

Identifying potential hazards



Why use this activity?

This activity can be used to visualise and gather information about local disasters which have occurred in the past, how severe they were and the impacts they had. It can also serve to show any trends through time.



A brief description

A group produces a timeline of hazards the community has faced over a number of years. A discussion helps to draw out key information.



You will need

- Large pieces of paper
- Pens
- Small stones or bottle tops
- Maps of the community (see **Tool A2: Getting to know our community**)



Timeline

This activity will take 1-2 hours

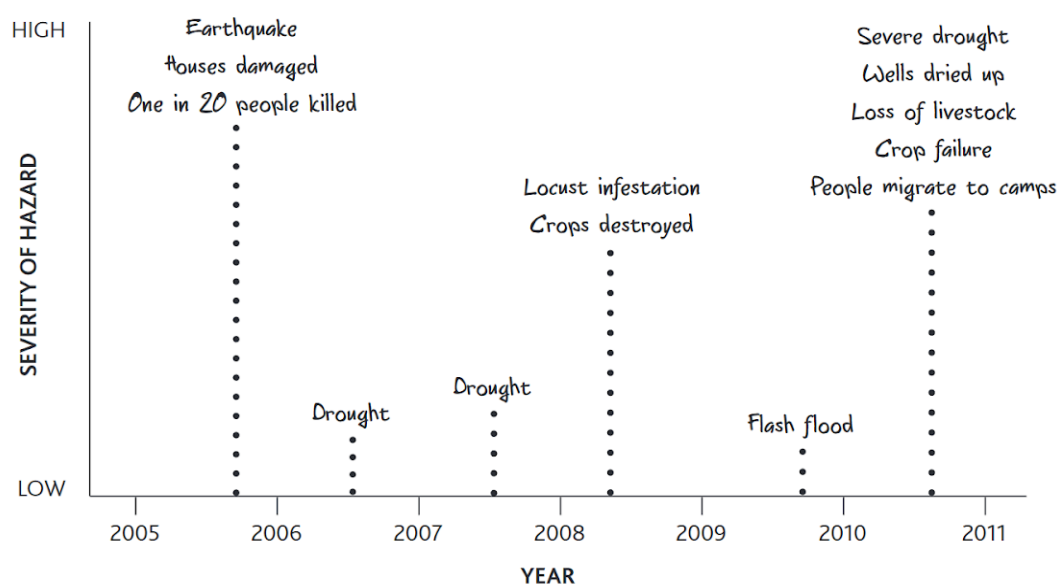


What to do

- Before starting this activity, ensure that the group understands the meaning of the following words:
 - **Hazard** – an extreme event which could injure people or damage property and the environment
 - **Vulnerability** – how likely people are to suffer serious loss, damage, injury or death as a result of a hazard
 - **Disaster** – a disaster occurs when a hazard affects vulnerable people who are unable to cope with its effects

Part 1

- Draw the axes of a map onto a large piece of paper (see the example below). The vertical axis (the line running from top to bottom) will measure how severe the hazard was. The horizontal axis (the line from left to right) represents time. You can choose the length of time to reflect back on. It could be 5 or 10 years, or longer if you want to include a significant event that happened longer than 10 years ago. Allow the group to decide.
- Ask the group to think back over the hazards that the community has faced within the timeline. Mark these along the horizontal axis using the small stones or bottle tops.
- Once all of the key hazards have been marked on the map, ask the group to put another pebble or bottle top to mark how severe the hazard was, and to draw a dotted line between the two markers - as in the example below. The height of the dotted line above the horizontal axis shows how severe the hazard was.
- Ask the group the following discussion questions:
 - Have these hazards always affected you?
 - What has changed (and how)?
 - What were the impacts of the most severe hazards?
 - What was the human impact, for example on life and health?
 - What was the social impact, for example on community structures and education?
 - What was the impact on buildings and infrastructure?
 - What was the impact on natural resources such as land and water?
 - What was the economic impact, for example on livelihoods and income?
 - Which hazards are most likely to happen again in our community?



Part 2

Once the most likely hazards have been identified, these can be shown on the maps created during the activities in **Tool A2: Getting to know our community**.

For the most likely and impactful hazards identified, ask the group to consider:

- Which areas would be most at risk?
- Which buildings or structures would be most at risk?
- Which people in particular areas would be most at risk?
- What impact would there be on livelihoods, crops and animals?
- What impact would there be on water and food supplies?
- What impact would there be on communications (roads, bridges, telephones)?

After discussing all these questions, ask the group to shade in buildings, areas, or homes on the map, using colours to indicate levels of risk. For example, you could use red for high-risk, yellow for medium-risk and green for low-risk areas.

Next steps: We suggest that you carry out **Tool A2: Vulnerability and capability analysis** after completing this activity.



Notes

This activity is adapted from Tearfund (2011) *Disasters and the local church*

http://learn.tearfund.org/en/themes/disasters/disasters_and_the_local_church/ and

Tearfund (2011) *Roots 9: Reducing risk of disaster in our communities*

https://learn.tearfund.org/en/resources/publications/roots/reducing_risk_of_disaster_in_our_communities/