



# World Conference on Disaster Reduction

18-22 January 2005, Kobe, Hyogo, Japan

## ECHO/ISDR good practices for resilient communities

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### **The PEAT Project: A community based approach to address increased vulnerability to recurrent disasters**

Communities in East Kalimantan have had to cope with a relative new hazard: forest fires. While prior to the 1980's fire events were rare (once in a century), this has increased dramatically since 1983 when the first modern fire event happened. Since 1982 at major fires have occurred in 1987, 1991, 1994, 1997/98, 2002 and 2004. This has dramatically affected livelihoods of these communities. The disappearance of the forest has led to a changed hydrology that increased vulnerability to drought and floods.

In response, CARE has developed an innovative approach through the PEAT project. The PEAT project's approach aims to develop community-based capacity through institutionalization processes. The approach is based on the following elements:

- Increased awareness through training and synthesizing. CARE has developed a disaster management training and manual to introduce disaster management and basic disaster management concepts to policy makers and community leaders. The training provides an introduction to SPHERE. While an important component is the Capacity and Vulnerability Analysis (CVA).
- Establish fire brigades to reduce the fire risks. This is done through a two step approach:
  - A training of village volunteers in fire fighting and fire management.
  - Institutionalization of fire brigades by the village parliaments. Communities develop SOP (Standard Operating Procedures) which are defined in a village directive
- Strengthen coping strategies either based on indigenous knowledge like the management of peat swamps through improved water management (Banjar system), planting palm oil trees or rubber.
- Reduce vulnerability through the development of vision map. A vision map is a community-developed map that is based on participatory analysis of current land use. CVA is used as part of this process to identify key vulnerabilities and link these to capacities that communities possess through the definition of interventions that link these two. The process includes the following steps:
  - Conduct a participatory assessment to identify key vulnerability and strengths
  - Develop a hazard map on scale and link these to village timeline
  - Analyze secondary data like hotspot maps and vegetation maps
  - During a village workshop, revise the CVA results and build a vision of future land use that reduces vulnerability to disaster. Based on the map a community develop plan is made that will be part of the government endorsed village governance processes
  - Produce the vision maps on scale
- Better link communities to Early Warning Systems (EWS) through the use of community radio. CARE is currently in the process of developing a two way

communication approach to link community observations with EWS centers. CARE is working for example to train community in measuring indicators for fire rating which are then put in a fire danger rating systems after which results are broadcasted to the communities

The PEAT project has worked in 49 communities. The follow up project will expand the approach to another 47 projects in East- and Central Kalimantan. Initial hotspot and on the spot emergency assessment seems to indicate a significant reduction of community vulnerability. Furthermore CARE is in the process to assess if key elements like the vision mapping and two way EWS can be an effective tool in Tsunami disaster risk reduction