Bringing the Community

TOGETHER
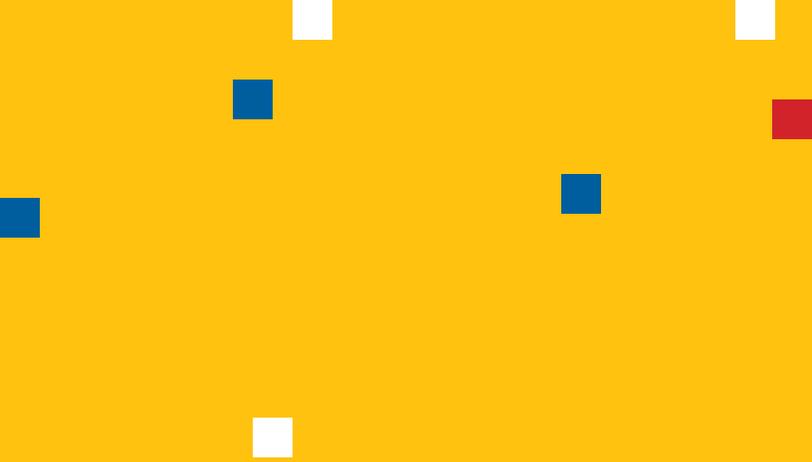
to Plan for Disease Outbreaks and Other Emergencies

A Step-by-Step
Guide for
Community Leaders

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Purpose of this Guide

Each year, dozens of communities around the world face natural disasters, disease outbreaks, and other emergencies. Today, more than 50 countries are facing outbreaks of bird flu (also known as avian influenza or H5N1). Scientists think that a worldwide influenza outbreak will happen sometime in the next decade.

Experts know what measures should be in place for many of types of emergencies. Governments around the world, working with the U.S. Agency for International Development, see the need for emergency plans. To save lives in times of crisis, governments, businesses, and community groups must have plans that are feasible and easy to follow.

This guide is to help local leaders and community organizers bring together the community to help plan for disease outbreaks and other emergencies.

Communities Working Together Create Better Plans

Other communities like yours have already started to plan for emergencies. They have:

■   Held community meetings,

■   Discussed their needs and ideas for solutions, and

■   Have offered officials valuable information to improve emergency plans.

And communities that already have been hit by disaster work together in relief efforts, then continue to work to be better ready in the future.

This guide uses the lessons from these communities and other often-used tools to create discussion among community members and effectively garner their insight.

Part 1 of this guide takes organizers through each step, namely:
1. Build support for the process
2. Invite participants and select tools
3. Schedule the activities
4. Hold community activities
5. Analyze and share findings, and create an action plan
6. Track and continue the process.

Part 2 of this guide provides a menu of community participation and questioning tools that you can use to create discussion among residents, leaders, and officials. Read this entire guide before beginning your process, so as to fully understand each step.

No one can predict when the next outbreak or disaster will happen or how severe it will be. By starting discussions and planning within your community NOW, residents can identify ways to prepare and give national and regional planners feedback on what support they may need – before a crisis hits.

PART 1

Steps toward a Community Action Plan

Step 1: Build Support for the Process

Support for community input into emergency planning must come from both directions: from officials who will be responding to the input and from community members who will provide it. **Develop a sense of common purpose** by including officials, community leaders, and residents in briefings to plan the process. Work ahead of time to align expectations between officials and residents about the process and its outcomes.

Attempt to identify the goal of the process in a one-sentence summary statement, to which everyone can agree. If your time and resources are limited, your summary statement might be very specific and focused at first.

Our community will work together to find ways to stop another outbreak of bird flu.

—Ban Champa, Laos

Keep your planning process open to participation by a wide variety of people and organizations, and make the process open and obvious to the community. Make sure that all know the purpose of the effort, and keep expectations realistic. For example, do not encourage residents to believe that funding or grants will become available after the planning process.

This process need not be complex or costly. But be sure to have enough resources for facilitators, meeting space, and materials. You may wish to ask volunteers for help and local organizations to donate space. Plan for some simple incentives (such as child care or free transport) to ensure that residents can come to the activities. Save some resources for future activities beyond the initial process, such as follow-up meetings or tracking changes in the community.

As you work with residents and officials to plan the process, ask them to help you identify "who" should be included in the process (the participants), and "how" (the tools). These decisions will be easier if the purpose of the effort is clear to everyone.

Advantages to community input for officials:

- Plans are relevant and feasible
- The community's assets are taken into account
- Residents can be first responders, relieving some burden on public services

Advantages to input for the community:

- Input is valuable and will be used by officials
- More relevant planning and services
- Creates new networks and relationships, especially among local organizations

Step 2: Invite Participants and Select Tools

Include a Diversity of Community Members

- Think about including groups that may not have been part of emergency planning efforts in the past, such as women's cooperatives, churches and mosques, and civic associations
- Make an effort to recruit and represent groups usually left out of policy making, especially those most vulnerable to disasters and disease
- Grant community groups **real opportunities to affect plans and make changes;** give them responsibility as part of the process so that they feel their efforts will matter.

Community organizing can have its own challenges, as some members will feel left out and others will want more power. Find a "champion" who can handle concerns about the process from residents and leaders. This person should be a trusted community member who can listen to concerns and offer flexible solutions to the process.

Select Tools to Capture a Range of Input and Generate Solutions

Emergency planning can be a daunting task. Using your community's goal statement, **identify what areas of emergency planning are most immediate.** Appendix A includes a comprehensive list of emergency preparation topics. Review this list to identify what areas your community wishes to address.

Part 2 of this guide includes 12 tools to create activities that facilitate discussion to:

1. Learn about past experiences and current strengths
2. Generate solutions
3. Define action steps
4. Track changes

Residents, farmers, fishermen, and local organizations will meet to make action plans to prepare for floods.

—Dumangas, the Philippines

Read through the tools and select one or two for each of these purposes. Then use the table on page 4 to decide which tool will be used to capture which area of emergency preparedness. Discuss the appropriateness of each tool with your planning group to help find the most useful tools for the participants you will be working with.

If you are trying to:	Try one of these tools:*
Learn about past experiences and current strengths	Community map Seasonal calendars Community walks and observations Observations of households or facilities Discussion groups Individual interviews Storytelling Communication circles
Generate solutions and suggestions for preparation and community action	Event timelines Discussion groups Individual interviews Communication circles Causes and effects Emergency scenario Visions for action
Rank and select specific actions	Discussion groups Individual interviews Causes and effects Bean ranking
Track community change	Community map Community walks and observations Observations of households or facilities Discussion groups Individual interviews Communication circles

* Each of these tools is described in more detail in Part 2 of this guide.

Tools for Creating Community Discussion

Planning: Use this table to **plan** which areas you would like to focus on, and select the appropriate tools to capture that information.

Analysis: Use this table again as a way to **organize your findings.** List each tool you used across the top, and fill in the boxes with the information you learned.

Focus area	Tool											
	A Community map	B Seasonal calendars	C Community walks	D Observation	E Discussion groups	F Individual interviews	G Story-telling	H Causes & effects	I Emergency scenario	J Bean ranking	K Communication circles	L Visions for action
Hygiene and sanitation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Care of ill and health seeking behaviors		X		X	X	X	X	X				X
Death and dying; traditions and services					X	X	X					
Care and health of children	X		X	X	X	X	X					X
Vulnerable people (elderly, people with chronic diseases)				X		X					X	X
Community preparedness; first responders; emergency services	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Community services (schools, hospitals, utilities)	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Businesses and markets	X	X	X		X	X					X	X
Livelihoods	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X	X
Food security and nutrition	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X
Urgent communication networks	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Step 3: Schedule the Activities

Communities can find many different ways to get together and discuss emergency plans. Choose a schedule that is realistic in terms of time and resources. Whatever schedule you choose, **include a large community meeting to create the action plan** and plan for future follow-up activities (such as tracking changes, bringing key leaders together later to review findings and discuss next steps, or discussing immediate community actions at the first sign of outbreaks in nearby countries).

Short Time Frame: Hold a "Town Hall" Community Meeting

If you have limited time, hold a "town hall" meeting (or workshop), and invite 15-20 community members to join for two days of group activities.

You may wish to ask several facilitators to run activities concurrently and save time, as input gathering activities can be done with several small groups at once, all in the same room. Design the day to begin with everyone together with activities to discuss the current situation in the community, then discuss possible outbreaks or emergencies, and finally to list and rank solutions, again with everyone together.

Sample Three-day Schedule

Preparation Day (1 week before Town Hall Meetings)	Town Hall Community Meeting Day 1	Town Hall Community Meeting Day 2
Meet with local officials and community leaders Invite community members to Town Hall meeting Preparation of activities for Day 1	Introduction to day's activities Small group activities to discuss emergency preparation: ■ Community maps (1 hour) ■ Seasonal calendars (30 minutes) ■ Concurrent discussion groups (1 hour) ■ Storytelling (1 hour) ■ Bean ranking (20 minutes) ■ Communication circles (20 minutes) Closing and preview of next day Discussion and analysis of small group findings Prepare presentation for next day	Presentation of findings Presentation by local leader based on findings (main problems and possible future action based on major identified problems) Community discussion and action steps Meet with officials to present findings and plan for further community planning

Multiple Days: Community Activities Plus a Final Meeting

If you have more time and resources, consider conducting activities in different places in the community. This option gives you access to different parts of town and more of a variety **of input from residents.** The same set of activities can be repeated with various groups of people and in varied neighborhoods.

Additional days can be added to this schedule to complete more activities before the final community meeting.

Sample Four-day Schedule

Day 1*	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Meet with local officials	Discussion group with village women (1 hour)	Discussion group with caregivers or teachers (1 hour)	Presentation of findings at community meeting
Invite local community members to mapping activity	Discussion group with village men (1 hour)	Interviews with small business owners or other audiences (3 hours)	Presentation by local leader (main problems and possible future action based on major identified problems)
Mapping and community walk (ongoing throughout day)	Discussion group and community circles with community organization representatives (2 hours)	Discussion and analysis of Day 3	Community discussion and action steps
Individual interviews with village leaders (concurrently with community walk; 3 hours)	Discussion and analysis of Day 2 findings	Preparation of following day: Presentation of findings to community and village authorities	Meet with officials to present findings and plan for further community planning
Discussion and analysis of Day 1 findings	Preparation of activities for Day 3		
Preparation of activities for Day 2			

More days can be added to this schedule using Day 2 as a sample schedule.
**Preparation meetings, briefings and invitations to community members can take place the week prior to this schedule.*

Keep the Work Plan Flexible to Respond to Changing Needs

While you must create a schedule to help residents know where and how to participate, you may need to adjust it depending on community needs. **Be flexible** to allow for participation from new groups or organizations and to reschedule activities to better meet participants' availability. Be aware that some residents may choose not to participate, or may wish to join the process mid-stream. Create ways to include people throughout the process.

Step 4: Hold Community Activities

Work as a team with other facilitators, community leaders, and volunteers to hold activities around the community to gather a range of input. Below are some things to remember when using the tools in Part 2 of this guide.

Adapting the Tools

The tools provide a general description of how to help residents generate ideas and envision action steps. You will need to adapt each tool to take into account:

- Who will be participating
- The local terms for disasters or diseases
- What has already been learned from previous activities

Use a "reverse" approach to adapting the tools; that is, think about what you would like to know about by the end of the activity, and create questions and prompts to bring out that information. Combine tools within a discussion group to capture several topics of discussion.

Facilitation

If possible, consider using two facilitators for each activity. One leads the activity and leads discussion; the other takes notes. After the activity, the facilitators meet to transcribe the activity as fully as possible.

When facilitating a discussion, use open-ended questions as much as possible to bring out the views of participants. Be aware that residents may express anger about past experiences. Acknowledge unresolved anger and frustration from past events and move forward with a positive tone. Try to remain positive and unbiased: do not guide the discussion toward a certain outcome or dwell on particular problems. Encourage all members of the group to participate.

> **Use open-ended questions**
>
> *How...?*
> *What...?*
> *Why...?*
> *Can you tell us more about...?*
> *Can you tell us what happened?*
> *How did you feel when...?*
>
> *Why do you think...?*

Participants

Most activities are designed for a group of community members. Try to hold the meeting in an open space, but away from spectators or other interruptions. Group activities, such as mapping or discussion groups, should include 6-8 participants. Groups of participants should reflect the community and various constituencies, such as a family caregivers, business owners, healers, or teachers. Attempt to capture as much diversity of the community as possible.

Timing

Most of the activities take an hour or less to complete. For discussions or interviews with community members, try to keep the discussion to an hour at most.

Materials

Most activities require only newsprint and markers, or pen and paper. Locally found objects, such as stones, sticks or lines in the sand, can be used as well. Hand-held audio-recorders may be useful for individual interviews.

Daily routines

While the activities are fun and engaging for participants, they can be a lot of work for the facilitators. For each hour of activity, plan on about three hours of preparation, transcription, and analysis. In the box are some of the tasks during a typical day.

> **Daily routine**
> The following are the key elements of each day during which you are working in the community:
>
> - Facilitators orientation/update and logistics
> - Revisions of the tools that will be used, based on the findings and comments from the previous day
> - Activities with community members
> - Recording, organizing, and analyzing the information
> - Identifying gaps to be addressed or information to be collected during the next day's activities

Step 5: Analyze and Share Findings, and Create an Action Plan

Once you have completed a number of activities, and begin to see trends or themes emerging from the community, prepare a summary of your findings. This can be as simple as a series of statements on newsprint to be posted and shared. Include any findings that would be helpful to an emergency plan, including current community preparedness and strengths, people who are more vulnerable, and suggestions for immediate action, in addition to community and resource needs.

Use a table such as the one on page 4 to help you compile your findings. Your summary does not need to be exhaustive, but must **identify the key actions** needed to increase local preparedness.

Share your summary with local leaders, community organizations, health care workers, and others in the community who can help better plan for an outbreak or other emergency. You may wish to speak at the **final community meeting** or ask a local leader to present them. Such a presentation offers community members a chance to further problem-solve, as well as to educate additional members of the community about emergency preparedness.

Share your findings with the provincial health department, your regional emergency or disease task force, and others who create policies and make resource allocations for your community. Finally, use your summary to identify the information gaps that you can try to fill next time your community meets to discuss these issues.

Final Community Meeting

Keep your community involved until the very end. Hold a large community gathering to review findings from the process and give input on action steps. Here are the components of a successful meeting:

■ Present findings from community activities

■ Summarize suggested action steps

■ Create the action plan (5-10 items only)

■ Ask for personal commitment

■ Celebrate!

Create the Action Plan

Work in the community meeting to facilitate the drafting of a short action plan. Ask residents to review the findings from the community activities and **select 5-10 realistic, or "do-able," actions that can make an immediate difference** to the community's emergency preparedness.

Consider the following criteria for selecting action steps:

- The action can be done in the immediate future (within a month)
- The action is the responsibility of the community (not of the Ministry of Health or of another outside group)
- The action will make a difference for emergency preparedness or the safety of community members.

Post the actions up in front of the community meeting, for all to see. Below are two ways to present the actions.

Sample Action Plan 1

Goal statement:

Action Committed by	Time frame	Resources /assistance needed	How will we knowwhen it is done?

Sample Action Plan 2

What needs to be done?				
▼		How can you make it happen?		
Community working together during a crisis		▼		
▼				What will you do?
Bring leaders together	▶	How?	▶	
Help families prepare	▶	How?	▶	
Keep families healthy	▶	How?	▶	
Keep children safe	▶	How?	▶	

Make a Commitment to Action

Once the community group has agreed upon the immediate action steps, ask people in the room to make a **personal commitment.** Ask residents and officials to come forward and sign their name to the action step as a commitment to working in the community to make that step happen. Ask others to offer assistance or support for larger tasks. If technical skills are needed, list who in the area can provide help, such as a local official, the health department, a university, or community organization. Add training as an action step if more structured assistance is needed.

Ask the other participants to **reward each pledge with cheers,** drums, whistles, and applause.

Example: Action Plan for Safe Poultry from Lao People's Democratic Republic

Action	Timeframe	Person in charge	Assisted by
Communication		Mr. T	Village cabinet secretary and local youth
Hold an opening ceremony to announce new poultry safety plan in community	Within 6 weeks		
Place posters around village	Within 6 weeks		
Make poultry safety announcements at village meeting	At each meeting		
Set up poultry market		Ms. T. and Mr. P.	Village elder and female representative of village
Find an appropriate location that is 200 meters outside of village and near river	Within 4 weeks		
Create an agreement between the owner and the village authority	Within 4 weeks	Villager	
Build stand for selling poultry	DONE	Villager	
Post the market sign	Within 8 weeks	Villager	
Poultry raising and keeping		Mr. S and 10 volunteer families	Village chief and guard of village
Ask 10 volunteer families to become "model families" in poultry rising	Within 2 weeks		
Clean poultry house monthly	Starting in 6 weeks		
Vaccinate poultry twice a year	Starting in 6 weeks		
Establish and follow village rules for poultry raising, such as: ■ Do not bring in poultry from other villages or independently trade poultry ■ Wash cages, pens and containers well after arriving from market ■ Clean aprons ■ Wash hands with soap thoroughly after culling poultry ■ Wear gloves to handle dead birds and bury them deeply ■ Cook poultry thoroughly (do not eat raw poultry)	Within 6 weeks Within 6 weeks		
Training		Program coordinator	Local community organization
Train village veterinary worker and 16 focal points	Every 3 months		
Monitor and report			
Regularly monitor the situation and report to authorities	Each time a problem arises		
Monthly follow up with district agriculture and forestry officer	Starting in 4 weeks		
Monitor and prepare report to community organization each month	Starting in 4 weeks		

Signature and stamp of village chief

Step 6: Track and Continue the Process

Creating a comprehensive emergency plan and putting its recommendations in place will take time. Community members and local officials will feel like **the process was valuable if there is clear evidence of change.** Put in place one or two follow-up activities to track and document changes, and to help the community continue to work toward improvements.

Assessing the Process

After the initial process, you can ask participants a set of simple questions to see **how well the process worked.** You may wish to ask an outside facilitator to ask these, so that participants feel free to provide honest input.

Assessment Questions for Participants

✔ I felt comfortable talking in the discussion

✔ The discussion was fair to all participants

✔ I think other people in the discussion felt comfortable talking

✔ Important points or perspectives were left out of the discussion

✔ One person or a small group of people dominated the discussion

✔ I think the process helped me better understand preparing for emergencies

✔ I think the process produced a valuable outcome regarding community preparedness

✔ I think officials will use our input in their plans or policies

Also use your facilitators' notes and transcripts to see how well the various tools worked in your community. Make a note where tools may need to be changed in the future.

Tracking Community Changes

Review the action steps to be taken in the short term and who is responsible for each step. Ask local community organizations to **hold follow-up meetings or activities to track progress,** at both the local level and at the policy-making level. Assist them in documenting progress and sharing it with the community at large. Other communities like yours have found that follow-up meetings with local officials and organizations resulted in valuable sharing of progress and lessons learned.

Many of the community activities can be repeated after some time to capture change. For example, a new community map might indicate new water storage tanks or a new community information booth.

Finally, meet with officials and other authorities to see how the community's actions can help larger preparedness goals. By monitoring the community's impact on improved planning and policymaking, residents will see that their efforts really do matter.

Planning Continued Community Input

Plan another round of community activities if:

■ There are significant gaps in information for which the community wants discussion or officials need input to improve the emergency plan. Refer back to **Appendix A** to see other possible areas of preparedness to address

■ Your assessment found serious flaws in the process and important members of the community must be re-engaged

■ Short-term changes are completed and longer-term action steps must be planned out

■ A disease outbreak or other crisis is forecast

PART 2

Community Activities

Tool A: Community Map

Purpose: Community members draw a map of their community, showing geographical features and facilities that residents would turn to during a disease outbreak or other disaster.

Procedure: Explain the purpose of the exercise. Ask the participants to draw a map indicating major landmarks. Once the outline of the community has been drawn, ask participants to mark the following:

- Where they would go for care during a crisis (neighbors, clinics, pharmacies, healers)
- Areas for resources during a crisis (clean water, food supplies, community support)
- Community meeting places (houses of worship, schools, markets, taverns, bus depots)
- Areas of crowding or sanitation problems, such as shanty towns or prisons
- Where to find vulnerable groups, such as the elderly or street children
- Places where urgent messages are posted or passed around
- Community leaders who communicate with community members and families during times of crisis

Elicit feedback on how the community is prepared for a crisis, or how emergencies were handled in the past.

How findings can inform other activities:

Use the findings from the community map to:

- Select zones to visit during community walks **(Tool C)**
- Identify community leaders to interview
- List supportive community facilities and institutions for exploration in discussion groups **(Tool E)**
- Identify institutions that serve vulnerable groups, and invite the workers to a discussion group

Tool B: Seasonal Calendar/Event Timeline

Purpose: Community members describe changes using a simple calendar to identify periods of greatest difficulty or vulnerability. This activity can be used to create a timeline of a particular event, such as a recent outbreak or a past crisis, to uncover strengths of the community.

Procedure: Explain the purpose of the activity. Ask participants how they would organize a calendar. The calendar should reflect the local concepts of time and does not have to use months. For example, participants may use rainy and dry seasons to divide the year. Indicate these time intervals across the top in a horizontal row.

Create vertical rows to represent various seasonal factors that may affect vulnerability to disease or disasters, such as:

- Food availability
- Rains/flooding, water supplies and sanitation
- School sessions; children's health
- Rainy seasons, festivals and other times when communities may congregate or be indoors
- Seasonal disease outbreaks; use of health services
- Migration, flow of workers

When all of the seasonal factors have been drawn, ask the participants to comment on the trends observed in the calendar.

How findings can inform later activities:

Use the findings from the seasonal calendar or an event timeline to:

- Identify times of the year when the community may be more vulnerable, and use this information for discussion in other activities
- Understand what happened during a past crisis and further discuss resources and challenges in other activities

Tool C: Community Walk and Observations

Purpose: Purpose: Walk through the community and observe daily practices and community resources.

Procedure: Draw a travel route through the community map **(Tool A)** that captures several zones to provide a representative view of the community. Depending on the size of the community, you may identify several routes to capture the diversity of the community.

Walk in the village; observe activities related to health and sanitation, emergency preparedness, and community gathering. Pose questions to community members involved to gain a better understanding of community practices. Use a simple grid to take notes as you move through the village.

Sample Community Observation Form

Areas to Observe	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3
Hygiene practices ■ Hand washing (available clean water and soap) ■ Caring of sick			
Sanitation ■ Water sources ■ Safe water handling and storage ■ Availability and use of latrines			
Health care providers ■ Type of provider ■ Services provided ■ Pharmacy and medicines ■ Number of beds/clinic patient load			
Emergency services ■ Location of emergency workers ■ Location of emergency vehicle			
Vulnerable groups ■ Shanty areas or slums ■ Homes for elderly ■ Day care centers			

Sample Community Observation Form (continued)

Areas to Observe	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3
Basic services ■ Electrical grid/transformers ■ Trash depot/dump			
Businesses ■ Food availability/storage ■ Markets ■ Farming ■ Fisheries ■ Factories or storage facilities with dangerous materials			
Community meeting places ■ Churches ■ Schools ■ Taverns/bars			
Crowding ■ Bus depot ■ Market/bazaar			

How findings can inform other activities:

Use the findings from the community map to:

■ Identify preventive behaviors and emergency resources already in place, to discuss in interviews or discussion groups

■ Identify areas of challenges during an outbreak, such as vulnerable groups, family livelihoods or businesses that may be affected

■ Identify health facilities and other services for observation **(Tool D)**

■ Invite community members for discussion groups or interviews **(Tools E and F)**, or other activities

■ Identify typical or vulnerable households for observation **(see Tool D)**.

Tool D: Household and Facility Observations

Description: Visit households to observe sanitation, hygiene practices, and/or care giving. Visit particular facilities to observe health services and/or first response activities.

Procedure: Ask community members for permission to visit relevant facilities or households to observe:

■ Household hygiene practices

■ Sanitation and disease control

■ Caring for elderly, chronically ill people, or vulnerable groups

■ Health center services

■ Services by traditional healers

■ Schools or child-care facilities

■ Other community services where groups may be cared for

■ First response services and communication networks

Prior to visiting, create a simple observation form on which to make notes. **Appendix B** provides a sample hygiene observation form.

How findings can inform later activities: Use the findings from household observations to:

■ Observe hand washing practices, such as availability of soap and clean water in homes, frequency of use and challenges during an outbreak

■ Observe how families care for ill relatives and discuss in discussion groups **(Tool E)**

■ Identify areas of crowding in homes and neighborhoods

Use the findings from facility observations to:

■ Identify preventive measures at facility level and challenges

■ Assess current patient loads and effects of crowding during a crisis

Tool E: Discussion Groups

Description: A facilitated discussion among a group of similar people from the community (such as a group of men, women, teachers, business owners, caregivers, or healthcare providers) to better understand the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions in relation to hygiene, disease, health-seeking behaviors, disaster preparedness, and feedback on specific emergency preparedness actions.

Procedure: Create a discussion guide ahead of time. (A sample guide is in **Appendix C**.) Identify key areas for discussion from previous learning activities. You can also use other activities in this guide during the discussion group (such as seasonal calendars, communication circles, and bean ranking), depending on what areas you wish to discuss with the group.

Have the group sit in a circle. Explain the purpose of the discussion. Ask questions using the discussion guide. Ensure that all the members of the group participate in the discussion.

How findings can inform later activities: Use the findings from household observations to:

- Understand how the community handles disease and other crises, and further discuss resources and challenges in other activities
- Identify preventive behaviors and emergency resources already in place so that they can be included in the action preparedness plan
- Examine communication networks in Communication Circles **(Tool K)**
- Identify community leaders and invite them to individual interviews **(Tool F)**
- Identify needs and actions to undertake in preparedness plans and rank them using Bean Ranking **(Tool J)**

Tool F: Individual Interviews

Purpose: Ask specific questions to individuals in the community to gain a deeper understanding of local emergency preparedness and get feedback into potential community actions.

Procedure: Create an interview guide before the interview. (You can adapt the group discussion guide in **Appendix C**.) Invite an individual community member or community leader to talk in a quiet place where you will not be disturbed. Explain the purpose of the interview and follow the questions on the guide.

How findings can inform later activities: Use the findings from individual interviews to:

- Adapt or revise the group discussion guide using words, terms and experiences learned from individuals
- Understand how the households or organizations handle disease and other crises, and further discuss resources and challenges in other activities
- Identify preventive behaviors and emergency resources already in place so that they are included in the action preparedness plan
- Examine communication networks in Communication Circles **(Tool K)**
- Identify needs and actions to undertake in preparedness plans and rank them using Bean Ranking **(Tool J)**

Tool G: Storytelling

Purpose: Community members tell about a disaster or disease outbreak they experienced to examine communication and responses. This activity can also be used as a "lessons learned" discussion to talk about changes in the community and what has been learned in making the changes.

Procedure: Explain the purpose of the activity. Ask participants to describe a past emergency (or recent changes in the community). Lead a discussion around the following issues:

- Who did community members turn to for help?
- Who were the leaders, why?
- How might people in this community communicate in this type of situation? Who would you hear from? Who would you relate information to?
- Who might be the leaders that could help others know what to do?

How findings can inform later activities:
Use the findings from storytelling to:

- Examine communication networks in Communication Circles **(Tool K)**
- Identify community leaders and invite them to individual interviews **(Tool F)**
- Identify needs in the community for crisis response and discuss the necessary actions

Tool H: Causes and Effects

Description: Community members draw and describe how they see the causes and effects of disease to explore perceptions of the causes, consequences and actions to prevent disease or mitigate the impact of an outbreak.

Procedure: Explain the purpose of the activity. Explore three situations with the group:

- A disease breaks out in the community, but is quickly stopped
- A severe disease outbreak
- A natural disaster (such as earthquake, flooding, or drought)

For each situation:

- Explore with the participants the spread of communicable disease, the effects of illness, and the impact on the household and the community. Ask participants to list community and/or household actions they take to prevent and mitigate disease from their experience and perspective.

- Probe to help participants be very specific when they list the causes, effects, and actions to be taken. For example, if someone mentions "lack of cleanliness" as a cause of disease, probe by asking the person to specify the exact behavior or practice she/he is referring to, such as "no hand washing" or "spitting."
- Help the participants organize the preventive and mitigating actions listed into categories.
- Explain that the community cannot implement the actions in all the categories at the same time. Ask the group to prioritize the categories and the actions in each category by giving them stones or beans to put on the priority actions. (See **Tool J** for Bean ranking instructions.)

How findings can inform later activities:
Use the findings from causes and effects discussion to:

- Identify areas of challenges during an outbreak for community solutions
- Identify needs and actions to undertake in preparedness plans

Tool I: Emergency Scenario

Purpose: To help community officials, leaders, and residents to identify strengths and gaps in procedures using a hypothetical scenario.

Procedure: Recruit a diverse group of about 20 community leaders, health and social service officials, and residents. Post signs around the room to depict groups, levels and/or sectors of the community. Use findings from other activities to identify these groups, which may include:

- Public safety
- Health services
- Public works
- Families
- Businesses
- Schools
- Journalists, local press/media
- Non-governmental organizations and community associations
- Local or municipal government
- Provincial or state government

Be sure to include levels of community authority that make and disseminate decisions, if appropriate to your community. Use photos or graphics to illustrate the signs.

Explain the exercise: Facilitators will tell a story in several parts about an imagined emergency in the village. At each point, facilitators will provide some time for participants to act or talk together about what to do.

Show the participants the posters of groups/sectors. Ask if there are any important groups in the village that are missing and post these. (If you have fewer participants, reduce the number of small groups.)

Ask participants to introduce themselves, and ask them to stand or sit near the group sign that they wish to play during the exercise. (Participants may assume a role similar to their real life position, or may play another role.) If necessary, facilitators can play roles in groups where there are few participants.

[Facilitator's note: Depending on the size of your meeting space, you may choose to have small groups in different rooms, allowing for more in-group discussion among sectors, and more effort for them to go contact another sector. This set-up might more clearly illustrate how sectors are often disconnected. Similarly, groups could meet where there are different telephones/cell phones and call each other instead of talking in person.]

Begin the activity. Read a short scenario, like the one in **Appendix D**, and allow the groups enough time to discuss. Facilitate group responses and possible communication scenarios. Encourage groups to think of practical and realistic actions and solutions. Continue with additional scenarios.

At the end of the exercise, facilitate a final summary discussion to capture learnings and suggestions for action.

How findings can inform later activities:
Use the findings from the emergency scenario to contribute to the action plan.

Tool J: Bean Ranking

Purpose: Beans or small stones are used to express relevant importance and feasibility of various solutions or actions to be taken.

Procedure: Use this activity as part of another activity, after a group generates possible solutions that must be prioritized. Ask a participant to draw the previously named actions on newsprint. These can be simply circles or pie diagrams with labels, or other shapes. Explain that it would be difficult for the community or the government to carry out all the actions listed at the same time. Explain that you wish for the participants to prioritize the actions in two ways.

Ask which would make the greatest difference or impact if they were carried out, that is, which actions would make the community safer during an emergency. Give 10 beans or small stones to each participant and ask them to distribute the beans according to the importance of that action.
Then ask which actions are the most feasible, that is, the ones the community can do easily. Give another 10 beans or small stones to each participant and ask them to distribute the beans according to the feasibility of that action.

Discuss with the group any trends they saw during the activity.

How findings can inform later activities:
Use the findings from bean ranking to express community priorities in the action preparedness plans.

Tool K: Communication Circles

Purpose:
Community members create circles to show how community groups interact, especially in times of crisis. This activity can be done with:

■ Community members, to show how households and families communicate informally

■ Community leaders and institutions, to show how organizations are connected

Procedure:
Explain the purpose of the activity. Ask participants to draw on the newsprint or arrange colored paper circles on the floor to show community interactions, such as:

■ Who the household gets information from and who they get information to; who has cell phones, telephones or radios that can pass along information

■ The individuals and institutions providing care and advice to people about health and sanitation

■ The individuals and services caring for others in the community, such as child care, schools, health workers, and care of the elderly

■ The individuals, businesses and markets that draw large numbers of people across the community

■ The institutions, organizations, or others who respond in emergencies and provide urgent information

Participants put the first circle in the middle representing themselves, their family or their group. Other circles are placed around the first circle. Sizes of circles can depict importance (influence or trust); distance between circles can represent levels of contact; overlapping circles can show close collaboration. Colors and labels can help further describe the circles.

When all the circles are arranged, probe the participants about:

■ How households, families and kinship relations help each other and communicate about important events

■ The roles and significance of various institutions to community members

■ How networks and interactions may be affected during a crisis

■ The potential for working through existing organizations to prepare for a crisis

■ The potential to create new connections between organizations

How findings can inform later activities:
Use the findings from the communication circles to:

■ Identify "gatekeepers" of information or influential institutions for interviews or discussion groups

■ In discussion groups, discuss how social networks and community interaction may be helpful during a crisis

Tool L: Visions for Action

Purpose: Participants envision their community in the future as they hope it will be and identify the resources and actions that can be accomplished.

Procedure: Participants are given a sheet of newsprint and markers and asked to get together and draw a "Dream Map" with all the achievements of their village. Everyone is encouraged to take part and add his/her part of the picture, something they value and/or believe is particularly important. Encourage everyone to include their own dreams and to dream "outrageously" of a grand future for themselves, their organization, village, children or grandchildren.

Alternative: Have participants close their eyes and sit silently for a minute or two. Ask them to imagine that they have been away from the village for quite a while, perhaps 5 or 10 years. Then ask them to imagine that all the things they were hoping for or dreaming of have come true. What would it look like? Ask them to share their dreams.

After the drawings are completed, have the group discuss the visions and their implications for community planning.

How findings can inform later activities:

Use the findings from visions for action to express community priorities in the action preparedness plans.

Appendix A:
Comprehensive List of Emergency Planning Actions

Use this list to develop questions and discussion points for your community activities. Refer back to this list to plan future activities or to expand your action plan at later dates.

Action Planning

✔ We have designated a task force responsible for producing and revising our action plan

✔ We have scheduled follow-up meetings

✔ We have set a realistic timeline for completion of the plan

✔ We have asked people and organizations to contribute to the plan, such as representatives from:

- health authorities, including services; the drug authority; and representatives of physicians,' nurses' and pharmacists' groups

- agricultural and veterinary authorities

- social services

- emergency response organizations or teams

- nongovernmental and voluntary organizations, such as the Red Cross or Red Crescent Society

- telecommunications and utilities

- the press

✔ All participants a`he plan

✔ We have conducted discussions and village meetings to get public input

✔ All essential service organizations agree to create their own emergency plans that focus on the functioning of their organizations and staff during a crisis

✔ We have informed the wider community that we are preparing a plan

Watching for Disease Outbreaks

✔ We have identified feasible ways to watch for unusual or unexplained illnesses, such as:

- Farmers and veterinarians watching for unusual illness or deaths among animals

- Hospitals watching for unusual patients

- Tracking unexplained deaths, both in the community and in health facilities

- Watching for severe illness in the community

- Watching sales of common antibiotics or drugs to relieve or prevent cough

✔ We have identified which individuals and institutions will watch for these illnesses

✔ We have identified others who can informally notify us of clusters of unusual diseases, such as schools, community health workers, traditional healers, pharmacists, and staff of care facilities for the elderly

✔ We have listed the actions that will be based upon this disease information being collected

Community Resources

✔ We have identified our sources of clean water and considered ways to store clean water or stockpile water purification supplies

✔ We have identified water sources at risk for contamination (such as in areas without latrines) and identified who will track the water safety

✔ We have identified our local sources of food, and have considered ways to stockpile dry goods

✔ We have helped families learn about ways to safely store food and water

✔ We have identified storage areas for community food, water, or other supplies, and developed a plan for rotating supplies to avoid damage or spoilage

✔ We have considered acquiring and storing other supplies, such as tents, blankets, or personal protective equipment (masks, gloves)

✔ We have identified other equipment that would be useful in emergencies, such as shovels, tractors and trucks, and have contacted their owners to request possible assistance

✔ We have met with businesses, storekeepers, and market sellers to understand how disruptions would affect the availability of essential goods (such as fuel, soap, food)

✔ We have identified official and volunteer vehicles that could be used for evacuations, transporting patients, or bringing in supplies

✔ We have identified churches, businesses, and schools that can become community centers for people to contact for assistance and information

Vulnerable Community Members

✔ We have identified neighborhoods and community members that are the most vulnerable, such as the elderly, handicapped, and young children

✔ We have identified organizations, individuals, businesses and others who are working with these communities to develop plans to serve these groups during emergencies and contribute to the overall community action plan for specific needs

Emergency Services

✔ We have considered various emergency situations based on our community's past history and weather patterns, such as flooding, fires, or earthquakes. Each of these cases could also result in disease outbreaks

✔ We have identified the local search and rescue teams, and understand how to contact them for mobilization and understand what assistance each can provide

✔ We have designated community spaces for use as shelters for families in need

✔ We have identified buildings for patient overflow, if the clinic is at capacity

✔ We have considered how to distribute food and water to homes if we have to shelter in place or quarantine

✔ We have defined evacuation routes

✔ We have identified and understand how to contact outside emergency services for receiving food, shelters, blankets and water during the course of an emergency, and have an estimate of how much time until such help arrives

✔ We have identified appropriate storage areas for corpses

Enacting Community Control

✔ We have reviewed national guidelines and met with local authorities to understand when various control measures may be required, such as:
- Culling animals
- Restricting water use
- Closing schools
- Closing businesses or asking workers to stay home
- Asking sick families to stay home (voluntary quarantine)
- Establishing quarantines for severely contagious patients
- Evacuating dangerous areas
- Restricting travel

Command and Control

✔ We have one commander for emergency situations, who will be the point person to implement our action plan,   and a back-up person

✔ We have informed all the participating organizations, rescue teams and public safety workers about how to contact our commander and how she/he can contact them

✔ We have identified who in each essential service organization will be part of the chain of command and who will report back up to provincial or national-level counterparts for reports and assistance

Communication

✔ We have a communication plan for explaining the action plan to residents and encouraging families to be prepared

✔ We have a spokesperson who will be responsible for implementing the communication plan

✔ We have located public spaces for posting information in the community

✔ We have asked other spokespeople in the community to help explain the plan, such as religious leaders, health workers, and social services providers

✔ We have met with the local press and journalists who can help provide information to the community

✔ We have received health and safety messages from the provincial level to use as guides

✔ We have developed simple safety and health messages to keep the community practicing preparation behaviors

✔ We have identified organizations, leaders, and front-line workers who will need to be contacted at the earliest possible time in a crisis. We have created a list of these and a phone tree for who will contact each person

✔ We have identified who has satellite and cellular phones and email that can be asked to assist during an emergency

Appendix B:
Sample Household Observation Form

Appendix C
Sample Discussion Guide for Community Members

Thank the participants and explain the purpose of the discussion:

The reason we've invited you to this discussion is to find out how we can help people in this community get ready for disease outbreaks that may happen in the future. Your views and experiences will be valuable to help us to plan.

Past Experience with Emergencies

What kind of emergencies have you experienced in the past?

Types of emergences; probe for each:

- *What did you do? Were you prepared?*
- *What were the main challenges you faced?*
- *What measures/strategies helped you to deal with the crisis?*
- *Who was "in charge" during this emergency (or who was instructing them on what to do)? (police, medical staff, local institutions)? How good were they at ensuring everyone's safety?*
- *How was the crisis resolved?*
- *How would you describe the reaction of the community?*
- *How has this experience changed how prepared you are for another emergency?*

How prepared is your village for a serious disease outbreak?

Probe:

- *Preparedness at the household, community, local government, or national level*
- *If preparedness is "reasonable," "poor" or "better": Why do you say that, please tell me what made you believe so?*
- *If there is a preparedness plan: Can you tell us what the preparations look like?*
- *Which organizations will help you, according to these plans?*
- *Who will get you information during a crisis?*

Illness Beliefs and Practices

Tell me a little about causes of illness. What causes a disease outbreak among many people?

Tell me about a time when someone in your family was very sick.

- *What happened?*
- *How did your family deal with the illness?*
- *Who provided the care?*
- *What were the changes in the household? What were the changes in your daily lives?*
- *What did other family members do to keep from getting the illness?*

Influenza, or the flu, is a respiratory illness that causes fever, coughing, and aches.

- *What have you heard about the flu?*
- *Do you consider the flu a serious illness?*
- *Have you had flu in this community in the past?*
- *How do families care for someone with the flu?*
- *What are some ways you can keep from getting the flu?*

What kinds of things might people here do to treat a bad case of the flu?

Possible prompts:

- *Do they typically stay home, or might they still go to work or school?*
- *Do they go to see a doctor?*
- *Are there home remedies they use?*
- *Do they see a healer, herbalist or other kind of health care professional?*
- *Do they take medicine?*

Impact of an Outbreak

Emergency situations can affect the community in many ways. Clinics may be full; businesses may close; or you may not be able to work during that time. What do you think can be done or has been done to reduce these effects?

Probe for health care effects:

- *How much do you depend on the clinic when some one gets sick?*
- *How will families manage if there is an outbreak and clinics and hospitals are full?*
- *Where and how do you get medicines?*

Probe for food security and water effects:

- *How much food do you have stored; how many days/weeks/months can your family eat if they could not buy anything from the market?*
- *Does this change throughout the year (rainy season, harvest season, dry season, etc.)?*
- *Is there a reliable water source nearby? Where, what type, how many?*
- *What would you and your family do if your water source was dried up or contaminated? Are there alternatives? How would you purify your water?*
- *Would you be able to store food and water if you needed to?*
- *Who would help you if you needed food or water?* (Probe for family or institutions.)

Probe for work and livelihood effects:

- *How will your family manage if your income provider is ill or cannot work?*
- *What do you expect the government should do for loss of work in case of any disaster or epidemic?*

Probe for travel/return to family:

- *If there was a crisis in this community, would you leave to stay with relatives in another area? Would relatives come to stay with you if they had an emergency in their town?*
- *How would you travel? (Probe for modes of transport.)*
- *What would you do if transportation was stopped or roads were closed?*

Attitudes and Beliefs about Death and Dying

In a severe outbreak, many people may die.

- *When someone dies, what customs or traditions does your family follow?*
- *How does your family support those who have suffered the loss of a loved one?*

Communication Preferences

Often during an emergency, information must be passed around to people so they know what to do.

- *Where do you and your family typically get information about health?*
- *Who would your family trust to give you urgent health information? (Prompt as needed: Friends? Family member? A doctor? A religious leader? Teacher? Government official?)*
- *How would you hear about a local emergency situation? Who do you know with a cell phone or radio? How else might you hear about a serious problem?*
- *Who do the people in this community trust most as leaders?*
- *If we needed to post information about a health emergency—such as when there is no electricity—where would be a good place to post it? (Prompt: Where people would see it or hear it?)*
- *Is there any other information that you think we should know about your family and this community?*

Thank you for sharing your time and insights today.

Appendix D:
Sample Emergency Scenarios for Discussion

Scenario Part 1: Early Warnings

The past year has been a good year in the village of [name]. The rains and crops were adequate, and children's and mothers' sicknesses have not been as bad as in other years.

A truck driver tells his friends in the tavern that in neighboring [country], many people have died from a coughing sickness.

Ask participants in each group to discuss this situation among themselves. How likely are they to think that this would raise concerns in the village?

Ask the business group to decide if they should do anything. What questions, if any, do they have? Where can they go to get more information? Which sectors/groups should have this information? Which sectors/groups, if any, should go out and provide information to others? Ask each small group to discuss what, if anything, they should do.

Ask representatives from various groups to walk over to other groups to ask questions or give information. Ask participants to observe which groups are active and which are not active.
Debrief with the entire group: Which group had the most questions? Who is the lead provider of information? Who did not get any information?

Scenario Part 2: Outbreak

Two months later, relatives traveling from [city] to visit family tell how their market has been empty, as vendors and customers have been at home sick. Many city people are coughing and have fevers. Their neighborhood health clinic has been over filled. Some people have died, they think. A person was coughing on the bus from the city.

Ask participants in each sector to discuss this new situation. How likely are they to think that this would raise concerns in the village? Ask the "Families" sector to get up and go ask questions of a sector that they think should have the answers.

Which group should be the lead sector to provide information to the others? What kind of information should be provided, and how?

Ask representatives from various sectors to walk to other sectors to ask questions or give information. Ask participants to observe which sectors are active and which are not active.
Debrief with the group: Which group had the most questions? Who is the lead provider of information? Who did not get any information?

Ask each small group to discuss what their sector should do, if anything, given this new development. Ask each group to list some actions they should take, if any.

Scenario Part 3: Fear

Now there are many stories in the newspaper and in conversation about how serious the disease is. It is called influenza, and it appears easy to get. People have died. The newspaper stories are causing worry.

The clinic just received notice from the health ministry that a serious influenza is spreading in the country, and the ministry wants all cases reported. The ministry has provided basic information about how to prevent spreading, like washing hands and covering coughs.

Who will take the lead to find out what is happening, if anything, in the village? Who reports this to the provincial government?

Who will take the lead to tell everyone what information they need to stop the spread of the disease?

Are these leaders that same or different from the previous scenarios?

Scenario Part 4: Continued Outbreak

Last week, the local pharmacist had five people come in to ask for help with their coughs and fevers. He sent two people to the clinic because they looked very sick. This week, more people have come in, and the clinic is seeing many people, too.

Ask each sector to discuss what they can do to stop tɪhe spread of disease in their village. Ask representatives from each sector to get up and walk over to other sectors if they need help to do these actions. Ask participants to notice what sectors must work together to stop the spread of disease.

Final Discussion

Ask participants to comment on what they observed through the exercise.

Who are the leaders to share information and communicate across the village? Is there a "phone tree," or a series of leaders who should pass information on from one to the other? Who else should be added to this chain of information?

What worked well? What sectors are ready for an emergency, and what solutions have been suggested?

What caused confusion? How can this be avoided in a real situation? Who else can be involved to help during such situations?

What actions can the village take now to be ready for emergencies?

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www.avianflu.aed.org

www.pandemicpreparedness.org