WORKING WITH WOMEN AT RISK

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING LOCAL DISASTER RISK

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PREFACE

For the past year, a team of researchers in the US, Dominican Republic, and St. Lucia have worked across borders of all kinds to develop a new way of studying community capacity and vulnerability in the face of hazards and disasters. Our approach builds on the local knowledge of women whose extensive social roles, community and family work, and economic activities make them experts on risk at the household, neighborhood, and community levels. Yet their important perspective is often overlooked even in community-based vulnerability research.

With financial support from the Center for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance at the University of South Florida, team leaders in the Caribbean collaborated with grassroots women’s groups to field test a new research model based on the expertise of local women and women’s groups.

The result is this step-by-step guide for assessing the resources and vulnerabilities of communities “through the eyes of women.” The model includes: identification of a local community women’s group to take on the project; training of women from the group as community researchers; guidelines for using various research strategies to collect original data about local hazards and risk; and ideas for synthesizing and utilizing the findings.

We offer the following research guidelines as a tool for planning and carrying out gender-focused community vulnerability research. You will find specific ideas for organizing a two-day training workshop for community women who then serve as researchers, including training materials and other reference material, and guides to successfully collecting and analyzing original data. We propose a model for organizing these findings into a comprehensive Community Vulnerability Profile. Finally, we present strategies for moving from analysis to action by sharing this work with community members, officials, the media and all those interested in safer communities.

We hope the document will help women’s organizations and other groups plan and conduct successful research useful to their neighborhoods and communities in the face of multifaceted hazards and the increasing global risk of disasters. We are confident the Community Vulnerability Profiles resulting from this methodology will be useful to emergency managers and planners.

The community researchers and key informants who joined us in carrying out the first field test of this research model generously shared a lifetime of experience and knowledge. I know they join me in this invitation to use, adapt, and pass along these research guidelines in the interest of building safer, more just, and sustainable disaster-resilient communities for all.

Elaine Enarson
Evergreen, Colorado
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Melania González  Ana Luisa Molina  Odeida Ventura

We join in dedicating this document to Gavina De La Cruz, who was keenly interested in the project and participated in the Haina training workshop in the Dominican Republic. Like others in her neighborhood, she made do with erratic electrical service but lost her life this spring due to electrocution in her own kitchen. Her needless death is a tragic and dramatic illustration of the risks she and millions of other women in the world face every day.
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SECTION ONE:

USING THE GUIDELINES:
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ASSESSING LOCAL RISK

What makes everyday life unsafe—and what can be done to make life more secure and sustainable? What makes it more unsafe for women? These are complex questions all the more pressing to answer as the human and environmental toll of disasters continues to rise.

Rising numbers of people around the globe live in hazardous environments due, among other factors, to:

- naturally-occurring events such as hurricanes or earthquakes
- human-caused and technological dangers such as toxic waste contamination and unsafe housing
- armed conflict within and across national borders
- biological hazards such as cholera or HIV/AIDS

Catastrophic events such as deadly hurricanes leave many thousands of dead and cause untold loss and pain when they strike Latin America and the Caribbean. Even more destructive in the long term are small-scale disasters which hit neighborhoods and communities time and again. These localized floods, mudslides, droughts, or toxic spills are frightening and destructive, but attract far less international attention and humanitarian relief than more dramatic and catastrophic events.

How can people be safer in a world of increasing risk? How can we know what places us in harm’s way?

We focus here on the everyday living conditions that reduce and increase people’s exposure to environmental and technological hazards in particular. These hazards are sometimes self-evident—the smoking volcano in the distance, nearby oil refineries or spring floods—but not always.

What makes people strong in the face of danger is even harder to see—and harder yet when we think of women and girls, so often typecast as victims in disasters.

Local Hazards, Local Vulnerabilities

Some risky conditions are easily observed—a building poorly constructed to withstand an earthquake, for example, or a neighborhood lacking safe drinking water—while others are obvious only by their absence, such as effective communication systems to warn people of hurricane-force winds. But even when dangers are evident, risk is more than a function of the hazards that exist in our environment.

The vulnerability of people increases the effects of hazards, putting people at increased risk of harm—and this is not a technical but a social issue. People vary widely in their exposure to hazards and in their ability to anticipate, plan for, survive and recover from the effects of disastrous events.

Not the flooded river but people’s vulnerability to the effects of a river overspilling its natural bank is one of the concerns of people living with floods. This is also important to more specialized risk managers charged with promoting public safety.

Just as hazards relate to a particular environment, people’s exposure to hazards and their capacity to “ride out the storm” are shaped by economic, political, and social conditions in particular environments.
• Are there functioning communication and electricity systems in this area? Do they reach this neighborhood or community? Do they reach all people equally?

• Where are the hurricane shelters or emergency evacuation sites—or are there any? Who here has reliable transportation to reach the school, community center, or other places of refuge?

• How do people earn a living and what happens to their livelihoods in a drought or a landslide that destroys the home they work in?

• How close is the nearest clinic or day care center? Are people there prepared for an emergency?

• How do people make their needs known? How do they organize politically to make life better?

• How well do neighbors know one another, and can friends, kin, or neighbors help others in an emergency?

These are some of the questions needing answers when people begin to assess hazards and their vulnerabilities and capacities in the face of these hazards. Here, local people are the experts. And here, the perspectives of women and men are likely to vary.

Building on Local Knowledge

All disasters are experienced locally by people in particular households and neighborhoods, whether we think of catastrophic events hitting thousands of people at once, the "creeping" disaster of drought or deforestation, or small-scale disasters like landslides or urban floods.

Risk assessment from this perspective is not simply a matter of collecting data about meteorological patterns (When will El Niño return? How active is the volcano?) or analyzing infrastructure (How close to the school are the trucks carrying hazardous waste? Is the hospital safe in an earthquake?) or simply consulting census data (How many old people live here? How many people can read emergency warnings?).

Assessing risk means understanding how dangerous conditions are constructed at the local level and who is most exposed to them. What are the root causes of unsafe conditions such as urban shantytowns or rural unemployment. How are communities changing and why?

To reduce risk, instead of simply documenting it, we need to understand how particular groups of people live with uncertainty and hazards of all kinds. What did local people do in the past to conserve water, or diversify crops, or prepare for the floods that arrive with certainty every year? What do they do now?

How do women and men, respectively, cope with high rates of infant mortality or unemployment, with unhealthy water, erratic or no electrical supplies, lack of transportation and limited control over decisions directly affecting their own families? What patterns and trends unite or divide people here today?

Volcanic eruptions, oil spills, and landslides happen to particular people in particular places. And it is local people who are the experts about what it takes to live with known risks and how risky conditions can be made safer.

Unlike scientific assessments based on computer-based mapping tools, which often lack a social dimension, community-based vulnerability assessments start with community organizing and depend on people's local knowledge.

This kind of risk assessment is a vital tool for learning what makes daily life risky and how people's lives can be made safer. Risk maps developed by people
directly affected can identify problems and suggest solutions, and can be used to advocate for changes that make life safer.

This approach to assessing local risks does not focus on how people can be helped after a disaster, but on how they can and do work together to prevent hazardous conditions or events from becoming destructive and tragic disasters. It draws on gender analysis to highlight women’s neglected knowledge and capacities in disaster contexts.

WHY IS GENDER IMPORTANT?

Why study risk through women’s eyes? Isn’t that just part of the picture? And what about men?

Like age, gender is a factor that shapes every person’s daily life. The relationships in society between women and men are a powerful force in every culture, resulting in differences as well as inequalities. Just as women and men are differently affected by economic and social development, they are differently affected by hazards and disasters.

Though gender is not always or necessarily the most important factor in people’s experience of disasters, it is never irrelevant—for men as much as women. But we focus here on women to help correct the gender bias in most approaches today to vulnerability assessment and in emergency management generally.

For the most part, other models for assessing vulnerability and capacity do not begin from the ground up to develop a “bird’s eye” view of risk. They tend to focus predominantly on the needs of particularly vulnerable social groups rather than balancing knowledge about needs with knowledge about skills and resources. Few studies are currently conducted by people who themselves are at risk.

Most vulnerability studies are also considered "gender neutral" because they do not attend to women and men specifically, and to the social relations between them. But this leads to "gender blind" research which overlooks differences and inequalities that are highly relevant before, during, and after disasters. For example, the land, skills, and jobs of men may be considered but not women’s unpaid work in the home and community or the ways they earn income in the informal economy.

Seeing Risk Through Women’s Eyes

These Guidelines begin with women and what they know about their own community. For many reasons, this is an important and new perspective on risk.

Women have unique perspectives on community danger and safety. They are very likely to be involved in community networks and organizations and in emergency response to people hurt by crises of all kinds. Many are highly vulnerable to the effects of disasters—though not automatically just because they are women.

Yet the dangers faced by girls and women simply because they are female are not reflected in most disaster research. Nor is much known about how the gender division of labor, for example, can cause the deaths of women and men, respectively, in disasters.

Unlike most studies of vulnerability, the model we use takes a community approach and a gendered perspective. This means that both capacities and vulnerabilities are explored, and that risk is assessed within the context of daily living conditions. It also means that social vulnerability, rather than exposure to physical or meteorological hazards, is the focus. Finally, this model ensures that those most at risk take center stage.
For all these reasons, the research methods used in these guidelines build on the ideas, feelings, and observations of women. In addition to being astute social observers, women have been found by researchers to be, on balance, more likely than men to:

- manage and use natural resources on a daily basis
- organize locally to address immediate family and community needs such as lack of clean water
- have limited economic resources to anticipate, prepare for, and recover from a major disaster
- respond to people’s on-going needs in the extended recovery period following a major disaster
- be under-represented politically but strong informal leaders
- be connected with school systems and children’s education
- have influence over others through strong social networks
- be effective communicators
- be attentive to emergency warnings and preparedness
- be safety-conscious or "risk averse"

The world is not "gender blind" and our assessments of risk cannot be either. Until all studies of hazard and disaster are gender-sensitive, we won’t have the knowledge we need about the world as it is. And until we look at disasters through women’s eyes, we won’t know enough about half the world’s population in disaster situations.

Guidelines for Community Vulnerability Research

These Guidelines will guide you every step of the way as you study community risk with, by, and for some of the most vulnerable and most resourceful people in any community—women.

Who are they for? These Guidelines are based on the experience of grassroots women in the Caribbean who worked through local women’s organizations to learn more about the risks they face and how to reduce them. They are intended primarily for use by women’s groups, though the Guidelines may also be useful to other community groups, educators, development agencies, emergency managers and researchers wishing to identify and assess the hazards of everyday life and the resources, capacities, skills, and knowledge of local people who live in hazardous places and times.

What is included? Here you will find a step-by-step guide for your women’s group to plan and carry out a local assessment of disaster risk. The Guidelines offer project facilitators planning tips to help you get started, training materials for the research workshop, background information, and suggestions for how to utilize the research findings.

Who will use the results? This action research project will result in a written Community Vulnerability Profile. The document summarizes the research results and can help community members promote steps to reduce risk. It is a useful tool for women’s groups and for informing emergency managers about local capacities and vulnerabilities.

Who does the research? The Guidelines assume that grassroots women can and will become effective community researchers. Research is challenging for everyone, and especially for community women without the benefit of extended
education or training and perhaps—at the outset—without much self-confidence in their abilities as researchers.

The Guidelines build on local women’s knowledge to develop realistic research skills and increase awareness of vulnerability and resilience to disaster. We find that this model of vulnerability research affords women who tend to be marginalized in disaster planning and response (and in disaster research) new confidence in their abilities and critical insight into the urgency of reducing risk. Women talking with other women about hazards and disasters is a powerful first step.

You may well find that the community researchers urgently want to carry the work forward as community vulnerability educators and activists.

**Women and Disaster: Understanding Vulnerabilities**

Of course, not all women are equally vulnerable or exposed to the effects of hazards and disasters in identical ways. Women’s lives, like men’s, are shaped both by gender relations in a particular culture or time and by everything else about them—their age, their physical capacities, their ethnic or racial status and economic conditions, to name a few.

Research conducted around the world from a gender perspective does suggest that women are likely to be especially vulnerable to disasters simply because gender inequality is so widespread. The daily lives of girls and women may increase their exposure to all kinds of unsafe conditions and hazardous events. Women also tend to have less power in household decisions, just as they are under-represented in political decision-making. When their voices aren’t heard, their immediate needs or long-term interests may not be taken into account.

Many social trends changing the face of societies today are especially likely to affect women, for example pressures on governments to privatize social services, which undermines the social safety net, and the trend toward longer life spans. Rising rates of poverty mean rising rates of female poverty in most cases. In some, but not all cultures, rising rates of households headed by women result in greater vulnerability to poverty and other risk factors relevant in disasters.

**Women and Disaster: Understanding Strengths and Capacities**

Knowing that women in unsafe living conditions may be highly vulnerable in disasters often leads to the stereotype of women as passive, helpless, and needy victims in the face of emergencies.

To the contrary, the division of labor may encourage women to act proactively to conserve the natural resources they depend on to earn income. The paid jobs women take on in health care, education, and the human services give them essential skills and networks in disasters.

As primary health care providers in the home, women strive to keep families healthy, and as family educators, they teach children about safety and self-protection. Very often, it is also women who carry the stories of a neighborhood or family, and keep languages and cultural traditions alive through family celebrations and special meals. These too are assets, for example when communities are severely impacted by an earthquake and people face relocation. In many communities, women’s voluntary work behind the scenes helps organize people for social change. The contribution they make to household incomes is a vital resource when families are hit by disasters and must start again. Certainly women’s domestic labor—cooking, cleaning, sewing, caring for livestock and household gardens, making houses into homes—is essential. And their emotional strength and strong interpersonal and family networks help when people must bury loved ones and rebuild lives and livelihoods.
Are women victimized by disasters, or are they heroines who save the day? Neither of course. But only when women’s skills, knowledge, abilities, and networks are recognized—as well as the factors which make their daily lives so risky—can women and men work together as full and equal partners to make communities safer.

**GENDER FACTORS INCREASING RISK FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN**

- Childbirth- and pregnancy-related health limitations
- Longer life span and increased mobility limitations, chronic illness, disabilities
- Limited reproductive control
- Greater risk of domestic and sexual violence
- More likely to be sole economic providers
- Lower incomes, more economic dependency; less access to credit
- Fewer land rights; less control over labor
- More often employed as part-time, "flexible" workers, and in free trade zones
- More responsibility for dependents
- More dependent on child care centers, schools, clinics, and other public services
- Less access to transportation
- Higher illiteracy rates, lower levels of schooling and training
- More dependent on water, fuel wood, crops and other natural resources
- Less free time and personal autonomy
- More often socially isolated
- Less decision-making power in homes and political institutions
- Subject to "intersecting vulnerabilities," e.g. as impoverished women raising families in substandard housing; under-employed disabled women subject to sexual violence; frail older women who are illiterate
- Low representation in emergency management organizations and professions
- Less knowledge of how to access emergency assistance or capacity to do so

**WOMEN AS "KEYS TO PREVENTION"**

- Family roles making them important risk communicators and educators
- Managing environmental resources for sustained use to support households
- Extensive caregiving networks and resources: women are healers
- Leadership roles in local community networks and organizations
- Survival and coping skills in emergencies, including food preservation
- Informal physical and mental health care skills and experience
- Occupational specialization in jobs central to disaster preparedness and recovery, such as teachers, counselors, and health care providers
- Local knowledge of the community, including living conditions, location, and needs of those most in need of assistance in a crisis
- Social networks and intimate ties with others
- Cultural knowledge: oral historians
SECTION TWO:
WHERE TO START?
PLANNING AND PREPARATION
SECTION TWO: WHERE TO START? PLANNING AND PREPARATION

PLANNING RESEARCH WITH COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Knowing where you want to go and how to get there is a vital part of planning. In this section, we outline the major steps involved in conducting this action research project, which are also pictured in Appendix A [Research Process Overview].

A. Making Commitments

Is this a project for your group or organization? If so, you will need to put other goals and objectives aside.

Time: Conducting a vulnerability study will take at least 3 months and may take longer.

• Who in your group or organization can work on this project?
• For how long?
• How much time do you have for collecting and analyzing data?
• For writing and sharing your results?

People: Depending on the size of your community, conducting a vulnerability study will involve from 10 to 15 people, or more, not including women in the community who are interviewed.

The study can involve just your organization or it may involve partnering with another local group or organization. In either case, to carry out the study you will need people able and willing to carry it out. These include:

A project coordinator with at least 8 hours a week available to oversee the administration of the project and troubleshoot problems. This person may also be the lead writer of the Community Vulnerability Profile and facilitate all community meetings.

A writer who will take the findings from the researchers and turn it into a user-friendly Community Vulnerability Profile. This person need not be a specialist but does need experience analyzing information and writing reports. This can be done by the project coordinator or another person.

A field coordinator, either within your own group or in your partner organization, who works closely with the researchers during the training and then during the research and analysis process. The field coordinator ensures accountability and consistency in the research.

Community researchers (5-10) people who live in the area under study and are able, willing, and ready to attend a two-day training workshop, conduct original research for 4-6 weeks, help analyze and report the data, and share the findings with community members and emergency management authorities.

B. Finding Partners

Your women’s group may have sufficient resources to carry out the vulnerability assessment but partnering with other groups or agencies may also be necessary or desirable. Partner agencies may be able to help fund the project or provide other kinds of support.

If so, be sure to begin and end this project as a collaborative venture with full consultation and consensual decisions.

Don’t plan the research and then look for partners!
Private voluntary agencies, nongovernmental organizations, national and international organizations, community groups, and women’s organizations are all potential partners and funders.

Consider collaborating with:

**Women’s and community groups**
- Crisis centers
- Community development groups
- Work-based associations, unions, collaboratives
- Child care groups and schools
- Faith-based groups
- Housing collectives
- Women organized around environmental issues
- Political women’s organizations
- Senior women or disabled women’s groups
- Social or cultural groups
- Women’s professional groups (e.g., women in academia, or women environmental scientists)
- Organizations of women health workers

**Development and disaster organizations**
- Local emergency management agency
- National or regional emergency management organization
- International organizations, e.g. United Nations Development Program, International Labour Organization, World Health Organization, Pan-American Health Organization, etc.
- International development agencies, e.g. US Agency for International Development, Canadian International Development Agency, etc.
- Humanitarian relief agencies, e.g. Oxfam, International Federation of Red Cross/Red Crescent, Save the Children, etc.

**Other government agencies**
- Environmental resource agencies
- Urban planning agencies
- Research centers
- Economic planning and development agency
- Women’s bureaus
- Municipal authorities

**C. Securing Resources**

If your women’s group seeks outside financial help to undertake this project, here are some tips:

- Study grants previously awarded by the funding organization
- Make personal contact, if possible, to explain the project
- If there is a formal grant application process, follow it in detail—check and double check!
- Provide ample background information about your group, the people participating in the project, and why you think the research is worthwhile
- Write a reasonable budget with basic categories like stipend, travel costs, and office supplies. Don’t forget to check your math and do be realistic about your costs
- If your first request is rejected, don’t give up! Ask for feedback on why you weren’t successful and try again, even with the same organization, if possible
THE PLANNING MEETING

Holding a planning meeting is very important. It may well be the first time that members of your women’s group have met personally with other groups or agencies interested in reducing the risk of natural disasters. Take time now for introductions, background, and plenty of talking. You share a lot of common interests or you wouldn’t be at the planning meeting, but there may also be different perspectives or interests that are important to air. Plan to meet over a meal, if possible.

A. Scheduling

Be sure to plan the first meeting in a place and time convenient to people with differing work and family responsibilities, and remember that not everyone has reliable personal transportation.

You won’t know without asking, so it’s important to ask at the outset how the meeting can best be arranged to suit all. Is child care needed? How about translators or wheelchair-accessible facilities?

Make this first meeting as participatory and interactive as possible. The meeting organizers should take a back seat.

Work now to set basic ground rules for your work together. Ensure that time for speaking is fairly distributed and that all views are respected and heard. Some people will have more experience than others speaking out in groups. Be sure to hear from everyone.

Stress the importance of open communication and agreeing on important decisions so everyone can support them.

B. Selecting Participants

Naturally, the key people at the first planning meeting should represent all the groups or agencies interested in participating. Be as inclusive as possible. We don’t suggest inviting outside persons at this point but only those likely to be directly involved. These include:

- All those in your community group who will be overseeing or participating personally in the research training, data collection, data analysis and report writing;
- Representatives from the partner agencies or groups you want to work with, including key administrative and support people;
- The person from your group who is likely to be the coordinator of the community researchers (the field coordinator), if this person has been identified at this point;
- Others whose work may be impacted, such as co-workers or local officials.

RESOURCES NEEDED FOR RESEARCH

| People with time to coordinate the project. |
| Workspace and modest office supplies; if possible, telephones and access to computers |
| Funds from the CBO or agency or outside donors sufficient to: |
| - compensate researchers for their out-of-pocket expenses such as child care, transportation, lost wages |
| - provide space, refreshments, and supplies for all community meetings (planning meeting, 2-day training, action meeting, and final community workshop) |
| - meet administrative costs (modest telephone or fax bills, some local transportation costs for those directly involved in the project) |
| - provide researchers with tape recorders and tape if tape-recording is acceptable, and with disposable cameras, and other incidentals. |
C. Exchanging Information

The goals and accomplishments of your women’s group may not be well known to others at the meeting, and you will certainly want to learn more about your potential partner. Take advantage of this opportunity to share background information and explain why you are concerned about hazards and disasters.

You may want to locate and copy some of the general readings suggested in Appendix S [Selected Resources] for review by others attending the planning meeting, and perhaps a copy of the Introduction to the Project letter as well [Appendix J].

Prepare these materials and, if possible, circulate them in advance of the planning meeting so people can come prepared:

- Background information (see above)
- Proposed meeting agenda
- Contact information for all participants
- Flyers or other information about your group

Before the meeting, ask your partner agency, if any, to bring descriptive material about their members and their activities. Don’t assume people know about the community work of other groups, even when they work in the same area. Use the planning meeting for information exchange and the beginnings of personal networks at the community level.

D. Setting an Agenda

People from your organization are convening the meeting so you should draw up a working agenda [see Appendix B, Planning Meeting Agenda]. Also decide on a meeting facilitator, whose first task is to introduce the agenda and ask for other ideas. Confirm the general timeframe. Are you going to work through lunch? Will you need a follow-up meeting?

Allow plenty of time for people to discuss the essential goals and objectives of the project. What are we trying to accomplish by studying vulnerability? Why are only women involved? This is the time for participants to ask questions, express alternative views, and have substantive input into the design of the project. These Guidelines are just that—guidelines for your group or agency to consult and, of course, to change.

Allow time for a break and open discussion. People’s real questions or worries tend to surface in informal conversation. Be sure to ask for feedback throughout the meeting and encourage people to share their concerns and questions. There will be lots!

E. Confirming the Division of Labor

Who will fill which roles? Who will take responsibility for what?

Being very clear about who does what and when is essential in any project. Now is the time to secure commitments.

What is expected of the partners in the project? If only one group or organization will be organizing the research, what are the primary tasks and who will take them on? Who can help and how?

In addition to the local women doing the research, the project will need people who can help supervise and coordinate. You may want to include others who can offer specific skills or resources to the project as well.

F. Setting the Timeframe

Timing is important. Emphasize the importance of agreeing on a timeframe and planning to stick with it. Funding may depend on timely progress, and people’s energy and enthusiasm usually lag over time. Will you do the training workshop 3 weeks or 3 months from now? How long do you expect the community investigations to take, and how long will it take the people who will be analyzing the data to write it up?

Setting realistic goals is always important—and so is flexibility down the road.
G. Planning Ahead

The training period may or may not include follow-up sessions after the two-day training workshop. Think ahead now about what would work best for your group.

Would a follow-up briefing from a local emergency manager be useful? That person could explain local preparedness and response systems and discuss local hazards.

Perhaps you will want to plan a follow-up meeting involving the community researchers, field coordinator, and project coordinator to practice some of the research methods.

Or you may need a short follow-up meeting to clarify the specific tasks (and compensation, if any) of the women conducting the research.

In some cases, this may not be necessary. Personal contacts or telephone contacts (where possible) may do. In other cases, it may be a good idea to meet again with more or different people at the table.

Exchange contact information and see that everyone present receives a copy. Plan now for regular consultation. Stay in touch!

H. Confirming the Study Sites

Before the training workshop can be conducted, you will need to know just who will be doing the research and where. The project coordinator and field coordinator should arrange to meet some or all of those groups interested in participating. Visit them in their own neighborhood or community center. They will have learned about the research through their women’s group, but can learn more from informal conversation with you. Go over the goals of the research and the responsibilities of the community researchers in detail so women can make informed decisions about whether or not to participate.

If you are not working in your own community, plan a field trip to meet local women from the group you will be partnering with.

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**WHAT ARE THE PRIMARY PROJECT TASKS?**

- Overall coordination, including administration of funds (if appropriate) and final reporting
- Field coordination to assist the community researchers throughout the project and liaise with project coordinator
- Primary research, including attending the research methods workshop, choosing the sample, collecting and analyzing data, and consultation with others
- Supervision of community research, including trouble-shooting, selecting the sample, practicing methods of data collection, analyzing data, etc.
- Planning and conducting follow-up meetings (for more methods practice, for action planning, for presenting findings)
- Writing the Community Vulnerability Profile
- Reproduction and distribution of the Profile
- Overall project evaluation
- Follow-up community education or political advocacy or community organizing, as needed

You can learn a great deal about hazards and vulnerabilities simply by observing. Most importantly, the community researchers will have an opportunity to ask questions and learn more about what it means to be a "community researcher."

A field visit will also give those outside the women’s group a good idea of the capabilities and limitations of potential participants. This is important background knowledge.

Now you know who you are working with, where, how, when and why. You’re ready to begin planning for the training workshop!
SECTION THREE:

PLANNING AND CONDUCTING THE TRAINING WORKSHOP
SECTION THREE: PLANNING AND CONDUCTING THE TRAINING WORKSHOP

The primary purpose of the research training workshop is to collectively develop a research strategy for assessing vulnerability and capacity in the community at large.

In this section, we offer specific ideas about how to make the most of the two-day training you will offer to women able and willing to serve as community researchers.

PREPARING FOR THE WORKSHOP

A. Where and When?

Attending a two-day workshop asks a lot of people, especially women who may have to forego income that day, arrange for child care, and make other complex family arrangements.

All the more reason to plan carefully and prepare well in advance. Allow at least a month between the planning meeting and the community workshop.

When will the workshop training be? Consult with representatives of the women’s group to determine whether weekdays or weekends are better.

You will need a facility located very close to the homes or workplaces of the women attending the workshop and carrying out the research. If possible, find a place with child care and kitchen facilities. It should be large enough to split off into small groups for discussion.

B. Who Should Attend?

It is very important that the workshop include only those who will be carrying out the research. You may find that some community members or agency staff may wish to participate out of general interest though they will not be continuing as researchers.

As there is limited time to focus on learning and practicing new research skills, we strongly advise against including them in the workshop. Explain that the training workshop is specifically for those conducting the research but that they would be welcome later in the project, for example at the final community meeting when findings are presented and action recommendations debated.

What makes a good community researcher?

Following introductory discussions and meetings, a pool of women who are interested in being trained as community researchers will emerge.

It is up to the field coordinator, who personally knows potential community researchers, to select women to attend the research training workshop.

She should look for women who know their communities well and whose own life experience makes them a local expert on living with risk. These women know what brings people together in their community and what divides them, differences between neighborhoods, where the most vulnerable people live and how, what resources people have, and what hazards exist.

Because they are active in their women’s group, they also have organizational skills needed to carry out the research. They may have already raised money for a school, built a community center, organized relief in a hurricane or flood, and done other work with outside development agencies, academics, or government agencies.

Look for women who represent as wide a range of views as possible. You may find teachers and health providers especially
interested in participating, and you will want to work with women with the educational skills necessary to gather and record data. But do also include other women who lack professional training. As much as possible, include women at varying stages of life and in different ethnic and economic groups.

Compensation?

We strongly recommend compensating the grassroots researchers for data collection and analysis. If possible, we also urge compensation for attending the training workshop and other meetings. Many women will forego earning opportunities to be there. At a minimum, out-of-pocket expenses must be compensated in order to work with women in different economic circumstances.

Competition?

We find that women are eager to participate and very eager to learn more about hazards and disasters.

Work closely with the field coordinator to select participants, avoiding personalizing the selection as much as possible.

It is not advisable to include many women who have powerful roles within the women’s group or who may dominate the group for other reasons.

What about men?

This project assumes that women’s life experiences best equip them to be community researchers. In some places, it may be effective to have men interviewing women but gender barriers can bias the results. Generally it is advisable in this context that women study women.

C. Training Resources

Each community researcher should receive a folder or binder with all the training material included in the Appendix.

In addition, we suggest that the folder include flyers, posters, buttons, fact sheets, or other pieces of information on local emergency preparedness and disaster response. Check with your local emergency management authority well in advance to have sufficient quantities on hand.

If possible, have extras on hand for community researchers to distribute to their respondents during the study. This is not only a gesture of good will and thanks but increases local knowledge about existing resources.

In addition to handouts on sampling, methods, and analysis, the Appendix includes additional material to support the discussion about hazards and disasters from women’s perspectives.

WORKSHOP SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

- White board or chalk board
- Flip chart or pins and tape for posting material
- Marking pens and paper
- Comfortable chairs
- Large drawing surface
- Workshop folder with all duplicated materials
- Name tags for participants
- Cameras
- Tape recorders and tape for each researcher
- Identification tags for researchers
Women and Disaster: What's the Connection? The brochure can be duplicated and shared with respondents as well as researchers.

- Photographs of women living in dangerous situations, mitigating hazards, as disaster responders, coping with the aftermath, etc.

- First-person quotations from women around the world about hazards and disasters.

We also provide a resource list of basic readings which workshop planners may want to consider using Appendix S. Your group, university faculty, development agencies, government offices and others may have other useful material for the workshop folder and perhaps photos and stories from previous disasters in the area.

D. Facilitation

Who takes the lead role for the training workshop? Ideally, two people should share the role. Each should be knowledgeable about women’s living conditions locally and also about local hazard and disaster experiences.

However, these Guidelines provide sufficient background and materials for any person with experience conducting group meetings to facilitate successfully.

TEACHING ACTION RESEARCH SKILLS

We offer a general template for covering all the important ground in two (busy) days. You will want to review and adapt it as needed to suit your community and priorities.

However you organize your time, be prepared for change! Being flexible and responsive to those participating is the key to a successful workshop.

A. Day One: Introducing Key Ideas

Start off with introductions and a thorough discussion of the general goals of the research project and the specific objectives of the two-day training workshop. [See Appendix C, Training Workshop Agenda.]

Be just as clear about what part the community researchers will play after these two days of training. Review the benefits to the community. What do women especially stand to gain?

Initiate an open discussion of the agenda prepared by the workshop facilitators. Find consensus on the agenda and time-frame and on ground rules for the discussion, with attention to the importance of attending on both days and arriving on time.

Hint: Changes made to the workshop agenda should not cut short the time reserved on the second day for teaching and practicing research skills.

1. Introduce core concepts

The first part of the workshop is very important as it offers women a new way of thinking and speaking about risk. Slowly introduce these core terms through illustrations from concrete experience or, if relevant, past disasters that affected the region.

Begin by brainstorming about well-known or obvious hazards in the local area and about how people have coped with these or tried to reduce them. Ask for (or volunteer) personal or community experiences that illustrate the key concepts summarized in Appendix F [Ideas about Natural Disasters], for example spring floods or landslides, inadequate electricity, unsafe housing.

To orient the discussion to research, ask women to think of questions they could
ask people in their own neighborhoods about unsafe conditions. Begin by speaking generally: What makes people’s lives risky around here? Who gets hurt and how? What hazards do we all face together? What happened during the last disaster here?

2. Identify local resources

Using examples arising from the discussion above, as well as agency materials included in the folder, identify and briefly evaluate the local emergency management system. Explain what agencies or departments are responsible for helping people prepare for and cope with disasters and who can help people afterwards. This can be sketched on a flip chart or blackboard to frame the discussion of local experience dealing with hazards and disasters.

Identifying and assessing local resources and people’s awareness of them is an important part of the first day.

3. Connect women’s lives to disasters

For the rest of the first day, the focus should be on women, making explicit the connections between gender relations and disasters.

Draw on personal observation or ideas to answer these questions: What makes different women’s lives here risky? Which women would have the hardest time in a natural disaster caused by an extreme environmental event like drought or volcanic eruption? Would this answer change if we think instead of a toxic spill or explosion? How have women dealt with threatening conditions in the past?

Be sure that women’s strengths and capacities are identified and discussed as well as the problems or limitations they may face.

Use the photographs and words of women around the world to illustrate some of the issues facing girls and women in disaster contexts. These are likely to spark lively discussion and can help women make the connection between gender relations and disaster vulnerability.

This is also the time for group discussion of women’s and men’s differing and overlapping experiences in past disasters, if any, in this particular area. Try to direct the discussion from the emergency itself to what, if any, steps community members took to reduce local threats to safety or to cope with the disaster.

Some women may wish to work on informal skits that convey these ideas, or draw pictures, or sketch out hazards in rough risk maps. There are many creative ways to make these ideas come alive.

The facilitator can focus attention on changes over time in disaster resilience and vulnerability by asking women to describe how community life has changed since "your Granny’s time." Do they think their daughters will be less or more at risk?

The discussion can also explore differences, both among women and between women and men. What roles did different women play in the last disastrous event here? How did their activities differ from men’s?

4. Practice asking the right questions

Our approach to studying vulnerability seeks general findings from particular women’s experiences, thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Respondents are asked very broad questions with no simple “yes or no” or “how many” answers. The words a woman chooses to describe her daily life and the community around her are very important.
The most important part of becoming a disaster researcher in two short days is learning how to ask guiding questions.

The core questions we suggest were developed on the basis of lessons learned from women's groups testing this model. [See Appendix K, Guiding Research Questions.] They ask women to respond to open-ended questions about general concerns:

- Perceptions of safe and unsafe conditions
- How people cope with unsafe conditions
- Awareness of environmental and technological hazards
- Who in the community is least and most vulnerable
- What local people do to solve problems and cope with disasters
- Recent disaster experience, if any
- Ways people can prevent disasters
- How women are organized
- How being a woman matters
- Patterns of community change
- Possible action steps

The Guiding Research Questions exploring these areas are to be asked of all informants, though some interviews will be shorter than others and some answers less complete. Researchers can follow general answers with additional "probes," or follow-up questions to develop themes or explore new ideas.

Community researchers can ask respondents to first speak about their own experience but then talk about these topics as they relate to family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, and the community generally. In this way, each respondent provides a birds-eye view of risk which can be compared and contrasted with others.

Allow plenty of time to review the guiding research questions to be used and the kinds of responses they may prompt. Be sure to leave time today and tomorrow for practice interviewing using these questions. The facilitator may want to conduct a mock interview with a volunteer or the group can work in pairs to practice asking and answering the guiding questions.

At the end of the first day, ask everyone to think about the guiding questions overnight and imagine they or their

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**AN ELDERLY WOMAN IN HURRICANE GEORGES**

The house was very run down and not at all safe but the elderly woman insisted on staying there considering that God and her faith would save her from harm. She was in charge of two grandchildren, whom she assured God would also save. In the middle of the hurricane, the woman's house roof was blown away and she had to shelter herself and the children under a big table ("la mesa," meaning the only table in the house). In the middle of the hurricane, the neighbors (one of the community researchers and her family) had to run to get them all of out the house and into their home for safety. They specified that no authorities came to offer shelter or help before the hurricane came. The neighbors were the ones to offer her help from the beginning.

Community researchers in the Dominican Republic developed a skit using this story during their training, demonstrating their acting abilities and presenting an important concept in a humorous and dramatic way.
mother or friend were asked to answer
these same questions: How would they
answer them? Would the questions
encourage them to volunteer information
or give quick "yes" and "no" answers?

In some cases it may be advisable to
modify the core questions. If so, it is
vital that the revised list of questions be
used consistently by all researchers.

Don’t end the workshop without con-
sensus on the Guiding Research
Questions. As these must be asked
consistently by all researchers, be sure
everyone understands them and agrees to
follow the research guide to the best of
their ability.

B. Day Two: Introducing
Methodologies

Begin the second day by asking for
feedback about yesterday. Do the
ground rules need changing? Does anyone
want to raise concerns or problems? This
is also a good time to ask for feedback
on the Guiding Research Questions.

Most of the second day is geared to
hands-on training in how to define a
study sample, ways of gaining informa-
tion, record-keeping, and other tasks
necessary to conduct meaningful
research.

1. Setting limits

Community researchers are not profes-
sional social scientists—their skills and
experience lie elsewhere. Women
attending the workshop will wonder what
exactly they are to do to "assess vulnera-
bility" or "contact key informants" and
whether they can do it.

An important part of the workshop is
setting reasonable expectations for
researchers.

- No, they are not expected to be
  sociologists or scientists

- Yes, they are expected to be respon-
sive to the field coordinator by
collecting data in a certain area within
a certain timeframe following certain
guidelines

- Yes, they are expected to be "objec-
tive" by following basic scientific rules
they will learn in this workshop

- Yes, they are expected to gather
  information completely and to the best
  of their ability

- Yes, they are expected to help analyze
  the data so that others can learn from it

- Yes, they are expected to revise their
  methodology and try again if necessary

2. Choosing a study area

Where does a "community" begin and
end? What are the boundaries of a
"neighborhood?"

This study begins from the assumption
that every place people live entails some
degree of risk. But we cannot reasonably
study everyone in every place.

Consider working in pairs or small groups
to compare notes about natural divisions
and borders. Ask what "communities" may
exist in the local area. These are some:

Physical boundaries: different sides of
the railroad track or river, up the hill or
down, above the sea or along the beach

Social-economic boundaries: the migrant
community, the homeless down by the
river, the people in the best houses

Language boundaries: people who speak
different languages often live in dif-
ferent worlds [but do they face the same
hazards?]

Political boundaries: people living on
different sides of a political border but
along the same river or below the same
toxic waste dump
Following this discussion, the group can decide what makes sense in their area—dividing up the region along which boundaries? Everyone studying the same area, or splitting up? Working in pairs to study one particular neighborhood (where new migrants live, or where people speak the old language, or where the very poorest people live) or a broader area (the new section of town, the beachfront, the people just outside town)?

When these decisions are made, each community researcher should be clear about the physical boundaries of her work area. This is where she will study vulnerability and no place else.

3. Studying research methods

Now, on the second day of the workshop, an opportunity is provided to reach consensus on the guiding research questions and to learn and practice ways of collecting and analyzing data.

Remind the researchers on Day Two that these are new skills and that learning any new skill takes time and practice. Stress that your expectations are realistic. Nobody becomes an expert in an afternoon!

It is vital to reserve ample time for questions and for airing concerns or doubts that may surface now.

4. Selecting the sample

Not everyone can be interviewed. In fact, a great deal about risky living conditions can be learned by choosing a few key people to talk with in more depth. [See Appendix L, Guide To Selecting A Sample.]

We recommend avoiding the traditional survey approach unless there are reasons to hear from large numbers of people who are randomly selected as respondents. Instead, we recommend working closely with the community researchers to identify categories of "key informants" and plan which of these to contact.

There are many possible key informants with important points of view and life experiences. The researchers should strive to select a sample which reflects the range of women's living conditions and life experiences in this particular region or community.

Choosing a good mix of informants is critical. Without this, only women facing a particular risk (air pollution, sewage
spills) and not others (pesticides, deforested hillsides) will be reflected in the results. Selecting women whose lives reflect more than one of these conditions (for example, senior women with language barriers but extensive community knowledge) is one way to make a small sample more inclusive.

While the sample will not represent all social groups equally, the project manager, field coordinator, and community researchers should carefully review the final sample of informants to be contacted. Does it give undue weight to one factor or one social group to the exclusion of others? Is it diverse enough to represent the diversity of women who live here?

5. Choosing the best research method

The guiding questions can be answered in many different ways. We offer guides for the methods below [See Appendix M, Some Research Methods].

- Semi-structured intensive interviews with key informants
- Life history with selected informants
- Group interviews organized around topics or social groups
- Photo essay
- Risk map

The research methods we recommend are flexible. They allow for following up new ideas and for a different mix of interviews, life histories, and group discussions in every community.

Data collection can be complicated by language problems. Involve multi-lingual women as researchers when possible and plan ahead to translate your data if necessary.

The facilitator will need ample time to review with community researchers the noteworthy characteristics of each method. Helpful hints are provided, for example, on the importance of controlling a group discussion and asking open-ended questions. Use specific examples to show how different methods can be used:

- How did people here cope with the last disaster? A group photo essay could not answer this question. It could, however, very graphically point out hazards the community faces every day.

### POSSIBLE KEY INFORMANTS

Women living in hazardous areas or conditions ... Women inadequately housed ... Women who are sole household providers ... Elderly women or widows living alone ... New women in the community ... Recent migrants ...

Minority women (any excluded group) ... Women caring for disabled or ill family members ... The poorest women ... Disabled or ill women ... Young mothers ... Grandmothers raising children ... Abused women ... Unemployed women ... Women working in a free trade zone ... Women working from their homes ... Women working in occupations affected by hazards ...

Women vendors ... Rural women or women living in isolated areas ... Urban women in shanty towns ... Renters ... Illiterate women ...

Women living on the street ... Prostitutes ... Women likely to be ignored or excluded for any reasons ... Women respected by others ... Women on local disaster committees ... Women leaders or authorities.

Who comes to mind in your own community? Who can you learn the most from?
• How are women organized here? How have they worked together in groups or coalitions of groups—or have they? These would be good topics for a group discussion as one answer will prompt others.

• How do your everyday living conditions affect your ability to solve problems created by an earthquake, for instance? As the key informants all live very differently, this is a question for an individual, not a group. Also, women may hesitate to discuss problems such as domestic violence in a group.

• What did women do during the last disaster? How about men? Here a life history with an older woman would be a good technique. Another informant who recently migrated here would be a poor choice.

Intensive interviews and life histories

These are likely to be used most often so the training should focus on them, using the handout to guide discussion and the guiding questions to practice asking and answering questions. The facilitator should stress the importance of leaving sufficient time for in-depth discussion with key informants. Return visits may be needed.

Group discussions

Group discussions offer invaluable insights because people respond to one another's ideas. They can be organized around broad topics with a very diverse group of participants ("How do changes in our community make life here safer or less safe?") or narrower themes involving a smaller range of participants ("What puts women at risk when they work in the free trade zone factory? In local agriculture?"). A useful approach might be to organize a preliminary group discussion about women’s and men’s experiences in the last disaster here.

At least one person facilitating should take careful notes as tape-recording will be difficult and may not be welcome. These notes should be summarized promptly in a written report highlighting the hazards, vulnerabilities, and capacities of the group. The group will work together with the field coordinator to propose and organize one or more group discussions.

Risk mapping and photo essays

Maps are an important part of any vulnerability assessment. Encourage the group to work together during the training workshop, perhaps at the end of Day One, on a preliminary map. Brainstorm known hazards: women will know about dangerous roads, electrical shortages, health problems, eroding beaches, soil erosion, etc. Physical or structural hazards can be mapped easily. Others will be more difficult to depict visually, such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic, slow erosion of the economic base, political repression, or family stress.

Don’t forget to include community centers, shelters, or other facilities which are resources for people in danger. These should also be mapped when possible.

The researchers will certainly want to revisit the risk map based on their interviews. The final map will be included in the Community Vulnerability Profile.

Note: This map is for the women’s group itself and the community profile to be written. Others can develop more technical maps.

A picture tells a thousand words! Like a map, a photo essay provides a quick overview of the problem. Where should the camera be pointed? Who should be in the picture and why? During the workshop, discuss how to narrow ideas (for example, from "no work here" to photos showing "what things women and men do around here to make money"). Emphasize pictures that tell a story or show people in action.
Remember, film developing is expensive! Plan photos carefully to avoid wasting film. Disposable cameras are recommended.

6. Reviewing research tasks

Everyone needs a clear understanding of what is expected of them when taking on a new role or project. This is a critical part of Day Two.

Data collection

We assume that, working together, the community researchers will:

- Conduct a number of intensive interviews with key informants
- Complete a smaller number of life histories
- Conduct at least one group discussion
- Collaboratively develop a photo essay
- Collaboratively develop a risk map

There is no one best way of collecting the data. One team of researchers may want to begin with a group interview, perhaps of all key informants or of informants knowledgeable about a particular event or hazard. Another may begin instead with intensive interviews and follow-up with life histories of some of the women. Risk mapping and photography can help a group begin or close the project.

The project coordinator, field coordinator, and community researchers should make these decisions together and early on. We urge that intensive interviews be at the core of every study, even if mapping or group interviews, for example, cannot be completed.

A reasonable expectation of each community researcher is that she personally:

- conduct 5 interviews with key informants
- complete at least one life history
- help construct a photo essay, for example of workplace hazards or living conditions
- help draw a risk map relating natural features (steep hillsides, ports) and social landmarks (places of refuge, schools, clinics) and natural and human-caused hazards

Scheduling

Naturally, each researcher will participate as the study team identifies which key informants to select. She will also help determine bounded areas for the research and agree to work only in her assigned area.

Researchers will make all necessary arrangements to meet the key informant, perhaps more than once, and complete the interview to the best of their ability. The forms provided will help track appointments and interviews [see Appendix P, Interview Scheduling].

Securing cooperation

Introducing the study [see Appendix J] is the first step. In some cases it may be possible to offer a small stipend to potential respondents to compensate for their time and lost earning opportunity. More often, this will not be possible.

Be sure researchers explain the potential community benefits of this self-study to respondents, and that they begin and end each interview by thanking informants for their time and ideas. They may also want to offer the brochure on Women and Disaster and any handouts on preparedness and response available from local emergency management authorities.

The workshop facilitator should emphasize the importance of answering all
questions from potential respondents as fully as possible. Respecting women’s right not to participate or not to answer any particular question is essential. The facilitator may wish to role play interaction with hesitant respondents or those who change their minds.

**Background information**

Gathering background information about each person contacted [see Appendix O, Interview Face Sheet] is the next vital step as the researcher meets each new informant.

It is important to document the ways the women interviewed are different and alike. Are they all of the same generation? All married? All equally educated? Personal circumstances matter. The researchers can work in pairs to practice using the Face Sheet, which includes basic questions on age, education, livelihood, family size, and so forth.

In some cases, researchers may choose not to ask for all of this information if they feel it will seem too intrusive. This is also important information to record.

**Recording the conversation**

Using tape recorders and/or pen and paper, researchers must record the interview and help the field coordinator make sense of it. This may mean helping with translation, if the interview was not conducted in the dominant language, or ensuring that handwritten notes are legible.

Urge every interviewer using a tape recorder to work in a place providing as much privacy and quiet as possible. Researchers could work in pairs with one person asking questions and the other taking careful notes, if tape-recording isn’t appropriate or welcome.

Though this may be hard to arrange, researchers should try to speak with key informants alone, or without other adults present. There is another time and place for group discussion.

Encourage researchers to record their own thoughts about the interview immediately after conducting it. What were the highlights? Were any questions just not answered, and why? What special words or concepts were used and what did they mean? These personal reminders will help later when the responses are summarized and analyzed.

Note: Community researchers themselves are very knowledgeable about risk and vulnerability. They can be consulted individually by the project coordinator or field coordinator for background information and insight, or interviewed themselves at a later date to evaluate other information. It is important that their ideas not be confused with those of their informants, however.

**COORDINATING THE RESEARCH**

Coordination is essential during the data gathering period. This is primarily the job of the field coordinator, with the help of the project coordinator where feasible.

The field coordinator will need to:

- Reserve time for field visits to the research sites
- Reserve time for inquiries from the researchers
- Accompany the researchers periodically, e.g. to help with group interviewing
- Ensure that each researcher is completing the necessary forms regularly
- Ensure that each researcher is regularly making interview appointments, working in her assigned neighborhood, and following the guiding questions
- Provide technical assistance as needed to the researchers such as help with transportation and supplies
• Consider arranging a meeting with community researchers to discuss issues arising during the data collection period

• Review the key informant interviews as they are completed to identify problems or gaps

A. Documentation

We have strongly urged seeking funds to compensate the community researchers. Regardless, it is important that researchers be encouraged to document their time and activities. The Interview Scheduling handout will help with this. Other forms may be needed, for example to document out-of-pocket expenses which can be reimbursed.

Where funding cannot be provided, the project coordinator should arrange for a certificate to be printed and distributed as a permanent "record of achievement" in an important community project. You may want to offer certificates to all, regardless of funding.

Note: The emergency management or local government authorities, women's bureau, or secondary school may be able to print the certificate or provide funds for it.

B. Follow-up Meetings?

You will know when a follow-up meeting is necessary to practice research methods or review tasks and timelines or to discuss technical questions about the administration of the project.

You might also want to consider other kinds of follow-up meetings in the week or two after the training workshop. For example, local emergency managers might be invited to meet with the women to answer questions about hazardous conditions and emergency preparedness, helping them as interviewers.

Remember that these are busy women who have already made a major commitment to this project.

C. Evaluate the Workshop

A positive way to end two busy days is to ask all participants for feedback on the training workshop. Appendix R is just one model. You'll find very useful ideas for future workshops.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TROUBLESHOOTING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Tardiness can delay the workshop and cut into needed time. Ask for consensus about being on time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Family emergencies or unexpected events can keep women away. The field coordinator should meet with women individually to brief them on what they may have missed. Set limits on how much absence is too much.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Conflicts can arise over the division of labor within the group, for example if more than one person prefers to study a particular neighborhood. Let the field coordinator mediate these conflicts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Workshop materials or topics may seem overwhelming. The facilitator should acknowledge the challenges of this project but stress women's past experience, community knowledge, social networks, and communication skills. Be prepared to make substitutions if some women drop out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not all respondents who agree to be interviewed will make themselves available on the day and time agreed. Caution researchers to reconfirm appointments and help them make substitutions with other selected key informants when necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Don’t close the training workshop until all women present are clear about roles and responsibilities. Make a written record of decisions made, for instance about who will work where and what the date of the next meeting is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• &quot;Check in&quot; frequently with participants to encourage the expression of everyone’s ideas and feelings. Be flexible!</td>
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SECTION FOUR:

ANALYZING

VULNERABILITY DATA
SECTION FOUR: ANALYZING VULNERABILITY DATA

Following these Guidelines will result in many hours of taped conversation and rich impressions of women's feelings and ideas about risk. But, as in any research project, gathering this information is just a first step. We turn now to how you can analyze and present the data.

SUMMARIZING THE FINDINGS

First, each researcher has an important task to complete after every interview. In order to share this information with others, she has taped the conversation and/or taken legible notes. Now, at home, she will use these to write a short summary, one-page or longer.

A. Organizing Data

Appendix N [Analyzing Qualitative Data] includes hints for researchers such as using highlighting pens when reading over notes or taking notes on the tape when it is reviewed at home. Marking words or expressions or ideas that seem important is the first step. Making lists can help, for example, when an informant cites many examples of problems women had in the last disaster or many examples of women’s and men’s community organizations in town. These may not appear in the same place on the tape, but in the summary they can be grouped together.

Think of how a kitchen might be organized (pots and pans together, spices and staples, cleaning supplies, fresh foods) and apply this same way of thinking to what you have heard. Or you might think of categories of tools or clothing or plants and animals.

Every interview is different. A long conversation will yield an abundance of information, anecdote, opinion, and observation. A short one can include brief answers to every question, but may also have lots of gaps and silences if questions were not understood or people declined to answer them.

Long or short, the answers can be organized into four general categories:

- **hazards** cited by this person (list the environmental or technological risks mentioned)
- **vulnerabilities** cited by this person (list the living conditions that this person mentioned as problems in dealing with hazards and disasters)
- **resources or capacities** (list the things mentioned that help people prepare for and cope with dangers, including personal, group and community resources)
- **changes needed** (list what the person said most needed to be done to make life safer)

B. Writing an Interview Summary

Why summarize the interviews? The summaries will help the writer or project coordinator draw everything together into the Community Vulnerability Profile. They give others a short-hand account of your major findings in four key areas: hazards, vulnerabilities, resources, and needed changes.

What does an Interview Summary look like? It is a short overview of the highlights from the interview, beginning with a brief description of the key informant herself.

The Interview Summary should not repeat everything on the tape or in the researcher’s notes, but highlight answers to the key questions the researchers
have asked in these four areas. The field coordinator and project coordinator should review the first summaries done by each researcher very carefully.

Summaries of all group discussions conducted should be prepared by the field coordinator. We recommend writing the summaries as soon as possible after the individual or group interviews.

**WRITING THE VULNERABILITY PROFILE**

A written Community Vulnerability Profile is one of the major outcomes of this research. It conveys the major findings of the research to outsiders and includes some background data about the people and place studied. Doing the research taught women a lot about their own safety, but taking this knowledge one step further to write a Community Vulnerability Profile can be an important tool for change.

One or more people will take responsibility for writing the Community Vulnerability Profile. [See Appendix Q, Community Vulnerability Profile Template.] The writer and coordinators should regularly review the researchers’ notes, tapes, and interview summaries to identify gaps which need to be filled or consistent bias or errors. They will want to be in close contact with researchers now through telephone or personal visits.

**A. Locating and Using Secondary Data**

Information collected by others can be very useful secondary data. It can suggest areas to be examined more closely and help put the findings of your study in context. How does disaster risk here relate to other patterns and trends in this culture and society?

While data from all studies must be used cautiously (pay attention to who collected it, how, and why), using information from other researchers to sketch the “big picture” before you present your own findings is very effective.

You might want to point out unemployment rates and migration patterns in this region, for example, or recent trends in public health, family size, or land ownership; refer to local indicators of women’s status and local indicators of climate change; or summarize data about past disaster experiences in the area. There are many kinds of secondary data which can help you tell your story.

**SECONDARY DATA SOURCES**

Locate statistical reports, analytic summaries, personal narratives and other kinds of data collected by others by consulting:

- The national census bureau, which may also report regional statistics
- International UN-affiliated organizations
- Regional and national economic development agencies
- Environmental and social planning bodies
- College and university libraries and research centers
- Nongovernmental organizations involved with women, community development, disaster mitigation, and humanitarian relief
- Emergency management agencies
- Women’s organizations
- Newspapers and other news media

**B. Vulnerability Profile Outline**

Analyzing data and presenting it in a meaningful way is always the most challenging part of research.

The template we offer in Appendix Q is just one way of organizing and presenting
the findings of your study. Naturally, the structure and content of the Profile should be adapted to your data and the uses you want to make of your results.

The Community Vulnerability Profile will reflect the degree to which good questions are asked and answered—and also how the answers are analyzed.

The writer should organize and present the data to make effective use of the information and insights gained from respondents. We caution against reporting the data numerically though there may be useful statistics to include from secondary data sources.

Reporting findings anonymously is important. Readers do not need to know a woman’s name and it should never be used. But simply leaving names out may not really protect somebody’s identity, especially in a small community. Remember, even general descriptions ("mother of twins," "widowed by the landslide," "active church leader") can easily bring a name to mind.

With this in mind, we strongly encourage the writer of the Profile to make generous use of all (anonymous) first-person quotations, photographs, songs or stories, unique words or phrases, and the photos and maps drawn by researchers. This is what your readers will find most memorable.

When the community researcher is analyzing the interviews, don’t second-guess the respondent if questions of interpretation arise (the use of a phrase or word, tone of voice, body language, the meaning of a photo). Go back and ask the respondent what she meant.

Later, when the writer is using the data summaries to draft the Profile, don’t second-guess the researchers: go back and ask them for more information. Remember, these are women who are partners in every step of the research process, from collecting to analyzing and presenting the data. Consult them frequently.

The Community Vulnerability Profile that results from this process will be an accomplishment in which your organization and all the women involved can take pride. It is also a tool for advocacy and social change.

A WORKSHOP FOR ACTION PLANNING

We strongly suggest a half-day Action Planning workshop at the end of the data collecting period. A full day is better, if possible. [See Appendix D, Action Planning Workshop Agenda.]

Ask all researchers, as well as the field coordinator and project coordinator, to attend. Again, plan the meeting for a time and place convenient for the community researchers, and plan on sharing a meal if possible.

A. Sharing Data and Ideas

Be sure that the researchers have had time to complete all their interviewing and write the interview summaries. Ask each to bring along their summaries (or the field coordinator can collect them all beforehand) as they will be circulated in the group. Use these summaries as well as the photo essays and risk maps, as the basis for discussion. The researchers will also want to compare notes about their experience as disaster researchers. This is the time for them to express their own ideas and feelings as well.

B. Implications for Change

The goal of the action planning workshop is just that—a time to plan action steps, based on changes needed to make life safer in these neighborhoods and communities.
Use the four core themes to organize the discussion, leaving plenty of time for each woman to share what she learned from her informants:

• What are the primary environmental hazards faced here? What about those caused by people?

• What makes people more and less vulnerable?

• What personal, group, and institutional resources to people here have to reduce hazards and cope, when they must, with disasters?

Then use this collective knowledge to draw up a list of the most important social changes the women of this community think are needed to make life safer.

• What specific action steps are needed?

• Which is most important?

• Who can do this? How? When?

This discussion leads naturally into planning for the final community workshop. We sketch out the entire research process below.

Hint: Monitor the discussion closely to ensure that the action steps reflect the views of all those interviewed, taken as a whole, and do not follow from only a handful of the interview summaries or particularly articulate researchers or informants.

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**SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS**

Complete the training workshop
   Select your sample
     Contact all respondents and secure their voluntary participation
     Schedule and record all appointments
     Complete the background sheet
     Tape record or take detailed notes on your conversations with respondents

Analyze the interviews, group interviews, or life histories you did and write a summary
   Return to informants for more information, if necessary
     Attend action planning meeting to brainstorm common problems and possible solutions
     Share the Community Vulnerability Profile with others

And..... you may find yourself wanting to do more!
   Seek outside funding to publicize and distribute your findings
     Volunteer to help another community group conduct a research workshop and study risk
     Study your community again in five years to track changes
     Study community vulnerability "through the eyes of men"
     Be a community vulnerability educator every day!
SECTION FIVE:

ONE: MOVING FROM KNOWLEDGE TO ACTION
A community able to minimize the impacts of a disaster and "bounce back" afterwards is a "disaster-resilient community." Knowing more about hazards, vulnerabilities and capacities is a powerful tool, but places are made more (or less) resilient by people's actions.

Around the world, women have demonstrated their will to help make people safer. These are just a few examples other researchers have documented:

- In the Caribbean, women have worked through community organizations to expand women's employment opportunities after disasters
- In India, women have organized ways of conserving rain water against drought
- In Peru, women helped build earthquake resistant homes using indigenous materials and ancient methods
- In Egypt, women have trained their neighbors in sound environmental management techniques

Now, through this action research project, you and your women's group are taking a huge step forward by educating yourselves and others about risk and developing strategies for reducing it.

**USING THE COMMUNITY PROFILE**

You will find that this project has many positive results—for the community researchers who learned new social research skills and a lot about risk, for women whose ideas were taken seriously by the interviewers, and for the community at large when the findings are shared.

Knowing more about risky conditions is the first step to reducing risk—but only the first step. In this last section, we suggest ways the Guidelines can be used to increase awareness about risk and community development, promote community organization to reduce risk, and make women's potential as risk managers more visible.

**Share Your Vulnerability Profile with Emergency Managers and Local Authorities**

Arrange a face-to-face meeting, if possible, for the women who did this research to share the Profile with emergency managers and disaster responders responsible for their region. Governmental policy makers and elected officials need to know about women's perspectives on risk, too. This not only informs professional risk managers about community needs but lets them know what women and women's groups can do.

Many of these individuals will be men who may not have had much contact with your women's group or understand why women and men in hazardous environments face many different issues. You can help them recognize women's ability to mitigate hazards and prepare for disasters and also help them see what women and men alike can contribute—and may need help with—during and after natural disasters.

Plan a follow-up meeting to identify specific opportunities to work together. How can women's groups and disaster planners and responders work more closely? What opportunities are there for joint activities?

At a minimum, exchange contact information and stay in touch. Let them know what knowledge, skills, and abilities women in their own community can bring to the table—and what you need, in turn, from emergency managers.
Share Your Findings With Local Media

Local radio and community publications (like popular events or open meetings) can be excellent ways to reach people. Media people are often looking for contacts and story ideas and may well share your interest in disasters.

But let them know you and your organization want to help tell the story. Remember all those pictures of crying women and hard-working men in disasters? The media often repeat stereotypes about people in the face of danger and don’t really represent how households, neighborhoods, governments, and helping agencies operate. You can help change this by sharing the story of your research.

Is there a community radio station in your area, or a women’s radio station? Ask for time and bring along some of the women you interviewed. The photo essays you did can be used, with your permission, to illustrate articles about your action research project.

Sharing your work with the media is an excellent way to bring to others’ attention the problems and solutions you explored.

Share Your Work With Other Women

Use your networks to let other women’s groups know what you learned about women and risk. Why is women’s perspective so important in vulnerability research? How can women help?

Make a flyer, write a short article, or dictate a radio story describing the research and Community Vulnerability Profile and circulate it as widely as possible.

Find a time when some of the community researchers and some of the key informants can visit women in nearby communities. You may have common needs and ways of working together to reduce shared risks.

Organize another meeting or workshop for the community researchers to present the Profile to women in a very different context. For example, findings from a rural community can be shared with urban women for discussion of differences and similarities. Include different kinds of women’s groups.

If a community development group conducted the research in your project, ask to meet with women from a crisis center or women’s bureau. They will learn from you and your work may inspire their own.

Consider taking the completed Profile directly to other women, such as friends working together through a church group, mothers in a food collective, or an informal group of health workers or teachers.

Explain why you did this research and how, and share the highlights of your findings. Just talking about risk and about action steps to reduce it is important, even when others are unlikely to follow up with their own vulnerability study.

This can initiate a long-lasting dialogue and may open the door to future collaboration on action projects to reduce risk. It also may be just what’s needed to encourage others to do their own assessment.

Share the Guidelines With Other Groups

Women who have conducted vulnerability research have invaluable knowledge and experience helpful to other organizations and agencies.

Work through other women’s organizations, nongovernmental organizations and community-based organizations to explain the Guidelines and share your experience using them.
What went well, and not so well? What different strategies or different informants or different questions would work better here?

Be sure to let all the regional and national women’s groups know about your work. Planning agencies, local government authorities, academic disaster researchers, community development groups, faith-based organizations and many other groups will be interested.

If possible, arrange face-to-face meetings to discuss the Guidelines and the outcomes of action research.

These groups or organizations may want to use these Guidelines to conduct their own vulnerability assessment—and you can help. Your new insight and skills make you invaluable community vulnerability educators. Let others know what you know.

**Share Your New Knowledge**

The community researchers and the women who participated in the study have a lot to share:

- New concepts that point out problems in the community and possible solutions
- New ideas about what needs to be changed in their area
- New research skills
- New tools for community development
- New information about existing emergency preparedness systems
- New contacts with local emergency managers
- New information about how to minimize damage to households and workplaces

Sharing this knowledge with others is essential. Bring it into the union or workplace (what can be done here to reduce risk?) and bring it to your neighbors (how can we work together to make our lives safer?). Bring it into all your activities. The community theater group could use the words of women interviewed in skits or plays about risk, for instance. The preschool could organize parents to retrofit the facility and draw up an emergency plan. In many communities, health providers and teachers are very interested in emergency preparedness and will want to share ideas with you.

Use this knowledge to make some changes. Can teachers be asked to use material from the study in their classes? Can the river level be monitored by women who are employed nearby? Can women charged with organizing emergency shelters be provided resources well in advance? Can crisis centers be equipped in advance to meet any increased violence against women after a disaster?

**Share Your Ideas With the Community**

The Community Vulnerability Profile is a concise summary of your major findings. It describes hazards everyone faces and the particular living conditions of those most vulnerable to these hazards. It describes personal, group, and institutional resources and how people here have tried to mitigate hazards and cope with disasters in the past. Most importantly, it includes specific action steps that would make the community a safer place to live.

We strongly recommend presenting these findings to the community at large as the final step in this action research.

Plan a community meeting at a place and time convenient and safe for women as well as men. You will need at least two hours to:
• Explain the project’s goals and objectives

• Present and discuss the most important findings

• Explain the action planning meeting and present the action recommendations

• Discuss the recommendations for individuals, groups, and institutions in the area

• Make plans for change!

The meeting should be planned primarily by the community researchers and the project coordinators during the Action Planning meeting, but a sample agenda is provided. [See Appendix E, Community Meeting Agenda.]

Be sure to invite representatives of employers and unions, political groups, educational and faith-based institutions, health organizations, cultural and advocacy groups, and all women’s groups, as well as community-based groups. Make a special effort to encourage the attendance of local environmentalists, emergency managers and disaster relief workers, political leaders and community development agencies.

This meeting can provide a platform for future work on collaborative projects. Of course, one meeting is never a solution to a problem. But this final community meeting can certainly be a jumping-off point for more discussion and action at the grassroots level.

**Share Your New Feelings, Too**

Women using these Guidelines to study vulnerability learn a great deal about the things that make them unsafe in their own neighborhoods, and how to reduce their vulnerability to hazards and disasters.

Sometimes people feel helpless, accept disasters as "meant to be" and out of their control, or fear that discussing danger or fear brings bad luck.

The approach we adopt to studying vulnerability research counteracts this. Community research working from the "bottom up" or "inside out" with highly vulnerable residents teaches people more about danger but also more about their own resources. When this model is used by and for women, talking with other women, strong feelings of pride and capability are likely to result.

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You have played an important role in helping to develop a new approach with great potential for grassroots empowerment and disaster reduction. This new model is:

• Holistic, linking everyday problems to disaster resilience

• Action-oriented, with the promise of benefit to the community at large

• Prevention-oriented, focusing on how risk can be reduced and managed

• Inclusive, as women who are easily overlooked or marginalized are key informants on the community at large

• Grounded in women’s experiences, capacities, knowledge, and action as well as factors increasing their vulnerability

• Empowering, providing those in particularly unsafe conditions the skills to identify specific hazards and local community resources

• Useful, because comprehensive, grassroots, and gender-sensitive documentation helps community members as well as disaster planners and responders

**Enjoy this community project and know that your work will help make people safer.**
APPENDIX A

RESEARCH PROCESS OVERVIEW

GETTING STARTED
1. Making Commitments
2. Finding Partners
3. Securing Funding

HOLDING THE PLANNING MEETING
1. Scheduling
2. Selecting Participants
3. Exchanging Information
4. Setting an Agenda
5. Confirming the Division of Labor
6. Setting the Time Frame
7. Planning Ahead
8. Confirming the Study Sites

COORDINATING THE RESEARCH
1. Documentation
2. Follow-Up Meeting

ANALYZING VULNERABILITY DATA
1. Summarizing the Findings
2. Writing the Interview Summary
3. Writing the Community Vulnerability Profile

CONDUCTING THE TWO DAY TRAINING WORKSHOP
1. Where and When?
2. Who Should Attend?
3. Training Resources
4. Facilitation
5. Introducing Core Ideas
6. Introducing Methodologies

CONDUCTING AN ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOP FOR RESEARCHERS
1. Sharing the profile with emergency managers, local authorities, and the media
2. Sharing the profile with other women
3. Sharing the profile with the community
INTRODUCTIONS

Personal introductions
[Self-introductions]

Overall introduction
[Who initiated the project? Who coordinated the planning meeting?]

Ground rules
[Who will facilitate and how?]

REVIEW AND REVISION OF THE AGENDA

Changes to the discussion topics?
Changes to the structure of the meeting?

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Which community groups or agencies are involved
[What work do they do? How are they organized?]

Which local authorities could or should be involved, and how?

Why is disaster vulnerability a concern?

DISCUSSION AND CONSENSUS

Project goals and objectives

Project tasks and the division of labor

Timeframe

Future planning meetings?

OTHER?

FEEDBACK/CLOSURE
APPENDIX C

TRAINING WORKSHOP AGENDA

DAY ONE: MORNING

Orientation

- Round-robin self-introductions
- Confirm or revise the agenda
- Review the contents of the training folder

Project goals

- To assess and document vulnerabilities and capacities in the local area
- To increase community awareness about risk and risk reduction
- To develop and strengthen networks between women’s groups and emergency management authorities
- To empower women as change agents

Specific project objectives

- To train local women in vulnerability research techniques
- To use the data collected to write a Community Vulnerability Profile
- To use the findings to educate the community about risk and risk reduction
- To use the findings to inform local and regional emergency managers about local capacities and vulnerabilities

What makes life risky here?

- Brainstorm daily hazards
- Brainstorm daily coping strategies
- Discuss local experience (emergencies, accidents, disasters of all kinds)
- Who here is most at risk?

Why do disasters happen?

- What is a disaster? Review handout on key concepts
- Discuss the causes and effects of recent disasters
- How are disasters and development related? Is the community changing in ways that increase or decrease risk?

Identify local resources

- How emergency management systems work here (national, regional, local)-in practice and theory
- Contact information
- Other resources (who helps in a fire? how is the community organized?)

DAY ONE: AFTERNOON

Women in disasters around the world

- Brainstorm stereotypes about women, men, danger, and risk
- Discuss pictures and stories from women caught up in disasters (mitigation, preparation, response, recovery)
- Share stories of what women do here to solve problems in the home and community
- Discuss last major disaster here: What did women and men do before, during and after?

Women as community researchers

- Why women’s perspectives matter
- What being a community researcher involves
- Preview tomorrow’s training activities

Asking the right questions

- Discuss guiding research questions
- Practice interviewing in pairs: answering the questions

Feedback/Closure/Preview of Day 2
DAY TWO: MORNING

Using the guiding research questions

• Probing techniques
• Changes to guiding questions?

Defining the job

• Discuss overall research strategy (qualitative, community-based, gender-focused)
• Review project tasks, timelines and coordination (who does what, when)
• Review specific community researcher tasks (training, data collection, research summaries, action step meeting, community meeting)
• Discuss realistic expectations of community researchers
• What the field coordinator will do

Selecting a sample: Who to talk with and why?

• Review and discussion of sampling: What is a "key informant"? Which one to contact?
• Setting geographic boundaries: who works where?

Gathering the data

• Extended discussion of methodology handout
• Specific discussion of writing the interview summary ("data analysis")

Practice Session

• Work in pairs or small groups to use each method and ask all questions (skits and role plays can help)

DAY TWO: AFTERNOON

Continued practice

• Using guiding questions
• Conducting extended interviews, life stories, group discussions
• Drawing risk maps
• Writing an interview summary
• Collaborating to compile a photo essay on community vulnerability and capacity
• Completing the background face sheet
• Completing the interview calendar sheet

Getting started

• Confirming assignments (where each person will work, what the deadlines are, and what data are to be collected)
• How to contact the field coordinator and project coordinator
• Hands-on detailed instruction on operating cameras and tape recorders

Getting help

• What help the field coordinator and project coordinator will provide
• Who else can help?

Planning

• Set time and place of next meeting or any follow-up workshop desired

Evaluation

• Complete evaluation form (Appendix R)
• Informal feedback

Review /Closure
ORIENTATION

Review and revise agenda

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To synthesize knowledge gained
To identify specific action steps needed
To plan final community meeting

REPORTS FROM RESEARCHERS

Presentation and discussion of interview summaries
Discussion of what was learned from maps and photos

ANALYTIC SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Primary hazards reported
Primary vulnerabilities reported
Primary resources and capacities reported

ACTION PLANNING

Work in pairs to list and prioritize changes needed
Group work to consolidate lists
Discuss areas of responsibility. Consider women, community members, women’s groups, emergency managers, government authorities at all levels, NGOs, relief agencies, etc.

Who can do what?
Who should do what?
What would help get change started?

COMMUNITY MEETING PLANNING

Where and when?
Who should be invited and encouraged to come?
Who will introduce the project and researchers?
How will the findings and action steps be presented?
What outcomes are desired?
COMMUNITY MEETING AGENDA

ORIENTATION  [15 minutes]

Introduction to the study [by CBO project coordinator and partner groups]

Who did what, why, how, where, when?
Describe all training and workshops

Overview of goals and objectives

Why a grassroots approach is best
Why women take the lead

Introduction to the community researchers and other participants

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS  [45 minutes]

Community researchers present most important findings about

Local hazards
Local vulnerabilities
Local resources and capacities
Local experience with past disasters
Women’s experience in past disasters

Circulate risk maps and photo essay and copies of Community Profile

Community researchers present action steps ranked most critical by informants

At the level of the individual/household
Groups and organizations
Institutions

OPEN DISCUSSION  [60 minutes]

PLANS FOR NEXT MEETING
IDEAS ABOUT NATURAL DISASTERS

What is a disaster?

There is no one definition. Many disasters are extreme consequences of routine events like storms and earthquakes, but a disaster like a nuclear power accident or poisonous gas explosion is something resulting from what people have made. A disaster like a war or drought can come on slowly, and a flash flood in just a moment or two.

Natural disasters result from "the impact of a natural hazard on a socio-economic system with a given level of vulnerability, which prevents the affected society from coping adequately. Natural hazards themselves do not necessarily lead to disasters. It is only their interaction with people and their environment that generates impacts, which may reach disastrous proportions."

What is a hazard?

This is "an event or occurrence that has the potential for causing injury, loss of life, or damage to property and the environment. . . . Most natural hazards cannot be prevented or minimized."

Hazards are a part of life, though they may threaten our lives and livelihoods and disrupt normal activities. Extreme storms, earthquakes, wildfires and volcanic eruptions are examples of natural hazards. If they occur where people are prepared for them, these are not necessarily "disasters."

Social hazards are created by people, for instance unsafe storage of toxic substances or armed conflict. Many people lack safe drinking water and face other social hazards that are part of their daily life and make life more dangerous.

How do people deal with hazards?

Mitigating hazards is how people make life safer despite these hazards. For example, we try to conserve water in a drought and reduce deforestation leading to landslides. We build cyclone shelters, strive to construct buildings resistant to earthquakes, and learn how to help ourselves and others in emergencies.

We use all our social, economic and political resources, skills, and knowledge to make life safer but catastrophic storms or volcanic eruptions will still occur. When they do, people must use their coping capacities to survive and rebuild.

What are coping capacities?

This involves "managing resources, both in normal times, as well as during unusual, abnormal and adverse conditions of a disaster event or process. . . . Capabilities are a combination of all the strengths and resources available in a particular location that are useful in reducing the effects of disasters."

People have different kinds of resources (like a secure income, good health, a strong family or a proactive government) and different ways of coping. Some people have technical or scientific skills, for instance, and can suggest ways to build houses that stand up in an earthquake. Other people have determination, knowledge of local materials, appropriate tools and experience building houses. Both are important and help people become less disaster vulnerable-meaning, their way of life is more resistant to the effects of an earthquake and they are more able to "bounce back." We call this disaster resilience.
What is disaster vulnerability?

Disaster vulnerability means "characteristics of a person or group in terms of their capacity to anticipate, cope with, resist, and recover from the impact of a natural hazard." Vulnerabilities can be physical, economic, social, cultural, and attitudinal, and directly or indirectly increase or decrease risk in a disaster.

Disaster vulnerability is how likely you or your family or neighborhood are to be hurt by the effects of natural or social hazards. If you live far from the ocean, you are not vulnerable to a cyclone, for example, and if you have a steady income and secure home, you can ride out the storm wherever you live.

Even in the same area, people are not all equally vulnerable. If a storm destroys your crops, can you reseed? If your baby is hurt by an explosion or landslide, can you travel to a clinic and afford the fees?

What is disaster risk?

This is the "probability of injury, loss of life, damage to property, disruption of services and activities, and negative environmental effects." Risk can be increased or decreased depending on exposure to danger, on the one hand, and what can be done to reduce this exposure, on the other hand.

Risk is the result of a "multiple chain of events" and can increase or decrease. The risk of disaster decreases when people are not likely to be affected by a hazard like a volcano, and (if they do have a volcano in their backyard) when they and their community are prepared to respond to a sudden eruption.

Fierce storms, forest fires, and landslides cannot be prevented but preventing hazards from becoming disastrous events in people’s lives is very possible. People around the world are working together to minimize danger and prepare in advance to respond in emergencies.

Everyone’s lives can be made safer by identifying hazards and learning how to reduce them. Risk awareness begins at home, in your own neighborhood, and community, because local people always know best what makes their way of life safe and unsafe.

Of course governments, employers, and scientists have important roles to play. But people generally rely more on what they know best—their own skills and resources, friendships and local organizations. Strong families and communities are strong in the face of disaster, too.

Whatever people do to lower their vulnerability—by not building homes on steep hillsides, for instance, building hospitals that won’t collapse in an earthquake, and planning in advance how to respond to a cyclone, for instance—lowers their risk.

This means, they have made their way of life safer. We call this making a community disaster resilient.

APPENDIX G

DOES THIS LOOK FAMILIAR?
WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD LEARN TO LIVE WITH DISASTERS

The following four-page collage can be used to stimulate discussion during the workshop. It includes photos featuring:

1. Military woman sandbagging the Red River of the North [US]
2. Hutterite women in Manitoba sandbagging a home [Canada]
3. Mother and child evacuating [Africa]
4. Self-Employed Women’s Association members distributing relief goods after the Gujarat earthquake [India]
5. Women clearing earthquake rubble [Turkey]
6. Sorting through donated medical supplies [Latin America]
7. Interior clean-up following a flood [US]
8. Searching for replacement clothing [US]
9. Comforting one another after a tornado [Canada]
10. Interior clean-up with a smile [US]
11. Woman relaxing in bathtub in hurricane rubble [US]

These photos can be downloaded from the Working With Women at Risk page on the website of the International Hurricane Center at Florida International University (www.fiu.edu/~lsbr/women) and from the website of the Gender and Disaster Network (www.anglia.ac.uk/geography/gdn).

The photographs are intended for educational purposes only and cannot be reproduced for any commercial purpose. We gratefully acknowledge:

1. Andy Blenkush, Under the Whelming Tide: The 1997 Flood of the Red River of the North, North Dakota Museum of Art
3. UNDP Department of Humanitarian Affairs
4. Self-Employed Women’s Association
5. UNDP Department of Humanitarian Affairs
6. PAHO, A World Safe from Natural Disasters
7. Carolyn Kaster, Come Hell or High Water: The Incredible Story of the 1997 Red River Flood, Grand Forks Herald and Knight-Ridder Newspapers
9. Globe and Mail Newspaper photography
10. Erik Hylden, Come Hell or High Water: The Incredible Story of the 1997 Red River Flood, Grand Forks Herald and Knight-Ridder Newspapers
DOES THIS LOOK FAMILIAR?

WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD LEARN TO LIVE WITH DISASTERS

MILITARY WOMEN WORKED ALONGSIDE MEN TO PREVENT FLOODING

TRADITIONAL HUTTERITE WOMEN IN RURAL CANADA HELPED SANDBAG THEIR NEIGHBORS’ HOMES

SOMETIMES WOMEN MUST TAKE THEIR CHILDREN AND LEAVE DANGEROUS SITUATIONS
FOOD MUST STILL BE COOKED!
WOMEN HAVE A LOT TO DO AFTER
A FLOOD

SIFTING THROUGH DONATIONS TO
CLOTHE HER FAMILY

HELPING EACH OTHER
THROUGH A DIFFICULT
TIME
INDIAN WOMEN WORKED THROUGH THEIR LABOR UNION TO HELP EARTHQUAKE SURVIVORS

TURKISH WOMEN SEARCH FOR SURVIVORS

SORTING THROUGH DONATED MEDICAL SUPPLIES
MAKING THE BEST OF IT . . .

WITH A SMILE!
APPENDIX H

SOME OF WOMEN’S DISASTER STORIES: WHAT ABOUT YOURS?

Women have a lot to lose:

When the tide came, it covered the sky and my children slipped away from me in the strong current. A man is a man, but what am I without my children? ¹

I experienced Storm Debby in 1994 [in St. Lucia]. The wind blew four sheets of galvanized off my house and I lose my rug and my wardrobe, the water entered by house causing me to lose my sewing machine as well... Well there is a disaster group in the community, they did not really assist me, because I never went to them. And in the countryside, where I have my bananas I lost everything through landslides. After the storm I had to move to the [shelter in the school] where I stayed there for one week. I believe the house got damaged because of the location it was. When the water entered by house, it reached my waist... I never got assistance for my bananas that were destroyed. And up to now things hard in the country, I never got my sewing machine back and many other things that I lost. ²

I had just experienced a vehicular accident when Debbie visited us. I had twenty lines of sea moss in the water, all of which got white [ruined] cause the chemical it was treated with created a distaste for the sea moss. The banana farm all of which was destroyed by the devastating storm. Even our water was polluted with debris and other chemicals as well as toxic waste. We were prepared at home because we were really secure.³

The tremor has affected us a lot. There is less movement, tourists go to other places. My salary depends on commission according to the number of [bus] tickets sold. Lately, I’ve sold very few.⁴

[Following the Berkeley/Oakland firestorm] I had no thread. By this I mean I had no thread to stitch my daughter’s hem, and also I lost the thread of my life. The pattern of my days, my plans, my routines were irrevocably ruptured. The warp of my past was torn from the weave of my future. Who I am, what I was, what I intended to do, the fabric of my life, utterly unraveled.⁵

He is a new kind of mad. He has this anger in him that I have never seen before.⁶

² La Point Development Committee community research project, St. Lucia, 2001.
³ La Point Development Committee community research project, St. Lucia, 2001.
My husband went crazy. He couldn’t take the pressure—being used to everything, and then coming down to no eating, because we could not find food . . . And then he was beating me up, taking my money—there was just so much going on that I just couldn’t—he was really going berserk. I was getting beat up pretty bad. I didn’t have a job, I didn’t have any clothes, because I was fleeing for my life. I came here with one shoe, ended up going to the hospital, the emergency room—He really went crazy. Before, I would get beat up maybe once a month if I was lucky . . . But then, after the hurricane it all got worse . . . It was really rough for a female. I ran across a lot of women suffering too with their children—husbands beating them up and leaving them. It was pretty bad. 7

[Migrant] women are still expected to do their normal job . . . and to come home at night and take care of the kids . . . and to help their husband with the disaster-related clean-up or whatever else is going on. And I’ve seen a lot of stress issues, where women are taking it on—they’ve done it and done it and done it. 8

He likes things ordered and when things are out of order he doesn’t like it. So the flood was a nightmare for him. It’s not like his temperament completely changed with the flood but I definitely do consider us to be a flood casualty. The flood did bring on his anger. 9

Women listen to hazard warnings:

After about 1½ hours of sleep Friday night, I turned the radio back on and they were saying that the whole town should evacuate—our area was specifically named. I woke [my husband and grown son] about 5 am. Both said they would not go . . . It took me until the afternoon on Saturday to convince [him] that we should leave. All medical services were down, and I didn’t want to have to worry about getting him to medical help if he should need it in an area where none was available. [My son] refused to go. 10

In 1980 I experienced hurricane Allen . . . It was a Sunday night about six o’clock p.m. when the wind began to blow with such force and the sound of breaking branches could be heard a far distance away. We were advised by the radio announcers to stay tuned to our radio because hurricane advisory would be issued, and so we did just that. We were tuned and were prepared. 11

He didn’t want to evacuate. He wanted to stay here and protect the place . . . I was scared. I wanted to leave . . . He wanted to come back here sooner also . . . He did come back a week earlier . . . I felt the safety issue was too much. He should have stayed away. 12

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8Interview conducted with Migrant Outreach professional in Grand Forks, N. Dakota. See Enarson 2001, What women do: gendered disaster work in the Red River Valley flood. Environmental Hazards 3 (1).
11La Point Development Committee community research project, St. Lucia, 2001.
[W]hen we heard that Lincoln dike had broke, we all called my sister to say we’d come over and get trucks and we would move everything out of their home. And [my brother-in-law] just refused. He said "It’s not going to flood. We’re all right." He just absolutely—and she had a business down in her basement and she wanted to get all that stuff and he just, he refused. . . And I think when it hit, [he] was very closed. You couldn’t get him to talk. He would go off and walk by himself a lot, just not talk to anyone and I think he felt really guilty that ‘What if I would have done this, we wouldn’t have lost all of our furniture, [her] business.’

Women show leadership:

People came with no clothes. We set up a clothing drive, a food bank. We put all of those rural women—used all of their energy, even though they were housing people, to do things for others. They were the ones that held it together.

[During the volcanic eruption in Montserrat] women were quick at becoming enterprising. They filled the gaps. They moved their hairdressing shops, seamstresses continued to sew school uniforms. They tried to keep the community together even when they were in shelters-cooking, feeding people in shelters. Food was a big thing because it was difficult to cook in the early days.

As a woman, I faced a shock along with my female colleagues when we were told that we could not accompany the relief mission with the visiting team because there was no guarantee of any ‘secure’ place to stay. . . [It] was important for women workers to help women survivors. We learned from other NGOs that they sent mainly male relief teams. This may have been unintentional but indicated that women were seen more as victims and not as providers of services during and after disasters.

He was not the strong one any more because he had such a difficult time, thinking, not only did he lose his home but his parents’ home. And so I had to be the strong one. I still had to take care of my daughter. He did come up [where we evacuated] for a week. . . The first three or four months he was, he stayed away. He was real distant and kind of did his own thing. . . He said the most difficult thing for him was the fact that he is supposed to take care of his family and he had nowhere to bring that family.

If there is one member of the community through hurricane they help each other. We join our hands together and do what is necessary. In Praslin [St. Lucia] we do not have an established group for disaster preparedness. But there that tendency that exist in the community. That where they need a ride too. Especially in disasters people come together and they lend a helping hand and we make things happen.

14Ibid.
17Ibid.
18La Point Development Committee community research project, St. Lucia, 2001.
When exposed to a dangerous situation, I have an overwhelming desire to put myself where I can physically help others. I still look forward to the excitement disaster work provides, but now [after going back to college] I am getting paid for my disaster preparedness work and part of my motivation is an increased sense of duty to my city. I have a greater degree of identification with the community, and the better I come to know it, the more I am motivated to get this city prepared for disaster!  

Women help themselves and others:

I did the cleaning while the others sandbagged. I kind of thought to myself 'Who's going to help me while you help the neighbors?'

Not only my husband, but my 12- and 14-year old sons were swiftly recruited. However when with my daughter and a female friend, I offered my services in the [fire fighting], they were declined. We worked instead where it was deemed appropriate for us-preparing food in our kitchen, which was already stacked high with [food] made by district women for the firefighters.

One lady on 10th Street, I'll never forget her, I don't know why. Her mother was dying of cancer, her sister was dying of cancer, and she had kids, she had a house, they had a flooded basement. Her husband wasn't living there because he had to work someplace else. Massive craziness. And she was just strong, and going here at 2, going there at 4, got to be here at 6, got to be home at this time because the kids are going to be home, gotta cook dinner. I mean, she had everything going.

I had a hard time going to, like, Red Cross or anything like that. I had a very difficult time. And I don't know if it was a pride thing or what. My dad would not go [And your husband?] Oh, there's no way. No. And when we were [evacuated] out there, I had to go. I had nothing for my daughter.

I did most of the going out and finding the resources that were available to us. Standing in line, waiting for this, waiting for that. I mean, all I remember is standing in line.

There was fifty caravans and one washing-machine, so it was pandemonium trying to wash everything for the kids. You'd have to sit up 'til about five in the morning, and if you seen [the washing machine] was free, you'd run down and get your washing in.

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20 Interview conducted in Manitoba during the 1997 Red River Valley flood. See E. Enarson and J. Scanlon, 1999, op.cit.
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
Their men may have lost the fishing equipment necessary to earn a living, their children may have died and their homes and belongings were washed away but at the end of each day it was the wife/mother who had to cook for whoever survived in her family. In all the relief lines I saw, women stood first. They were the ones collecting bits of wood and bamboo to rebuild the houses. As is customary, they dealt with the sick children and lack of food.

I mean his whole total effort was shrugging his shoulders and sighing. I mean I was turning out my whole house, seeing to my kids, worrying myself sick... and I just felt he thought that where we were was very comfortable. ... I mean probably if we hadn’ been flooded out I’d have just sauntered along with him. His life didn’t change. His Monday to Friday job was the same but from Friday to Sunday he was still assuming he was going out to the pub. I was left in the caravan and that’s the bit I couldnae cope with... I couldnae cope with my house and him and... a new baby and everything.

I was forced to deal with my ex. He ended up evacuating, he came up to the apartment that we were in because he didn’t have anywhere else to go. ... My ex-husband [was] just totally drinking every day. And then I relied on his help so I could try and get my kids back into the house and he was drinking so much it took him, like, ten times as long as he needed to try and clean the basement out.

[We] three women spent 39 days without electricity-washing clothes in the bathtub, heating water on the campfire for the children’s baths, washing dishes in a bucket. We cooked Mexican food over a makeshift kitchen in the yard, preparing corn tortillas on a cast iron griddle... Disaster or no disaster, the men demanded hearty meals of traditional foods and refused to eat at the military kitchens... The men began to hire themselves out, repairing others’ homes as the job market for workers boomed, but our home lay in disarray.

Women can change their lives:

I can do wire now! Changed all my outlets and I can put up lights. I’m real scared of wiring even though I’ve done that. And I really got to be a good plasterer because I didn’t like the way they did it so I redid it at nights myself.

There were more decisions to be made... We’re not agreeing on anything... He’s not taking me seriously. You can’t go your whole life with someone without having something to offer them... It’s his way and that’s it. It wasn’t a big deal before the flood. Now it is.

I gained a lot of respect from the city employees during that time because of course, they expected that I would be the person that they should all be taking care of, and instead, I was there helping them, organizing. We worked 16-hour days straight for over 5 weeks. But I enjoyed it. We have a good old boys’ system here, so afterwards this one...
guy didn’t want me to attend the meetings anymore. I told him, ‘I have been here since day one, and I’ve had to make a lot of decisions, my signature is on everything, and you should back me.’ The city council completely supported me. And now, well, they all definitely listen when I say something.32

Then came the drought of 1985. Both my husband and I started going to work on the relief sites—digging earth. . . we dug earth for four years—there was no other way. All my hair fell out and I went bald. But now I have guaranteed work. I am a member of SEWA [Self-Employed Women’s Association, an Indian savings bank for low-income women] and our village group leader. From my year’s savings, I have now bought a buffalo, so that gives me extra income. I am the sole breadwinner: my whole family lives on my income. I also assist the other village women to do high-quality embroidery so that they also get regular work and income. Now, all the men in the village also respect me.33

I thought I wouldn’t be able to endure the hardship of being a victim of the volcano. But it was shown to me. . . that I can be empowered.34

It was just houses, you know? We’ve come through the depressions and wars and we are a tough generation. This was just a miserable little bushfire. When you have got kids, your order of what is important in the world is quite clear. If your kids are happy and safe and you are not injured, you can get on.35

In fact, I got together with another woman and we’re thinking about forming a group. It’s still in the making, but we want to get together—all Hispanic women—so we can have a voice. We still need to get some basics. . . We don’t know who [the local political candidates] are. Do we know what they stand for? As Hispanic women, we’re still not out there, letting our voices be heard.36

[Women Will Rebuild in Miami] brought together women who had never come together before. I think they did make an honest effort to represent all the groups in Miami. I give them credit for that.37

In the aftermath of the hurricane I found a source of strength and power of survival that I hold within myself and because of that I am a stronger person today.38

I’m starting a new life. So I’m going to take that flood and all that abuse, and when the flood waters left Grand Forks, well, that was my old life leaving. All the abuse left with the water. That’s how I look at it.39

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39Alice Fothergill, 1999, op.cit.
What can you do?

Women's lives are very different. But, around the world, many women's groups and individual women are taking steps to reduce the risk of disasters.

* Identify hazards and dangers affecting people in your own neighborhood.

* Identify your resources, skills, and capacities in dealing with hazards and potential disasters.

* Identify changes needed to make women like you less vulnerable to these hazards.

* Identify how groups and networks you know can help organize the community to reduce dangerous conditions and prepare to respond to disasters when they do occur.

* Identify ways women and men can work together to help minimize hazards and reduce the risk of disasters.

Working together, women and women's community organizations and networks have a vital role to play in building safer communities. It starts with you!

For more information about disasters and emergency preparedness, contact your emergency management authorities.

For more information about working with other women to reduce the threat of disasters, see Working With Women: Practical Guidelines for Assessing Disaster Vulnerabilities and Capacities at the Local Level.

Write for a copy from the Lab for Social & Behavioral Research International Hurricane Center, Florida International University, Miami, Florida, 33199.

Or you can download it from the www.fiu.edu/~lsbr/women

Also found on this web site are photos and other materials related to the topic.

Women and Disaster: What's the Connection?

Do disasters affect women and men equally? How does being a woman matter in a disaster?

Everyone is exposed to danger in life—but not everyone is equally exposed to the effects of hazardous conditions in their daily lives. Some people are very hard-hit in disasters and others pick up the pieces and go on. Why is this?

Don't most women and men face the risks and challenges of life together?

Yes and no. People living on land prone to flooding or subject to severe droughts share many of the same worries about how to make a living and raise their families in risky environments.

But think of the everyday lives of women and men you know. How do they spend their days—and where? What skills do they have? What resources do they control? Who makes important decisions in their homes and neighborhoods? What do they do when they need help?

These are differences that affect how people prepare for, survive, cope with, and recover from extreme events like landslides or earthquakes and from "man made" disasters like toxic spills, explosions, and war, too.
Disasters can hit girls and women hard. Sometimes they are less likely than men in their neighborhood to live through an earthquake or eruption because they put others first and aren’t always free to act in their own best interests. Often, women lack the information or spare time or extra income it takes to prepare their homes and workplaces for extreme events like cyclones. And afterwards, most women around the world have less money, land, political influence and other resources to help them fully recover from their losses.

Not all women are more vulnerable than the men around them but, in every culture and society, a great many girls and women are at high risk. Why is this?

* Part of the answer is physical. Women may be less mobile than many men before and after childbirth and are more likely to have health problems related to old age than men, who tend not to live as long.
* Part of the answer is economic. Women are the poorest of the poor. In many parts of the world, they rely on the local water, animals, and land for their income so natural disasters hit them hard.
* Part of the answer is social. Women provide food, water, fuel wood and other necessities of life for others. Generally, they are also the ones who care for infants and children, older people, and others who live with disabilities or illness.

Also, more women than men live alone. Widows, women heading households alone, and women who have left their homes and moved their families to the city or another country are especially likely not to have secure incomes, savings, or credit. They may be newcomers without many friendships or isolated from others because of the language they speak.

* And part of the answer is political. Many women are made homeless by male violence, long before an earthquake or volcanic eruption. Generally, men make the key decisions about disasters—how and when to prepare, evacuate, rebuild, or relocate.

* Older women especially will remember how people coped with past hazards and disasters and are more likely than men to still speak the native language. They can help others like them learn how to minimize risk.
* Women are more likely than men to share information, ideas, and resources because they are more organized at the grassroots. They build lively networks of friends at work, in schools, in their neighborhood and through their religion. Often in a disaster, it is women’s groups that take the lead in helping rebuild community solidarity after a disaster.
* Like men, women in a crisis do what needs to be done. They don’t sit and wait for rescue but help themselves and their neighbors when they can. When the crisis passes, it is women especially—as nurses, teachers, counselors, and caregivers—who help disaster survivors deal with the painful losses of disasters.
* In rising numbers, women are also employed as environmental scientists and policy makers, firefighters and police officers, health care providers and teachers. They have important roles in planning agencies, humanitarian relief operations, and emergency management organizations worldwide.

Long before any disaster, women in your area probably came together to provide for their families and organize stronger communities. They may be harvesting rainwater or experimenting with drought-resistant crops or ways to build sturdy houses, monitoring river levels, forming neighborhood self-help groups, working together to build a child care center or local clinics, and educating their children about self-protection.

When women plant backyard gardens, join community disaster preparedness groups, monitor environmental changes and pay attention to disaster warning systems, they are helping to prevent a natural event such as a forest fire or fierce storm from becoming a “natural” disaster.
APPENDIX J

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

Thank you!

You have joined with other women who want to investigate what makes life here risky and what can help make it safer—especially when cyclones, floods, explosions, and other major events occur.

Too often, the experiences of women in disasters have been ignored. But women are highly involved in anything that affects their families, homes, workplaces, neighborhoods, and communities. Other research has shown women are hard-hit by disasters but also work hard to try to prevent them and help people recover later.

Who better to study hazards the community faces and what can be done to make disasters less likely?

You’ll be doing this by talking with other women in your community, following a step-by-step interview process. From this, we will write a Community Profile about strengths and weaknesses in disasters and how emergency management agencies and women’s groups can work together to make families safer. You will also learn a lot about preparing for emergencies.

The women’s group you belong to is doing this because the research and action plan can benefit the community as a whole and women in particular. The field coordinator knows your organization and is here to help you through every phase of the research. Call or visit her anytime:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women’s group contact information and field coordinator contact information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The other organization participating in the study is [insert name here]. Contact [insert project coordinator’s name here] for more information. Call or visit them anytime.

| Other sponsoring organization contact information and Project Coordinator contact information |
APPENDIX K

GUIDING RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How safe is it to live here?
   - Why?
   - What do you mean by that?
   - Can you give me an example?
   - How is this different for different people?

2. What makes you feel unsafe or in danger around here?
   - Why?
   - What do you mean by that?
   - Can you give me an example?
   - How is this different for different people?

3. What about natural events like floods or earthquakes or hurricanes?

4. What about the environment?
   - How clean is the water? What about air pollution? Soil erosion?
   - What about spills of dangerous materials or industrial accidents?
   - How about the soil, crops, fish, or animals? What problems do you see, if any?

5. Who in your community is most likely to be affected by disasters?
   - Why? What do you mean by that?
   - Who is least likely to be affected? Why?
   - Can you give me some examples?
   - How is this different for different people?

6. How do people here try to prevent things like floods?
   - What do you think should be done?
   - What have you done?
   - What have others done?
   - What about things like industrial accidents?
7. If you have ever experienced a disaster, tell me about it.
   • What problems did it cause you?
   • What did you do during all this? What did you want to do? How about afterwards?
   • What did others do? What did you want others to do?
   • Did you know who to ask for help? What happened when you did?
   • What did you learn from this experience?

8. How would you describe everyday life around here?
   • Tell me how you earn a living and the natural resources you use.
   • Tell me about your living area or house. How secure is it?
   • Who do you take care of, and who takes care of you?
   • How about your health? Your education?
   • Tell me about the people in your family and in your neighborhood.
   • Who makes political decisions around here? Do you?
   • How do your everyday living conditions help you solve problems caused by events like landslides or chemical explosions?
   • How do they make things more difficult?

9. What do women do together around here?
   • What do they do together in a crisis like an explosion or an earthquake?
   • What women’s groups or coalitions are there? How are you involved?
   • What do you do with other women?
   • Around the school? church? workplace? What about cultural events?

10. How does being a woman matter in all this?
    • What problems do you have that the men you know don’t?
    • What difference does it make in a disaster?
    • What things do you know how to do that the men you know don’t?
    • What difference does it make in a disaster?
    • Is it different for the men you know? Tell me about that.
    • How is this different for different women?

11. What could be done to make your life safer?
    • How about your neighborhood?
    • What would make the whole community safer?
    • If there were just one thing, what is it that should be done to make people safer?
    • Who can do it? Who should do it?

12. Thinking of everything we’ve talked about, how different was it for your grandmother?
    • What about for your children, in the future?
    • What is causing changes in your community?
    • Does this make people safer or more unsafe?
APPENDIX L

GUIDE TO SELECTING A SAMPLE OF INFORMANTS

When doing research, it is usually not possible to talk to everyone in the population being studied. Therefore, a sample of people is chosen to be contacted. There are many ways in which this sample can be chosen. For this research project we are interested in choosing a group of key women throughout the community who have special circumstances or knowledge related to risk and vulnerability. This type of non-random or non-probability sampling is called a purposive sample. Each person is chosen for a reason - she represents a type of woman that you believe can make an important or unique contribution to the research.

In order to pick your sample of five women, or key informants, to interview, you will use your expertise of the issues in your community and of the women living there. Under the direction of your field coordinator, the other researchers and you will choose samples to reflect a variety of types of women in your community who can be particularly vulnerable, who are apt to have special situations or problems that need to be considered when looking at community vulnerability, or who have special knowledge to share.

Some examples of women who are likely to have important points of view on this topic are listed below. All of these may not apply to your community and there may be others you can think of that are not on the list. Some women will cover more than one category. It is important that key informants are chosen to cover a diversity of types of at-risk women found in your community or women who have the most to contribute to the project.

Possible key informants are:

- Women living in hazardous areas or conditions
- Women who are inadequately housed
- Women who are sole household providers
- Elderly women or widows living alone
- Recent migrants or others new to the area
- Minority women (any excluded group)
- Women caring for disabled or ill family members
- The poorest women
- Disabled or ill women
- Young mothers
- Grandmothers raising children
- Abused women
- Women who are unemployed or underemployed
- Women working in a free zone
- Women working from their homes
- Women employed in hazardous occupations or in hazardous workplaces
- Women vendors
- Rural women or women living in isolated areas
- Urban women
- Renters
- Illiterate women
- Street women
- Prostitutes
- Women who are likely to be ignored or excluded for any reason
- Women who are respected by others
- Women leaders or authorities
APPENDIX M

SOME RESEARCH METHODS FOR ASSESSING VULNERABILITY

**Intensive Interviewing.** This will be the main method of data collection for this project. Each researcher will conduct intensive interviews with a sample of 5 key informants chosen for their particular knowledge or circumstances. While these interviews will be guided by a list of sample questions, they will be open-ended and informal. The researcher will guide the interview to gain the most information related to the subject, including the person’s special circumstances, experiences and perceptions about the risks faced in her daily life, as well as when special events occur. Each interview will be tape-recorded and a written summary prepared by the researcher.

After the interviews have been completed and discussed by the research team, other methods will be chosen to complete a picture of the community’s vulnerability. These might include the following:

**Life History.** This involves several interviews with a key informant to capture the main points of her life as it relates to the topic. Someone who has lived in the community for many years and been through numerous crises would be a good candidate for a life history, as would someone who lived through a major disaster in another community and remembers how they coped. Of special interest will be her memories of women’s activities and experiences. Where possible, external evidence, such as newspaper clippings and photos, can be used to supplement the life history.

**Group Interview.** A group of women who share similar circumstances can be interviewed together. This allows the discussion to build on each other’s experiences. For example, if your research group found elderly women were an important group of at-risk women in your community, you might bring 4 or 5 of them together to discuss their situations, how they cope, and how they might be helped. At least two researchers should conduct each group interview and they should be tape-recorded.

**Photo Essay.** Photos can tell the story of your community. The subject of each photo should be chosen to make a particular point about the community related to risk, vulnerability and response. A short essay should be written for each, explaining what it expresses about the topic. An alternative, and more complex method, is the making of a video about your community.

**Surveys.** In order to get input from a larger number of people, your research team may decide to conduct a survey that further develops topics emerging from your interviews. This will involve developing a questionnaire (with your field coordinator and senior researcher), administering it to a sample of people, and analyzing the results. The type of sample will depend on the purpose of the survey. It might be given to a women’s group, to every household in a particular neighborhood or region, or to a sample of women with special needs, as examples.
APPENDIX N

ANALYZING QUALITATIVE DATA

In this type of research words, not numbers, are the data. Analysis involves studying words or themes that are repeated, looking for what is consistent and for what is unusual. You are trying to get at the meanings of words, and these can vary from one person to another. Let the person talk to you in her own words, explaining what she means when she talks about dangers, risks, fears, capacities and vulnerabilities. We are looking for community patterns, but also trying to understand the variety of individual experiences and conditions present in any given community. Therefore, do not neglect the person whose situation is unique, if it is something that the community should be aware of, or it can be addressed in some way.

For example, if you find that most women are concerned about the quality of water available to their households, say that, and use her own words to describe how this affects them, or matters to them. You will want to collect details about water sources, how it is collected, stored, used and discarded. If many are concerned about unsafe transportation, you will want to collect information about different kinds of transportation and their use, too. On the other hand, if just one woman talks about being abused, or one elderly woman expresses fear of being trapped by floods in her own home, it should be included in your report because of its seriousness.

Remember, you want to discover how people in this particular place are at risk and what resources can be used to address these dangers. You will present your final report to the community and to the appropriate authorities as part of a plan to make your community safer.

Steps In Analysis

1. Without taking any notes, listen carefully to every tape (and read your interview notes several times before beginning to do any analysis. In other words become very familiar with your data.

2. Sit and think about what you have learned. What questions has the data answered?

3. Now listen to each tape very slowly, looking for themes and common topics. Stop and take notes on small pieces of paper so you can sort them later. For example, if Interview #1 talks about children’s fears, write this on a piece of paper, noting that it came from Interview #1. Later you can put all of the papers having to do with children in one pile and write about them together.

4. Sort your notes around either common topics (such as children) or themes (such as ways women try to reduce their risks). Think of categories of things you might find in a kitchen, or how you sort clothing or tools into categories.

5. Look for gaps where you need more information and go back and ask for it. You might return to a particular woman with more questions about a topic or question that arose as you analyzed the data. Or you might complete the puzzle in other ways, like calling authorities to find out more about a water source, for example, or photographing the water source yourself. Secondary data (not collected by you but available from the newspaper, local experts, and other sources) can be helpful.

6. Outline your results, looking for things that should be discussed together.

7. Write up your findings.
APPENDIX O

INTERVIEW FACE SHEET

Name of interviewer:

Place of interview (home? community center? other?)

Date of interview:

Note: Before ending the interview, be sure you can answer each of these questions. You may have heard the answers to many of these questions as you spoke with your informant—record them now, before leaving. If there are gaps, ask directly for an answer now. You may want to gather and record the information on this form as you and your key informant are getting settled for the interview. Remember that background information is needed for each respondent participating in the study, including those in group interviews.

HOW OLD IS THIS PERSON?

WHAT WAS HER PLACE OF BIRTH?

HOW DOES SHE EARN MONEY? WHAT IS HER OCCUPATION?

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS HER GENERAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS?

WHAT IS HER FAMILY SITUATION? WHO LIVES WITH HER?

WHAT IS HER PRIMARY LANGUAGE?

HOW MANY YEARS OF SCHOOL DID SHE COMPLETE?

WHAT WERE YOUR GENERAL IMPRESSIONS OF HER NEIGHBORHOOD?
APPENDIX P

INTERVIEW SCHEDULING

OVERVIEW:
Selection of Key Informants completed by [name of researcher]

Data collection to take place between _________ and ____________

Number of interviews to be completed:

Number of oral histories to be completed:

Number of group discussions to be completed:

Names of Interviewers and their neighborhood assignments:

RESULTS: For each interview, record the following information.

Informant #1 [use initials or numbers]

1. Which researcher made the first contact? [If she was not the only researcher to speak with the respondent, explain.]

2. When was the interview completed?

3. Where did it take place?

4. If not completed, explain [e.g., when were follow-up meetings scheduled?]

5. Comments/problems
COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY PROFILE TEMPLATE

I. The Context [based on secondary sources, e.g. census data, environmental studies, disaster reports]

A. Project Overview [1 page]
   Describe groups and organizations undertaking the research
   Physical location of the study
   Timeframe

B. The people and place [1-2 pages]
   Who lives here? How do they live?
   What is the environmental context? The political setting?
   What major hazards are evident in the region? What recent disaster experience?

II. Women Living With Risk: Balancing Capacities And Vulnerabilities
[based on primary data collected]

A. What factors increase risk here? [2-3 pages]
   Hazards (environmental, technological, other)
   Vulnerabilities of everyday life
   Trends and patterns

B. What factors decrease risk here? [2-3 pages]
   Problem-solving resources (personal)
   Problem-solving resources (institutional)
   Trends and patterns

C. Case Study [if appropriate] of women responding to extreme events [2-3 pages]
   Women’s roles in mitigating hazardous conditions
   Describe the event itself
   Gender-specific impacts
   Coping strategies of women/men
   Women’s roles in long-term recovery and reconstruction
III. Planning Action to Reduce Risk [from Action workshop]

A. Recommended steps ranked in order of priority [2 pages]
   - Personal/household
   - Group/organizational
   - Community
   - Governments
   - Emergency managers
   - Other

B. Proposals for implementation [1 page]

IV. Appendix

A. Research design [1-2 pages]
   - Data collection methodologies [which used most often here]
   - Sample selection [summary of key informants and areas of study]
   - Sample characteristics [from face sheet data]
   - Limitations [e.g., data gaps, sample bias]

B. Documentation [1-5 pages]
   - Contact information for community researchers and field coordinators
   - Maps [with sufficient description to interpret: who, how, what, why? meaning?]
   - Photos [with identification, and written analysis of significance]
   - List of guiding questions used [as presented in the workshop with all revisions included]
   - Original data/tapes/any transcribed or translated material
APPENDIX R

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

A. WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE WORKSHOP?

B. WHAT COULD HAVE MADE IT EASIER FOR YOU TO ATTEND?

C. HOW CLEAR WERE THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP?

D. WHAT TOPICS DID YOU ENJOY DISCUSSING MOST? WHICH NEEDED MORE TIME?

E. HOW CLEARLY WAS YOUR ROLE EXPLAINED? WHAT HELPED YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH IT?

F. WERE ALL YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED?

G. WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THIS TO A FRIEND? WHY OR WHY NOT?

H. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR THE WORKSHOP ORGANIZERS?
APPENDIX S

SELECTED RESOURCES ON WOMEN AND DISASTER

Selected English-language Readings


Enarson, Elaine and Maureen Fordham. 2001. From women's needs to women's rights in disasters. Forthcoming in Environmental Hazards.


Some general readings


Selected Spanish-language Readings


Fact Sheets, Newsletters, and Bulletins [useful for background reading and workshop packet]

*Gender and natural disasters* (Spanish/English), developed by PAHO (www.paho.org)

*Unsung heroines: women and natural disasters*, Bullet 8 (January) of USAID’s Gender Matters


*Violence Against Women in Disasters*. Fact sheet compiled by E. Enarson, available through the Gender and Disaster Network (www.anglia.ac.uk/geography/gdn).

Bibliography

Special journal issues (English)


IDNDR Stop Disasters (Women and Children: Keys to Prevention), Vol. 24, 1995. Also see "Prevention pays: success stories featuring women and children" (Fact Sheet #1).


Websites

GDN: The Gender and Disaster Network [www.anglia.ac.uk/geography/gdn] includes downloadable papers, contact information for members, reports, and other materials. A comprehensive bibliography of English-language writing on gender and disaster is also maintained on this website.

CRID: The Regional Disaster Information Center maintains an international collection of Spanish- and English-language documents, with a growing collection of gender and disaster writing. See www.crid.or.cr/.

RADIX: Radical Interpretations of Disaster (www.anglia.ac.uk/geography/radix) includes gender-sensitive analysis of disaster vulnerability, response, and prevention.

Conference reports

See the Gender and Disaster Network [www.anglia.ac.uk/geography/gdn]) for proceedings and recommendations from conferences held in British Columbia (1999) and Miami (2000). Links are provided for documents from UN conferences in Turkey (2001) and New York (UN Commission on the Status of Women), 2002.

Proceedings from a major conference on gender and disaster in Pakistan (1996) were published by Fernando and Fernando (op.cit.).

Videos


GUIDELINES EVALUATION

Our thanks in advance for evaluating the Guidelines after you use them. We will continue testing the model in the Caribbean during 2003-2003 and welcome your feedback. Contact details for all of the authors are provided on the back cover.

Please complete and return this evaluation form or send us your comments and thoughts in another way. Also, let us know if you would like to receive an electronic or paper copy of the final document.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK!

E-mail your thoughts to eenarson @ earthlink.net or mail them:

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A. WHAT GENERAL COMMENTS DO YOU HAVE ON THE CONTENT OR STRUCTURE OF THE GUIDELINES?

B. HOW COULD THE GUIDE BE MORE USER-FRIENDLY?

C. HOW USEFUL WOULD THE GUIDELINES BE FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION? COULD THEY BE ADAPTED TO YOUR CONTEXT?

D. WHAT WOULD IMPROVE THE GUIDELINES?
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