

Participation by Crisis-Affected Populations in Humanitarian Action. A Handbook for Practitioners (Chapter 3: Assessment, Chapter 4: Design)

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Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP)

Organisation

The Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) was formed in 1997 as a network comprised of members, observers, and a steering committee. ALNAP is dedicated to improving accountability and quality of humanitarian action through sharing lessons, identifying common problems and building consensus approaches.

Weblink: www.alnap.org

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Abstract

This document provides practical approaches for field workers to involve affected communities in the design and implementation of humanitarian interventions. It offers a deeper understanding of what participation in humanitarian assistance involves, and how in conflict situations and disaster environments, participation can be given a more prominent role. The two chapters profiled provide a series of 17 participatory assessment and analysis tools for a capacity and vulnerability analysis (CVA). In addition to primarily using the participatory rural appraisal (PRA) approach, the publication also considers crosscutting themes such as security and protection, discrimination and minorities, and impartiality and independence. The remainder of the manual looks at sectoral approaches to assessment and analysis including health, water and sanitation, food security, habitat and shelter, and education.

Intended end users

This publication is intended to be used by **community development workers, humanitarian and disaster risk management field practitioners, emergency managers**, as well as **staff working for international and local non-governmental organisations**.

Geographical focus

The ALNAP Practitioners Handbook is based on comprehensive research in five different humanitarian emergency situations – **Afghanistan, Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Columbia** and **Sri Lanka**. Its use is intended to be applied in a **global** context.

Type of Material

This publication is a **comprehensive manual** providing a series of 17 participatory rural appraisals (PRA) tools for a capacities and vulnerability analysis (CVA) and action planning for relevant projects in humanitarian action following a crisis, such as a conflict. Chapter Three on assessment is structured around ‘Understanding the context’, ‘Understanding the crisis and its effects’, ‘Understanding who is who’, ‘Understanding vulnerabilities and capacities’, and ‘Understanding needs and demands’. Chapter Four on design guides the user to create a logical framework in a participatory manner and to present the information to the community.

Language

This publication is written in English.

Scale of assessment

The focus of the assessment is at the **community level**.

Type of assessment

The manual presents Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) as the primary assessment methods and guide the user to consider crosscutting themes including: security and protection, discrimination and minorities, and impartiality and independence. The participatory approach is linked to a participatory capacity and vulnerability analysis (PCVA) to ground findings in existing potential or programs.

Analytical methods

The two chapters examined focus on participatory assessment and analysis methods and tools. The remainder of the manual outlines sectoral approaches to these including health, water and sanitation, food security, habitat and shelter, and education.

Disaster Risk Assessment Methods mentioned are:

- ♦ **Participatory Capacity and Vulnerability Assessment (PCVA)**

General Assessment methods include:

- ♦ **Institutional Analysis**
- ♦ **Integrated Assessment**
- ♦ **Needs Assessment**
- ♦ **Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)**
- ♦ **Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA)**
- ♦ **Stakeholder Analysis**

Tools

The tools are described in details with the objective, target participants, step by step approach, examples, tips, warnings and guiding questions inserted throughout their description.

The participatory tools include:

- ◆ **Historical Timeline**
- ◆ **Community Mapping**
- ◆ **Participatory Wealth and Vulnerability Ranking**
- ◆ Pillars of Survival (coping strategies of the population)
- ◆ Graph on Economic Processes (inflows and outflows of production and output of economic activity)
- ◆ Proportional Piling
- ◆ **Seasonal Activity Calendar**
- ◆ Daily Schedule
- ◆ Analysing the Crisis (validate the findings)
- ◆ **Transect Walk**
- ◆ Participatory **Stakeholders Analysis**
- ◆ Interaction Diagram (organizational institutional chart)
- ◆ **Venn Diagram**
- ◆ Proximity Distance Analysis
- ◆ Capacity and Vulnerability Analysis
- ◆ Transforming Needs into Demands
- ◆ **Problem/ Solution Tree**
- ◆ **Focus Group Discussion**
- ◆ Role Playing, Games and Theatre

Notes on methods

The manual uses the PRA model focusing largely on participation of populations in crisis situations. It deals more broadly with participatory assessments and analysis using a community wide framework rather than a disaster mitigation framework. The manual warns that this method is time and resource intensive, but can make the difference between a meaningful program and a project that is of little interest to the affected population.

Case studies / practical examples

In describing the tools for analysis, there are practical examples inserted from Afghanistan, the former Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka, Angola, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There are also generic examples of some of the tools completed.

Resource people

For more information or hard copies of the publication, interested parties should contact alnap@odi.org.uk.

Author of guidance note

The ProVention Consortium contracted Stephanie Bouris to author this guidance note.

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