



10. Mainstreaming starts from planning and budgeting

The accountant at a CBM-supported Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) in Torbeck, Haiti, puts a contribution into the books. © CBM/Nadia Todres

The process of mainstreaming DIDRR starts early, right from planning. It is not a costless exercise, and while much can be done with simple adaptation, there are other activities that may need intense resources, especially financial ones.

But, taking a step back, the key message here is simple: if disasters and DIDRR are not adequately accounted for at the planning phase, they are likely to be excluded at all subsequent levels in community development work.

The first step is perhaps to get planning staff to ask a few questions together with others. Here are some to get you started. (Note: Information you have already generated can be usefully drawn into here):

- How do disasters cross-cut your projects?
- What are the current barriers to mainstreaming at all levels, especially among implementing partners and OPDs on the ground?
- What needs to be built into these projects to make them more disaster-resilient?
- What is it about your own organisational policies and practices that may actually be working against or hindering the process of mainstreaming?

So, how do we move forward?

Here are some suggestions on how to go about this. As you will see, creating the demand for community development to include and mainstream DIDRR is part of the job, and this includes convincing and bringing multiple stakeholders, including donors, on board.

However, there is a requirement for deliberate efforts at mainstreaming DIDRR, and this needs to be clearly communicated across the organisation and any partners you work with. The box below can help get you started:

PLANNING FOR THE MAINSTREAMING OF DIDRR IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Find relevant, intelligible and contextualised ways of communicating that DIDRR is part and parcel of community development and not an afterthought or a separate area of practice. You can start with the head offices of your own organisation!

The process of mainstreaming starts from strategic development, planning and design, and any project proposal needs to reflect this: a possibility is to include a DIDRR component as a prerequisite across all projects.

Include DIDRR alongside climate resilience as conditions for funding: this will hopefully impact project design.

Encourage joint projects and collaborative proposal writing in ways that integrate community development and DIDRR approaches, objectives and projects so that these do not operate in silos.

Proportion of national or regional DRR budget allocated to disability.

Explore the possibility of 'model programmes' that include DIDRR and implement them as a pilot and use them as platforms for learning and adaptation.

Ensure buy-in by communities: involve community leaders, get them to participate, listen and learn from their ideas, and importantly get their legitimisation so that they own the DIDRR process. Activities such as simulations run by OPDs can be a start.

Experience and work in DIDRR can be harnessed as an entry point onto inter-agency platforms, especially those operating in DRR and related areas. Participation in such platforms can also be a useful part of learning.



PLANNING FOR THE MAINSTREAMING OF DIDRR IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Infuse 'Build Back Better' principles in community development backed by adequate resources: for example, to work on disaster resilient housing in a project on safe shelter¹⁶.

Open channels to communicate and work with the national DRR systems: this will not merely happen by training OPDs on advocacy.

Educate stakeholders (for example those working in emergency) on disability and how to effectively assist and work with persons with disabilities.

Identify main hazards and reflect together with other stakeholders what these could mean for each component of your program (e.g. rehabilitation services having to reorient towards emergency and trauma care; supply chains becoming overstretched; schools being transformed in community hubs or shelters; the need to access long-term food or grain storage at short notice; project vehicles being used for evacuation instead of their regular use in community development).

However, as highlighted earlier, mainstreaming needs its own resources, including financial resources. Without adequate funding, little can be achieved. DIDRR will also not happen by default or by banking solely on advocacy by already weakened, overstretched and often impoverished local OPDs. Here are some ideas on how to raise funds and where these can be directed:

RESOURCES FOR MAINSTREAMING: GETTING FUNDS IN PLACE

Lobby donors for a budget to help make your community development programmes and projects disaster-inclusive.

Budget for DIDRR initiatives as part of community development e.g. disaster-resilient livelihoods projects as regular ones rather than one-off. This will help with reinforcing the mentality that DIDRR is part and parcel of community development.

Contingency funding or crisis modifiers need to be actively built into all programmes and therefore must be an integral consideration in budgeting: typically, this may be a reserve fund budgeted for and that can be tapped into with speed to protect development gains made through years of community development work and prevent systems from collapsing. Crisis modifiers are inevitable in volatile contexts in globally unstable times¹⁷.

Ensure that funds are in place for the logistics of mainstreaming: including working with local partners and communities, equipping them with knowledge, training and resources, and importantly a wage so that any DIDRR work is not seen as an added burden that strains them even further. Funds are also needed to attend meetings especially with DRR stakeholders and to help get OPDs together.

Invest in partnerships with stakeholders and organisations that have actual expertise in disasters and emergencies to collaborate with and support your work. This itself will be necessary to create a demand for and legitimise CBID in DRR efforts.

¹⁶ See section 15 for more on 'build back better'.

¹⁷ Crisis modifiers are discussed in section 20 in this guidance document.