

Section E3

Social sector dynamics



Objectives

- Define the following concepts in the context of mitigation and reconstruction.
 - ❖ Social Policy
 - ❖ Resilience
 - ❖ Social Capital
 - ❖ Social impact assessment
 - ❖ Benefits of gender analysis
 - ❖ Social Vulnerability
- Discuss the social sector dynamics of mitigation, recovery and reconstruction
- Discuss the social dimensions of risk management
- Discuss the social sector dimension of vulnerability reduction



What is social policy?

Social Policy is a collection of interventions directly affecting transformation in social welfare, social institutions and social relations. It involves overall and prior concerns with social development and as a key instrument, it works in tandem with economic policy, to ensure equitable and socially sustainable development.

What is resilience?

Resilience speaks to the ability of an individual, household, community or eco-system to withstand external shocks. From a social perspective, this ability may be based on the entitlement, enfranchisement, empowerment and or capabilities of the individual, household or community.

What is social capital?

Social capital has been defined as networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups.

The notion of social capital suggests that there is value in “social energy”, in the form of friendship, shared ideals and ideas that transcend rational self-interest and market transaction and promote social co-operation. It has been suggested that whatever the motivation for co-operating and trusting, investment in individual and group identity can lead to the creation of dense social networks and ultimately better economic and social outcomes. In this way, civic engagement, honesty and social trust can reinforce each other.



Social sector dynamics of mitigation and reconstruction

Social factors which affect positively or negatively the mitigation and reconstruction process:

- The degree and extent of poverty in the country;
- Geographic location of population in regard to risk brought on by natural disasters;
- Population structure and features of internal and external migration;
- Household size and structure;
- Health status of the affected community;
- Land tenure of affected population;
- The extent of reliance on public services of the social groups affected;
- Level of education – and extent of functional literacy;
- Access to public information (safety, disaster mitigation and prevention, health, risk reduction);
- Degree of resilience of Affected Population – skills, resourcefulness;
- Mitigation of social impacts and equitable distribution of benefits and costs;
- Gender differentials; and
- Government expenditure in the social sectors, immediate, short term and long term.

Social dimensions of risk management

- Capacity for social mobilisation;
- Access to public information;
- Educational levels or knowledge base of the community;
- Extent of social cohesion;
- Strength of social capital formation;
- Trust of authority; and
- Credibility of national/community leaders



Function of a Social Impact Assessment

To obtain and analyze the necessary information about community organization and likely responses to changing conditions.

To determine how those initiating an action or policy can design such action so as to cause the least adverse and most beneficial impact to the particular community or beneficiaries.

A Social Impact Assessment (SIA) can be crucial in determining:

- what mitigation is necessary;
- what mitigation alternatives exist; and
- which mitigation strategies are most likely to work

Accurate assessments of impacts which pay attention to gendered differentials must be based on sound pre-existing socio-demographic data.

Benefits of gender analysis

- Better targeting of resources to reach people in greatest need
- More accurate service provision/ meet actual needs with far-reaching impact
- Decrease vulnerability to future disasters
- Prevent or mitigate negative impacts of “second generation” disasters, e.g. family violence



Dimensions and causes of women's vulnerability to natural disasters

- Poverty
- Female household headship
- Women carry great economic burdens flowing from their reproductive roles and often discharge these responsibilities with smaller incomes

Significant percentage of female-headed households in the Caribbean

These heads typically are:

- Paid less than their male counterparts
- Have larger households, comprised of children and the elderly

Differential Impacts

Differential impact refers to the different findings which are observed when individuals or groups of individuals with similar or different characteristics experience the same phenomenon.

Examples of gender differentials are:

- Women are slower to return to formal labour market than men
- Losses in informal sector in which many women are engaged are harder to quantify than formal sector which engages more men
- Men engaged in construction and rehabilitation projects more readily than women
- Short term income opportunities often times more available to men
- Gender differentiated workload in rehabilitation phases



Poverty & Vulnerability

The data from the region indicates that some 38 per cent of the population in the Caribbean live below the poverty line. The capacity to survive and recover from the effects of a natural disaster is the result of two factors:

- the physical magnitude of the disaster in a given area;
- the socioeconomic conditions of individuals or social groups in that area.

Differential vulnerabilities

- Each social group's degree of vulnerability to a natural disaster is different. (See slides)

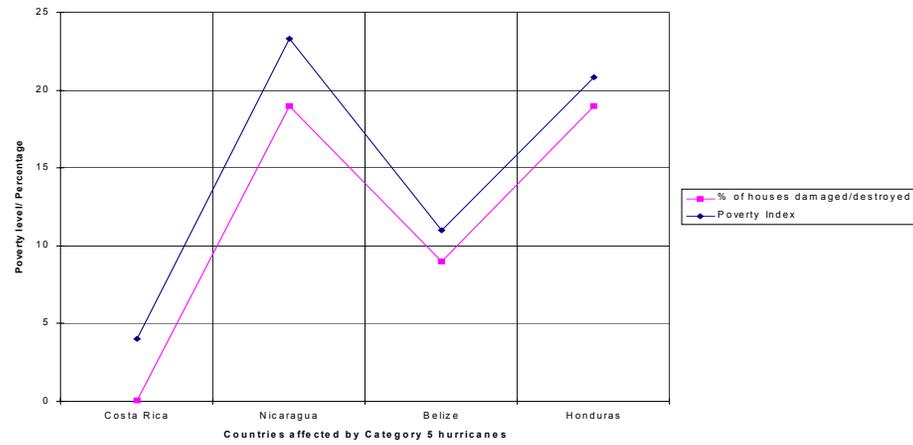
Vulnerability, Reduction, Resilience, Mitigation and Reconstruction

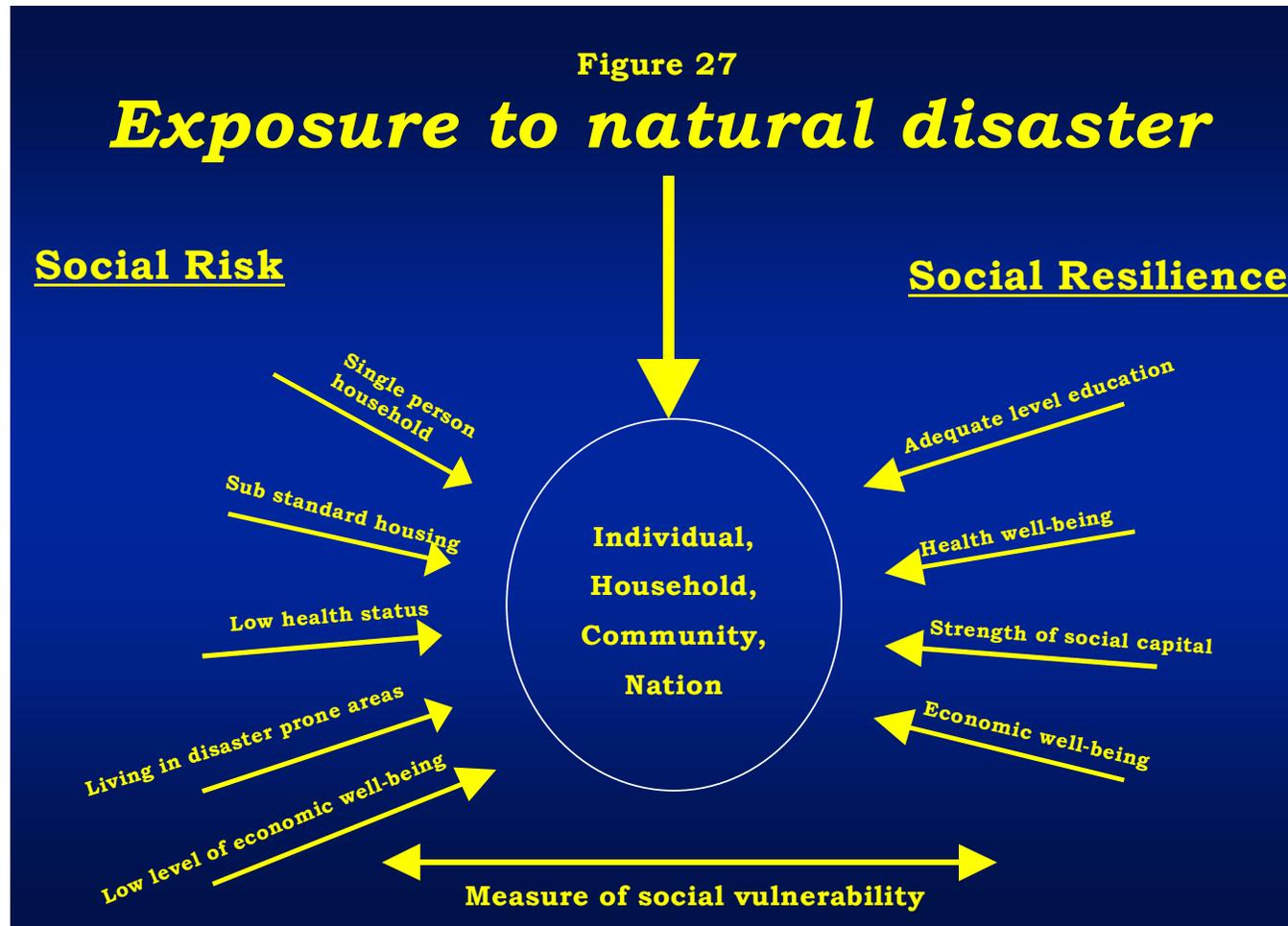
Social sector recovery & mitigation seeks to put measures in place which reduce vulnerability



Chart 13
*Hurricane Mitch 1998 and
Hurricane Keith 2000*

Relationship between poverty and the percentage of houses damaged or destroyed





Social policy issues in mitigation and reconstruction

Social policy, while being particularly concerned with the most disadvantaged sections of the society, has the broader objective of constructing societies with greater social cohesion, equity and confidence in the future.

- Sustainable livelihoods;
- Job creation;
- Human Resource Development – education, training and health;
- Adequate housing – e.g. through self help programmes;
- Social capital formation – through programmes which enhance, identity, gender equality, social equity respect for human, cultural, economic and political rights; good governance – transparency, accountability, participation;
- Health and well-being; and
- Access to quality education.



Social Priorities

Projects for recovery and mitigation

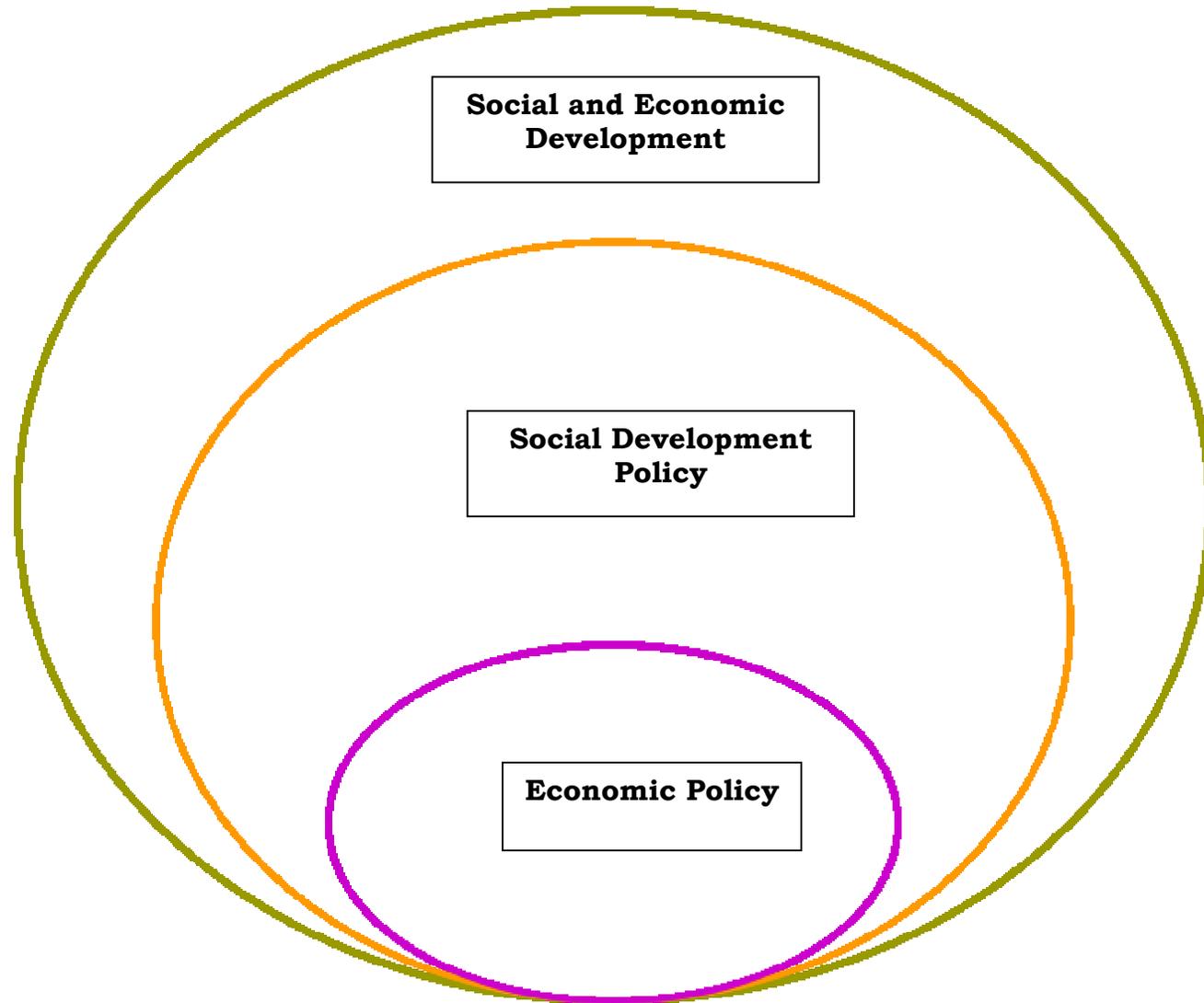
- Education;
- Community development;
- Additional housing facilities or human settlement development;
- Poverty reduction;
- Basic health needs;
- Micro enterprise development; and
- Sustainable livelihood.

Projects for Recovery & Mitigation

- Relocation - the creation of human settlements;
- Retro fitting of housing stock/health/ education facilities;
- Public education;
- Health education; and
- Sustainable livelihood.



Figure 28: Social Development



Exercise:

- (a) Pick a community using the case study provided;
- (b) Analyse the differential vulnerabilities and resilience of the community in the face of the natural disaster;
- (c) Make recommendations for mitigation and reconstruction; and
- (d) Present your report in plenary

Self-assessment

By now you should be conversant with the concepts of social policy, resilience and social capital and their uses in the context of mitigation and reconstruction. Try to verbalise the concepts describing all that they entail. If you believe that you are not too clear on the different facets of the concepts, return to the relevant concept and read it again. If you are still unsure, seek help.

How would you describe the resilience which people possess in the face of natural disaster damage?

How can you gather information about the degree of resilience of a particular community?

