

# Getting people involved

**People affected by disaster have important competencies and aspirations and ultimate responsibility for their own future and survival.**

## Factors to consider about participation in humanitarian action

- How has the crisis impacted people's ability and willingness to participate?
- What is the local perception and trust of humanitarian agencies?
- What participative approaches would accommodate such limitations?
- How can you avoid generating unrealistic expectations amongst those affected as an outcome of their participation?
- What is the local social hierarchy and how is participation perceived?
- What physical or cultural barriers could inhibit participation?.
- What are the political dynamics and who are the major stakeholders?
- Who wields power within the local context and how can you ensure equal participation of the most vulnerable and powerless?
- What are the risks that participation will increase marginalising and stigmatising vulnerable groups and how can these be mitigated?
- How might participation affect security or protection risks to aid workers and beneficiary groups and how might these be addressed?
- What are the organisational and beneficiary time and resource constraints?
- How can existing initiatives or intermediaries be used as a bridge to the affected population?
- How could participation compromise your independence and impartiality?
- How can you maintain and communicate this impartiality to those affected?
- How can you maintain and communicate this to the affected population?
- How can you promote the engagement of local stakeholders in wider relief or recovery operations and coordination i.e. advocating for translation of information, interpretation services, accountability / transparency
- What additional information or expertise do you need to adopt an appropriate participatory approach and tackle the challenges identified ?

## Useful participatory tools

For further tools and details of their application in the project cycle / specific sectors – see the ALNAP Practitioners Guide under CD resources.

Mapping	Explains how people see their area in relation to physical, social and economic land marks, risks and opportunities.
Seasonal activity calendar	Explains seasonal actions of affected population to enable effective planning and highlight likely constraints to implementation.
Stakeholder / interaction analysis	Identifies different groups (inc. marginalised) and their roles, responsibilities, interests, power / influence and coordination
Wealth ranking	Indicates the evolution & distribution of wealth / social status
Capacities / vulnerability analysis	Enables groups to identify and understand their own weaknesses, capacities and vulnerabilities.
Committees, food / cash for work	Enables communities to take an active role in management and implementation of programme activities.

### All In Diary CD Resources:

© ODI (2003) ALNAP (2003) Participation of Crisis Affected Populations in Humanitarian Action – A Practitioners Guide  
© MANGO (2005) Accountability to beneficiaries – a practical checklist

### Web links for further information

[www.INTRAC.org](http://www.INTRAC.org)  
[http://www.alnap.org/publications/participation\\_study.htm](http://www.alnap.org/publications/participation_study.htm)

## Types of participation by affected communities

**Passive** – population are informed of plans / actions

**Supply of information** – those affected provide information i.e. for surveys but with no control over the process

**Consultation** – those affected are consulted but not involved in decision making

**Material incentives** – the population supply materials or labour in exchange for cash or in-kind incentives.

**Supply of materials cash or labour** – those affected support recovery through supply of inputs on a cost recovery basis.

**Interactive** – those affected participate in needs assessments and decision making

**Local initiatives** – the population acts independently seeking external support for their own initiatives.

