

PARTICIPATORY VULNERABILITY ANALYSIS WORKSHOP
(Oct 30-Nov 01,2000 at Symondsbur Manor, Dorset, England)

Background

Vulnerability is considered to be the main linking factor between emergencies and long term development work. The emergencies strategy of ActionAid has also emphasised on analysing vulnerabilities in long-term work and using this analysis in building local resilience, readiness and long term recovery.

This three-day workshop was organised as part of the project on vulnerability analysis by emergencies unit (EmU). In the initial part of the project, EmU conducted a desk study in 1999. This study gave an idea about the existing level of work done by ActionAid and other agencies. This study also showed that existing tools of analysing vulnerabilities do not match with ActionAid's people centred advocacy approach. Some ideas were generated to develop practical methodology for conducting vulnerability analysis. These ideas were exchanged with interested country programmes (CPs) and some individuals who were keen to take part in this project.

In order to take the work forward and to develop consensus on the methodologies by considering different available options selected country programmes & individuals were invited to take part in this workshop. Representatives of 10 country programmes along with some external resource persons from Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), Bangkok, Hazard Research Centre, University Collage London & Centre for Development Studies, University of Swansea participated in this workshop.

Objectives:

The objectives of the workshop were:

- To generate a common consensus on plan for a research programme on vulnerability analysis
- To share what we know and don't know about vulnerability
- To learn and think about vulnerability and how this can be analysed effectively
- To develop a network of people working on vulnerability & emergencies within ActionAid in the different parts of world

Key Issues Emerged:

- ✓ Should the analysis be necessarily followed by **action** in order to bring change? What should be the balance between analysis & action?
- ✓ How to develop true **participation & ownership** of the most vulnerable in the analysis.
- ✓ How to develop **linkages to different levels** i.e. community, district, regional/national, international, while doing causal analysis.
- ✓ Should the vulnerability analysis be **one off or continuous process** integrated within existing work. In case it is a one off activity, what should be the ideal timing of the analysis?
- ✓ What should be the **unit of analysis** i.e. individuals, households, community groups, district, regional/national.
- ✓ How changes or **progression of vulnerability** can be monitored & recorded over time?
- ✓ Is it possible to predict about future vulnerabilities based on experience & action? If so, what can be the indicators to make it **predictive**?
- ✓ Vulnerability analysis should include endowments and entitlements of the communities along with the **causes and underlying forces**, which make people vulnerable.

PVA Model Developed by ActionAid:

The discussion on the above issues led to the generation of following multilevel model, which links different levels of analysis and actions by developing an interactive flow of information. In order to address these issues, some shared understanding was developed about each of these. On the basis of this understanding, four levels of analysis and action were determined, as the analysis of each level extract and feed information into the other levels.

At the community level analysis, local facilitators will help the community to analyse their vulnerabilities in the meetings and discussion sessions. The participatory and Reflect approaches will be used to incorporate community's perception of their vulnerabilities. But at the same time, local facilitators will feed in some issues extracted from the other levels of analysis.

At the district/project level analysis, community representatives will involve the other stakeholders and will translate the issues into the local level advocacy and lobbying. The regional/ country and international level of analysis will extract the ideas & issues from the community and district level analysis to feed into the policy and advocacy work. Studies on specific issues identified by the analysis will be conducted and learning will be promoted by workshops, reports and exchange visits.

ACTIVITIES

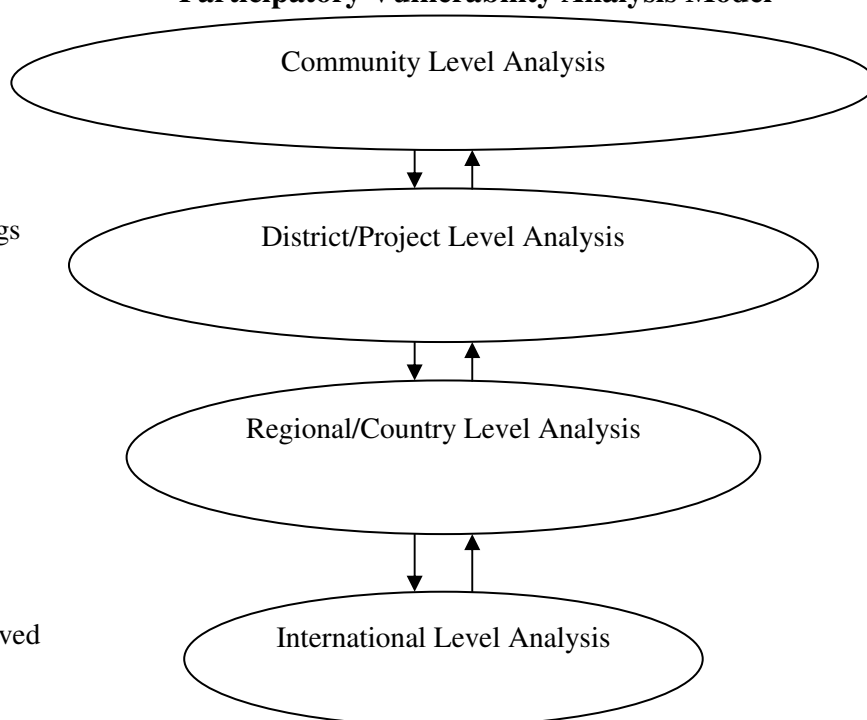
Community Meetings
Discussion Sessions & Analysis
Training of local facilitators
Participatory & Reflect approaches

Stakeholders & Focal group Meetings
Local level advocacy & lobbying
Documentation & Liaison

Studies on selected issues
National level advocacy & lobbying
Exchange visits & monitoring
National level Workshops

Co-ordination & Documentation
Technical support to countries involved
Policy & advocacy work
International Workshops

Participatory Vulnerability Analysis Model



Extraction & Feeding of Issues/Information

Emergencies Networking:

Apart from developing a research plan for the vulnerability analysis project, the other main outcome of the workshop was to build a network of people handling emergencies work in different country programmes. The idea behind developing such a network was to promote sharing of experiences and learning from each other within the regions as well as across the regions. The need for having a forum of focal emergencies people in different country programmes was being identified for quite some time. This workshop provided the opportunity to take the first step in this direction.

The whole workshop was planned in such a way, emphasising both process and product, to provide maximum opportunities to develop interaction and team building among the participants. The objectives outlined for this network were to provide a forum where people can exchange information & experiences in a direct and informal way, learn horizontally within the organisation and replicate the best practices where applicable. The network members will be responsible to promote exchange visits and to keep the other network members informed about what and how they doing emergencies work in their own country. All the participants welcomed the idea and showed their commitment to work as part of this network. Following are the contact details.

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Agreements/Common Understanding:

- ◆ All the participants recognised that they did not know that much about the idea of vulnerability before coming to the workshop. Now they not only know different aspects of it but also have a common understanding on many issues.
- ◆ Work on Vulnerability Analysis is important because of its scope for linking emergencies with long term development work; its deep link with poverty and inter-relatedness with rights issues.
- ◆ PVA draws its mandate from *Fighting Poverty Together* by contributing for the core themes of participation, rights and advocacy.
- ◆ Ten country programmes (Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Uganda) represented at the workshop and Haiti will be involved in this project.
- ◆ No single definition of vulnerability captures all its dimensions, complexities and applications.
- ◆ No single model or generalisation can be applied to all the places and contexts.
- ◆ Country Programmes should have the flexibility to evolve context specific methods of analysis.
- ◆ A holistic FPT approach should be adopted while doing PVA without actually separating the themes of participation, rights and advocacy.
- ◆ PVA should be participatory, qualitative, empowering and analysing responsibilities and capacities.
- ◆ Improved analysis of the situation/context can be done without taking sides.
- ◆ Analysis should be based on the community's own agenda at the community level with some input from the facilitators. In this way, community's time will be spent to pursue their own motives rather than to feed the organisation.
- ◆ Linking this analysis to the bigger picture should be the agenda of ActionAid.
- ◆ Every analysis should be followed by action but there can be some cases where no service delivery action is required.
- ◆ Vulnerability analysis should also include stakeholders, capacities, rights and responsibilities analysis.

A Way Forward:

- There will not be any core team for the project; instead the interaction will be in the form of a horizontal network where EmU will have some co-ordination role.
- Participatory/Reflect approaches will be used at the community level analysis and the capacity of facilitators will be build before conducting analysis.
- Institutional support for this project will be obtained from ADPC Bangkok, Hazard Research Centre University Collage London and University of Swansea.
- The country programmes involved will also work on a related research project of 3-5 years, which has been submitted jointly by University of Swansea, University Collage London and ActionAid for ESRC funding (subject to approval of funding).
- Efforts will be made to integrate PVA into the existing policies/programmes.
- Web Site of AA's PVA will be developed along with a system of regular updating.
- There will be one international meeting every year to share the progress of work. The next meeting will be held in Uganda in the beginning of year 2002.

Actions Required:

- ❑ Ten country programmes involved in this pilot project, will undertake the activities as described in the PVA model and will share the results with other network members.
- ❑ The country programmes involved will have the full autonomy to evolve their own methodology of analysis, keeping in view the local contexts. They will follow the common checklist/format given for reporting to give coherence to the project.
- ❑ Two people from each country will be nominated to represent in the network and replacements will be made before anyone leaves the network.
- ❑ Country plans for the work on PVA for 2001 will be finalised and shared by the end of year 2000.
- ❑ Once any CP will do something, they will share the update with the other network members following the common reporting format.
- ❑ The importance of PVA will be emphasised by raising this issue in country and regional meetings.

Reporting Format/Checklist:

This format provides a tentative checklist describing steps taken and problems encountered for future reporting and work in country programmes. First column shows the common understanding, developed during the workshop on some related issues under participation, process, contents & policy. Second and third column shows the outline & possible questions to ask while documenting process and result of context specific analysis.

Mutual agreement/Common Understanding on Issues related to vulnerability analysis	<i>Process of Analysis (How)</i> (For the learning of other network members/organisations)	<i>Results of Analysis (What)</i> (For planning/programmes reviews of CPs)
A. Participation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most vulnerable to be involved in the analysis. 2. Involvement of stakeholders at all levels in the analysis 3. Developing a sense of ownership of analysis in the community. 4. PVA process should gradually empower the community. 5. PVA should incorporate communities' perception about vulnerabilities 6. There should be a balance of local & outsiders information/knowledge while doing PVA. 	<p>How the most vulnerable people were involved?</p> <p>How the stakeholders were identified and involved?</p> <p>How was community motivated to spend time on the analysis?</p> <p>How the analysis was made empowering and in what way, it empowered the community?</p> <p>How communities' perception was incorporated in the analysis of other levels?</p> <p>How issues were introduced & accepted by both outsiders & community?</p>	<p>Who are the most vulnerable & were they involved in the analysis?</p> <p>Stakeholders participated in the analysis</p> <p>Do community understand this analysis as their own motive?</p> <p>Was the analysis empowering? What are the indicators of empowerment</p> <p>Does vulnerability analysis of all levels reflect communities' perception of vulnerabilities?</p> <p>What issues came from community and what issues outsiders introduced?</p>
B. Method/Process <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Every analysis should be followed by action to bring change. 2. Reflect & Participatory approaches will be used for PVA in community. 3. PVA will be a continuous process integrated with existing work of AA. 	<p>How analysis led to action & how the actions were prioritised?</p> <p>What tools/approaches were used for analysis & how successful was each of these?</p> <p>How PVA was made a continuous process?</p>	<p>What action was taken/ recommended after analysis?</p>

<p>4. Efforts will be made to predict future vulnerabilities by combining experience & action.</p> <p>5. Vulnerability may be used as an indicator for the success of long-term development work or initiatives.</p> <p>6. Extracting information at one level and feeding at another will link different levels of analysis (community, district, country & international).</p> <p>7. Capacity of local facilitators will be developed for improved facilitation & analysis.</p>	<p>How Vulnerabilities were made predictive and how far the predictions were true?</p> <p>How vulnerability was used as indicator of long-term development and impact assessments?</p> <p>What measures were taken to link different levels of analysis & how far were these successful?</p> <p>How was the capacity of facilitators built?</p>	<p>What aspects of vulnerabilities can be used as indicator in programme reviews & impact assessments?</p> <p>Does the holistic analysis contain aspects drawn from different levels of analysis?</p>
<p>C. Contents</p> <p>1. Progression of vulnerabilities will be monitored over time.</p> <p>2. Investigation into the causes and underlying forces of vulnerabilities.</p> <p>3. Capacity analysis will be an integral part of VA.</p> <p>4. The basic unit of analysis will be community groups based on gender, generation, ethnicity, class etc. but we can also go to HH as well as intra HH level to do detailed analysis.</p>	<p>How changes will be monitored and recorded over time? & How to pick up trends?</p> <p>How the underlying causes of vulnerabilities were explored?</p> <p>How the capacities were analysed?</p> <p>What unit of analysis is best for analysing each type of vulnerability?</p>	<p>What are the changes in vulnerabilities over time?</p> <p>What are the underlying causes of vulnerabilities?</p> <p>What are the capacities of the communities?</p> <p>What was the unit of analysis?</p>
<p>D. Policy</p> <p>1. Analysis should inform the policy work of the organisation.</p> <p>2. PVA is linked to FPT/ regional/ country strategies of ActionAid.</p> <p>3. To see the affect of macro level policies on the vulnerabilities.</p>	<p>How analysis informed the policy & was it useful?</p> <p>In what way the PVA conducted is linked to FPT/other strategies?</p> <p>How was the impact of macro policies on vulnerabilities analysed? How this information fed into analysis?</p>	<p>Was the outcome of analysis incorporated into future policies?</p> <p>What progress against FTP/ other strategy objectives was generated by PVA?</p> <p>What and how policies affect vulnerabilities of poor people?</p>