Being Ready

CARE
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Glossary
Executive Summary

Being prepared for emergencies will help CARE International achieve its mission of ending poverty. Responding to disasters, mitigating risks and helping vulnerable communities become more prepared and more resilient to the effects of disasters are vital components of CARE’s humanitarian efforts. None of these objectives can be achieved without thorough, ongoing emergency preparedness planning at the Country Office level. As such, emergency preparedness planning is a key strategic and operational imperative for every CARE Country Office.

This guide presents a practical, operationally useful process and framework for Country Office emergency preparedness planning. The recommendations found throughout this guide are based on detailed analysis of past emergency experiences, direct research with Country Offices and discussions with key field personnel. Through this new approach to emergency preparedness planning, CARE aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To promote the understanding of the effects of disasters on the underlying causes of poverty and the importance of emergency preparedness planning to CARE’s overall vision, mission and objectives.
- To provide a practical roadmap of the emergency preparedness planning process and direction on developing an operationally useful emergency preparedness plan.
- To provide guidance on incorporating emergency preparedness as a standard component of CARE’s operational and strategic processes and ongoing programming.

Emergency preparedness planning is a complex, long-term undertaking. There are many steps in the process and great investment to be made on the part of Country Office staff. As such, CARE recommends an iterative, or tiered, approach to emergency preparedness planning where Country Offices take incremental steps and investments toward being completely prepared. CARE has developed multiple Tiers of preparedness that are focused on the following: (Tier 1) internal analysis, scenario building and action planning; (Tier 2) response plans, partner development and shadow structures; (Tier 3) community capacity building, knowledge management and local government coordination; and (Tier 4) early warning systems, national government disaster planning and regional planning.

This document offers a practical, overarching guide to the emergency preparedness planning process. It focuses on the process of planning: if the process is right, an effective emergency preparedness plan will naturally follow. Training workshops and more detailed documentation will guide Country Offices through the four tiers of preparedness planning. Together, this overview and the workshops will provide Country Offices with the knowledge and tools needed to become prepared for emergencies.

The end result of this initiative must be effective mitigation, preparedness and response that saves lives and diminishes further suffering. And, to reduce the effects of disasters, CARE must address the underlying risks that exacerbate them. This guide serves as a starting point for achieving those goals.
Why Plan for Emergency Preparedness – the Case for Planning

CARE has invested considerable effort to develop programming approaches that integrate risk management into long-term programs that have the objective of addressing underlying causes of poverty and vulnerability. This means not only attacking causes of vulnerability, but also incorporating readiness to deal with the effects of acute vulnerability—in terms of protection from and mitigation of shocks, as well as response to the humanitarian emergencies they trigger.

CARE firmly believes emergency preparedness planning is a critical component for all development programming and is a necessary ingredient not only for effective emergency response but also for effective risk mitigation and reduction of community vulnerabilities before an event occurs. Based on its extensive experience in humanitarian relief throughout the world, CARE has identified three critical drivers of the need for emergency preparedness:

**One: Planning for Emergencies Furthers CARE’s Mission to End Poverty**
Responding to emergencies and disasters is central to CARE’s vision, mission and objectives as is addressing the underlying causes of poverty. The relationship between the effects of emergencies and poverty is direct and intimately tied. Repeated exposure of vulnerable populations to disasters is a major cause of poverty, and chronic poverty makes populations all the more vulnerable. Addressing both acute symptoms of poverty—like emergencies—and chronic underlying causes are integral to CARE’s mission. And, good preparation is necessary to do both well.

One of the most significant efforts CARE can make towards its vision is to reduce the consequences of emergencies before and when they happen. Helping people survive and recover from disasters, reducing community and household vulnerability and mitigating harmful effects of future shocks are key goals. These objectives can only be achieved through detailed emergency preparedness planning.

**Two: Emergency Preparedness Planning Builds CARE’s Credibility**
In the 1990s, several global conferences triggered new ideas and new commitments to addressing disasters as an underlying cause of poverty. More and more, CARE will be held accountable for what it does to diminish the effects of disasters and how the organization coordinates with communities and local governments in these endeavors. This means that CARE needs to demonstrate to its stakeholders how it has reduced emergency consequences not only during a response but also beforehand through mitigation and preparedness. Effective planning in these areas enhances CARE’s credibility in the international community—it allows CARE to respond confidently to questions raised and puts the organization in the driver’s seat when communicating to its stakeholders when and how it plans to respond to crises. In addition, evidence of detailed preparedness planning gives CARE the credibility it needs to quickly raise funds to help support emergency response in the event of a disaster.

**Three: Established Plans Justify Actions**
Planning shows forethought. A plan can protect Country Directors and senior staff from scrutiny and skepticism during an emergency—and to some extent, protect CARE International from external scrutiny. The plan can act as a Country Office policy statement, establishing triggers and parameters for CARE’s engagement. In the event that a Country Office elects not to respond or to respond in a more limited or robust manner than expected, the Country Director can speak convincingly to how the plan determined the scope and scale of actions.
The Meaning and Measurement of Preparedness

How do we know we are prepared? What does it mean to be prepared and how should preparedness be measured? Preparedness is much more than having a documented plan. To put it simply, preparedness is a state of mind and a level of readiness. Being prepared means being ready—ready to save lives, ready to save livelihoods, ready to minimize suffering, ready to prevent destitution, and at times, ready not to respond.

For CARE, preparedness encompasses all aspects of disaster management—from addressing underlying causes to responding in times of emergencies. First and foremost, preparedness must focus on mitigation—taking pre-emptive measures to help communities avoid emergencies and become better equipped so that disaster consequences are lessened. But because some risks cannot be completely mitigated, Country Offices should always remain in a state of readiness to respond to crises. Good Country Office preparedness includes the right mitigation and response processes that are integrated into all development. Ultimately, a well-prepared office should be:

- Able to identify high-risk situations and design programmatic interventions to reduce the effects should the situation unfold.
- Able to strengthen community capacities to articulate efforts at reducing the effects of identified risk situations and be better prepared to respond.
- Confident enough to “raise the alarm” in the event of an emergency (to CARE and the international community) and to provide best estimates of the situation.
- Able to categorize any emergency, factoring in scale, speed of onset and typology of causal factors.
- Able to realistically recognize its own capacity and limitations to respond.

Measuring Preparedness

Measuring preparedness starts with evaluating the quality of mitigation efforts and how well Country Offices have integrated preparedness planning into ongoing development programming. If risk mitigation is successful, communities should be more resilient to disasters and more equipped to manage the consequences of an emergency with limited assistance from CARE. If efforts at improving community-based preparedness are effective, a limited response to a disaster from CARE would be evidence of competence rather than deficiency.

Secondly, if an emergency response from CARE is warranted, the measure of CARE’s preparedness is the quality of response—not the possession of a plan or the process used to develop it. The ultimate measure of the quality of its response is impact, which comes from competent performance. Not necessarily the timing or scale of the response. But, did CARE save lives, improve livelihoods, minimize suffering and prevent destruction.

Criteria defining minimum levels of preparedness are being developed and long-term expectations of preparedness are still under discussion, including the higher-level impacts CARE’s emergency preparedness planning must aim for. The overarching end result must be effective mitigation and response that saves lives and diminishes further suffering. And, to reduce the effects of disasters, CARE must address the underlying risks that exacerbate them.
The Process: How to Plan

For emergency preparedness planning to have the best chance of organizational success, it is imperative that Country Offices get the process right. The process must be kept simple and focused. Too many steps will reduce the effectiveness of even the best manager and facilitator.

The process of emergency preparedness planning is more important than the plan. A participatory, thoughtful, focused and regular planning process airs issues and concerns, clarifies roles, responsibilities and procedures, hones analytical skills, builds confidence, strengthens teams, and can inform ongoing programming.

Based on careful and detailed analysis, direct research with Country Offices and discussions with key field staff, CARE has developed a set of practical guidelines for conducting emergency preparedness planning. This guide provides an overview of the planning process, including a set of steps Country Offices can take to improve their level of preparedness. Through formal training workshops, CARE will provide more detailed information and instruction on the planning process—including a tiered, or iterative, approach to emergency preparedness—as well as instruction on developing the actual plan document.

Seven Steps to Successful Emergency Preparedness

CARE recommends a planning process that incorporates the following seven steps:

- **Step 1: Gather Information**
- **Step 2: Identify Risks**
- **Step 3: Analyze Risks and Develop Scenarios**
- **Step 4: Review Operations and Management Considerations**
- **Step 5: Analyze Capacity Gaps**
- **Step 6: Document and Distribute the Plan**
- **Step 7: Monitor, Review for Impact and Update the Plan**

**Step 1: Gather Information**

Information is required to make clear decisions on risk scenarios CARE can or will have to address in the future. Review of past responses to events, historical data from communities and government centers, early warning systems, etc. can provide inputs for identifying the primary risks in a country or region.

Critical to the analysis of the information is the ability to know when enough information is available to make an informed decision on critical risks for CARE to focus on. For example, civil unrest may be a critical risk. However, in-depth political analysis is less important to the analysis of impact. If the risk is confined to a small part of the country where CARE does not work, it may not be the most critical risk to address.
While existing information is useful, fresh thinking is most valuable to developing new approaches and plans for emergency preparedness. Participants in the planning process should avoid redundant thinking and reliance on existing plans and documents.

### Step 2: Identify Risks

In either a workshop or team forum, the Country Office should discuss, analyze and evaluate potential risks and identify those risks most likely to occur and those with the highest consequence levels. These risks will be the basis for risk analysis and scenario development to follow.

When identifying risks, Country Offices should consider the following equation \( R = \frac{HXV}{C} \):

\[
Risk = Hazard \ (\text{the event}) \times Vulnerability \ (\text{root causes, unsafe conditions, other pressures}) \divided \ by \ Capacity \ (\text{community resources, assets, knowledge, social assets, etc})
\]

(See HPN Good Practice Review, Number 9, March 2004, John Twigg, pg. 20 for more detailed information on the risk equation)

In identifying risks, it is important to consider the different types of hazards a community faces and which ones CARE has the capacity to prepare for or respond to. In general, hazards can be categorized in three groups: natural, technological and environmental degradation. Natural hazards include earthquakes, tsunamis, major storms, drought, epidemic disease outbreak and others. Technological hazards originate from technological or industrial accidents and failures, such as pollution, dam failures, nuclear activities and toxic wastes. Environmental degradation is induced by human actions and includes deforestation, land degradation, wildland fires and loss of water among others. (See Twigg, pg. 15 for further information)

It is important to understand that communities often face multiple hazards at once—e.g. natural combined with technological—and that the combination of hazards creates an even more complex risk to address.

**Objective: Identify the critical disaster risk situations**

**Key Questions to Consider**

- What are historical disasters over the last 50 years?
- What has been the effect of these disasters?
- Are their potential disasters or hazards CARE has not considered—epidemic, biological, environmental or conflict?
- Where would they occur? Are these in areas CARE works? Are they regional?
- What would be the consequence and how severe would it be?
- Does CARE have expertise in any of these disasters?
- Who will be affected? How vulnerable are the communities? What is their capacity to cope? Are communities prepared to minimize the effect of the risk situation or to respond if it unfolds?
- What would be best and worst case expectations?
Step 3: Analyze Risks and Develop Scenarios

Risk analysis and scenario development is one of the most critical parts of the emergency preparedness planning process. Using scenarios is rehearsing for the future. Scenario analysis allows Country Offices to run through simulated events as if they were happening, and it helps staff:

- Understand key variables in the environment
- Identify and recognize the warning signs of an unfolding event
- Identify actions that can mitigate the effect of the consequence
- Avoid unpleasant surprises and reactive decision-making
- Avoid the trap of rigid Country Office and program strategies
- Know how to act in the event of an emergency

Having identified the critical risks to be addressed, participants should develop scenarios for each one. A scenario is nothing more than the scene one would expect to see if the risk event actually occurred. Obviously, there is a certain amount of guesswork and assumptions on how great the event and the corresponding results would be. At this point, an educated estimate based on thoughtful analysis is sufficient. The scenario should be updated as it unfolds and additional information becomes available. Appendix A provides a detailed template for completing scenario analysis.

Objective: Describe the “picture” one would see

Key Questions to Consider

- What is the event?
- How or who will make it occur?
- Where would this happen?
- When will it happen?
- Who will be affected?
- How vulnerable are the communities? What is their capacity to cope?
- What events have occurred that lead to this? How are they linked?
- What would one see? Who would one see?

Each scenario will identify most likely consequences, an analysis of how to reduce the consequences (mitigation, preparedness and response measures), links with current programming and action plans to address identified capacity gaps as described below.

Step 3.1 Identify Risk Consequences

All events have many consequences—social, economic, physical and environmental; small or large; short-term or long-term. Therefore, it is important to focus primarily on the consequences CARE can address. For example, floods may result in ruined agriculture, epidemic, population migration, social disruption, looting, etc. CARE may not able to mitigate, prepare or respond to everything. Therefore, it is important for Country Offices to reflect on where they can or should put emphasis for preparedness.
Objective: Identify potential consequences of the scenario

Key Questions to Consider
- What are likely consequences for this scenario?
- How serious are they?
- What is the scale of these consequences?
- What would be best/worst case expectations?
- What are likely consequences in event of an emergency?
- How are these linked?
- Are the consequences short or long term?
- What are issues other than the event itself which may exacerbate its effect (location of housing, on-going civil unrest, deforestation, etc.)

Step 3.2 Analyze Underlying Causes of Consequences

To develop the measures necessary to address risk consequences, Country Offices must analyze underlying causes. Vulnerability influences the consequence of an event. For example, if a population is already vulnerable due to a high rate of HIV/AIDS infection, they will be more susceptible to food shortages or the trauma of flight. Poorer communities often have no choice but to build in poor conditions and are therefore more vulnerable to flood or landslide.

Some areas for consideration are root causes (lack of access, political and economic systems), dynamic pressures (lack of skills, investment, markets, freedom as well as macro forces such as rapid urbanization, military expenditure, deforestation) or unsafe conditions (physical, economic, social and institutional).

During strategic planning, CARE may have already identified vulnerability issues and underlying causes of poverty in the communities where it works. By addressing these causes or building awareness of them, measures can be taken to reduce hazard consequences. CARE’s Underlying Causes Framework also can be used to identify vulnerability issues.

Step 3.3 Reducing Risks through Mitigation, Preparedness and Response Measures

This process uses the scenario to drive discussion on the risk consequences and what measures CARE can take to reduce those consequences. All measures, including mitigation, preparedness and response, are necessary to truly decrease effects of disaster.

Event consequences can be exacerbated or reduced depending on how CARE addresses situations. Just as CARE documents procedures for reducing potential harm during response, it should also document procedures for reducing harm when mitigating and preparing for events.

3.3.1 Mitigation Measures

Mitigating measures look at addressing potential events as early as possible. They provide a means to diminish consequences through early identification of the problem and possible outcomes. They look at asset protection and saving livelihoods, even on a
day-to-day basis. For example, the mitigation activity of teaching First Aid to staff and communities can save many lives during an emergency, but it is also an important skill that may come into use on a daily basis.

**Objective: Identify measures that lower consequences of the risk situation before it happens**

**Key Questions to Consider**
- What can be done to diminish consequences in terms of mitigation?
- What are the underlying causes of vulnerability that contribute to the probability of the risk unfolding (economic, social, environmental and/or physical)?
- Can CARE advocate for change before an event? Is disaster risk reduction part of national development agendas? Is CARE or its partners in a position to advocate in favor of such an effort?
- What current CARE programs work, or could work, towards mitigating the risk in question? Do CARE programs integrate disaster risk reduction thinking?
- What can be done with partners and communities to mitigate risk? How is CARE engaging communities to analyze their risks?
- What type of analysis can contribute to identifying ways to lower the effect of the risk situation?

### 3.3.2 Preparedness Measures

In many ways, preparedness is part of mitigation—measures that can be done in advance in anticipation of probable events. What is different is that preparedness measures are conducted when it is obvious that a risk will occur, irrespective of how much CARE has mitigated against the risk. Examples of preparedness measures could include early warning to communities or pre-positioning response stocks.

**Objective: Identify the measures that lower consequences through advanced preparation**

**Key Questions to Consider**
- What can be done to prepare the community for a disaster?
- What are community traditional contingencies?
- What mediums can be used to warn communities of an impending event?
- What role could advocacy play in reducing consequences?
- What preparation does CARE need particularly in functional areas (human resources, logistics, communications, etc.)?
- Which partners would CARE work with during response? Have discussions occurred and are Memorandums of Understanding in place?

### 3.3.3 Response Measures
CARE can reduce the effects of events; however, CARE cannot actually prevent them. Therefore, it is still critical that CARE remains continually in a state of readiness to respond. What is key to remember is that communities are the FIRST responders. Identifying their abilities, technical expertise and local mechanisms are key to appropriate response. Because CARE has more expertise in response, it is often easy to spend more time on these measures. But, keep in mind that each mitigation and preparedness measure will ultimately reduce the amount of response and types of response required in an emergency.

**Objectives: Identify measures that are required to reduce consequences during response**

**Key Questions to Consider**
- What level of response would be required?
- What are community capacities to respond?
- Do CARE’s capacities complement those of the community?
- What is CARE’s niche in this response?
- What role could advocacy play in reducing consequences?
- What current CARE programs work towards mitigating this risk?
- What can be done with partners and communities to mitigate risk?

**Step 3.4 Action Key Considerations**

To ensure effective preparedness, Country Offices should identify key considerations needed to accomplish mitigation, preparedness and response measures. Participants should review each measure, identify which considerations (Appendix D) are needed to achieve the measure and identify which considerations are key to a specific scenario or to all scenarios.

**Appendix B** provides a guide to primary element areas with key questions and basic criteria to guide potential actions required by the Country Office to address gaps.

**Objective: Identify key elements needed to accomplish measures**

**Key Questions to Consider**
- What elements are associated with each measure?
- How critical are they?
- What would happen if CARE did NOT have this process or procedure in place?
- Does CARE have these capacities already?
- What criteria are identified as critical in the Process list? Do we already have these systems in place?

**Step 3.5 Action Plan**

Identifying processes to accomplish mitigation, preparedness and response measures will lead to action plans. For each process, minimum readiness criteria have been set. By reviewing these criteria, Country Offices can quickly see if they already meet these criteria or whether a capacity gap exists. Country offices should assign actions to
individuals and set time frames for completion to address these capacity gaps. Appendix C provides a Country Office inventory list to assist with analyzing emergency preparedness and response capacity and gaps.

It is recommended that in the first few reviews of preparedness, Country Offices should identify a few quick and critical actions and concentrate on accomplishing these in a short period of time. Long lists or huge additions to individual workloads will not be completed. It is more important to ensure that a few things get done, allowing Country Offices to move onto the next level of planning.

**Objective: Identify critical actions to be completed in the review periods**

**Key Questions to Consider**
- What actions are most critical to be completed in one month? Three months? Six months?
- Who and what resources are necessary to complete these tasks?
- Does the Country Office need additional resources or outside help?
- How will this action reduce risk consequences?

**Step 3.6 Triggers for Preparedness and Response**

Triggers identify points in time when the Country Office must move to a new level of readiness. These indicators activate a higher level of readiness—moving the discussion from mitigation to preparedness and from preparedness to actual response. The triggers will be different for each scenario and for each Country Office context. If all staff are aware of these triggers, a form of early warning results as they consciously can be alert of a change in their situation and the corresponding action from this early warning.

**Objective: To provide a set of criteria for each risk that informs a Country Office whether to respond to or mitigate an emergency**

**Key Questions to Consider**
- When will CARE’s values or commitments require a response?
- How do CARE staff and partners perceive CARE’s responsibilities to local communities, authorities and other agencies?
- What sources of early warning information does CARE track that will inform trigger indicators?
- Under what exceptional circumstances would CARE NOT intervene?

**Step 3.7 Partnerships and Alternatives to Direct Response**

Part of preparedness planning is ensuring partners and alliances are also prepared. By identifying those agencies most necessary to each scenario, Country Offices can work together to coordinate common mitigation, preparedness and response. Partnering helps reduce duplication of effort, promotes collaboration among NGOs and government agencies and enables each organization to focus on its core strengths.
Note that partners may be different during each phase and for each scenario. For example, during mitigation, the partner may be health clinics to provide information; during preparedness, it may be the Ministry of Health; and during actual response, it may be the Red Cross Society or a combination of all partners. A famine may require WFP partnerships while displacement will be in coordination with UNHCR.

**Objective: Identify priority partners for mitigation, preparedness and response.**

**Key Questions to Consider**

- Who are key partners (at local, national and international levels)? What roles could they play?
- What are the strengths and gaps of these partners?
- What are local and national mechanisms during the mitigation, preparedness and response to this scenario?
- What other Country Offices, particularly regionally, have experience in this event?
- What cross-boundary issues are associated with this risk?
- How can the lead members, headquarters and CARE International assist?
- What in-country standards will need to be met (e.g. government health standards, education curriculums, etc.)
- What other ways can CARE assist outside of direct response, e.g. providing staff or other resources to other NGOs, advocacy, etc.

**Step 3.8 Special Considerations**

During scenario development, Country Offices should examine very specific country-level issues that influence the actions and measures undertaken. These considerations may influence some of the ways CARE prepares or responds to emergencies as well as advise CEG/HQ of critical contextual factors for their support considerations. Examples of such considerations include language requirements, lack of free press, poor NGO or UN coordination, multiple “governments” in civil war situations and regional implications.

**Objective: Identify critical issues that may affect a Country Office’s ability to prepare**

**Key Questions to Consider**

- Can CARE freely advocate in-country and outside?
- Do communities have free access to press and information?
- Are intra- or inter-country (ethnic or political) conflicts affecting CARE’s ability to prepare and respond? How?
- Are there sanctions or other international political implications which could affect CARE’s ability to respond quickly?
Planning discussions and preparedness processes will expose areas of management and operations that need modification or improvements for the Country Office to heighten its level of preparedness. Areas for review can include: human resources, logistics/supply chain, media, security, communications and information sharing, and fundraising. Country Offices should first identify key operations and management considerations needed to complete mitigation, preparedness and response measures and review key questions and minimum criteria that are required for the Country Office to reach the desired level of preparedness. As part of the analysis, Country Offices should identify key areas of strengths and weaknesses.

**Detailed information on operations and management considerations found in Appendix B should be used for the Step 4 review.**

### Step 5: Gap Analysis

During this step, the Country Office will identify gaps, weak areas, capacity building and training needs, and actions for all areas requiring development to assure emergency preparedness. Detailed action plans should be developed to address the gaps. The action plans should be incorporated into operational and individual plans, and Country Directors should assign actions to individuals and set time frames for completion.

It’s important for action plans to be practical—concrete, easy to complete and achievable within a short time frame. It would be counterproductive for a Country Office to overextend itself with too many action items or try to detail everything that could be done to improve preparedness over a five year time period. It’s better to accomplish one or two action items quickly rather than attempt to address 50 of them over an extended time period.

Country Offices also should look to partners to help fill capacity gaps that cannot be addressed internally. And when a County Office recognizes that it does not have the capacity to respond, it should inform CEG Lead Member/Regional structures to generate awareness of additional preparedness support it needs.

**Appendices A, B and C** provide guidelines and matrix-style tools to assist with capacity and gap analysis.

Once the action plans have been properly addressed, Country Offices should measure the impact the action had on mitigation, preparedness and response.

### Step 6: Document and Distribute the Plan

While emergency preparedness planning is primarily a “thinking” process, it is also important to document all relevant discussions. Participants of the planning process should take detailed notes throughout the planning sessions, recording all ideas, issues and action items discussed.

The Country Director should appoint one senior staff member to be accountable for the completion and distribution of the emergency preparedness plan. Having a single writer will result in a plan that’s easier to read and follow. Other staff members involved in the planning process should review the written plan for accuracy and completeness, and the Country Director should have final signoff.
Keep in mind that the plan is an internal CARE document and will not be shared or distributed externally. The plan should be very focused and as short as possible while still incorporating all critical information. General background information on CARE or its programming is not necessary and should not be part of the plan document. The plan is not a catalog of all issues aired or assessments undertaken during the planning process. Rather, it is a summation of the most important decisions made and the most essential information needed for reference.

The plan document will serve the needs of a variety of stakeholders, such as the Country Office, Lead Member Structures and CARE International. Once completed and approved, the emergency preparedness plan should be distributed to all key stakeholders, including everyone in the Country Office. Country Directors should ensure that all staff have read and understood the document and have had an opportunity to have questions and concerns addressed.

**Step 7: Monitor, Review for Impact and Update Plan**

Once the plan is put into use, the Country Director should be accountable for execution, continual review and updating. This will help ensure that action points are being actively addressed, including the incorporation of the emergency preparedness plan into operational, strategic and performance documents.

Even the best plans will require revision and modification when put to the test of reality, so the emergency preparedness plan must be a fluid and flexible document. Country offices should establish a schedule for routine discussions among staff of emergency preparedness procedures and processes. Members of the Country Office senior management team should meet regularly, depending on imminence of the emergencies. This should be an open forum where assumptions, considerations and prior conclusions are candidly revisited and preparations to move to a higher level of readiness reviewed. Emergency preparedness planning also should be given focus as a central part of long-term and mid-range planning cycles.

The actual plan should be reviewed and updated to ensure it remains current, relevant and appropriate. CARE recommends updating the plan every six months; for Country Offices experiencing frequent emergencies, every three months.

It’s also important for Country Offices to review impacts and improvements that result from action plans. In doing this, Country Offices can ensure that the proper actions were taken to address capacity gaps and areas of weakness. Additionally, documenting impacts and improvements will help CARE build credibility with its stakeholders—CARE will have evidence that it has taken the appropriate steps to become better prepared and can show that its actions and planning have reduced risks and the effects of emergencies.

**Integrating the Emergency Preparedness Planning Process**

Emergency preparedness planning should not exist as an isolated process. For it to have the desired effect on emergency mitigation and response, emergency preparedness planning must be incorporated into all Country Office strategies, operational procedures and ongoing programming.
**CARE Institutional Rationale**

Changing a way of thinking is difficult. For years, emergency and development have been perceived as separate issues. It will take time to transition to a focus on mitigation and risk reduction rather than responding after events. However, CARE has institutional tools which can be used to expose these traditional processes and adapt them to accept the integrated approaches needed to address poverty.

Simple tools are part of the strategic and operational processes within Country Offices, regions, members and CARE International. By ensuring that questions of preparedness are incorporated into these documents and are regularly reviewed, CARE will reflect a holistic approach to addressing community vulnerabilities.

Within project development and logical framework analyses, questions of preparedness can be incorporated. Rather than seeing disasters as a force that will negatively affect the project, emergencies can be viewed as pragmatic opportunities to build community capacities for early warning and initial response systems.

For example: HIV/AIDS programming and thematic approaches have been at the forefront of CARE for several years. These projects require time and commitment, as communities change their thinking and find approaches to deal with the effect of HIV/AIDS.

However, most of these communities are also volatile when faced with disasters—natural or man-made. Years of work can be destroyed by even short-term displacements of communities as a result of disasters. Preparedness processes incorporated into HIV/AIDS programming will ensure that projects are designed to handle disaster effects.

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### Key Questions to Consider

- How will the risks identified by the Country Office affect the project area?
- What will happen to this project when people are disrupted by disaster?
- What changes will occur in migration and possible transmission patterns?
- How will our project continue with its key messages even when the identified disasters occur?
- Do donors understand the issues of the potential disasters?
- Can this community be involved in mitigating the identified risk?

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**Community-Based Preparedness**

Planning for disasters in isolation of the community will not be successful. Communities are the first responders and have a level of capacity and resilience not always acknowledged during emergency response. Although it is difficult to motivate people to plan and prepare when they cannot see the immediate results or see more immediate needs, it is well documented that community mitigation, understanding and preparedness for disaster will reduce consequences. CARE is in a unique position to promote disaster awareness messages in daily work environments and ensure that communities are continually asked, “what will you do when...”
There are many opportunities for collaboration with communities. These include project assessment discussions, regular project meetings, school-parent meetings, women’s groups and other community meetings.

Communities can also be excellent sources for improving response following an emergency. While the response is still fresh in people’s minds, it is important to discuss and document lessons-learned—including what happened good and bad and what could be done to lessen the effects in the future.

Local Preparedness Partnerships
CARE has also made a commitment to working with local NGOs and government partners; and in a disaster, these partnerships and their readiness need to be in tune with CARE. There is significant preliminary work which can be done at all levels of partners. This varies from creating critical networks, to pre-signing of emergency Memorandums of Understanding to comprehending donor emergency funding and proposal requirements. In many instances, this is an opportunity to build capacities that reduce the amount of time and effort CARE needs to devote to response. Localized and small events provide these training and development opportunities to create improved response capacities locally.

Tools and Resources
CARE and other organizations have already developed tools which Country Office staff can use to prepare themselves for emergencies. Some of these documents are conceptual while others are geared towards the practical aspects of preparedness and response. Still under development are methods to include emergency preparedness in CARE’s project design as are tools that include cross-cutting initiatives in emergency response. Therefore, this guide will always be under development to include new ideas, methods and processes. Refer to Appendices A, B, C and D for templates and tools that should be used during the emergency preparedness planning process.
The Written Plan: Outline of Key Components

After thoughtful, detailed analysis of risks, scenarios, mitigation and response measures, and action plans, the Country Office should write the emergency preparedness plan. The plan will mirror the discussion topics of the planning process; however, it will not be a recitation of every issue aired or decision made. The plan will summarize the key decisions, actions and reference information necessary for effective emergency preparedness and response.

Although country offices will develop the plan in different ways, the following four components are considered critical for any preparedness plan:

- **Executive Summary**  
  Provide context to the plan. Document the plan date, author, last date of revision, distribution lists, etc.

- **Analysis and Planning (Scenario Development through to Triggers for Engagement)**  
  Explain scenarios, consequences, underlying causes and impact reduction measures

- **Operations and Management Procedures**  
  Ensure functional capacities—such as human resources, supply chain, and communications—are identified

- **Action Plans**  
  Ensure gaps are addressed and the emergency preparedness plan is continually reviewed and updated. Review action plans to verify that changes have been implemented and to measure the impact of those changes on emergency preparedness.

These components represent the baseline content for a plan—the minimum requirements. Other analysis and information can also be very useful, including:

- **Analysis of Local Capacities and Vulnerabilities**  
  Identify community vulnerabilities as well as community skills and assets that may help them survive or mitigate the effects of an emergency. Reference tools include CARE Critical Vulnerability Guide and Underlying Causes Framework.

- **Early Warning Indicators**  
  Indicators CARE monitors for the purposes of tracking the probability of an emergency. Reference tools include Appendix D: Response Plan and Local Capacities Contingency Plan.

- **Programming Considerations**  
  Explain programming concerns the Country Office will be most seized with in an emergency and briefly explain how responders will attempt to address concerns. Reference tools include Country Office LRSP and AOP.

- **CARE’s Performance Niche**  
  Define where and how CARE can have its desired impact. Where does CARE have the best chance of making a difference? Reference tools include Appendix C: Country Office Emergency Preparedness Capacity Inventory and Appendix D: Response Plan.

As previously discussed, the plan should be as short as possible while still being operationally useful. The plan should be easy to read and follow, with liberal use of
tables, charts and bulleted lists to give readers the ability to quickly identify the most critical information.

Detailed instruction on developing the plan will be covered during training workshops. For more information on the components of the emergency preparedness plan and the details of each section, refer to Appendix A, B, C and D for sample templates.