

Approaches to R & R assistance:

TOOLS THAT CHANGE PEOPLE'S LIVES

SEVERAL FRAMEWORKS CAN BE USED by both local and Canadian NGOs to analyze the situation of a community after a disaster, to identify alternatives and to develop priorities for action. They can also be used to evaluate the project to determine whether the actions chosen resulted in a change in the situation. A framework does not tell what to do in any given situation. It is only a diagnostic tool. But, as a tool, it has power—the power to organize and systematize our knowledge and understanding of a situation in such a way that we can recognize important factors affecting people's lives and more accurately predict the impact of our own interventions on their internal resources. There are four such frameworks:

1. Capacities and vulnerabilities analysis

The capacities and vulnerabilities (C/V) analytical framework developed by Mary Anderson and Peter Woodrow at the Harvard International Relief/Development Project in 1987 has become a fundamental approach for reconstruction and rehabilitation projects. After 1993 all *R & R Fund* projects were submitted in this format (*see page 11*):

The framework explores vulnerabilities in order to understand why a disaster happened and what its impact has been, why it affected a particular group of people, and how to estimate the risks of future disasters. It calls into question any post-disaster attempts simply to “get things back to normal,” because, by raising awareness of the factors that contributed to this disaster, it shows that “normalcy” involved vulnerabilities that, if not changed, may lead to future disasters. It also alerts NGOs to the potential for unwittingly contributing to future vulnerabilities by their own interventions.

The framework explores capacities in order to know what strengths exist within a society—even among disaster victims—on which future development can be built. Acknowledging the capacities of the affected population is important for designing and implementing disaster responses that have developmental impacts.

Every society has both strengths and weaknesses, capacities and vulnerabilities. When a crisis event becomes a disaster—that is, outstrips the capacity of the society to cope with it—then the society's vulnerabilities are more noticeable than its capacities. However, for NGOs wanting to help with recovery and systemic

development beyond recovery, understanding both is essential. The analysis refers to factors at the community, rather than at the individual, level.

People become disaster “victims” because they are vulnerable. The most visible area of vulnerability is physical/material poverty. Poor people more often suffer from crises than people who are richer— because they have little savings, few income/production options, and limited resources. Less obvious, but equally important are two other areas of vulnerability that may also contribute to victimization. These are the social/organizational and motivational/attitudinal areas. The vulnerabilities or capacities in these areas are as important as their material resources, or lack of them.

The framework can serve in another way as a powerful tool. Experience shows that when communities themselves gather information on their capacities and vulnerabilities, several things happen. First, they develop their own powers of analysis to sort and make sense of their circumstances. More important, by adding up their multiple capacities, many communities are surprised and heartened. Where they may have felt discouraged and helpless before, after noting their skills and abilities and communal learning, they begin to feel empowered.

An NGO, wishing to be helpful in a disaster response, need not feel overwhelmed by the difficulty of doing C/V analysis. The people in the situation are the best resource for gaining the needed information and understanding.

(Excerpts from “An Approach to Integrating Development and Relief Programming: An Analytical Framework”, by Mary B. Anderson and Peter J. Woodrow, May, 1988).

The C/V analysis can be used to identify different effects of a disaster on men and women or on different groups in the community, such as the rich, middle income and the poor. It can also be used to monitor change in a situation over time and to show how interventions affect capacities and vulnerabilities.

2. Gender and development (GAD)

The GAD analysis is based on a development philosophy of promoting empowerment of people living in poverty by helping to increase their access to the resources, skills and political power needed to achieve and sustain a satisfactory standard of living. Gender analysis must be stressed, not only because women are among the poorest of the poor, but because women are essential to the development process and gender analysis can help ensure the full participation of women and men.

Reconstruction and rehabilitation (and development) projects affect women

capacities and vulnerabilities analysis matrix

Capacities

Vulnerabilities

<p>People have positive attitudes and strong motivations such as the will to survive, love and concern for each other, bravery and a willingness to help each other. These are important capacities and form the basis for development just as much as the physical resources people have.</p>	<p>People who have low confidence in their ability to affect change or who have "lost heart" and feel defeated by events they cannot control—these people are harder hit by disasters than those who have a sense of their ability to bring the changes they desire.</p>
<p>In most disasters, people suffer their greatest losses in the physical and material realm. However, even when everything physical is destroyed, people still have their skills and knowledge; they have family and community organization. They have leaders and systems for making decisions. They have tribal loyalties or church affiliations. They have capacities in the social/organizational realm.</p>	<p>Experience shows that people who have been marginalized in social or political terms are vulnerable to suffering from disasters whereas groups which are well organized and in which there is a high commitment to each other suffer less when catastrophe strikes. Weakness in social and organizational areas may also cause disasters. For example, deep divisions can lead to conflict and war. A second area of vulnerability, then, is in the social/organizational realm.</p>
<p>Even very poor people whose houses have been destroyed by a typhoon or whose crops have been destroyed by a flood can salvage some things from their homes and/or their farms. Sometimes they have food in storage or crops that can be recovered from the fields or farm implements for planting again. Some family members have skills which enable them to find employment if they migrate, either temporarily or permanently.</p>	<p>For example, poor people, those who have few physical/material resources, usually suffer more from disasters than rich people. People who are poor often live on marginal lands; they don't have any savings or insurances; they are in poor health. These factors make them more vulnerable to disasters and mean that they have a harder time surviving and recovering from a calamity than people who are better off economically.</p>

Motivational / Attitudinal

How does the community view its ability to create change?

Social / Organizational

What are the relations and organizations among people?

Physical / Material

What productive resources, skills, and hazards exist?

The Capacity and Vulnerability Analysis Matrix reprinted by permission of Westview Press from *Rising from the Ashes: Development Strategies in Times of Disaster*, by Mary B. Anderson and Peter J. Woodrow. Published by Westview Press, 1989, Boulder, Colorado.

and men differently and women and men will have different impacts on projects. As the two key “stakeholders”, both must be involved in identifying problems and solutions if the interests of the community as a whole are to be furthered. NGOs must be consistently conscious of the need to identify the differing experience and perspectives women and men can contribute to designing, implementing and evaluating programs and projects.

Almost all facets of reconstruction and rehabilitation affect women. It is therefore possible to assume that women’s issues are automatically included. However, general discussions frequently lose sight of the particular deprivations and needs of women.

The word “gender” is used because gender analysis examines the relationships between women and men. GAD describes what they do in the society, and who has the power and benefits from the work they do. In every country of the world there is a gender-based division of labor and social roles. This situation translates into differences in capacities and vulnerabilities for women and men.

It is inaccurate and potentially damaging to assume that meeting the needs of one sex will naturally benefit the interests of the other. In fact, exclusively targeting women for project benefits may have a number of drawbacks, among them a failure to effectively integrate the project within the needs of the whole community, as well as increasing the risk that, at best, men will not support the project and, at worst, will actively work to undermine it.

3. A framework for people-oriented planning in refugee situations

After 1986 more than one-third of all projects funded by the *R & R Fund* dealt with displaced people. Displaced people include both external refugees who have been displaced across an international boundary and internal refugees who have had to move within their own country.

UNHCR has developed an analytical framework for rapid and improved assessment of displaced populations that reveals their capacities and vulnerabilities. It concentrates on the effects of change and on the different needs of age and gender groups. It examines roles, status and activities both before and after displacement in order to identify the needs and strategic interests of traumatized and dislocated groups.

The People-oriented Planning (POP) framework was developed by Mary B. Anderson, Ann M. Howarth, and Catherine Overholt. A major factor in planning for refugees is the concept of change. To plan refugee protection and assistance activities efficiently and effectively, refugee workers must analyze the social and economic roles of women, men and children in the refugee community and understand how these roles will affect and be affected by planned activities. In a refugee context, customary socio-

economic roles and responsibilities are disrupted and are changing constantly as the stages of the refugee condition evolve from flight, arrival and asylum to durable solutions. It is essential to understand the dynamics of change in order to plan effective activities for refugees or in preparing them to return home.

Refugee participation of all groups in the planning, implementation and evaluation of a project is also a major factor in determining its success.

4. Environment and development

Dramatic declines in the quality and quantity of natural resources have led to increasing global awareness of the need for improved environmental conservation and management. Of particular concern to agencies working in developing countries are the environmentally, economically and socially destructive effects of disasters.

In 1985 the Coordinator of the United Nations Disaster Relief Office called upon agencies working in disaster-prone areas to work towards the mitigation of future disasters in an attempt to lessen the associated impacts.

Of the disasters occurring today, many are made more severe, or are caused by, human activities. In recognition of this fact, the first step toward mitigating the effects of disasters is to ensure the appropriateness of actions undertaken by agencies in stricken areas.

CIDA has responded through the development of a set of environmental criteria for agency-funded projects. Since 1989 environmental impact assessments (EIAs) have been required from NGOs receiving CIDA funds. Consequently, these NGOs must now become aware of alternative approaches that will eliminate or mitigate environmental damage.

With CIDA funding, CCIC has produced a series of booklets under the title, *Environmental Screening of NGO Development Projects*. These booklets provide the information necessary to undertake CIDA's initial screening requirement for potential environmental impacts. They outline the basic principles for sustainable development, lists of organizations working in environment and development, and a series of case studies.

The *R & R Fund* also produced its own series of reports, called *Focus on Environment: a Capacities and Vulnerabilities Approach*, which provides an interdisciplinary analysis using the C/V framework. The series comprises four reports: *Modern and Ecological Agriculture* (1989), *Irrigation* (1990), *Women, Trees and Forest Resources* (1991), and *Aquaculture* (1993). All are available from CCIC (*see resource list*). Information provided in the series could be used to justify adopting or rejecting a particular activity or help in identifying appropriate indicators to be measured.

How big is too big?

1. [We] learned by omission one lesson about scale. To locate projects about which to write cases, they asked NGOs to nominate what they considered their most successful projects in terms of developmental impact. Only one large-scale project was nominated. They concluded that, in most NGO experience, smaller projects are more apt to be developmental than large ones.

2. There is asymmetry in the relationship of the size of the intervention and its potential developmental impact. The larger the intervention, the greater the potential for a negative developmental impact, and it is not true that the potential for a positive impact is also greater. Very small interventions can have significant developmental impacts, but their negative effects are limited by their size. Thus, when in doubt it is better to do less than to do more, and the larger the project planned, the greater the risks to the local population that it will leave them worse off than before.

(Rising from the Ashes: Development Strategies in Times of Disaster, by Mary B. Anderson and Peter J. Woodrow, p. 53)

How long is too long?

There is an important distinction to be made between an NGO's long-term commitment to people with whom it works and long projects. While commitment to people should not be turned on and off, long projects do not, of themselves, increase the likelihood of development.

(Rising from the Ashes, p. 56)



Important components of R & R projects:

DESIGNING FOR SELF-RELIANCE

*I*N THE *R & R FUND*'S EXPERIENCE, the first priority in designing a reconstruction and rehabilitation project should be rebuilding the capacity of groups and communities to take care of themselves. Disasters can provide the opportunity to introduce new ideas, to question conventional ways of doing things, to reorganize along different lines, to raise new issues to strengthen local control. The participants themselves should be directly involved in the analysis of the community and in proposing project ideas.

The *R & R Fund* learned that it is important to identify expected results of the project. The results may be both quantitative, e.g., to set up 10 cooperatives, and qualitative, e.g., to increase the participation of women in decision-making. In order to measure results, indicators of the impact of the project should be identified, i.e., how will you know the results occurred? These indicators should be identified in the planning stage so that they can be monitored and the results evaluated. Results of projects are not always predictable and unexpected results also provide valuable learning.

A project should reflect a development process that does not deal just with needs and aid, but with fostering sustainable societies through participation, community empowerment, respect for human rights and strengthening of institutions, both government and non-government.

Even the size of the project and the time-frame should be carefully considered in order to achieve the best results.

Here are other important components of the design of effective reconstruction and rehabilitation projects:

Community analysis

An analysis of the community's capacities and vulnerabilities is critical in order to examine various reconstruction and rehabilitation interventions and to choose those that best address the vulnerabilities while building on the capacities of the community. This analysis needs to take into account differences in activities and status of various groups, such as gender or age groupings, as well as cultural, language, religious and political groups. *This brochure contains a C/V grid and further explanation of the C/V framework on pages 9-11.*

Community development

Reconstruction and rehabilitation projects need a community development approach with involvement of the participants in planning, implementation and evaluation of the project. It is more important to design a project that will reduce vulnerabilities and enhance capacities while meeting the expressed needs of the participants, than it is to quickly provide services or infrastructure. This has been borne out by studies of *R & R Fund* projects which show higher success rates against objectives for projects with higher recipient participation, although it is fairly well established that projects whose objective is self-help take longer.

Institutional strengthening and projects with new activities are encouraged since it is not desirable or enough to put things back the way they were before the disaster; pre-existing conditions often make the population more vulnerable to disaster from a human-made or natural event.

Women's participation

Women's participation in decision-making and skills development is of particular importance in order to enhance their overall position and strategic interests in the community as well as to improve the condition of their lives.

Impact on the environment

Environmental impacts of reconstruction and rehabilitation projects should be assessed. Environmental vulnerabilities in the project area should be recognized along with the potential environmental effects of projects. Plans to mitigate such impacts and enhance environmental health are necessary parts of project design. Projects can be sustainable only when both the environment and the community have the capacity to continue to support the improvement of the community's well-being.

Prevention and preparedness

Elements of disaster reduction should be incorporated into reconstruction and rehabilitation activities. Community analysis should identify continuing risks which should then be acted upon to mitigate the effects of future disasters. Efforts should be made to raise community awareness of disaster reduction, encourage community reflection on past experience, identify indigenous knowledge, adopt strategies for disaster reduction and develop preparedness plans.

The *R & R Fund* recognized that a balance between prevention, mitigation and preparedness is necessary to effectively reduce risk. In other words, efforts should ideally try to prevent the intensity or frequency of a hazardous event, such as planting trees to stabilize a deforested landslide-prone slope. Recognizing that not all events can be prevented, mitigation actions should also be taken to lessen the impact, as in tree planting a wind-break against cyclones. Finally, if an event will still have a disastrous impact, then communities must plan for it and prepare themselves to react, for example, through early warning, evacuation planning or planting trees for something to cling to during a cyclone and to provide nutrition from coconuts post-cyclone.

Livelihood initiatives

It should be clear what productive capacities can be developed and supported to enable people to survive and contribute to the economy during and after reconstruction/relocation projects. Integration of housing, food, health, income and education sectors can lead to more sustainable development. Revolving loans and projects which provide employment which generates cash income can lead to the long-term rebuilding of the community.

Education of Canadians

NGOs have a responsibility to educate Canadians regarding the root causes of poverty and underdevelopment which leave people living in poverty much more vulnerable to disasters. Project information which emphasizes the capacities of a community, even in the face of disaster, can help debunk the myth of “helpless victims” and mobilize Canadian support for assisting people who are already helping themselves. NGOs involved in overseas development are encouraged to work with development education organizations to develop a clear strategy for educational outreach.

Participatory planning

R & R Fund experience showed that the following components were also important to a project’s success: **participatory planning, appropriate partners, careful budgeting and monitoring and evaluation.**

1. A local representative group should assess the community’s needs as well as help plan, implement and evaluate the project, ensuring a high level of community participation.
2. The project should contribute to an ongoing program of development activity which can continue following the end of the reconstruction and rehabilitation intervention.
3. The project proposal should demonstrate how it will build on the capacities of the community and reduce the vulnerabilities that have been identified.
4. Control, access to and status of land, buildings and implements involved in the project should be clearly stated.

Appropriate partners

1. The partner group(s) should represent the interests of the beneficiaries, have an established relationship with the community prior to the disaster and have the appropriate technical and administrative skills for the particular disaster or access to these skills.
2. There should be an established relationship between the Canadian NGO and their overseas partner(s), especially where a long-term development plan is in place or planned. Consideration of a proposal should also be given where there is a commitment to establish an ongoing relationship.
3. Partnerships are more than just a funding relationship for the purposes

of a project. They can also form a program partnership which involves mutual analysis of community needs, planning program priorities, organizational development, education and training.

Careful budgeting

1. A project should display appropriate and thorough budget planning and have well identified local and external resources needed for its successful completion.
2. Project costs should be in proportion to project benefits.

Monitoring and evaluation

1. A project should identify and describe effective project monitoring and evaluation techniques and schedules, especially impact on strategic interests of beneficiaries, on women and on the environment.
2. Participatory evaluation is encouraged and the lessons learned should be shared with the local community as well as the wider NGO community.

*P*riorities of *R* & *R* assistance: TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

R & *R* FUND EXPERIENCE SHOWED THE FOLLOWING TO BE
priority areas:

High priority projects

High priority projects were those that:

1. contributed significantly to the resumption of a self-sufficient livelihood in the disaster area in order that those affected can provide for their own basic needs;
2. contributed to renewed community effort to achieve sustainable development;
3. developed local initiative and innovation and cultivated leadership potential in the local community;
4. fostered self-reliance by encouraging maximum use of local knowledge, resources and appropriate technology;
5. assisted those in low income, underprivileged and vulnerable groups, such as women, children, the aged and the disabled. (Beneficiary selection should be impartial with respect to race, creed, political orientation and ethnicity.);
6. enhanced the overall position (strategic interests) of participants in the community while addressing the condition (practical needs) of both women and men. Proper consideration should be given to the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the community in order to plan a project which is beneficial to women as well as men. Projects can empower women when they provide them access to land ownership, credit, literacy, accounting skills, etc.; and
7. incorporated, whenever possible, disaster preparedness and prevention into project proposals, including local strategic planning and coordination, as well as mitigation efforts. Such measures should improve community capacity to deal with future disasters.

Low priority projects

Low priority projects were those that:

1. involved a high proportion of capital costs; that is, non-consumable items, such as buildings, vehicles, fixed services or infrastructure;
2. involved continuing administrative costs except in exceptional circumstances or for a limited period;
3. were relief or welfare rather than development-oriented;
4. were curative rather than preventive; that is, concerned with the results of poverty and underdevelopment rather than the causes (an example is immunization without health education); or
5. were for recurring formal education costs.

Reporting, monitoring and evaluation: PUTTING EXPERIENCE TO WORK

*T*HE *R & R FUND* also worked to reduce vulnerability to disasters through promotion of social, economic and environmental sustainability. Accordingly, projects supported by the fund attempted to create conditions conducive to these objectives. The *R & R Fund* learned that knowledge gained through past experience could be used to improve future efforts. Therefore monitoring and evaluation are as essential as project design. Reports which document and evaluate the project's activities and effects can be a source of learning for the NGOs and communities involved as well as the larger development community.

Reporting

A report, whether interim or final, should relate directly to the project proposal. The annual report should directly reflect the year's work plan and serve to monitor progress towards the overall project goals and objectives.

The report format should, for example, include:

1. comparison of the project's progress with the planned activities;
2. discussion of variances from the work plan and timeline (and for interim reports, proposed modifications for upcoming work plans and objectives for the coming year);
3. comparison of results to objectives, including how the project is reducing vulnerabilities while enhancing capacities such as organizational or personnel development;
4. comparison of baseline and monitoring studies used to measure the impacts of the project; indicated both positive and negative effects; included any observations concerning those activities not formally monitored;
5. documenting of resources used and a discussion of the cost/benefit and financial sustainability of the project;
6. a general evaluation of the project process and methodology, especially problems and obstacles, as well as specific achievements and positive results. Just as much is learned from what didn't work, and why, as from what did work; and

7. recommendations for change in project objectives, activities and methodology. In the final report, this would include the lessons learned and how they might be applied to a future project.

► Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are exercises to determine what has been achieved, what progress has been made, whether the stated objectives are being reached, what obstacles have been overcome and what has been learned from the process of initiating and implementing a project or program.

Monitoring is observing what is happening in a project, often by measuring pre-determined indicators of impact.

Evaluation is identifying and analyzing what happened in the project. Feedback from participants is an integral part of evaluation. There should be direct comparison to project objectives to evaluate the overall results of the project. Unexpected results often occur and these too should be noted since they can contribute to better understanding of the development process.

► Monitoring

Potential impacts can be identified by doing a C/V analysis on each of the proposed activities. In order to monitor change, indicators need to be identified which can be measured or observed which can document the impacts on the community.

The basic administrative tool for monitoring projects is a **regular (usually monthly) report** from the project team in the field, prepared by the project manager. It refers back to the project proposal, is descriptive of work done, progress made according to schedule, methods of implementation and problems encountered. It is always accompanied by a financial statement of income and expenditures for the reporting period.

At another monitoring level, supplementary **field visits** can be made to the project by project staff of the local coordinating NGO or the overseas funding agency(ies). These allow an informal subjective assessment of the partner organization, its procedures and methodology and its relations between various participants in project implementation. This generally results in some information exchange, suggestions and anecdotal reports.

► Evaluation

Evaluation is one of the most important parts of the project because this is where careful analysis can lead to lessons learned which add to the effectiveness of future R & R and development work. **Participatory evaluation** of R & R Fund projects was encouraged and the lessons learned shared with the local community as well as the wider NGO community.

The more a community understands the process and results of projects, the more likely it is to increase its capacities and the more sustainable the project.

Each Canadian NGO could play a key role in helping its Southern partners to communicate with each other about their successes and failures, to harmonize methods, and to coordinate the application of services ensuring adequate coverage across regions. A forum or workshop between Canadian NGOs and their counterpart organizations could be used to work through common problems and to build stronger relationships between Canadian NGOs and their Southern partners.

Decisions at the outset and in the design of the project affect evaluation. The decision to undertake an activity should be justifiable on the basis of available theoretical information or practical experience. **Variables** to be measured as indicators of the impacts of the activity should be identified. **Measurements** of these indicators should be taken prior to project implementation, should be ongoing during the operational phase of the project, and may continue once the project is in place. Pre-project measurements compared to interim and final measurements help to identify long-term impacts.

Evaluations should include:

1. analysis of monitoring reports.
2. comparison of baseline data with effects measured throughout the project. Conclusions should be drawn from systematic analysis of data rather than comments based on speculation. Impacts on women and environment are particularly important to monitor and evaluate.
3. identification of who will evaluate the project. An important source is a participatory evaluation with beneficiaries where they identify what they feel was accomplished and what worked or didn't and why. This could lead to needs assessment for the next project.
4. A number of NGOs might also get together to evaluate response to a given disaster and plan for improved coordination in the next disaster. This could include identifying and providing training needs for NGO personnel.
5. Lessons learned from the project should be summarized with ideas for how to apply them to the next project. These ideas should be shared with both Southern and Northern NGOs to improve the quality of R & R work being done.