

## Including additional considerations on gender and diversity, climate, livelihoods and health into the Seasonal Calendar

The following are suggestions elaborated by VCA practitioners from different parts of the world to adapt or improve particular aspects of the VCA tools. While basic aspects of these sectors have been mainstreamed into the revised tools, the below provides further explanations and proposed additions related to one or several of the following areas:

- Gender and diversity
- Climate change adaptation
- Livelihoods
- Health

These should be read and used as a complementary note to the steps described in the [Seasonal Calendar](#).



### Gender & diversity<sup>1</sup>

#### **Importance of gender and diversity**

The tool should be undertaken with men and women in separate groups. Both calendars can then be brought together at the end to compare and contrast, with information kept disaggregated. Conducting the Seasonal Calendar with men, women and diverse groups allows us to understand the different perceptions of risk, hazards and social vulnerabilities, by group. This ensures that the different perceptions of each, are recorded and commonalities identified.

#### **The Seasonal Calendar should allow you to:**

- Understand the different workloads and livelihood options and responsibilities of men and women over the course of the year
- Understand the economic situation of men and women over the course of the year and the different income sources for men and women.
- Who makes decisions regarding spending of income
- Understand if there are times of year where there are increased levels of stress, higher workloads, and whether there are any impacts of this in the household or community (this can be an important information to consider when developing a community action plan following the VCA process).
- It can be helpful to split younger and older participants into different groups and collect data first as the situation is today, and then ask whether things have changed

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<sup>1</sup> [Gender and diversity sensitive Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment \(VCA\). IFRC.](#)

in the last 30 years. This is a good opportunity to engage older generations in the community on their views on hazards and risks and the changing environment.

- Understand the implications regarding the division of labour, capacities and knowledge of women and men
- Understand whether the implications regarding vulnerabilities and seasonality of disaster or climate change are based on different groups



### Climate change adaptation<sup>2</sup>

The seasonal calendar opens up an opportunity for VCA facilitators to discuss whether seasons are changing which may have implications for health problems, disasters and livelihoods (see example questions in [Annex 1 & Annex 2 RCCC](#)). It is recommended that first you create a seasonal calendar based on 'now' and after the community has completed that task, ask if these seasons have changed compared to the past 30 years or so. However, if people are already mentioning unpredictable weather, you might revert the order and discuss what it was like in the past and then try to discuss potential challenges induced by any recent 'unpredictability'. For discussing long-term variation (see also [Historical Profile](#)) it is important to include elders in the group. Remember also, it is not one past event, but patterns in the past that you are looking for in the seasonal calendar.

The tool can be used to raise awareness that in light of changes to weather patterns, old seasonal calendars and traditional planning approaches may need to be reassessed. A diagram could be used to indicate how things like flowering, planting and harvest times of crops are changing, new weather and health related hazards might be emerging or old ones might be appearing at times of the year not expected.

For more resources on how to incorporate climate change considerations into this tool see:

- [Integrating Climate Change and Urban Risk into VCA pages 94-97](#)
- The [3CA toolkit developed by CADRIM page 82-84](#)



### Livelihoods: Economic activities, assets and financial services

The seasonal calendar should identify the annual cycle of the households 'productive and economic activities, their income and expenses fluctuation and the seasonal events that might affect, directly or indirectly, the Household Economic Security. Keep in mind how each of the five capitals of the Livelihoods framework (Livelihoods Guidelines IFRC pages 17 – 18: physical, social, human, natural and financial) are impacted by the seasons (drought periods, harvesting periods, increase of sales, seasonal diseases, holidays, etc). This tool allows the

<sup>2</sup> [Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre. How can climate change be considered in Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments? 2012.](#)

analysis and identification of those periods with a higher economic tension and/or food insecurity for the household as well as those periods where economic conditions are the best, households are better off and receive the highest income.

**Recommended Steps:** Note that the situation may be different for each type of livelihoods. To better support livelihoods interventions, you may want to have each livelihoods group draw their own calendar reflecting the seasonality of farmers, herders, micro and small entrepreneurs, retailers... We therefore suggest considering the following aspects:

- ✓ Firstly, it is important to determine those periods with a higher level of work for the different groups. You may also need to look at access to credit / indebtedness, migration patterns.
- ✓ Fluctuation of income in different periods of the year (crops in a year and other income sources). Which months of the year income are enough to cover basic needs (food, education, health, etc.)? When is the lean period? how long does it last?
- ✓ Then identify those periods with a higher level of expenses (social and religious activities, school enrolment, investment in livelihoods (seeds, land preparation, vaccination, hiring of agricultural labour etc....)
- ✓ Then, assess fluctuation on prices (inputs, staple food).
- ✓ Next, look at those periods with a higher occurrence of communicable diseases (cholera, influenza, diarrhoea, ARIs...).
- ✓ Identify the main negative coping strategies when food, income, and activities are low,
- ✓ Finally look at disasters and events that directly affect the 5 capitals or six resilience characteristics (floods, hurricanes, droughts...).
- ✓ Ideally the last 15-30 years should be considered to see if any remarkable changes in the calendar have taken place: changes in health, migration, hazard patterns.

Once we have all this information integrated in the calendar, a group analysis should be done in order to include missing information, amend possible mistakes and drawing conclusions as mentioned before.

#### Tips:

- ✓ Analyse the level of indebtedness and/or the level of access to services.
- ✓ Some coping strategies or negative behaviour which are related to the seasonality of income and food (including increase of domestic violence, drunkenness...) may not be easily revealed in a group exercise but their occurrence matter for programme design
- ✓ Identify consequences of the different events and how they relate to each other. Reflect that on your analysis.



Health

Map and discuss the impact of weather and natural hazards on disease outbreaks/accidents such as diarrhoea, cholera, ARIs and how Climate Change is impacting on this

Record seasonal variations in availability of resources such as food, water and income (migration for work). Include periods of food insecurity.

Identify periods of higher workload, stress, interpersonal violence and suicide.

Non-Communicable Diseases: the tool can also be used to map out and discuss the impact of festivals or community events which bring higher risk of unhealthy eating, alcohol drinking or smoking i.e. Christmas, community holidays, rites de passage, fasting etc. Some events could also increase the risk of STI transmission or unwanted pregnancies if they are associated with higher levels of unprotected sex.