

**Notes on Half Day REA Training for LWF
Konark, Orissa India, 15 December 2003.**

Training presented by C. Kelly (72734.2412@compuserve.com)

1. The training was part of a LWF regional workshop on community disaster preparedness. The 25 or so participants came from India, Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. All participants spoke English, but the level of fluency and ease of understanding varied considerably.

Each participant had some level of disaster, disaster preparedness or development experience but the level of experience of the participants varied. Few had any specific background in environmental issues, although one person had participated in the Bhubaneswar REA training in February.

2. The agenda for the training is attached. The time allocated for each session was generally appropriate for the topic covered, but see the comments below. The overall session ran over the allotted four hours by 2 hour, but this basically represented the time taken by other activities during REA session (e.g., announcements and departing comments by participants leaving the workshop early).

3. The Interworks PowerPoint slides developed for the Bhubaneswar training were used as the base for the sessions. The slides were revised and re-organized to fit the schedule and focus of the half day workshop. (Copies of the slides were provided to the participants.) In general, to cover the REA and have meaningful hands-on sessions, the number of slides and examples in each session needs to be reduced.

Each original slide set a session starts with an outline of the objectives and topics to be covered in the session and then goes into the topic in detail. This is probably too repetitive for the time available in a half day training. Each session should move directly to the substance of the session with only a brief preamble.

4. What is covered in each session (and thus the actual slides used), needs to be tuned to each group. The LWF group was well aware of the Sphere Standards and so discussion of this topic was basically eliminated from the presentation on Unmet Needs.

The group had, the day before, conducted a community level PRA exercise. This made a good part of the Community REA session redundant or repetitive. The session would have been more useful by using the Rating Form with actual results of the previous day=s data.

5. As in previous sessions presented to non-native English speakers, the presenter=s pronunciation and speaking style and the difficulty in getting feedback during sessions were problems. While these problems can be reduced with better presentation methods, these problems are likely to remain for a training intended to compress 3 days of work into one half day and include hands-on sessions (1/4 of the total training time).

6. The two practical sessions (see attached narratives) worked fairly well, although they went longer than planned. The participants were divided into five groups and tasked to complete the Unmet Needs or Negative Environmental Impact rating forms based on narratives of a disaster situation. The normal Unmet Needs form was used for the first exercise, while a cut-down

Negative Environmental Impact form was prepared to match the post disaster narrative.

Some groups found the exercise relatively easy and others somewhat difficult to complete. The basic problem did not appear to be either the complexity of the exercise, the rating process or the form itself, but a combination of language (i.e., working in a foreign language) and less well developed aptitudes for rapid decision making.

The exercises could be made easier by providing each group with a printed copy of the disaster or post disaster situation statement (a Power Point project was used due to a lack of time to print out hard copies) and also providing printed instructions since the disruption associated with forming groups meant that oral instructions are missed or misunderstood.

6. Session Specific Comments

Introductions: This session went longer than planned, as usual. It was repetitive since the participants already knew each other.

REA Conceptual Framework: Generally well accepted but the presentation and slides need to be more focused. The section on disasters and the environment does not need too much detail if participants are already aware of environment-disasters linkages, as would be the case if field personnel are the participants in the training. Background on disasters and disaster assessment was not provided since it was expected that the participants already had knowledge in these areas.

REA Sections on Unmet Needs and Possible Negative Environmental Impacts of Relief

Assistance: The Bhubaneswar slides were used for this session. Due to time constraints the introduction segments of these slides should be reduced and the presentations should move directly to presenting the forms and how they are completed. A degree of repetition is needed to ensure that everyone understands the procedures involved.

Exercises: See notes above. Each exercise should be designed to match the background and skills of the participants of each specific workshop. Sufficient time should be allotted as part of the exercise time to go through the process of consolidating results from different groups. The work of each group was monitored during each exercise and it appeared that each group did understand the exercise and process being presented.

For the Unmet Needs, a flip chart was used to present the results of the different groups. Insufficient time was available to go into detail on how to consolidate the different scores and rank the results.

For the Negative Environmental Impact form, participants completed the analysis based on the cut-down form but there was insufficient time to discuss the results. Instead, the scenario was in open session and negative impacts were identified through group discussions.

Community Level Assessment: As noted, this session should have been changed and refocused to take into account participant experiences.

Consolidation and Analysis: This session probably needed to be expanded and include a practical mini-exercise to ensure that all participants fully understood the process.

Increasing time for this session could come from shortening (tightening up) the Conceptual Framework session.

Green Procurement: The example of a Land Cruiser raised hackles with some participants. Otherwise, the session went well, although it was a bit longer than planned. Again, a short practical example of how to complete the form would be useful.

Questions and Discussions: The general point raised was that a lot was covered in the four hour session and it would take participants some time to digest the results. Frankly, because of the intensity of the four hours and the need move quickly from topic to topic, most participants were probably a bit Ashell shocked@ by the end of the four hours.

7. Follow-up and Comments

Six copies of the *Guidelines* were provided to individual participants¹. All were directed to the project web site to download the *Guidelines* and other documents. Each participant was also provided with my email address and encouraged to use me as a resource person on the REA and disaster and environment issues in general.

LWF has been asked to provide the email addresses of the participants. This information will be used to add the participants to the evolving REA email network and eventually a REA list serve when this is established.

No formal evaluation of the session was made. Results from the overall workshop evaluation are not available at the time of this report.

Informal comments during breaks and after the session indicated that the session was well received but a bit too intense for many participants. The general sense was that the REA was interesting but hard to put into the context of an individual's own work.

8. Options

A one half day session on the REA can be used to introduce the REA to field personnel. Tailored to the general level of experience of participants, a 4 hour session can introduce key concepts and some basic procedures of use to participants in daily activities. However, it is clear that the uptake and use of the information provided in the session depends on the background, skills, and probably the immediate workload, of each participant.

More hands-on use of key operational parts of the REA should be provided in a half day training if possible. For instance, the short exercises on Unmet Needs and Negative Environmental Impacts can be expanded to go more into detail on consolidation and analysis of results. Similarly, if a group has community assessment experience (or has just completed a community assessment exercise), this information can be used on a community assessment exercise of the appropriate REA sections. These adaptations of the REA training materials need to be made for each half day training.

It should be possible to present a half day training to personnel going to or currently in the field working on disaster relief operations. Such a training would need to focus clearly on practical skill rather than the theory and concept of the REA process, and of course be linked to the practical aspects of the actual disaster of concern.

¹ It was not possible to provide all participants with *Guidelines* due to a lack of funds for printing.

Although this idea may sound impractical, it is increasingly common to hold capacity building sessions for disaster field staff during operations to introduce or expand on concepts and procedures which should be covered if operations are to be effective. Examples include training in gender, education, safety and violence prevention and shelter.

The experience with the one half day course indicates that a full day REA course, also directed to field personnel and focusing on hands-on exercises, is possible. As with the half day training, a full day training would need to be focused to take into account the background, skills and immediate objectives of participants. When matched with the forthcoming AREA Quick Guide[®] and backed with the full *Guidelines* and an eLearning module on CD, it is possible that a full day session can bring field-based participants up to a level of understanding and skills to allow them to integrate the REA into field operations. (Presuming, of course, that operations are not already overloaded with an excessive number of tasks and obligations.)

One Half Day REA Module
LWF Community Based Disaster Preparedness Workshop
Konark, Orissa, 12 December 2003
Presented as part of the Benfield Hazard Research Centre/Care International Rapid
Environmental Impact Assessment in Disasters Project.

Objectives

Provide participants with:

- X A background in the REA concept and process.
- X Hands-on experience with the Unmet Needs and Negative Environmental Impact of Relief Assistance sections of the REA.
- X An overview of the community level assessment process incorporated into the REA.

The module will focus on the three most practical sections of the REA (Unmet needs, Environmental Impact of Relief and Community Assessment) but other elements of the REA will be presented in detail.

Outcome

At the end of the session participants will:

- X Be familiar with the background and concepts used in the REA.
- X Able to perform simple analysis of relief needs and environmental impacts using REA forms and,
- X Have an understanding of different approaches to community level assessment and how assessment results can be incorporated into relief planning.

Session Outline and Time Line

0900 - 0910	Introductions
0910 - 0955	REA Conceptual Framework
0955 - 1040	REA Sections on Unmet Needs and Possible Negative Environmental Impacts of Relief Assistance.
1040 - 1055	Break
1055 - 1155	Exercise
	X Scenario presentation.
	X Completion of Unmet Needs form.
	X Review of results.
	X Scenario presentation.
	X Completion of Negative Environmental Impacts form.
	X Review of results.
1155 - 1220	Community Level Assessment
1220 - 1245	Consolidation and Analysis
1245 - 1250	Green Procurement
1250 - 1300	Questions and Discussions.

Materials

Paper and electronic copies of the Guidelines for Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment in Disasters and REA Workshop Participant=s Workbook will be provided to all participants along with copies of overheads used in the presentation.

Disaster in Nuiea

The island of Nuiea is 60 km north of Oahu (Hawaiian islands). Nuiea (population 75,000) is the most traditional of the Hawaiian islands, but the standard of living is close to average for the United States. The island was hit by a typhoon 24 hours ago. You are on the first outside assessment team dispatched to the island.

It is 1800. You have been on the island for 2 hours, having arrived on a relief flight to the closed and damaged airport. Sea access has not been established. After a brief inspection by helicopter and short conversations with other relief workers and local residents you know that:

- X Finding a place to stay tonight is difficult as all hotels and most of the houses have suffered damage from high winds.
- X Most people did not lose house contents, although many things are still wet.
- X Your lap-top is dead because the battery ran down, the public electrical supply is not working and few emergency generators are in operation.
- X People have already begun cleaning up with debris being put in piles. But no one knows what to do with the piles
- X Most people are planning on camping out for the night and have already begun to build shelters from local resources.
- X The National Guard is deploying 1,000 troops to take over police functions.
- X Residents and local relief workers are talking about the great Luau to be held tonight since all refrigerated food needs to be eaten since the electricity is out.
- X Most tourists have been evacuated but the few remaining are being taken care of by local populations. Hotels with less damage have opened their facilities as shelters and are distributing perishable commodities through the school system.
- X Residents, and particularly women and elderly, are worried about getting drug refills and care for chronically ill since all pharmacies are closed and the island's only hospital is only caring for critical cases.
- X Sewage pumping and processing stations are not working because of the lack of electricity, but water is available because the system works on gravity.
- X More heavy rains are predicted for the next 24 hours, with the risk of flooding and landslides.

The Incident Commander has asked you to provide an assessment of unmet needs and environmental linkages in 15 minutes.

Disaster in Nuiea: The Days After

Recovery has begun. Clean-up operations are underway. Debris (mostly vegetation, roofing materials and general trash) is being piled. The piles are being burned in an ad hoc manner as they have become harbors for insects and other pests. Residents complain that the amount of trash is actually increasing because the relief assistance is triple packed in plastic and cardboard, apparently to prevent damage during sea transport. (Most relief continues to arrive by air. The port suffered heavy damage and it still not open to normal operations.)

All residents have some form of semi-permanent shelter and have begun using in-house appliances and facilities. But many prefer to sleep outside at night because electricity is cut off at night for repairs, and there are no fans or air conditioning.

A rapid multi-sector assessment has been done and identified the following actions are planned or underway:

Widespread aerial spaying against insects at night has begun. No information has been provided to residents on protective measures since they are expected to be inside and asleep at the time of the spraying.

The sewage systems will be repaired and refurbished. However, only primary treatment before releasing sewage into the ocean is possible for the next 60 days. A public awareness campaign will target coastal residents and fisher persons on ocean areas which may be polluted and mitigation measures.

The only island landfill is not usable. It is flooded and in a flood prone area. No alternate debris disposal activities are planned for the next 60 days since residents seem to be able to handle the debris problem themselves.

Local authorities propose realigning a number of roads, some not damaged by the typhoon, as part of the recovery program. Most realignments had been in the works before the typhoon but not all the mandatory EIAs had been completed. Several realignments are contested due to the impacts on wet lands. Authorities propose to not complete the EIAs as the realignments would be done under an emergency program.

Assistance will be provided to local authorities and homeowners to repair or rebuild. Current Hawaiian building codes will be used for all repairs and new buildings. Funds will specifically be provided for retrofitting damaged and undamaged buildings. All construction supplies will be brought in from off the island.

Since a number of trawlers based on Nuiea were lost during the typhoon, loan funds at preferential rates are being requested to get newer and bigger boats. The justification for bigger trawlers is based on the need to employ more people and stimulate the local fishing sector which has been in the doldrums due to a lack of good hauls over the past decade.

The Incident Commander wants an assessment of outstanding environmental issues related to recovery operations in 10 minutes for a general recovery operations review meeting.