

CONTENT

STEP 1: UNDERSTAND KEY TERMS AND RELATED QUESTIONS

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The methods you use to collect information should always be directly linked to, and appropriate for, the questions you are asking. This section outlines the key questions you will need to examine and answer while developing your anticipatory action plan and EAPs in particular.

Exposure

- Who and what suffers or is affected the most from the prioritized impact and how?
- Which sub-groups of the populations are exposed?
- What elements of the built environment are most affected and how (for example, houses, schools, cross, natural resources, water points, roads)?
- Where are those exposed elements located (for example, households living on at-risk parts of embankments)?

Vulnerability

- What characteristics of people and/or things lead them to be disproportionately impacted by a particular hazard?



Clarification: Exposure vs. Vulnerability

The terms exposure and vulnerability are often confused, but they are not interchangeable. Exposure refers to people, places, or things that are hit by an event, regardless of whether they are (likely to be) negatively impacted. Vulnerability describes the characteristics of those things that make them more likely to suffer from impacts. For example, a cement house and an adobe house may be located side by side in a flood zone. Both houses are exposed to flooding, but because of its construction, the adobe house will be more vulnerable to flood waters than its cement neighbour. When collecting data and information for your anticipatory action plan, you need to understand both exposure and vulnerability.

Drivers of vulnerability

While exposure can often be directly learned from hazard maps (if available) or from the knowledge of the community which area is often flooded, vulnerability is more complex. Different individual and community characteristics can contribute to the vulnerability of individual people, and influence how badly they may be affected by a hazard. On the individual level, people could be more vulnerable based on their age, gender, disabilities, level of education, or livelihood, for example. Communities in their entirety may be more vulnerable than others if they have been historically marginalized and received fewer resources to strengthen their resilience. Often, drivers of vulnerability are not static, and people's vulnerability can change over time. These are particularly complex dynamics in fragile and conflict-affected settings. The toolkits on Protection, Gender and Inclusion and on Anticipatory Action in Fragile, Conflict-affected and Violent Settings in this chapter's [toolbox](#) offer useful resources to identify and monitor relevant drivers of vulnerability.

Impacts

- What are the (humanitarian) impacts of a particular hazard?
- What impact databases or other records, e.g., narratives from older adults / elderly individuals or media archives are available for the selected hazard?
- How confident are you in the quality of the historical records?
- What hazard magnitude produces key impacts?
- What impacts do people find most difficult to deal with in their daily lives?
- Which sectors have been historically affected the most (health, shelter, agriculture, infrastructure, etc.)?

Early actions

- What do affected populations currently do (or have they historically done) to prevent or cope with negative impacts of the hazard in question?
- Could any of these responses be implemented before the event occurred to reduce later impacts?
- Could current preparedness actions be reinforced or improved with anticipatory action?
- What more could stakeholders do (in the window between the forecast and the hazard impact) if they had additional support or resources?
- What (if any) evidence is there that the action we are proposing will work?

