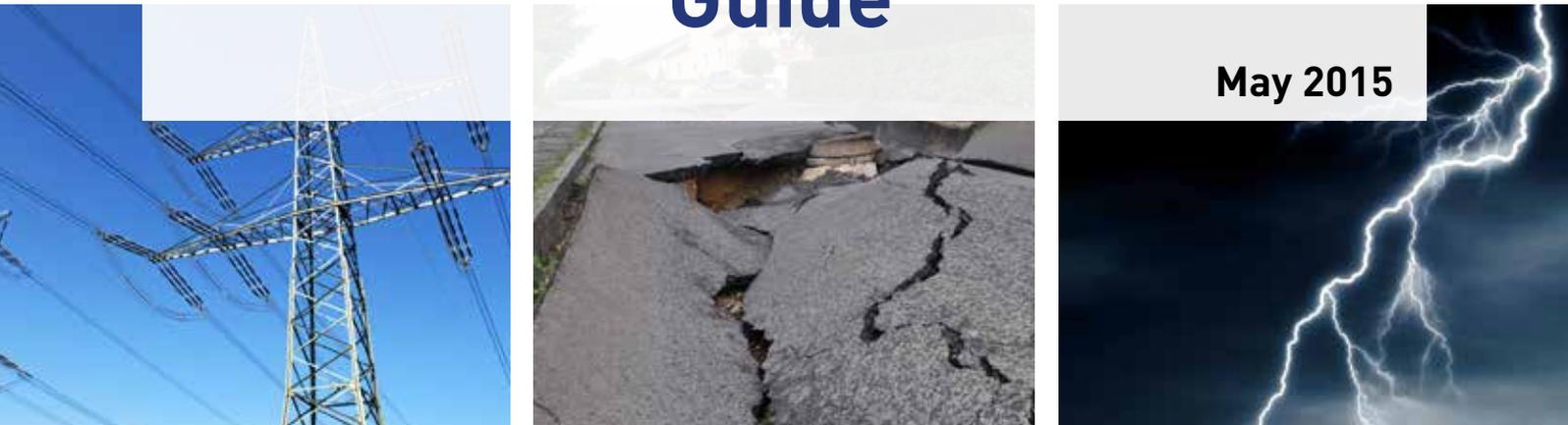


# aware & resilient

## Community-based Emergency Preparedness Exercise (CBE) Guide

May 2015



AUSTRIAN RED CROSS



БЪЛГАРСКИ  
ЧЕРВЕН КРЪСТ



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# Table of Contents

<b>About the Community-based Emergency Preparedness Exercise Guide .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Part 1 – Background and policy .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1. Introduction and background.....	5
2. What is a Community-based Emergency Preparedness Exercise (CBE)?.....	6
3. Types of CBEs .....	7
4. Pre-conditions for a CBE .....	8
4.1. Clear objectives and expected results .....	8
4.2. Identified community and target groups .....	10
4.3. Identifying institutional stakeholders .....	10
<b>Part 2 – Planning and delivering a CBE.....</b>	<b>12</b>
5. Main pillars of the CBE .....	12
5.1. CBE topics.....	12
5.2. The size of the event.....	13
5.3. The venue of the CBE .....	14
5.4. The date and timing of the exercise.....	14
5.5. The length of the exercise .....	15
5.6. Selection of methodology.....	15
6. Organising a CBE team .....	17
6.1. Steering Committee .....	17
6.2. Facilitators and station managers.....	17
6.3. Technical and logistical team.....	18
7. Reaching the community and involving local participants .....	19
8. Organisational issues and logistics .....	20
8.1. Ensuring proper facilities.....	20
8.2. Transportation .....	21
8.3. Equipment and other items .....	21
8.4. Information materials and giveaways.....	22
8.5. Financial issues and resource mobilisation .....	23
8.6. Final preparations .....	24
9. Evaluation and follow-up .....	25
<b>Part 3 – Tools and methods (tool-kit).....</b>	<b>27</b>
10. Introduction to the tool-kit.....	27
11. Opening of the CBE .....	27
12. Setting the context.....	27
13. Vulnerability and capacity assessment.....	27
14. Risk awareness raising and disaster preparedness.....	28
15. Helping others .....	30
16. Physical exercises and games .....	30
17. Demonstrations and simulations.....	31

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## About the Community-based Emergency Preparedness Exercise Guide

This Community-based Emergency Preparedness Exercise (CBE) Guide has been developed in the frame of the [Aware and Resilient Project](#), funded by the EU Civil Protection Financial Instrument. It builds upon the CBE Guide created as a result of a previous EC co-funded project “Informed Prepared Together.” This CBE Guide aims to add value by providing practical details to assist implementers with their planning, delivery and evaluation of community-based emergency preparedness exercises (CBEs).

This CBE Guide will assist people in charge of risk management, members of rescue organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community leaders and citizens who are willing to organise CBEs in an endeavour to raise awareness, to reduce risks and eventually change the behaviour of citizens.

The Guide refers to methods and tools developed within other EC co-funded projects<sup>1</sup> and within the framework of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement<sup>2</sup> that have been adapted, translated and piloted within the Aware and Resilient Project. The Guide also builds upon the lessons learned within this project from the five CBEs conducted by Red Cross organisations and their partners in Austria, Bulgaria, France, Latvia and Romania.

This CBE Guide consists of three main parts:

Part 1 is general, it shows the policy framework as a basis for initiating CBEs. It explains what a CBE is and why it is important; who it should involve; the possible CBE types of and prerequisites for success; and the roles of stakeholders.

Part 2 describes the whole process of initiating, preparing and organising a CBE, based on experiences from five actual exercises conducted within the project. It includes tips for the organisers and highlights issues to be considered in the process.

Part 3 provides an overview of the practical tools that can be used as elements of a CBE. Detailed descriptions and guides for implementation of these tools are available in the website of the Aware and Resilient Project: [www.ar-project.eu](http://www.ar-project.eu)

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1 Informed. Prepared. Together, 2009 | Self-Protection With Children in the Community, 2011.

2 Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment methodology

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# Part 1 – Background and policy

## 1. Introduction and background

It is widely recognised that disaster risk reduction (DRR) and mitigation measures prevent loss of life, infrastructure, economy and environment and they also save money. The costs of prevention and disaster risk reduction are several times less than the costs of destruction, response and recovery following a disaster.

A global strategic document in this field, the new [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#)<sup>3</sup> sets four key priorities for action:

1. Understanding disaster risk.
2. Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk.
3. Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience.
4. Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

These priorities build on co-operation between actors at all levels, including communities. Key is the involvement in disaster risk management of local communities with all their social diversity, in particular priority groups such as women, children and youths, older people and migrants. The value of local knowledge is being promoted in the planning and implementation of risk reduction measures, while the role of civil society and community-based organisations and volunteers is central for their contribution to “*public awareness, a culture of prevention and education on disaster risk; and advocating for resilient communities and an inclusive and all-of-society disaster risk management*”. This guiding document reflects, to a significant extent, the key role of local communities and citizens in planning and preparing for, responding to and recovering from disasters.

[The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement](#) has been working in the field of DRR for many years. The Movement has focused efforts on communities in disaster prone areas all over the world, striving to reach the following characteristics of safe and resilient communities<sup>4</sup>, that they:

- understand the disaster risks that they face, they can assess them and can protect themselves minimising losses and damage when a disaster strikes...
- are organised, with capacity to identify problems, prioritise and act
- are engaged in the development of local risk reduction policies
- are connected. They have relations with external actors who support them in need
- have infrastructure and services, and are able to maintain and repair the system
- have economic opportunities, they value and manage well their natural assets...
- can do much on their own and to sustain basic functions despite the impact of disasters
- can build-back after a disaster and work for reduced vulnerabilities in the future
- understand that building safety and resilience is a long-term commitment and work
- understand that more needs to be done to adapt to future problems and build on their current knowledge.

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3 [http://www.wcdrr.org/uploads/Sendai\\_Framework\\_for\\_Disaster\\_Risk\\_Reduction\\_2015-2030.pdf](http://www.wcdrr.org/uploads/Sendai_Framework_for_Disaster_Risk_Reduction_2015-2030.pdf)

4 [The road to resilience. Bridging relief and development for a more sustainable future](#), IFRC, 2011

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## What about the European Union (EU)?

In recent years the EU has invested significant focus and resources in the development of strong emergency management systems, structures and infrastructure, inter-agency communication and co-ordination, advanced technologies, establishment of professional and better equipped rescue teams for better protection of EU citizens in emergencies. Emergency management has become increasingly complex and technological, while citizens' and communities' roles in emergencies have received much less attention.

This situation creates risks, particularly in more developed countries, where services work well in normal situations and citizens may become too reliant on the rescue systems. The high confidence in the capacity of authorities and responding organisations to protect citizens can result in a false feeling of safety among citizens, especially dangerous in large emergencies, when rescue services are affected themselves and cannot respond quickly to all people in need.

The common approaches used in the EU and the raising of citizens' awareness are not interactive. Online information and leaflets providing advice about what to do in particular emergencies provide a lot of information, but in a passive way. Public demonstrations by responder organisations are attractive and useful, but citizens are most often 'viewers,' not 'active participants' in the emergency response. Additionally, large demonstrations of equipment, professional response and capacity of responders contribute to citizens being overconfident about the capacity of the rescue systems, and reducing their interest in doing something for their personal protection.

It is vital for effective risk reduction, emergency response and recovery to involve citizens and communities as primary actors in their own protection. It is important to increase their understanding that the capacities of authorities and responder services may not, on their own, be sufficient to protect citizens; to recognise that, in emergency situations, the first persons to respond are most often those in the community – family members and neighbours.

CBEs provide an excellent method to tackle these issues.

## 2. What is a Community-based Emergency Preparedness Exercise (CBE)?

A CBE is an interactive event involving citizens, emergency responders and other local stakeholders, not only those involved in risk management and emergency response. It is organised with the main objective to improve the emergency preparedness of all local stakeholders, with a focus on citizens, families and the whole community as key actors in an emergency response. A successful emergency preparedness exercise will raise the awareness of citizens about the risks in emergency situations and will inform them how to protect their lives, health, property and livelihoods in an emergency.

### Who is it for?

The CBE Guide is aimed at community members of all ages, backgrounds and social status, together with responder organisations, governmental institutions, NGOs, local authorities and all other stakeholders including media, business, etc. It is intended for all actors, individual or collective, who have a role in an emergency situation, regardless of whether this role is institutionalised or is imposed by an urgent necessity to respond.

An exercise can be organised with people living in village communities, families, schools and universities. It can also be organised with employers in the public and private sector. It would be advantageous if responders, rescue organisations and authorities in charge of crisis management could be involved.

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## Why exercise?

There are many ways to facilitate learning and preparedness of citizens, by: individual or group methods; leaflets and books; lessons; training and courses; presentations and demonstrations. In comparison, a CBE is a cost efficient large group participatory activity, involving local stakeholders and community members acting together to prepare for emergencies.

CBEs address the human aspects of emergency response and directly contribute to building the resilience of citizens and communities to emergencies and disasters. While being less technical and more human oriented, CBEs can facilitate learning among participants and stakeholders and provide practical opportunities to exercise shared knowledge and skills. By doing this, CBEs can improve individual and collective coping with emergencies.

A CBE can provide an opportunity to bridge the gap between the general population and emergency response professionals, by interlinking citizens with volunteers, authorities, media and response organisations and transferring theory, within communities, into practice.

## What you can and cannot expect with this activity?

As an interactive event, a CBE enables a large number of citizens (from 60 to 100s of people) to elaborate on emergency preparedness issues in a relatively short time (from three to four hours, up to 24 hours).

A CBE is a tool for raising the awareness of citizens about the risks and impacts of emergencies. It can provide citizens with basic tips about how to prepare for and how to behave in different situations and to learn about what risks they face in their communities. They can learn key facts about the emergency response system and how rescue organisations participating in the emergency response function.

In a CBE, participants can learn basic ways and methods to protect themselves, individually and as a group, through exercises and games (example: discussion on the contents of a family emergency kit), or through practical exercising (filling sandbags, extinguishing fires, First Aid, etc.).

A CBE is not training and does not create professionals. One exercise is not sufficient to equip citizens with all the skills needed to cope with every situation, nor with the knowledge about all aspects of emergencies and preparedness. It cannot inform people in depth about every possible risk in their community nor all the ways to manage each risk. It can motivate citizens to learn more and engage in follow-up activities (for example to prepare their own home for an emergency, to attend training, or to buy insurance, etc.).

The main goal of the CBE is to inform, raise awareness, link people and organisations together for a better response. The main expected outcome of a CBE is to make people aware of the risks they may face. It will provide the basics of emergency preparedness and will aim to motivate them to learn and to do more for their own protection, the protection of their loved ones and of the members of their community.

## 3. Types of CBEs

A CBE can be run as a 'stand-alone' exercise, or as a component of a larger event.

### A 'stand-alone' CBE

A 'stand-alone' CBE is a public event with one agenda, organised together with stakeholders and following agreed common objectives, where partners' activities are interlinked and follow the overall logic of the exercise. It can be a good way of organising a CBE in small communities such as in rural areas, or with a specific target group in larger cities.

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Within the Aware and Resilient Project, 'stand-alone' CBEs were organised in Austria, in a community in a rural area with 1,600 inhabitants. The CBE was held, together with several stakeholders that participated in and organised different stations. In Bulgaria, a 'stand-alone' event was run in a rural area with 2,500 inhabitants. The CBE was held with several stakeholders that also ran separate and joint activities. In Latvia, a 'stand-alone' event was run in an urban area with 61,961 inhabitants, involving several stakeholders and joint activities.

### A CBE as a component of a large event

A CBE can be organised within larger public events, especially in cities, where larger exercises, carnivals, fairs, anniversaries and celebrative days can gather very large audiences. It can be cost efficient to use facilities and services dedicated to an existing planned event and use the ensuing high public interest.

In the frame of the Aware and Resilient Project, a CBE in France was organised within a large public event and an evacuation exercise held in a town of around 50,000 inhabitants. Citizens could visit the main square in the centre of the town where there were many stations with exhibitions and activities on emergency management and preparedness. It was held over a day and included a Red Cross exercise of rescue, evacuation and shelter of citizens, in addition to many side activities (risk education for children, First Aid training). The specific methods for a CBE adapted and developed from within the Aware and Resilient Project were but just one aspect of the other activities, and included: the introduction to risk reduction and a facilitated table top exercise with citizens and experts, based on a flood scenario under the title "What if tomorrow?"

The CBE in Romania was held as part of a larger event of the Romanian Red Cross, organised in a public park of the capital city. Citizens in small groups visited separate stations presenting Red Cross activities and those of other stakeholders; they came together to observe a demonstration on search and rescue. The CBE sessions were held as stations within this larger event.

The way in which a CBE is organised depends very much on the type of community, size of the event, the participating stakeholders and the overall capacity of organisers. Secondary, but also very important, are the issues of logistics: location, available facilities and space.

## 4. Pre-conditions for a CBE

There are three main phases in organising a CBE: planning, implementation and evaluation. Within the planning phase, the most important factors for success include the following: clear objectives and expected results agreed; community and target groups identified; appropriate methods and tools selected; and stakeholders involved.

The participation of citizens is key to the success of a CBE. It is important to make sure that the methods used in the CBE are as interactive as possible and that community members are not only observers, but are involved and active participants throughout the whole exercise.

### 4.1. Clear objectives and expected results

The objectives and expected results of a CBE must be designed and agreed by all stakeholders who will participate in the exercise. As the CBE is intended for community members and citizens, the objectives should be focused on raising their awareness and preparedness for emergencies. The expected results should reflect on the change you expect to achieve in their awareness, knowledge or behaviour in emergencies.

A key factor is that the exercise objectives should correspond to the knowledge and expertise that the organ-

isers and other participating organisations are able to provide.

General objectives of a CBE may include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Making people aware that responders are not always able to reach the affected people immediately
- Promoting the importance of self-protection
- Building confidence between citizens and responders and understanding each other's roles.

The five CBEs conducted within the Aware and Resilient Project show that the CBE methods can help in reaching the following specific objectives and results:

Objectives	Expected results
<b>To raise the awareness of participants about existing and potential risks in their environment, and to help them develop a better knowledge about how to prepare for and how to respond to the risks</b>	Risk mapping in the community, created and agreed by citizens, volunteers and organisations. Participants are better aware of the risks in their environment and have gained knowledge of how to protect themselves. Participants are better aware of their vulnerabilities in emergencies and about their capacity to reduce the risks
<b>To introduce citizens to information about the specific roles, capacity and ways of working of the responder organisations</b>	Participants are aware of what they can expect from responders in an emergency and understand the importance of self-protection
<b>To introduce citizens to information on how, in an emergency, they may be informed by authorities and how they can inform authorities about an emergency</b>	Participants know how to access vital emergency information quickly and how to alert authorities in a more efficient way. Participants and organisations have developed awareness on the importance of good communication in emergencies
<b>To develop a better understanding by participants of the importance of their personal and family preparedness for emergencies</b>	Participants have gained some practical skills for self-protection and developed interest in follow-up activity. Some participants consider making family plans and emergency kits.
<b>To exercise activities which are usually undertaken during an emergency with the participation of all stakeholders, according to their roles</b>	Citizens, organisations and volunteers have gained practical skills, working together in preparing for and responding to an emergency. Citizens, organisations and volunteers are more familiar with each other and consider joint follow-up activities.

### Tips!

Keep objectives and expected results of the exercise simple and realistic, and make sure that they correspond to the capacity, time and resources available.

Start thinking about how to evaluate the achievement of objectives and results after a CBE at an early stage.

Make use of the CBE as a forum to discuss and clarify the roles of stakeholders and citizens, while building local capacities, especially if local emergency response plans are not clear about these.

Do not impose external objectives on local stakeholders. Respect the local environment, local actors and the lessons they have learned from past emergencies. Show appreciation for their work and their level of responsibilities.

## 4.2. Identified community and target groups

Disaster risk reduction as a priority is focused on the most vulnerable communities and communities at risk. It is therefore advisable to organise a CBE where it is most needed: communities at risk, communities affected by repeated emergencies and those having significant numbers of vulnerable groups (older people, people with disabilities, children, etc.).

*What specifics to consider about the “community”?*

The general understanding of community is that it can be made up of the people residing in one location (e.g. sharing similar domestic issues) or people sharing common beliefs, interests or problems. In the context of public safety in emergencies, people sharing common risks can represent a community.

It could be difficult to identify the target community in the context of a CBE. Firstly the concept of “community” does not exist in some countries or it has a different meaning (a name for an administrative structure, or a local area, part of the territorial division in a country). Secondly, the identification of a community depends on size of population and level of relationships between people. The people who live in small settlements are interlinked and share similar problems, while cities are composed of hundreds and thousands of communities – a diverse, inhomogeneous and ever-changing mass of people.

In rural areas, the community usually is the population of a whole village.

In larger cities, the common location may not be the feature to identify a community. Urban communities may comprise of families living in the neighbourhood, people who are participating in groups of interest (older people club, scouts association, mothers’ association, etc.), or people in working relationships (colleagues, students, etc.), plus many others. People sharing common interests or problems can also represent communities: people with disabilities, mothers, older people, children, drivers, students, social workers etc.

In the frame of the Aware and Resilient Project, CBEs in Austria and Bulgaria targeted rural communities, 1,600 total inhabitants in Austria and 2,500 inhabitants in Bulgaria. Those in France, Latvia and Romania targeted urban areas – from 50000 inhabitants in France, and 61961 inhabitants in Latvia, to the capital city in Romania, with a total population of almost two million.

A participatory approach was undertaken in Latvia, where local authorities were invited to host a CBE. The target community was selected through the Latvian Association of local and regional governments based on confirmed willingness by a local authority to support the CBE. In other countries, the main criteria for community selection included areas affected by previous emergencies, combined with the existing local capacities of the Red Cross and good relations with stakeholders. In the case of Romania and France, due to the larger size of the planned events, the local capacity was not sufficient and volunteers from other regions were involved in the CBEs.

The variety of locations required specific approaches in selecting more robust target groups for each CBE. In Latvia, the CBE specifically targeted different organisations that then invited their members and representatives; these were NGOs, universities and representatives of institutions dealing with emergencies. The other CBEs were directed at families, selected and invited through a network of volunteers, while the CBEs were attended also by many other citizens involved through invitations posted in public places (France, Austria, Bulgaria, Romania).

## 4.3. Identifying institutional stakeholders

The identification and early involvement of institutional stakeholders in the planning process of a CBE can be one of the most important factors of success. The partners can contribute material and human resources and they can assist in setting appropriate objectives. Reaching the target groups and their active participation

in the exercise will achieve one of main objectives of this tool – to link responders and citizens. It can also be vital to include organisations that have a mandate linked to emergencies and emergency preparedness that the initiating organisation may not have.

## Who are the institutional stakeholders in a CBE?

They are the institutions and persons in charge of risk and crisis management for the selected community, including: local and regional authorities; rescue services; medical services; civil society organisations dealing with emergency response or risk education; local or regional institutions and organisations providing services for the community (school, kindergarten, utility companies, insurance companies, factories, churches, etc.). It should be acknowledged that different countries have different administrative structures and units in charge of emergencies, but that in every context, two authorities are likely to have responsibility for the safety of their citizens: the local authority and the local civil protection department. These should be the first institutions to contact in order to ensure acceptance and support for the initiative of organising a CBE.

The local authority is the main stakeholder in every community, directly responsible for the protection of citizens and emergency response. If an organisation is not yet present in the community through volunteers, members or staff, the local authority is the first stakeholder to approach. Any further involvement with local citizens should be undertaken with the consent of the local authorities and if they wish, with their direct participation. The particular groups in the community who will be invited to the exercise will be identified and approached in co-operation with the institutional stakeholders.

In the frame of the Aware and Resilient Project, the following stakeholders were identified and participated in the CBEs:

**Austria:** It was important to include the Provincial Civil Protection Association which has responsibility for raising awareness for disaster preparedness in Austria, local Fire Brigade, Lower Austrian government and the local municipality including the Mayor.

**Bulgaria:** The main stakeholders included: the Village Mayor, Regional Directorate “Fire Safety and Protection of Population” (Civil Protection Authority), Regional Governor and municipal administration, Emergency Service 112, Medical Ambulance Service, local doctor, school teachers and insurance company.

**France:** The main stakeholders included: the Mayor and team, water and sanitation services, Fire Brigade, representatives of the Prefecture, Disaster Risk Management Agency, Deputies of the Parliament, and the President and General Director French Red Cross.

**Latvia:** Representatives of the following organisations were involved: Chairman of Jelgava city council, Civil Protection Authority – Jelgava Municipality Operative Information Centre, Fire and Rescue Service, Police, State Emergency Medical Service, Municipal authorities, Latvia University of Agriculture, local associations, NGOs and insurance company.

**Romania:** The CBE involved the Municipality, Fire Brigade, Gendarmerie, Civil Protection and the National Ambulance Service (SMURD).

### Tips!

Institutional stakeholders can be experienced in managing educational events for the public. Listen to their advice, but be careful to keep control of event planning and operations. Be aware that emergency services are used to presenting their equipment and best practices, as a show. A CBE is intended to be a more open and interactive event, where the input and experience of the public is valued, making clear that institutional stakeholders roles will be more consultative than a lecture. Show respect to everyone involved, but make sure that you will meet your objectives.

## Part 2 – Planning and delivering a CBE

Planning includes the design and agreement of the key elements of a CBE with stakeholders. Once it has been agreed that a CBE will be organised, the stakeholders have been identified and involved, the process of planning the robust CBE elements begins.

The elements of the CBE that need to be developed and agreed by the partners, include: topics, size, venue, location, time, length and methodology.

Allow sufficient time for planning and co-ordination, especially as the involvement of more partners in the preparations will make it necessary to co-ordinate decisions with all parties.

### 5. Main pillars of the CBE

#### 5.1. CBE topics

The main topic of a CBE is emergency preparedness. Emergency preparedness includes knowing the risks, being aware of emergencies which might occur in the area and knowing what measures can be taken to prepare for the risks. Before deciding on the topics, it is recommended to collect information about typical emergencies and risks in the target area. This can be done through desk studies, reviews of past emergencies and statistics, preparatory field visits and interviews with local stakeholders, NGOs, voluntary organisations, clubs and citizens.

This preliminary work will help in selecting appropriate topics for the CBE – relevant to local realities and experiences. The topics can include emergencies occurring regularly in the region and affecting the target community, as well as potential threats. The elements of the CBE may well include general preparedness activities and practical skills needed for all kinds of emergencies, including small incidents such as fire at home or work, road accidents, and many others.

In the frame of the Aware and Resilient Project, the CBEs covered emergencies and risks, relevant for the target communities.

In Austria, the CBE sessions included activities and games related to flooding – a risk relevant to the community where it was taking place, together with activities building general preparedness for various risks.

In Bulgaria, the exercise was focused on building general preparedness, while it also covered a variety of risks, which occur regularly in emergency situations in the winter. It also included an earthquake scenario, as the area is vulnerable to this threat and has past experiences. The practical game of using fire extinguishers was dedicated to preparedness for another common risk in the rural area of Tetovo village, where woodstoves are the main heating device in use.

In France, the main topic of the exercise was related to flooding, the most important and recurrent risk affecting France and particularly in cities near rivers, as is the case in Alfortville. In case of flooding, 70% of the city will be affected by floods. The citizens discussed and practised particular activities related to coping in such situations, including: family preparedness, evacuation, discussion on how such an emergency affects their community and services, and what measures the institutions should take to respond.

In Latvia, the exercise aimed at raising general preparedness, yet most attention was paid to flooding, which often affects the area of Jelgava, and fires, which are usual in densely populated urban areas.

In Romania, the CBE was focused on a disaster relief camp for displaced people in case of an earthquake and included activities and games like First Aid, psychosocial support, restoring family links and demonstration of search and rescue.

In all partner countries, the exercises included: training sessions related to behaviour in various situations, First Aid, preparing family disaster plans and family disaster kits; sandbag filling competition; cooking in emergencies using basic products; extinguishing fires etc.

A preliminary consultation with community members and local institutional stakeholders can help to decide on the relevant topics of the exercise. This will also help the detailed planning of exercise activities, based on real places, people and events. Such a preliminary consultation can also raise interest among community members and it can help identify and involve new stakeholders.

### Tip!

Plan the activities in the CBE on the basis of the agreed objectives, and make sure that they take into account the local specifics, number, composition and background of participants. Involve the appropriate partners to cover areas of expertise where your organisation does not have capacity and encourage their participation and creativity. Think of the planned CBE activities from the perspective of participants and plan interactive and useful activities for the community members. Check with local stakeholders and community members on the relevance of the CBE topics and events.

## 5.2. The size of the event

When deciding the size of the event, consider the following factors:

- The agreed CBE objective and expected results
- The capacity for managing large groups of people. Consider how many volunteers and facilitators will be needed for the exercise and how they are briefed and prepared
- Available space and facilities
- The type of the CBE – whether it is a ‘stand-alone’ or part of a larger event. It is difficult to control the number of people attending a large event, so be realistic about the number of people who will attend the CBE
- The resources available for materials, takeaways, drinks and food for the participants.

From a methodological point of view, a CBE with plenary sessions involving all participants is unlikely to be effective with very large numbers of people, a recommended maximum would be 60-100 participants. CBEs with separate stations operating simultaneously can be attended by many more participants. Depending on the resources available and the number of stations established, an event could reach hundreds of people.

In order to achieve the learning objectives of a CBE, it is important to find an adequate balance between the number of participants and the quality of participatory CBE activities offered.

The CBEs organised within the Aware and Resilient Project were attended by 100 to 500 persons.

### Tips!

Decide how many people you can accommodate in the exercise. If planned activities have a strict participant limit, consider pre-registration or sending invitations only to organisations you wish to involve. If the exercise is open to the public, prepare a back-up plan for how to keep everyone involved, if more people arrive than planned.

### 5.3. The venue of the CBE

The selection of the appropriate venue is made together with the local stakeholders. In most cases, it will be the local authority that will designate the venue for the CBE. An exercise can be organised to take place indoors, outdoors, or both. The venue can be just one large hall, or it may comprise several locations and stations, where different CBE sessions are carried out.

When selecting the best venue for the exercise, it is important to consider what type of activities will be carried out with the citizens and the size of groups to be involved. From a logistics perspective, outdoor activities allow a larger number of participants in smaller groups, but may be dependent on the weather. Larger groups require more space and, while games and competitions can be carried out outdoors, table top exercises and large discussion groups can be organised for delivery indoors and require larger rooms.

In the frame of the Aware and Resilient Project, CBEs were undertaken in a variety of venues:

**Indoors:** village sports and events hall and schoolrooms (Austria); sports hall and schoolrooms (Bulgaria); sports hall and community centre (France); large conference hall (accommodating 200 people) and a computer room (Latvia)

**Outdoors:** parking lot and area around village events hall (Austria); sports playground (Bulgaria); city centre, children's playgrounds and parks (France); car parking area (Latvia); section of a public park in a large city (Romania)

### 5.4. The date and timing of the exercise

The date and timing of the event is to be agreed together with the local stakeholders, in accordance with their schedules. The local authority will be the most important stakeholder for identifying the most appropriate season, month and day of the week. Other issues to consider are: whether there are existing practices in the local communities or events that cause people to come together? If local practices and traditions are respected, community involvement and ownership will be higher.

Consider the season, especially if the CBE will include outdoor activities. For communities affected by repeated threats (flooding, heavy snowfalls), consider when a CBE can help communities in preparing better for the period when such emergencies may occur. Consider the selected target group and choose the most convenient time and hours for the people to attend.

In the frame of the Aware and Resilient Project, CBEs were carried out at the weekends, with the exception of the CBE in Latvia that was held during a working day, targeting a particular group of students, professionals, citizens, retired people, representatives from various NGOs (e.g. youth organisations, people with special needs) and religious denominations. The CBE in France was organised within a large event related to emergencies, carried out on a particular day and announced in advance. The CBE in Bulgaria was held during a weekend, and it was planned for the day following a village festive day. In Austria and Romania, the CBE was linked to the usual activities of the local people on Sundays: mass, going out and spending time with family and friends. The events in Austria and Bulgaria both took place one day before the International Day of Disaster Preparedness and contributed to the Red Cross' publicity campaign on this day.

#### Tips!

Ask about the usual ways the community gathers, use this knowledge and make the exercise accessible for the people.

If you have a CBE on a working day, some people will have to take a day off from their work. They might require a certificate of participation to show their employers.

## 5.5. The length of the exercise

A CBE should be planned to run for as long as it takes to achieve the defined objectives with the selected target groups. Typically the event will run from between three hours and a whole day or in certain cases even longer.

Tabletop exercises and discussion sessions need to be well-planned and not too long, in order to allow for group dynamics. Exercises that use such methods, especially if they involve the same participants, should not exceed two to three hours. If plenary sessions are combined with other activities (physical activities, quizzes, games or practical exercises in small groups or individually), a CBE can run for longer with the same group of people. An exercise can run for a whole day if it offers a variety of separate interactive activities with small groups and if participants are free to come and go.

The length of CBEs conducted within the Aware and Resilient Project ran from four hours, as in the 'stand-alone' exercises organised in Bulgaria and Latvia with all participants together, to a whole day with CBEs as elements of a larger event, as held in France and Romania, which included activities with all participants, in addition to a number of separate stations. The 'stand-alone' CBE in Austria that lasted a whole day included multiple stations and offered awards for those citizens who attended a certain amount of stations, but allowed people to come and go as they pleased. The CBE in Romania ran for even longer – from early afternoon until the following morning, offering the citizens an opportunity to spend the night in a tent camp in a simulated evacuation, but also offering the opportunity to attend individual sessions only.

## 5.6. Selection of methodology

The practical methodology of the CBE should correspond to its objectives, topics and the specifics of the target groups. It should take into consideration the group dynamics and movement of people, and aim at creating a relaxed and open atmosphere. The methodology should be agreed with the other participating stakeholders. It is best to elaborate a detailed plan for each session.

The choice of the methodology should also be based on the material resources and facilities available and take into consideration the possible constraints. It is important to use interactive methods and tools, inclusive for all participants.

### Activity sequences:

- Sequence of activities with the same participants from the start to the end
- Plenary and group sessions, with or without rotation of people in groups
- Multiple stations with various activities, visited by individual participants or groups, consequently or randomly
- A mix of the above.

### Activity types:

- Plenary sessions or activities involving all participants. Recommended up to 30 minutes per session and using skilled facilitator/facilitators.
- Simultaneous working groups, (each participant taking part in one small group). Recommended up to 20 minutes per session, with a follow-up in plenary (up to ten minutes).
- Separate parallel stations on particular subjects. Recommended from ten to 20 minutes per group and selection of topics contributing to the overall logic of the CBE.
- Small games and exercises (undertaken by some people, observed by others). Recommended rotation and longer overall time for the CBE to involve as many people as possible – up to one day.

- Demonstrations by professionals or by skilled volunteers. Recommended from 30 minutes to one hour (depending on the purpose and complexity of the demonstration) and including citizens as participants.

Participation of stakeholders: Together in all sessions, managing separate stations, or both.

Special considerations: smaller children may participate in separate exercises, but other activities should be considered in which they could participate together with their parents or grandparents.

### **Tips!**

More interactive activities will lead to more active participation of citizens and better learning.

Agree with the institutional stakeholders the aim of organising a lively and engaging community event.

- In the planning of each session, consider what will be the role of citizens and plan it in a more interactive way. Find a good balance between giving and receiving information, promoting discussion and group work
- Include activities and games, which citizens themselves can also practice. Use demonstrations not only to present professional work but to let citizens find out what they can do
- Design activities which build upon and strengthen the existing links between participants
- Check and verify your ideas with the stakeholders and discuss theirs
- Think of the composition of the groups and agree what methods will be appropriate for which participants. If needed, design special activities for special groups (older people, small children, etc.).

## 6. Organising a CBE team

### 6.1. Steering Committee

When planning a CBE together with other institutional partners (this is the most efficient way of organising a CBE), it is necessary to organise the preparations in a structured way. This may include setting up a 'steering committee' or 'organisational committee' as a way to reach agreements and to carry out joint planning, while keeping everybody informed of the progress.

#### What should be planned together among stakeholders?

- The objectives of the CBE, the target community and target groups, timing, length and venue
- The topics of the CBE and the methodology and tools which will be used
- All resources needed for every element of the exercise, and who will provide what and when, including people (facilitators or supporters), facilities, transport, equipment, visual materials, logistics, etc.
- A master plan, detailed agenda and sessions of the CBE, and roles of each partner during the exercise
- Roles in promoting the exercise within and outside the target community. This may include invitations to citizens, publication of separate or joint press releases, contacting and involvement of other important stakeholders
- Agreement on periodic meetings to share the progress in preparations.

#### Tips!

Always agree on deadlines for any commitment undertaken by each partner and state clearly at the beginning who is responsible for what. Take notes and share with everybody following a meeting. Maintain communication between meetings. Involve the volunteers and other stakeholders in meetings. Keep the partnership open for new stakeholders. If you are involving volunteers, make sure that the meetings do not take too long.

### 6.2. Facilitators and station managers

A CBE should build on what is available in the community or in its surroundings, including people, facilities and equipment. Facilitators can be selected from among the staff and volunteers of all stakeholders, especially for separate stations, where each stakeholder covers a topic relevant to their competencies. Local volunteers who are trained in specific subjects and who have facilitation skills can be involved in the CBE stations. These volunteers can contribute to building local ownership and continuity following the CBE.

Exercises with plenary sessions involving all participants should be guided by a skilled and experienced lead moderator, or by a team of moderators. Depending on the selected set of activities and number of stations, a sufficient number of facilitators or station managers must be trained and involved.

CBEs that include separate stations will require at least two facilitators for each station. While in most cases a station can be managed by one person, it proves very convenient if facilitators are enabled to work in pairs. While one facilitator is leading a session, a back-up person may assist by observing group dynamics, making notes, helping with time management or taking over in case of a difficulty. This staffing level enables the facilitators to take sufficient breaks.

Some sessions may require even more facilitators, either due to the need of particular sets of expertise in the station (fire safety, floods, First Aid, psycho-social support), for technical support with equipment and logistics, or when a particular session requires a team.

The CBEs conducted within the Aware and Resilient Project involved from 15 to 50 volunteers as facilitators, trainers and station managers, according to the size of the event and the types of activities planned. The large multi-purpose exercise in Romania involved 100 volunteers from different regions.

Depending on the complexity of the selected methodology and the expected level of involvement of citizens, some tasks such as First Aid or psychosocial support will involve trainers with specific training. For simple tasks and exercises, as a minimum, facilitators need proper briefing and instructions.

#### **Tips!**

The methodology used will define the choice of who will carry out CBE activities. Discussion sessions (brainstorming sessions, table-top simulations, workshops, etc.) require skilled facilitators. Simple physical activities and games can be carried out by trained or briefed volunteers without facilitators' skills. Activities with children and other groups of people with special needs, in addition to activities that may induce emotional reactions, require trained staff or volunteers to provide psychosocial support.

### **6.3. Technical and logistical team**

Managing a CBE requires a large number of well-briefed assisting staff and/or volunteers who can take care of all supporting activities: logistics, welcoming of participants, registration, directing the movement of participants, assistance in filling in evaluation forms, distribution of materials, water, refreshments, technical support and roles in practical exercises or simulations.

The volunteers who will provide technical and logistical assistance should be well briefed, in advance. They need to know the details of the overall plan for the exercise and the venue, the roles of each, times and place of work, methods of communicating for solving unexpected difficulties. If many volunteers are to be involved in different stations and areas, consideration should be given to appointing team leaders for general co-ordination.

## 7. Reaching the community and involving local participants

One of the most important issues in the planning process is how to ensure the involvement of citizens in the CBE through communication and publicity.

Different contexts and different communities require specific messages and methods. As with other elements of the CBE, the communication plan for the community members should be developed together with the institutional stakeholders. Local authorities are a key stakeholder in promoting the exercise and they should take an active part in this process. The messages directed to citizens should take into account the local culture and the particular target groups.

In the frame of the Aware and Resilient Project, the CBE in Austria was promoted as a community event, linked to the usual activities of the community members on Sundays. Leaflets and posters were distributed, the invitation was put into the Community's monthly newsletter and leaflets were put into the mailboxes of all inhabitants of the community's villages, two days before the event. The CBE in Bulgaria was linked to the village celebrations day, when the whole community celebrates together. In France, the CBE was part of a large annual event, already familiar to citizens; however the participants in the CBE were invited personally to dedicated sessions, also as contributors and not merely as public. In Latvia, the date of the community event was chosen in regard to World First Aid Day. Stakeholder representatives were invited personally to the CBE, as people dealing with risks and emergency response, to contribute with: their expertise, to raise awareness of citizens, to promote the importance of emergency preparedness and First Aid training. In Romania, the CBE was planned as a weekend outdoor event in the most usual place where people spend their time – in the largest public park.

Communication channels to the community are different, depending on the specifics of the target groups and the context of the exercise. The style used for engaging people and raising public interest is also different and depends on local specifics. For example, young people are better targeted through informal messages, where electronic media and social networks can be used very effectively. Adults can be invited to a CBE through individual invitations – for a family and community event, dedicated to their own and their children safety in emergencies. Older people can be reached through other older people, clubs and organised groups, where they are members.

In the frame of the Aware and Resilient Project, a common network mobilised to involve citizens was the network of Red Cross volunteers. All communication means, including TV, printed media and radio (radio is particularly useful, as so many people listen) can be used to communicate effectively with the general public.

Other approaches to community involvement include media announcements, posters in public places and leaflets distributed in public. All channels can be used to reach the community, yet the more effective tools may be direct invitations delivered to each participant or family. Direct invitations provide better answers to the matters of interest for the participants, especially for CBE, where they will be expected to participate in longer sessions.

### **Tips!**

The invitations should provide the following minimum information to the participants: purpose of the event, location, time, length, programme and topics, the benefit to the person invited and what is expected from them.

## 8. Organisational issues and logistics

### 8.1. Ensuring proper facilities

The facilities chosen for the event will affect the behaviour of participants. It should be comfortable, allowing free movement of people and sufficient space between stations. It should provide adequate light, appropriate temperature and ventilation, and a sufficient number of restrooms for all participants.

#### Tips!

Make a plan of the venue and agree on the set-up with the institutional stakeholders, including the issues of safety and access. The plan can show each station, how many people can visit in what time periods and who is in charge of the session. Consider visual signs or banners to mark each station.

For indoor activities, consider sound and multi-media equipment and check the acoustics and visibility.

For outdoor activities, consider tents, sound equipment and make a back-up plan in case of rain or other adverse weather conditions.

Ensure facilities and access for people with disabilities, pregnant women, older people and children.

#### Size of the facility

For CBEs which include working in plenary with a large group of participants, the minimum indoor facility would be a large hall with sufficient capacity for 100 or more people, and a number of separate smaller rooms to provide for separate stations and workshops. The size of hall and number of rooms needed will depend on the activities planned (the number of simultaneous stations). If the space is not sufficient, exercise sessions with smaller groups can be held in a consecutive sequence, instead of in parallel.

#### Tips!

For indoor activities with large groups, check in advance how well the participants will be able to see the visual materials or presentations, and whether they will be able to hear the lead facilitator and each other. If several working groups or stations will take place at the same time, make sure that there is sufficient space between them.

Outdoor CBEs, consisting of separate stations, can be organised in parking lots, squares, parks, school yards and any other available space, where tents or shelters can be erected. An outdoor CBE can be delivered by several workshops and stations taking place at the same time, in different locations. Such arrangements give an opportunity for hundreds of visitors to participate in at least one station during the day of the exercise.

#### Tips!

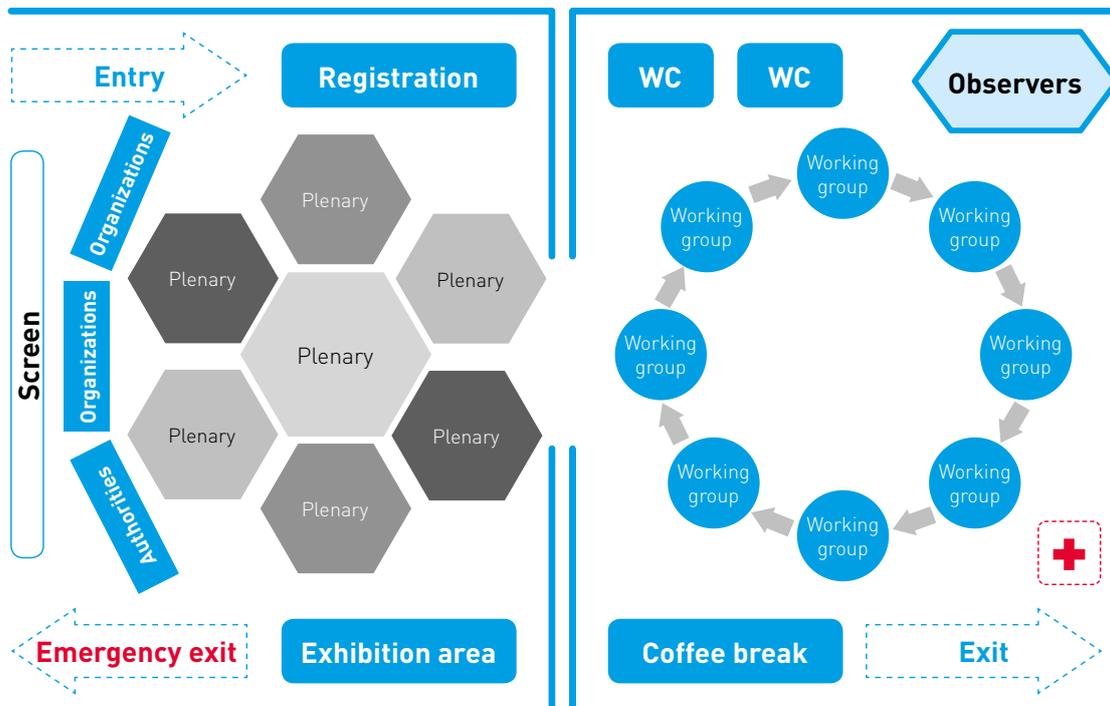
In outdoor exercises, participants may prefer to participate in physical activities and they are not likely to stay long in one place. Consider short, entertaining activities, without compromising the objectives and the overall logic of the CBE. Think of incentives such as takeaways and gifts for the more active participants, those who contributed the most or those who visited most stations.

Make a plan of the venue and agree on the set-up, safety and access issues with the institutional stakeholders. The plan can show where each session will take place, how many people and who is in charge of the session, timing and logistics. Think of visual materials related to the topic of each station (posters, banners, or a table sign, etc.) and mark the locations. Assign a special area for small children if needed.

The plan of the venue can be included in the information pack for the participants; it can be posted on the wall or printed on their invitations.

Markings, arrows and signs in the area can prove very useful to direct the movement of the participants.

### Example



## 8.2. Transportation

With regard to the attendance of citizens and participants in the CBE, especially for larger exercises in urban areas, make sure that the invitations include information about how to reach the venue, by public transport or by private vehicles. In order to avoid overcrowding and better security of vehicles during the course of the event, make adequate provision for designated parking areas. To direct the arriving participants, place posters at the entry to the venue, showing the location of the parking area, the welcome point and/or reception area. Certain exercises may include transportation of participants to a specific location if the venue is too far from the centre of activity.

## 8.3. Equipment and other items

According to the plan for the CBE, make a list and ensure, in advance, the provision of all necessary equipment and materials that are needed for the exercise – at each station and point. Consider reserve equipment in case of malfunction. It can be impossible for one organisation to secure all items needed for a CBE; the equipment and materials should be shared across institutional stakeholders. It is recommended to appoint a team to take care of the technical issues.

Make sure you agree, in advance, which co-operation partner will provide which materials and which equipment.

For indoor plenary sessions, the equipment will include multi-media projectors, laptops and sound equipment, preferably with a number of wireless microphones.

### Tips!

If the venue of the CBE is not structurally ideal for plenary events (for example sport halls with no or high windows), it could be difficult to achieve a proper balance of light: sufficiently dark for multi-media presentations and yet light enough for workshops. Very large halls with more than one hundred participants can make it difficult for everyone to see the screens. In such cases, several smaller screens can be used to cover different angles and groups of participants. The simplest way is to connect the laptop used for the presentation to two multi-media projectors, using a splitter and long multi-media cables.

Large halls can cause echoes that make it difficult to hear. If a better venue is not available, in such cases it is better to adjust the sound equipment by increasing treble, reducing the bass and keeping the volume as low as possible.

For outdoors events, the necessary facilities include **tents and shelters** and a place where participants can rest, **sound equipment, benches** and other items, including **toilets** (chemical, dry, or regular...).

Equipment and materials necessary for practical sessions include all possible items related to the purpose of the particular sessions, for example: **fire extinguishers, gas masks, First Aid kits, emergency kits, shovels, sandbags, mattresses** and any other items which will be required during the sessions of the exercise.

For workshop sessions, the minimum necessary items will include **flipcharts and flipchart paper**, different **colour markers, copy paper, pens or pencils, sticky paper, maps** or any other items needed for the purpose of each workshop. The optimal number of people in a workshop is approximately 10 to 12 people, so if there are a lot of working groups or stations walls or tables can be used to record and display information, instead of flipcharts. Packing paper can be an economical substitute for more expensive flipchart paper.

For the comfort of participants, anticipate their needs during their time at the CBE and plan well to meet those needs. Be rigorous in thinking about details, starting from **signs on walls and stations**, adequate **seats and chairs, drinking water** (coffee or tea) and **food** (snacks or lunch), **water for washing hands, soap and toilet paper**. Consider the needs of people with disabilities, older people and children, in accordance with their role in the CBE (separate workshops or together, special facilities or equipment required etc.).

### Tips!

A preliminary visit to the exercise venue will enable a proper assessment of resources available and the need to provide additional resources, such as sound, electronic equipment, areas for the different working groups, place for guests, sources of power supply, acoustics and lighting, number of available tables, chairs, flipcharts and more.

## 8.4. Information materials and giveaways

The development of information materials to be used both in the preparation and during the CBE should begin early and in close co-operation with the stakeholders involved. Specify, together with stakeholders, the formats, logos and emblems to be used and the use of existing materials; consider re-designing the materials that need to be changed and agree on the design of new materials to be made specifically for the CBE.

A variety of information materials have been provided to the participants in the CBEs conducted within the Aware and Resilient Project, and the most common included a family emergency plan, leaflets on preparedness for various types of emergencies, First Aid leaflets, emergency kits, etc. Many of those materials are used in particular CBE tools and listed in Part 3 of this Guide.

Giveaways in the form of simple gifts are often used to stimulate and show appreciation for participants' time and involvement in public exercises. In emergency exercises, giveaways are also a way to provide the participants with mementoes, which they will keep and which will remind them about the lessons learned in the exercise. Giveaways should be: useful (people will use and not throw away), inexpensive (large number of expected participants multiplies the costs), and related to the topic of the CBE (providing a memory of the experience).

Giveaways for the participants in the CBEs conducted within the Aware and Resilient Project included headlamps, small wind-up torches, simple First Aid kits, smoke detectors, t-shirts, USB sticks with information, leaflets and other goodies with organisers' or partners' logos...

## 8.5. Financial issues and resource mobilisation

A CBE requires significant resources, some of which can be obtained locally and in-kind, while others can only be acquired by spending money. Do not start technical preparations and do not initiate activities for community involvement before making sure that resources are available.

### Tips!

Do not initiate a CBE that requires too many financial resources. Firstly – expensive events discourage local community and stakeholders from continuing on their own. Secondly- extensive use of local resources builds local ownership and responsibility. Keep in mind that a CBE will not work without extensive contributions in kind, like venues, sponsored material and volunteer and staff dedication.

Equipment and some of the materials can be available already and can be shared among organisers, yet cash will be needed for some unavoidable costs: consumables, services and running costs, rent of the venue, transport or fuel for vehicles, refreshments for the participants and/or volunteers, maintenance, repairs and services as needed, in addition to all materials which it is necessary to prepare specifically for the planned CBE.

In order to know the sum that has to be secured, the budget for the exercise should be developed together with all stakeholders in the planning process. A general plan, which includes the resources to be used at all stations managed by each partner, can help to find the best use of available resources (vehicles, equipment and materials) and encourage sharing among partners. This can greatly reduce the financial cost of the CBE.

The elaborated budget will not be complete without the costs of the preparations for the CBE. These can include the costs of: site visits to the venue; communications between partners; meetings of the steering committee; training facilitators and volunteers; developing training materials and items needed for each CBE session; questionnaires; and evaluation forms.

The direct financial costs of the CBEs conducted within the Aware and Resilient Project varied from 2,500 to 6,000 Euros per exercise. The largest costs were for participants and, to a lesser extent, for the volunteers. They included mainly giveaways and materials for citizens, refreshments for participants and volunteers, technical equipment, transport, and, in some, rent for halls.

The costs and budget lines are different in each country and reflect both local cultures as well as the type of exercise being carried out (for example: in the CBEs in Bulgaria and Latvia, snack meals were provided to the participants by the organisers; in Austria they followed their traditional way of organising events where people are used to coming together e.g. in the festivities of the local fire brigade, and buying their food themselves at a reasonable price. Refreshments for participants were provided by the organisers of exercises where all participants were expected to participate together for a long time (Bulgaria, Latvia and France), compared to CBE models where participants visited the CBE site randomly and participated in different shorter sessions (Austria and Romania).

In-kind contributions of partners in the CBEs significantly exceeded the amount of cash expenditure and included transport, various equipment – from smaller tools to large fire trucks or high capacity pumps, materials for citizens, renovation of facilities and infrastructure (local and municipal authorities renovated the sports hall and repaired the street for the CBE), free venues, personnel costs covered by each organisation and vast amounts of volunteer work. For the CBE in Bulgaria, a private company also donated bottled drinking water for all participants. The biggest contribution in-kind in every case was the involvement of a great number of volunteers and paid staff in all of the CBEs.

## 8.6. Final preparations

- Visit the location, together with volunteers and supporters, on the day before or early on the day.<sup>5</sup>
- Test and check that each person knows his/her role, place and the agenda/timing according to the scenario.
- Check all materials and distribute them in the venue.
- Set up the stands and posters in their places.
- Clear the corridors and rest area.
- Check all technicalities (light, cleanliness, WC, location and set-up of space for coffee breaks, emergency exits, electricity, equipment – cables, projectors, microphones, etc.).
- Arrange volunteers or local hosts to meet participants and accompany them to the venue.
- Arrange personnel to welcome representatives from institutions and check, with them, the roles to be undertaken.
- Ensure a technical assistant is available to prepare multi-media equipment and gather presentations from institutional stakeholders ready for display.
- Remind all speakers and presenters to keep speeches short, to allow and seek comments and discussion.
- Check if commitments of institutional stakeholders (involvement of rescue teams in practical exercises – e.g. ambulance, fire brigade team, etc.) are confirmed and teams are ready.

### Tips!

Consider 'plan B'. Imagine that more community members join the event without being invited and wish, at least, to observe the CBE. It may not be possible to involve them in the planned exercise sessions.

## 9. Evaluation and follow-up

In some cases, informal feedback and anecdotal satisfaction from participants and stakeholders about an event can provide an early indication of whether the original objectives were met and whether the CBE was successful. However, it is important to evaluate the process and the results systematically because CBEs are events contributing to an important and longer-term objective of disaster risk reduction, with the need for organisations to learn and improve their work, and, where significant resources are contributed by stakeholders who require certain outcomes.

Evaluation should be fairly simple to administer and should be closely connected with the actual exercise activities. It should be balanced with the work required for the organisation and conduct of the actual exercise. An evaluation that is too demanding, takes significant time and effort, filling-in too many, too long and complicated questionnaires, can discourage the citizens and partners alike from active participation.

Two aspects are usually highlighted for an evaluation:

1. Evaluating the process of putting the exercise into place and its follow-up. Aspects that are relevant include:
  - Effectiveness: the extent to which the CBE was conducted as planned and achieved its purpose and objectives
  - Efficiency: the extent to which best use of resources was made to achieve the objectives.

Process evaluation is particularly relevant in cases where one or more organisations would like to implement CBEs in different regions and would like to optimise the process. The evaluation of these aspects also contributes to the greater learning and promotes networking, based on the clear benefits of effective partnerships. The evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of a successful CBE will show the positive impact of early involvement and good co-operation with relevant stakeholders, the benefits of sharing human and material resources among institutions and the contribution of the community itself.

2. Evaluating the outcomes of the exercise:
    - Relevance and usefulness of the exercise: the extent to which the exercise corresponds to the needs of the target groups and manages to cover these needs. In terms of results, this is where the process of learning is evaluated and the improved level of preparedness is measured – both for citizens and responders. The key points to evaluate include what:
      - a. people have learned about the risks and their own vulnerabilities
      - b. they learned about their own community and environment and about the surrounding environment (responder services and responsible institutions and the assistance they are able to provide)
      - c. they have learned to prevent and reduce these risks
      - d. solutions did they find for themselves and their relatives
      - e. practical skills they have gained to help themselves, their relatives, neighbours and other members of their community.
    - Potential sustainability: the extent to which the CBE has triggered a process of thinking, willingness and intent of participants to take the next step for their preparedness – individually and collectively in the community. Sustainability also applies to the willingness of partnering organisations to continue further emergency preparedness activities together and to improve and use the methodology.
    - Potential impact: the extent to which the CBE has contributed: in the longer term to: the emergency preparedness of citizens, better cohesion within the community and with responding organisations, and has contributed to disaster risk reduction.
-

For an evaluation of a CBE, several methods can be used: questionnaires, focus groups or evaluation exercises built into the event's activities.

As mentioned in earlier paragraphs, there are many different groups of people involved at different stages of organising and delivering a CBE. It is important to consider their perspectives in the evaluation and choose the evaluation tools accordingly. Target groups can include: the participants of the event belonging to the population in general; the volunteers and staff members involved in delivering the event; the organisations participating in planning for and delivering the event; and the observers who can contribute an outside perspective. All target groups can be involved in eliciting outcomes and process factors for the evaluation. Volunteers and co-organisers may contribute more to identifying details of the process and participants' attitudes and knowledge will be a key to evaluating the outcomes of the event.

Several indicators can be used to validate the conclusions of the analysis, such as: the level of satisfaction of participants, the number of participants attending the exercise, the length of their stay and participation, the number of stations visited, their findings on their risks and learning about their own community and external stakeholders, their recommendations on the content and format of the exercise. Since the CBE aims to improve the preparedness of the population in case of an actual emergency, it is also relevant to know whether participants in the CBE intend to implement, subsequently, any of the lessons learned. If possible, it can be useful to collect some information on participants' behaviour at a later stage or offer some follow-up activities.

### **Tips!**

Make sure your evaluation tools fit the different target groups involved: observers, participants, other stakeholders, in terms of length and language. They should be as simple as possible, but allow you to measure the impact of your event and to improve the delivery of future events.

Consider the amount of time needed to fill in questionnaires. Additionally, symbols or 'happy sheets' may be used, for example smiley faces, to evaluate the level of satisfaction in a group.

If this is a pilot CBE, it is worthwhile to evaluate the results, processes, resources needed and obtained, and the response of partners and public, in order to adjust the methodology and to improve the organisation of further CBEs.

To measure whether the event contributes to raising awareness and improving the knowledge of the participants on emergency preparedness, a short questionnaire with six questions was developed within the Aware and Resilient Project. Similar questions were asked before and after the event, to measure how participants' opinions and attitudes changed.

For example, in the Austrian exercise, several evaluation methods were used for different target groups. The participants were asked to fill in a short questionnaire before and after the event, containing questions on their knowledge of different emergency preparedness measures. Those participants who handed in the completed questionnaire received a small First Aid pack. Observers from the Aware and Resilient partner countries attended the event and visited all modules. They filled in a questionnaire containing open and closed questions on process and outcomes of the event. This represented the points of view of Red Cross representatives as well as representatives of civil protection authorities and organisations from other countries. Finally, a three-hour debriefing meeting with all the stakeholders involved in running the exercise was held to collate the strengths and weaknesses of the Austrian CBE.

Similar methods, with small variations, were employed for each of the five CBEs delivered within the Aware and Resilient Project. For instance, in the Bulgarian CBE, one more questionnaire was used to collect the feedback of the organisers: Red Cross staff, volunteers and partner institutions who participated in the exercise, in addition to the debriefing sessions.

## Part 3 – Tools and methods (tool-kit)

### 10. Introduction to the tool-kit

The purpose of Part 3 of the CBE guide is to provide ideas on some tools and sessions that may be used in a CBE, based on the experiences from the Aware and Resilient Project.

As an organiser, ideally you should take into consideration the specifics of the target community and the institutional stakeholders who will become your partners in the organisation and conduct of the exercise; designing your own tools corresponding to the needs of the community, the capacity and expertise of the organisers and ultimately, to the resources available.

The tools are described briefly below. More detailed descriptions, guidelines and supporting documents can be found in the website of the Aware and Resilient Project: [www.ar-project.eu](http://www.ar-project.eu)

### 11. Opening of the CBE

Keep it short. Try to make the opening as informal as possible. Show the importance of emergency preparedness, but avoid frightening messages or images. Be positive and request active participation from everybody. Encourage people to enjoy their time together. Brief the speakers well, in advance of the exercise.

In Austria for example, to avoid long individual speeches, interviews were conducted with the senior representatives from the participating organisations. Questions concerned the perspective of the representative's organisation, but also their personal preparedness.

### 12. Setting the context

- Display a collection of images from past emergencies, especially if there are photos available from the same community, or of other emergencies relevant to the target community. The message is that emergencies are real; they happen; and they can affect anybody, anywhere, anytime. Their impact can be limited, not only by the involvement of responders when emergency strikes, but also by the way people behave before and when it happens.
- Story-telling can be also used by inviting community members, who have experienced such events, to talk about their experience and how the community coped with the situation. A historical profile<sup>6</sup> of the community can be made before or during the CBE to present the emergency history of the community, together with risk mapping. Such sessions, where citizens talk about their community, provide useful information while also stimulating the active participation of citizens.
- The questionnaires<sup>7</sup> distributed to participants before the CBE, set the focus on emergency preparedness and raise some key issues to be explored further in the exercise.

### 13. Vulnerability and capacity assessment

- **Community Map:** sessions of 20 minutes, where community members (up to 15 persons) draw the boundaries of their community and the most important places in it on a flipchart. Gently facilitated, discussion can be focused into areas where community members gather and areas most appropriate for evacuation, critical infrastructure, and highlighting physical objects causing risks, in addition to

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6 See Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment: [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

7 See Part 9 Evaluation and Follow-up

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the facilities that can be used. Used for breaking the ice and as a starting point, the ideas can be transformed into a risk map.

- Risk Map:** sessions of 30 minutes, where community members (up to 15 persons) draw the boundaries of their community and the areas of risk on a flipchart. Particular focus is on real experiences and situations. This approach provides a lot of information, including daily accidents and areas where the local authorities should concentrate their attention. A facilitated discussion is initiated about areas with increased risks. The method is used as a source of information, for raising awareness and as a basis for further analysis of measures and capacities to reduce and prevent the risks. This map can also show which areas should be avoided in particular situations.
- Community profile:** sessions of 30 minutes, where community members (up to 20 persons) describe themselves, their status, occupation and skills. Can be presented as a list or in another creative way. The result serves to identify the most vulnerable people in a community – older, disabled, children, single headed family, unemployed, etc., – who may need special assistance in emergencies, and capabilities and capacities – those persons with particular skills or specialist tools and equipment. The exercise provides useful contact information and helps to guide further sessions into exploring more capacities within the community for coping with emergencies.



## 14. Risk awareness raising and disaster preparedness

- “Introduction to risk reduction”:** A one-hour facilitated exercise for small groups of community members (up to ten persons). The objective is to develop a responsible attitude in the participants, envisaging undertaking relevant actions to prepare most effectively for an individual or larger emergency. The aim of the facilitation is to encourage participants to find a series of elements needed for risk reduction and to verify those elements with the experts. Guided discussion starts with finding a common definition of a disaster, elaboration on disasters and identifying risks; followed by discussions on how to reduce risks including warning and information services, family contingency plans, basic First Aid, five fundamental needs to survive in a disaster (healing, protecting, signalling to rescue services, drinking, eating); and actions to minimise the disaster’s economic impact. The exercise is based on two simple tools, the family disaster plan and disaster kit (made by the French Red Cross), used during the discussions, to support and strengthen the conclusions of participants and for use as model tools in the future.
- “What if tomorrow...”:** A one-hour facilitated group work session, where community members (up to 60 persons on six to eight tables, each corresponding to a particular group of local stakeholders) are placed within a simulated situation of urban flooding. The purpose is to increase the awareness of the citizens of the major risks, with each playing the role of an institutional stakeholder and discussing the existing means to minimise consequences. The scenario is presented in a slideshow covering a three-phase development of a disaster situation: (1) immediate, (2) one day later – further worsening and (3) recovery, three weeks later. Participants in groups play the role of different stakeholders, such as city hall, school teachers, fire officers, medical teams, Red Cross volunteers, directors of utility companies. After each phase they discuss and answer the question “what they will do in the given circumstances?” Expert stakeholders provide feedback on the participants’ answers and clarify how the response system works. Discussion, conclusions and closure follow.



- **“Get through this!”**<sup>8</sup>: From one to 3 hours round-table discussion in four groups with four to ten citizens and experts from key institutions in each group, accompanied by follow-up discussions in plenary. Key institutions include fire and rescue services, state and municipal police, emergency medical services, municipal operational information centre. A three-phase deteriorating scenario of a complex emergency is elaborated on by the groups (fire in a large building combined with rise of river waters preventing the evacuation). The topics covered by each group include discussion on emergencies in high-risk buildings, emergency action plans for services and public and actions to take as the situation deteriorates. The purpose is to raise the awareness of participants on existing and potential risks for citizens and the importance of preparedness, to develop their knowledge on how to respond to the risks and practice emergency drills with the participation of all stakeholders.


- **“Are you ready?”**<sup>9</sup>: a one-hour facilitated group work session, where community members (up to 60 persons, on different tables) are placed in the context of critical situations. The purpose is to increase the awareness of the public on risks and emergencies in the local rural context and to discuss how the community copes with a typical local emergency, followed by a simulated large-scale disaster. The scenario is presented in a slideshow covering two critical situations, from severe winter with full breakdown of most services to a second scenario of an earthquake. Participants in groups, together with stakeholders (municipality, civil protection teams, emergency ambulance service, 112 dispatch service, Red Cross volunteers) discuss elements of disaster response and how they will manage in each of the two situations, considering the different nature of risks and coping mechanisms. Group distribution by topics: search and rescue (protection), information and communication, humanitarian aid, medical assistance, First Aid and psychosocial support. Feedback, discussion and closure follow.


- **Worst Case Hero**<sup>10</sup>: online game with three scenarios (power outage, flooding and pandemic flu), where in a limited time, players have to choose the most appropriate actions and items needed to prepare and survive in each of those situations. Players are awarded points for good solutions and can compete with friends over social networks. Within a CBE, points can be collected on flipchart or pin-board as a “wall of fame” and, for example, the three with the highest points win.


- **Prepare yourself**<sup>11</sup>: series of videos with a mime (produced by the French Red Cross) covering response to different emergency situations, basic instructions on First Aid and instructions how to prepare for emergencies at home, including information about warning signals, how to make a disaster kit and instructions for the family. Especially good for children. Can be used as a basis for follow-up discussion sessions with children, families, teachers and various other groups.



8 Variation of “What if tomorrow...” exercise

9 Variation of “What if tomorrow...” exercise

10 <http://www.ar-project.eu/en/play/worst-case-hero>

11 <http://www.preparezvous.eu>

## 15. Helping others

- First Psychological Aid / Psychosocial support:** a 30 minutes facilitated group session, implemented as part of an emergency simulation exercise, where community members (up to ten persons) analyse the given emergency scenario, discuss the findings from the perspective of psychological stress and needs and develop quick solutions. Trained volunteers display some of the basic techniques for calming and reassuring a person (a child) in stress or in physical pain.
 
- Psychological First Aid:** a 45 minutes to one hour seminar with a short input on what psychosocial support/psychological first aid is, followed by an interactive session, using cards to elicit what situations can be where people would need psychosocial support and the main 'do's and don'ts'. Sessions should be delivered by staff or volunteers who are trained in psychosocial support.
 
- First Aid Sessions:** In the CBEs, First Aid Trainers ran the First Aid sessions. The basic pillars of First Aid were introduced in an interactive way. One approach was to have volunteers demonstrate First Aid methods on mannequins (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) in particular), or on each other (bandages, stopping bleeding, etc.). Another approach was to have participants (especially children and youth) try out the methods on each other.
 

## 16. Physical exercises and games

- Sand-shovelling competition:** This is an open outdoor activity that takes two to three minutes per person. An ideal sandbag is weighed at the beginning of the session (or beforehand). Participants are asked to shovel sand into the bag and this is then weighed. The weight of each bag is recorded and the participant coming closest to the weight of the 'ideal' sandbag wins.
 
- Stockpiling competition:** A variety (30-40) food items are put onto one table. These should be a mixture of those that can be stored well and are nutritious and those that do not keep or are not healthy. One participant at a time is asked to put as many useful items as they can onto a table that is a few metres away in 60 seconds. The second table should be far enough away that people have to run back and forth. When the time is up, points are awarded for all items on the second table that are healthy and can be stored well. The points can be shown on a 'wall of fame'. (pin board or flipchart) and the participants with highest scores can receive a prize.
 
- 'Grab-and-go' bag packing:** Several items, approximately 25, some useful for an evacuation, others that are not, are put onto a table or another surface. One participant at a time has 90 seconds to pack a 'grab and go' bag. At the end of this, each useful item scores 20 points. Points are added and can be recorded or shown on a 'wall of fame'. Those with the highest scores receive a prize.
 
- One-flame cooking:** This is a good outdoor activity that demonstrates how to cook tasty and nutritious food easily by using a barbecue or a gas stove. Participants like finding out about these new ways of cooking and enjoy tasting the results.
 

- **Fire-fighting exercises:** Exercises involving and encouraging citizens to extinguish fire using fire extinguishers. Those can be run in a competitive format: following an instructive demonstration from fire brigades, pairs of citizens (perhaps a man with a woman) compete by running a 100 metres distance, carrying between them an air pressurised water extinguisher. The task is to aim the extinguisher at special targets such as empty water containers. The pair that is first to fill the container with water wins and gets a prize.



## 17. Demonstrations and simulations

Earthquake – search and rescue, First Aid



Flooding – search and rescue, shelter, First Aid

This Community-based Emergency Preparedness Exercise (CBE) Guide has been developed in the frame of the [Aware and Resilient project](#), funded by the EU Civil Protection Financial Instrument. It highlights an innovative event format that aims to raise awareness of citizens for disaster preparedness and link local actors to strengthen resilience. The main elements of these exercises are described, highlighting examples from the five exercises piloted within the project in Austria, Bulgaria, France, Latvia and Romania.

More information on the Aware & Resilient project and its results can be found under:

[www.ar-project.eu](http://www.ar-project.eu).



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