

STEP 1 Preparation

Before beginning the Assessment process, the facilitation team should do the following:

- 1 Meet with community and church leaders
- 2 Prepare for the field work
- 3 Learn and practise participatory tools
- 4 Make the practical arrangements
- 5 Introduce PADR to the community.

1 Meet with community and church leaders

A plan to carry out PADR should be developed in consultation with the community, particularly its leaders. Their understanding and ownership of the process is very important for its success and future outputs. It is also important to gain as much support from the government as possible. Therefore, it may be appropriate to invite government officials to be involved at this stage of the process, and at other appropriate stages throughout the process.

Set up a meeting with the community and church leaders. The meeting should include:

- **INTRODUCTIONS** The community leaders, church leaders and facilitation team should introduce themselves.
- **PURPOSE** Explain what the Assessment can offer local people in terms of helping them to reduce risk. Briefly explain what the process involves and explain the relationship between hazard and vulnerability. Point out that the process involves both assessment and action. Seek permission to carry out this work in the local area and to access various groups.
- **FINDING OUT** some general information about the community:
 - **History** When was the community formed? What significant events and changes have occurred?
 - **Livelihoods** What economic activities are carried out locally and how have these changed over time?
 - **Population** What is the population of the community? Is it increasing or decreasing? Is there any migration?
 - **Rich and poor** How would 'rich' and 'poor' be defined by local people?
 - **Hazards and disasters** Have the hazards and their characteristics changed over time?
 - **Vulnerability** Who are the people most in need, especially in times of crisis? Why do they suffer more than others?
 - **Leadership** Ask about the role of the community leaders, church leaders, the local government system and how decisions are made.
 - **Walk** If there is time, it can be helpful for the community leaders and church leaders to take the facilitation team for a walk around the local area, pointing out significant aspects.

- If the leaders agree to PADR being carried out in the community, ask them to identify people who could form focus groups. Ask them to identify key informants.
- Work with community leaders and church leaders to draft a schedule for PADR. The schedule should include all six steps. It is important that each step has adequate time for both the gathering of information and the analysis. Around half the time should be used for analysis, which includes discussion and prioritising findings.

Ensure that anything that could limit the availability of local people is taken into account, such as:

- market days
- festivals
- weather (such as harvesting ahead of bad weather)
- elections
- insecurity.

The length of time required to do a PADR will vary according to the context, the size of the facilitation team, the structure of the community and the number of focus groups.

In order to prepare church members for the Assessment, church leaders could encourage members to use the Bible studies on page 8.

2 Prepare for the field work

Identify focus groups

Vulnerabilities and capacities will vary between different groups within a given community. Even within groups, individuals will experience different types of vulnerability and will possess different capacities. Perceptions of disaster risk will therefore vary. However, it is not practical to meet with every person in the local area. The best way forward is therefore to meet with a selection of people in focus groups. These focus groups consist of community members with similar characteristics.

When setting up focus groups, consider how different categories of people within the local area are likely to be affected by disaster. Community leaders can help by identifying specific people who could join focus groups. Groups could consist of:

- women
- men
- older people
- young people
- groups such as water user committees, self-help groups or church groups
- livelihood groups such as farmers or labourers. These could be further divided into wealthy groups and poorer groups
- those from a certain social background, such as according to caste or social class.

The size of each group should be carefully managed. Ten to twelve people per group will usually provide a good representation of the range of views held by local people. In a larger group it can be difficult to keep focused. The location of the meetings requires careful planning. Quiet places where the meetings are unlikely to be interrupted are best. However, the place selected must be accessible to the focus group members. A church building or village community centre may provide a good setting. A focus group of women could decide to meet at a well where they often talk, away from the men.

During such meetings, it may become clear that specific people need to be interviewed separately. For example, some people may have more to offer than can be expressed in a focus group setting. A disabled person may be unable to attend the focus group meeting or be denied access, but could have valuable views to share.

Consider potential key informants

In order to gain a full understanding of vulnerabilities and capacities, it will be necessary to talk to individuals who have a different perspective, level of knowledge or understanding from the majority. They are likely to be external to the community or occupy positions of power and influence. The community leaders may have identified some of these informants. Other key informants might be identified later by focus groups during the vulnerability assessment. It is important to have spoken to key informants before planning action in STEP 6. Interviewing of key informants could take place after the vulnerability and capacity assessments, or between them. Key informants may include:

- local government officials
- landowners
- employers
- other community leaders in the area
- religious leaders
- school teachers
- medical staff (doctors or health workers)
- government agricultural or livestock workers
- NGOs in the area
- United Nations personnel in the area.

Scheduling

It is important to find out people's availability before agreeing a detailed schedule. The community leaders will have helped to write a draft schedule. It may be helpful to check the draft with a few local people, in particular to check that their daily routines and work patterns do not affect their ability to participate in the Assessment. Focus group meetings, for each step of the Assessment, are likely to last two to three hours. However, the amount of time required to carry out each step will often grow as members become more interested in, and enthusiastic about, the process.

Preparing questions

FOCUS GROUPS Guideline questions, based upon the PADR framework, should be prepared before focus group meetings. Sample questions are given in Section 4, Step 3. These should be used as ideas for discussion, not for rigid and inflexible interviewing. The questions should be adapted to suit specific focus groups, as different groups will have different interests and experiences. The facilitator should draw out these perspectives and views.

KEY INFORMANTS Careful thought and preparation is required before meeting with key informants. It is useful to prepare questions before the meeting. Sample questions are given on page 54 but they should be adapted and based on findings from the focus groups.

The purpose of the meetings is to gain a better understanding of key informants' perspectives on the vulnerabilities and capacities in relation to a specific hazard. Be aware that some key informants could be acting as 'pressures' by creating vulnerable conditions. In this case, their co-operation is important as it may be needed for long-term reduction in disaster risk.

3 Learn and practise participatory tools

The success of PADR in leading to reduced disaster risk is heavily dependent on the commitment of local people to developing and initiating action. The proper use of participatory tools will help to achieve this, as there will be shared learning and development. Facilitators should take time to learn, adapt and practise participatory tools. Decide carefully which tool to use for different steps in the process. Suggestions are given on page 32.

The facilitator should introduce the tools for use by groups, but group members should be responsible for carrying out the activity. The tools can produce very different information if carried out by separate groups, such as according to age, gender, occupation or ethnicity.

CASE STUDY Drawing hazard maps in Indonesia

In Banda Aceh, Indonesia, following the tsunami disaster, three different focus groups drew hazard maps of their local area. Only the women drew the shops, only the men drew the location of a warehouse, and only the children drew the playgrounds. This shows that people with different characteristics have different perspectives on what they think is important.

Map drawn by women in Banda Aceh.



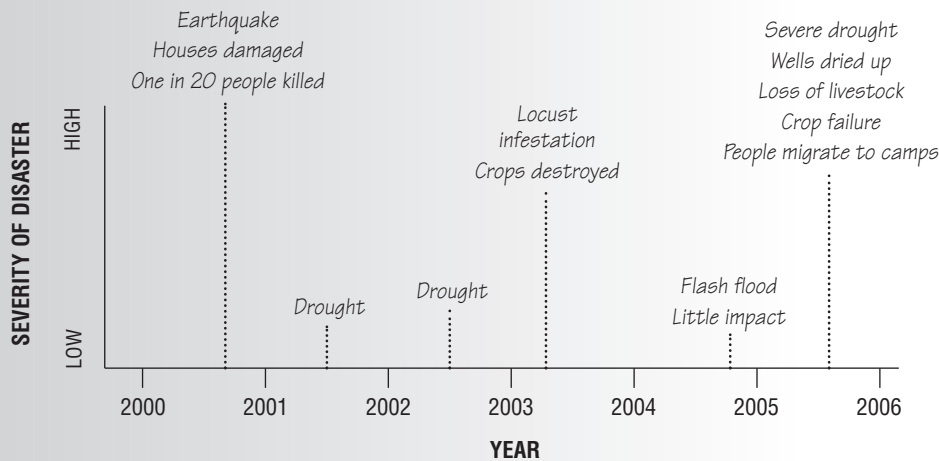
Photo: Paul Venton



Some participatory tools that could be useful in PADR...

TIMELINE

This is used to gather information about what happened in the past in order to understand the present situation.



DRAMA

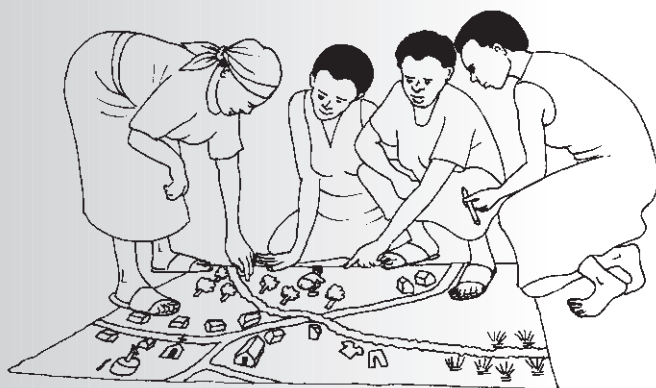
People could be asked to act out a disaster situation, showing who is affected and what is damaged. They could show how local people prepare for, and respond to, particular hazards.

FOLK SONGS, STORIES, POETRY

These can reveal indigenous knowledge, beliefs and practices.

MAPPING

This involves drawing the area's main features and landmarks as a map. This might include houses and community facilities vulnerable to particular hazards, and the location of key resources in an emergency. Maps can be drawn on the ground using sticks, leaves and stones, with chalk on a blackboard or with pens or pencils on a large sheet or a large piece of paper.

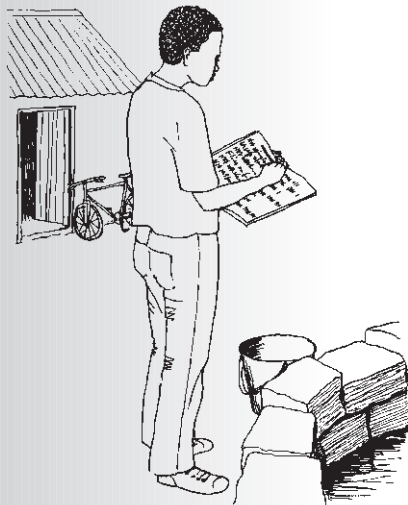


RANKING

This tool explores people's perceptions of risks and helps to understand their priorities. One way of carrying this out is to write or draw the risks on to separate paper bags. Give each person six seeds, stones, beads or bottle tops to use as counters. Each person in turn puts their counters into the relevant bags, according to their priorities. They should put three counters for their first priority, two for their second and one for their third. The counters in each bag are then counted and the results announced. Another way of ranking priorities is to write or draw the risks on to cards and ask the group to prioritise them together by moving the cards around, putting the priority at the top.

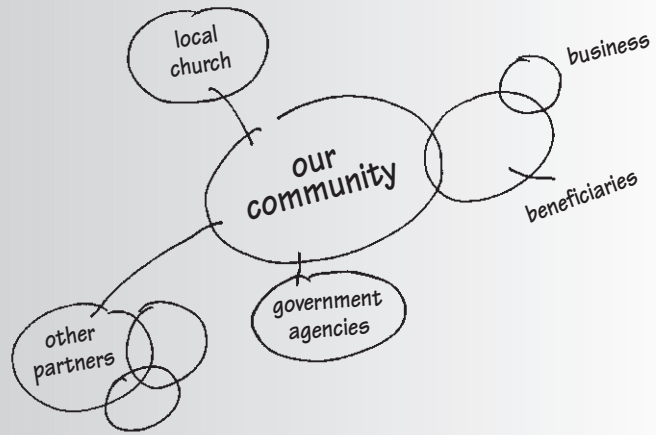
TRANSECT WALK

This is a planned walk through the local area to explore different land uses (such as economic activities, agriculture, open spaces, houses) while taking notes, photographs and asking questions.



VENN DIAGRAM

This shows the key organisations and individuals in the local area and their relationships with each other.



DIRECT OBSERVATION

By observing people and relationships, objects, structures, events and processes we can start to develop a picture of community issues.

SEASONAL CALENDAR

This shows when agricultural activities, festivals and other significant events take place in the local area. Hazards can be added to the chart to show which activities will be affected.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Hazards	FLOOD						██████████					
	SOIL EROSION					██████████						
	MALARIA							██████████				
Activities	RICE GROWING	██████████				██████████						██████
	MIGRATION						██████████					
	HANDICRAFTS		██████████									

The table below shows which participatory tools best fit each type of assessment. For each assessment, facilitation team members should select the tools based on the information needed, literacy level of the group and the skills and experience of the facilitator.



Useful participatory tools according to type of assessment

HAZARD ASSESSMENT	VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT AND CAPACITY ASSESSMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hazard map ■ Ranking ■ Seasonal calendar ■ Time line ■ Historical map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Risk map (Hazard map also showing 'elements at risk') ■ Transect walk ■ Seasonal calendar ■ Time line ■ Venn diagram ■ Folk songs, stories, poetry ■ Drama

4 Make the practical arrangements

Issues to consider include:

- Travel arrangements – who, where, when, and how?
- Food and drink – are refreshments required for the focus group participants?
- Resources for the facilitation team, such as guideline questions, note book, pencil or pen and camera.
- Resources required for participatory exercises – large sheets of paper, pens, chalk, or natural resources (such as sticks and stones) and aids for drama.

5 Introduce PADR to the community

Before carrying out the assessments it is important to hold a community meeting to explain what PADR is and what the process involves. Try to involve community leaders in presenting PADR in order to encourage community ownership. Explain the relationship between hazard and vulnerability.

This meeting could be used to invite people to join focus groups and to discuss the appropriate timing of the meetings. However, the community leaders may prefer to select people themselves. If this is the case, ensure that the focus group members have not been picked because they are biased in some way.

Expectations should be discussed with local people, so that they do not expect things that cannot be offered. However, it is important not to discourage vision. People need to believe that a difference will be made, but must be realistic in terms of the time and resources available to achieve aims.