

Annex 9: Interview guide examples

Two interview guides are provided in the next. The first guide is for mayors and decision-makers at the local level. The second guide is for local community leaders. The structure and content is very similar; however, questions are removed, added, and altered as appropriate for the type of interviewee. Again, as a reminder, interview guides were created with a combination of two PhD thesis topics. This was necessary to help ensure that interviewees were not interviewed multiple times by different researchers within the project.

Protocol: Mayors/Decision-Makers

(Risk Management, Local Level Communication)

INTRODUCTION

Could you describe some examples of how your office is involved in managing flooding and landslide risks?

1. How do you take risk into account?

- a. In what way? Is it mandatory or not?
- B. Do you think it is needed/necessary to take risk into account?
- C. Do you think you are going to have economic benefits by taking risks into account?

COMMUNICATION

Could you describe how you communicate risk related information? (to the public) And what kind of information you communicate?

1.1 How do you communicate information on risk assessment results and management decisions?

3.1 Can you describe the communication between authorities and the public before, during, and after a crisis?

1.2 Do you feel information is provided in an understandable language for the public?

1.3 Who decides what information is provided to the public?

3.3 In your opinion, do you think the public is interested in receiving more information?

INTERACTION & INVOLVEMENT OF PUBLIC

We would also like to ask about how the public is involved in management and assessment of these risks. What are some ways in which the public can be involved? (two-way present?)

3.4 How is the public involved in decision-making processes (assessment and management of flooding and landslides)?

- a. Should they be more involved? (contribute information?)
- b. Could this benefit decision-making processes?
- c. Can or does this involvement positively or negatively affect planning activities?

5.4 Do methods or tools exist to determine the needs of the public? What about to address 'public grievances'?

RESPONSIBILITY & OVERSIGHT

How would you describe your responsibilities in comparison to the responsibilities of the authorities you work with most directly? Are you satisfied with the distribution of responsibilities?

2.2 Are responsibilities and who has what responsibilities clear for your offices and other authorities you work with? Are there overlaps? (Conflicts present? How to address these?)

6.1 Do you feel decisions are made at the most appropriate level?

Could you elaborate on how the procedures you must follow are evaluated? (evaluation lead to adjustment?)

6.4 We would like to ask about monitoring activities:

- **Are administrative procedures you most directly deal with reviewed and adjusted? How often does this occur? (Efficiency)**
 - (if above affirmative) 6.5 Are these procedures monitored for efficiency (e.g. efficient use of resources) what about for effectiveness (contribution and ability to achieve goal)? If yes, then how?
 - (more specifically) 6.6 Are there monitoring processes to adjust risk assessment practices if e.g. an exceptional event occurs? (Efficiency)

Can you describe the evaluation process for mitigation measures?

- **What about for mitigation measures? Are these monitored for effectiveness and adherence to codes?**
 - If yes, how often are mitigation measures checked?
 - If no, mitigation measures are not checked, then why not?

VISION & SUSTAINABILITY

Can you explain the long-term strategy of the municipal office in terms of managing potential risks for flooding and landslides?

4.1 What would you say is the strategic focus of your office in terms of managing potential risks for flooding and landslides?(main priorities)

a. Do you feel this strategy provides flexibility for adapting to a changing environment?

How does your office work toward the goals of your long-term strategy? How long does it take to achieve some of these goals? Are you happy with this? (need for more time?)

4.2 Does the existing strategy employed utilize an appropriate timescale? Is there a focus put on operating on a short-term timescale rather than a long-term timescale?

8.1 Given current resources and interests, can practices be continued in the long-term?

8.2 Do you feel current practices can provide an advantage to future generations?

TRUST & EQUALITY

Do you feel risks to flooding and landslides affect all those in your community equally?

7.1 In your opinion, with the currently existing regulations and risk management practices, are there specific groups of people who benefit less or who are put at a disadvantage compared to other

groups in your community? More specifically, **do practices place an equal amount of burden on all members of your community?**

a. If no, is the burden unevenly distributed to those least able to afford it?

7.2 Are there identifiable groups in the community that are considered especially vulnerable as compared to other groups? What makes them more vulnerable?

Are there some examples you have that demonstrate a strong level of trust between your offices and the authorities you work with? (and with the public?)

9.1 Do you feel your interactions with other authorities occur within a foundation of mutual trust?

9.2 Are there examples of past experiences you have that support the existence of an environment of trust?

a. If no, is there a need to rebuild trust (what are some ways in which this can be achieved)?

9.4 Are methods employed to determine what level of risk is acceptable by the different societal groups?

9.5 (ONLY FOR POLAND AND ROMANIA) Is there evidence that supports an improvement from former historical times characterized by an environment of distrust?

9.6 Do you believe the different societal groups trust in your authority? Why is this? (If negative ask also: how can trust be regenerated?)

MANAGEMENT & ASSESSMENT GENERAL

In your opinion, are there any existing regulations directly affecting your work that can be improved? (How might you improve them?)

5.1 Are there any examples you can think of where existing regulations need better enforcement? Are there some examples of existing regulations that should be improved?

5.2 Are there any practices your offices engage in which go above and beyond legally required actions?

5.7 Do options exist which allow for flexibility and redundancy in the management practices used, especially in maintaining the essential needs of your community?

a. Does this improve (or diminish) your abilities to adjust to unexpected events and changes?

b. If not the case, are decision-making processes stable and hard to amend and renew?

Can you elaborate on the how the early warning systems in your community work?

5.5 How would you describe the existing early warning systems?

a. Do they produce useful information/is this information provided in a way which allows for use and assistance in decision-making processes?

b. 5.6 In past events, have reactions to early warning system information provided either under or overreaction?

We would also like to ask about what kind of resources and information you rely on.

Could you please elaborate on what kinds of resources are available to you? What kind of information do you receive in making decisions related to flood and landslide risks? (Are you happy with what is available?)

10.1 Are adequate resources (especially information) available and accessible to you in terms of:

a. Available and appropriate **timing** for completing tasks required?

- b. Available and accessible **financial resources** as compared to other authorities in dealing with flooding and landslides?
- c. Available **expertise and knowledge** for informing decision-making processes?
- d. Coverage of **personnel and equipment** for the necessary responsibilities/tasks to be completed?
- e. Quality of **structural resources**? (e.g. infrastructure such as roads and public utilities)
- f. If no to any of the above, what are the reasons for this?

2. Is there uncertainty in the information you are provided? (esp. for future changes or developments of hazards as well as vulnerability) (meaning the degree of loss of an element due to the occurrence of a certain hazard with a given magnitude or intensity))

- a. (Yes) How do you deal with this?
- b. (Yes) what about uncertainties in information related to spatial development of your municipality?
- c. (No)
 - i. Are uncertainties not made transparent enough?
 - ii. Are uncertainties communicated and mapped at all?
 - iii. Do you wish to communicate uncertainties?

10.3 What would you say are some of the biggest decisions you have to make in fulfilling your roles/responsibilities?

- **What (e.g. information, self-information, from other authorities) do you find you tend to rely on most to make decisions?**
- What factors are you limited by in terms of making these decisions? (e.g. lack /accessibility of data, need to wait from higher authorities)
 - **Is the information about risks you receive mandatory and does this limit you decision-making abilities? (e.g. hazard and risk maps)**
 - If yes, how do you feel about this? Suggestions for improvement?

Could you describe the level of cooperation (informal interactions) and coordination (formal interactions) between your offices and those you work with most closely?

11.3 How are disagreements between authorities mediated/organized in your offices?

11.4 How would you describe the coordination between your offices and higher levels of authority?

12.1 Would you say there is a high, medium, or low level of cooperation (informal communication) and coordination (formal communication) between your offices and authorities at the local level? (e.g. district, municipality/commune)

- More specifically, how would you rate the cooperation with spatial planning authorities and spatial planning offices?
- What about authorities at higher levels?

12.2 In your opinion, is dialogue between and among various authorities constructive? (meaning does it try to work toward a mutual, positive outcome, and toward a solution)

11.1 In your opinion, do you feel responsibilities to assess and manage flooding and landslides are concentrated centrally (centralized) or fragmented amongst multiple authorities?

- 11.2 (In the case of fragmentation:) Does fragmentation lead to problems such as duplication of efforts, wasted resources, or overlooked issues especially in the case that this causes certain risks are not managed by any particular entity?
- (In the case of centralization:) Does centralization lead to any problems such as greater burden of responsibility placed on the higher levels of authority, restricted or limited

capabilities at the more local levels of authority, or practices which do not fit to local level needs?

PLANNING SPECIFIC

We would like to ask some questions related to risk prevention, i.e. activities aiming at risk prevention...

1. What activities do you take to mitigate the risk of disasters?

- Building inspections
- Land use zoning
- Construction of structural mitigation measures (dykes, dams, etc.)

2. How relevant do you consider local land-use planning and its instruments for risk management carried out in this municipality/region?

How do you use static maps in making long-term decisions in the spatial development of your municipality?

3. Is it a problem for you to manage the potential issues between having a static map (not accounting for change) and making long-term decisions in the spatial development of your municipality?

- a. Are legally binding or flexible informal planning instruments the better alternative for successful risk prevention?

4. Compared to other concerns in your municipality, which importance do you attach to risk prevention and preparedness? What is the most important topic and objective in your municipality, i.e. which “problem” obtains the main attention?

- a. What role do hazards and risks play?

5. What are the major challenges you face in undertaking activities to protect against and prevent damages arising from natural hazards?

- What are the causes of these challenges?

EXTRA Closing question: good practice example or elaboration? Anything, we did not ask that you feel is important to communicate?

Protocol: Community Leaders

(e.g. church officials, heads of community centers or businesses)

(Risk Management, Local Level Communication)

INTRODUCTION

Can you describe a past experience you have had with floods and landslides?

1. **Do you feel you (or your community) are affected by flood and landslide risks?**
 - a. Can you describe an example where you have been personally affected?
 - b. Do you take any personal actions to protect yourself and your home from flooding and landslides? (e.g. insurance, barriers, slope stability on your property)
 - i. If no, why not?

COMMUNICATION

Could you describe how you receive risk related information? And what kind of information you receive?

2.2 To your knowledge, who or what authorities are responsible for e.g. prevention and protection of their community during peace time and for response and recovery during time of crisis?

- a. 3.1 What are the most important means of communication between you and these authorities?

1.1 How do you receive information on risk assessment results and management decisions?

1.2 Do you feel information is provided in an understandable language for the public?

1.3 Is there an appropriate balance between what information is confidential and what information is publically provided?

3.3 Are you (or members of your community) interested in receiving more information on flood and landslide risks (and hazards)? (than is currently available and accessible)

INTERACTION & INVOLVEMENT OF PUBLIC

We would also like to ask about how the public is involved in management and assessment of these risks. What are some ways in which the public can be involved? (two-way present?)

3.4 How is the public (how are you) involved in decision-making processes (assessment and management of flooding and landslides)?

- a. Should they (you) be more involved? (contribute information?)
- b. Could this benefit decision-making processes?
- c. Could this benefit planning activities in your community?

3.4 Do you feel authorities have a positive attitude toward the involvement of the public in decision-making processes?

2.3 Are mechanisms in place for the public to keep authorities/actors accountable?

5.4 Do methods or tools exist to determine the needs of the public? What about to address 'public grievances'?

RESPONSIBILITY & OVERSIGHT

Can you describe your experience (in past events) with decisions made and actions taken by authorities during a crisis and after a crisis has occurred?

6.1 Do you feel decisions are made at the most appropriate level?

6.2 Are decisions made in a timely manner? (esp. for actions taken during a crisis and for recovery)

VISION & SUSTAINABILITY

How would you describe the timescale in which authorities operate? Do you see a focus on activities targeting a more short-term strategy or more long-term strategy?

4.2 Does there appear to be a focus put on actions taken by authorities on a short-term timescale rather than a long-term timescale?

8.1 Given current resources and interests, can practices be continued in the long-term?

8.2 Do you feel current practices advantage/disadvantage future generations?

TRUST & EQUALITY

Do you feel risks to flooding and landslides affect all those in your community equally?

7.1 In your opinion, with the currently existing regulations and risk management practices, are there specific groups of people who benefit less or who are put at a disadvantage compared to other groups in your community? More specifically, **do practices place an equal amount of burden on all members of your community or is the burden unevenly distributed to those least able to afford it?**

7.2 Are there identifiable groups in the community that are considered especially vulnerable as compared to other groups? What makes them more vulnerable?

Are there some examples you have that demonstrate a strong level of trust between the community (societal groups) and authorities?

9.2 Are there examples of past experiences you have that support the existence of an environment of trust or a lack of trust? (between people in the community, with higher level authorities, with local level authorities?)

9.4 Are methods employed to determine what level of risk is acceptable by the different societal groups ?

9.3 Is access to information provided in an acceptable manner? (status of information is acceptable)

9.5 (ONLY FOR POLAND AND ROMANIA) Is there evidence that supports an improvement from former historical times characterized by an environment of distrust?

9.6 Is there a strong level of trust in local authorities? Why is this? (If negative ask also: how can trust be regenerated?)

a. Is there any difference in the level of trust with Regional authorities? Why is this? (If negative ask also: how can trust be regenerated?)

MANAGEMENT & ASSESSMENT GENERAL

In your opinion, are there any existing regulations directly affecting your work that can be improved? (How might you improve them?)

5.1 Are there any examples you can think of where existing regulations need better enforcement? Are there some examples of existing regulations that should be improved?

Can you elaborate on the how the early warning systems in your community work?

5.5 Is there an effective early warning system put in place?

- a. Does it produce useful information/is this information provided in a way which allows use to make informed decisions for yourself and your household?
- b. 5.6 In past events, have reactions to early warning system information provided either under or overreaction?

6. Compared to other concerns in your municipality, how important are flooding and landslide risks? What is the most important issue in your municipality, i.e. which “problem” is given the most attention?

EXTRA Closing question: good practice example or elaboration? Anything, we did not ask that you feel is important to communicate?