

Vulnerability and capacity assessment: questions and recording grid for focus group discussion

This document provides 5 questionnaires to be used in focus groups to assess capacities and vulnerabilities in five different categories:

1. Individual
2. Social
3. Natural
4. Physical
5. Economic

For a further detailed analyses, a distinction between different groups (based on gender, location, livelihood activity, or other) might be useful, depending on the local circumstances.

The questions should be asked in the local language.

The questionnaires were taken from Tearfund's *Reducing risk of disaster in our communities*.
ROOTS 9.

Vulnerabilities and capacities in INDIVIDUAL (male/female) category

Impact question	Answer
<p>What impact does the main hazard have on human life and health in the community? For example. Death, injury, hunger, reduced ability to work.</p>	

Question	Vulnerability	Capacity
<p>1. Which people in the community are most affected by the hazard? Why are they most affected?</p>		
<p>2. Which people in the community are the least affected by the hazard? Why are they least affected?</p>		
<p>3. Which health problems reduce people's ability to cope with a disaster? In which months are these health problems most serious?</p>		
<p>4. Have you (or children) received any information or training about how to cope with disasters? Where did this information come from?</p>		
<p>5. What skills and knowledge help people to cope better with disasters? For example ability to swim; knowledge of wild foods; boat-handling skills?</p>		

Vulnerabilities and capacities in SOCIAL category

Tool: With the group, draw a Venn diagram with circles to represent different social groups: the sizes of circles indicate their importance in the community.

Impact question	Answer
<p>How does the main hazard affect social life? For example, more/fewer ceremonies; school attendance drops; migration; more crime or disputes etc.</p>	

Question	Vulnerability	Capacity
<p>1. The Venn diagram shows that many groups exist in the community. Which of these groups is of most help in times of disaster? Please give reasons.</p>		
<p>2. Which family links or relatives are most helpful to you during times of disaster? (Local and more distant.)</p>		
<p>3. Are there people in the community who benefit from disasters? If yes, please give details of why and how.</p>		
<p>4. Who provides leadership and good guidance in times of crisis? For example, traditional leader; government officials; religious leader; others.</p>		
<p>5. What government services still function during disasters, and how do they help the community?</p>		

Vulnerabilities and capacities in Natural category

Tool: List or draw the natural resources available to the community. Which ones are the most important? Do a ranking exercise. Natural resources should also be added to the map drawn for the physical category.

Impact question	Answer
<p>How does the main hazard affect natural resources? For example, impact on drinking water, grazing land, forest, fish, soil, etc.</p>	

Question	Vulnerability	Capacity
<p>1. Which natural resources (e.g. water, grass, trees, fish) are most affected by the hazard? Why does this damage occur?</p>		
<p>2. Which natural resources (e.g. water, grass, trees, fish) are less affected by the hazard? Why are these resources not damaged or lost?</p>		
<p>3. Is there restricted access to any natural resource (e.g. water or wood) during a disaster? Which resources, and why is access restricted?</p>		
<p>4. Is there competition or argument over any natural resource during times of crisis? Please give details.</p>		
<p>5. Which natural resources (e.g. wild food or banana trees) become especially important during disasters? Why is this?</p>		

Vulnerabilities and capacities in PHYSICAL category

Tool: Help group members to draw a map of their village, marking the buildings, roads, bridges, markets etc which are important. This can be drawn on the ground, on paper or on a blackboard. Make a copy on a flip chart for the team. Show the areas affected by the main hazard. Add natural resources – rivers, ponds, forests etc – to the map.

Impact question	Answer
How does the main hazard affect constructed features (e.g. houses, roads, bridges, school, wells etc)? What impact is seen on tools or other physical belongings?	

Question	Vulnerability	Capacity
1. Which buildings or structures are most affected by the hazard? Why does this damage occur?		
2. Which buildings are least affected by the hazard? Why are these buildings less affected?		
3. What communication systems are available during times of crisis? For example, mobile phones or radios.		
4. What means of transport are available and still useable during times of emergency? For example, boats, bicycles, other vehicles.		
5. How do people preserve their tools and household possessions during the crisis caused by the hazard?		
6. How are open wells and hand-pumps affected by the hazard? Why?		

Vulnerabilities and capacities in ECONOMY category

Tool: Draw a seasonal calendar with the community, showing the different agricultural and other livelihood activities, and the months when different hazards are most likely to appear. Show migration seasons, animal movements etc.

Impact question	Answer
How does the main hazard affect economic activities, such as farming, fishing, factories, or operation of local markets?	

Question	Vulnerability	Capacity
1. Which livelihoods (or income-generating activities) are most affected by the hazard? Why is this?		
2. Which livelihoods (or income-generating activities) are not affected or less affected by the hazard? What new ways of generating income are used in times of crisis?		
3. Which crops are most affected by the hazard? Why does this happen?		
4. Which crops are less affected by the hazard? Why are they not so much affected?		
5. How do people get money to buy food or other items after a disaster? For example, from savings, borrowing, remittances or selling assets.		
6. How is paid labour affected by the hazard? For example, work in factories, on big farms, on plantations. Why?		

Summarizing information – VCA Table

Column 1

Column 2

Column 3

Column 4

Column 5

Category	Impact of hazards	Vulnerabilities	Capacities	Suggested risk-reducing activities
Individual				
Social				
Natural				
Physical				
Economic				