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2 SOCIAL MOBILIZATION

2.1 Introduction

Social mobilization is the primary step of community development for recovery from conflicts and disasters. It allows people to think and understand their situation and to organize and initiate action for their recovery with their own initiative and creativity. Through mobilization, people can organize themselves to take action collectively by developing their own plan and strategy for recovery rather than being imposed from outside.

Communities that take charge of their own recovery will make informed decisions, reach sustainable solutions, and achieve better results faster, while at the same time enhancing their solidarity and capacity to undertake development initiatives. This action is one of the most effective means of overcoming the trauma of a conflict or a disaster. Social mobilization is practiced in many different ways by development practioners. This chapter describes the common threads of

UN-HABITAT'S practice in its work in the Asian region.

2.2 What is a community?

A community is a body of persons sharing common problems, living in a physically identifiable area. In a disaster or conflict situation, the affected community is the focal point in the implementation of the Programme. The number of families in a physically identifiable area can be any number from 10 to 250.

The community living in any settlement needs to be responsible for decisions about their own development or in larger developments that will affect them. This should essentially be the cornerstone of the recovery and the reconstruction effort of the Programme.

Vulnerable groups including women headed households and disabled should be given special attention because their

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Promoting Active Participation of Women

needs may be particular. Political, social, religious or other affiliations may divide a community. These issues need to be addressed before other collective activities can take place.

Stronger groups in the community can influence the decision making process in the community for their own benefit. These issues have to be very carefully considered and addressed in the implementation of a recovery programme.

For this purpose, methods and tools that help them to take decisions regarding their own development need to be applied. In the reconstruction and recovery process these methods will assist the community of a particular settlement to plan, implement and evaluate their own actions.

Under a disaster and conflict recovery programme, the responsibility of the community will be strengthened by the establishment of representative Community Development Council (CDC). The recognition of the representative community organization by the authorities is crucial for empowering the community to be responsible for their own actions. A formal recognitions mechanism that can be established is the registration of the CDC with the Local Authority (Annexes 001, 002 and 003).

2.3 Steps of Social Mobilization

- Social mobilization will be initiated by Community Mobilizers or Social Mobilizers
- Firstly they should visit the community in the camps and their settlements and establish a rapport
- Determine physical boundaries of the settlement with the people
- Should assist the community in holding a mass meeting and encourage them to understand the need to organize for collective action
- Assist in the formation of Primary Groups in the settlement of clusters of 10 to 15 houses
- Assist the Groups in camp management and relief distribution

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Social Mobilization Meetings

- Two representatives from the Primary Group will represent in the CDC
- Assist in the election and formation of the Community Development Council
- Assist in the formulation of constitution and registration of CDC, which may assume a name

2.3.1 Formation of Primary Group (PG)

A group of persons in a community affected by a disaster, who wish to address their common interest of recovery and reconstruction, can form a Primary Group (PG). The main issue of common interest is rebuilding of the homes, but they may have many others e.g. restarting their livelihoods, education, health care, savings and credit, enterprise community infrastructure etc. The purpose of forming a Primary Group is for the group to collectively address these particular issues.

- Community members who would have been living in neighborhoods with socio-economic affinity, having common interest can form Primary Groups

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- Each group will select a group leader and a secretary to serve for a period to be determined by them
- Ideally the size of the group should be 15-20 households
- The group should discuss amongst themselves and workout their rules of association
- Ensure that rules are clearly understood by all group members
- Initially the groups would have to meet daily to discuss the most pressing issues and action to be taken
- For a community, the appropriate number of groups would be around 20
- Primary Groups meetings can be used to activate and motivate passive members
- The group leader and secretary will represent the Primary Group in the CDC

2.3.2 Formation of Community Development Council

- After the formation of Primary Groups, the Community Development Council (CDC) will be formed in each community
- The purpose of the Community Development Council is to address the common development issues faced by the entire community
- All group leaders and secretaries will be the members of the Community Development Council
- The members will elect a Chairperson, a Vice-chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer for a period to be determined by them
- The office bearers can be elected through secret ballot or consensus
- Either the chairperson or vice-chairperson should be a female member
- Community Development Council may assign specific tasks to members as and when necessary
- The Community Development Council should formulate a Constitution for its operation and this should be presented to and accepted by the

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"CDCs, as they are elected directly by the people are answerable and accountable to the people who elected them. Through tools like the social audit, representatives keep communities informed about the implementation of their decisions and status of resource utilization"

CDCs Open Space for Women's Participation

whole community

- The Community Development Council should apply for registration to the Local Authority or the local level government agency
- The Community Development Council should open a bank account in a recognized bank with the Treasurer as mandatory signatory and the Chairperson and Secretary as alternative signatories
- To establish linkage among the CDCs, and forum can be established at city or district level

2.3.3 Beneficiary Identification

In a disaster or a conflict recovery programme, generally all the affected families are entitled beneficiaries. In this situation one would often find that families who were not affected trying to get into the recovery programme in order to draw on the cash and other benefits that will be provided. Therefore screening becomes important. The government official working at the local level may have the lists from the initial damage assessments. These lists need to be screened by the community in a transparent manner.

The following steps are useful to establish a transparent process:

1. Obtain list of beneficiaries for a community from the Government official who would have been responsible for identifying the initial affected families (Please note that this official may not be from the community and she/he may not have accurate information)
2. Collect copies of Damage Assessment Form from the relevant Government office
3. Verify legitimate beneficiaries by checking where they had been living
4. CDC verification of beneficiaries with community screening i.e. community consultation to ensure that legitimate beneficiaries are included in the programme
5. Finalize beneficiary list after the community screening and bring to public notice
6. Identify missing or vulnerable families who are not on the beneficiary list
7. Consider appeals from beneficiaries who are not selected and take up their case to the relevant authorities
8. Confirm the final list of beneficiaries with the community and the relevant authorities
9. Log beneficiaries into the project database

Fig. 2.1 Activities of Community Development Council