

# **CONTINGENCY PLAN AND WARNING SYSTEM**

*This chapter provides basic guidelines to prepare village level contingency plans. State level and District level contingency plans exist in many States. But such macro plans envisage sole responsibility to Government officials.*

*If the community is expected to share responsibilities, micro village level plans need to be drawn up. The community should be involved in plan formulation stage also to make the plan more effective and people more responsible.*

*The following pages detail the process involved in preparatory and formulation phases of village level contingency plans. This chapter explains techniques of making a contingency plan to be a comprehensive, practical action program that would adopt protective, preventive and ameliorative measures to mitigate damages due to disasters.*

## **CONTINGENCY PLAN**

A contingency plan is a comprehensive, practical action program to adopt :

- Comprehensive
- Practical
- Protective
- Preventive and
- Ameliorative measures to mitigate damages due to disaster

The plan should be complete in all respects. It should include resource points, problem areas and responsibility allocation.

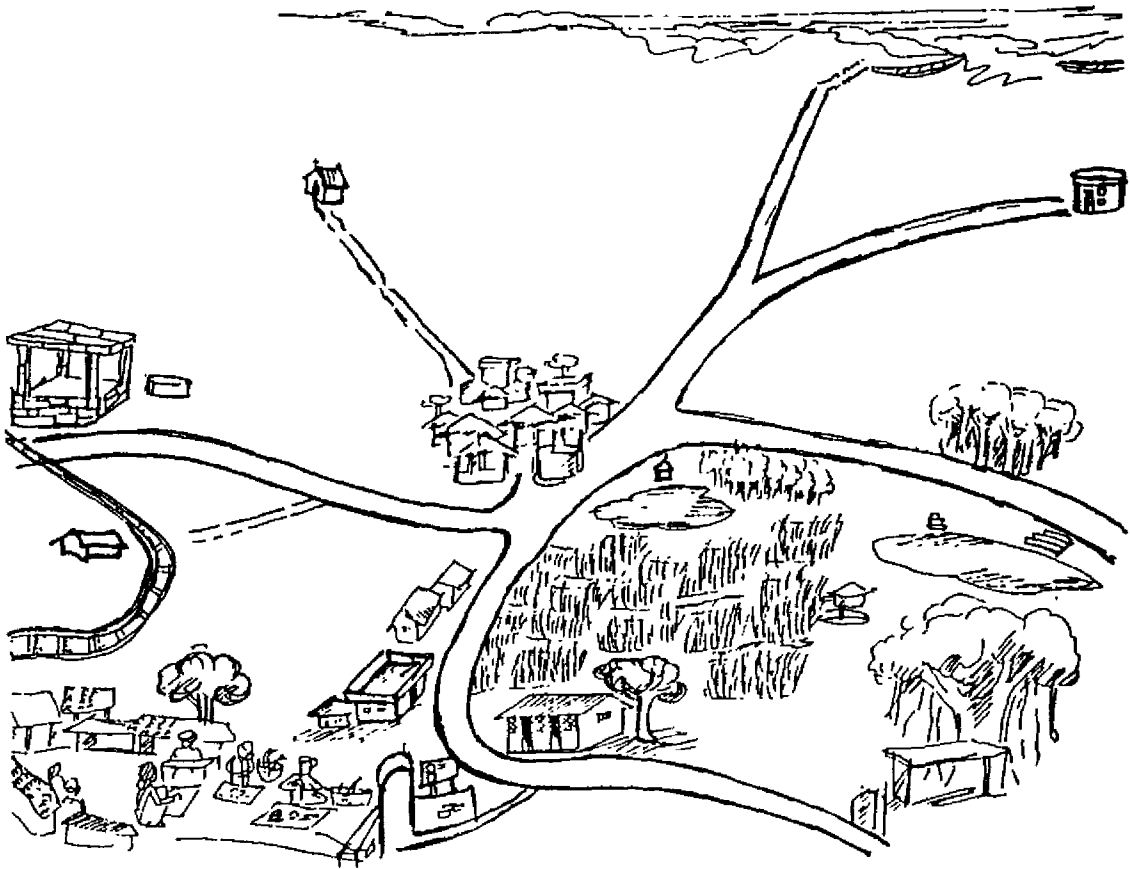
<b>Resource points :</b>	Sources within the village which offer resources such as food and shelter communication and transportation, rescue and medical facilities.
<b>Problem areas :</b>	Are the problems that are likely to rise during a disaster such as obstacles in exit routes and people needing assistance during evacuation.
<b>Responsibility allocation</b>	<p>Means a pre planned division of work among volunteers who will be involved during a disaster.</p> <p>How to develop a comprehensive contingency plan for a village?</p>

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The geological survey of India's area (Taluk/mandals/revenue village) maps could form the basis.



From this a 5 km radius sketch plan could be developed for the village. Care should be taken to clearly highlight landmark and approach routes surrounding the village.





Involvement of elders and youth from that particular village is necessary.

Detailed discussions with the elders will help in this aspect. They will be able to point out the direction, distance and routes to nearest post offices/telegraphic office, Railway station, bus stand, Cyclone shelters/other safe structures, Market places, and Government offices.



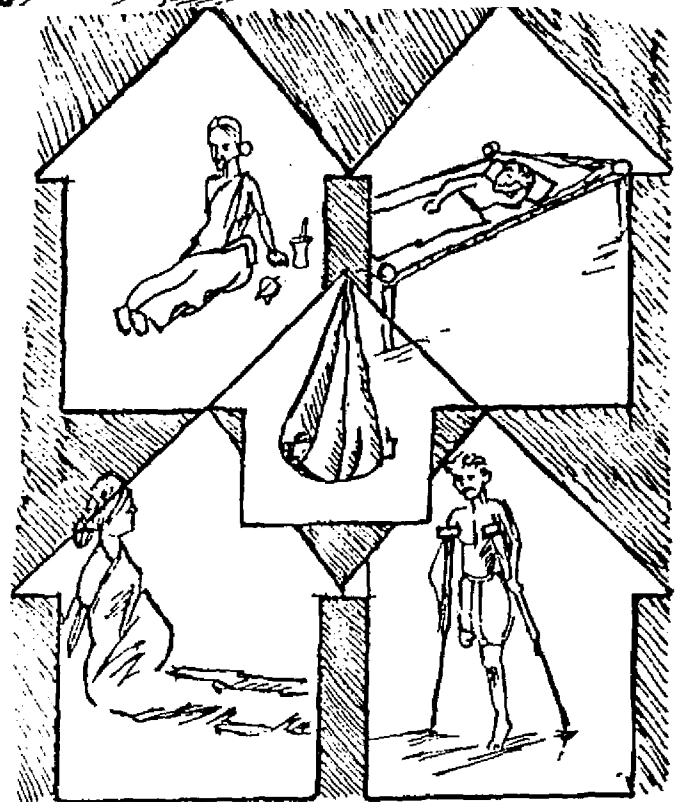
The youth of the village should be involved in a house to house survey.



The survey should include

- Sick
- Elderly
- Handicapped.
- Pregnant women and
- Infants.

in each household. This is essential as these people need special assistance in case of emergency evacuation.



A detailed layout map of the village indicating residences of these people who need assistance has to be developed next.





The layout map should detail-

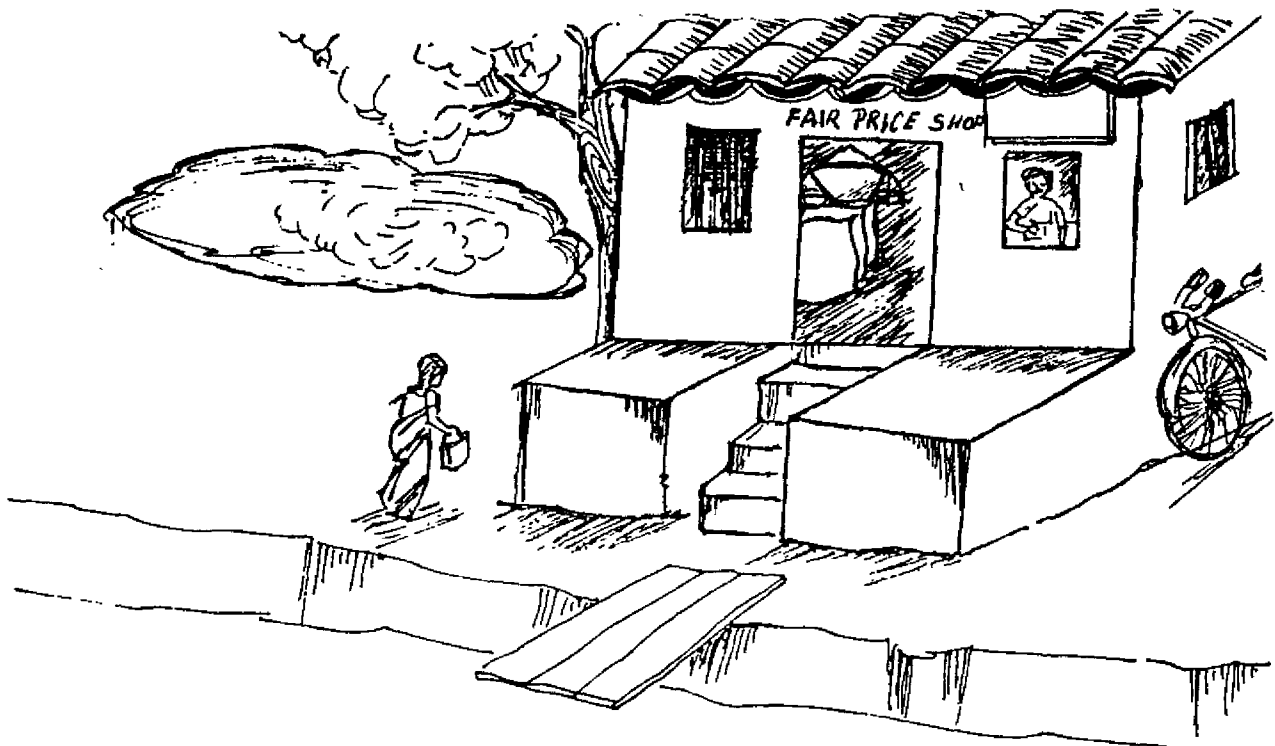
- lowlying areas within the village.
- highlying areas
- Structures.
- Approach routes to them.



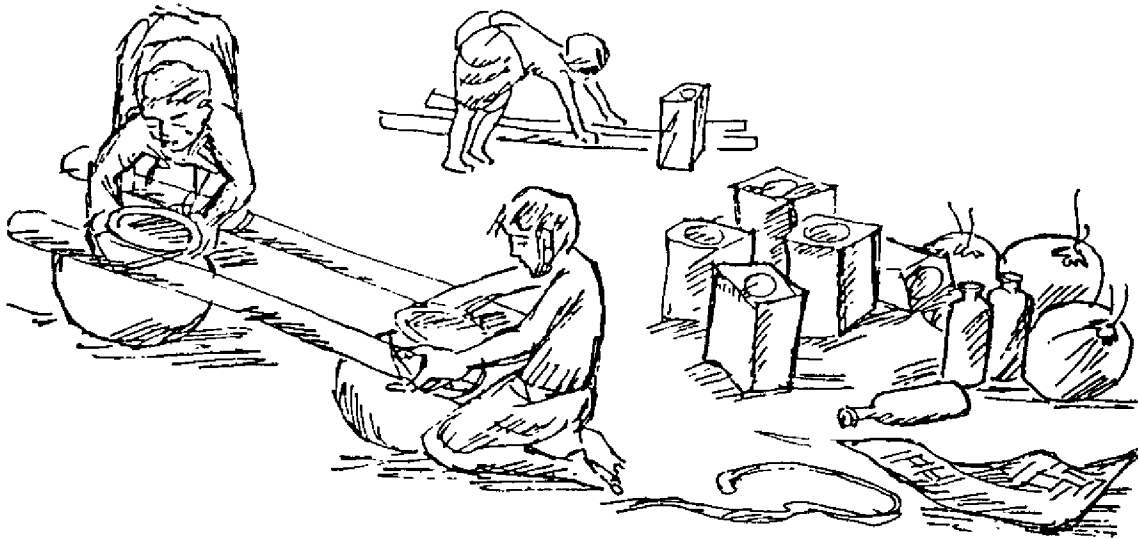
A couple of maps - 5 km radius sketch map and detailed village layout map are not sufficient. Lists of resource points, problem areas and responsibility allocation should be prepared and attached to the maps. Only then it becomes a plan.

## Resource points in a village

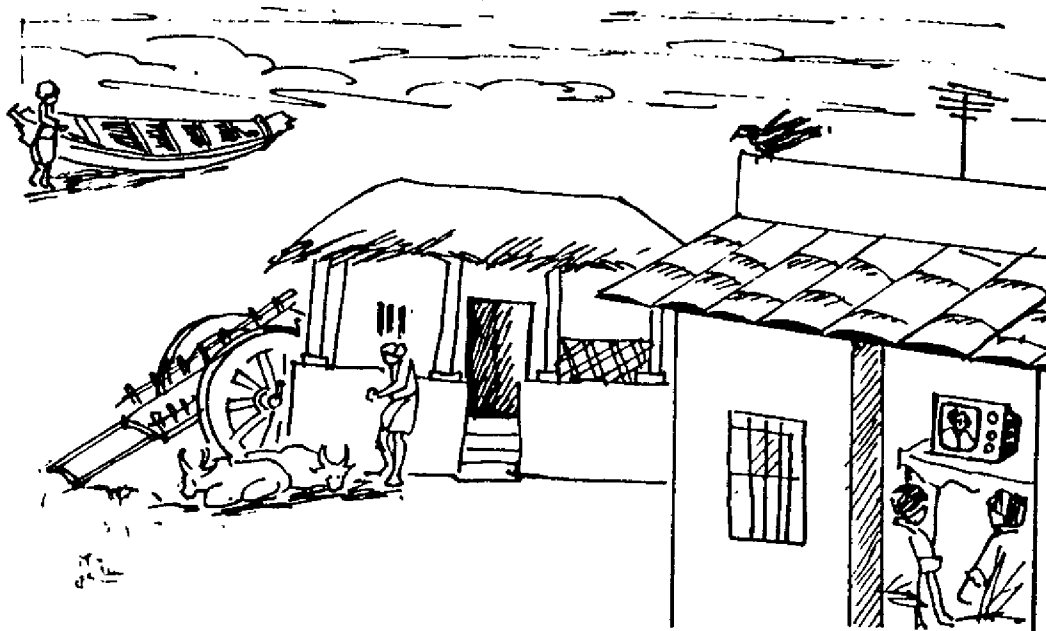
- Highland buildings.
  - Safe buildings and structures
  - Exit routes.
  - Medical kits.
- 
- Public distribution system outlets



- Locally available floating aids and rescue materials like bamboos, ropes, pots etc.



- Community shed , housing TV/Radio.
- Ownership of carts, boats and other modes of transport.



## Some Problem Areas

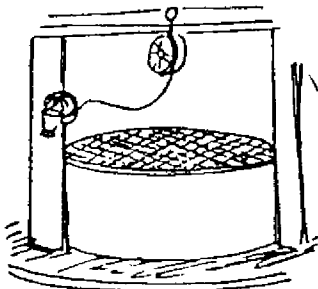
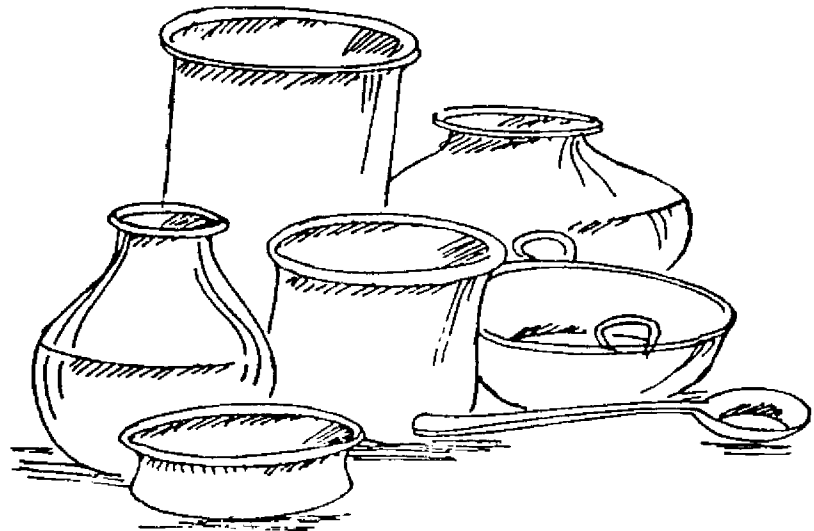
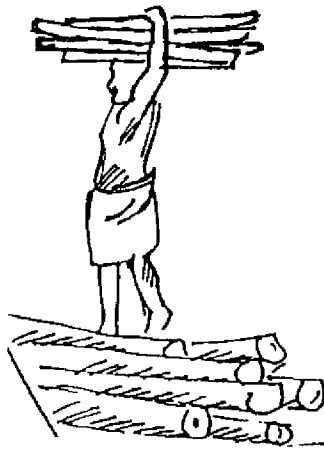
- Lowlying areas.
- Thorny obstacles on routes.
- Pits
- Marshy areas.



**Residence of people who need special assistance.:**



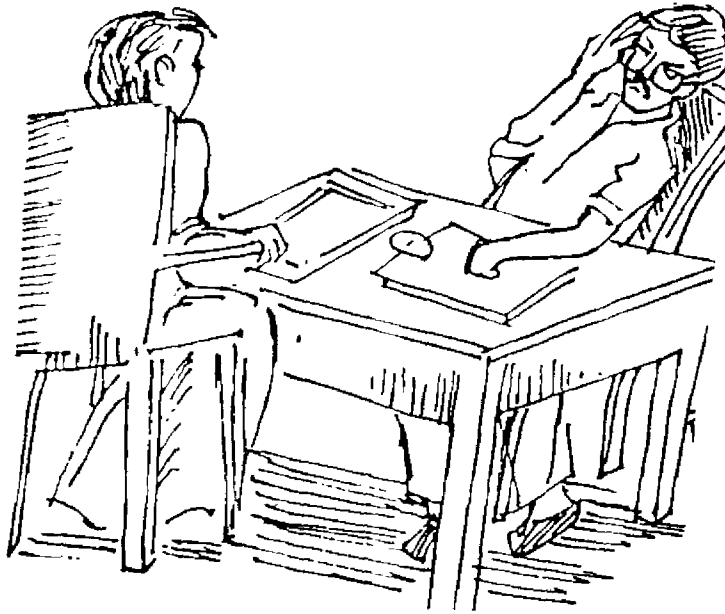
**Food, water, fuel shortages, etc.**



**REMEMBER . . . . .**

Responsibility allocation is a decisive list detailing who will tackle which problem and control what resources.

If all the youth in the village are involved in the volunteer team, the plan can be practical and put to use during disasters.



Each member in the team should be given specific responsibilities and control of resources. The resources as listed earlier are community sheds with TV/Radio, P.D.S. outlet, carts, boats and other modes of transport, highland buildings, safe structures, exit routes, medical kits, floating aids and rescue materials like bamboos, pots, ropes etc.



## Team Responsibilities

- Warning and Information Dissemination to people.
- High risk (special assistance) concentration.
- Streetwise,
- Communication to local officials,



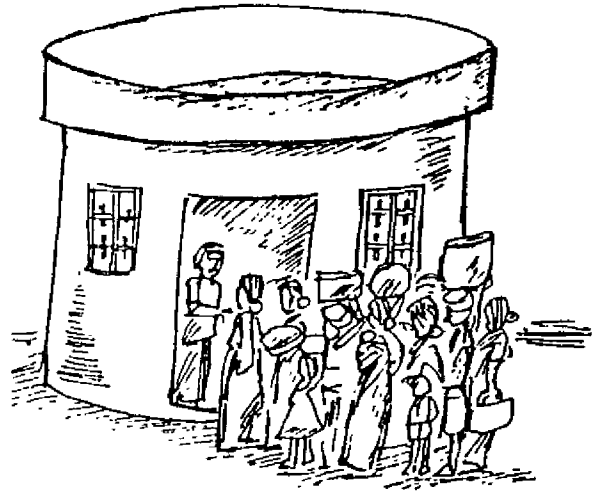
- Medical care



- Rescue,
- Evacuation,

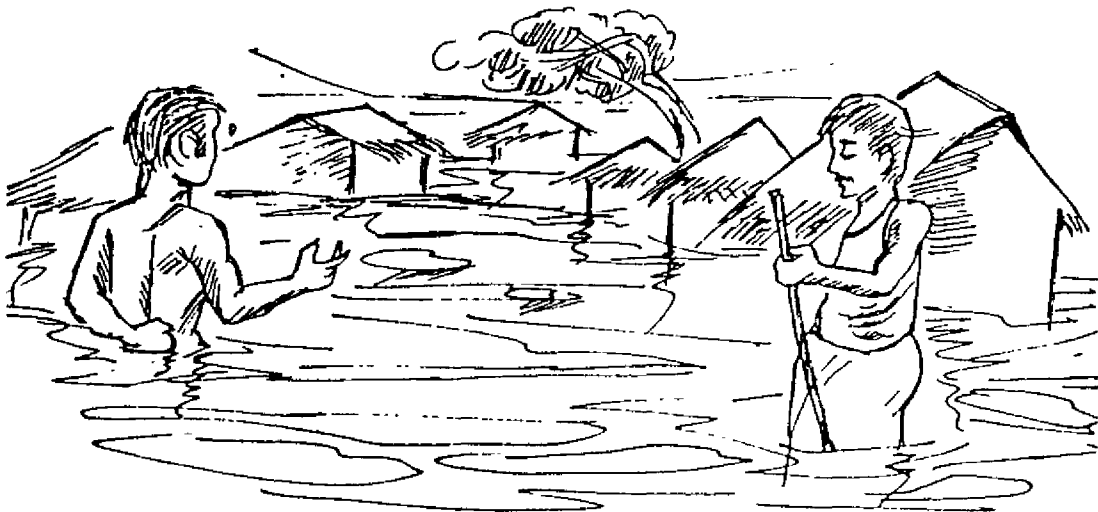


- Camp organisation,



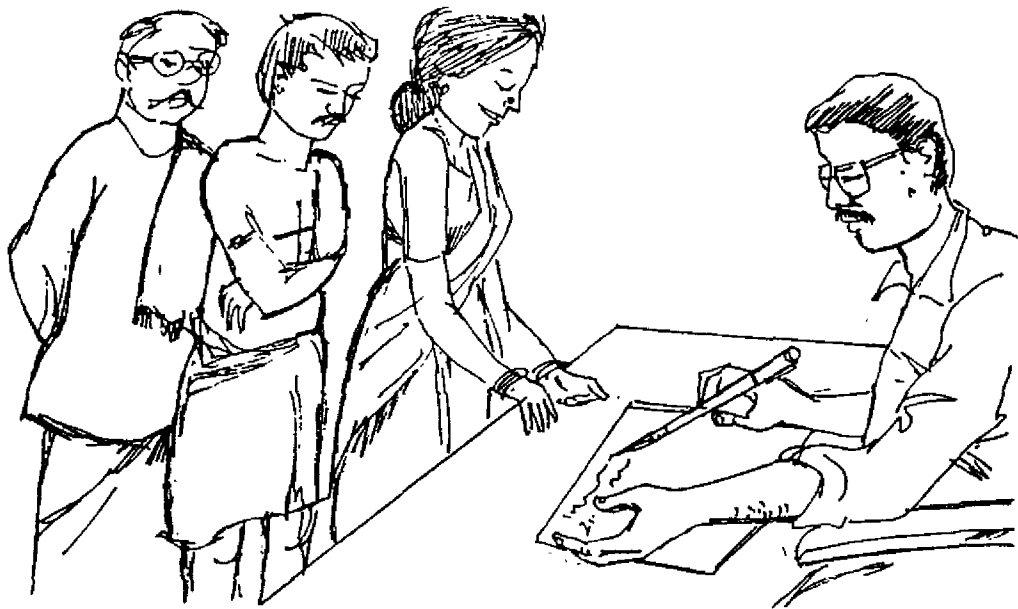
- Food and Relief distribution,

- Patrolling of deserted village,





## Registration of Victims



A proper matching of resources with responsibility is necessary. For example, persons responsible for warning and information dissemination should have access to the TV/Radio in community shed. This will help them to hear weather forecasts regularly and disseminate warning in time.

List of people responsible for these activities  
also forms part of the plan

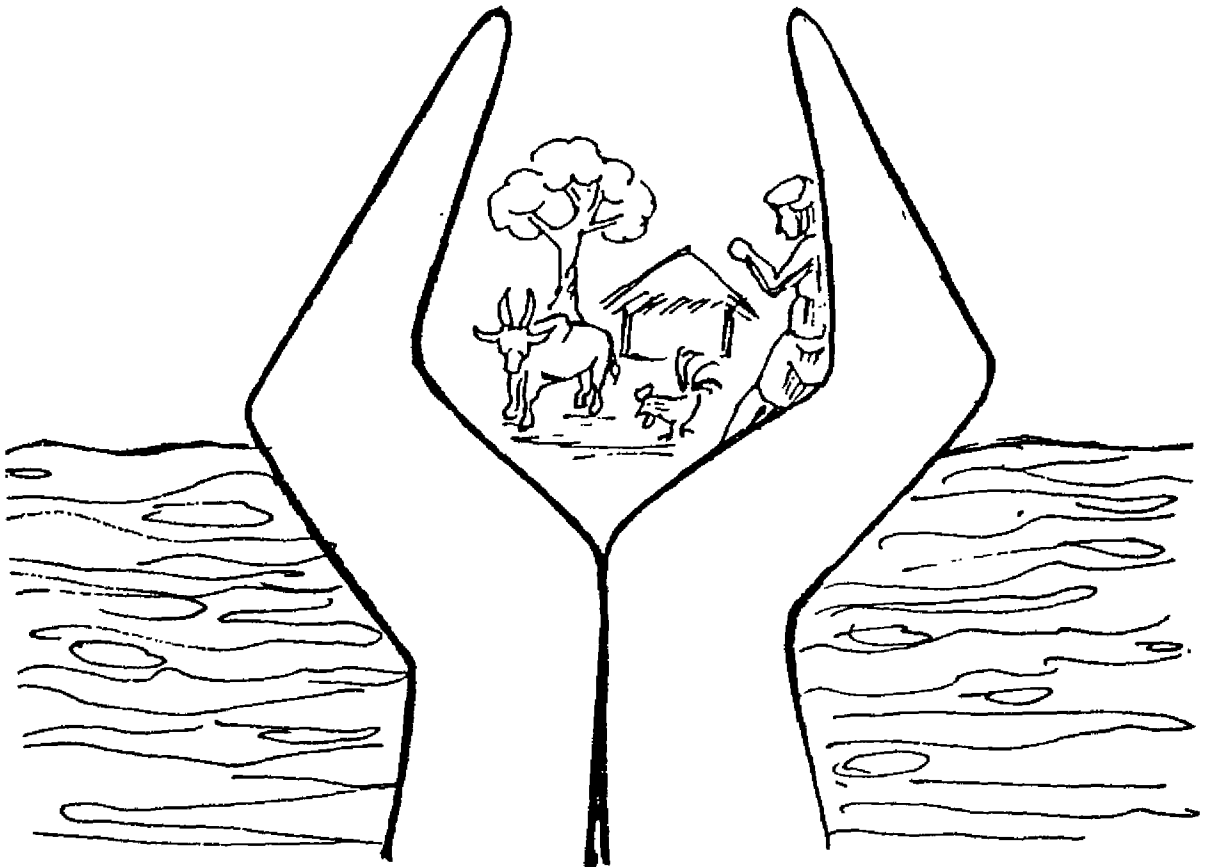


A Minimum of two members will be necessary to execute each task. This will help them to take turns and continue without interruption.

In this sense we may need a minimum of 25 volunteers for a village. But we can manage even with a smaller team.

## PROTECTIVE PLAN

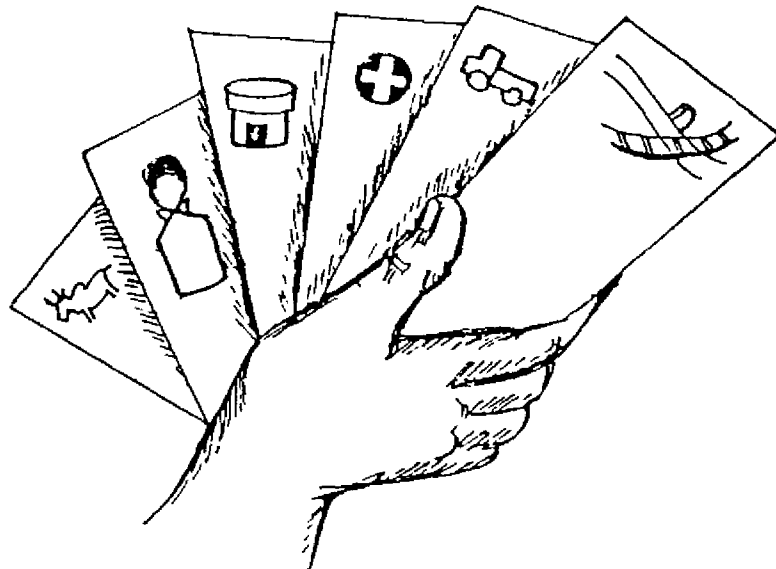
The plan should provide practical means to protect property and lives from disaster.



## **PROTECTIVE PLAN INCLUDES**

Several lists and annexures giving details of

- Trained volunteers
- Safe buildings in and around the village
- Medical facilities
- People responsible for maintenance of carts, cyclone shelters
- Clear safe routes of exit
- Cattle herds who will be responsible for livestock.

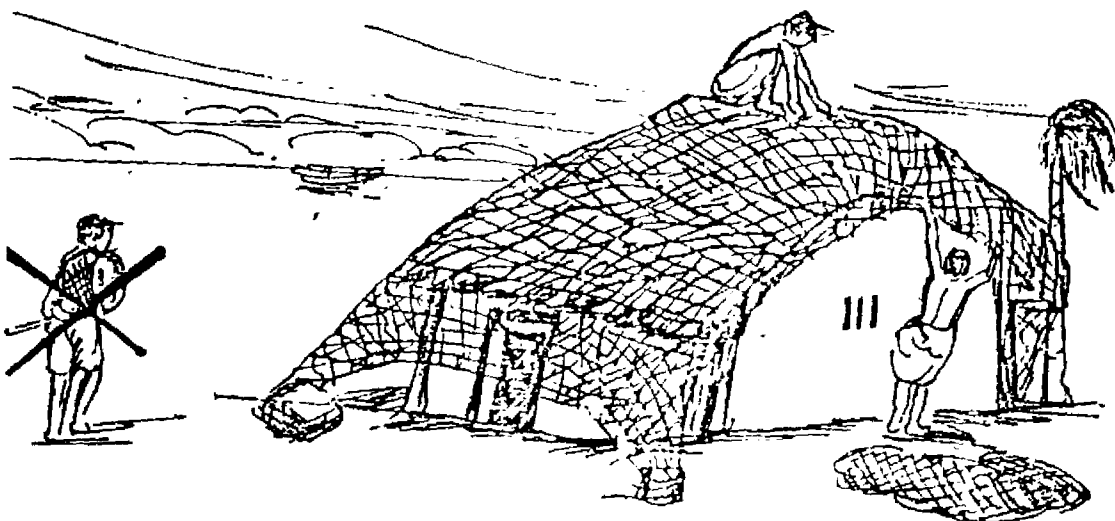


## PREVENTIVE PLAN

The plan should facilitate preventive action by the community by providing adequate access to warnings.

What are the preventive actions?

- Not sailing out for fishing
- Securing thatch roofs with fishing nets.
- Shifting animals and assets to safer altitudes.
- Storing food, drinking water and adequate fuel.
- Evacuating at the earliest to safer places.



## **WARNING SYSTEM**

Warnings play an important role. Recent technology developments help in receipt of meteorological data well in advance. Super computers help in speedy analysis, interpretation and forecast.

### **Warning System Is Aimed At**

- Primary group - people who live at the place where the disaster strikes.
- Secondary group - living outside the circle. This group rushes to help the affected people.

### **Warning Message Should Contain**

- Severity of the cyclone.
- Where it would cross.
- When it would cross.
- Which areas are affected.
- Type of damage.
- Evacuation advices.

## The Team Should Know

### Signs Of A Cyclone

- The type of wind mild/medium/strong.
- Direction of wind
- Height of waves.
- Changes in undercurrent.
- Bulls restless, scratching ground with hooves.
- Disappearance of some varieties of fish and appearance of some other.
- The overcast sky
- Disappearance of birds.

Often used terms are:

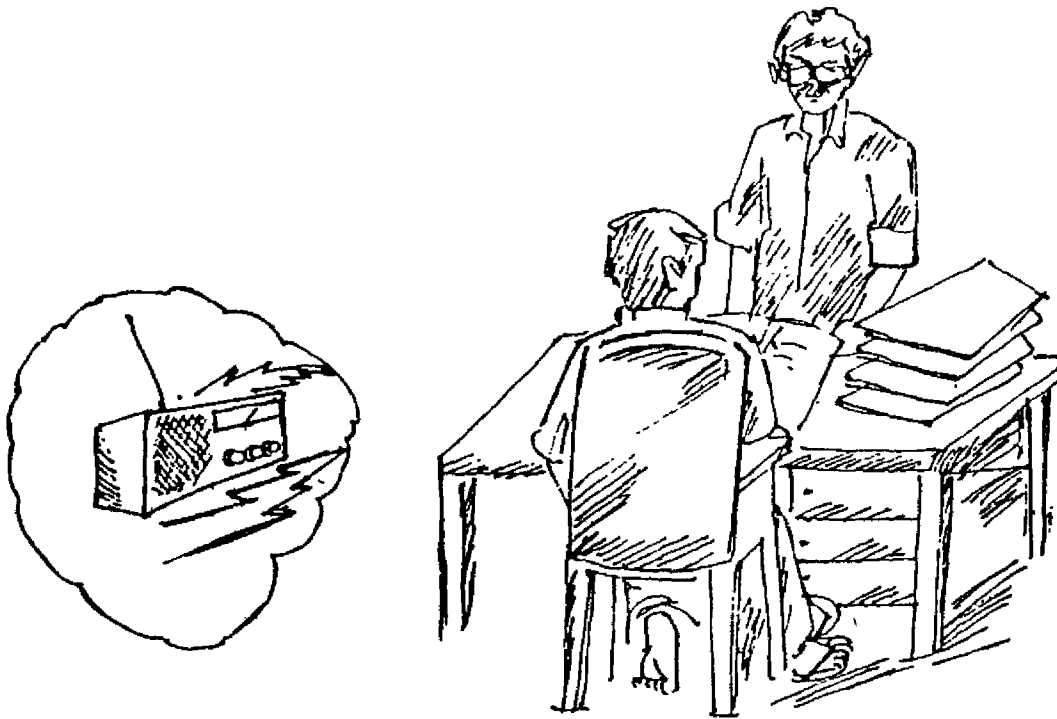
	Km/hr.
Low pressure	upto 30
Depression	31 - 50
Deep-Depression	51 - 60
Cyclone	61 - 85
Severe cyclone	86 - 115
Hurricane	116 & above

## WIND SPEED AND POSSIBLE DAMAGES

Speed	Name	Damage
0 - 50	Strong breeze	Large branches in motion
- 60	near gale	Whole trees shake Whistling telegraph wires
- 70	gale	Small branches break off.
- 85	Strong gale	Huts are slightly damaged
- 100	Storm(Cyclone)	Trees uprooted, Buildingsdamaged
- 115	violent storm Hurricane	Widespread damage



Weather forecasts are received by local govt. officials. They try to warn the community. They disseminate information through radios and messengers to reach all prone villages



If this information reaches every person in the village,, people will be prepared to face a disaster and prevent damages.

But practically this warning does not reach every person in the villages. Even among the people who receive the warnings, not all believe them. Thus the trainer and the volunteer team have two important tasks in this context:

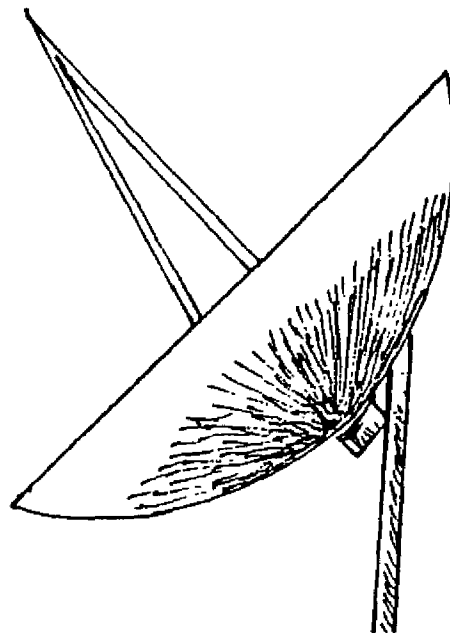
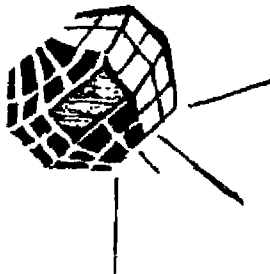
- To ensure that warning reaches everybody the moment it is received, and
- To educate the community on the efficiency of the warning system.



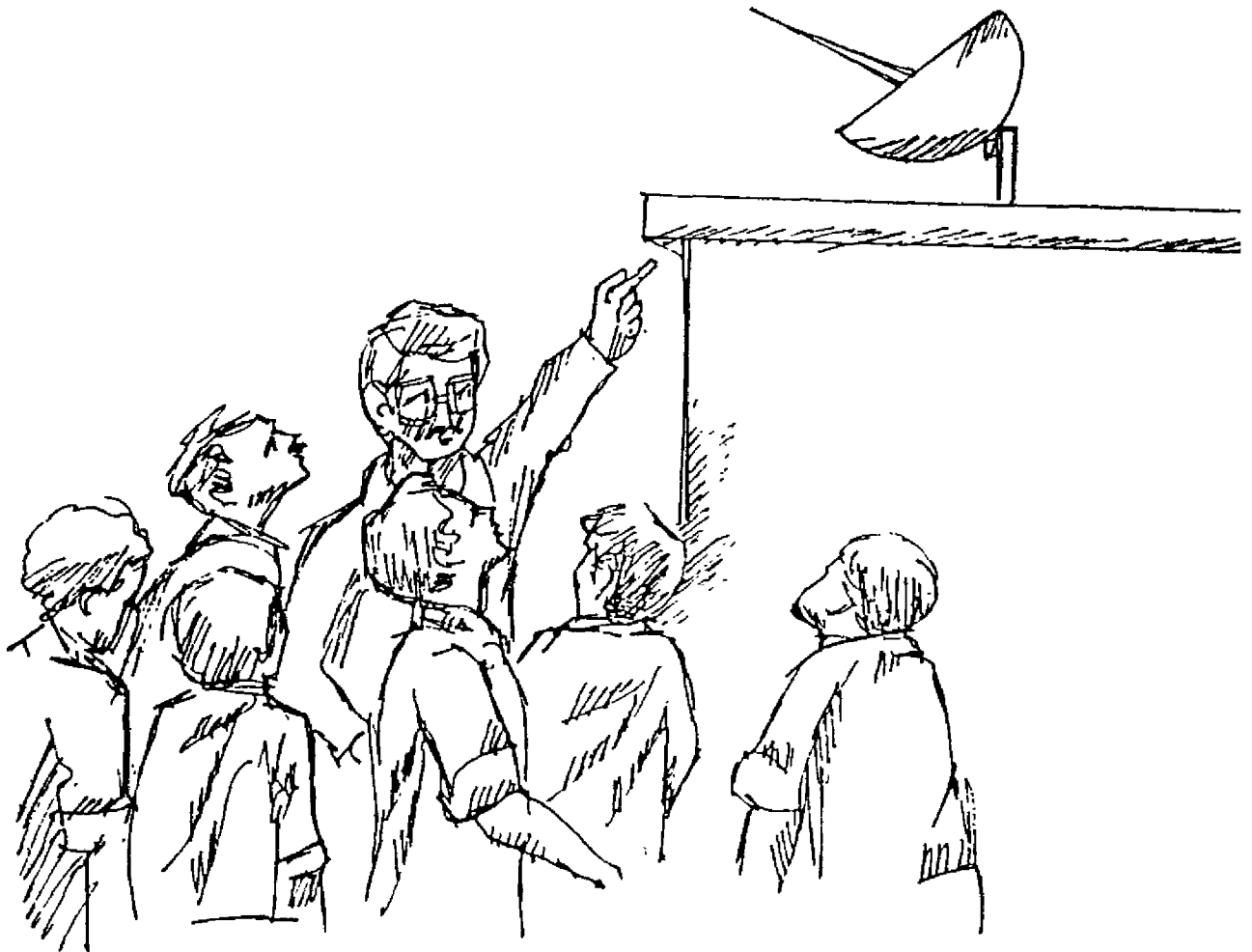
Educating is important as many do not have faith in weather forecasts and disaster warnings.

Satellite pictures, radar scanning and super computer analysis should be explained.

- District Collector's access to such facilities should be highlighted.
- This exercise should be done several times during normal days.



- Persons who have no faith in these forecasts and warnings could be taken to nearby Radar Tracking Stations
- This will help them to understand and appreciate the technology involved.



List of people responsible for these activities also forms part of the plan. This is important as warnings facilitate preventive action.

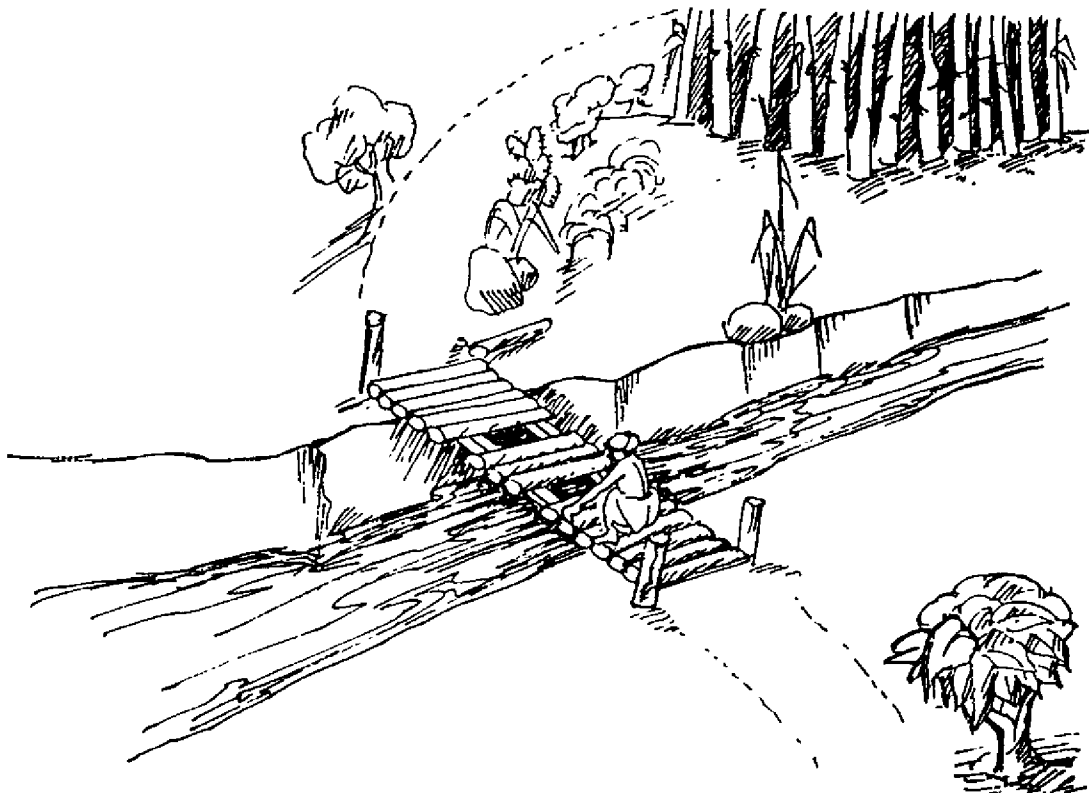
## POST-DISASTER IMPROVEMENTS

Whatever precautions are followed damages during disasters are unavoidable. At best these precautions can mitigate damages. Major and minor damages are bound to occur during a major disaster.

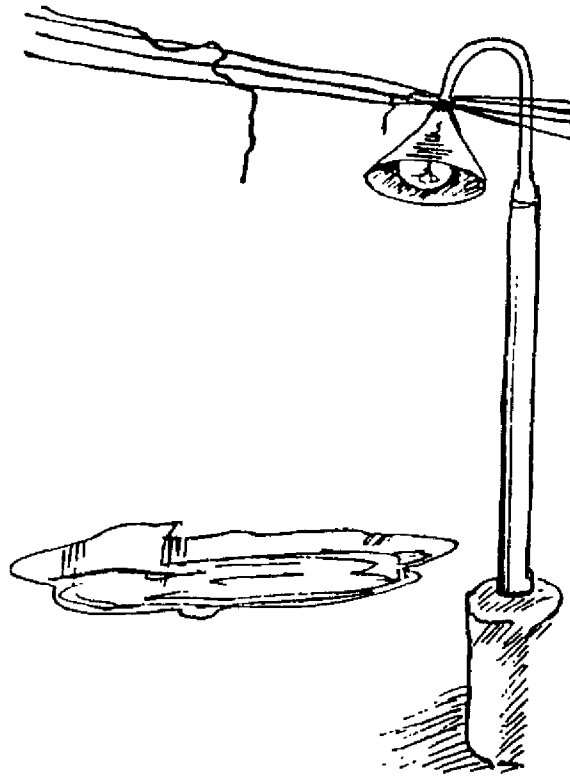
Major rehabilitation is normally the responsibility of the Government. But basic improvements should be community's responsibility.

### What Community Can Do

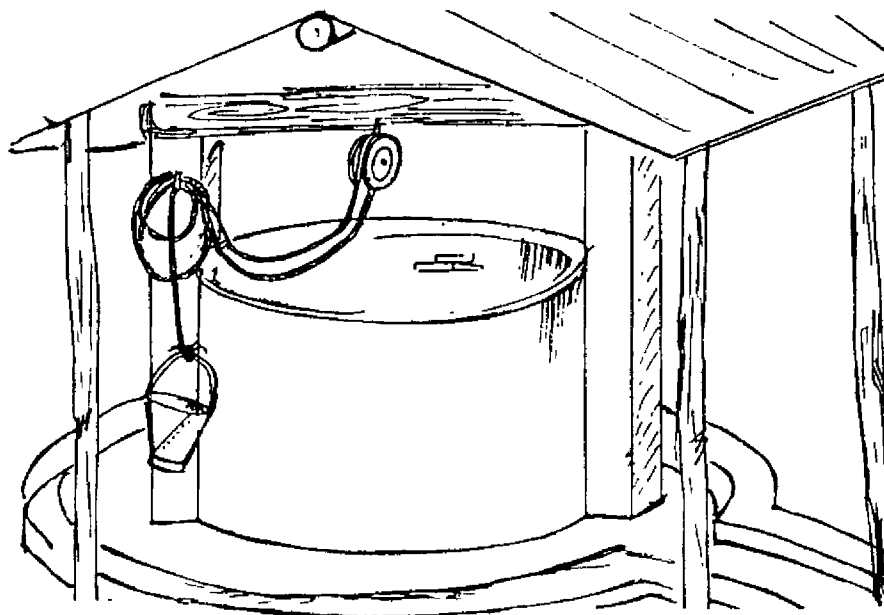
Repair and relaying of temporary bridges.



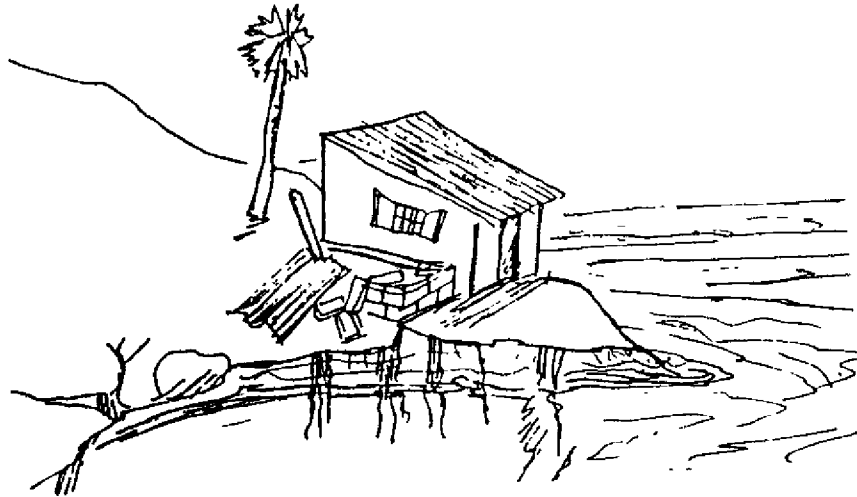
Helping electricity Board staff in power restoration (under their supervision).



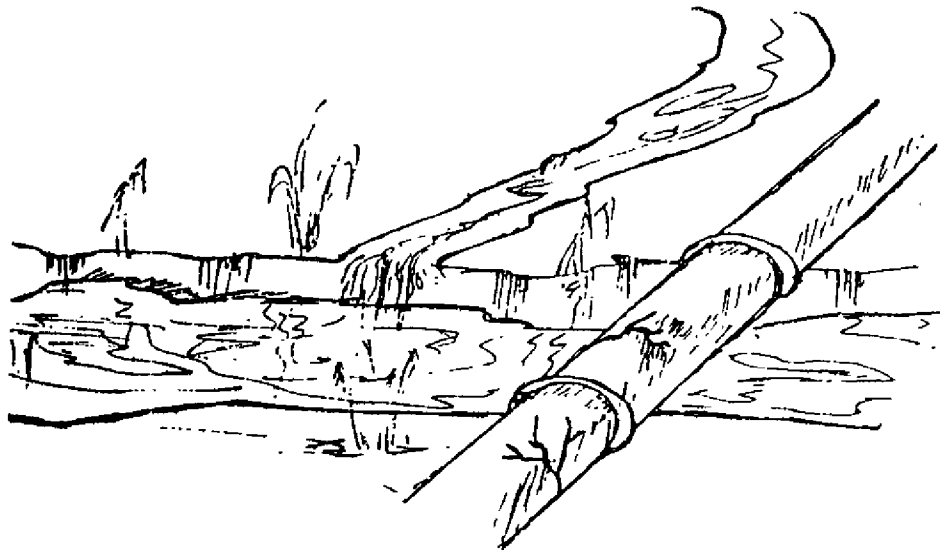
Chlorination of wells.



Small reclamation to soil erosion/minor  
landslide, affected pathways.



Minor repairs to drainage damages.



## **AMELIORATIVE PLAN**

The plan should provide for means to improve environment of the victims before and after the disaster.

What improvement activities could be taken before a disaster?

Clearing of thorny bushes from exit routes.

Filling pits that may not be visible when flooded.

Providing water and sanitation facilities near potential relief camp sites and shelters are some of the important activities that could be undertaken before the disaster.

Thus, a list of people responsible for these activities should also form part of the plan.



Sometimes people are sheltered in safe private houses within the village. In such cases these houses should be identified and owner's consent should be obtained well in advance. Owners may prefer sheltering their relatives and friends in the village. Their preference should be kept in mind while distributing victims.

Care should be taken not to overcrowd these houses. Capacity of the house (after leaving adequate space for owner's family) should be estimated and indicated in the plan.

Women may have to endure hardships. They may be held up in queues for fairly long time awaiting their turn to receive rations. In crowded indoors children get restless and may disturb others. Mothers should be mentally prepared to withstand such pressures.

Some volunteers could take responsibility for these works. A list of volunteers taking up this could also be attached to the plan.