Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments – Exercise

In an effort to understand **the risk of disruption of schooling due to commonly occurring mudslides** and intervene meaningfully to reduce this risk, consider the case study below and identify (on the other side of the paper) the potential and certain vulnerabilities and capacities you think could reduce this disaster risk

Case study scenario:

In the southwest region of Sierra Leone there is a mountainous area comprised of 50 communities whose inhabitants are largely subsistence farmers. This area is prone to annual mudslides, and whole villages have been destroyed in two occasions over the past 15 years. There are 19 primary schools and 1 junior secondary school in the school catchment area. The teacher workforce in these schools is insufficient and teachers must teach double shifts to cover all grade levels. Furthermore, 80% of the teachers are community volunteers from the area who receive a small donation (approx $10/month) from the students’ parents. Because of the small remuneration, these teachers must also farm and find other livelihood strategies to feed their families. 16 of the 19 primary school principals have advocated tirelessly, over the past ten years, for government certification of their schools in hopes of receiving minimal government support. The response they receive from the district level ministry officials is that there is no money; a response they do not believe. After the war, once people returned to their homes, local builders fired brick to form the school buildings and missionaries and NGOs provided tin roofing material and school furniture. The buildings have resisted the hard rainy seasons and lasted a long time with maintenance provided locally through the support and work of school development committees. However, their initial placement was determined without consideration of mudslides as the war and its consequences were most fresh in the mind of the population, government and development partners. From the population’s perspective, mudslides, much like flash floods, are the will of god, and most often, punishment for disharmony and greed amongst each other. Yet, those slightly better off financially have built their homes in less disaster prone areas. Poorer inhabitants, including many of the community teachers, have not had the capital to build or live where they like and currently reside in higher risk areas.

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| **Hazard** | **Exposure** | **Vulnerabilities – potential and certain** | **Capacities/Resources – potential and certain** |
| 2 yr Mudslides whose flow through two settlements resulted in their destruction and the death of 60% of the inhabitants | Secondary school catchment area made up of 19 primary schools and one secondary school serving 50 communities. |  |  |
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