

Coaching session on Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment

Slide 2 House rules

- Raise your hand if you have a question
- Keep your mic turned off
- Keep your camera on

Comment Ask participants to raise their (virtual) hand if they have question and listen when another participant/ the facilitator is speaking.

If someone raises their hand make sure you call on that person shortly, at a suitable moment, so that he/she can ask a question or give a comment.

Ask participants to keep their mic turned off while not speaking and only turn it on when they say something, e.g., after you have called on them for raising their hand.

If participants have an instable internet connection, they can keep their camera off

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Slide 4 1. Learning objectives

At the end of this session, the trainees

1. know the purpose and value of the Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
2. have a more detailed understanding of vulnerabilities and capacities
3. can assess capacities and vulnerabilities in a community effectively
4. know how Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment links to CCCD

Slide 5 2. Purpose of Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment

The Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) helps you to

- Understand why it is possible for a hazard to cause damage
- Identify elements at risk of damage and loss in a community
- Determine vulnerabilities and capacities present in the community
- Prioritize actions to minimize risk

Learning
objective
1

Knowing vulnerabilities and capacities help build resilience and knowing where to focus programming.

Slide 6 Understanding local vulnerabilities and capacities is important for effective programming and meeting the needs of our target audience. It helps building

resilience as well as providing a life in dignity and a promising future and for the children in the community.

Slide 7 **3. Capacities and Vulnerabilities**

Comment Might be known to trainees from elsewhere. But it is good to go through it again and bring everyone onto the same level.

Slide 8 **Capacities**

- Help prepare for a disaster, reduce impact of a hazard, cope with it
- Can be strengths, skills, knowledge, social networks, traditional knowledge, coping strategies
 - E.g., alternative crops or livelihoods, savings, radio
- Every community, household, individual has capacities

The strengths, coping strategies, and resources that exist within the people and their communities. These can be used to mitigate, prepare for, and cope with damaging effects of disaster, or quickly recover from a disaster.

Learning objective
2

Comment → Ask trainees for possible capacities.
More detailed examples will follow later.

Slide 9 **Vulnerabilities**

- That which makes a community susceptible to disaster
- Pre-existing conditions
- Vary between and within communities, families, household.
- Vulnerability is often connected to what is absent or not accessible
- Hazard Impact = Damage

Vulnerability is being exposed to the negative impacts of a hazard (can turn into a disaster) due to location or being prone/susceptible to damage or injury.

Some households have more capital, better livestock, better housing, and location thereof than others.

Some social groups tend to be more vulnerable, e.g., due to the location where they live

Women are often more vulnerable than men, as are children, the elderly or the sick.

Children are especially vulnerable. Keep an extra eye out for their vulnerabilities and capacities.

Learning objective
2

Comment Hazard Impact: Usually easy to describe, it is the visible effect of the hazard. Impact and vulnerability are correlated. Vulnerabilities allow the impact.

Slide 10 **Capacities and Vulnerabilities**

- Every community has vulnerabilities as well as capacities
- Exist on different levels: Individual, household/family, community, national
- Some things can be both capacity and vulnerability, depending on the context
 - Work migration in times of drought is a common coping strategy and an economic capacity. Yet, separation of families can have negative consequences, e.g., pressure on kids to work more, help with chores and miss out on school.

Learning objective
2

- Large herds are a sign of wealth and economic capacity. In times of drought and scarce pasture too many animals may put more pressure on landscape dependency on a single livelihood increases vulnerability to drought.
- It is important to understand capacities and vulnerabilities in relation to different hazards

Slide 11 Elements at risk

Elements at risk:

- Aspects of life, livelihoods, property, or others that are susceptible to damage from hazards
- Various elements at risks might be impacted on by a hazard differently
- Example: Example: Houses, livelihoods, water supply, natural resources

Learning objective
2

Slide 12 Exercise



Identify and list possible flood impacts on the listed elements at risk and the vulnerabilities that make these impacts possible.

Learning objectives
2 & 3

Element at Risk	Impact on Elements at Risk	Possible vulnerabilities which allow this impact
Houses		
Water supply		
Livelihoods		
Natural resources		

Comment → Set a specific hazard e.g., flood, drought, conflict. Let participants think of possible impacts and vulnerabilities for the elements at risk mentioned in the left column.
 → This can be done either individually or in a group. In an online session you could use a whiteboard tool like Padlet or Mural.
 For an in-person session, this table can be found ready to print at the end of this document.
 The examples following are for a flood and a drought.
 Choose one of these examples or do both.

Slide 13 Flood example

Element at Risk	Impact on Elements at Risk	Possible vulnerabilities which allow this impact
Houses	Damage to houses	House close to river Weak house design or weak foundations No protective wall, embankment, or trees
Water supply	Containment of wells	Wells close to river Wells not capped or protected from containment

Learning objective
2

Livelihoods	Destruction of crops	Farm fields located on low land, close to river Growing season of crop coincides with flood No protective wall, embankment, or trees
Natural resources	Destruction of natural resources	Climate or environmental change has brought more severe weather that will now damage previously resilient assets

Slide 15 Drought example

Learning objective 2

Element at Risk	Impact on Elements at Risk	Possible vulnerabilities which allow this impact
Health	Health problems	Lack of health knowledge Lack of pure drinking water sources
Livelihoods: Agriculture	Reduced or zero yield from field crops	Crops not resistant to drought Lack of irrigation systems Agricultural extension services not adequate
Livelihoods: Pastoralism	Death of livestock	Some animals do not cope well with drought Some animals not in good health Herds are too large Veterinary services are absent
Natural resources	Reduced number of wild plants and/or animals	Even wild plants and animals are not resistant to the extreme drought now seen

Slide 16 4. Categories of Vulnerabilities and Capacity

Slide 17 Categories

Learning objectives 2 & 3

- Vulnerabilities and Capacities can be found in five categories:
 - Individual
 - Social
 - Economic
 - Physical
 - Natural
- Various hazards will impact these differently
- Vulnerability and capacity might be different for different social groups

The categories correspondent to the five assets from the Sustainable Livelihood Framework.

Slide 18 Individual

Learning objectives 2 & 3

- Knowledge, health status, skills etc. or the lack thereof
- Identify the most vulnerable individuals in the community
 - These are often women and children, the elderly, or sick people.
 - Women might be restricted in movement or in decision-making-power.
- Data should be disaggregated by meaningful groups
 - Male and female separately

- The elderly might create vulnerabilities to family, e.g., time and money consumed in caring and not farming
- Look specifically at children
- Individual assets are used to make use of assets in different categories
 - Traditional knowledge on resistant crops or edible wild plants helps make better use of natural resources
 - Ability to interpret signs of nature may help predict a hazard: e.g., buffalo running uphill before a tsunami

Slide 19 Individual Example

Learning objectives 2 & 3

Vulnerability	Capacity
Low literacy rates	High literacy rates
Undernutrition	Good nutritional status
Little knowledge of hazards and how to cope with them	Good knowledge of hazards and how to cope with them
Lack of educational or skills training opportunities	Good opportunities for education and learning new skills
High prevalence of diseases (e.g., HIV, malaria)	Good health status
Women restricted in mobility or dress	Women empowered, their knowledge and resourcefulness respected
Lack of able-bodied men or women	Presence of able-bodied youth, men and women

Comment Each of the following example tables only holds a few possible examples, none is exhaustive.
 Ask participants what other vulnerabilities and examples they can think of for each category.
 You can also ask participants to make a list of their vulnerabilities and capacities.

Slide 20 Social

Learning objectives 2 & 3

- Social vulnerabilities appear if ties and network between individuals and families are weak
 - Dispersed families remove support members can give each other
- Good social ties and relationships increase capacity to cope with threats
 - Bad relationships hinder mutual support, increases arguments or minor crime
- Presence of social clubs/groups helpful
 - SHGs, farmers association, etc.
 - E.g., SHGs facilitated knowledge sharing and build relationship
- Good leadership in times of crises is important, too.

Slide 21 Social Example

Learning objectives 2 & 3

Vulnerability	Capacity
Weak family relationships	Strong family relationships
Religious groups absent or ineffective	Religious groups strong and active in helping the community

Poor relationships between different ethnic, religious, class or livelihood groups	Good relationships between different ethnic, religious, class or livelihood groups
Women and other groups' gifts, skills, abilities, and experience are not values	Capacities of both men and women are recognised and used
Few social groups, e.g., absence of SHGs, clubs, cooperative	Well-established groups exist within community whose member can assist one another

Slide 22 Natural

- Resources found (or not found) in environment: Water, fish, soil, tress, crops, razing land, wild plants...
- Often the basis of livelihoods, essential for survival
- Natural resources that remain unharmed by disaster will provide important coping capacities for survivors
- Natural resources change from location to location

Slide 23 Natural Example

Vulnerability	Capacity
Surface water not consistently available	Adequate surface water availability
Absence of tress	Presence of tress or bamboo
Soil degraded	Soil fertile and productive
Limited grazing land available	Adequate grazing land available
Reduced fish stock	Fish available
No emergency 'famine food' e.g., wild plants and berries	'Famine foods' available. E.g., roots, berries, etc.

Learning objectives
2 & 3

Slide 24 Physical

- Those assets constructed by people
 - E.g., roads, buildings, phones, tools water pumps, electricity grid
- Physical vulnerabilities are caused by their absence, weakness, damage, or issues with location.
- Are often hazards specific
 - Strong buildings important in flooding but not during droughts
- May be communally or individually owned

Learning objectives
2 & 3

Slide 25 Physical Example

Vulnerability	Capacity
No strong public buildings in community	Community has one or more strongly built school church or other community structure
House design and structure not strong enough to resist common hazards	Many housed include earthquake or flood resistant design features

Roads and bridges no usable throughout the whole year and in bad condition	Road surface and bridge allow year-round access and are in good condition
No protected wells or water pumps	Pumps elevated above potential flood water level springs and wells have protective caps
No landline telephones, poor mobile signal	Landline, and mobile communication in good conditions, no matter the weather
Shortage of tools needed for livelihood	Tools and equipment available and protected

Slide 26 **Economic**

- Anything to do with livelihoods, finances, or buying/selling
- Usually not hazard specific
- Economic capacities might be referred to as safety nets:
 - Saving schemes, government grant to compensate damage or loss
- Could be remittances, animals to be sold, savings, jewellery

Learning objectives 2 & 3

Slide 27 **Economic Example**

Vulnerability	Capacity
No easily sellable assets or savings	Family possesses sellable assets or savings
Local credit only available at very high interest rates	Group savings and credit schemes available; low-interest loans available
Few jobs or work opportunities available	Opportunities for casual or skilled labour available
No government support during crises	Government has safety net schemes during crises
No remittances	Families have relatives in employment abroad
Dependency on a single cash crop	Farmers grow several different crops

Learning objectives 2 & 3

Slides 28 - 29 **5. Assessing Vulnerability and Capacity**

- Determine capacities and vulnerabilities present in your area
 - Here the focus on lies on community-based assessment in project
- Both might vary for different social groups
- Assess for different hazards and social groups
 - Vulnerability and capacity might be different for different social groups and hazards.

Learning objectives 2,3

Slide 30 In assessing

- Use community groups
 - (Youth) SHGs, Parenting groups, farmers groups, church groups, Child rights clubs, extra meeting....
- Apply participatory tools and question sets
 - Tools and questions sets will follow below.
- Use hazards identified in Hazard Assessment
- Start by asking for the impact of hazards

Learning objectives 3

- Look at all 5 categories
- Make use of secondary data and key informant to complement community input

Slide 31 VCA Tool

- New PRA Tool “Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment” was created
- Looks at Vulnerabilities and Capacities for different groups
- General question set to assess Vulnerabilities and Capacities in general
- Additional questions to ask if community struggles with natural hazards

Comment

In the following a practical overview and question sets for assessing Vs & Cs specifically for disasters are presented.



“VCA Questionnaires specifically for disasters” file provides these overviews. → hand out to participants.

Useful tool “Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment” can also be found in the PRA Toolbox.

Slide 32 Assessment Structure

Learning objective 3

Impact question	Answer	
Main impact of hazard upon this category of asset		
Question	Vulnerability	Capacity
Q1		
Q2		
Q3		
Q4		
Q5		

Comment

Set a hazard/disaster for which you are assessing Vulnerabilities and Capacities. This is the main structure for the assessment

- ‘Main impact’ answers the damage the hazard does to this category of assets
- If answer to a question indicates a weakness it is taken down as a vulnerability
- If answer to a question indicates a strength it is noted as a capacity
- ➔ Question overview for all hazards follow below. More questions can be added.
- ➔ These questionnaires can be found in the file “VCA Questionnaires”

Slide 33 Example Impact Question

Each category assessment starts with a question for the main impact. Here is an example impact question form for the PHYSICAL category and flood.

Learning objective 3

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?	Flood causes destruction and damage to houses, roads, bridges, and other infrastructure. Communication is disrupted.

Comment This question and all following need to be translated into the local language and adjusted to the context so that community members are sure to understand them.

Slides **Assessment Questions**

34 - 38 All assessment questions and formats for the five categories are shown and introduced.

Learning objective 3

Comment The formats and question can be found in the document “VCA Questionnaires”.



Slide 39 **PRA tools to use**

1. Individual – seasonal calendar, take a step, 24-hour schedule, child development/wellbeing matrix, ten seeds (for women/girls), Self Help Group’s
2. Social – the river code, 24-hour schedule, Venn diagram I, Self Help Group’s
3. Natural – seasonal calendar, historical timeline, transect walk, community mapping
4. Physical – community mapping, transect walk
5. Economic – community mapping, seasonal calendar, wealth ranking

Learning objectives 3 & 4

“Vulnerability ranking”, “Resource Bag” and “Access and Control over resources” PRA Tool can be used for each of the five VCA elements.

Comment These are some ideas which PRA tools to use for each category. Others can be used, too.
Tools and their explanation can be found in PRA Toolkit.

Slide 40 **Summarizing information**

Column 1 Column 2 Column 3 Column 4 Column 5

Learning objective 3

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

Normally completed in the office. E.g., done on a flipchart

- ➔ Answers for columns 2, 3, 4 are taken from the questionnaires.
- ➔ Different groups in the categories (e.g., male and female) may be captured by extra rows or by using different colours.
- ➔ Try to put extra focus on children’s vulnerabilities and capacities.

- Complement with key informant information
- VCA identifies capacities and vulnerabilities at one point in time. They change over time.

Comment Example assessment form and questions for the natural category follows.

Slide 41 Summarizing Example

Learning objective
3

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5
Category	Impact of hazards	Vulnerabilities	Capacities	Suggested risk-reducing activities
Individual (male)	Small loss of life; increased health issues	No warning system; lack of health knowledge	Able-bodied youth; carpenters	Train youth as volunteers to raise alarms and assist evacuation
Individual (female)	High loss of life; increased health issues	No warning system; lack of health knowledge; low literacy rates; less ability to swim	Resourceful in times of crisis	Health education; swimming lessons for girls in school; train female volunteers
Social	Families split up; disruption of education	No evacuation plan; location of school; shortage of social groups; poor government services	Health works in community; government agricultural department; farmers' cooperative	Community evacuation plan; women's groups; strengthen cooperative; advocacy to improve and use government agricultural service
Natural	Destruction of smaller trees; deposition of sand on land	No protective embankment; erosion from upstream as result of tree felling	Bamboo and a few trees; forestry department nursery; available high land	Use bamboo to strengthen river bank; tree planting along bank and on slopes; advocacy to reduce tree cutting
Physical	Damage to houses, roads, and bridges	Houses close to river; design of houses not strong	Some stronger houses; church building on higher land	Build stronger embankment; teach better house design; use church as evacuation centre in floods

Economic	Damage to crops; death of livestock	Fields near river; no embankment; growing season is during flood season; crop varieties not resistant; no warnings or evacuation plan for animals	Winter vegetable seed available; a few small livestock and chickens kept	Increase cultivation of winter vegetables; seek flood-resistant crops; evacuation plan to save cattle; expand alternative livelihoods (e.g., egg production)
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Comment → You can let participants identify their own capacities and vulnerabilities here, too.

Aim of VCA is to eventually build capacity where it is missing and reduce existing vulnerability.

How to create a suitable risk reduction action plan as part of the wider community action plan is covered in more detailed in the coaching session *Community-level risk management planning*.

Slide 42 **6. Roleplay exercise**

Take 30 minutes to identify Vulnerabilities and Capacities in the community.

Learning objectives
1, 3 & 4

Comment Exercise: Assign different roles to the participants as found in the document “VCA Roleplay Characters” and introduce the village context, too.



Assign a facilitator to guide the group through the VCA. Also provide the document “VCA Questionnaires.”



Together, in a focus group setting they should try to find vulnerabilities and capacities of the fictitious community assigned to them. They can also be imaginative and come up with items not listed in their role description if it fits the context.

You assign how much time and freedom the groups have to do it.

If in a big (online) setting, smaller (breakout) groups might be helpful.

Slide 43 **Summary VCA**

- Identify vulnerabilities and capacities in relation to a specific hazard
- Look at different groups
- Look at different assets
- VCA can be used to track changes over time and disaggregate data by gender, age, wealth groups etc.

Learning objectives
1 & 3

Comment Focus groups and PRA tools are a great way to facilitate a VCA. The best way to do it depends on the local context.

Slide 44 **7. VCA in CCCD**

Comment → Ask Participants how Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment can be used in, help, and contribute to CCCD

Slide 45 **Preparation Phase**

Learning objective 4

PROJECT DESIGN	
Phase 2: Preparation Analyse disaster risk on country, area, and sector level. Collect general vulnerabilities and capacities on broader context.	
Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Collect basic information on vulnerabilities and capacities in the project area. Use secondary data and government statistics.Determine general vulnerability levels	Knowledge outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">General awareness of vulnerabilities and capacities in project areaUnderstanding of information gaps and needs

Comment For context analysis. Only broad. Not yet with community.

Slide 46 **Community Challenge**

Learning objective 4

PROJECT PREPERATION (2PHASES)	
Phase 3: Community Challenge Assess local community capacities and vulnerabilities.	
Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment using different PRA toolsCreation of Community Venn diagram	Knowledge outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Identification of vulnerable locations within community: settlements, production facilities, critical facilitiesDetermination of expected damage to people, property, livelihoods, and disruption to implementation plansIdentification of vulnerable assets and elements at risk within the community

Comment Most important time for VCA during community challenge.

Slide 47 **Implementing Phase**

Learning objective 4

PROJECT DESIGN (4PHASES)	
Phase 4 – Phase 9 Focus on monitoring progress	
Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Ongoing monitoring of community vulnerabilities and capacities	Knowledge outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">Identification of changing vulnerabilities and capacitiesDetermination of improved resilience or increased vulnerability

Comment In the implementation phase it has a monitoring role to see whether anything is changing. As mentioned above, VCA can be used to track changes over time

Slide 48 **Integrating VCA in CCCD structures**

Which existing CCCD structures can be used to facilitate VCA?

- (Youth) SHGs
- Parenting classes
- Needs assessment

Learning
objective
4

Slide 49 **Capacity building in CCCD**

CCCD programming already address vulnerabilities and builds capacities.

- Social: SHGs, community networks
- Financial: credit schemes, increase of labour opportunities
- Individual: knowledge transfer, skills training, agricultural training
- Others?

Learning
objective
4

Comment Ask trainees how CCCD contributes to building capacities at the moment.

Slide **Short Quiz**

50 & 51 A short quiz about the content of this session can be found under

<https://www.onlinequizcreator.com/vulnerability-and-capacity-assesemnt/quiz-478242>. Share the link with the participants in the chat function.

Tell participants to click at the beginning on “view my result without an account” under “Start without an account”.

Slides **Conclusion**

52 & 53 Ask for and answer remaining questions.

Ask participants to write one sentence in the chat function about what they learned today.

Exercise Sheet

Element at Risk	Impact on Elements at Risk	Possible vulnerabilities which allow this impact
Houses		
Water supply		
Livelihoods		
Natural resources		