Community Assessment & Engagement Tool

Targeting the delivery of Red Cross Emergency Services preparedness activities

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Introduction

This tool is designed to assist Red Cross staff and volunteers to target Emergency Services preparedness work.

Whether it is using the assessment tools to identify a community to engage with preparedness activities, or working with a community to assist them to identify their own preparedness activity needs, this document provides tools and guidance to help effectively target our work and build community and household preparedness.

This document is designed to assist and provide guidance to effectively:

- Assess hazard risks, Red Cross capacity and community capacity
- Identify and engage community members and organisations
- Plan preparedness activities
- Monitor and review preparedness activities.

Background

Emergency Services has designed an approach for targeting its activities and services to collaborate with communities to undertake preparedness activities, build emergency response capacity, and to target recovery activities.

The aim is to move from a deficits or vulnerability based approach, to a strengths based approach. In line with the Red Cross *Ways of Working* guidelines, this enables meaningful engagement with local communities, builds on local strengths and capacities and assists communities to improve their resilience to disaster impacts.

Disasters have long term, complex impacts that can significantly change the fabric, economies and wellbeing of individuals and communities. Often these impacts can be overlaid upon areas that already experience significant social disadvantage, compounding the issues that communities face.

Individuals and communities, however, have significant strengths and capacities, which may vary as a result of a range of socio-economic, cultural, accessibility and locational factors.

Local organisations, and formal and informal networks are good influencers and conduits to reach individuals and households. Household preparedness activities are most successful when communities are well connected and engaged in the process[1].

Red Cross seeks to work with the most disadvantaged people in the most disadvantaged places (Strategy 2015). These guidelines will assist in identifying community and individual strengths, engaging with community members and agencies, and provide an avenue to start preparedness work with people and communities to help strengthen their resilience to the impacts of disaster.

What do disasters do?

We know disasters tend to be sudden, unpredictable and destructive events. Even with improved warning systems and predictive tools, it is still difficult to predict the impact on people and communities.

Some hazards produce very obvious destructive impacts, e.g. bushfires, cyclones, severe storms, and earthquakes, while others, such as floods, can have hidden long term effects. This might include structural damage to houses, and for the individual, the possibility of long term health consequences.

We know disasters cause loss of life and injury (and the emotional distress associated with this), loss of homes, financial burden, loss of income, the loss of livelihoods, loss of pets and animals (and associated grief), the loss of possessions (and the financial and emotional impact of that), and the loss of familiar places/community ties to an area (and the emotional and practical impacts of that loss).

When we think about preparedness, we need to think about preparing people for the consequences of a disaster, not just surviving the hazard.

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[1] Paton, Johnston

How to use the Community Assessment & Engagement Tool (CAET)

The CAET is about engaging with communities, assisting them to identify their preparedness needs and where appropriate, providing Red Cross support through RediPlan. Each community is different and this document seeks to identify the community's specific needs and target Red Cross work effectively. The process does not need to be conducted in the order set out in this document. It can be adapted as needed.

Staff and volunteers may use this tool to help them decide which communities to prioritise for preparedness activities, while others may use it to help guide the process of planning activities in an already identified and engaged community.

Feel free to jump around using what you need to complete the work, or skip sections that are not applicable to you. For example, the chapter on identifying key people may not be relevant to you if you are already engaged with people from the community you are working in. It is expected however, that you conduct a certain amount of assessment, engagement, planning and monitoring for all preparedness work in communities.

The CAET and accompanying guidelines are not designed to provide definitive answers on where and for whom preparedness work should focus. It is a guide to assist staff and volunteers to think through the process of assessment and engagement, and target activities to people who would most benefit from them.

Adaptive capacities

You may be able to identify some preparedness activities that focus on one or more of these capacities.

We are all potentially vulnerable to the impact from disasters, but everyone has their own strengths that can help alleviate the impact.

Due to complex circumstances, some people can have reduced resilience to the impact of a disaster. Where practical, preparedness activities should be targeted towards people who may need support in these areas. Other people can have greater resilience and are able to 'bounce back' more easily.

Based on our experience and on informed research, the following capacities tend to improve people's resilience to disasters:

- **Knowledge** - of hazards and local history, and the ability to access information to make informed decisions
- **Connections** - good community networks, trust in local institutions, connection to place
- **Security** – financial protection against loss of assets, livelihoods, personal safety and shelter
- **Wellbeing** - good health status and the ability to cope with:
  - the challenges of life
  - the disruption of emergencies; and
  - the health and social issues that can arise from emergencies

Take the opportunity to talk with community members or community representatives about the adaptive capacities and what they mean for people in the community. You may be able to identify some preparedness activities that focus on some of these capacities. For example, there could be preparedness activities that focus on people who are new to the community and require information about local hazards and services available.

Based on the above capacities, some areas that may need targeting could be[2] (the capacities we may seek to strengthen are given in brackets):

- Low socio-economic status – this is assessed based on income, education level and occupation (S, K, W)
- Low literacy level (K)
- Chronic health conditions (W, S, A)
- Mental health conditions / anxiety issues – either on a daily basis or only during stressful events (W, S, A)
- Compromised mobility - reliant on walking aids, etc (W, A)
- Compromised mobility only in the event of an emergency, i.e. pregnancy (A, W)
- Reliance on financial services (A, S)
- Reliance on community services (A, W, S)
- Reliance on carer/parent/partner (W, S, A)
- New to a community (C, K)
- Time poor (A, K)
- Transitional housing residents (C, S)
- Holiday housing residents (C, K)
- Transitional workers, i.e. fruit pickers (K, C)
- Shift workers (A, K)
- Single parents (A, K, S)
- English as a second language (A, C, K)
- Hearing or visual impairments (A, K)
- Socially isolated (K,C,A,W)

Note: the above are examples and not intended to be used as a definitive 'list'.

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[2] Some of these groups of people may have multiple deficits in their adaptive capacities. Some of these deficits may not be so apparent.

Community profile – what does the community look like?

Understanding the 'identity' of the community you are working in can assist in identifying and planning preparedness activities suited to the community.

It is also a chance for community members to reflect on their own community and how people connect to it.

The aim of this section is to set up a profile for the community, engage with community members and start to identify how they see their community. Let this be a chance for the community to tell their 'story'.

What is community?

Community generally describes one of three things:

· *All people, organisations, and structures within a defined geographical area, having a common government*

· *A group of people with a common interest*

· *People with a common affiliation*

(Ways of Working, Red Cross)

Some discussion points and questions to start some of the conversation:

- Is it a community of interest or geography?
- Is it urban or rural?
- Is there an agricultural or industrial work base to the community?
- What are things community members have in common?
- What are differences?
- Are there community elders?
- What does the community mean to people?
- Is it a vibrant community? What makes it vibrant / not vibrant?
- Is there an active local government?
- Is there community participation?
- Are there diverse social/cultural groups?
- Why do people choose to live there or be a part of the community?
- How do people describe their community?

This section links in with the Community Assessment information found on Page 18.

Social capital (community connections)

Recovery from natural and other disasters does not depend on the overall amount of aid received nor on the amount of damage done by the disaster; instead, social capital – the bonds which tie citizens together – functions as the main engine of long term recovery.'

Daniel Aldrich

Social capital can be at the level of both a community and an individual.

What is social capital?

Good social capital at a community level is having strong networks binding members of the community together. This can be achieved through individuals participating in community activities, local businesses and community centres supporting community growth, trust among the members of local institutions, and the facilitation of membership of local community groups and associations.

Good social capital, at the household and individual level, is having support networks, feeling connected to the community, knowing people and trusting people (neighbours) in the community, participating in community events or sporting teams, or belonging to a community based group, association or club.

Red Cross believes that social capital is a key aspect of emergency preparedness and recovery. Communities and individuals with strong social capital usually have stronger resilience, an ability to support each other during and after disasters, and the ability to recover well.

When thinking about social capital within a community, here are some questions to consider discussing with community members:

- Are there community events, such as fetes/festivals? Are these events well attended?
- Do people get active in community issues? Who isn't actively involved? Why not?
- Are there local sporting teams? How many are there and how diverse are age and culture represented within the sporting teams?
- Are there locally based cultural groups/clubs, e.g. a Greek Club?
- Are there faith-based groups?

Section 1: Assess

Why assess?

To put it simply, conducting an assessment can give us an informed starting point for our preparedness work.

Assessments assist us in targeting our work more effectively within communities. To do this, we want to assess three things:

- hazard risk
- existing Red Cross capacity
- community capacity.

In Emergency Services, a hazard assessment aims to identify the:

- type of hazard that may affect a community
- frequency of these hazards
- impact the hazard may have on a community.

In Emergency Services, a Red Cross capacity assessment aims to:

- determine to what extent, if any, there is Red Cross presence in the community
- determine if there are Red Cross programs currently being run in the community
- determine if there is the capacity for emergency preparedness activities to be run through these programs, or to utilise networks already established.

In Emergency Services, a community assessment aims to:

- provide a broad understanding of the characteristics and capacities of the community, whether that be a geographic community or community with common interest
- provide a general sense of the issues that can be addressed by Red Cross preparedness activities
- assess if there are current emergency preparedness activities being conducted by other agencies or community groups and whether we can engage with these activities.

Hazard assessment

What is a hazard?

A hazard is something that can endanger people and their environment if precautions are not taken. Hazards can be natural or human-made, ranging from an event such as an earthquake, to a chemical spill.

This is an overview of a standard hazard risk assessment. It is a guide only. Answer what is relevant to your work and use more detailed assessments if the capacity and resources are available.

This assessment will help determine what the hazard risk is for the community, the likelihood of an event and the potential impact it may have. If you are doing multiple community assessments, this information will help prioritise communities. If only doing one assessment in one community, this will assist with understanding the community you are working in and be a helpful tool to engage with the community.

You may find that the hazard assessment is not applicable if you are planning to work with a community who has a common interest. However, you may find that you are able to adapt the assessment to make it more general. For example, looking at what are the common or more general hazard risks people may experience, when they may seasonally occur and the potential for damage, etc.

Not all hazards or emergencies discussed will be captured in this assessment.

All communities and individuals are susceptible to hazardous events or emergency situations, for example:

- House fire
- Extreme heat
- Unexpected trips to the hospital
- Public health issues/disease outbreaks/pandemics

A community, be that geographical or a community of interest or characteristics, may appear to have a low hazard risk but could still benefit from preparedness activities.

The following information can be sourced from internet based research, Red Cross information, local knowledge, municipal emergency management plans or talking with people in the community.

Basic hazard assessment

Type

What are the hazards or potential hazards that impact the community/region/area?

☐ Riverine flooding/flash flooding (specify which one)

☐ Bushfire

☐ Heat wave

☐ Cyclone

☐ Severe storms

☐ Earthquake

☐ Human-made disaster (specify)

☐ Other: (specify)

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What sources of information have you accessed?

☐ Planning mapping[3] (speak to your state coordinator/local community)

☐ Hazard management agencies

☐ Local knowledge

☐ Community meetings

☐ Local government

☐ Other: (specify)

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[3] In many states, planning information will identify if areas are subject to bushfire risk, flood risk, or one in 100 year flooding

Basic hazard assessment (continued)

Frequency

How often do they occur (frequency and/or likelihood)? *Be mindful that the pattern that hazards may have followed in the past may not be representative of the future.*

☐ Seasonally (specify the hazardous time of year, i.e. January/February)

☐ Every second year

☐ Every 2-5 years

☐ Every 5-10 years

☐ Other: (specify years) ……......................

☐ Unsure of last hazard event

☐ A hazard has never occurred in the area/community/region

When did the last hazard/s occur? *(Specify the hazard/s and the date/year of the last hazard)*

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What was the impact?

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Does the community consider itself in recovery from a recent/previous event? [4]
(This may help or hinder preparedness work)

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What is the potential for damage in community/region/area should the identified hazard/s occur?
(Including potential infrastructural, environmental, economic, etc)

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[4] A community in recovery may be more receptive to preparedness activities if they have directly experienced the consequences.
   Conversely, a community may also be fatigued … and so not so receptive to recovery activities.

How long in duration have the hazard(s) lasted? *(For example, the difference between flash flooding and bushfire. Be mindful that the hazard may only last a few hours but the impacts of the disaster can last longer.)*

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What are the perceptions of risk within the community (consider different social groups)?

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Who is most/least aware of the risk?

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Do they feel there are hazards that could impact their community, what is their hazard knowledge?

(This question may need to be left until you are speaking with people in the community about preparedness work. If you have local knowledge of the community in which work is being planned, you may be able to answer it at the beginning.)

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From undertaking these assessments, you should now have a picture of whether the area is likely to be affected by a hazard, and a sense of the impacts of those hazards.

If a specific area within the community is likely to be affected by a hazard, you may want to start targeting work there first. If the area is at risk of being affected by a specific hazard, i.e. flash flood, talk to the relevant hazard agency about what community education activities they may have already undertaken or are planning to undertake. See what you can do to work with the community.

Red Cross capacity assessment

Before working in a community you should determine what Red Cross presence already exists, if any.

Established Red Cross programs may help to engage with the community. Trust may have already been built with community members. Red Cross staff and volunteers may hold information about the community that could be helpful for preparedness work.

It is important that Red Cross programs are not developed and implemented in isolation. By finding out which other areas of Red Cross are present in the community, you are linking in and contributing to a better Red Cross presence and capacity.

The other thing to keep in mind is the reputation Red Cross has within the community. Whether it is a good reputation or a bad one, it is important to be aware of this, as it may impact upon the experience you have working with the community.

It is also useful for Red Cross branch members, volunteers or program areas to know about preparedness activities that are taking place in the community so they can act as influencers and promote the work.

Again, this is only a guide. Apply this to what is relevant to your work in the community. At a minimum, for simple session delivery it is valuable to be aware of the Red Cross reputation, what branches are present and what other Red Cross services exist within the community.

For more comprehensive assessments of Red Cross presence in a community, or work that Red Cross may have conducted, contact your state/territory emergency services manager.

Basic Red Cross capacity assessment

Try to assess the following:

- Presence of Red Cross in the community (the questions below will help with this)
- Whether Red Cross has undertaken community mapping or been linked into local planning networks with useful information for preparedness planning
- Interactions Red Cross already has with the community
- Red Cross services may already exist in the community

Are the following present in the community:

☐ Red Cross volunteers/members/branches? Please list them below.

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☐ Red Cross fundraising activities?

☐ Emergency services teams, or recovery/preparedness activities?

☐ Telecross programs?

☐ Red Cross College activities (eg First Aid)?

☐ Red Cross Blood Service?

☐ Red Cross retail shops?

☐ State-specific (community) programs/information? (If unsure how to access this information, contact your state/territory preparedness coordinator.)

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☐ If they are present, have you contacted them?

☐ Has there been previous engagement with community? (positive or negative)

....

Other: (specify)

....

What is Red Cross' reputation in the community? *(This may be answered by contacting your state/territory manager, talking to Red Cross branch members or to people in the community.)*

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Community assessment

If you are working with a community of interest, you may find that a lot of this information may not be applicable to you.

Red Cross only works with communities that agree to our involvement and on the basis of a reciprocal partnership. Our 'place based' approach means that solutions are tailored to the unique circumstances of the place/location in partnership with the community. To facilitate this, communities need to be actively involved in the planning and implementation of programs.

Conducting a basic community assessment is helpful to understand the community you are, or will be, working in. This can be extensive or basic, depending on the type of work being undertaken.

A community assessment can assist in identifying what groups or services exist within a community, and who might be the key influencers to start the engagement process.

For example, if you know that there is an influential neighbourhood/community house or soccer/AFL/netball/ rugby club, these may be the groups you contact to discuss preparedness activities. Local or state government may also be a good source of community information.

The other important aspect of understanding a community that you are working in or plan to work in, is assessing which other hazard agencies are working in the community.

For example, are the SES or fire services providing emergency preparedness sessions in the community? What kind of work are they conducting? Could Red Cross and these agencies collaborate in the delivery of preparedness activities?

If you are looking at targeting specific culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups, please contact and discuss this with your state/territory preparedness coordinator.
Appendix 1 includes a link to multicultural resource centres in states and territories. These agencies may be a good contact if you want to gather information about a particular cultural group in the community.

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If you are looking at targeting specific indigenous groups, please contact your state/territory preparedness coordinator to ensure your work is linked in with Red Cross Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community programs. Red Cross has Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander program manuals. Please talk to your state/territory preparedness coordinator about accessing these resources.

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To build a deeper understanding of the community, see the Community Profile section found on Page 8.

Basic community assessment

All of the below agencies or groups have been identified as avenues to promote preparedness activities.

Does the community have:

- [ ] Interpreters/translators
- [ ] Play groups
- [ ] Migrant support services
- [ ] Police, courts, legal aid
- [ ] Women's health centres
- [ ] Men's groups
- [ ] Art and cultural centres
- [ ] Resource agencies
- [ ] Wellbeing centres
- [ ] Mental health services
- [ ] Respite groups
- [ ] Senior citizen centres
- [ ] Sport and recreation
- [ ] Family centres

- [ ] Breast feeding groups
- [ ] Land care/ environmental groups
- [ ] Community health clinics
- [ ] Community care services
- [ ] Support services (counseling)
- [ ] Recreational groups/gyms
- [ ] Neighbourhood houses
- [ ] Hairdressers/ Real Estate agents
- [ ] Banks
- [ ] Schools/TAFE/Universities
- [ ] Social enterprise groups
- [ ] Youth directed organisations

- [ ] Faith-based groups/ organisations
- [ ] Ethnic-based groups/ organisations
- [ ] Libraries
- [ ] Other:
  ....
- [ ] Other:
  ....
- [ ] Other:
  ....

Finding out more about the above groups or services may help start preparedness engagement in the community. To find out this information, you may be able to do an internet based search, access the Australian Bureau of Statistics, utilise local knowledge or talk to people in the community.

Perhaps encourage them to speak to or contact the local/regional council or service providers to get a sense of whether the services available above are adequate or lacking. They may have all these services but still have a drastic shortage, there may be none of these services or they may be based in a neighbouring town.

Hazard agency assessment

☐ List state/community-specific agencies that exist in the community. For example, SES, fire services, etc.

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☐ Which hazard agencies are working in the community and what activities are they undertaking?

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………..

☐ Is there the potential for Red Cross to join up with one of these agencies to deliver preparedness activities?

………..

………..

Assessment summary

What do you now know?

By the end of this process you should have a sense of:

- whether there is a significant hazard risk and what that might be

- whether Red Cross has a presence in the community and the implications – positive or negative – of this presence (could you link in with other Red Cross programs?)

- which hazard agencies are in the community and what kind of work they are doing

- a basic community profile and knowledge of community networks.

The next step is identifying key people. It is most likely you will already have started this process when conducting the assessments.

Engagement

The best source of knowledge comes generally from local community members. They will know their community needs, wants and what approaches may work – but be careful not to rely on the opinion of one influencer!

Make the most of your community influencers and contacts, they can often assist with advertising an event, either through local radio, a local business or any community meetings they may attend. This is a great way to get the word out about preparedness activities

Identifying key people – stakeholder mapping

Tapping into existing networks

It is important to tap into existing networks to bring together representatives from a variety of groups that are already engaged in the community. Doing so allows people in the community to be involved in and be a part of community activities. When a community actively participates and 'drives' activity, outcomes are more likely to be sustainable.

Who are the community influencers?

People have different roles within communities. Influencers are considered individuals or groups/organisations that have the ability to influence change in the behaviour of those community members the Red Cross program seeks to address.

These 'influencers' may have a formal role within a community, e.g. a local councillor, the president of a sporting club, or a community health nurse. They could also have a more informal role such as helping out at school fetes, or a local business person with good contacts.

Some people are leaders within their community, but may not realise it. The president of the school council has a leadership role, but may not recognise their influence on others.

Personal services such as hairdressers are also good conduits to the community and sources of local information. Red Cross volunteers who live in the community may be a great source of local information and community contacts, as well as knowing about Red Cross and current projects that may be running in the community. Red Cross branch members are also generally well connected to communities.

Service providers such as Home and Community Care (HACC) program representatives, elected officials or local government officers may be useful contacts to establish. From there you may find other informal leaders or influencers to talk to.

Identifying key people/influencers

Key community contacts or organisations that may be useful or relevant. In addition to the usual emergency management agencies or councils, remember to consider more broadly the range of community groups present in the community.

Organisation/Council/Community group(s)	Name and role	Contact details	Relevance

Starting the preparedness conversation

This section can be useful as a guide to starting the emergency preparedness conversation with people/groups/organisations that you have identified as key community influencers.

See Appendix 2 for a cheat sheet on starting the conversation.

Why have you chosen to speak to this organisation? How did you contact them/organise the meeting?

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Who in the community do they work with or represent?

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……

Key contacts

Name	Position	Phone	Address	Email

Are they involved in, or do they know about, any community activities to prepare for emergencies?

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………

What are their strengths as an organisation or individual when it comes to community connection or emergency preparedness work?

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………

What are the potential barriers to emergency preparedness activities in the community?

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………

Do they know if the community has any particular needs when it comes to emergency preparedness activities?

………

………

Do they represent or know of any groups who may be particularly vulnerable in an emergency (utilising the adaptive capacities assessment)?

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In what way/s can Red Cross work with them, or the people they represent, to help people be more prepared for emergencies?

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Section 2: Plan

Planning your activities

You should now have a better understanding of the community you are working in, have made contact with key influencers and identified where there is interest in undertaking preparedness activities.

Start small, get a feel for how receptive target communities are for the sessions. You can always build up and overachieve, rather than set a big target and fall short.

Working with strategic partners

In all of its preparedness activities, Red Cross takes an all-hazards approach acknowledging that hazard-specific information should always be delivered or informed by the relevant hazard management agency. Partnerships with these agencies are encouraged. Following your hazard assessment, if you are working in areas that have a high risk of a specific hazard, you should engage with the lead agency early on so they are aware of your activities and, where appropriate, are given the opportunity to participate and communicate their messages to participants.

Planning basic outline

What is the aim of your preparedness activities?

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What is your anticipated/preferred timeframe for engagement? E.g. one off, ongoing, etc.

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Based on your assessments, who do you plan to target and why?

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How will you ensure that the most marginalized people will find out about actvities and feel comfortable attending? Will they feel welcome at the venue chosen and will the venue be accessible or comfortable to attend with other people?

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Will you be booking venues or will that be taken care of by someone else? Does the venue cater to the needs of the people attending? For example, ramps for people with compromised mobility or a large visual screen and appropriate sound system for large groups or for people with visual and/or hearing issues.

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Who will be involved (e.g. local fire service, local government, community health centre or local multicultural resource centre) and how?

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What resources are required?
(I.e. REDiPlan books, DVD, example of a kit, video projector, interpreter.)

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How will you know how effective the activities are? Including to marginalized community members?

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How will you know you have done a good job? (How would you assess your own success?)

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Section 3:
Implement and monitor

Implement and monitor

Taking action

This is the stage for actioning your plan! For straightforward session delivery, such as REDiPlan sessions, it is a matter of keeping on track with your plan, resources and timelines.

For more comprehensive preparedness activities or program development, this stage requires an implementation strategy to outline the tasks, resources and timelines required for implementation. This helps keep things on track.

Assessing progress

Part of the implementing stage requires you to report back to Red Cross state/territory staff (and other agencies you have worked with) on your activities. Don't worry, this is not about checking up on you.

Reporting can help us:

- work out how many people we are reaching with our preparedness messages
- plan our resource distributions, i.e. for booklets, etc
- make stronger funding submissions
- improve our REDiPlan resources
- help you with a sense of achievement.

What is monitoring?

Monitoring is the regular tracking of the performance and impacts of a project or session delivery over time.

Monitoring allows you to:

- have adequate and up-to-date information that will assist you to make informed decisions regarding network activities
- track progress
- facilitate learning
- recognise what you have achieved and refine any activities to improve effectiveness for future implementation.

All delivery of preparedness education requires staff and volunteers to complete a spreadsheet capturing basic information on each session. Speak to your state/territory preparedness coordinator about this process.

In addition to this, Red Cross has indicators by which we measure the impact, effectiveness and sustainability of our emergency preparedness work.

To assess the impact of our preparedness work and whether we are meeting our intended outcomes, questionnaires should be filled in

Appendix 1

Resource links for cultural agencies in states and territories

Centre for Culture, Ethnicity & Health
http://www.ceh.org.au/culturalcompetence.aspx

Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria
http://eccv.org.au/library/doc/CulturalCompetenceGuidelinesandProtocols.pdf

Sydney Multicultural Community Services
https://sites.google.com/site/smcstestsite/links/nsw-migrant-resource-centres

Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre
http://www.mmrcwa.org.au/

The Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland Ltd
http://www.eccq.com.au/

Multicultural Community Services of Central Australia
http://www.mcsca.org.au/

Multicultural Youth South Australia
http://MYSA.com.au

Appendix 2

Cheat sheet for starting a conversation

Starting a conversation with people in the community can sometimes be the difficult part in getting started with preparedness activities. The following are some pointers that might help:

Introduction

It is important to introduce yourself and to explain why you are interested in contacting them.

If it is a community group/council or agency you are looking to talk to, be mindful that it is likely that the people with whom you meet will have busy schedules.

It is important that you communicate the benefits of preparedness education. For example, local councils have emergency management plans that include emergency preparedness obligations. REDiPlan can assist organisations to meet their emergency planning obligations to clients.

If it is bringing community members together for a chat or meeting, find common interests and make it relevant to their community.

Red Cross and emergencies

Use the starting point that emergencies affect everyone and it doesn't have to be a large-scale disaster to cause significant disruption.

Explain how Red Cross approaches emergency preparedness. Explain REDiPlan – contact your state/ territory preparedness coordinator for REDiPlan key messages.

Explain how Red Cross gets people to think about preparing for the big challenges, as well as the smaller-scale challenges in life.

Linking the key influencers in to the conversation

It is important to actively involve the person with whom you are speaking and to listen to what they have to say. Don't just talk at them. They know and are part of the community in which you want to work.

Let them know that you are interested in working with them and that you would appreciate their time to go through some of the assessments and activity planning.

Next steps

Make a plan to meet and chat again. Set a date and time to maintain momentum on both sides.