

Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment: An International Federation Guide

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
(IFRC)

Organisation

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is the world's largest humanitarian organization, with 181 member National Societies. IFRC's work is guided by seven fundamental principles; humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

Website: www.ifrc.org

IFRC's Disaster Preparedness webpage: www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/dp

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Abstract

This publication should be considered as a step in the process of showing National Red Cross and Red Crescent societies how vulnerability and capacity assessments (VCA) can help them to improve their understanding of the needs of people at the greatest risks of natural and man-made disasters, and thus prepare more appropriate actions to assist them cope with and recover from these hazards. The guide consists of National Society case studies and examples describing VCA's usefulness and lessons learnt.

This publication is currently being reviewed.

Intended end users

End users are **international agency staff** at the International Federation of the Red Cross and National Societies, and **policy-makers**.

Geographical focus

Applicable worldwide

Type of Material

This publication is a **guideline** that focuses on and contextualizes the utilization of VCA. The guide contains:

- ◆ Key concepts, models and definitions influencing VCA
- ◆ Framework and tools in which to conduct VCA
- ◆ Case studies throughout
- ◆ Sections on: The importance of VCA, Preparation for VCA, When to use a VCA, Using the results of VCA

Language

This guideline is written in English.

Scale of assessment

The focus is on the Red Cross and Red Crescent working at the **community**-level.

Type of assessment

The guideline is based on the Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) framework. It recommends utilizing participatory, action-oriented methods tools based on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). The VCA fits within disaster preparedness and disaster response initiatives.

Analytical methods/tools

There are few methods and tools mentioned in this guide, as this publication mainly introduces the concept of **Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA)** and how it could be utilized in disaster preparedness and response initiatives.

General Assessment Methods mentioned:

- ◆ **Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)**
- ◆ **Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA)**

Tools

Participatory Tools include:

- ◆ **Risk mapping**
- ◆ **Wealth ranking**
- ◆ **Seasonal calendar**

- ♦ **Problem tree**
- ♦ Organizational, economic and kinship charts
- ♦ Time-use charts
- ♦ Flow charts
- ♦ Matrix ranking/scoring

Technical Assessment Tools include:

- ♦ **Questionnaires**

Notes on methods

- ♦ This document is targeted at IFRC staff, National Societies, and policy makers to introduce the concept of VCA. It is therefore not meant to provide detailed instructions on how to undertake the actual VCA.
- ♦ Provides limited examples of methods and tools for conducting VCA.

Case studies / practical examples

- ♦ There are numerous case studies throughout this guide illustrating Red Cross societies and organisations that have begun to use VCA in their work initiatives on disaster preparedness and disaster risk.
- ♦ The ProVention CRA Toolkit contains several examples of Red Cross/Red Crescent VCA's: see Solomon Islands, Belize, Sierra Leone, Jamaica and Zambia case studies.

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