

# **From Disaster Relief to Development in Zambia**

**Report on Disaster Preparedness Training Workshop**

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# **From Disaster Relief to Development in Zambia Report on Disaster Preparedness Training Workshop**

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# From Disaster Relief to Development in Zambia

## Report on Disaster Preparedness Training Workshop

### Sunday 10 Nov - First day

The workshop started on the evening of Sunday 10 November with an exercise (called "Polarities") to identify how the group who had come for the workshop was composed.

From this exercise we discovered:

1. Participants had come from Kasama (furthest) to Roma. Lusaka (closest)
2. Participants ranged from age 61 to age 26
3. Participants experience in development work ranged from 23 years to 1 year
4. Participants experience in disaster relief work ranged from 6 years to 1 year
5. There were 15 men and 1 woman
6. 12 were married, 4 were not
7. Of those who were married, the number of children they had ranged from 6 to 0

### Monday 11 Nov - Second Day

The workshop continued on Monday. It started by stating the goal of the workshop

**Goal**  
**How to provide relief assistance in such a way that  
long-term development is encouraged**

Once this was agreed, the facilitator clarified the assumptions that he was making about the people at the workshop:

#### **Assumptions**

1. **Participants are experienced in both development and relief work**
2. **Participants are interested to improve their knowledge of disaster preparedness**
3. **Participants are willing to contribute honestly and creatively to the workshop**

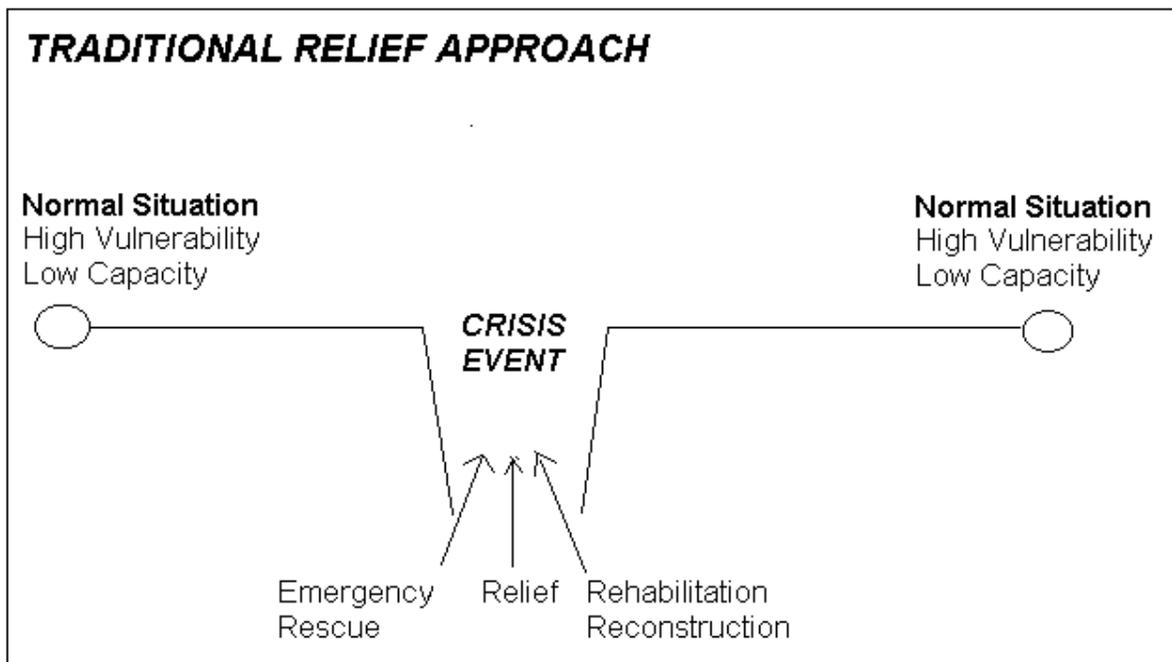
It was agreed that these assumptions were valid. The facilitator then asked the participants what were the problems that participants recognized as problems that they wanted to solve. These were:

## **Problems**

- 1. Rural people who have received food aid previous previously, sell their harvest in the expectation of getting free food, then go hungry**
- 2. A minority of the people do not plant sufficient land, because they expect that they will get free food**
- 3. Seed as part of a rehabilitation package comes late, and is planted but has poor results**
- 4. The tradition of food storage both individually and collectively is dying out**
- 5. At a time of drought with diminishing water sources, these become polluted and there are disease outbreaks in both people and animals**
- 6. Food for Work discourages community initiatives to do things for themselves**
- 7. Food for Work encourages the attitude that peoples time will be rewarded by food, and discourages voluntary labour without food.**
- 8. The possibility of large influxes of refugees from Zaire into Zambia with inadequate preparation**

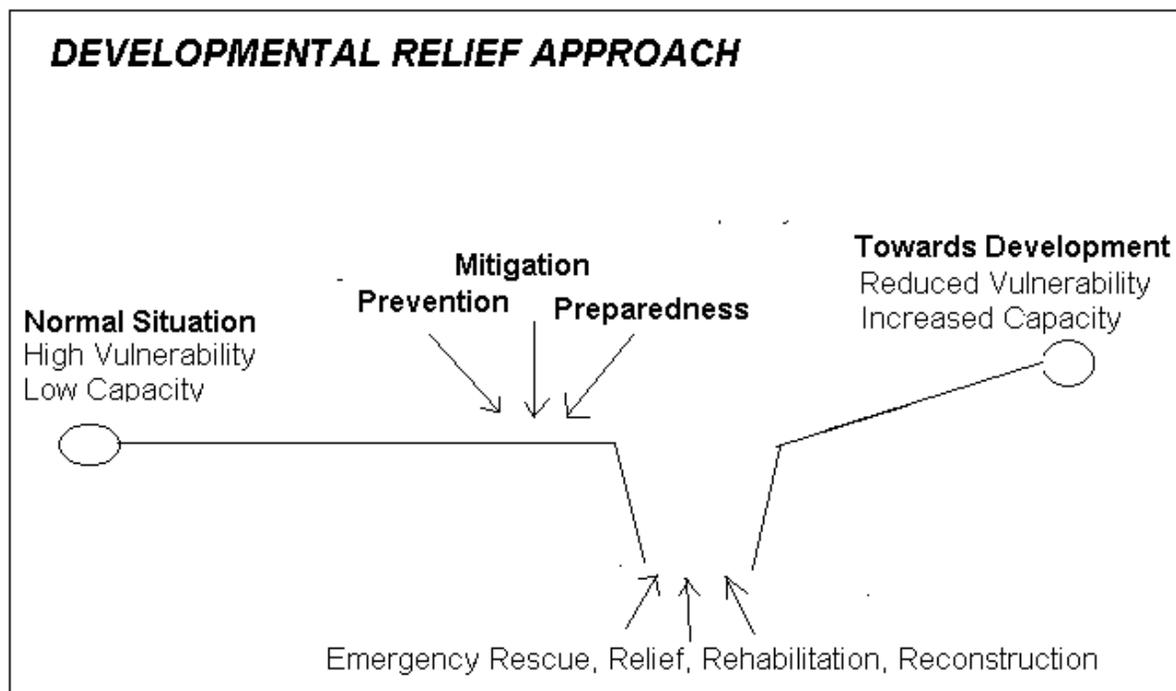
The facilitator then talked about the difference between relief and development through 2 diagrams: the Traditional approach to Relief, and the Developmental approach to Relief

The facilitator pointed out that in the traditional approach to relief you tried to restore things to how they were before - and you do this by applying the tools of Rescue, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction. However, the normal situation (to which you are



trying to return, is a situation in which people are very vulnerable to the next disaster, and one in which people have not improved their capacity to cope with the problems of the next disaster. In fact the traditional approach to relief deals with immediate problems, but does not deal with the implications of these problems on peoples lives. Having been rescued from a disaster they are no more able to cope with the next disaster than they were before the relief effort.

The diagram of the Developmental approach to relief, however, showed a different picture. Here the situation of the people at the end of the intervention was considerably better than their situation before the disaster. They were more able to deal with



problems in the future. As well as the relief tools of Rescue, Relief, Rehabilitation and reconstruction, they had been assisted by the tools of Prevention, Mitigation, and preparedness before the disaster happened. Thus the effects of the disaster on the people were less, their recovery faster, their post disaster situation was better, and they were better able to withstand the next disaster when it comes

The facilitator explained that many NGOs think that you can either do relief or development, but that there are two separate, and mutually contradictory ways of working. Some NGOs think that you can do both relief and development, but that they have to be handled differently. Now we are saying that you can do development through relief so that the act of a disaster relief exercise will lead to developmental impact.

It does depend, however, on appreciating that development is something which people

have to do for themselves. The important statement in this connection is

**No-one ever develops anyone else: people and societies develop themselves. International aid, whether for development, or in response to an emergency, cannot bring development. However, it can either support and promote development or, unfortunately, undermine and delay it**

The most useful ways of understanding the differences between the two approaches start with appreciating that the people who are affected by a disaster are no different just because they have suffered a disaster. They are still people with strengths or capacities (even though they may have been through a very rough time). Just because they seem very vulnerable, this should not stop us from seeing them as human beings who have the opportunity to interact with their environment to improve their lives - should not stop us from seeing them in developmental terms.

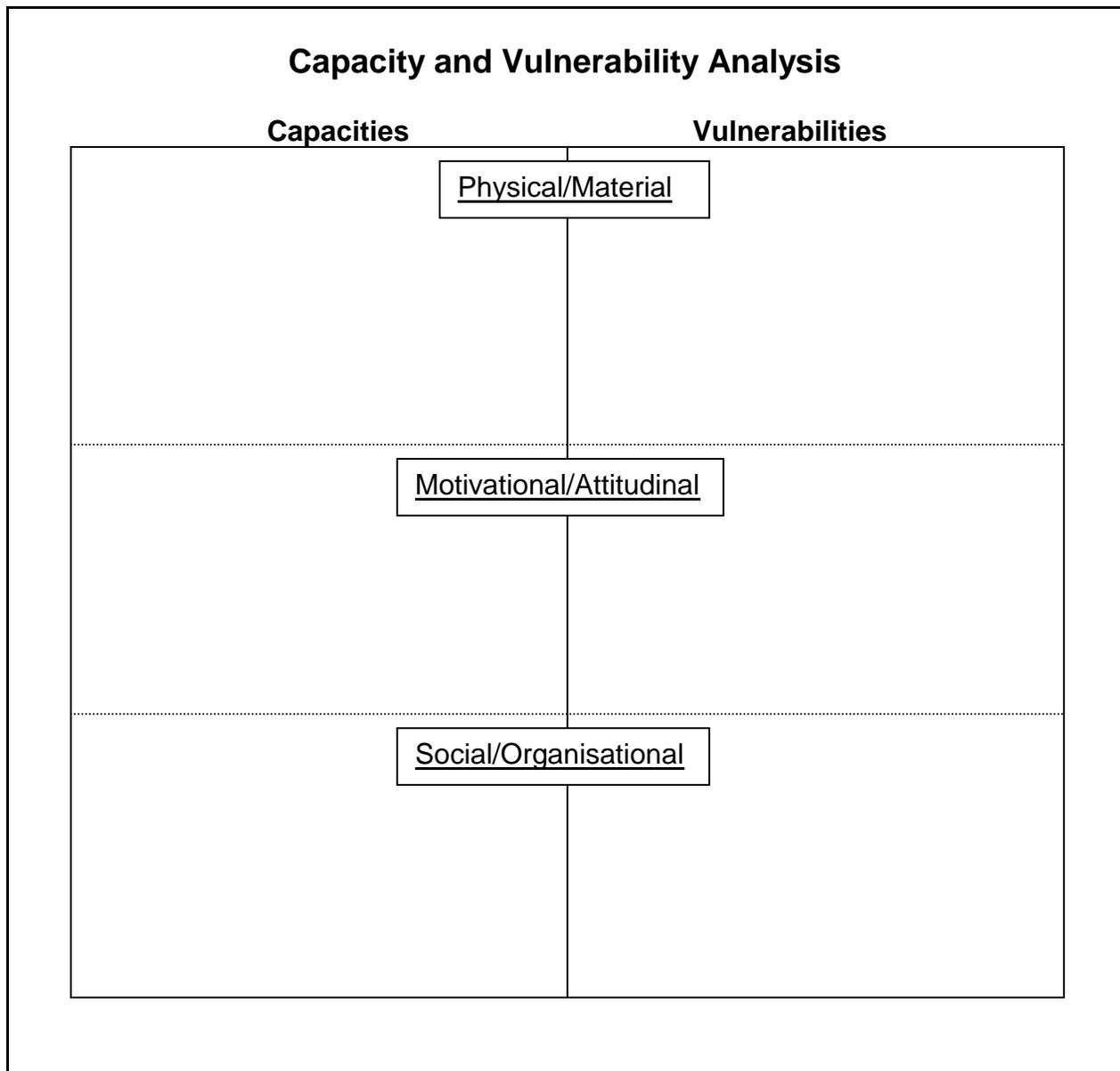
A very useful way of looking at people is by assessing their vulnerabilities and their capacities - and to think how we can decrease their vulnerabilities - i.e. make them less vulnerable to problems: and how we can increase their capacities - i.e. make them better able to overcome problems.

We can usefully define development, therefore, as:

**Development is the process by which vulnerabilities are reduced and capacities increased**

We are very used to thinking of vulnerabilities and capacities in physical terms - such a person is vulnerable to disease because he/she is weak, or they have the capacity to withstand drought because they have savings in the bank, for example. But people are not defined by physical things only: it is also very important to think of the ways that people get together socially and organisationally, and it is also very important to think about peoples attitudes and motivations.

A very useful tool for dealing with people at time of disaster is a six part matrix which looks at Capacities and Vulnerabilities under three levels - Physical/material: social/organisational: motivational/attitudinal. This matrix encourages us to make sure we are thinking of people's vulnerabilities and capacities, and it encourages us to make sure that we are thinking of them in three different ways. It also shows that there are no definite lines between these divisions - some characteristics can be vulnerabilities at some times



After this explanation the participants were given the "Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis" materials to read.

Participants were encouraged to think of the Matrix in other ways:

- a. It could be used as an exercise over time - the matrix at one point, then redone six months later to see what changes had occurred, for instance
- b. It might be done for different groups - the matrix done for women, separately from men, for instance, and then compared.
- c. It might be done at different levels - at village, district, province and national levels for instance.

Two case studies had been identified for this workshop - Yifat na Timuga for drought and Greenhills Site B concerning refugees. These were two topics that were relevant to Zambia.

Case Studies are a useful tool to use in this context - there is no right answer, but several options for action where choices have to be made - just as in real life. People bring their own experiences to the case, and apply this to the information that they are given. All are experts after reading the case, and everyone's viewpoint is valued.

The cases were given to the participants to read individually and then in small groups they were asked to answer the questions posed at the start of each case. Following this exercise the groups presented their answers to the questions in plenary and defended their position.

After the participants had read and discussed the Vulnerability and Capacities Matrix, they were offered the first of the Case Studies - this one about drought in Ethiopia in the region of Yifat Na Timuga. The case of Yifat Na Timuga and the exercises connected with it took the rest of that day. Participants were encouraged to think of the common features between the case study and Zambia.

## **Tuesday 12 Nov - Second Day**

At the start of the second day, participants were asked to read the Case Study of Greenhills Camp B from Thailand, and go through the same process of reading individually, discussing and answering the questions in small groups, and then presenting and defending their findings in front of the plenary.

After that case study had been explored, the facilitator asked people to be ready to bring what they had learnt from the experiences of Ethiopia and Thailand back home to Zambia. He asked for a variety of experiences of relief work in Zambia. It turned out that the majority of the participants had been involved in the CARITAS Drought Relief and rehabilitation of 1994/5, and so this was chosen as the topic on which participants could practice their new found skills in vulnerability and capacity analysis.

Before doing so, however, the facilitator asked the participants to consider the 7 stages in programming- that is the seven stages that anyone involved in a development program has to think about and reflect on the way in which Capacity and Vulnerability Analysis could help people when they were making plans for a disaster intervention. At each stage the participants were asked to consider the developmental question of whether their actions would increase or decrease vulnerability - and increase or decrease capacity amongst those affected by the disaster.

The 7 stages were:

## **7 Stages in the Disaster Intervention Program Process**

- 1. To intervene ... or not**  
The most developmental decision might be to stay out - if local people are managing without you.
- 2. Partnerships**  
Who will you work with? Will this partner promote a developmental approach?
- 3. Information Gathering**  
Are you going to involve the local people in the information gathering?
- 4. Program Design**  
Will you involve local people in the program design?
- 5. Program Implementation**  
Will you involve the local people in implementing the program?
- 6. Program Redesign**  
As the situation changes, and relief moves into rehabilitation, will you involve the local people in the re-design?
- 7. Evaluation and Follow Up**  
What kinds of reports are you usually asked to prepare - do these illustrate anything about increasing capacity and reducing vulnerability?

After going through this topic, Participants were asked to construct the Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis for the drought stricken areas of Zambia in 1994 in Plenary, and the result is provided in the following page.

### **Preparedness and Mitigation**

Following the Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis of Zambian drought, participants were asked to suggest the program that could be put into place which would increase people's capacity to withstand the next drought, and reduce their vulnerability in the next drought. Participants agreed that the most important things were to ensure more water, more production of food and more reserves.

The suggestions made were:

***Ideas for Building Capacity to produce more food and build reserves***

- 1. Introduce donkey power for ploughing and cultivating so as to increase acreage under food***
- 2. Encourage the production of food from communal fields which would be a buffer for the whole community at time of drought.***
- 3. Set up Grain banks***
- 4. Distribute and teach the use of appropriate seed for drought conditions***
- 5. Develop more appropriate agricultural techniques for the local resource base***
- 6. Build dams***
- 7. Credit Schemes***

Participants were invited to reflect on the fact that all of these ideas would have a place in any usual kind of development program - they were not disaster relief ideas, and were not part of the usual mix of relief programs.

**Training Materials**

Finally Participants were asked to think how they could get communities to think about different ways of preparing for disasters. It was suggested that structurally there could be "Disaster Committees" at community level, as well as specialized units in NGOs and Government which would have gone through various kinds of disaster preparedness training - like Capacities and Vulnerabilities Training. It was agreed that the difficult problem would be to find materials with which to train them (there were no Zambian Case Studies), and to make sure that they did indeed listen to the people, rather than treating the people as passive (and helpless) victims.

If village or community level disaster or relief committees were formed, it would be useful to have materials with which their consciousness about disasters and disaster preparedness measures could be improved. The facilitator gave the example of work done in Bangladesh for disaster preparedness for floods.

The NGO had held a series of workshops with communities that had lived through the flood and asked them to relive key episodes in their experience of the floods, together with thinking of what lessons they had learnt from their experience and what they would do next time. These "key episodes" were then produced in the form of drawings or

cartoons. A field worker would use these cartoons in a village meeting as follows:

1. Hold up the picture and ask if people in the group had had the experience drawn in the picture. Usually this is agreed and starts discussion.
2. Ask the people "How would you do things differently in the light of your experience? What lessons have you learnt?"
3. Depending on the answers, work with the group to think how these ideas can be put into practice.

The facilitator showed pictures from Bangladesh to illustrate this, and asked whether this would be useful as a technique in Zambia. It was thought that it would be.

## **Conclusions**

Finally Participants were asked if they thought that Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis was a useful tool to apply in Zambia. Most people felt that the focus on social/organisational and motivational/attitudinal issues was a new idea and important in Zambia - people had usually dealt with the physical problems and needs of those suffering from drought or other disasters - but had not looked at these other important factors - and yet the "Training for Transformation" system, used largely by the Catholic Church, encouraged such approaches. The gap between relief and development had been considerably narrowed by the workshop