

COMMUNITY RESPONSE TEAMS

Minimum Standards And Sustainability Guidelines



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In addition, good practices were contributed by various partners across the region, which has enabled this document to reflect a more holistic perspective on community response teams.

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Foreword

The heightened frequency and intensity of disasters in the Caribbean region calls for increased attention towards effective and responsive disaster management. After major disasters such as hurricanes and floods, regional communities can often be left isolated as it is sometimes difficult for responders to reach them. Sometimes it can take a couple of hours and other times it can take several days before emergency personnel can access the communities. These disasters can have catastrophic impact on the lives and wellbeing of people.

The Red Cross in 1998, began exploring options that would best address the gaps associated with disaster response at the community level. This led to the creation of Community Disaster Response Teams (CDRTs). In 2009, a similar initiative was taken in Montserrat to support the search and rescue needs of the country in the aftermath of the series of volcanic eruptions in the country. Building on the momentum of this initiative, CDEMA led the process of adapting the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) CERT model into the Caribbean context.

The core of disaster response is based on community. Ongoing discussions between IFRC and CDEMA have focused on how we can collectively build resilience at the community level. A key finding of discussions was that impacted community members took on the roles of first responders after a disaster and therefore there was a need to increase the capacity of community members. Thereby, justifying the creation of Community Response Teams with the necessary skills, equipment and training to respond to emergencies.

In the decade of the 2000's, the scaling up through the region of community response teams saw the implementation of numerous regional programs on disaster preparedness with the support of the European Commission, USAID OFDA, the Canadian United Kingdom Governments. Those contributions helped to increase surge capacity and scale up the response mechanisms throughout the region in different countries. Amongst the lessons learned was the potentially adverse impact of duplicating efforts in developing country level response systems. This includes (i) operational linkages between governments and National Disaster Offices; (ii) providing specialized and timely services to vulnerable populations; (iii) engaging other actors who are in the process of establishing and developing alternative types of response teams.

Other noteworthy lessons were the duplication of efforts amongst multiple state agencies and non-state actors in responding to single scale events, as well as the creation of several response team systems to assist impacted persons. It was determined that response teams were working, but there needs to be a more integrated and coordinated approach to guide all response teams in an effort to promote safe and resilient communities, without the duplication of efforts; essentially, a process of harmonizing the CDRT and the CERT methodologies into a Minimum Standard and Sustainability Guidelines for Community Response Teams (MSSG) document.

In 2024, the MSSG was updated to include additional lessons learnt in the standardized approach to training first responders. Therefore, this document creates a starting point from which communities' key institutions and first responder agencies can work together to effectively prepare mitigate, respond and recover from emergencies.

Acronyms/Abbreviations

CADRIM	Red Cross Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Reference Centre
CCOPE	Caribbean Communities Organised and Prepared for Emergencies
CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
CDRT	Caribbean Disaster Response Team
CERT	Community Emergency Response Team
CRT	Community Response Team
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DIPECHO	European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department of Disaster Preparedness
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EVCA	Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Assessment
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
NDO	National Disaster Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
US AID OFDA	The United States Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance

Glossary

Disaster

A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts that exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.

Disaster Risk Reduction

The concept and practice of reducing disaster risk through systematic efforts to analyze and manage the casual factors of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events.

Community Response Team

A group of community members organized as a community-based team that receives disaster management training to enhance their ability to prepare, recognize, mitigate, respond and recover from emergencies or disaster situation within their community.

As an organized team, individuals can provide vital services in the absence of and while waiting for the arrival of emergency responders; they often also assist once responders arrive.

Mitigation

The lessening or limitation of the adverse impacts of hazards and related disasters.

Preparedness

Activities and measures taken in advance to ensure effective response to the impact of hazards, including the issuance of timely & effective early warnings and the temporary evacuation of people and property from threatened locations.

Introduction

Community Response Teams (CRTs) comprise of community volunteers educated in different elements of disaster risk reduction with the aim of lending assistance to their local Red Cross National Society and/or National Disaster Office in times of emergencies. There are two types of Community Response Teams trainings: Community Disaster Response Team (CDRT) and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), which is a more robust training developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Both types of trainings are conducted in the Caribbean region.

Community Response Team members are equipped with the essential knowledge and skills required to effectively ready themselves for and react to emergencies. This proves vital after a disaster, especially when gaining access to communities poses challenges, potentially causing delays in receiving support from responder agencies. Through proper training and regular drills, community members can maximize their impact in aiding the greatest number of victims following a disaster, all the while safeguarding themselves from becoming victims.

Therefore, Community Response Teams are key elements for the development of community resilience, a strong and well-prepared team will not just be critical when a disaster strikes, giving proper and timely relief, development damage and needs assessment, but could also be key for the development and implementation of prevention, preparedness and mitigation measures within the community.

The first iteration of the Minimum Standards and Sustainability Guidelines (MSSG) was developed in 2014 after concerns were raised regarding the different branding and quality of CRT trainings at a CDEMA/IFRC meeting. As different organizations are committed to the function and development of CRTs in shared post emergency spaces, there was a need for more harmonized CRT trainings with a standardized approach to the application of the methodologies, whilst showcasing specialized skills appropriate to support local authorities was the main priority highlighted for effective responses.

The MSSG is meant to establish consistent quality in community response teams by setting specific criteria of training methodologies, trainers, trainees and training content. Minimum standards will also outline the appropriateness and specifications of equipment needed for CRTs.

The second component to this document addresses the sustainability of community response teams. This focuses on the type of support and follow-up actions that are required to enable a group to remain active beyond the initial injection of financial and technical resources earmarked to start CRTs. Here we want to explore those factors that contributed to sustainable CRTs over the years and highlight them as best practices.

Recognizing that both methodologies play an encouraging and supportive role to national response frameworks, it is crucial that key standards be maintained when applying either methodologies. By this we are agreeing that a common understanding on quality would be maintained in terms of the type of training and also the types of requirements that must be met by the participants. This document also highlights how we collaborate and work in the same space with communities by proposing a national system that governs and manages CRTs.



Section A

OVERVIEW

Background



A reflection on both CDRT and CERT methodologies through consultation by a quadrant of stakeholders in the region produced a comparative analysis of the CRT mechanism.

CDRT

The Community Disaster Response Team (CDRT) in the IFRC began as an expanding concept of training communities to protect themselves in emergencies, as it was observed that assistance is needed before emergency first responders arrive.

CERT

In 2012-13 CERT training was established in 8 Caribbean states: Haiti, St. Kitts, St. Vincent, Turks & Caicos, St. Lucia, Virgin Island, Suriname, Dominica.

CDEMA Participating States, the National Disaster Offices in collaboration with national/local partners (including the Red Cross National Societies) continued conducting CERT training on a regular basis to establish or enhance their community preparedness, response and resilience capabilities.

CDRT Training



The methodologies used in both trainings are both proactive and reactive. The teams are not just response teams. They implement activities in all phases of the disaster management cycle and therefore conduct preparedness and prevention activities in non-crisis times.

CDRT

- Team members consist of interested volunteers.
- Persons pass on knowledge and information to other community members during peace times.
- Current disaster related trainings such as Climate Change and Nature-Based Solutions.
- Aid in providing information for the development of DANA reports.
- Includes training in Adult Learning and leadership skills.
- Materials are adapted according to context.
- Members are trained in all areas of the Disaster Management Cycle.
- Members meet regularly to update any changes to the team and community information in the CDRT plan.
- In 2022, CDRT training materials were expanded to include a CDRT Workbook and CDRT related videos. Training materials can be found on CADRIM Reference Centre website: <https://www.cadrim.org/>
- Standardised Evaluation is conducted at the end of the trainings, which include a simulation exercise.

CERT

- Inclusive of all persons interested in supporting disaster risk reduction activities.
- Very practical and robust training.
- Includes emergency communication training.
- Includes Leadership, Team Building and Problem Solving training.
- Aid in providing information for the development of Situational Reports and DANA reports.
- Participants meet regularly to continue training in their communities. However, once a year there is a National CERT Day where all CERTS will come together and compete on different CERT Skill Tests
- The 5 day training is the basic course, which requires persons to go back to the community and train
- All the trainers are specialists in their areas (Fire, Police, Medical, DM and Military). However, the Supervisors and Assistant Instructors are selected from past CERT

Modules/Units



CDRT

CDRT Course Outline:

- Module 1: CDRT & Disaster Risk Management
- Module 2: CDRT & Disaster Preparedness
- Module 3: CDRT Roles & Structures
- Module 4: Community Assessment
- Module 5: Stress Management and Psychosocial Support
- Module 6: Health in Emergencies
- Module 7: Fire Safety
- Module 8: Communication
- Module 9: Light Search & Rescue
- Module 10: Shelter Management
- Final Simulation

All-inclusive approach but training can be tailored to suit individual abilities and skills as well as the mandate of the National Society.

CERT

CERT Course outline:

- Unit 1: Disaster Preparation Training
- Unit 2: CERT Organisation Training
- Unit 3: Disaster Medical Operations Training (Part 1)
- Unit 4: Disaster Medical Operations Training (Part 2)
- Unit 5: Disaster Psychology Training
- Unit 6: Fire Safety & Utility Controls Training
- Unit 7: Light Search and Rescue Training
- Unit 8: Terrorism and CERT Training
- Course Review, Final Exam and Disaster Simulation
- Additional CERT Training

Post CRT Training



The membership of both CDRTs and CERT is on a voluntary basis. They maintain their own independence, and report to either the Red Cross National Society, the National Disaster Office and/or the local government and works in coordination with other response agencies.

In some countries, trained CDRTs and CERTs fall under the purview of the local disaster agency. In Trinidad and Tobago, CERTs fall under the jurisdiction of the Disaster Management Units of the various Municipal Corporations. In Jamaica, CDRTs are incorporated into the Parish Disaster Management Structure and reports to the Parish Disaster Coordinator for the Local Authority. Similarly in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, CDRTs report to the National Disaster Office. The Red Cross National Society takes responsibility for the CDRTs in Dominica, Guyana, Suriname and Grenada.

Best Practices



CDRT

- In Jamaica: CDRTs are linked to zonal committees; this structure helps to keep the groups active
- Development of a WhatsApp group which includes the National Society/National Disaster Office liaison
- CDRT curricula includes a Multi-Hazard approach
- Leadership training has been added to the curriculum to increase the sustainability and improve the efficiency of the group
- Community members own the process and are motivated to build a group that is specific to solving issues in the community by the community
- CDRTs can be linked to the enhanced Vulnerability Capacity Assessment (eVCA) approach, linking risk analysis and community-based disaster management
- In Suriname, CDRTs also assist in writing proposals to assist community initiatives and raise funding for community projects.
- In Belize and Jamaica, CDRTs assist with monitoring community early warning systems and alerting the community of danger by using school bells or runners.

CERT

- Frequent call for simulations during and after training
- Agencies in specialised areas deliver specific trainings (medic etc) so members have relevant information and become certified.
- Accepts a Multi-hazard approach
- Providing members with proper equipment builds the teams' efficiency and ability to response. Each member is outfitted with a personal response kit
- Better reference and resource
- Increase in courtesy calls amongst team members strengthens team building.
- In Dominica, CERTs worked well after TS Erica when communities were cut off. Members were able to come out and respond in their communities, while first responders were overwhelmed and trying to get to persons impacted.

Lessons Learnt



CDRT

- Developing CDRTs can increase National Societies' volunteer base.
- Humanitarian service can be more widely dispensed and be tailored to support national response frameworks.
- CDRT teams need more structure and guidance to ensure sustainability. They will become ineffective if they are left immediately on their own. A clear plan for sustaining CRTs is needed by the agency with oversight of the CRTs. There should be an agreement of between the National Society and the NDO or local government on how to treat with CRTs.
- Refresher trainings are important or access to further trainings are needed to sustain CDRTs.
- CDRTs should be incorporated in drills/ simulations/tabletop exercises at least once a year.
- Leadership skills and team building should be included in the CDRT training curricular. These were added in the revamped CDRT training materials.

CERT

- CERTs react to learning principles and techniques that encourage learning by doing. Conducting drills and exercises are the best way to retain the knowledge learn from CERT trainings.
- CERTs are a resource to the community; so they need to be equipped properly (individual kit and team kits).
- Refresher trainings and the need to monitor team membership can impact the effectiveness of CERTs.

Differences



CDRT

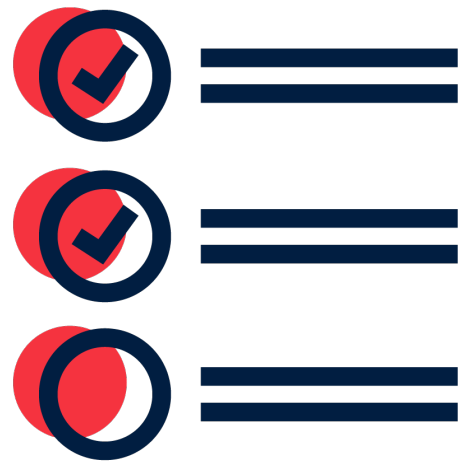
- Opened to general community members to form CDRTs to build community resilience independently.
- Modules cover overviews of topics and not specialised certification on some themes of learning, but can be furthered if interest was there through secondary training.
- Simulation happens mostly after training is complete.
- Focuses on basic concepts of DRR/DRM

CERT

- Selection criteria for participation.
- Governed by National Response Agency or Local Response Authority.
- Modules are very detailed and hands-on
- Frequent simulations
- Stronger search and rescue component

Similarities

- Covers most of the basic DRM modules
- Engages Humanitarian response actors
- Both community based
- Volunteer base
- Assist in all phases of the Disaster Management Cycle
- Self-activation



Section B

**MINIMUM
STANDARDS**

Similarities



A reflection on both CDRT and CERT methodologies through consultation by a quadrant of stakeholders in the region produced a comparative analysis of the CRT mechanism.

Methodology & Training

In order to ensure that the team will be well trained from the first training they receive, any CRT methodology should have as basic training units the following:

Topic

Concepts Taught

Disaster Risk Management And Disaster Preparedness

- Disaster concepts.
- Key DRR terms.
- Knowing what to do before, during and after different hazard impacts.

- National disaster system.
- Table-top exercise (practical).

CRT Organization

- Team dynamics and leadership skills.
- How CRTs fit into the national systems.

- CRT community structure.
- Roles and responsibilities of CRTs.

Community Assessments

- Understand the different types of assessments.
- Understand the type of information to be collected.

- Tips of working with other agencies.

Health In Emergencies

- Key health terms
- Communicable and Non-communicable diseases
- First Aid

- Dealing with epidemics
- Stabilize, packaging and transport/movement *(for medically qualified persons ONLY)*

Topic

Concepts Taught

Fire Safety

- Basic fire prevention at home and at work
- Practical exercise on the proper way to use a fire extinguisher.

Psychosocial Support

- Understanding stress and recognizing symptoms of stress.
- Basic understanding of psychosocial support.
- Tips on providing psychosocial support to affected persons.

Emergency Communication

- Risk communication to impacted people.
- Understand communication barriers.
- Understand the different modes of communication.
- Use of two-way radios.

Light Search & Rescue

- Effective size-up.
- Search methods.
- Safety precautions.
- Practical exercise.

Shelter Management

- Setting up single host shelters.
- Opening and managing a shelter.
- Shelter rules.
- Practical exercise.

Final Evaluation

- Simulation exercise is conducted.

Evaluations, Frequency Of Trainings & Refreshers

To ensure that the participants have acquired both the required knowledge and developed the right skills, the training should be evaluated by a Final examination comprising of both theatrical and practical exercises. Activities or quizzes that test learning should be completed by participants during training sessions. A simulation exercise must be done at the end of the training.

With the objective of strengthening preparedness and the response mechanisms at the national scale, training of new CRTs should be rolled out at least **once every 6 months to a year or once a year provided that a simulation exercise can be completed** in collaboration with key stakeholders. The frequency of trainings will depend on

Refreshers

Obtaining knowledge, new skills and the technical know-how to operate as a first responder is fundamental, but the retaining and application of those teachings in a masterful and efficient manner that results in the saving of lives and protection of livelihoods is paramount. Refresher exercises are an excellent means of testing the retention of knowledge of CRT members and evaluate the strengths and areas for improvements within the team. The following are the recommended frequency, at minimum, that CRTs should be holding refresher exercises:

Full review of skill-based modules: **Once every 2 years**

Simulations and/or drill exercises: **Once per year in collaboration with National Disaster Office, Local Government and other response agencies. It is recommended to have as frequent as possible.**

Important note:

The design and evaluation team for the community simulation and drills should consist of multi-sector agencies. Community Disaster Plan and the National Disaster Plan should be use as reference for the support in the designing of simulations a drills.

Training Review

It is highly recommended that a systematic revision of the CRT training materials and methodology is done by a Technical Advisory Group at a minimum of every 2 years. This will ensure that the methodology is up to date with DDR needs and trends.

CDRT Training of Trainers (ToT) should be conducted every 2 years in order to add to the pool of CDRT facilitators and to ensure that the facilitators are aware of any revisions made to the training materials.

The periods suggested are based on learning from established groups and based on consistently funded groups. The frequency of trainings and refreshers will be dependent upon CRT budget resources.

Profiles & Equipment

Facilitation Team

Any facilitator of a CRT methodology, whether is a general facilitator or just of a specific unit should meet the following criteria to ensure the quality of the training:

- Demonstrated knowledge and experience in the thematic area.
- Stimulates interaction and the free sharing of thoughts and ideas.
- A masterful and engaging listener, better known as active listener.
- Understanding of community-based organizations.
- Possesses strong facilitation skills or the capacity to learn proper facilitation techniques and the integration of adult learning techniques.
- Capacity to build and maintain partnerships to enhance overall community resilience.
- Proficient in documenting activities, incidents, and outcomes.
- Ability to generate comprehensive reports for analysis and improvement.

Having a culturally sensitive and diverse facilitation team enriches the experience of the community participants and will allow the space for the group to network and become acquainted with the different agencies they are likely to interact with while carrying out their duties, and vice versa.

The Facilitation team can consist of representatives from a combination of different organizations, for examples:

- Red Cross
- NDO
- NGO
- National Authorities (such as Fire Services, Police, Ministry of Health (including clinical and medical professionals, epidemic control specialists, Psychosocial Support specialists and emergency medical technician)

Important note:

Facilitators should be practicing professionals in the thematic area that they will be instructing. At a minimum, someone who is able to teach first aid. Clinical is not as important as health responders. Health responders (who may be clinical) can give context to how systems function in the aftermath of disaster and how alert and referral should work and should be able to provide basic first aid skills.

CRT Member Profile:

To have a team that really functions and that can carry out its duties and responsibilities effectively and efficiently, based on standard operating procedures, it is important that the right persons are recruited as members. Candidates that have an interest in being part of a CRT should possess the following characteristics:

- Basic interest or willingness to be a member
- Have skills related to the CRT's scope of work or be willing to be trained accordingly
- Resources and or expertise that will benefit the community and residents
- Works well as part of a team
- Ability to work in under stressful circumstances or be aware of limitations during stressful situations and support alternative activities
- Available to work flexible hours in times of an emergency

Size of the team:

Every community is different, and so the composition of the group will vary from region to region. When recruiting members, it is important, as mentioned above, to be strategic in targeting highly motivated individuals who are able to achieve the objectives of the team.

Minimum number of members per team: 10-15

(Size is also dependent on the size of the community, it may exceed the recommended 15 or be under the minimum of ten in some instances).

CRT Equipment:

During major crises, it is important that each CRT team is equipped with the tools and machinery to be able to carry out their tasks effectively and efficiently. There are two sets of items that the team must be furnished with when responding: 1. Personal response kit, and 2. Community response kit. These kits should include:

Personal Response Kit

- Hard hats
- Flashlight
- Radio
- Whistles
- Rain coats
- Boots
- Googles
- Gloves
- Hardhat (with headlamp)
- Reflective vests
- Masks
- Individual sized Water Bottle
- Personal First Aid kit
- Vest (reflective)
- Ponchos/rain coats
- ID badges
- Hand sanitizer

Community Response Kit

- Flash lights/w batteries
- Pick heads
- Pick handles
- 2-5 Garden forks
- 2 Chain saws (including fuel containers, chain saw lubricant, 2-stroke oil, and file to sharpen the teeth).
- 2 Traffic cones
- 5-10 Tarpaulins
- 2-5 Shovels
- 120 ft. rope
- 5- 10 gallon water container
- Whistles
- First Aid Kit
- 2-5 Cutlasses

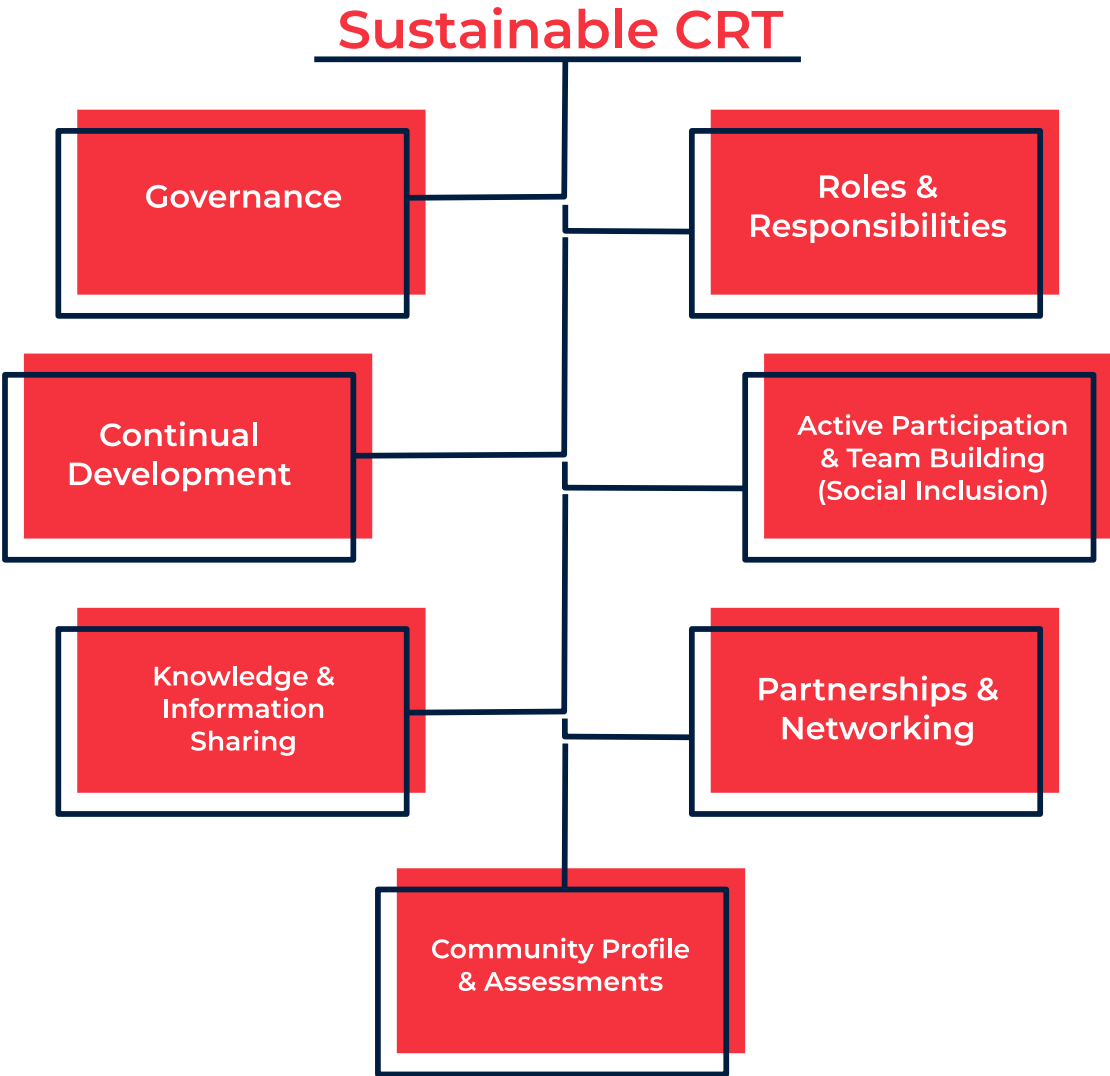


Section C

**SUSTAINABILITY
GUIDELINES AT
NATIONAL AND
COMMUNITY
LEVELS**

Community Response Teams (CRTs) play a pivotal role in enhancing disaster resilience within communities. These teams are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively prepare for and respond to emergencies, making them a crucial component of a robust national response system. To ensure sustainability, it is imperative to integrate CRTs seamlessly into the broader emergency response framework. By doing so, these teams can contribute significantly to the overall resilience of communities, allowing for a more coordinated and efficient response to disasters. This integration not only bolsters the capacity of CRTs but also reinforces the collective strength of the national response system, ultimately fostering a more resilient and adaptive society in the face of unforeseen challenges.

These sustainability guidelines for community response teams are built on seven pillars and are intended to support the CRT’s processes from training to the organizational components and relationship with community members and external actors, thereby helping the teams to be self-sufficient and sustainable through time.



1. Governance at a National Level



“The exercise of economic, political, and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels. It comprises mechanisms, processes, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations, and mediate their differences.” – UNDP.

Proper governance is key to the establishment and the eventual growth of community response teams. It speaks to the vision and mission of the group and identifies a clear road-map on how it plans to achieve its objectives. Governance speaks to the clear lines reporting and categorizes the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders. Some key contributions of good governance include:

- Legal Framework
- Standard Operating Procedures
- Operation Manuals
- Code of Conduct
- Memorandums of Understanding

Community Response Teams, both CDRT and CERT, forms part of the national response mechanism of that country. As such, a clear chain of command must be present and known by all CRTs to ensure effective response and coordination of efforts.

The following chart highlights the governance structure at the national level (this can vary in each country depending on their policies and laws). The aim of this diagram is to showcase the support levels available to the CRTs including, but not limited to:

1. Management oversight
2. Consistent and equal access to resources
3. Shared responsibility

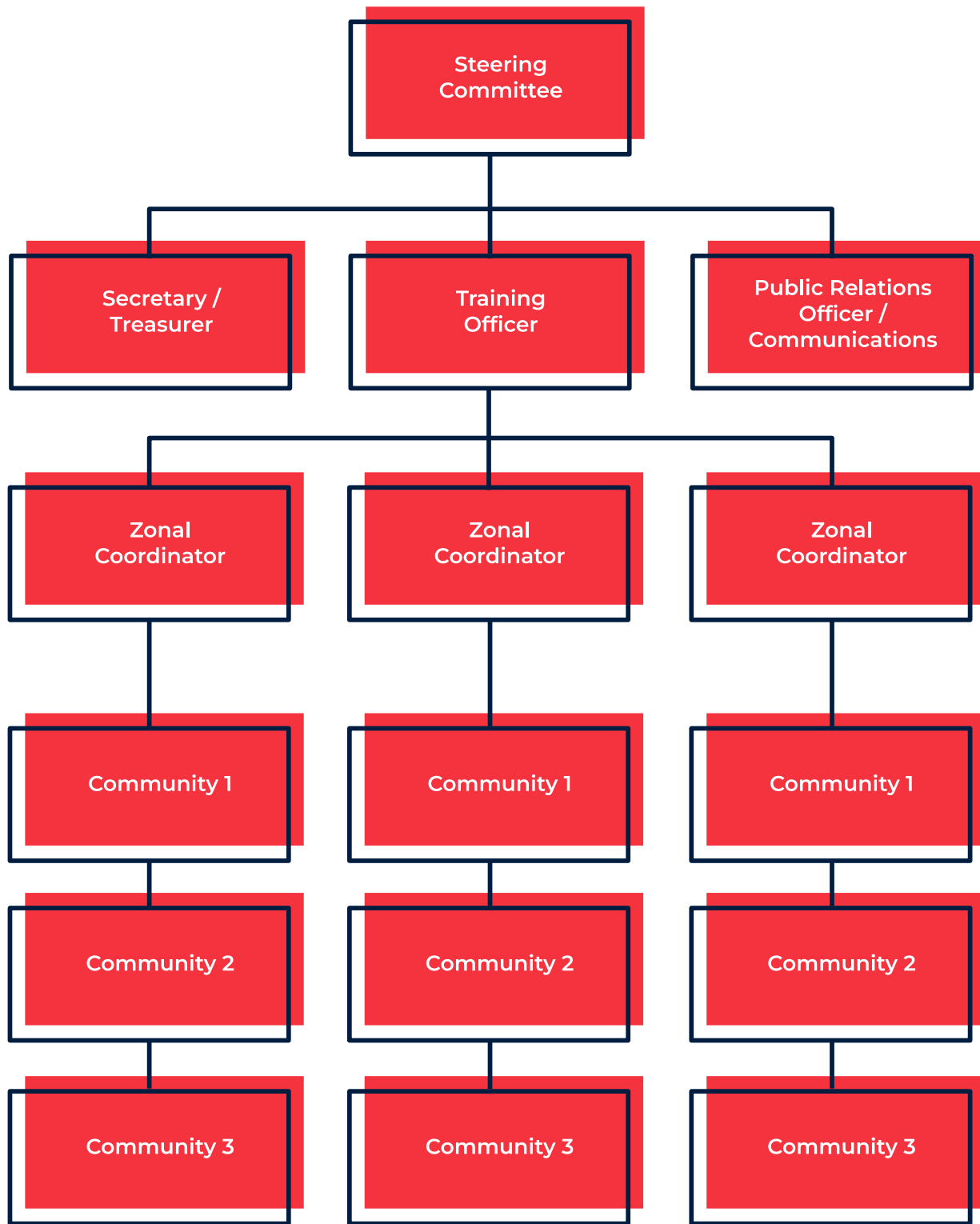


Figure 1: CRT Governance Structure

This model can be adjusted based on the legal framework of the country and which lead agency leads the organisation of the CRT, or the national categorisation of geographical boundaries and their management.

2. Roles & Responsibilities



Ensuring that all members/stakeholders have a clear understanding of their duties and contributions as a part of the CRT network is essential. Oversight and management is a shared responsibility among several key agencies and organizations, therefore a holistic approach to who does what, when and how much be clearly outlined.

Roles

Steering Committee

- NDO – Chair
- Red Cross – Co-chair
- 3 other agencies (fire, medical, police/military, social development ministry, NGOs)

Chair

Responsibilities

- Resource mobilization
 - Development of annual budget
 - Strategic planning
 - Planning of annual CRT activities
 - Appointment of district and community leadership positions
 - Establishment and training of new teams
 - Scheduling of refresher trainings
 - Document and record keeping of all CRT activities
-
- Leads steering committee and oversees all CRT activities
 - Develops and manages relationships and communication across the assigned priority areas
 - Participates in ongoing strategic planning and seeks new opportunities for growth and development
 - Participates in monitoring and evaluating efforts within the priority areas

Roles

Committee Members

- NDO – Chair
- Red Cross – Co-chair
- 3 other agencies (fire, medical, police/military, social development ministry, NGOs)

Secretary / Treasurer

Responsibilities

- Plan and set the overall direction for priority areas
- Ensure that major goals and timelines are achieved
- Facilitate innovative and problem-solving and open communication that encourages relationship building across network; and serve as a sounding board for new ideas and opportunities for growth
- Monitor progress, which may include tracking timelines and creating and implementing evaluation procedures
- Ensure meetings are effectively organised and minutes taken
 - Liaise with chair to plan meetings
 - Receive agenda items from committee members
 - Circulate approved minutes
 - Check that agreed actions are carried out
 - Implement fund raising activities
- Maintaining effective records and administration
 - Keeping up-to-date contact details
 - Filing minutes and reports
 - Compile list of names and addresses that are useful to the group
 - Keeping a list of the group's activities and future plans
- Upholding legal requirements
 - Acting as custodian
 - Checking quorum is present at meetings
 - Ensuring elections are in line with stipulated procedures
 - Ensuring group activities are in line with its objectives
- Communication and correspondence
 - Respond to all committee correspondence
 - Filing all committee correspondence received and copies sent
 - Keeping copies of any publications (leaflets, etc.)

Roles

P.R.O / Communications

Responsibilities

- Prepare and disseminate circulars
- Document the work/response of CRTs
- Maintain an up-to-date communication network
- Planned publicity campaigns

Training Officer

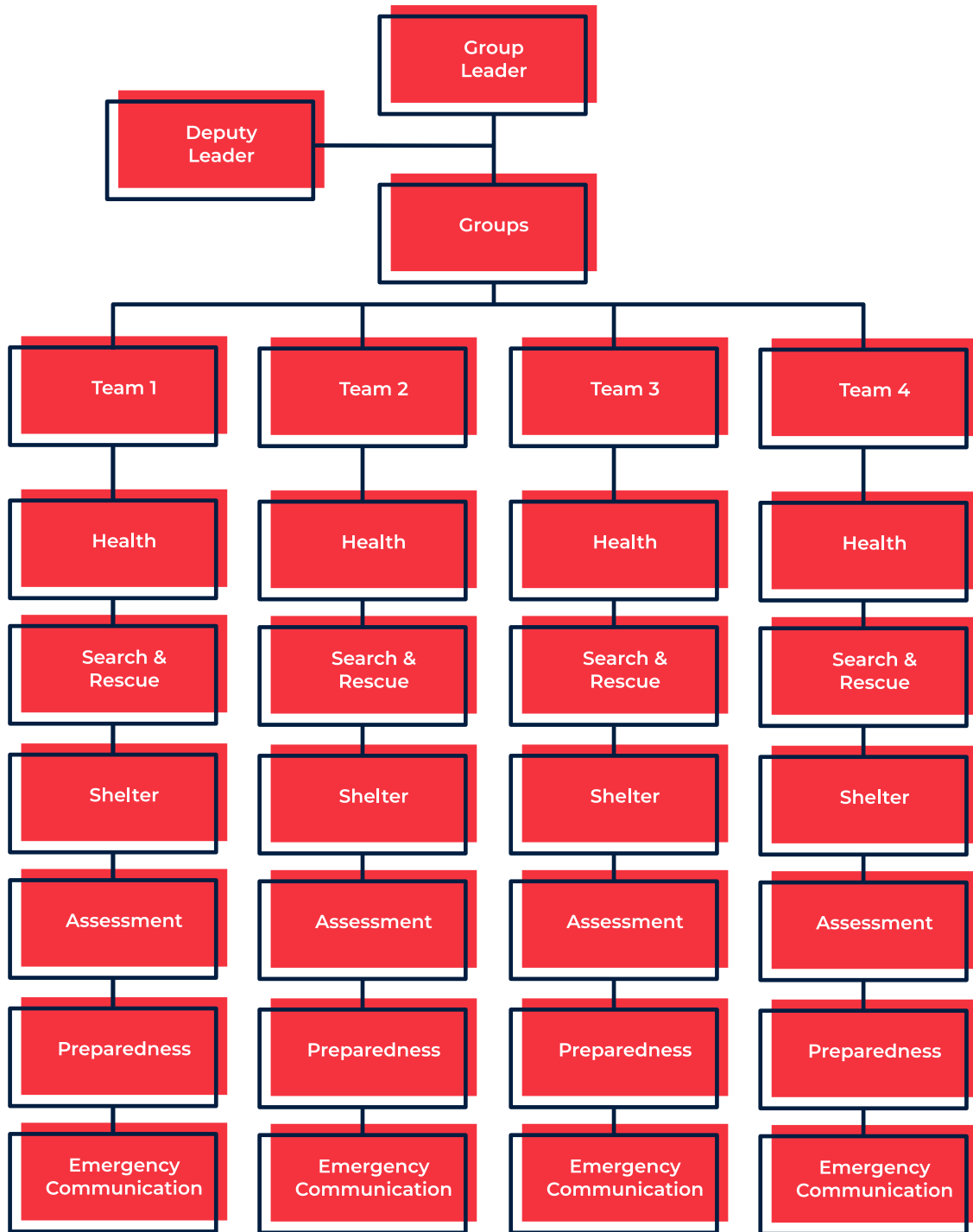
- Develop and maintain training materials to the highest standard
- Evaluate the effectiveness of training and modify materials as appropriate
- Maintain effective communication with the CRTs to ascertain training needs
- Assist in the procurement of materials to support the delivery of trainings

Zonal Coordinators

- Maintain an up-to-date schedule of trainings and refresher courses
- Ensure adequate supplies and equipment are available for CRTs to perform their duties
- Plan, manage, supervise and evaluate all programs under his/her care
- Keep an updated roster of all CRT members

The design and evaluation team for the community simulation and drills should consist of multi-sector agencies. Community Disaster Plan and the National Disaster Plan should be use as reference for the support in the designing of simulations a drills.

3. Governance at a Community Level



This model can be adjusted.

Ensuring that all team members have a clear understanding of their duties and contributions as a part of the team is essential. Members should also understand the reporting structure, both internally and at a National Level.

Roles

Group Leader

Responsibilities

- Have overall responsibility of the team
- Acts as the liaison between the team and the National Society/ National Disaster Office
- Responsible for leading preparedness measures
- Responsible for assigning roles of other team members when assisting in a response
- Responsible for leading the development and updating of CDRT plan

Deputy Group Leader

- Supports the Group Leader with the planning and implementation of team activities

Other Roles

- Health
- Search and Rescue
- Shelter
- Assessment
- Preparedness
- Emergency Communication

- Each team member will provide assistance where needed, therefore it is not necessary to assign persons to the functions listed under “Other Roles”. However it is important that teams members understand each role and it is up to the Group Leader to assign people to the roles based on their individual strengths when needed.

4. Active Participation & Team Building (Social Inclusion)



In the Caribbean, we have very dynamic and unique communities, each varying in size, people, cultural norms and daily activities. Regardless of geographical location or the political construct of a community, vulnerabilities are ever present and this requires the intervention of skilled personnel to reduce the risks and impacts that these vulnerabilities can have on the population.

Community Response Teams have the responsibility of developing socially inclusive programs, which are set up primarily to overcome social exclusion for vulnerable and socially isolated people, such as, persons living with disabilities and the elderly, minority groups and displaced persons, by providing bridges back into the community. In order to truly achieve social inclusion, there needs to be an open-mindedness and respect for diversity. CRTs discuss ways of creating diverse teams, which negates exclusion overall.

CRTs must be committed to having an inclusive society where all people are valued, their differences are respected and their basic needs are met.

Having a people's centred approach to CRTs action in vulnerability reduction takes into account the actions taken and led by community response teams, which are vital to the resilience of a community. Therefore, by being first aid trained, doing community clean up, family emergency planning and having a community disaster plan, at least once a year can reduce vulnerabilities and thus enhance capacities towards a better and vibrant community.

By having CRTs leading the following tasks community risk -assessment, disaster preparedness meetings, project management, risk reduction and evacuation plans, inventory of equipment and relief stock, emergency response and public awareness and education will enable community members to be more cognizant of their needs and become more involved in the overall process of resilience.

Team Building

A Team is a group of people that share a common purpose, to which they are all committed to, and who are empowered to set goals, solve problems and make decisions.

In order to archive CRT core goal of building more prepared and resilient communities, a unified approach is needed to have a strong team. One that is dedicated and committed to carrying out its different tasks and responsibilities

“Selection of team members should be an inclusive exercise, where everyone with interest has a chance and a role within the team. Advocating for social inclusion in our communities starts from the inside of the team.”

Benefits of Teamwork

Team work contributes towards:

- Increased productivity
- Improvement in quality
- Innovation and creativity
- Improved commitment and motivation
- Enhanced problem-solving
- Improved communication
- Effective time management
- Learning opportunities

Team members can learn from each other which include acquiring new skills, gaining insights into different perspectives and sharing knowledge.

What does belonging to a team mean?

- Having a shared communication network
- Accepting accountability
- Co-operation
- Being in-sync (all members singing the same tune)
- Supporting each other
- Learning, developing skills and abilities
- Patience- have to recognize that teams go through different stages of maturity
- Mutual support
- Vision
- Involvement
- Working towards a common goal
- Team members accepting responsibility
- Rapid and effective response
- Enhanced preparedness
- Community engagement and connection
- Skills development
- Leadership opportunities
- Personal and professional growth

5. Partnerships & Networking



Partnerships and networking are one means of supporting sustainable programs at the community level by ensuring that relationships are well established with key organizations and institutions that has a stake in working in the same target area(s). Mindful that different partners come with varying levels of experience and expertise, careful consideration must be given as to what each one would be contributing, including the convener (CRT).

Community engage is core to building relationships with community members and requires a multifaceted, inclusive approach when engaging communities. That is why, establishing and maintaining effective partnerships and networks must be treated seriously and includes cooperation with multiple actors at the relevant levels. This level of cooperation and coordination is important, because it creates opportunities for the people. This is especially so since there are several actors that already exists or works within the target area; this space can become crowded quickly and results in each stakeholder vying for the same resources. Working jointly with other stakeholders is one way of not overburdening the community, while maximizing your resources by pooling them together.

When identifying who your partners would be, it is important that you first consider these guiding questions:

1. Why? Determine the purpose the partnership will serve	2. Who? Identify the groups / companies / agencies that you will work with	3. What? Identify what you and/ or the other agencies being to the table	4. When? Establish timelines for the delivery of actions
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Partnerships are normally defined as an arrangement between two or more parties that agrees to collaborate to advance their mutual interest. The terms of this arrangement is often outlines in an agreed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), or a Letter of Agreement (LoA).

Networking tend to be broader than partnerships. This arrangement is more informal and mainly involves the exchange of information and spontaneous interactions.

6. Community Profile & Assessments



In providing a public service to the community, the key to doing so successfully is knowing what is in there and where. Having information readily available is crucial to making quick decisions. Not only must there be information available, but it must be known by the people who are likely to be affected or involved in the event of a disaster or crisis.

The process of mapping your community is one of several hands on approaches that involves everyone that community response teams can facilitate that contributes to disaster risk reduction. Here are some examples:

1. Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (eVCA)

eVCA uses various participatory tools to gauge people's exposure to and capacity to resist natural hazards. It is an integral part of disaster preparedness and contributes to the creation of community-based disaster preparedness programs at the rural and urban grass-roots level.

2. Family Disaster Planning

It is important to make sure that every household and family is prepared and informed in the event of a disaster or emergency occurs. CRTs may not be able to be everywhere and help everyone at the same time. You can assist these households by:

- Discuss how to prepare and respond to emergencies that are most likely to happen where they live, work and play
- Identify responsibilities for each member of the household
- Plan what to do in case you are separated during an emergency
- Plan what to do if you have to evacuate

7. Knowledge Management & Information Sharing



It is often heard in the workplace that “if something is not documented, it didn’t happen.” This phrase echoes what we will like to emphasize on **Knowledge Management** and how this impacts the group meeting its organizational objectives. It is important to mention here that this is a process that requires detailed, accurate and the identification of relevant materials/resources.

So, what is the first step? At the inception of CRTs, there is often a rapid flow of new information or what some might call ‘information overload.’ Note, this is not a bad thing. It is important that CRTs are aware of all of the information and trainings that are relevant to their work. What happens next with that new information is what is critical.

This is the point where CRTs need to decipher and organize that information. In order to be sustainable, CRTs must be seen as being biotic – alive and growing. This means then that they must be constantly looking to:

- Updating of training
- Identifying new areas for skills development
- Researching current and emerging trends, e.g. climate change and the related impacts on Small Island Developing States,



Annex

**SUSTAINABILITY
PLAN FOR THE
CRTS**

SG Framework



Getting Started

- Identify your community goals and objectives (needs and threats; SWAT analysis)
- Establish awareness of the needs and or threats (Scope)
- Once it has been established, the existence in a very vulnerable community where they are exposed to several hazards namely: hurricane, fire earth, drought, among others
- Want to build a resilient community through training- practical and theory
- Create the group structure and see how it fits into the bigger picture
- Develop the mission statement
- Develop the roles and responsibilities of the group
- Develop the purpose
- Create SoPs, operational manuals, code of conduct
- Documentation and distribution

Build your case for support

- Community vulnerabilities (there may be need for help from outside the communities)
- Due to the location to the essential services
- Community willingness
- Best to have First Responders with the community
- What kind of support is needed

***Develop Strategies
To Maintain
Partnerships***

- Why?
 - Determine the purpose the partnership will serve
- Who?
 - Identify groups/companies/agencies
- Recognition
- Activity Sharing (offer free services such as first aid)
- Consistent Liaison
- Transparency and Accountability
- Performance
- Appoint Persons/Teams
- Identify Needs
- Draft a Plan
- Adopt a Plan
- Implement a Plan

Sustaining Community Response Teams



Regular Training Exercises

- Conduct frequent training sessions for team members to enhance their skills.
- Simulate various disaster scenarios to ensure preparedness and coordination.
- Include refreshers on first aid, search and rescue, and communication protocols.

Community Workshops

- Organize workshops to educate the community on disaster preparedness.
- Teach basic first aid, evacuation procedures, and emergency communication.
- Foster a culture of resilience by promoting awareness and understanding.

Mock Drills and Simulations

- Periodically conduct mock drills involving the entire community.
- Simulate evacuation processes, shelter setup, and communication procedures.
- Evaluate the team's performance and identify areas for improvement.

Collaborative Partnerships

- Establish partnerships with local businesses, schools, and organizations.
- Coordinate joint training exercises with emergency services and response agencies.
- Share resources and knowledge with neighboring communities for mutual support.

Public Awareness Campaigns

- Launch awareness campaigns on social media, community bulletin boards, and local media outlets.
- Share success stories, testimonials, and information about the team's activities.
- Encourage community members to join and support the response efforts.

Regular Team Meetings

- Conduct regular team meetings to discuss ongoing initiatives and address any concerns.
- Provide a platform for team members to share their experiences and insights.
- Use meetings to reinforce team cohesion and commitment.



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