Lessons learned and best practices

Project: “Generating capacities for disaster risk reduction and strengthening humanitarian response with communities in Baja Verapaz, Alta Verapaz and Petén, Guatemala.”

Financed by:
The following pages share lessons learned and best practices from the project „Generating capacities for disaster risk reduction and strengthening humanitarian response with communities in Baja Verapaz, Alta Verapaz and Petén, Guatemala“, implemented from 2017 to 2019.

The project was carried out thanks to the efforts of the technical team of the Association of Community Health Services (ASECSA), with the support of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe. The project was co-financed by the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany (Auswärtiges Amt, AA) and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe.

The contribution made by the 10 participating communities of the municipalities of Rabinal, Cubulco and El Chol in the department of Baja Verapaz is recognized and appreciated; specifically, from the 4 communities of the municipality of Chisec in Alta Verapaz and 3 communities of the municipality of Sayaxché in Petén. The acknowledgement is also extended to the Municipalities and the National Coordination for Disaster Reduction (CONRED).
### Abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Auswärtiges Amt (Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany)</td>
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<td>ASECSA</td>
<td>Asociación de Servicios Comunitarios de Salud (Community Health Services Association)</td>
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<td>CAP</td>
<td>Community Action Plan</td>
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<td>CBDRRM</td>
<td>Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction &amp; Management</td>
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<td>CODRED</td>
<td>Coordinadora Departamental de Reducción de Desastres (Departmental Coordination for Disaster Reduction)</td>
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<td>COLRED</td>
<td>Coordinadora Local de Reducción de Desastres (Traditional &amp; Ancestral Coordination for Disaster Reduction)</td>
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<td>COMRED</td>
<td>Coordinadora Municipal de Reducción de Desastres (Municipal Coordination for Disaster Reduction)</td>
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<td>CONRED</td>
<td>Coordinadora Nacional de Reducción de Desastres (National Coordination for Disaster Reduction)</td>
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<td>CORRED</td>
<td>Coordinadora Regional de Reducción de Desastres (Regional Coordination for Disaster Reduction)</td>
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<td>DRRM</td>
<td>Disaster Risk Reduction &amp; Management</td>
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<td>EPRP</td>
<td>Emergency Preparedness &amp; Response Plan</td>
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<td>EWS</td>
<td>Early Warning System</td>
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<td>LRP</td>
<td>Local Response Plan</td>
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<td>MP</td>
<td>Microprojects</td>
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<td>RA</td>
<td>Risk Analysis</td>
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<td>RMMO</td>
<td>Risk Management Municipal Office</td>
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<td>SFA</td>
<td>Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (Sendai Framework for Action)</td>
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<td>UN SDGs</td>
<td>United Nations Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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### Manuals produced by the project

The following 5 manuals have been developed by the project in Guatemalan Spanish.

2. Community Action Plan Manual: Guía para elaborar y monitorear el plan de acción comunitaria para reducir los riesgos a desastres y estar mejor preparados
3. Local Response Planning Manual: ¿Cómo hacer nuestro plan local de respuesta?
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A. Introduction

A.1. Description of the document

The „Lessons Learned and Best Practices“ document is part of a collection of „Conceptual Documents“ that ASECSA, with support from Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, have been developing. This is part of a continuation of activities aimed at contributing to the Sendai Framework for Action (SFA) agreed upon in Japan in 2015. The document takes up and complements the experiences from „Generating capacities for disaster risk reduction and strengthening humanitarian response with communities in Baja Verapaz, Alta Verapaz and Petén, Guatemala“ (project developed with Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and Caritas, and co-financed by the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany). The SFA sets out 4 priorities that serve as a reference to analyze the lessons learned and best practices presented in Section C of this publication. Similarly, the project contributes to the measurement of 3 objectives, 5 targets and 7 indicators of the 2030 agenda for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs).

The document is divided into four sections: Section A. INTRODUCTION, which provides information regarding the project, including: location, implementation period and the general conclusions from the evaluation of the project. Section B. CASE STUDIES, shares a summary of 5 case studies and their respective success stories developed during the implementation of the project. Each case presents different experiences related to: preparedness for evacuation from possible floods, mobilization of resources in the form of microprojects, advocacy activities including for the relocation of a community at high risk, emergency funds to increase resilience before a drought and example of institutional response to an emergency (specifically, volcanic eruption). Section C. LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES, learned from implementation of the project presented according to the 4 priorities of the SFA. Finally, Section D. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE & SDGs, which analyzes the project’s contribution toward improving community resilience and the United Nations’ SDGs.

A.2. Project information

The project „Generating capacities for disaster risk reduction and strengthening humanitarian response capacity with communities in Baja Verapaz, Alta Verapaz and Petén, Guatemala.“ Ref: K GTM 2017 9008 (REF AA: S09 GTM 01/17) was conducted during the period of 01.12.2017 to 31.12.2019. The project was implemented by the technical team of the Association of Community Health Services (ASECSA) together with the support and co-financing of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany (AA).
The objectives and sub-objectives of the project are summarized below:

- **Project objective**: 17 communities in Baja Verapaz, Alta Verapaz and Peten (Guatemala) have been prepared / trained to react adequately in case of a disaster and to provide humanitarian relief.

- **Sub-objective 1**: Communities and ASECSA have the capacity and sustainable mechanisms for the management and humanitarian response to emergencies at the right time and in the most effective manner.

For this sub-objective, ASECSA, with technical support from Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, adopted a strategy called „Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction & Management (CBDRRM)“ which includes the following 4 elements:

- Disaster risk analysis
- Planning to reduce risk and to be better prepared
- Organization (strengthen committees and rescue teams)
- Implementation and monitoring
CBDRRM is a process which the communities engage in. In the initial phase of this project an external organization, in this case ASECSA, facilitated the accompaniment and supported 17 communities to build their own process and to establish the four elements of CBDRRM.

The CBDRRM model is represented in Figure 2 by a car / automobile where 4 wheels represent each of the 4 elements mentioned, and it is the community behind the wheel driving the car.

Within the strategy we enable ‘resilience’ by applying 4 principles to the process of community resilience building:

- **Participation of all to demand their rights**: Participation in the identification of risks and vulnerabilities in order to generate greater awareness and understanding of the existing risks, and to thereby go about reducing such risks.

- **Collaboration for solidarity**: The identification of the most vulnerable and high-risk persons enables communities to identify appropriate actions to reduce risks. This improves the well-being of the most affected individuals and improves the well-being of the wider community.

- **Local capacity for empowerment**: This helps to determine the role of the community and organizational structures in a process of equipping the community, and local level, with the tools needed in case of a disaster. This approach uses the existing capacity in the community to develop and fulfill the process of reducing risks and strengthening capacities of humanitarian assistance networks.

- **Developing self-sufficiency towards sustainability**: The community equipped with increased capacity to monitor its own risks.

For a better understanding of risk analysis, communities, with the accompaniment of ASECSA, have jointly developed a Methodological Manual of Disaster Risk Analysis from the Community which focuses on the following 5 steps:

- Step 1: Main ideas of risk analysis (concepts)
- Step 2: Identify the hazards or threats to the community
- Step 3: Prioritization of hazards or threats and identification of vulnerabilities
- Step 4: Vulnerability analysis and planning based on available capacities of internal and external actors
- Step 5: Monitoring of vulnerability and the risk of disaster for the community
Sub-objective 2: Community structures (COLRED) will coordinate with each other and efficiently use methodological tools to mobilize and generate resources, ensuring the implementation of CBDRRM and humanitarian measures by government actors.

This sub-objective can be better visualized by understanding the tiered organization of CONRED at the central or national level, CORRED at the regional level, CODRED at the departmental level, COMRED at the municipal level and COLRED at the community level, respectively. The final, and most local level at the community, COLRED, is specifically referred to by sub-objective 2 of the project.
Sub-objective 3: ASECSA and community organizations will be able to articulate, negotiate and influence the formulation and implementation of humanitarian and CBDRRM public policies at the municipal, departmental and national levels.

Through the project, the communities worked to develop an inter-community advocacy approach focused on the municipal level. These actions have been realized through lobby meetings, negotiation with local authorities and an initiative to establish municipal platforms for CBDRRM. See case study B.3, Advocacy for the relocation of a community at risk: community leaders affect the management of community relocation – Carreché Sechina, Chisec & Alta Verapaz – August 2019.

Sub-objective 4: Communities and ASECSA establish and use systems and mechanisms for generating, managing, documenting and disseminating knowledge and learning on CBDRRM.

From their experience and lessons learned with communities in the CBDRRM process, ASECSA generated methodological documents and tools to be disseminated to other communities, local authorities and municipal, national and regional organizations (See Figure 3, Figure 4, Figure 5, and the list of five Manuals produced by the project).

A.3. Risk scenarios

In the departments selected for this project climate events such as hurricanes, floods, forest fires and droughts have been significantly and increasingly deteriorating agricultural production, ecosystems and the overall chance of survival of communities. Many of these communities are already at high risk but were not yet covered by the National Coordination for Disaster Reduction (CONRED).

According to FAO data, the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomenon is one of the main sources of climate variability directly associated with the occurrence of droughts, creating a region known as „The Dry Corridor“ in areas affected by the phenomenon. The dry corridor of Guatemala includes 3,236 villages in eight departments where an estimated 1,250,000 people live (11% of Guatemala’s population).

Department of Baja Verapaz (10 communities within the Municipalities of Rabinal, Cubulco and Chol)

In recent years, droughts have generated serious crop losses, mainly from basic and staple global grains and particularly in the dry corridor of Guatemala. These droughts are also correlated with the occurrence of forest fires, soil erosion, deforestation, and the depletion of aquifer and water sources.

The vulnerability within the communities of these areas is high mainly due to 3 interrelated factors: 1. the absence or weak formulation of management plans and non-binding legal frameworks for existing problems in DRRM; 2. the absence of sufficient systems to collect, monitor, interpret and communicate data for adequate decision-making on how to address existing risks; and 3. limited capacity of local authorities and institutions with responsibility for addressing DRRM issues and weak linkages within the work of institutions.
Alta Verapaz Department (4 communities, municipality of Chisec)

The level of risk for the department of Alta Verapaz is estimated to be critical. This was defined after determining the relationship between socio-environmental threats and vulnerability by understanding which basic services are or are not available. The level of integrated threat in Alta Verapaz is very high while the main individual threats are those related to socio-environmental (forest fires, soil erosion, deforestation, aquifer depletion, water sources and river drying) and anthropic (solid and liquid waste pollution) factors. Constant rains and saturation of the soil cause the Chixoy and San Simón rivers to overflow, causing flooding in other municipalities like Chisec. After establishing the relationship of hydro-meteorological threats (hurricanes, tropical storms, floods and droughts) with their effects (destruction of roads, electrical power distribution networks, water systems, educational services, health services and communication pathways), the department of Alta Verapaz is estimated to exist at a critical level of risk.

Department of Petén (3 communities within the Municipality of Sayaxché)

The department of Petén is affected annually by climatic events such as Storm Earl in August 2016 which caused flooding affecting 712 families. The same storm affected 1,115 hectares of crops (770 ha of maize, 210 ha of beans and 135 ha of pepitoria, or squash/pumpkin), while also causing the death of numerous cattle, pigs and poultry.

Overflowing of the rivers Salinas, La Pasión and Usumacinta have also significantly impacted low-lying human populations located around these rivers and those running through the southwestern part of Petén department.

In the dry season, increased shortage of rains in more recent years has led to the loss of large areas of cultivation, especially those areas devoted to the cultivation of maize and beans (approx. 2,638 hectares). These losses have significantly affected the national economy as such regions compose 62% of the total maize production nationally. In the instance of wildfires, 15,462 hectares were negatively affected in the department of Petén in 2016 and an additional 66,245 ha were affected the following year.

Figure 7: The perspective of food insecurity following drought of 2019/20
(Source: FEWS NET Food Safety Outlook, October 2019 to May 2020)

Figure 8: Map of tropical cyclones affecting Guatemala directly and indirectly for the period 1950-2014
(Source: INSIVUMEH 2015)
Common aspects of the intervention area
The populations of this project belong mostly to the Achi and Q’eqchi’ indigenous groups, both of which have limited access to basic health and mainstream education services. The roads leading to these communities are mostly locally made, unpaved routes, making the costs of moving to and from the nearest urban centers very high. The population in these areas depend mostly on subsistence agriculture, although where possible, surpluses are sold in local or other markets.

These communities are also located in places tending to lead to the permanent accumulation of risks as a result of climate variability and uncertainty. Heavy rains in these areas inundate planted seeds, crops and man-made structures. The risk of falling rocks and debris in these mountainous regions of Guatemala increases during the rainy season, particularly for the community of Carreché, Sechina. Heavy rains and droughts cause the loss of human life, damage to homes, loss of crops and animals, scarcity of water for human consumption and forest fires. Consequential effects include decreased agricultural production, damage to flora and fauna, food insecurity and malnutrition and an overall deterioration of living conditions for most vulnerable groups.

A.4. Conclusions of the project evaluation

The conclusions of the project evaluation are presented below. For the methodology applied in the evaluation, see Annex 1: Evaluation methodology.

✓ The achievement of the project objective and sub-objectives were confirmed. It was however necessary to adjust the number of communities, from 18 to 17 after safety issues within the community of Isla San Felix which put the integrity of the field technical team at risk.

✓ Communities have understood the importance of preparedness and prevention and allocated efforts toward strengthening their capacities. All efforts were aimed at increasing the level of resilience in these communities. In the evaluation group interviews participants indicated that before the project began everyone saw themselves as a distinct family unit. However, after the project families report to understand themselves as being part of a community which organizes itself; a result being more community eyes looking at the issue of DRRM and emergency response.

✓ The objectives of the project were consistent with the identified need for strengthening the capacities of the population to react adequately in the event of different disasters and to implement actions to reduce the impact of existing threats. The populations that participated in the project reflected and built knowledge about their shared threats, vulnerabilities, capacities, risk analyses, Community Action Plans (CAP), Local Response Plans (LRP), Early Warning Systems (EWS), simulations and advocacy actions. All of the communities had the opportunity to put into practice the knowledge acquired during the project through the participatory development
and application of tools for community reflection, applying an exercise which leads the community as a whole to be more aware of their shared community risks. The communities now consider themselves better prepared and recognize the need to involve vulnerable groups.

✓ In each of the participating communities, the cohesion of at least 2 community structures (COLRED and COCODE) was achieved. These structures established efficient coordination and used methodological tools to generate and mobilize resources. So, together ensuring the implementation of DRRM measures and humanitarian systems. This was realized through the design and implementation of microprojects with input from the community and other actors such as municipalities, private companies and development organizations. As well as the implementation of savings and credits groups focused on CBDRRM issues.

✓ Indirectly, the project contributed to the reconstruction of community social structure as all were, in one way or another, impacted socially by Guatemala’s internal armed conflict from 1960 to 1996. The collaboration between actors during this project and the process of community participation has led to the creation of trust and strengthened inter-cooperation between neighbors.

✓ For communities, it was important to have knowledge of a methodology which would allow them to identify the routes for carrying out advocacy processes in different spaces. The communities recognized the importance of knowing who the decision-makers in the community were and understanding how they could approach the negotiating process so as to convince these actors of community needs and demands. The communities agreed and drew attention to the fact that such decision-makers can be within the same community or from other neighboring communities, local governments, central governments, ministries, etc. This knowledge allowed the communities to identify where and how to influence these actors by understanding where points of contact could be found. At the local level, an impact was made with municipal governments and other public and private actors to provide greater attention to the issue of risk management and to address and contribute directly to needs identified within CAPs.

✓ Through the project’s engagement in the COCIGER platform, ASECSA participated in discussions by advocating for reform of the CONRED law at the national level.

✓ With the accompaniment of ASECSA, community organizations have developed inter-community advocacy capabilities with the municipal authorities. These organizations have demonstrated they are able to articulate, negotiate and influence the formulation and implementation of public policies of CBDRRM and influence humanitarian actors at the municipal, departmental and national levels. For example, in Chisec, through the articulation of approximately 20 communities the municipal platform for DRRM was established. The community has also requested that the municipality install a municipal office for DRRM.

✓ The advice and accompaniment of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe to ASECSA has been very important in realizing the Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction & Management (CBDRRM) strategy. It is confirmed that this strategy was the main basis for achieving, and in some cases, exceeding the objectives of this project. From this learning, ASECSA has built methodological manuals and community tools for risk analysis, CAPs, LRP, EWS, microprojects and more efficient advocacy for prevention, preparedness and management of disasters. At the institutional level, ASECSA has strengthened their Emergency Preparedness & Response Plan (EPRP), their protocols for humanitarian response and processes for conducting drills and simulations for the event of an emergency.
B. Case studies


Community profile
Petén is the department with the highest biological diversity in Guatemala and a territory of forests home to the largest wetlands of Central America, holding a great wealth of endemic fauna. However, this same area has high rates of environmental degradation and deforestation. In the municipality of Sayaxché, the advance of large palm oil and extensive livestock plantations are disturbing the biodiverse ecosystems in Petén by causing large ecological imbalances. For these reasons, the community of Saragoza settled in La Ribera del Río Salinas. The area is now occupied by 32 families with 146 people (69 men and 77 women). All of these families are trying to survive on a subsistence-style farming livelihood where maize, bean and pepitoria (pumpkin/squash) crops are grown exclusively.

Problem addressed
The main threat in the area is flooding. Previously, large floods occurred every 10 years and affected only agricultural areas. Today, waters accumulate in the large palm plantations and concentrate in the Río Salinas, causing severe flooding of housing and crops in the community. During the rainy season rivers overflow their normal parameters, putting at risk the lives of inhabitants who live nearby and their belongings. Flooding occurs between June-December and the canicula, a short period without rain during the rainy season, occurs between August and the first week of October. The scale of devastation depends on the severity of the winter. Seven families are most exposed in this community. For these seven families, their homes are flooded every two years and when this occurs the families are forced to take refuge in a shelter. Another 12 families are affected by the floods, though with less intensity.

Description of intervention/activity
In the CBDRRM process, Saragoza conducted the RA in several sessions with focus groups of the COCODE organizational structures, the auxiliary mayor, and local women’s groups, all with the technical accompaniment of ASECSA. Within their Community Action Plan (CAP), through consensus of assembly this community prioritized the need to improve their shelter for affected families.

Factors affecting intervention
Lack of Knowledge: It was necessary that ASECSA ensures that all COLRED members and members of the community have the basic knowledge of use and utility of the tools for conducting the RA. Missing factor: Young people needed to be better integrated into the development and updating of the RA and CAP. Working on political advocacy: The municipality and CONRED needed to be influenced to prioritize DRRM plans and to respect the RAs and CAPs.

Achievements and Challenges during implementation
- An achievement for this community was the formation of their COLRED committee. The challenge was to secure the allocation of functions to members of the committee who could ensure their adequate and effective response in the event of future floods. COLRED is in the accreditation phase by CONRED.
The community managed to prioritize the microproject: „Improvement of the Shelter“, ensuring safe accommodation and providing decent conditions for families affected by flooding by updating shelter conditions. The challenge was to achieve full community engagement throughout the RA process and the development of the CAP.

The community was able to contribute unskilled labor during the process. The challenge was to achieve the contributions of the municipality through political advocacy of COLRED and COCODE, such as through meetings with the mayor and councilors, and to receive contribution through the transfer of materials and the assignment of a welder.

**Successes**

- Community flood warning and response capacities are available: early-warning system and shelter.
- The conditions of the shelter were improved to accommodate 32 families, 7 of them considered as most vulnerable.
- It was a success to form COLRED as another inclusive organizational structure. The process strengthened local knowledge and empowered CBDRRM leaders in the management and search for community development.
- The process was implemented with a gendered approach; women’s participation in the community planning increased, and overall community cohesion was increased.

**Recommendations**

- Promote the integration of teachers (educators) to improve knowledge transfer in CBDRRM to students.
- Continue advocacy processes with public and private sectors to further improve engagement in CBDRRM.
- Propose to the municipality the creation of a Comprehensive Municipal Risk Management Plan in Sayaxché, which includes actions for risk reduction from community action plans (CAPs).

**Lessons Learned**

- The adoption of the CBDRRM process would not have occurred without the committed involvement of community leaders in conducting the RA and developing the CAP.
- The management capacity of community leaders is a foundation for capacity building for DRRM.
- Involving local and municipal authorities facilitates the process for realizing mitigation and risk reduction measures.
B.2. Resource mobilization through microprojects: Women and men community leaders have an impact on the management of resources for their microproject – Palestina, Chisec & Alta Verapaz – April 2019

Community profile
Chisec is a municipality in the department of Alta Verapaz, located in the north of the country with a warm climate. Most of the working population is engaged in subsistence agriculture. Chisec ranks third highest for metrics of risk. Its rural communities are susceptible to many extreme climatic events including heavy rainfall and droughts. The community of Palestina provides home to a population of 384 people, 77 families.

Problem addressed
Alta Verapaz is one of the departments most affected by flooding caused by thunderstorms, which are often accompanied by strong winds (as in the case of tropical storms or depressions). Due to these climatic conditions, the RA confirmed that the main threats to this area include landslides and floods. Palestina is affected by flash flood events where water levels rise rapidly, and at times rising by up to 2 meters. These floods can affect 100% of the subsistence crops of the communities’ 77 families. The homes of 15 families are those most exposed to these climatic events and forces these families to seek refuge with neighboring families or in other communities on a near yearly basis.

Description of intervention/activity
▪ As part of their CAP for DRRM, the community prioritized a microproject for improving the community’s temporary shelter to assure families affected by flooding had access to minimum conditions for survival during these times of need.
▪ In order to carry out the work, COLRED and COCODE, with the accompaniment of ASECSA, managed to mobilize resources of the municipality and a local organization called CEIBA. The total value of the microproject was Q 58,325.75 (6,751.60€) and was financed as follows: project funds Q 24,000.00 (2,778.16€) for building materials; community contribution Q 19,820.00 (2,294.30€) in unskilled labor and food expenses; municipality contribution Q 6,650.00 (769.78€) for building materials and their transportation; and CEIBA contributed Q 7,855.75 (909.36€) in building materials and payment for the construction team.
▪ The community initiated the implementation of the savings and credits methods to generate its own resources for further implementation of their CAP and to prepare for other microprojects.

Factors affecting intervention
The low income and schooling levels of leaders (on average, leaders have been schooled until the 3rd grade) increased difficulties in this process. The local election campaign hindered coordination and communication with community leaders.

Achievements and Challenges during implementation
▪ Teamwork, solidarity and support among families was achieved. A change in orientation to communication between neighbors to alert them of threats was also realized. The culture of preparedness and prevention within the community on the knowledge of dangers and threats was strengthened.
Co-financing of the municipality and a private organization was obtained for the improvement of the community disaster relief shelter.
COCODE representatives and other leaders (representatives of the Protestant/ Evangelical Church in COLRED) were linked during the process.

**Successes**
- The most vulnerable families have a safe place to stay in case of flooding. The shelter also serves as a center for community meetings and disaster risk reduction training workshops.
- The community knows how to react in the event of future flooding by applying knowledge gained during simulations and drills.
- Leaders are empowered in the management of resources in coordination with municipal authorities and other actors. Their level of participation in advocacy processes has increased, as has the active participation of women and young people.

**Recommendations**
Promote the replication of exercises and actions of community-level workshop to reduce risks in the community in real-time. Active participation in municipal platforms for the continuous management and execution of the CAPs.

**Lessons learned**
- ASECSA’s support provoked the interest and knowledge of leaders in disaster risk reduction. Before the project, many leaders did not know about these issues in the community or failed to recognize them as risks. The 20 COLRED members were involved throughout the process of the microproject.
- The advocacy strategy and the methodology of the microproject facilitated the contribution of the municipality and enabled successful implementation.
- The linkage of COCODE in the management process facilitated co-operation of the project with local and traditional authorities.
- The distribution of community work facilitated the implementation of the microproject. The most vulnerable families were involved in the activities and have become more aware of risks they are exposed to.
B.3. Advocacy for the relocation of a community at risk: community leaders affect the management of community relocation – Carreché Sechina, Chisec & Alta Verapaz – August 2019

Community profile

The community of Carreché Sechina is part of the Northern Transverse Strip of the department of Alta Verapaz. It has a population of 110 Maya Q'eqchi families, mainly dedicated to subsistence agriculture (corn, beans and cardamom). The women of the community are mainly engaged in domestic trades, animal rearing and husbandry.

Problem addressed

The community of Carreché Sechina is affected by floods and falling rocks caused by tropical storms and the overflow of the San Simón River. Over the years, families have witnessed the loss of loved ones and possessions to falling rocks and floods. This community is also affected by skin diseases, malaria, and stomach diseases, which occur at higher rates as a result of flooding events. Every year flooding causes the loss of community subsistence crops and degradation of housing. The community has been declared at high risk by CONRED and therefore must be relocated.

Description of intervention/activity

- COLRED have developed their RA and CAP, from which the plan and advocacy route for the community’s relocation have been derived.
- Community leaders, with the technical support of ASECSA, requested the intervention of CONRED and the municipality of Chisec for the development of a damage assessment of their homes. It was acknowledged that the community lacked safe housing at the time of this request.
- At the same time, leaders requested CONRED’s intervention to carry out the technical and legal evaluation of their community, which included an inspection and field visits to identify a safe place for the community to live and produce their crops.
- The process of relocation of the community of Carreché Sechina is complex and long-term. Leaders continue soliciting the departmental governance structures, CONRED, and the municipality with the aim of implementing this through a Multisectoral Technical Table for Recovery, which is fundamental to materialize the institutional commitments for the relocation of Sechina.

Factors affecting intervention

- The community does not have sufficient resources to cover the costs of moving municipal and departmental meetings.
- The lack of proficiency of community leaders in Spanish partly hinders the negotiation processes with the state authorities. Most of the leaders speak a Mayan language, Q’eqchi, as their native tongue.
- There is little political will of the state institutions to expedite and comply with the process of relocating the community.
- There is a lack of technical and legal support to leaders throughout the community relocation process.
Achievements and Challenges during implementation

- A strong will and commitment by leaders were achieved and sustained during the project.
- Solidarity and participation of women in the advocacy processes was increased.
- A greater awareness in the community about the risk of staying in the area, instead of evacuating when faced by a disaster has been established. Greater leadership capacity to engage in dialogue with government authorities, despite the challenge of overcoming language barriers, has been recognized.
- The integration of a community savings scheme for disaster risk reduction and management was realized.

Successes

- The leaders have improved their negotiation, advocacy and dialogue skills with government authorities.
- At the community level, there is the support and participation of the COCODE (Community Development Council).
- The level of participation of women in advocacy for relocation has increased.

Recommendations

Actively participate in the municipal DRRM platform to achieve the objectives of integration at the Multisectoral Technical Table. Technical and legal accompaniment in the relocation process is needed. Follow-up should be made following training workshops on advocacy routes.

Lessons learned

- The community states that through knowledge of disaster risk management strategies they have been able to influence and relate to the institutions of the State in order to make progress towards the process of relocation.
- The linking of local and traditional/ancestral authorities and COCODE representatives in the relocation management process facilitated the communication and establishment of an understanding of the disaster history in the community.
- The success of the advocacy process depends on the level of commitment of COLRED members.
- Only when the most vulnerable families are made aware of their risks do they directly participate and engage in the activities and actions of CBDRRM.

Community Profile
Baja Verapaz is a department of Guatemala located in the northern region of the country. It forms part of the dry corridor and is one of the areas of the country most affected by the recurring droughts in recent years. In the community of Xesiguan, part of the municipality of Rabinal, 146 families are living with a total population of 600. These families are dedicated mainly to subsistence agriculture, producing maize, beans and vegetables. Women in the community are engaged in domestic trades, the rearing and husbandry of animals, and growing of vegetables in small vegetable gardens for subsistence.

Problem addressed
Xesiguan is exposed to threats such as drought, landslides, increased diseases (plague in domesticated animals) and the spread of pests in crops. In the rainy season, the saturation of the soils often leads to land and mudslides. According to the RA carried out by the community, in the dry season (November-April) 146 families are affected by drought, which in turn causes decreased agricultural production and food insecurity for these families. In 2013, the losses due to drought amounted to 20% of the total crop production. In 2019, these families lost between 50% and 70% of their harvest due to intense drought conditions. For these reasons, what subsistence farmers are managing to produce on-farm is insufficient for their needs. Without formal sources of employment, however, these families are then often forced to ration food, both in quality and quantity. Additionally, when there is rain during the rainy season (May-October), soil saturation can cause mudslides and landslides that have a tendency to affect mainly crop areas as these are parts of the land that have often been worked or cleared.

Description of intervention/activity
In Xesiguan, the CBDRRM process started with the RA. From this the CAP was developed to reduce the risks and become better prepared. COLRED was formed with participation of the women’s organizational structures, highlighting the role of women in this process. The women’s organization promoted linking the CAP with the community savings initiative, aiming to create a fund to specifically address emergencies in the face of drought and manage support from external actors.

Factors affecting intervention
Some community members were distrustful of the savings and credit methods to create the social emergency response fund. There is need to improve the relationship and coordination with other social organizations that support preparedness and reduction of risks. Young people need to be invited into the women-driven initiative and COLRED needs to be invited to participate in their DRRM actions.

Achievements and Challenges during implementation
The active participation of women organized and linked to COLRED generated partnerships with other groups in productive projects (projects with birds, orchards with technical accompaniment), a measure that helps to mitigate food insecurity in times of drought. The strengthening of technical capacities was achieved in the preparation of cleaning supplies (shampoo and chlorine) and in alliance with faith-based groups, promoting actions for the care of the environment.

1 Climatological region with high risks to droughts in Guatemala.
through “deschatarrización” and reforestation. With the organization and participation of women in COLRED, and the advice of ASECSA, resource generation initiatives were implemented. The women’s group began their community savings experience with a minimum contribution of Q. 10.00 (USD 1.33) per meeting participant every 15 days. With the savings made, they make community and family loans, especially in times of crisis due to drought, for the purchase of food (basic grains). At the end of 2018, women achieved savings of Q.35,000.00 (USD 4,666.66) and the generation of interest amounting to Q.15,000.00 (USD 2,000.00).

Successes
The women’s group linked to COLRED has been empowered within the organizational structure. They are trained and strengthened for disaster risk management and for emergency preparedness and response in the community in the event of disaster. They have also strengthened their economic autonomy and improved self-esteem and their level of participation in the process. They also gained support from external actors; 40 families were exposed to the effects of drought due to climate variability and have now benefited from animal and orchard projects. Community savings funds now support families in times of crisis, especially during times of drought.

Recommendations
Promote youth participation in community organization to ensure the transfer of knowledge and experiences. Establish a closer relationship between municipal authorities and the community organization. Maintain the activities of the savings group, taking into account the implementation of the CAP and other risk management activities and tools.

Lessons learned
It is necessary to reduce dependence upon external sources. It is important that the community promotes the integration of activities that generate resources for prevention and preparedness. The results of the RA and CAP make it easier for the community to follow management-oriented actions and mobilize resources from other actors.
B.5. Emergency response from the eruption of the Fuego Volcano in Guatemala: Response to the emergency by the eruption of the Volcano of Fire – Chimaltenango and Escuintla – from June 2018 to July 2019

Community profile
The population of rural communities of the departments of Escuintla and Chimaltenango live around the active Fuego Volcano. These communities subsist in conditions of extreme poverty and very basic levels of education. These communities depend on maize and beans in a subsistence form of production, growing coffee on small-scale to supplement any income. Most of the inhabitants of these areas are of the Christian faith (Evangelicals and Catholics) group. Some communities, such as La Trinidad, Unión Maya and Don Pancho, have been impacted notably by Guatemala’s recent internal armed conflict.

Problem addressed
On June 3 of 2018, Guatemala was affected by the eruption of the Fuego Volcano, causing ash rain, rivers of pyroclastic lava flows and lahars, and loud rumblings after shock waves causing vibration of roofs and windows in housing of communities around the volcano. The community of Rodeo was completely buried by the flow of material from the volcano's eruption. The most affected departments of this disaster were Escuintla and Chimaltenango. The special vulcanological bulletin BEFGO 29-2018 referred to the eruption as one of the strongest eruptions recorded in recent years. According to CONRED, the event left 1,714,387 people affected; 12,823 people evacuated; 3,193 housed in shelters; 27 injured; 260 missing and 165 killed and substantial damage left to homes and public infrastructure. The families of communities nearest to the volcano lost their homes, crops and animals in the event. Following the eruption, many of these communities were left without communication and were made vulnerable to the risk of being injured or killed by lava and volcano lahars following the blast.

Description of intervention/activity
With the experience of community-work and at the advice of Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, ASECSA developed in 2017 an Emergency Preparedness & Response Plan (EPRP) to be better prepared to properly coordinate during an emergency. ASECSA's technical team met in several working sessions to define the kits of services and products that would be provided in the case of emergency. ASECSA identified potential suppliers and estimated product prices. ASECSA located the warehouse areas and established technical teams to respond to emergencies. During the emergency caused by the volcanic eruption in June 2018, ASECSA activated the EPRP to provide their emergency response.

Factors affecting intervention
The flow of lahars from the volcano affected entry into the communities by blocking roads and other ways of passage. A limited budget was available to serve all the families affected. Administrative procedures delayed purchases of emergency supplies. Roads prior to the event were in disrepair and rivers with heavy rain had overflown, further impeding emergency response efforts.
Achievements and Challenges during implementation

The EPRP facilitated the decision-making for the purchase of supplies and services in the kits to be provided during the emergency. A challenge was to adapt the first aid kit to include medicines, as the initial EPRP kit did not consider the assistance needed following an emergency caused by a volcanic eruption. As this was the first experience addressing an emergency caused by volcanic eruption, there was a need to quickly obtain additional information about this type of disaster and its effects to be better prepared for similar events in the future. The communities affected by the eruption of the volcano were provided with humanitarian assistance, especially those that were not served by government entities. Communities were strengthened in terms of health issues. Coordination with other organizations present in the area was made and efforts were joined during the aftermath to address the issues that had arisen following the disaster. Psychosocial support following the event was adapted to the Mayan worldview (ceremonies were conducted). Communities affected by the volcano are not certified by CONRED, despite being located in high-risk areas. This oversight affected the activation of alerts to occur in a timely enough manner before the eruption.

Successes

The EPRP is a tool that facilitates a timely response to an emergency. Within 4 days of the event, ASECSA was able to respond to communities needs by providing medical care in coordination with firefighters. More than 800 people were assisted in a day with medical care provided in the wake of the eruption; 1,126 people (adults, children and adolescents) were able to benefit from days of psychosocial and spiritual support. In the rehabilitation stage, 2,083 people from the most vulnerable category were able to benefit from the assistance of food relief. An additional 30 people from COLREDs were trained in First Aid during this time. With capacity building and empowerment, communities also made an impact on the authorities.

Recommendations

Design special administrative processes to attend to emergencies, facilitating procurement processes with this effort. Support communities to manage health care in a more permanent manner via the authorities. It is advisable to promote the existence of a permanent institution emergency response team, and with access to sufficient response funds.

Lessons learned

It is important that ASECSA has a strategy to directly coordinate their response with other actors. From their experiences, ASECSA can also share lessons learned and best practices with other communities during emergency response situations.
C. Lessons learned and best practices

The lessons learned presented in this document are derived from the analysis of best practices. For better understanding we start with the following definitions:

- **Best practice:** An efficient solution to solve a problem in different contexts; recommended as a model to be replicated in other experiences so that a practice may be adopted by as many people and organizations as possible.

- **Level of intervention:** Community, other actors and intra-institutional (ASECSA).

- **Lesson learned:** This is the conclusion that is drawn once a „practice“ has been implemented, analyzed and reflected upon.

The project contributes to compliance with the [Sendai Framework for Action (SFA)](https://www.unisdr.org/sfa) in the Guatemalan municipalities of Baja Verapaz, Alta Verapaz and Petén. This contribution is achieved through close coordination with participating communities, CONRED and municipal governments. The SFA sets out 4 priorities which also become the framework for analyzing the lessons learned and best practices presented below.

C.1. Priority 1: Knowledge of risk

Understanding disaster risk

Disaster risk management needs to be based on an understanding of disaster risk in all its dimensions of vulnerability, capacity, exposure of persons and assets, hazard characteristics and the environment. (SFA)

**Contribution at different levels**

- The 17 communities supported by ASECSA strengthened knowledge of the concepts of vulnerability, threat, capacities and risk. Each community implemented the learned concepts through the development of a risk map, seasonal calendar, Local Response Plan, Community Action Plan, Early Warning Systems and the risk monitoring mechanism.

- ASECSA developed its Emergency Preparedness & Response Plan and led the preparation and dissemination of regional risk analyses, which were socialized with municipal governments, communities and CONRED.

**Best practices**

Communities appreciated the fact that they now have a risk analysis tool available to them. The development of the community risk map allowed for an open and participatory dialogue in the community. The application of these tools enabled communities to implement the knowledge acquired and to identify the usefulness of their lessons learned, including developing an understanding of the need to continuously monitor and update their risk analysis. The communities are more aware of their capacities and their ability to manage risks. Similarly, to the extent that risk information is shared with other actors, a permanent alertness and monitoring attitude is maintained within the communities, reminding them to remain vigilant and active in the face of threats. For their part, the municipal and departmental governments are interested in the processes conducted in the communities and expressed an interest in allocating specific resources for risk management.

**Lessons learned**

Having visual tools and working with them in a participatory way has facilitated their adoption by communities, promoting reflection on how to act in coordination to work towards improved prevention.
and preparedness. The communities also engaged in a process of reaching consensus in order to establish procedures for monitoring risks. In addition, through regional analyses and working with other actors, ASECSA has been able to address risk management situations beyond the geographical boundaries of individual communities.

C.2. Priority 2: Governance
Strengthen disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk

Disaster risk governance at the national, regional and global levels is vital to the management of disaster risk reduction in all sectors and ensuring the coherence of national and local frameworks of laws, regulations and public policies that, by defining roles and responsibilities, guide, encourage and incentivize the public and private sectors to take action and address disaster risk. (SFA)

Contribution at different levels
→ ASECSA participates with other civil society organizations within the framework of the COCIGER platform, proposing reform to CONRED’s national law.
→ ASECSA promotes and participates with the Inter-Institutional Tables of Coordination at the regional level on disaster risk management.
→ ASECSA supported community leaders’ engagement with municipal governments to enable them to fulfill their role as duty bearers for risk management.
→ The 17 communities of the project, along with support from ASECSA, manage to achieve COLRED certification of each of the 17 communities by CONRED.
→ The 17 cohesive community structures of COCODE and COLRED are driving the CBDRRM process.

Best practices
By intentionally supporting communities to build partnerships for advocacy with external duty bearers, it has become possible to strengthen capacities and carry out these practices without needing permanent support from ASECSA. It is confirmed that the most autonomous communities engaged in the management of risk no longer perceived themselves as recipients of aid. The Risk Management Boards enhanced and confirmed the importance of building alliance mechanisms.

Lessons learned
Having on hand the results of the risk mapping exercise and the proposals from the communities for how to be better prevent and prepare for disasters builds the confidence of community representatives. This strengthens their influence on government authorities to engage with them on disaster risk management. As a concrete example, communities have received support from municipalities and other actors to implement microprojects that will equip them to be better prepared for emergencies and disasters.
C.3. Priority 3: Resilience
Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience

Public and private investment in disaster risk prevention and reduction through structural and non-structural measures are essential to enhance the economic, social, health and cultural resilience of persons, communities, countries and their assets, as well as the environment. These can be drivers of innovation, growth and job creation. Such measures are cost-effective and instrumental to save lives, prevent and reduce losses and ensure effective recovery and rehabilitation. (SFA)

Contribution at different levels
→ All of the following processes are means of strengthening communities’ capacities and resilience: local capacity building; implementation of preparedness actions; improved conditions in shelters; provision of equipment; facilitating early-warning systems; utilizing radio communication systems and signaling system for the population to locate necessary assistance; and the identification of evacuation routes and safe places to stay in the event of a disaster.
→ The project has contributed to the way communities and ASECSA consolidate alliances at the municipal and national levels and how they have an impact on the authorities and municipal governments to ensure compliance. These alliances strengthen the commitment of legal rights bearers, holding them responsible and accountable for providing support to vulnerable and affected communities.

Best practices
The risk monitoring system and functional community structures established within the framework and processes of DRRM facilitate the path to resilience, and the autonomy of communities. Activities such as the microprojects were an effective action for performing this accompaniment. The strengthening the COLREDs reinforced this process.

Lessons learned
Based on the concrete actions of a microproject, the community has prioritized the generation of community resources for emergency response and risk reduction at a local level. Through the formation of COLRED, a culture of prevention and preparedness has been generated and community awareness of risks has been created, facilitating the promotion of risk mitigation measures.

C.4. Priority 4: Preparedness for response
Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to «Build Back Better» in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction

Experience indicates that disaster preparedness needs to be strengthened for more effective response and ensure capacities are in place for effective recovery. Disasters have also demonstrated that the recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction phase, which needs to be prepared ahead of the disaster, is an opportunity to «Build Back Better» through integrating disaster risk reduction measures. Women and persons with disabilities should publicly lead and promote gender-equitable and universally accessible approaches during the response and reconstruction phases. (SFA)

Contribution at different levels
→ The 17 communities, with support from ASECSA, have formed the local community level Traditional and Ancestral Coordination for Disaster Reduction (COLRED) with the integration of both women and men. These groups are prepared for emergency response. They have identified risks and have a Local Response Plan and Community Action Plan developed with the participation of representatives of vulnerable groups. The members of the COLREDs know their roles and responsibilities.
→ ASECSA, as an institution, is also ready to respond. Their response mechanisms and detailed action plans are documented within their Emergency Preparedness & Response Plan (EPRP).
**Best practices**

Having an institutional strategy linked to the national government strategy (CONRED) enables ASECSA to be part of a more comprehensive and sustainable process.

ASECSA promoted and accompanied the:

- Definition of roles for each COLRED member and other community members.
- Simulations and drills that were performed in each community to strengthen the performance and functioning of COLREDs in the event of disaster.
- Implementation of Early Warning Systems in the communities.
- Dissemination of training materials and information on community preparedness methods and facilitated related learning activities.
- Development of the EPRP protocols for emergency response by regional headquarters.
- Use of international standards set out in the Sphere Handbook and NutVal.  

ASECSA believes that the CBDRRM strategy is precisely what gives sustainability to achieve best practices in the field of preparedness for response and risk management. The communities have been strengthened in regard to the management of risk and have built their resilience.

**Lessons learned**

- The development of exercises (simulations) and the design of educational material (visual and methodological) was fundamental in the process of allocating functions and positions to the members of COLRED, a process that has since allowed COLREDs to act in a coordinated and efficient manner with each member aware of their role in the wider process.
- The division of responsibility for the management of alert levels by color (green, yellow, orange and red) and the capacity building of COLREDs has allowed the community to make decisions, mobilize resources, coordinate actions and disseminate information (specifically, in the case of the flooding emergency addressed in October 2018 in Saragoza, by the members of COLRED).
- Emergency response was strengthened from the regional level perspective to a national level by the coordination of ASECSA. The professional skills of ASECSA’s work were increased in this process and limitations and new needs were identified to adjust and update the EPRP.

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NutVal is the WHO/FAO spreadsheet application for the planning and control of the nutritional content of food and rations in general.
D. Community resilience and the SDGs

The United Nations 2030 agenda consists of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 169 targets and 332 indicators. Of all of these, this project has contributed to **3 Objectives, 5 targets and 7 indicators** (see also Annex 2: SDGs targets and indicators to which the project contributed). This section reflects the project’s contribution through the analysis of the UN SDGs Framework. The twelve components presented below in Figure 13 are what Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and ASECSA consider as the common characteristics of a disaster-resilient community (see details on the means of verification for these characteristics in Annex 3: Components of a disaster resilient community).

**Figure 13: Components of a disaster resilient community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components of a disaster resilient community</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The twelve components presented here are what Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and ASECSA consider as the common characteristics of a disaster-resilient community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Risk analysis and implementation planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Community-based early-warning systems (including the use of both technology and indigenous knowledge)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Target 1.5** By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.

From the point of view of ASECSA and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, components 1, 2, 3 and 5 contribute to the scope of target 1.5. The four components are like the four core elements (vehicle wheels) of the CBDRRM process (see Figure 2: Elements of CBDRRM).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Project Contribution</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Risk analysis and implementation planning</td>
<td>Communities have traditional knowledge and lessons that have been documented through methodological manuals, handbooks and visual educational materials that facilitate knowledge creation, information generation and which facilitate outreach in communities. The families and communities involved in this project were made more aware of their vulnerabilities and the importance of participating in the activities organized as a way to strengthen their capacities and views in planning for disaster management. COLREDs seek to keep the capacities of their members active, thereby avoiding the disruption of periodic changes of COCODE’s members. The community has become more aware of the importance of engaging in an organized manner in preparedness and risk management. Capacities have been strengthened through training processes and the implementation of newly acquired knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Social cohesion with inclusion of most vulnerable groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Community structures to coordinate with related organizations and advocate for the implementation of their plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Community monitoring and learning</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Target 11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.

From the perspective of ASECSA and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, components 7 and 12 of the project contribute to the scope of target 11.5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Project Contribution</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| 7. Capabilities and skills for preparedness and risk management | Community populations participated for two years in training and knowledge-building processes that enabled them to be better prepared and better manage and respond to risks.  
The main resources of the participating communities at the time of a disaster are the places previously and formally designated as shelters. These shelters are located in safe places. The communities have also strengthened their capacities to provide adequate protection measures as they successfully carried out the improvement of these shelters. |
| 12. Protected assets which enable communities to cope and recover |                                                                                                                                                      |

Target 11.b By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels.

From the perspective of ASECSA and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, components 2, 3, 6 and 10 contribute to the scope of target 11.b. This target refers to the mobilization of different groups and actors to provide support and contribute resources for risk management activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Project Contribution</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Social cohesion with inclusion of most vulnerable groups</td>
<td>The most vulnerable groups have been identified in each of the 17 communities based on the risk analysis during the development of the community map. Vulnerable groups are actively involved in risk management actions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3. Community structures to coordinate with related organizations and advocate for the implementation of their plans | Community structures have established inter-community partnerships and local organizations to influence municipal authorities to implement their Community Action Plans.  
The COLREDS have strengthened their links with COCODEs and the municipal government on issues of coordination, communication and assignment of responsibilities. The COLREDS seek to keep the capacities of their members active and avoid disruption in the periodic change of COCODES representatives. |
| 6. Community-based early-warning systems (including the use of both technology and indigenous knowledge) | Ancestral and traditional knowledge is being recovered and strengthened, mainly by the identification of early warning indicators related to the interpretation of climatic conditions. |
| 10. Risk diversified livelihoods (including adaptation to climate change) | Participating communities have been able to identify the livelihoods available in the same community or nearby areas that allow them to mitigate risks taking into consideration intervention regions are mainly affected by excessive rainfall and prolonged droughts resulting from climate change. |
Target 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.

From the point of view of ASECSA and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, components 4, 11 and 12 contribute to the scope of target 13.1. This target refers to actions that enable communities to cope with and recover from disasters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Project Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Access to information and knowledge on how to act</td>
<td>Seasonal calendars and risk maps are installed in visible places and have facilitated community reflection processes and raised awareness of risks and how to act in response to them. ASECSA has provided the communities with easy-to-understand materials and some with the use of play/game-learning (lottery).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Risk reduction and adaptation measures for different sectors</td>
<td>Through periodic analysis of risks and updating Community Action Plans, communities are reducing their vulnerability and strengthening their capacities. This includes self-generated social funds. The planning and implementation of microprojects realize actions for risk reduction, these include establishing shelters and protecting water sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Protected assets which enable communities to cope and recover</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Target 13.3 Improve education, awareness and human and institutional capacity for climate change mitigation, adaptation to reduction of its effects and early warning.

From the point of view of ASECSA and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, components 1, 4, 5 and 9 contribute to the scope of target 13.3. This target refers to the development of capabilities to continuously analyze, monitor and respond to risks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Project Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Risk analysis and implementation planning</td>
<td>Risk analysis is done regularly applying a participatory approach. This method improves the planning and implementation of the CAP, LRP and advocacy actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Community monitoring and learning</td>
<td>Monitoring is an important activity in the life of communities, as well as the sharing of lessons learned experientially. For its part, ASECSA contributes to these experiences as lessons learnt are collected in documents that are made public and popularized to facilitate their comprehension in the communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Capabilities and skills for preparedness and risk management</td>
<td>Communities have the ability to manage resources. They do so with municipal governments and with private companies that are geographically close by. Capacity to mobilize resources within the community has also been strengthened through community savings methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Resources for implementing plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annexes

Annex 1: Evaluation methodology

Interviews were conducted with beneficiary groups in 8 of the 17 communities benefiting from the project. Group meetings were held in these communities, in which COLRED members and vulnerable groups participated. It is very common for people from vulnerable groups to be both vulnerable persons and COLRED members. Participants were summoned by members of the ASECSA technical team in each region. An average of 15 people participated in each visit.

The information in this document was obtained through semi-structured interviews:

- The evaluator had a guide to the topics to be covered, the terms to use, and a (suggested) order of questions to follow.
- Frequently, the terms used, and the order of subjects presented changed slightly during each interview. New questions in alignment with the thematic focus of the interview were used to reorient the group when discussions meandered off-topic.
- Unlike a questionnaire, the semi-structured interview is based on open-ended questions which provide flexibility to the respondent. This style of inquiry also takes into account the tendency in rural communities for people to gradually join the discussion/interview and allows opportunity to leave room for the explanation of elements previously not encountered by respondents, valuing flexibility without losing focus.
- The role of the evaluator during the meeting was to act as a moderator of the conversion, gently keeping discussion centered around topics and sub-themes of interest and evaluation in the project.
- General notes of the information discussed in interviews were taken as supplementary information and served as inputs for various aspects covered in the evaluation.

The issues discussed in the communities were:

Risk Analysis (RA)
The initiation of the discussions arose on the topic of the Community Risk Map. The communities were asked to explain how they had created it. Specifically, participants were asked to answer the question, ‘where are we now?’ and were asked to identify the dwelling or location of the group at the time of meeting. Questions such as ‘where do you live?’ (leading everyone to identify their house); ‘Where do vulnerable families live?’; ‘What are the risks in the community?’ (gradually identifying places in the community that pose risks); and ‘Why are these places high-risk?’ were also asked in these group sessions.

Local Response Plan (LRP)
Discussion of risk maps resulted in the start of a discussion of the local response plan. In each community, participants were shown the local response plan that existed and functions of each COLRED member were explained simultaneously. With the narration via photographs, the participants explained how these plans had been made. Additionally, it was asked of participants ‘what is the history of threats in the community?’

During the visits to the communities, meetings were also held with members of the Traditional and Ancestral Coordination for Disaster Reduction (COLRED) and people from the most vulnerable groups. The communities visited are highlighted in Figure 1: Geographic coverage of the project.

Community Action Plan (CAP)
The community was asked, ‘how was the matrix used ‘to work the CAP?’ and ‘what is its usefulness?’

Drills/Simulations
Participants were asked ‘What was your experience like during the drills?’. (The word „simulate” was used because it
is commonly used in Guatemala for this type of exercise. For this reason, it is common that people in communities understand what is meant by this term when it is used.

**Microproject**
In this part, the interviewed group was asked to share on the topic of ‘what their experience with the microproject been like and were asked, ‘was it important and why?’.

**Women’s participation**
Women were asked why this project was important to them in the communities.

**Meeting with other actors**
During the evaluation, a meeting was scheduled with representatives of the National Coordination for Disaster Reduction (CONRED) and representatives from the Municipal Governments of Rabinal, Chisec and Sayaxché. During these meetings, participants were asked what added value was given to their work through interaction with organizations like ASECSA.

**Regional meetings**
Two regional meetings were held to socialize the results of the preliminary evaluation report and to initiate the process of identifying best practices and lessons learned. Each meeting involved a group of 15 people consisting of representatives of communities, municipal governments, CONRED and the ASECSA technical team. A final workshop was conducted with only ASECSA team members in order to strengthen the identification of best practices and lessons learned from the previous meetings.

**Workshop with ASECSA technical team**
A final workshop was held with ASECSA’s technical team to identify lessons learned and best practices detailed in the evaluation report. The general framework of reference was the concept of best practice and the concept of lessons learned which is shared as the contents of this document.
### Annex 2: SDGs targets and indicators to which the project contributed

**Objective 1.** End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

**Target 1.5** By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.

- **Indicator 1.5.1** Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population.
- **Indicator 1.5.4** Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies.

**Target 11.** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

**Target 11.5** By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations

- **Indicator 11.5.1** Number of people killed, missing and directly affected directly attributed to disasters per 100,000 people. (Matches indicator 1.5.1)
- **Indicator 11.5.4** Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies. (Matches indicator 11.b.2)

**Target 13.** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

**Target 13.1** Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.

- **Indicator 13.1.1** Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population. (Matches indicator 1.5.1 and 11.5.1)
- **Indicator 13.1.3** Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies. (Matches indicator 11.b.2)

**Target 13.3** Improve education, awareness raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

- **Indicator 13.3.2** Number of countries that have communicated the strengthening of institutional, systemic and individual capacity-building to implement adaptation, mitigation and technology transfer, and development actions.
### Annex 3: Components of a disaster resilient community

Means of verification for the components of a resilient community according to Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and ASECSA.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Components of a Disaster Resilient Community</th>
<th>Means of Verification</th>
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| 1. Risk analysis and implementation planning | • Risk map developed (and extent of information)  
• Community Action Plans (CAPs) developed (and extent of actions identified), LRP, advocacy plan, microprojects, planning for the implementation of drills/simulations |
| 2. Social cohesion with the inclusion of the most vulnerable groups | • Scope of engagement of community organizational structures  
• Level of participation of those most vulnerable |
| 3. Community structures to coordinate with related organizations and advocate for the implementation of their plans | • Development phase of the COLRED structure and the relationship with COCODEs |
| 4. Community monitoring and learning | • Risk monitoring mechanisms established  
• Extent of feedback  
• Level of knowledge of vulnerabilities and risks  
• Documented case studies  
• ASECSA and Community Monitoring System |
| 5. Capabilities and skills for preparedness and risk management | • Emergency team: skills, number of people trained, suitability of available equipment  
• Evacuation routes |
| 6. Community-based early-warning systems (including the use of technology and indigenous knowledge) | • EWS systems installed  
• Communication system  
• Monitoring system  
• Results of the evaluation of the simulation/drill exercises |
| 7. Social safety nets* | • Mechanisms to support affected individuals/families (social funds) |
| 8. Access to information and knowledge on how to act | • Community knowledge of maps and plans  
• Resources (available DRRM information materials)  
• Links with people with technical knowledge (i.e. training centers) |
| 9. Resources for implementing plans* | • Resource management capacity (e.g. financial management)  
• Allocation of community resources  
• Access to external resources |
| 10. Risk-diversified livelihoods (including adaptation to climate change) | • Number of ongoing good practices  
• Number of people who apply these practices |
| 11. Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation measures for different sectors | • Ongoing actions to reduce damage and losses  
• Plans in place to avoid the creation of new risks |
| 12. Protected resources that enable communities to cope and recover | • Amount of critical assets protected or with a plan to protect them |