



Review of Tearfund's Guidelines for 'Disasters and the local church'

Tearfund

Prepared by

Lydia Tanner and Catherine Komuhangi

The Research People Ltd

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CEDRA	Climate Change and Environmental Degradation Risk and Adaptation Assessment
CD	Compact Disc
CCM	Church & Community Mobilisation
CM	Church Mobilisation
DMC	Disaster Management Committee
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ELAC	Eurasia Latin America & Caribbean
EU	European Union
HQ	Headquarters
ICM	International Care Ministries
ICN	Inter-Church Networking Committee
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
KII	Key Informant Interviews
MCC	Mennonite Central Committee
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
PADR	Participatory Assessment of Disaster Risk
PCEC	Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches and Peace Builders
PHILRADS	Philippine Relief and Development Services
PiD	Pastors in Disasters
PPD	Pastors Prepared for Disasters
RIHPED	Réseau Intégral Haïtien pour le Plaidoyer et l'Environnement Durable
ROCA	Red de Organizaciones Cristianas de Centroamérica
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WCA	West & Central Africa

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The icons used in graphics throughout the report are from The Noun Project. We have also used illustrations from the published guidelines under review, drawn by Bill Crooks and Jackie Mouradian of Mosaic Creative Ltd.

Executive Summary

In 2011, Tearfund published '*Disasters and the local church: guidelines for church leaders in disaster-prone areas*'. The guidelines intended to increase church leaders' understanding of disasters and to give guidance on the practical things a church and its congregation can do to prepare for a disaster, respond effectively to it, and reduce the risk of it happening again.¹

The guidelines were intended as a stand-alone resource that partners and churches could draw on as needed. However, in response to demand, a series of training was conducted to help partners understand the guidelines and to promote implementation of suggested actions. This report, commissioned by Tearfund UK, showcases the ways in which the guidelines have been used and the impact they have had on churches that have used them. It also highlights lessons learnt and provides recommendations on how to improve the resources.

The guidelines were published in 2011 and translated into nine languages, a process that often included contextualising them for the local situation. Partners noted that the guidelines were easy to understand because they are written using basic language, with practical information supported by diagrams showing the actions churches can take during the disaster management cycle. The guidelines were seen as a ready-made training tool for partners.

Nevertheless, Tearfund's Country Representatives and partners experienced several challenges: the translation process was difficult; even though the guidelines were written in a simple manner, and low literacy levels hindered their accessibility. Moreover, it was difficult to balance the demand for greater depth in the disasters relevant to a specific location, with the demand for a simple global manual. As a result some of the building materials or approaches were not relevant to all contexts and certain actions were too resource heavy for small churches.

Training was delivered in response to requests from Country Representatives and partners between October 2009 and December 2015. The training was often conducted after a disaster, which generated a demand for information from partners and churches alongside significant external funding. The training was based on lessons from the manual but were heavily contextualised to address the disasters faced in the country. Training reports from Central America, Nepal and the Philippines at the time highlighted areas of learning, including the need for local language resources and facilitators, and the importance of follow-up activities to monitor and support implementation of the action plans that were developed at the end of the training.

The research identifies four areas in which capabilities have been built. First, the guidelines and training supported a biblical understanding of disasters and awareness amongst churches of the roles they can play during the disaster management cycle. This was greatly supported by the inclusion of Bible studies, references to scripture, and the use of biblical stories, which made the guidelines more credible among church leaders. Additionally, the resources provided practical information, illustrations and examples of what churches could do during different stages of the disaster management cycle.

Second, churches reported building relationships and networks both within their communities and with other humanitarian actors. Internally, many of the churches involved have established disaster management

¹ Tearfund (2011) *Disasters and the local church: guidelines for church leaders in disaster-prone areas*, pg.2.

committees responsible for preparing and responding to disasters. Externally, a few churches have formed broader networks or coalitions to facilitate DRR activities, while others have been willing to work with secular organisations, government stakeholders, and other international organisations.

Third, churches have gained an understanding of risks and vulnerabilities within the church and community and have organised activities to identify, map, and respond to those risks. These activities have included developing risk maps to identify evacuation routes in earthquakes or floods. Churches have also developed mechanisms to reduce risks, through volunteer structures, planning for evacuation centres, and sharing information.

Finally, churches have taken steps to assess and respond to needs and vulnerabilities. Partners explained that the guidelines have supported awareness of particularly vulnerable groups - such as children, the elderly and pregnant women – and helped to ensure that church’s disaster management plans have provisions that cater to their needs. In some cases, churches have been able to conduct needs assessments that have been used by humanitarian actors.

The research ends by examining the impact of guidelines and training on churches approaches during the disaster management cycle, which includes preparedness, response, rehabilitation and mitigation. The majority of activities fell into the ‘preparedness’ phase of the cycle, with a particular focus on identifying risks, and sharing information on risks and mitigation during sermons and through the response committees. There were fewest reported activities during the ‘rehabilitation’ phase, largely because churches felt ill-suited to contribute to time and resource-heavy activities. Nevertheless, there were examples of churches re-building and reinforcing church structures and partnering with other institutions during rehabilitation. Finally, partners were often unable to differentiate between preparedness and mitigation although they did discuss activities to mitigate effects of flooding on their communities.

The research report concludes with a section exploring the perspectives of staff and partners on the future of the guidelines and training. It draws several conclusions and recommendations:

- Future training should include ongoing accompaniment, where Tearfund staff or partners are assigned to specific regions/churches to support churches develop and implement their plans
- Networking of partners and leaders that have received the resources promotes learning and sharing of practices
- Guidelines and training should be tailored to the inherent strengths of churches, including spiritual and emotional support to the community and peace building

1. Introduction

In 2011, Tearfund developed a manual, *'Disasters and the Local Church: Guidelines for Church Leaders in Disaster-Prone Areas,'* that aimed to increase understanding of disasters and provide practical know-how for churches and their communities. The manual included information on preparing for disasters, effectively responding to disasters and reducing the risk of a disaster reoccurring. Training that supported the manual was also delivered when requested by Tearfund Country Representatives and local partners.

1.1 Churches and disasters

There is a growing awareness of the roles of churches and other faith-based institutions in disaster preparedness and response. Many churches hold a high degree of trust and influence in their communities, a unique network for information dissemination, and access to hard-to-reach areas. Moreover, they often have resources and skills that are essential during disaster response: buildings that can be used as shelters, the ability to mobilise volunteers or resources, and the capacity to offer spiritual and emotional support to affected populations.

Several important studies exploring faith-based disaster response have highlighted the unique roles church leaders and churches have played.² Before a disaster, churches have established disaster committees to represent a broad array of perspectives, created awareness among the community on how they can prepare and mitigate the effect of crises, conducted risk assessments of hazards, developed contingency plans, and encouraged households to develop their own plans. During disasters, they have contributed to distributions, provided shelter, and mobilised volunteers, finances, skilled and unskilled labour within the congregation. Following disasters, they have provided psychosocial support and counselling, supported rebuilding, and conducted training on mitigation.

A recent research study on the role of faith leaders during the Ebola crisis noted that faith leaders were among the first responders and so were able to mobilise communities, raise funds, and buy materials (such as buckets, water and soap) that helped lessen the spread of disease.³ Faith leaders used sermons as an opportunity to share information on cultural practices that promoted the spread of disease (particularly burial practices). They also provided vital psychosocial support for people who had recovered from Ebola and faced enormous stigma, and acted as mediators when disputes arose out of a fear that some communities were hiding Ebola patients, and out of distrust towards emergency workers.

However, there are few humanitarian organisations that specifically work with church leaders and their congregations to improve the preparedness and quality of faith-based locally-led response. Moreover, there has been little research to understand the roles that churches wish to play, and how they can be equipped to provide assistance alongside other humanitarian actors.

1.2 Tearfund, disasters, and the local church

The guidelines on disasters and the local church (known colloquially as “Pastors in Disasters” at Tearfund) outlines the roles that church leaders and churches can play during a disaster, including recruiting, organising and encouraging volunteers, teaching biblical views on disasters, and delegating tasks to others when appropriate. It also outlines how church structures can be used for shelters, and how the skills and capabilities

² See for example: Bulmer A (2009) The local church and its engagement with disasters. Tearfund; and Ed. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh E. Dr and Ager, A. Prof (2013). 'Local faith communities and the promotion of resilience in humanitarian situations, a scoping study', Working paper series no. 90, February 2013, Refugee Studies Centre

³ Featherstone, A (2015). “Keeping the Faith: The Role of Faith Leaders in the Ebola Response.” Christian Aid, CAFOD, Tearfund and Islamic Relief

of church members can be deployed to reinforce church structures, develop contingency plans, and support the local community. The guidelines also outline the four stages of the disaster management cycle (response, rehabilitation, mitigation and preparedness) and six different types of disaster (floods, windstorms, landslides, drought, food insecurity and earthquakes) describing the role that churches and their leaders can play in each.

Between 2009 and 2015, the guidelines were used as the basis of training delivered in Central America (Honduras, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Guatemala), Asia (Nepal, Myanmar, Cambodia, Bangladesh and the Philippines) the Caribbean (Haiti) and Africa (Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Malawi). A core set of topics were used during the training⁴ but case studies and disaster specific sessions were adapted to suit the context and priorities of Tearfund's country offices.

As far as we are aware, no training has been implemented since late 2015. Instead, Tearfund country offices have increasingly focussed on Church and Community Mobilisation (CCM).⁵ Through this process churches are accompanied through a series of discussions and activities to review basic theology on integral mission,⁶ work with the local community to examine their own resources and challenges, and to create a plan to address them. This process normally takes three to five years. The issues they choose to address are not necessarily related to disasters and do not usually use the guidelines on "disasters and the local church".

1.3 Purpose of this report

Tearfund has anecdotal evidence that these guidelines have proved useful to church leaders in disaster-prone areas, but did not have robust evidence on the uptake or outcomes of the guidelines. This report was commissioned to explore the reach, uptake and impact of the guidelines and training on partners and churches, and to identify lessons that have been learned. It was also commissioned in order to understand how the guidelines are being used now – eight years after they were first published – and the perspectives of staff and partners on how they might be used in future.

⁴ Core topics included: responding to a disaster, disaster cycle, resources of the local church and the role of church leaders. In some cases training was delivered to local partners and combined with information on humanitarian quality standards and/or security.

⁵ CCM is when the local church works with its local community to identify and respond to needs together. The local church acts as a facilitator in mobilising the community, working with the community, not for the community.

⁶ Integral mission is defined as the work of the church in contributing to the positive physical, spiritual, economic, psychological and social transformation of people.

2 Methodology

This section sets out the research questions that form the basis of the review. It outlines the data collection methods, the limitations we faced whilst conducting the research, and a roadmap for the report.

2.1 Research questions

The research aimed to identify the outcomes of the manual and training (tools), impact and lessons learnt on how to improve the tools and dissemination methods. It had two objectives:

1. Identify the intended and unintended outcomes of the guidelines and training package
2. Identify lessons on how to improve the guidelines, training approach and dissemination of the guidelines.

The research aims were addressed by exploring the following research questions, as guided by the ToR:

1. What is the coverage of guidance and training?
2. How many partners conducted training in their local community after receiving training from Tearfund?
3. How have the guidelines and training developed the capacities of church leaders in response, rehabilitation, mitigation and preparedness?
4. Where has capacity building been most significant: i) response ii) rehabilitation iii) mitigation iv) preparedness?
5. To what extent have the guidelines and training challenged the behaviours and attitudes of participants? If so, how?
6. To what extent has Tearfund's training led to locally-owned disaster risk reduction? If so, how?

The research attempted to identify the impact of the guidelines and training package, explore the views of the participants and communities on the guidelines and training package, and identify areas of improvement. The findings of the research were compiled in this report with recommendations on how the approach and guidelines can be improved.

2.2 Summary of approach

The table below summarises the key stakeholders and the main data collection methods for each. There were three primary groups: those facilitating implementation of Tearfund programmes; the denominations, networks and churches that partner with Tearfund; and external stakeholders with experience of DRR including Government and other humanitarian actors. The majority of time was given to the former two groups.

Table 1: Summary of methods

METHOD	DETAIL
Document Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Literature on faith and humanitarian response• Training reports
Consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9 Tearfund UK staff• 12 Tearfund in-country staff• 14 partners and churches• 8 others, including other Tear organisations and Food for the Hungry
Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 13 responses
Findings workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion of emerging findings with Tearfund UK

The research methodology included six components:

1. **Inception meeting** with Tearfund to discuss the methodology design, roles and responsibilities, potential key informant interviews and templates. This was consolidated in a final inception report.
2. Developing a **research framework** that formed the basis of the review (see Annex 1).
3. **Desk review** of Tearfund's programme reports and secondary sources on DRR & capacity building and the roles churches can play during disasters. We adopted a structured approach that allowed us to identify common themes and gaps, as well as areas for further exploration. To assess the reach of the guidelines, we also undertook an online search for examples of guidelines being referenced or adapted (see Annex 4).
4. **An online survey** was distributed to all Country Representatives and Country Directors and to relevant partners. It asked 10 multiple-choice and open questions designed to establish the uptake and use of the guidance and training across Tearfund countries. It was also used to identify potential KII participants.
5. **Consultations and key informant interviews** with 22 Tearfund staff (of 25 contacted), 12 churches and partners (of 26 contacted), and 6 external stakeholders. We used a snowball sampling approach that involved asking key informants to suggest potential interviewees. We spoke to a broad range of Tearfund HQ and in-country staff including participants from half of the countries where training was provided. However, the response rate from partners and church leaders was lower than we had anticipated, in part due to the relatively long periods of time that have elapsed since the guidelines were published and distributed. This means that we have drawn on the reports of Tearfund staff or partner staff, rather than on first-hand accounts of church leaders themselves. Where this was the case, we have attempted to triangulate responses from multiple respondents. The interviews lasted 45-60 minutes guided by a semi-structured interview template that included a series of open questions associated with the key research topics (see Annex 1).
6. **Presentation of the findings to Tearfund.** Attendees included the Head of Humanitarian Support Team; two Humanitarian Support Managers; Humanitarian Business Development Manager; Humanitarian Impact & Learning Officer; Design, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (Church & Community Transformation); Church & Development Advisor; Senior Project Manager (Church & Community Transformation); Resilience Officer; and Knowledge & Learning Coordinator (Tear Netherlands). The presentation included discussion of participants' perspectives on key findings and next steps.

2.3 Limitations

There were five primary limitations to this research:

1. The guidelines were published in 2011 and the majority of training was conducted between 2011-2014. We were therefore asking participants to reconstruct events and experiences that had occurred four to six years ago. Some interviewees struggled to remember what had happened and others reconstructed events in light of more recent experiences. As a result, the responses do not have the detail that would be expected if the research was collected immediately after the events recounted here.
2. The training was demand-led and there were no monitoring mechanisms in place to track uptake or impact of the tools. The only data available for review was from training feedback collected on the

final day of training. This meant we relied on collecting information from Tearfund staff and partners which, at times, was anecdotal.

3. There has been some staff turnover at Tearfund offices and in partner organisations, which meant that the most relevant staff were not always available. This affected data collection as new staff were not as conversant with past activities. In two cases, Tearfund staff connected us to partners who they believed had implemented the training, but when interviewing those partners it became apparent that they had not seen the guidelines or materials.
4. The online survey was sent to all Country Representatives and Country Directors and to relevant partners but yielded only 13 responses, 5 of whom said that they had not received the guidelines. This small sample size makes it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about the reach and effectiveness of the guidelines and training.
5. We sought to understand the extent to which Tearfund's training has led to locally-owned disaster risk reduction. It has been difficult to establish clear examples of DRR activities being conducted as a direct result of the guidelines or training. Moreover, we did not undertake any fieldwork to allow for in-depth exposure to specific churches and response rates to our requests for interview were low among churches and church networks.

2.4 Structure of the report

The report begins with an overview on the uptake and usage of the guidelines including the publications, translations, training, and reach of the guidelines and the challenges that were associated with using them. Next, in Chapter 4, we identify and discuss four areas in which capabilities that were built among churches, drawing on examples for each. Chapter 5 examines examples of church mobilisation at each phase of the disaster management cycle. Chapter 6 outlines possible next steps for Tearfund and explores three questions that should be considered in planning for the next phase of this guideline and training package. The report ends with conclusions on how materials and training have facilitated local churches in disaster management.

TEARFUND'S GUIDELINES ON 'DISASTERS AND THE LOCAL CHURCH'

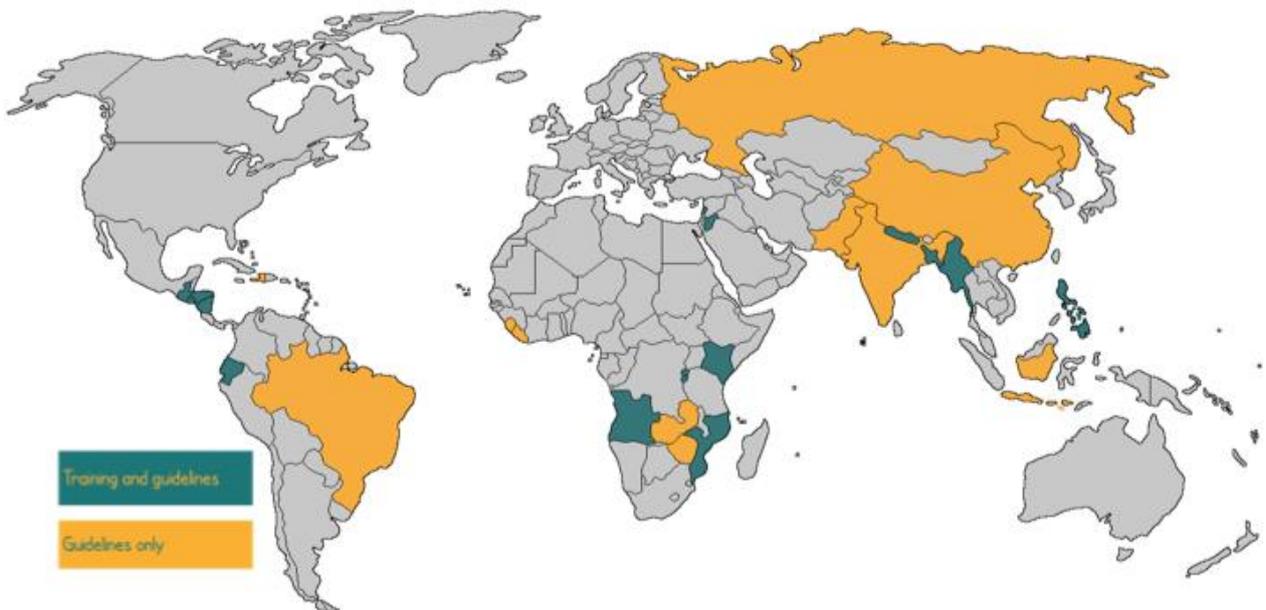


**AT LEAST
8000 IN PRINT
AND 3000
DOWNLOADS**

**TRANSLATED
INTO 9
LANGUAGES**



**TRAINING IN 16
LOCATIONS AND
EXAMPLES OF
INFORMATION
CASCADING FROM
PARTNERS TO
CHURCHES**



**SOUTH AND
CENTRAL
AMERICA**

**Translation into
Spanish, Portugese
and Creole**

Trained >50 partners
and church leaders in
Honduras, Guatemala,
Nicaragua, El Salvador,
Colombia and Mexico

AFRICA

**Translation into
French and Portugese**

Trained >50 partners
and church leaders in
Angola, Burundi,
Kenya, Rwanda, and
Mozambique

ASIA

**Translation into
Nepali, Burmese,
Russian, Bengali, and
(partially) Mandarin**

Trained 320 partners
and church leaders in
Bangladesh, Jordan,
Lebanon, Myanmar,
Nepal, Pakistan, and
the Philippines

3 Uptake and usage

This section provides an overview of the reach of the guidelines and training by Tearfund country offices and partners. It then examines the effectiveness of the modalities, including the content of the guidelines, and lessons learned from how the training was delivered.

3.1 Global coverage

It is difficult to accurately establish the full reach of the guidelines. This report contains many anecdotal examples of times the guidelines have been used and reported and Country Representatives themselves did not necessarily know how widely the documents had been distributed.

The guidelines have been translated into Russian, Nepali, Portuguese, Spanish, Bengali, Burmese, Mandarin, Creole and French. In each case, there were adaptations to contextualise the content. For example, a section on rebuilding basic homes/structures to be earthquake resistant was adapted in the Spanish version because some of the suggested materials was not available in Central America (Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua). In Haiti, content was translated into Creole, adapted, and used in the Participatory Assessment of Disaster Risk (PADR) training.

Table 2 indicates the print and online (via Tearfund Learn) distribution of each translation. It indicates that the report has primarily been downloaded in English and Spanish. Visitors to the “Disasters and the Local Church” pages are primarily in the UK, US, Brazil, France, Mexico, the Philippines, and Chile.

Table 2: Known translations of guidelines

Language	Printed copies	Downloads
English	Number of copies unknown.	1,333
French	Number of copies unknown.	223
Spanish	3,000 printed of which 2,500 have been disseminated in Honduras, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Guatemala; 300 facilitator manuals distributed in Central America.	1,016
Portuguese	Number of copies unknown.	646
Nepali	At least 2000.	58
Burmese	Large initial print run. Reprinted in 2015/6 following widespread floods.	N/A
Bengali	Number of copies unknown.	N/A
Creole	Small print run.	N/A
Mandarin	Translated in part. Number of copies unknown.	N/A
Russian	Number of copies unknown.	N/A

Overall, the guidelines and training are not actively discussed or used by Tearfund UK or country office staff and are not central to most current DRR or church-based approaches (as evidenced by Tearfund interviews as well as the low response rate to the survey). Of the 13 survey respondents, 8 had received the guidelines, of whom, 7 had disseminated them to churches, agricultural associations, networks, local and national NGOs, and individuals. Five had participated in training and all had shared training information with local churches.

However, the guidelines were being actively used in Central America where the team has developed a facilitator's manual in Spanish that has been distributed to Tearfund partners, the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and ROCA, as well as another Christian INGO World Renew. It was also still actively used by several partner organisations. For example, a partner in Guatemala – Ami San Lucas – has developed its own training modules for church leaders that draws upon the risk mapping and risk analysis content. MOPAWI, a partner organisation in Honduras, revealed that it uses the exercises and graphics during training and meetings for church leaders and other community groups. MOPAWI also use the bible studies in the guideline during their staff devotions.

Several partners had also found the content helpful for their own organisations. In Honduras, one organisation used the Bible studies in staff devotions. In Haiti, the Réseau Integral Haitienne pour le Plaidoyer et Environnement Durable (RIHPED) Network (made up of 13 national Christian organisations) used the guidelines as the basis of their contingency planning for Hurricane Matthew, including anticipating and agreeing roles and responsibilities for each organisation during a disaster.

Tearfund delivered training in at least 14 countries between 2009 and 2015 (see Annex 3). Most training sessions included 15-30 participants from a mixture of local and national partner organisations and church networks.

Six of the partner organisations interviewed reported passing on training to church leaders in a variety of formal and informal ways. In Zimbabwe, a partner had used the guidelines to facilitate a training to church leaders in Madagascar and to the Mothers' Union. In the Philippines, PHILARDS for example, used the guidelines to train approximately 26 church leaders; while ICM and the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches and Peace Builders (PCEC) used part of the guidelines to deliver cascade training to over 3000 church leaders.

BEYOND TEARFUND

There are a small number of examples of the training being used beyond Tearfund. For example, the Spanish version of the guidelines is used by at least one theological seminary in Central America to support training future pastors in integral mission.⁷ The Episcopal Church similarly drew upon elements of the guidelines when it developed its toolkit for community-based DRR for church leaders.⁸

3.2 Guidelines

The guidelines were predated by a series of 12 case studies by Andrew Bulmer (2008)⁹ that examined times that churches responded to disasters and identified some guiding principles. The case studies highlighted a number of niche areas in which the churches had demonstrated strong responses, including through supporting people in trauma and using their church building and other physical resources. Bulmer later published "The local church and its engagement with disasters" to outline seven niche areas the local church can deploy during disasters.

However, Tearfund also identified that there were several reasons why churches struggled to respond to disaster situations, including a lack of training on disasters, and churches being ill-prepared for a sudden influx of displaced people into their church buildings. Tearfund commissioned an experienced trainer to develop the guidelines, which included four chapters relevant across all disaster contexts and four that were

⁷ All Nations College in the UK similarly draws upon the ROOTs Disaster Management material on vulnerability.

⁸ Episcopal Relief & Development (2016) Pastors and Disasters: A Toolkit for Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction & Management for members and partners of the Anglican relief and development community. Available at: http://www.episcopalrelief.org/uploaded/files/What-We-Do/DRR-Toolkit/Pastors_and_Disasters_FINAL_US.pdf

⁹ Published by Tearfund

relevant to specific types of disasters. Experts and partners reviewed the chapters, and the guidelines were published in 2011.¹⁰

The guidelines use basic language and emphasise practical actions that local churches can take to prepare for and respond to disasters in both rural and urban areas. There is also advice on risk reduction. For example, on preparedness, the guidelines provide information and a simple tool for contingency planning. Church leaders are shown how to make a floor plan of the church, identify potential hazards, and then identify how the hazard can be reduced so that the church is a safe place for shelter.

There were 13 staff responses to survey questions on the guidelines. When asked to rate their usefulness on a scale of 1 (never used) to 100 (used as part of day to day work), the average response was 44. The 7 respondents listed the most useful information from the guidelines as: resource mobilisation prevention, mitigation and resilience; theology of disasters; Bible studies; disaster assessment, targeting; risk mapping, assessments; practical information for community action and organisation/preparation for disaster.

Overall, the partners interviewed were positive about the guidelines and emphasised the value of a book written using simple language, with few technical terms, and which was accessible and readable to church leaders and the local partners who work with them.

Moreover, the guidelines were written in a format that made them easily adaptable for training. This meant that partners could use the resources in their own training. In the Philippines, for example, some church leaders involved in the PHILRADS project are now considered experts in DRR and have been asked by local authorities to act as community trainers/resource persons in their municipality.

The guidance provides practical information and tips with diagrams on the action churches and their communities can take during disasters, for example, storing plastic sheeting away from the rain or sun, how to set up a temporary structure, and how to construct a latrine.

The guidelines also assist churches in recognising that they have internal resources they can use when disasters hit. This enables them to act as first responders without having to wait for external help. For example, for small churches without a lot of resources, the guidelines states that to provide shelter, local materials such as banana leaves or grass can be used to build shelters and construction of pit latrines for sanitation.

Staff and partners identified six challenges:

1. **Translation:** both the availability of materials in local languages and (from Tearfund staff) the challenge of the translation process
2. **Literacy:** The guidelines have been translated into 9 languages. Nevertheless, they remain inaccessible to church leaders with low literacy levels in these languages. In Malawi, for example, the guidelines could not be used in rural churches because they were not available in local languages. In the Philippines, facilitators had to rephrase content to make it more accessible to people with low literacy, with mixed success.
3. **Disaster types:** It would have been impossible to produce in-depth information on every disaster. The guidelines tackle six major types of disaster. However, some interviewees felt that the content was less relevant to churches experiencing conflict, or to building resilience to small day-to-day crises

¹⁰ In 2012, Tear Netherlands also published a series of case studies entitled "The local church and its engagement with disasters" and a set of guidelines for NGOs called "Churches in disaster response: guidelines for NGOs."

such as food insecurity. A few interviewees would have preferred more in-depth information tailored to their context.

4. **Context:** Content was adapted in a few of the translations however some of the building materials or approaches were not relevant to all contexts. In Zimbabwe, for example, building materials recommended in the guidelines were not available and the churches contacted did not have the financial resources needed to conduct certain activities.
5. **Local information:** Three interviews noted that they would have valued more in-depth information on working with government authorities in their location including which authorities, how to contact them, and how to deal with politics and bureaucracy.
6. **Resources:** Some of the actions were too resource-intensive for small churches. For example, partners noted that many churches were unable to reinforce church structures for disaster risk reduction or to contribute to the reconstruction of the community.

3.3 Training

The guideline was originally intended as a stand-alone resource. However, there was a strong demand for training from Tearfund's country offices who wanted to promote understanding of the guidelines amongst partners. The training and materials were promoted at Tearfund's Annual Conference, and at international days or during training events or quarterly gatherings. At the request of Country Representatives, training was conducted between October 2009 and December 2015 (the guidelines were published in 2011).¹¹

Drivers for training

The research identified three key areas which drove demand for the training, namely:

- Funding from appeals in Angola, Nepal and the Philippines meant that resources for conducting training was available
- Country Representatives wanted to promote uptake of the guidelines among partners, for example in Bangladesh
- The onset of a crisis motivated churches to seek out information on how they could support their communities. Many of the partners who participated in the research are from countries that had experienced recent crises. In the Philippines, Myanmar, and Ecuador, recent disasters motivated partners to request training for churches. Churches that experienced recent or recurrent disasters were noted to be particularly receptive to new information and most likely to have a basic knowledge of planning and response mechanisms. For example:

“Church leaders in Myanmar have really valued the resource...they are responsible for so many different things. When disasters were happening there was a lot of excitement about a resource that would help them to respond step-by-step.”

In most instances, training was conducted for local partners who were already working with local churches and they were encouraged to pass on the guidelines and training to local churches. Some participants came from the relief and development branch of a church network. Others were local partners seeking to engage with churches for the first time.

¹¹ Training in Mozambique occurred while the materials for the guidelines were still being developed. The remainder occurred after publication.

In a small number of cases, translation of the guidelines and training was attached to institutional funding. The Angola training, for example, was delivered through an EU grant that also funded a Portuguese translation. The training was requested by the Country Representative but had not been requested by local partners and as a result the content had limited relevance.¹²

The training was based on lessons from the manual but adapted for the length of training and the types of disaster that were relevant to the context (for example, training in Nepal included content from the section on earthquakes). Core lessons were included across all of the training. These lessons focussed on the resources that the local church has to respond to a disaster – including people, skills, and physical resources – and on a holistic understanding of vulnerability (ensuring that the needs of vulnerable groups are factored in all activities and processes) and needs (ensuring that responses are based on what is required by disaster affected people).

Training was also specifically adapted for conflict settings. The guidelines do not provide specific content on conflict although they do include content on displacement. The training in Lebanon included several Syrian church partners who were working with displaced communities while being displaced themselves. The Consultant Trainer reports churches being particularly responsive to sessions on personal security planning and how to reduce risks for volunteers. The training also included information on the new conflict quality standard (which was introduced by Tearfund at that time), although the unique context made it difficult.

There were also two instances where training was adapted for churches operating under persecution. Here, it was not possible to have contact with participants ahead of the training, which limited opportunity to contextualise it to local priorities. However, the facilitators were able to hold discussions on the selection of volunteers, being aware of motives, and also basic earthquake preparedness and response. In the second, the facilitators provided basic tips for churches to initiate or assist in setting up an early warning system.

We reviewed training reports from Central America (2014), Nepal (2015), and the Philippines (2015). The training reports were written at the end of the training weeks, based on the trainer's reflections and feedback collected from participants. According to training reports, the most useful components of training included preparing for a disaster, project planning, church planning and family contingency planning. Participants also responded well to the "mini-bus planning tool", an exercise with a set of questions to help churches organise themselves.¹³ Most participants did not indicate topics that were least relevant.

¹² Interview with training facilitator

¹³ The exercise is a drawing of a minibus that poses seven questions i.e. what are we going to do; how are we going to do it; what resources do we have; who do we need on board; what could hold us back; what could get in our way; and how much will it cost?

Lessons Learnt from the training

The training reports from Central America, Nepal, the Philippines, as well as interviews, identified seven important areas of learning:

- **IN GENERAL, THE GUIDELINES SHOULD NOT BE USED AS A STAND ALONE RESOURCE.** In interviews, partners emphasised the importance of supporting the guidelines with training for two reasons. First, training allows church leaders to explore foundational lessons on why the churches should engage in disaster preparedness and response and how it can be part of their service to their communities (some respondents argued that the training on contingency planning should come later as part of a second training). Second, the training allows facilitators to emphasise the value of the initial four chapters of training (on the local church and disasters, organising ourselves, risks, needs and capacity assessments and displaced people) as well as the hazard-specific chapters.
- **CONTEXTUALISATION.** From the outset, the trainers learned to fit the training to hazards. They arranged a preparatory meeting with the local host partner to identify the main local risks as well as secondary disasters that had been experienced.
- **COMMUNICATE IN A LANGUAGE AND STYLE THAT PARTICIPANTS CAN UNDERSTAND.** This is often best achieved through local facilitators. Certain countries, such as Bangladesh, have staff members or partners who are able to deliver the training. The trainers have also routinely distributed CDs with all the training materials to the partner organisations. Training was enhanced when the materials were translated into the local language and was more difficult in countries where the partner literacy level was low (e.g. Mozambique). Furthermore, it was important that local facilitators had some knowledge on disaster management and training methods.
- **INCLUDE FIELDWORK.** Several of the training workshops included fieldwork, such as visits to churches, which was found to assist participants to practise what they were learning.
- **CONSIDER THE TIMING OF TRAINING.** In the Philippines, training was conducted immediately before Christmas, which meant that there was a gap between church leaders being trained and being able to implement what they had learned, which reduced the effectiveness of training.
- **FUNDING FOR CASCADE TRAINING.** Most training participants were local NGO partners or church denominations. Few country offices had funding for cascade training, and so while it was encouraged, there was little follow-up.
- **FOLLOW UP.** Follow-up on the training should be conducted within 2-3 months of the original training to ensure that participants follow up on their action plans (which outline actions they will take at one week, one month, and six months). The quality of these plans was very variable but in general there was little formal follow-up. One of the trainers, kept in touch with partners informally for some time to hear how the training was being implemented. This might be achieved through establishing local networks to encourage sharing and learning, however many respondents noted the importance of regularly communicating with partners or churches as part of a systematic engagement.

4 Building capabilities

This section provides an analysis of the types of capabilities that were supported through the guidelines and training.

In many cases, Tearfund partners have long-term engagement with churches and the ‘pastors in disasters’ training is just one component of the relationship. The focus of engagement will be unique for each church. However, four capabilities emerged from the interviews that have been built in many different contexts: identifying a role for the church, building networks, identifying risks, and assessing and responding to needs (see Figure 1). The sections below describe these capabilities, supported by examples from interviews.

BELIEFS ON DISASTERS AND THE CHURCH	BUILDS NETWORKS AND RELATIONSHIPS	UNDERSTANDS RISKS	CONTRIBUTES TO EFFECTIVE RESPONSE
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Church leader forms a biblical perspective on why disasters happen 2. Church leader forms a perspective on the role of the church in disasters 3. Church leader communicates these perspectives to the congregation 4. Church leader sets a personal example 5. Church members adopt a biblical perspective on disasters & see themselves as called to take action. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Church committee is formed, develops mission statement and plan for meetings 2. Church committee forms informal relationships with other community actors. 3. Church conducts joint activities with other community actors 4. Church committee engages with other humanitarian actors 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Church leaders can identify risks in the church 2. Church leaders can identify risks in the community 3. Church leaders share information on risks with their congregation and others 4. Leader and congregation make plans to reduce the risks identified. 5. Leader and congregation commit resources and implement their plan to reduce risks 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Church leaders are aware of the needs of different groups 2. Church leaders actively seek out those with sensitivity to specific shocks or stresses 3. Churches contribute to formal needs assessments 4. Churches use formal or informal needs assessment to contribute to response.

Figure 1: Four areas of capability building that were identified during interviews. We have indicated a scale for each (with 1 as the first step, and 4 or 5 as the highest step). Note that in some cases the steps were not taken in sequence, or some steps were missed out.

4.1 Beliefs on disasters and the church

The most significant finding across all partner responses was that the guidelines and training had supported churches to develop an integral mission theology.

The guidelines heavily reference scripture and use biblical stories, verses and Bible studies, which makes it credible for church leaders to use. At least three Tearfund staff members described observing partners and churches experiencing a series of perspective changes – from coming to believe that disasters are not divine punishment, to recognising that the church can or should play a role in supporting the community, to identifying their own role as leaders within that plan.

CHURCH LEADER FORMS A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON WHY DISASTERS HAPPEN

Six of the partners stated that some church leaders and congregations in their regions believe that disasters are a curse or punishment from God for the sins that human beings have committed. The guidelines provide a biblical perspective on disasters that intends to dispel the idea that disasters are a punishment from God and provide scripture that calls on churches to act and assist their community. As a Tearfund partner from Ecuador stated, they use the guidelines,

“to challenge the idea of disaster as God’s punishment - these are things that happen and we need to be prepared to confront them in the right way”.

CHURCH LEADER FORMS A PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH – TO ASSIST BOTH CHRISTIANS AND NON-CHRISTIANS

All partners said that one of the most important components of the guidelines was its inclusion of biblical references that illustrate why churches should engage with disasters. Both the guidelines and the training included biblical studies on characters such as Joseph, Noah, and others that had played a role in a disaster and that illustrated how “God used his people to save a wider body of people.”

Interviewees explained that an important component of building a perspective on the church’s role in disasters includes church leaders identifying their role to assist non-Christians in the community. Several partners noted that churches can be wary of working with secular organisations or of supporting people outside of their congregations. However, five interviewees talked about how the guidelines and training had helped church leaders plan support for both their congregation and the wider community. In Bangladesh, for example, a Tearfund staff member noted that church leaders have worked with the Muslim community during preparedness activities such as awareness raising.

All partners and churches noted the importance of framing training within a biblical worldview. For example, one partner in Honduras explained:

“Generally speaking, church leaders in this area are not too open to work on these issues unless it is heavily framed within a biblical perspective. The other tools we have used include Bible reflections but are written for a more general audience. I favour this guide for church leaders because it shows bigger content in terms of a Bible perspective”

In interviews, some partners explained that church leaders had not been aware that they could play a role during disasters, while others were responding but in an ad-hoc and unplanned way. In the Philippines, a baseline study by Tearfund partner ICM at the onset of training for 2351 church leaders indicated that only 16% of church leaders had previously taken action to prepare for or respond to a disaster and that only 22% felt able to respond to a future disaster. In a survey after the training 85% of church leaders could identify a phase of the disaster response cycle, compared to 13% before training and awareness of the Government’s Disaster Risk Reduction Plan had risen from 27% to 66%.¹⁴

Interviewees felt that the guidelines had provided practical guidance on what churches and their members could do before, during and after a disaster. For example, one church leader in Central America told a Tearfund staff member that he had not previously considered that the Church could act as a shelter during a crisis. Another said:

¹⁴ The impact of this training has also been explored in Tearfund’s “Evidence Brief. Tearfund and International Care Ministries in the Philippines: Training Pastors for Disasters”

“there is a religious conference and it was seen as really highbrow: everyone will frown if you take half an hour to talk about disasters because it was not about the spiritual development of the church. But now they are discussing it - seeing that it is part of their role to respond to disasters.”

Church leaders have many and varied perspectives on the role of the church in disasters. Some acted on the guidelines and training as an opportunity to engage in the physical and emotional needs of the community – while others attended training but did not establish committees or implement new activities. We have limited data on the factors that lead to greater uptake, however, the data we have suggests that three important factors were:

- a) an established supportive relationship with a partner or network;
- b) training was demand-led; and
- c) personal experience of recent or recurrent disasters;

CHURCH LEADER COMMUNICATES THESE PERSPECTIVES TO THE CONGREGATION



Some church leaders went on to communicate this perspective to other church leaders or their congregations. For example, a Tearfund staff member in Central America told of distributing guidelines to a seminary in Guatemala. The leader of the seminary initially responded that they were not an emergency response organisation. However, he took the manual, reviewed it, and after a couple of months, prepared a curriculum that integrated part of the manual into a practical training to help new church leaders respond to disasters. This is still used for training for holistic mission within the region.

In a similar vein, a church leader in the Philippines said that the training had helped him because:

“I learned that church leaders are to give knowledge and skills and to train the community so that they will be prepared during disasters.”

CHURCH LEADER SETS A PERSONAL EXAMPLE

Church leaders can set an example to their congregations by preparing their own families for disaster. In Honduras, MOPAWI worked with a pastor that decided to move his garden to a higher location, despite the land being less productive, because it would be safer in case of flooding. When the rain came, the uplands he was cultivating were not affected. MOPAWI attributes this to the pastor’s training and report that he has since used this example to convince others in his community that it will help them to be more resilient to future floods.

CHURCH MEMBERS ADOPT A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON DISASTER AND SEE THEMSELVES AS CALLED TO TAKE ACTION

There were no explicit examples of church members undergoing a change in their perspective on disasters or the role of the church in responding. However, this change is implicit in many of the examples in the following sections where church members form committees, build networks, and seek to understand the risks and vulnerabilities of their communities.

4.2 Building networks and relationships

The guidelines recommend that churches set up a disaster management committee (DMC) that is charged with preparing for and responding to disasters. The DMC should include representatives from different parts of the community, including women and minorities. The guidelines provide a list of some of the functions of the committee which include: coordinating needs assessment; ensuring that basic needs especially for



vulnerable groups are met; organising risk assessment (before a disaster); and supporting teams of volunteers. It also sets out crucial members of the DMC and their responsibilities, including a coordinator, treasurer, logistics person and a communications person.

CHURCH COMMITTEE IS FORMED AND DEVELOPS A MISSION STATEMENT

Once a church had identified a desire or mandate to respond to disasters, its first step was often to create a church committee. At least five of the partners interviewed described churches responding to the training by forming committees that came in different forms and sizes. In the Philippines, for example, partners said that some committees are relatively informal while others have a clear structure and roles. One church leader in the Philippines said that his church committee is made up of five members who each contribute 5 pesos (0.068 GBP) per month towards the ongoing and anticipated work of the committee.

Similarly, a partner in Bangladesh stated that he had worked with Tearfund since 2009, and had not observed any church involvement in the humanitarian response during an emergency. However, after distribution of the guidelines and subsequent training, he said that churches began forming disaster committees, distributing materials, and raising awareness on the types of disasters that exist and how to prepare and mitigate their effect.

CHURCH COMMITTEE FORMS RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER COMMUNITY ACTORS

Churches that had developed church committees were involved in a network or ongoing relationship with a partner that supported the process. Once the committee was established, they worked with the partner to strengthen relationships with other actors.

IMPACT STORY: Establishing networks and building relationships in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, the LAMB DRR project conducted training for church members of Kushdaha Union from 3-4 December 2014. A Tear Bangladesh staff member facilitated the training. The training was designed to help church leaders and members to identify the disasters that affect them, and to discuss the impact, challenges, opportunities and resources held by their community. At the end of the training, the participants developed an action plan and they agreed to form an Inter-Church Networking Committee (ICN) that would conduct advocacy, networking and coordination activities in relation to disasters. The committee developed a mission statement and an annual action plan to “rescue the impact of disasters.”

In 2015, Jabrepara, a community in the Kushdaha Union, was hit by a storm that destroyed the homes of 13 families, injured 3 people and destroyed crops and animals. Church members of Jabrepara reached out to ICN for assistance. ICN communicated the disaster to local government and NGOs and requested the partner, LAMB, to provide support to the affected families. ICN also took action by administering first aid, mobilising funds that were reportedly used to support the poorest families. After the crisis, ICN gave training to community members on planting hazard resistant crops and assisting families who lost their houses with reconstruction.

CHURCH COMMITTEE UNDERTAKES JOINT ACTIVITIES WITH OTHER COMMUNITY ACTORS

In several cases, churches also formed broader networks or coalitions to facilitate DRR activities. In the Philippines, for example, a group of local church leaders and faith-based organisations has formed a coalition

as a result of its engagement with Tearfund and PHILRADS. The coalition has conducted livelihoods recovery and disaster preparedness and has been recognised by the local Government. Similarly, in Bangladesh, the ICN Network described in the impact story above continues to meet (albeit irregularly) to conduct preparedness activities.

CHURCH COMMITTEE ENGAGES WITH HUMANITARIAN SYSTEM

In the stories gathered during this research, churches had not participated in formal humanitarian response mechanisms. However, interviews suggest that the church can contribute to coordination through strong informal relationships across community and humanitarian actors.

Partners in Central America and Bangladesh said that many churches in their countries are wary of working with secular organisations or of assisting populations outside of their congregation. Nevertheless, three of the partners interviewed recounted stories of churches widening their networks to engage with other humanitarian stakeholders, including secular organisations.

In Zimbabwe, for example, a partner recounted that after a flood hit an area in which he works, churches partnered with local and international NGOs to purchase materials for reconstructing houses using superior quality materials in order to 'build back better.' Similarly, a Tearfund representative in Colombia stated that church leaders in a flood-affected part of the country have begun working with local authorities including the Mayor to develop preparedness activities to reduce the vulnerability of the community to future floods. The interviewee noted,

“this was a first, as churches never really worked with political/government leaders before.”

IMPACT STORY: Churches working with local authorities in the Philippines

In the Philippines, Tearfund partnered the Philippine Relief and Development Services (PHILRADS) to deliver training for 29 local churches and local NGOs, and five staff from PHILRADS in Tacloban (the coordination centre for the Typhoon Haiyan response) in 2015. The training was aimed at equipping PHILRADS 'master trainers' with skills and knowledge about DRR so that they would be able to train church leaders, their members and community leaders and members. It was an intensive training that included field visits to churches for practical learning, during which the participants were engaged in exercises with church members and church leaders that included: reviewing checklists of risks, identifying how to make a building typhoon resistant and identifying options for water supply during a crisis.

PHILRADS delivered livelihoods activities in the area and remained in regular contact with the church leaders to provide ongoing support. The churches associated with PHILRADS demonstrated a willingness to serve and support local government actions. They have engaged with the community, set up youth groups, and have been asked to run training by local government. This has reportedly led to an improvement in the relationships between local churches and local Government. Community preparedness plans were developed and shared with local government. When another smaller typhoon hit, the church leaders felt more confident to share early warning information through the PHILRADS network.

4.3 Understanding risks

The guidelines suggest engaging the community in exercises to map risks by location and severity. The maps should also identify the communities' resources, including property, human and natural resources that will help it prepare for, cope with and recover from a disaster. Church and community leaders can visit the areas identified as high risk in order to identify changes that might reduce risks. A community response plan can also be developed allocating responsibilities, which can be updated every year.

The training included lessons on risks and vulnerability at the individual, local and community levels. This was often contextualised to the disasters being faced in the training country. For example, in Burundi, the training included two days on security planning, including how churches could assess their own risks, and how churches could operate in a way that safeguarded their volunteers and community.

CHURCH LEADERS IDENTIFY RISKS IN THE CHURCH

The training often included activities and field visits to help church partners identify and discuss risks in their buildings as well as how to make churches a safe place for people to seek refuge in an emergency. In the Philippines, trainees conducted a mapping exercise to identify risks in the church and surrounding community. One identified a potential fire hazard from a neighbouring slum, and resolved to put in place large drums of water and train some volunteers as fire-fighters. In another church, the leaders identified a significant fire risk from large spotlights near a fabric false-ceiling.

CHURCH LEADERS IDENTIFY RISKS IN THE COMMUNITY



There were also examples of church-based or local emergency committees identifying risks in the community. In Manta-Ecuador, for example, a small group of local churches invited community members (including those that were not Christian) to meet together to develop a risk map that included evacuation routes during earthquakes and earmarked places that people can take shelter. The same group later worked with university students to develop an early warning system. Similarly, in Brazil, one group of churches established a group on the messaging service WhatsApp to provide alerts during floods.

CHURCH LEADERS SHARE INFORMATION ON RISKS WITH CONGREGATION AND OTHERS

A significant proportion of church preparedness activities involved information sharing. In Nepal, a partner organisation described how church leaders were taking a greater role in informing churches about how to protect themselves during an earthquake. In the Philippines, some church leaders have shared information gathered during the training with their congregations or the wider community:

“It was clear during the training how to transfer information to the community. I did it in my barangay with the barangay tanod¹⁵ and barangay health worker. It was during a council session, and I just wanted to attend. They asked me what my agenda was and I said nothing. It so happened they talked about DRR. I started asking questions like who was in charge and does he/she know what to do. I then volunteered to help since I was trained. I have now trained the DRR head, barangay health worker, and other government officials to gather and be trained. In total, around 30 barangay officials have been trained by me. I work with the DRR chairman.”

¹⁵ Or police officer

LEADER AND CONGREGATION MAKE PLANS TO REDUCE RISKS

“Any community has self-agency but the training and the talks we have done have helped us to be more organised and reflect on planning for the future”

For example, in the Philippines, certain churches have been recognised as evacuation centres by the local *barangay*¹⁶ and some church leaders have established new volunteer structures in their churches to enable them to operate their evacuation centres. Furthermore, some of the church leaders have also been able to train the local DRR heads, the barangay health workers and other local government officials. Nevertheless, church leaders report that they face challenges interacting with government officials because of their religious identity, inexperience in developing connections with government officials, and because they are discouraged “due to politicking”.

LEADER AND CONGREGATION COMMIT RESOURCES AND IMPLEMENT PLANS TO REDUCE RISKS

There were a handful of examples where churches have committed resources in order to implement these plans. According to Tearfund partner ICM, a church leader from Gigantes Islands, who attended training in the Philippines, communicated what he had learnt to his congregation and the wider community. According to case study reports, the church members realised the importance of preparing the church building as an evacuation centre and took some practical steps to do so – such as increasing the number of toilets in preparation for an influx of people and holding discussions with the barangay leaders who were developing the barangay development plan that included community-level disaster preparedness.



4.4 Assessing and responding to needs and vulnerabilities

The guidelines emphasise the need for churches to include and cater to vulnerable groups at all stages of a disaster and encourages the church to be neutral, especially when societal and cultural beliefs lead to mistreatment of certain groups. The guidelines emphasise that everyone should be treated equally regardless of their background or belief and further states that, “the church is built on hope and the expectation of seeing God bring change, so it should not share the fatalism which may be common in the wider community.”¹⁷

CHURCH LEADERS ARE AWARE OF NEEDS OF DIFFERENT GROUPS

The guidelines provided a summary of factors that churches should consider when working with people with specific needs, such as the need to build pit latrines in well-lit areas that are safe for women and girls.

Several partners noted that training had encouraged a better understanding of the needs of vulnerable people during disasters and that these should be specifically catered for. There were examples of churches considering the specific needs of pregnant women, children, elderly, and people with disabilities while making plans and preparations for disasters.

¹⁶ A barangay is the smallest administrative division in the Philippines.

¹⁷ “Disasters and the local church” guidelines Pg. 27

CHURCH LEADERS ACTIVELY SEEKING OUT GROUPS WITH SPECIFIC VULNERABILITIES



Partners described church leaders having a greater awareness of specific vulnerabilities. In Ecuador for example, after the 2014 earthquakes, there were high cases of domestic violence and sexual abuse of children. Churches held discussions on how they could intervene and the assistance they can provide to children that have faced abuse.¹⁸

There was little discussion on how church leaders or their congregations identify groups with greater risk or vulnerabilities to shocks and stresses. Tearfund's understanding of resilience has developed since the guidelines were first published and several interviews suggest that this now needs to be incorporated into any future training for church leaders.

CHURCHES CONTRIBUTE TO NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

“the most useful things that have impacted from the guide are needs and risk assessments and how to conduct them”

The guidelines provided an introduction to both risk and needs assessments. Partners identified church leaders and their communities conducting their own informal needs assessments as well as contributing information for formal needs assessments. In Latin America for example, a Tearfund staff member stated that after the training, church leaders provided data on the needs of people that were affected by an earthquake in Northern Guatemala. When floods hit, Tearfund Central America used the information provided by church leaders to raise an Alert and apply for funding from the Start Fund,¹⁹ which was granted. Tearfund used the funding to provide shelter and conduct cash transfer programming.

CHURCHES USE NEEDS ASSESSMENTS TO CONTRIBUTE TO RESPONSE

Examples from the Philippines, Nepal and Bangladesh suggest that churches have used their understanding of needs to contribute to response. It is difficult to establish the scale of the churches engagement or how their new understanding of vulnerability has shaped the response. Nevertheless, in the Philippines, churches trained by ICM sent out warnings for early evacuations for their neighbourhoods, cut down trees that seemed to pose a hazard, and prepared sandbags to protect homes during typhoon and flooding. In all three countries, church leaders have opened the doors to their churches (and in one case their home) as evacuation centres and have provided trauma counselling.

¹⁸ Unfortunately, the interviewee, who was a staff member at Tearfund was not able to inform us of what happened as a result of these conversations

¹⁹ The Start Fund is a multi-donor pooled rapid-response fund that initiates disbursement of humanitarian finance within 72 hours. It is collectively owned and managed by the Start Network members, a group of 42 national and international aid agencies from five continents that include Tearfund.

5 Church engagement in the disaster cycle

Tearfund's model involves building the capabilities of church leaders, their churches and congregations, and supporting them to implement DRR activities with the objective of improving resilience and strengthening church mobilisation. This section explores how the Tearfund guidelines and training have led to church mobilisation at each phase of the disaster management cycle (illustrated in Figure 2).

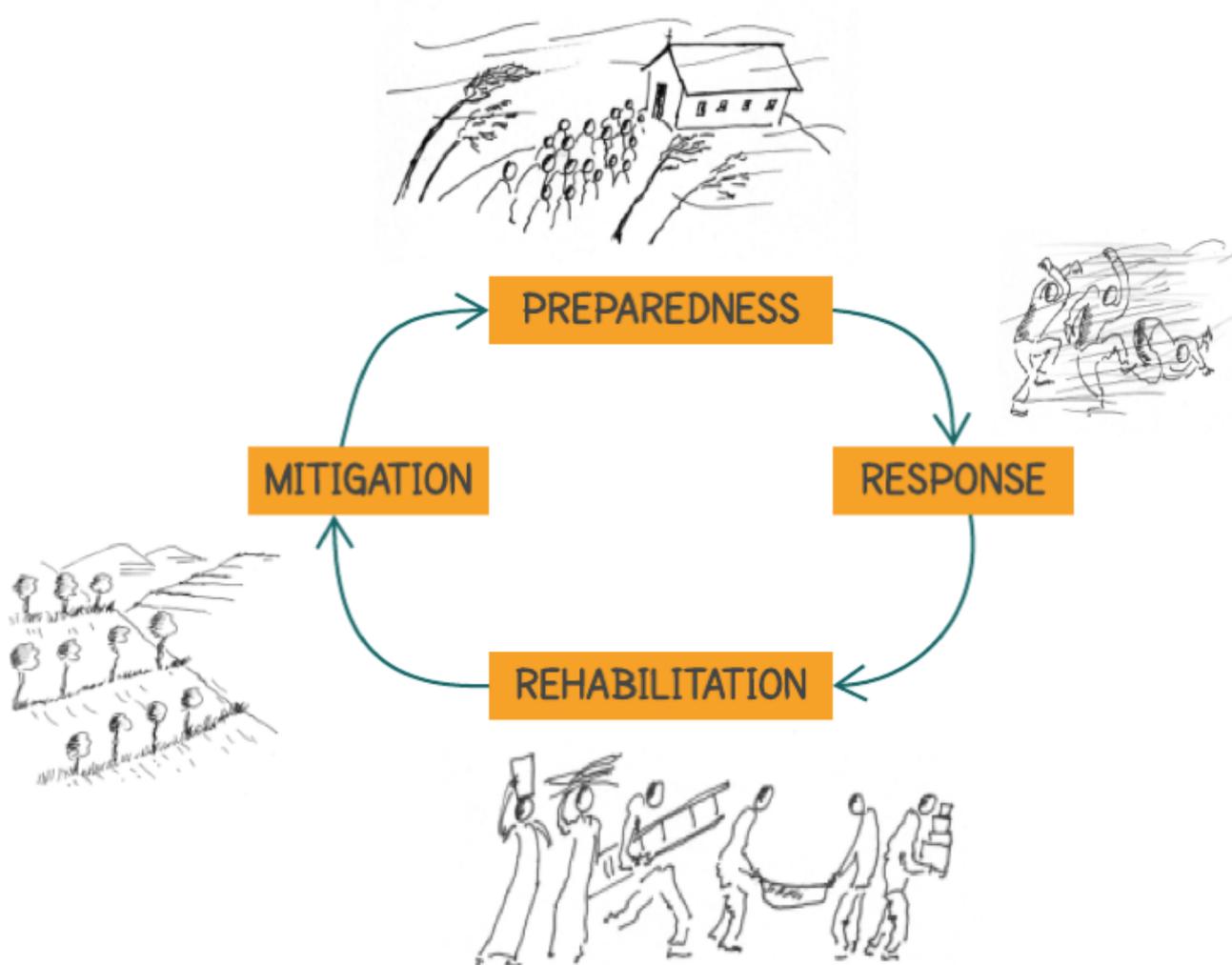


Figure 2: Disaster management cycle

PREPAREDNESS

Church leaders found it easier to grasp and implement training related to preparing for a disaster and the majority of activities conducted by churches fell into the 'preparedness' phase of the cycle. The stories we heard involved churches forming committees, identifying risks, sharing information, making plans, and developing early warning systems (see section on capabilities).

When asked about the impact of the guidelines on the community, the greatest number of examples came from church leaders creating awareness of risks and how to mitigate their effects during their sermons. These examples emphasised that in many places church leaders had previously been unlikely to talk about disasters

in a religious setting. However, they had gained a new perspective on their role and an understanding of the risks that the community faced. In two cases, partners reported an increased understanding of why some members of the community are more vulnerable during disasters. As a result, partners felt that church leaders are more likely to discuss practical aspects of disaster preparedness with their congregations. In one example from Nepal, a staff member described how a church leader had been talking to his congregation about safe places during earthquakes when one hit.

RESPONSE

The capabilities listed in the previous chapter – such as forming networks, identifying risks and assessing needs can help build preparedness and support DRR. However, the onset of a new crisis can often test those relationships and plans.

This research has identified churches that have engaged in response in Bangladesh, the Philippines, Guatemala and Nepal. These stories all illustrate ways in which the local church has been able to identify its own resources – people, skills, or physical resources – and put them to use. In all cases, training and guidelines have been just one way in which the church has been supported to respond. Other important factors were the existence of church networks that would hold churches accountable for implementing their plans, access to information, and ongoing support from a partner.

In Guatemala, a partner organisation that adapted Tearfund training and delivered it to ten local churches reported that:

“When people were stuck [after the earthquake] ... the [church’s new] disaster response committee agreed to open the church and offered food and a place to sleep for all those people who were not able to return to their homes for many days. I think the church responding in this way was a direct consequence of the training a few months earlier... They were given training but also camping mats that allowed them to host people.”

He noted that the guidelines help ensure churches are equipped to be able to run shelters and provide provisions for vulnerable people, including children.

However, interviews with Tearfund staff cautioned against viewing churches as part of Tearfund’s formal response mechanism without analysing the context. First because local churches may not have the institutional capacities for project management in order to implement a response, and second, because churches should be allowed to focus on the areas in which they can play a unique role, including supporting the emotional and spiritual needs of the community. In particular, staff said that in each response, Tearfund should consider the church’s position in the wider community, the needs in the area, and how many people can realistically be reached through church mechanisms.

REHABILITATION

Few of the stories recounted during interviews fell into the rehabilitation²⁰ phase of a disaster response. Church congregations often rebuild their own church building (and the guidelines have provided advice on where to do this). Several interviewees stated that churches are less able – or less well suited – to actively contribute to the wider rehabilitation efforts, which are often time consuming and resource heavy. However, there were reported examples of churches that partnered with other institutions by providing volunteers,

²⁰ The guidelines describe rehabilitation as “the actions taken to rebuild a community once the emergency response stage has passed. Rehabilitation can include repairing houses, restoring basic services (such as water and sanitation) and helping people to start earning a living again in a way that makes them less vulnerable to future disasters. Humanitarian organisations also refer to this as the reconstruction phase.

contributing to local disaster committees, or acting as “watchdogs” to ensure that activities adhered to humanitarian standards and that the right materials were used in reconstruction efforts.

In addition, several churches in Central America, for example, set up a system for receiving donations from the congregation for community rehabilitation activities. The partner reported that the guidelines had helped equip the churches to understand how to receive, store funds and promote equitable distribution of resources within the community.

MITIGATION AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (DRR)

Several interviewees struggled to understand the distinction between preparedness and mitigation activities – something they said had been unclear to them during the training. However, they were able to give examples of activities done to reduce the effects of floods on the church structures (in the Philippines), to redirect water towards rivers in anticipation of flooding (Zimbabwe), and to revive traditional Maize storage practices within church premises in anticipation of drought. In the Philippines, partners spoke of how the guidelines had provided churches with additional ways to protect their houses, for example building new houses away from riverbanks that were prone to flooding. Similarly, in Central America, a MOPAWI observed a church leader moving farming activities away from low lying area and encouraging his community to follow suit.

6 What next?

Undisclosed.

7 Conclusions

Undisclosed.

Annexes

Annex 1: Research framework

Research Question	Sub-question	Evidence and Source
1. What is the coverage of guidelines and training?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What proportion and demographic of partners have received the guidelines and training and when? • What training did the partners receive to use the guidelines? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training feedback forms (if available) • Survey
2. How many partners have conducted training in their local community after receiving training from Tearfund?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What level of training did the partners conduct in their local community? • What was the effect of the training? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Training feedback forms (if available)
4. What capacities have been built in church leaders for: i) response ii) rehabilitation iii) mitigation iv) preparedness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What parts of the training are most relevant to church leaders? • Is the training relevant to church leaders in different types of disaster context? • Have church leaders also received PADR training? Which is seen as most useful? Why? • What new knowledge and skills have been learned for: i) response ii) rehabilitation iii) mitigation iv) preparedness? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KII • Programme Reports • Evaluations within Tearfund's Database
3. Where has capacity building been most significant: i) response ii) rehabilitation iii) mitigation iv) preparedness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the perspective of church leaders on their role in each phase of the response cycle? • In which phase(s) has capacity been built most significantly? Why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KII • Programme M&E reports • Evaluations within Tearfund's Database
5. To what extent have the guidelines and training challenged the behaviours and attitudes of (individual) participants? If so, how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has there been any change in participants' attitudes towards the church's roles in disasters? • What are the participants doing differently since the dissemination of the guidelines and training? • What was the response of church leaders to disasters before training? What is their response now? • What were the rehabilitation mechanisms in place before? What are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KII • Programme Reports • Evaluations within Tearfund's Database

	<p>the rehabilitation mechanisms in place now?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the mitigation mechanisms in place before? What are the mitigation mechanisms in place now? • What were the preparedness activities in place before? What are the preparedness activities in place now? 	
6. To what extent has our training led to locally owned disaster risk reduction? If so, how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the training led to churches and communities perceiving and approaching DRR differently? • Are the DRR activities leading to greater resilience? • What is the observable interplay between capacity building and DRR? • How has the training contributed to the church playing a different role in managing disasters? • What other things need to complement the training to support community transformation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KII • Programme Reports • Evaluations within Tearfund's Database

Annex 2: List of PiD Training 2009-2015

Undisclosed

Annex 3: List of interviewees

Undisclosed

Annex 4: References to the guidelines

1. Books

- Managing the risks of extreme events and disasters to advance climate change and adaptation, Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

2. Online Resources

- Episcopal Relief & Development (2016) Pastors and Disasters: A Toolkit for Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction & Management for members and partners of the Anglican relief and development community. Available at: http://www.episcopalrelief.org/uploaded/files/What-We-Do/DRR-Toolkit/Pastors_and_Disasters_FINAL_US.pdf
- (2016) Local church partnerships in humanitarian assistance. Available at: <https://mccintersections.wordpress.com/2016/10/17/local-church-partnerships-humanitarian-assistance/>
- Integral Mission Forum (2014) Global Change: Exploring Current Trends in Mission. Provides a list of resources, including the guidelines, available at:

[http://www.globalconnections.org.uk/sites/newgc.localhost/files/papers/exploring_current_trends_in_mission - resources list - oct 2014.pdf](http://www.globalconnections.org.uk/sites/newgc.localhost/files/papers/exploring_current_trends_in_mission_-_resources_list_-_oct_2014.pdf)

- Response to a question online, 'Role of Faith-Based Organisations in Disaster Risk Reduction and Strengthening Resilience.' Available at:
<https://www.preventionweb.net/experts/ask/session/40329>
- Voice out loud, Issue 26, available here: <file:///C:/Users/Catherine/Downloads/voice-out-loud-26-6-liens.pdf>
- AFET ODAKLI ACİL MANEVİ SOSYAL HİZMET UYGULAMALARI BAĞLAMINDA TÜRKİYE'YE YÖNELİK BİR MODEL ÖNERİSİ by Prof. Dr. Ali SEYYAR and Aynur YUMURTACI available at:
http://journals.manas.edu.kg/mjsr/archives/Y2016_V05_I03/77648be2795af244cd50adfa8699f7d1.pdf

3. Dissertations

- Jennifer Wanjiku Kimaru (2015) Mass assemblies and vulnerability to disasters: The case of selected churches in Nairobi by available here:
http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/bitstream/handle/11295/94413/Kimaru_Mass%20assemblies%20and%20vulnerability%20to%20disasters:%20the%20case%20of%20selected%20churches%20in%20Nairobi.pdf?sequence=1