cottage , Portland
4.	CLIFORD LEWIS	Claverty Cottage ,Portland
5.	LETERIA BARCLAY	Claverty Cottage , Portland
6.	RICORDO HAMILTON	Claverty Cottage, Portland
7.	ADALBERT ANDERSON	Claverty Cottage, Portland
8.	CLINTON TAYLOR	Claverty Cottage , Portland
9.	LINDSAY WILLIS	Claverty Cottage , Portland
10.	CURTIS BARCLAY	Claverty Cottage , Portland
11.	DELPHEMA WILLIS	Claverty Cottage , Portland
12.	CLARDINE GRAHAM	Claverty Cottage , Portland
13.	MARCINA SHIREY	Claverty Cottage , Portland
14.	PERNELLA STEWARD	Claverty Cottage , Portland
15.	ENA WILLIS	Claverty Cottage , Portland
16.	ROMELL WILLIS	Claverty Cottage , Portland
17.	ANDREW REID	Claverty Cottage , Portland
18.	WILBERT CRISP	Claverty Cottage , Portland
19.	LORNA TYRELL	Claverty Cottage , Portland



Participants external to the community

#	Names	Addresses
01	Mr. Ivor Minott	c/o SDC, Portland
02	Ms Janine Fairweather	c/o MLSS, Portland
03	Mr. Everald Horne	c/o JFB, Portland
04	Mr. Oliver Coore	Emergency Services Section Chair- Portland Branch, JRC
05	Ms. Jen-Marie Pryce	Buff Bay Area Group Representative, Portland Branch, JRC
06	Mrs. Eileen Davis	Branch Representative, Portland Branch, JRC
07	Ms. Gloria Sinclair	Buff Bay Area Group Representative, Portland Branch, JRC