

PART 3

Awareness-Raising on Rights and Entitlements with Diverse Community Members

Summary

Part 3 has tools to raise awareness on rights and entitlements with diverse community members. The tools are designed for local disaster risk reduction (DRR) and humanitarian actors to use in communities. It includes training materials to raise awareness on rights and entitlements. It also includes materials to support community Safeguarding Agents.

List of the tools

Introduction to tools to raise awareness on rights and entitlements with communities		Overview Lessons learned	
Awareness session on rights and entitlements facilitation pack	To increase the knowledge and capacity of local communities on their rights and entitlements	Training facilitation guide, PowerPoint and handouts	This short 2-hour training session introduces community members to their rights and entitlements, including the behavior they can expect from DRR and humanitarian actors. It also includes the impact of safeguarding issues on survivors and the services available to help those who have experienced harm, abuse or exploitation.
Safeguarding Agent Terms of Reference (ToR)	To help local DRR and humanitarian actors identify and select community Safeguarding Agents	Tool with the role and responsibilities of community Safeguarding Agents	This tool includes selection criteria for community Safeguarding Agents. It also lists their roles and responsibilities and the activities they should deliver.
Safeguarding Agent training pack	To increase the knowledge and capacity of community Safeguarding Agents	Training facilitation guide, PowerPoint and handouts	This 2-day training should be used to develop community Safeguarding Agent's understanding and capacity. Safeguarding Agents are the first point of contact for community members who experience safeguarding issues during a disaster. This training gives them the basic information on what safeguarding means, the impact on survivors and their expected role.

Lessons from using the tools

A lack of community awareness on rights and entitlements—including staff conduct—was identified as a challenge in the needs assessment before the project started. For example, protection and DRR actors explained that people fail to report when they have been harmed because many are still confused about their rights under the law. The project developed key messages around rights and entitlements for communities that were translated into local languages. A 2-hour community awareness-raising session was developed to highlight those rights and entitlements and explained how people can report complaints and get help. It is vital to use clear, simple and locally translated language when doing this work. Safe and dignified programming approaches often contain technical “jargon” and can touch on sensitive issues. Additionally, many of the concepts being introduced were new to DRR and local humanitarian actors. Project staff highlighted the importance of translating those key messages into local languages, conducting plain language editing and sharing messages through a variety of channels and communication tools. This can help make the concepts more understandable, accessible and relatable to local communities. Of particular importance were key messages for communities on rights and entitlements—including expected conduct of DRR and local humanitarian actors and safeguarding themes—which were developed into a set of simple, straightforward and culturally sensitive messages.

Examples from pilot countries

In the **Philippines** the *Preparing for Enhanced Protection in Disasters (PrEPD)* project team used the community Safeguarding Agent model to great effect. Barangays (districts) lacked a focal point responsible for receiving and referring allegations of harm, abuse or exploitation. Reporting channels at the local government level were limited, responses to allegations of safeguarding incidents were uncoordinated and communities were largely unaware of safeguarding concepts and their rights and entitlements.

The project team recruited 20 community volunteers across ten barangays (one male and one female Safeguarding Agent per barangay). They received training on safeguarding concepts (rights and entitlements, shock-responsive referral pathways, reporting mechanisms) and signed the Terms of Reference outlining their responsibilities. This was followed by mentoring from the project team—particularly local partners Caritas Pasig Inc. and Commission on Social Action of Malolos—and a final 1-day refresher training. The Safeguarding Agents will soon deliver safeguarding awareness sessions in their communities.

Some of the volunteers also worked as barangay officials. Initially there were concerns they would not be perceived as neutral; however, their familiarity with local disaster responders/members of barangay Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) committees meant the Safeguarding Agent model organically linked in to local DRRM structures. The project team also supported local DRRM committees to review and modify their existing coordination structure by creating “protection teams.” They encouraged the committees to include Safeguarding Agents—especially those with no formal affiliations to the barangay—on these teams.

Community Safeguarding Agents serve as a concrete example of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (NDRRM) Plan for local government units (LGUs) (Republic Act 10121) aspiration to recruit and mobilize Community Disaster Volunteers across the Philippines. Longer term, Safeguarding Agents can be accredited as Community Disaster Volunteers through an Office of Civil Defense (OCD) resolution. This would formally acknowledge their role and influence in the barangays. It would also mean the barangays would take full responsibility for the well-being and further capacity-strengthening of Safeguarding Agents.¹

¹ Accreditation of Community Disaster Volunteers.