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# Dealing with Disasters

Capacity Building Toolkit for National
Civil Society Organisation Platforms

**4**

**Peer to peer
knowledge sharing**

# 4 Peer to peer knowledge sharing

CSOs often have limited access to relevant, actionable knowledge. Concerning everyday disasters, much of this knowledge is accumulated among their peers from local experience. Platforms can initiate mapping and surveying activities, create collaborations and hubs to strengthen knowledge sharing. They can support formalisation of knowledge through training resources and events.

Individual CSOs often have limited access to practical knowledge and expertise due to pressures of time and limited resources. National CSO Platforms (NCPs) play key roles in knowledge brokering between actors. This is important in intensive disasters, where both effective preparation and rapid and focused response are critical. It is also vital in response to everyday disasters where much knowledge is developed locally (see section 3). NCPs have an important role in 'brokering' knowledge between members. NCPs use networking, mapping, local consultation, partnerships, regional collaborations, round tables, and educational resource production to gather and share risk knowledge.

## Knowledge sharing

According to CCOD in the Republic of Congo, 'We really serve as an interface . . . we have the appropriate expertise, and we have the capacity to mobilize the expertise around us, national expertise, expertise in civil society at large.'

ASONOG, Honduras, organised eight 'Risk Management Round Tables' for knowledge sharing after Hurricane Mitch (1998). They also promote local knowledge sharing and education,

and designed a curriculum, guiding community members on providing follow-up during a drought (or other disaster), through risk maps, community and municipal plans.

GRIDES, in Peru, networks different sources of knowledge in 12 regional hubs linking local government, CSOs, academics, community leaders and unions. These provide local information and training. They also apply their shared knowledge in advocacy, influencing national policy.

NSET, in Nepal, meets and shares with other CSOs through the NFN CSO Platform. They also participate in a specialist network, DPnet, enabling CSOs specialising in disaster risk reduction to share and collaborate.

## Mapping

In Colombia, Fundación Azimuth highlights the value of gathering detailed local knowledge. It is necessary, they say, to 'walk the territory', by which they mean there is no substitute for learning locally from people, recognising and validating their knowledge.

For PREDES, in Peru, an important starting point was the creation of a national risk map to identify the most pressing threats and vulnerabilities (see Action Points below). When they did this, they identified departments most exposed to disasters as a focus for action.

Organisations such as NSET, ASONOG and PREDES participate in the GNDR Views from the Frontline action research, which enables them to gather, share, and analyse local information and to use it as a basis for local and national action planning.[10]

## ACTION POINTS

## Peer to peer knowledge sharing: Action Points

• **Employ mapping to create a clear picture of risks and vulnerabilities.**

• **At national scale, a formal method – such as GNDR's Views from the Frontline – can be used, or a bespoke survey can be created using a tool such as 'www. surveymonkey.com'.**

• **Platforms can integrate mapping data to create a detailed national risk map, to be applied in coordination of action and in advocacy with local and national government.**

• **At local level, participatory tools, such as those in the Views from the Frontline method or other participatory methods (see footnote 7), can be employed to generate risk information and to engage local populations in its understanding and use.**

• **Assess whether your NCP effectively links national, regional and local levels to ensure knowledge flows integrating detailed local knowledge and technical and other sources of knowledge. If not, develop structures to enable this.**

• **Ensure that local voices and experiences are heard. Local experiential knowledge is critical to risk reduction and strategic response.**

• **Create collaborations, hubs and round tables linking together different actors to share knowledge.**

• **Support the development of training and educational resources to disseminate knowledge widely.**

**FOOTNOTE**

[10] Participatory mapping tools: see: https://www.mdpi.com/2220-9964/7/2/68/htm

**See Case Studies 4 and 5 for examples of sharing peer to peer knowledge.**