



Strengthening Resilience for All in Pacific Disaster Preparedness: Diverse SOGIESC Toolkit

Table of Contents

About this toolkit

This is a practical toolkit, designed to support the safe and meaningful inclusion of people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) in Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM).

People with diverse SOGIESC experience disasters differently because preparedness, warnings, evacuations and recovery systems are usually designed around binary gender norms, household structures, and assumptions that do not reflect their lives or relationships. This can lead to exclusion from household registrations, being missed in risk mapping visits, unsafe or gendered shelter arrangements, or people avoiding community spaces due to past stigma or fear. These are structural patterns, not individual vulnerabilities, and they highlight why safe inclusion must be designed into CBDRM work, preferably from the start.

This toolkit helps you:

- Strengthen trust, safety, and participation for people with diverse SOGIESC.
- Equip CBDRM implementers with practical, culturally grounded tools.
- Plan for disasters in ways that reflect real community life.
- Reduce harm and build collective preparedness through reflection, dialogue, and relationships.

Do No Harm

The 'Do No Harm' principle is the foundation of this toolkit. It guides how CBDRM implementers engage, ask questions, design activities, and make decisions. In many Pacific and Timor-Leste contexts, people with diverse SOGIESC may face social stigma, exposure to gossip, or risks linked to being named or seen in public spaces. Safe inclusion requires careful planning, confidentiality, and culturally sensitive facilitation. Practitioners are encouraged to pause, reflect, and consider whether an action could unintentionally create harm or increase visibility, and to adjust approaches so participation is always voluntary, private, and grounded in local cultural values of care and protection.

In urban or peri-urban contexts, discussions about diverse SOGIESC inclusion may be more open, but this varies widely across the Pacific and Timor-Leste. Implementers should not assume safety based on geography; the same Do No Harm principles apply everywhere.

Guiding Approaches

This toolkit is shaped by 4 interconnected approaches that ground inclusion in Pacific realities and ensure CBDRM strengthens safety, trust, and collective wellbeing. These 4 approaches work together to guide every part of the toolkit:

1. Pacific Cultural Values

Inclusion is already embedded in systems of collective care such as *vanua*, *kastom*, *wantok*, and *hamutuk*. These values guide how communities protect one another and form the foundation for inclusive CBDRM. These cultural systems can create strong foundations for collective care, but they can also be spaces where stigma or exclusion is reinforced. In some communities, diverse SOGIESC people are framed as outside or against these values. Implementers should approach cultural values with care, recognising both their potential and their challenges, and work slowly to identify where trust, safety and openness already exist.

2. Human Rights-Based Inclusion

Every person has the right to participate, be safe, and be treated with dignity. This approach ensures systems are designed to include everyone, rather than expecting people to adapt to existing barriers.

3. Trauma-Informed Practice

Recognises that people and communities carry experiences of harm, including disaster impacts, interpersonal violence, discrimination, stigma, and exclusion from community life. People with diverse SOGIESC may carry additional layers of trauma linked to social rejection, forced invisibility, or past experiences of being unsafe in community or institutional settings. Trauma-informed CBDRM means facilitating in ways that centre emotional and cultural safety, reducing the likelihood of bringing past harms to the surface, minimise exposure or risk and support participation without pressure, judgement or expectation.

Examples of trauma relevant to diverse SOGIESC inclusion in CBDRM include:

- past experiences of stigma, harassment or exclusion in community settings
- fear of being outed, misnamed, or placed in unsafe gendered spaces
- previous violence from family, community members or authorities
- exclusion from shelters, warnings or community meetings in past disasters



4. Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation

CBDRM is not only technical; it is relational. This approach helps address tension, build trust, and strengthen social cohesion so communities can respond together, even when exclusion or conflict is present.

Examples of where peacebuilding and conflict-sensitive practice may be needed include:

- past exclusion or stigma that has created distance, silence or mistrust between diverse SOGIESC community members and local leaders.
- household or family tensions where differing beliefs about gender or sexuality affect whether people feel safe participating in preparedness activities.
- community divisions or recent disputes connected to land, leadership, church influence or resource allocation that impact who is heard in CBDRM work.
- fear of judgement or backlash, particularly in places where people with diverse SOGIESC have previously been blamed for social problems or disasters.
- strained organisational relationships, where non-government organisations (NGOs), churches or government actors may hold differing expectations about inclusion.

In these situations, peacebuilding does not mean resolving deep conflict. It means working slowly, building trust, and creating enough relational safety so that preparedness planning can take place without harming, exposing or isolating anyone.

Who is this toolkit for?

This toolkit is designed for Disaster READY partners and CBDRM implementers, including NGO staff, Community-based Organisations (CBOs), and government agencies working directly with communities.

It may also be useful for other disaster risk reduction and CBDRM actors in the region who are committed to strengthening inclusive, community-centred approaches.

Endorsement and use by National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs) across the five Disaster READY countries is encouraged.

Pre-requisite knowledge for safe use of this toolkit

This toolkit does not provide basic training on diverse SOGIESC concepts. CBDRM implementers need a minimum level of working knowledge to use tools such as the Country Context Tool or Community Readiness Assessment safely. This includes understanding:

- what diverse SOGIESC means in Pacific contexts
- common risks, stigma, and safety concerns
- how confidentiality, no-exposure, and do-no-harm principles apply
- the difference between visibility and safety
- how inclusion can be practised without naming identities.

Foundational learning can be provided by national diverse SOGIESC CBOs, or where needed, by an external Diverse SOGIESC advisor or specialist, provided this is safe and appropriate. If this knowledge is not yet in place, we recommend organisations complete introductory training in conjunction with this Toolkit.

Some of the tools within require implementers to recognise patterns of exclusion, risk, and safety dynamics that may not be visible without prior learning. If this knowledge is missing, implementers may misinterpret risks or apply the toolkit in ways that unintentionally cause harm. Organisations should ensure staff have access to foundational training delivered by national diverse SOGIESC CBOs or, where appropriate, by an external Diverse SOGIESC advisor or specialist.

Please also see Annex 1 for additional reading.

Who Facilitates What

Most tools in this toolkit are designed to be facilitated by Disaster READY partners and CBDRM implementers. In Part 4, you may decide to undertake some of the tools with village or settlement CBDRM committees.

All Disaster READY partners and implementing agencies are responsible for:

- Educating themselves and their organisations using internal reflection and accountability tools.
- Engaging community members through inclusive and participatory planning.
- Ensuring participation is trauma-informed, culturally safe, and voluntary.
- Collaborating with diverse SOGIESC CBOs and trusted local actors for advice and co-facilitation.



How to use this toolkit

This toolkit can be read from start to finish or implementers can jump into whatever sections are most relevant. That said, **the first four tools 2A to 2D in Part 2 should be completed prior to community-facing activities where possible.** These foundational tools establish safety, readiness, and contextual understanding, and should not be skipped. After this, implementers can move through the remaining tools in any order that fits their program. The toolkit includes practical tools, scenarios, and tips to help you create safer, more inclusive preparedness-processes grounded in local values and rights

Remember that inclusion is a long-term process. Building trust may require repeated visits, sustained relationships, and ongoing listening rather than short-term or once-off activities.

Overview of Toolkit

The toolkit is organised into **4 parts** that work together. Each part builds on the previous one, moving from foundations and organisational readiness through to practical inclusion in community disaster planning and partnerships that sustain inclusive practice.



PART	FOCUS	WHEN TO USE
Part 1: Foundations	Why inclusion of people with diverse SOGIESC matters. Peacebuilding, Pacific cultural values, human rights, and trauma-informed practice.	At project start, during staff onboarding, and when re-orienting teams to inclusive, trust-based practice.
Part 2: Organisational Tools for Inclusive CBDRM	Organisational accountability, readiness and safety. Includes tools for country context, self-assessment, community readiness and safety audits.	Before any community engagement or partnership. Also, during organisational reflection, safeguarding reviews, reporting or policy updates.
Part 3: Building Inclusion into CBDRM activities	Adapting CBDRM activities such as risk mapping, leadership, early-warning and shelter management to be safer and more inclusive.	Before running CBDRM activities, workshops, or consultations.
Part 4: Partnership and Sustainability	Building relationships and partnerships with Diverse SOGIESC CBOs and networks. Ensuring collaborations are fair, co-designed and grounded in trust.	When developing partnerships or planning long-term inclusion strategies.

Quick reference tool summary

PART & TOOL	TOOL TITLE	PURPOSE / FOCUS	WHEN TO USE
Part 2: Organisational Tools for Inclusive CBDRM			
Tool 2A	Country Context Tool	Understand the legal, cultural, and social environment that affects inclusion and safety for people with diverse SOGIESC.	At the start of a program, during country scoping, or when laws or social norms change.
Tool 2B	Organisational Accountability Tool	Assess internal readiness, policies, and systems for inclusion. Identify gaps and plan actions to strengthen accountability.	Before starting new programs, during annual reviews, or when forming new partnerships.
Tool 2C	Community Readiness Assessment	Understand how trust, power, and safety operate locally before engaging communities.	Before planning or outreach in any new community, or when an organisation is already working in a community and wants to reassess its readiness or strengthen inclusive practice.
Tool 2D	Community Safety Audit	Check that spaces, systems, and relationships uphold safety and dignity for all.	Before, during, and after any community activity.
Part 3: Building Inclusion into CBDRM activities			
Tool 3A	Inclusive Risk Assessment	Identify social and institutional risks that sit alongside physical hazards in CBDRM planning.	During community risk and vulnerability assessments.
Tool 3B	Inclusive Shelter Planning Checklist	Ensure evacuation centres and shelters protect privacy, dignity, and safety.	During preparedness-planning, audits, or response reviews.
Tool 3C	Inclusive -Participation Checklist	Adapt existing drills, meetings, and trainings so all people can participate safely.	Before and after drills, simulations, or community trainings.
Tool 3D	Inclusive Leadership Reflection	Strengthen fairness, inclusion, and accountability within CBDRM leadership structures.	During committee formation or review, or when leadership changes.
Tool 3E	Inclusive Early-Warning and Evacuation	Ensure messages reach everyone safely and evacuation processes are fair and accessible.	During preparedness-planning, system testing, or review.
Tool 3F	Inclusive WASH Planning and Management Checklist	Ensure water, sanitation, and hygiene systems are designed and managed to protect dignity, privacy, and safety for all.	During preparedness-planning, evacuation centre design, or early recovery.

Part 4: Working with diverse SOGIESC advisors and CBOs

Tool 4A	Champion Mapping Tool	Identify trusted individuals, informal allies, or organisations who can act as safe connectors and entry points for inclusive CBDRM engagement.	Early in project planning or community mapping, before consultations or when reviewing who helped during previous activities.
Tool 4B	Building and Maintaining Trust with Diverse SOGIESC CBOs	Strengthen long-term, accountable relationships with CBOs through fair payment, transparent communication, and shared learning.	During project design or adaptation phases; when initiating, reviewing, or sustaining partnerships over time.

Scenario Summary

A quick reference scenario list, of the various diverse SOGIESC focused scenarios in the toolkit.

SCENARIO TITLE	LOCATION / FOCUS	TOOLKIT SECTION	PAGE NUMBER
We Didn't Know What to Do	Vanuatu – Exclusion, invisibility, gendered harm	Part 1	16
We Changed How We Planned	Fiji – Early inclusion through small organisational adjustments	Part 2	32
We Didn't Know What to Write	Fiji – Institutional exclusion through unsafe forms	Part 2	36
They Skipped Our House	Vanuatu – Exclusion during mapping	Part 2	41
We Saw Risks We Had Missed	Solomon Islands – Inclusive risk information and quiet participation	Part 3	51
The Shelter Felt Safe This Time	PNG – Safety and dignity in shelter spaces	Part 3	55
We Thought We Weren't Welcome	PNG – Fear and exclusion from meetings	Part 3	59
They Think We're All the Same	PNG Highlands – Leadership and stigma	Part 3	62
We Just Listened from Outside	Timor-Leste – Exclusion from warnings and evacuation	Part 3	68
People Finally Felt Comfortable Using the Facilities	Vanuatu – Privacy focused WASH adjustments	Part 3	72
We Were Included, But Still Felt Exposed	Vanuatu – Uncertainty in meetings	Part 4	83
The Voices Kept Going	Timor-Leste – Community-led resilience and sustainability	Part 4	86

Adaptation guidance

This toolkit is a flexible guide, not a fixed manual. Adapt it to your organisation's readiness to engage safely, and to local culture and language.

You are encouraged to:

- Translate the tools, however this must be done by someone who understands how language is used in context. Some terms that seem neutral or commonly used in local languages can carry discriminatory or stigmatising meanings for people with diverse SOGIESC. This is an excellent place to work with diverse SOGIESC CBOs, who can help ensure translations are culturally grounded, safe, and free from wording that might unintentionally cause harm.
- Use visuals, metaphors, and storytelling for low-literacy or oral contexts, but ensure these are developed with people who understand how images, symbols, and narratives are interpreted locally. Some visuals or metaphors that seem harmless can carry unintended stigma or reinforce stereotypes. Working with diverse SOGIESC CBOs during this process can help ensure that stories, illustrations, and examples are culturally grounded and do not inadvertently create discomfort or exclusion for diverse SOGIESC communities.
- Frame inclusion through local cultural values such as *duavata*, *kastom*, *vanua*, or *hamutuk*.
- Apply a trauma-informed approach; work gently, create choice, and support people to feel safe and comfortable sharing their experiences and needs.
- Avoid using approaches that require people with diverse SOGIESC to be visible to CBDRM implementers; inclusion does not require anyone to disclose who they are.



Printing Tips for the Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to be flexible and easy to use in different settings.

You can print the entire document or select specific sections, tools, or activities as needed.

To make printing and use easier:

- **Print by Part:** Each part can be used as a stand-alone booklet for team training, reflection, or partnership planning.
- **Print by Tool:** Each tool has its own clear start and end, so you can print single tools to use in meetings, field activities, or workshops.
- **Print Reflection or Scenario Pages Separately:** These pages can be used as discussion prompts during training or team reflection sessions.
- **Keep Safety in Mind:** If printing in contexts where SOGIESC discussions are sensitive, label materials broadly (e.g., Inclusive CBDRM Tools) rather than using language that could create risk.

Printing only what you need helps keep the toolkit portable, adaptable, and safe to use in different environments.



Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION
Accountability	Being responsible for decisions and actions, especially to the communities affected.
Champion	A trusted community member who quietly supports inclusion and safety.
Chosen family	Refers to close relationships and support networks that a person builds by choice, rather than through biological or legal family ties. For many people with diverse SOGIESC, chosen family may provide care, safety, emotional support, and practical assistance, especially where family or community support is limited or unsafe.
Cultural safety	Working in a way that honours local protocols, avoids harm, and builds trust through relationships rather than visibility or disclosure
Disclosure	Revealing personal information, such as gender identity or sexuality.
Disaster READY	A disaster preparedness program funded by the Australian Government and implemented across Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu between 2017 and 2027.
Diverse SOGIESC	Refers to people whose sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions, or sex characteristics differ from social or cultural expectations. The word “diverse” recognises that there is no single way to experience or express sexuality, gender, or sex characteristics. These experiences vary across cultures, generations, and communities, including across the Pacific. People with diverse SOGIESC may or may not use global identity terms such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, intersex or asexual. Many people use local cultural terms, relational concepts, or may prefer not to label themselves at all. Diverse SOGIESC is an inclusive term that respects all ways people understand and live their identities, bodies and relationships.
Do No Harm	An approach that ensures our actions, decisions and systems do not create new risks, reinforce stigma, or worsen existing inequalities. Do No Harm recognises that policies, tools, data collection, community processes and organisational behaviour can all unintentionally expose people to danger, pressure or exclusion. Practising Do No Harm means slowing down, understanding the local context, paying attention to power, and making choices that protect safety and dignity for everyone, including people with diverse SOGIESC.
Emotional safety	Feeling secure, respected, and supported in a space, especially during discussions.
Facilitator	Within this toolkit, ‘facilitator’ refers to a person who leads or guides toolkit activities to support safe, inclusive participation. Facilitators help groups reflect, plan, and make decisions without judgment, ensuring safety, respect, and care in every session.

Gender expression	How a person shows or expresses their gender through clothing, hairstyle, voice, behaviour, mannerisms, names or how they carry themselves. Gender expression is not the same as gender identity, and a person may express their gender in ways that do or do not match cultural expectations. In the Pacific and other parts of the global South, gender expression is shaped by local culture, language, spirituality, community roles and relational responsibilities. These cultural understandings may differ from Western ideas of “masculine” or “feminine.” All forms of gender expression are valid expressions of human diversity.
Gender identity	A person’s deeply felt and individual sense of their own gender, which may or may not align with the sex assigned to them at birth. Gender identity can include being a woman, man, both, neither, or another gender altogether.
Hamutuk	A Tetum word meaning working together in cooperation, unity and solidarity. Hamutuk reflects the belief that community strength comes from collective effort, shared responsibility and mutual care. It is used in Timor-Leste to describe people coming together to solve problems, support each other and rebuild after hardship. Hamutuk emphasises relationships, trust and the idea that no one is left to face challenges alone.
Intersectionality	How different aspects of a person’s identity combine to shape their experiences of privilege, exclusion, and discrimination in relation to systems of power and decision-making.
Kastom	A Melanesian term referring to the traditional beliefs, values, practices and ways of living that guide community life. Kastom shapes how people relate to each other, how decisions are made, how land and resources are cared for, and how roles and responsibilities are understood. It includes stories, ceremonies, knowledge, obligations and social expectations passed down through generations. Kastom is living and dynamic, changing as communities change, while still holding deep cultural authority.
Lived experience	The knowledge and insight a person gain through their own life, shaped by their circumstances, relationships, and interactions with systems of power. Lived experience is more than identity; it reflects how a person’s experiences of safety, exclusion, resilience, or belonging have informed what they know and how they understand the world.
Men who have sex with men	A public health term used to describe males who engage in sexual activity with other males, regardless of how they identify their sexual orientation or gender identity. The term focuses on sexual behaviour for health and prevention purposes and does not assume identity, community affiliation, or self-identification.
Representation	Having people from different groups meaningfully involved in planning and decision-making. In inclusive CBDRM, representation means more than presence or numbers; it ensures that diverse voices, including those of women, people with disabilities, and people with diverse SOGIESC, can influence decisions, share perspectives safely, and be respected for their knowledge and experience.
Sex characteristics	The physical parts of a person’s body, like chromosomes, hormones, and reproductive organs. These vary naturally for all people. Some people are intersex, which means their sex characteristics do not fit typical ideas of female or male. All variations are normal and part of human diversity.

Sexual orientation	Sexual orientation is a person's deep emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction, or their lack of attraction. This can include attraction to people of the same gender, a different gender, more than one gender, or no sexual attraction. Sexual orientation is understood and expressed in many different ways across cultures. In the Pacific and other parts of the global South, people may use local terms, relational concepts, or community-specific language that does not match Western identity labels. Some people may use global terms like lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual or asexual, while others describe their attraction and relationships in ways grounded in culture, kinship, spirituality or community roles. There is no single way to name or experience sexual orientation. All orientations and all cultural expressions of attraction are valid parts of human diversity.
Solesolevaki	A Fijian practice of coming together to work collectively for a shared purpose. Solesolevaki is grounded in relationships, reciprocity, and mutual support. It reflects the understanding that community wellbeing is created through shared labour, shared responsibility, and shared care. People contribute what they can, knowing that others will do the same when needed. Solesolevaki strengthens trust, connection, and collective resilience.
Tokenism	Involving a person or group only to create the appearance of diversity or inclusion, without giving them real voice, influence, or decision-making power. True inclusion means participation that is meaningful, respected, and able to shape outcomes.
Trans/transgender	An umbrella term for people whose gender identity is different from the sex they were assigned at birth. This includes binary trans people (for example, trans women and trans men) and non-binary trans people, whose gender does not fit within the categories of 'woman' or 'man'. The term "transgender" is used in many global settings, but cultural understandings of gender diversity vary widely across the Pacific and Timor-Leste. In some communities, gender-diverse people have long-standing cultural or social roles that do not align with Western models of gender identity or transition. Local language, customs, and expectations shape how gender-diverse people are recognised, included, or stigmatised. Some people may identify with global terms such as transgender, while others may use local terms or choose not to name their identity at all. In this toolkit, the term "trans" includes all people whose lived gender does not align with the sex assigned at birth, recognising both global terminology and culturally specific expressions of gender diversity.
Trauma-informed	An approach that recognises that people and communities carry past experiences of harm, including disaster impacts, discrimination, exclusion, violence, stigma and unsafe institutional or community interactions. Trauma-informed practice works to avoid causing new harm by creating emotional and cultural safety, supporting choice, reducing pressure, and ensuring people can participate without fear or discomfort. It emphasises respect, trust, and awareness of how power and past experiences shape people's reactions, needs and sense of safety.
Trusted Circles	Informal diverse SOGIESC community members or allies who provide support.
Vanua	A Fijian concept that describes the deep connection between land, people, ancestors, and spiritual life. Vanua is not only a physical place. It includes the relationships, obligations, customs, and identities that hold a community together. Caring for the vanua means caring for the wellbeing of people, the land, the environment, and the cultural responsibilities that bind them. Decisions that affect the vanua are understood as affecting the whole community.

Vakaselewalewa	A Fijian term used in some communities to describe people assigned male at birth who live in feminine ways, take on feminine roles, or express a feminine gender. People who are vakasalewalewa may or may not use Western terms such as “transgender.” The meaning, acceptance, and experience of vakasalewalewa vary across families, villages, and regions in Fiji.
No disclosure required	Being acknowledged and included without needing to reveal private identity.
Wantok	A Melanesian concept describing the close bonds between people who share language, kinship, place, or cultural ties. Wantok relationships carry expectations of mutual support, shared responsibility, and social obligation. People in a wantok system help each other in times of need, contribute to community wellbeing, and uphold collective identity. The wantok system strengthens social protection and belonging, but it can also shape who is included or excluded in community decisions.

Acronyms

ACRONYM	DEFINITION
AHP	Australian Humanitarian Partnership
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CBDRM	Community-Based Disaster Risk Management
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation
LGBTIQA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer or Questioning, Asexual and other diverse identities.
MSM	Men who have sex with men
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
SOGIESC	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

A Note on language and terminology

Language shapes safety, trust, and participation. In Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste, people describe their identities in many ways, often using local terms, relational descriptions, or no labels at all. This toolkit uses language that recognises this diversity and avoids forcing Western identity categories onto communities.

Diverse SOGIESC

Throughout this toolkit, we use the term people with diverse Sexual Orientations, Gender Identities, Gender Expressions and Sex Characteristics (diverse SOGIESC). This language focuses on characteristics rather than identity labels. It helps practitioners think about inclusion without making assumptions about how people describe themselves. It is respectful in contexts where public identification may be unsafe or unwanted.

LGBTIQA+

Many civil society organisations in the Pacific and Timor-Leste describe their work as LGBTIQA+ focused, because this acronym is widely recognised in human rights, donor, and advocacy spaces. It is important to acknowledge and respect that this is the language used by community-based organisations. In community settings, however, the acronym may feel foreign or may not reflect local understandings of gender, relationships, or sexuality. Some people may identify with these letters, some may identify with local terms, and others may prefer not to use identity labels at all.

PIDSOGIESC (Pacific Islander Diverse SOGIESC)

Some regional networks, including the Pacific Gender and Diverse Sexualities Network use the term PIDSOGIESC, meaning Pacific Islander people with diverse SOGIESC. This term is used by regional activists to signal a shared political and cultural context. It is an advocacy term rather than a personal identity label. People in communities do not generally describe themselves this way, but it is a useful way to refer to Pacific-led collective efforts for safety, visibility, and rights.

Local language and cultural terms

Across the Pacific and Timor-Leste, people use local language terms to describe gender, relationships, and social roles. These terms carry cultural meaning that does not always translate neatly into Western identity categories. For example, communities may use words that describe behaviour, kinship roles, or social responsibilities rather than identity. Using local language when it is offered, and following the language that people choose for themselves, is a key part of cultural safety. CBDRM implementers are encouraged to avoid guessing or assigning labels, and instead use respectful, open language that does not require disclosure or self-identification.

Why this toolkit avoids relying on LGBTIQA+ categories in practice

In community-level CBDRM work, asking people to fit themselves into specific identity categories can create pressure, risk, or misunderstanding. It can also render local identities, relationships, and ways of belonging invisible, especially when everything that does not fit neatly into LGBTIQA+ becomes absorbed into the “plus”. Focusing on SOGIESC characteristics rather than identity categories helps ensure the toolkit is culturally relevant, safe, and flexible. It allows practitioners to think about inclusion without requiring people to name themselves in ways that may not feel safe, familiar, or culturally grounded.





Foundations for inclusive CBDRM

Understanding why inclusion matters and how to practise it safely and respectfully.

Why inclusion matters in CBDRM

Disasters do not affect everyone equally. For people with diverse SOGIESC, the risks they face often come from systems that were never designed with them in mind. In many Pacific and Timor-Leste communities, people with diverse SOGIESC may be left out of household registrations, risk-mapping exercises, committee roles, or evacuation planning. Some avoid shelters because they fear harassment, being placed in unsafe sleeping arrangements, or being asked to 'prove' their gender. Others participate quietly through informal care networks that operate outside formal CBDRM structures, meaning their contributions are present but rarely recognised. These differences matter because exclusion, not identity, is what creates risk.

At the same time, people with diverse SOGIESC also sustain community wellbeing in ways that are often overlooked. They provide care for elders, support children, mobilise neighbours, and hold important social and cultural knowledge. When their roles go unseen, communities lose a source of connection and resilience.

Building inclusion in CBDRM work is therefore not simply technical work, it is also relationship work. Inclusion helps repair trust where it has been weakened by stigma, silence, or past experiences of being unwelcome. This is why inclusion functions as a form of peacebuilding: it strengthens everyday relationships, supports safer participation for everyone, and helps communities work together more effectively before, during and after disasters.

Part 1 of this toolkit can be referred to at any point in the project cycle, not only at the beginning. Teams can return to these foundations when orienting new staff,

re-orienting existing teams, strengthening trust with communities, or adapting CBDRM activities partway through a project. Using this section regularly helps ensure that inclusive practice remains grounded, consistent and safe, even when contexts shift, or new risks emerge.

Inclusive CBDRM is grounded in the humanitarian imperative that 'action should be taken to prevent or alleviate human suffering arising out of disaster or conflict'¹, without discrimination on any grounds. This principle applies in every community context, including places where people with diverse SOGIESC may not be visible or may participate through informal networks. Practising inclusion helps ensure that no one is left behind simply because existing systems were not designed with their lives, relationships or realities in mind.

1 The Humanitarian Charter (Sphere, 2018)

SCENARIO

We didn't know what to do

Location: Small Island Community, Vanuatu

Content Warning: This scenario contains descriptions of sexual violence, forced marriage, homophobia, and exclusion

Lina grew up on a small island in Vanuatu. As a teenager, her parents became suspicious because she was very close with another girl in their village. They believed Lina was romantically and physically attracted to women. Her parents arranged for her to marry a man from a nearby community. She was only 16.

Lina begged not to be married, but her parents insisted. When her future husband heard rumours that Lina "wasn't normal" and "liked girls," he got angry. He thought he could "fix her" by having sex with her. He raped her, believing this would cure her.

Lina ran away. She fled to a larger village on another island where she lived alone and in hiding. She was pregnant and had no family, no support, and no money.

Two years later, Lina met another woman named Nia. They built a quiet life together with Lina's young daughter. They kept to themselves. In town, they often heard church leaders and local officials say that people like them were shameful or sinful. Sometimes, they heard that the government wanted to criminalise people who are diverse SOGIESC. They felt unsafe.

When their community held disaster preparedness meetings, they did not attend. They assumed those meetings weren't for people like them. They didn't want to be seen or gossiped about. They stayed away from anything organised by government or NGOs.

One day, Nia told Lina she had heard a Category 5 cyclone was coming. Neither knew how serious it was. They thought a Level 5 was the lowest category, not the highest. They didn't receive a warning because they weren't on any phone list or WhatsApp group. They didn't know where to evacuate. They stayed home.

Reflection Questions

1. Systems and Assumption

What assumptions, systems or community practices in this story contributed to people being excluded, silenced or made unsafe?

2. Safe and Inclusive Practice

If you were planning CBDRM activities in a similar context, what could you do differently to create safety, trust and access for people who may avoid formal systems because of past harm or stigma?



Inclusion as Peacebuilding and Preparedness

Inclusion in CBDRM is not about ticking boxes or widening participation. It is about rebuilding trust, repairing relationships, and creating conditions where everyone feels safe, respected, and able to contribute. In many communities, people with diverse SOGIESC have experienced exclusion, silence, or rejection. Addressing these patterns is a form of peacebuilding because it works at the root causes of marginalisation, reduces tension, and strengthens the relationships that hold communities

together. These stronger social foundations help communities prepare for, withstand, and recover from crises.

When CBDRM reflects the lived realities of all people - including those who are often excluded - it becomes more grounded, fair, and effective. Inclusion is not an add-on to preparedness; it is its foundation. It connects cultural values, human rights, trauma-informed care, and peacebuilding into one practice of community safety.

Key Concepts: Power, Safety, and Intersectionality

Disasters do not affect everyone in the same way. Gender, sexuality, disability, age, class and other parts of who we are shape how people experience risk, safety and recovery. People with diverse SOGIESC are often left out, not because they lack skills or strength, but because the systems surrounding preparedness, warnings, evacuation and recovery were not designed with their lives and realities in mind.



Power influences these experiences. It shapes who is listened to, who feels safe to speak, who makes decisions and whose needs are overlooked or dismissed. Inclusion means paying attention to our own position and influence as CBDRM implementers, and understanding how power operates within families, churches, committees and community structures. When we understand this, we can design processes that are safer, more respectful and more accessible for everyone.



Safety is more than physical protection from a hazard. In CBDRM, safety also means having a place or process where people feel respected, have privacy, can access support, and can participate without fear of judgement or harm. It includes the conditions that help people protect themselves, look after their families, and make decisions with confidence. Creating safety in CBDRM means avoiding practices that single people out, cause embarrassment, or create unwanted attention, and making sure people can take part in ways that feel comfortable and culturally respectful for them.



Intersectionality helps us understand that people's experiences of safety and exclusion are shaped by connected systems of power, not by single identities. SOGIESC itself includes several characteristics such as sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics, but people with diverse SOGIESC also navigate systems shaped by law and criminalisation, gaps in anti-discrimination protections, church influence, government structures, international NGO (INGO) practices, CBDRM processes and customary authority. These systems do not operate separately; they reinforce each other and shape who is welcomed, who is questioned and who is overlooked. For example, a gender-diverse person with a disability may face both physical barriers in CBDRM activities and social expectations in church or family settings that limit their safety or participation. Practising inclusion means recognising how these systems combine and working to change the conditions that create unequal access to safety, participation and protection.

The story below demonstrates how these concepts affect real experiences of inclusion and exclusion for people with diverse SOGIESC:

How power, safety, and intersectionality influence CBDRM

Lote is a gender-diverse young person living with extended family in a rural coastal village. At home, decisions are made by the eldest uncle, who does not acknowledge Lote's gender identity and insists they remain under the authority of the family. Whenever officials visit, he answers on behalf of everyone. Lote is rarely asked directly about their needs, responsibilities or concerns.

During CBDRM preparedness-meetings, church leaders open with strong messages about proper behaviour and respecting tradition. People glance at Lote when these messages are shared. Lote feels embarrassed and judged, so they choose not to attend. They worry that simply being present will cause gossip or public shaming, especially from youth groups linked to the church.

When risk mapping is conducted, the CBDRM team visits households but does not speak privately with individuals. Lote's uncle reports that everyone is fine, and that all information should be sent to his phone. Lote is not added to the early-warning list, even though they often move between households to help cousins with chores. Without their own access to warnings, they rely on rumours or last-minute announcements.

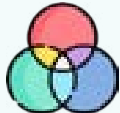
During evacuation drills, Lote avoids participating because people stare, whisper or joke about how they walk or dress. The shelter committee assigns men's and women's sleeping areas based strictly on sex assigned at birth. Lote knows they will not be safe in either, so they stay on the edge of the village during drills and plan to shelter alone if a real cyclone arrives.

Lote is not excluded because they lack ability or interest. They are excluded because systems around them, including family hierarchy, church authority, gender norms, communication processes and shelter arrangements, were not designed with their safety, privacy or dignity in mind.

This experience shows how power, safety and intersectionality shape real access to preparedness, warnings and protection.



The table below helps CBDRM implementers see how each concept, power, safety and intersectionality, affects Lote's experience, and how different choices could create safer, more inclusive participation.

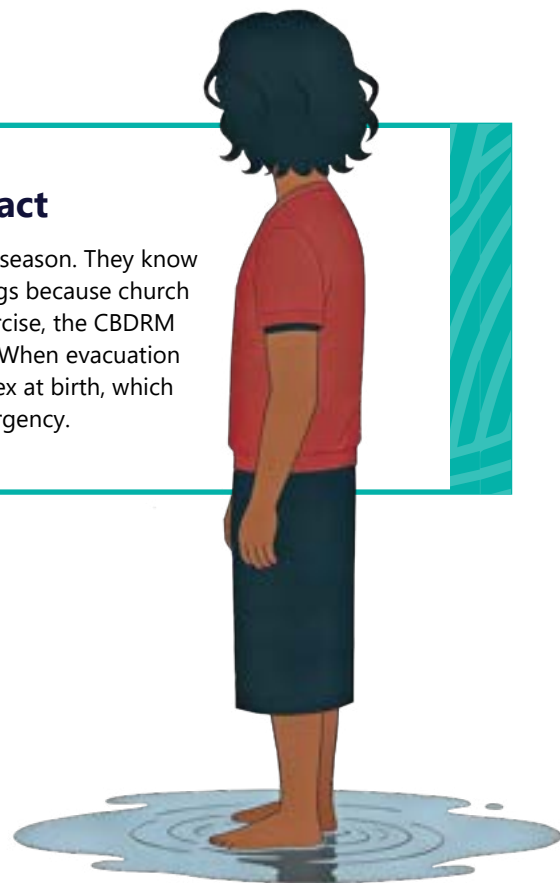
CONCEPT	WHAT IT MEANS IN CBDRM	HOW IT SHOWS UP IN PRACTICE	WHY IT MATTERS FOR INCLUSION
 Power	Who holds decision-making authority, whose voices are prioritised, and how systems of inclusion or exclusion are reinforced	Village leaders set evacuation priorities; church leaders decide who speaks at meetings; traditional norms define who is part of the "community"	Power determines who takes part, whose needs are recognised, and which issues are seen as important in disaster planning
 Safety	More than physical protection, it includes emotional, cultural, spiritual, and relational safety in community spaces and processes	People with diverse SOGIESC feel unsafe in community shelters; people with disabilities are left out of drills; survivors of violence stay silent in planning meetings	Without safety, people do not participate. Visibility alone is not inclusion if joining in causes harm
 Intersectionality	People's experiences of risk are shaped by connected systems of power (such as gender, sexuality, disability, age, ethnicity, class, and faith)	A young trans woman with a disability may face mobility barriers, being misnamed, and close monitoring, all at once	Effective inclusion means understanding how systems of power interact, not assuming one approach will work for everyone

The story below demonstrates how powerholders within communities can create unsafe environments and the ripple on effect it can have:

How power, safety, and intersectionality interact

Tala is a gender-diverse person who often helps neighbours during cyclone season. They know the area well, including which houses flood first. Tala avoids CBDRM meetings because church leaders have publicly criticised people like them. During a risk mapping exercise, the CBDRM team speaks only to household heads, so Tala's knowledge is not captured. When evacuation plans are developed, Tala is assigned to the men's sleeping area based on sex at birth, which feels unsafe to them. They decide they will not use the shelter in a real emergency.

The example above shows how power, safety and intersectionality can interact in a single CBDRM activity.



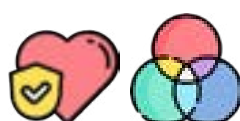
INTERACTION	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN CBDRM	IMPLICATIONS
Power + Safety	When people with power ignore or dismiss safety concerns, others may withdraw or choose not to take part	Inclusion requires sharing power so everyone can participate and speak safely
Safety + Intersectionality	People who face several kinds of exclusion may need quiet, private, or non-visible ways to join in	Facilitation should make space for anonymous input, peer support, and different ways of communicating
Power + Intersectionality	Those most affected by disaster risks often hold the least amount of formal power	Village CBDRM committees may overlook informal networks and peer leaders while focusing mainly on formal positions
Power + Safety + Intersectionality	Inclusion fails when power is not questioned, safety is not protected, or diversity is not understood in context	CBDRM committees and systems should reflect on their own power, put safety first in all decisions, and adapt processes so people with diverse identities can join and lead safely



Power + Safety

In the story, church leaders' authority shapes who feels safe to attend meetings. Tala stays away because those with power have created an unsafe environment.

Implication: Changing this means sharing power, adjusting facilitation, and ensuring that people who face stigma have safe ways to join.



Safety + Intersectionality

Tala faces exclusion because of both gender expression and the gendered layout of shelters. Having multiple layers of identity affects what safety looks like.

Implication: CBDRM processes must allow confidential participation, private communication channels and safer shelter arrangements.



Power + Intersectionality

Although Tala knows the area well, the CBDRM team only listens to household heads and formal leaders. Tala's local knowledge goes unrecognised.

Implication: Committees must value informal knowledge holders, not only those in formal roles.

What it looks like in CBDRM

People are excluded when those in power do not question their own influence, when participation does not feel safe, and when diversity is not considered in decisions.

Teams need to look at all three together, reflect on their own power, prioritise safety and adapt processes so people with diverse identities can participate and lead.

For people with diverse SOGIESC, trauma may come from past experiences of stigma, silence, discrimination or unsafe community or institutional responses. Resilience often comes from strong peer networks, cultural knowledge and the ability to navigate complex social environments. A trauma-informed and community-centred approach respects both realities.

Inclusive CBDRM work is grounded in:

- **Cultural values** such as *vanua*, *kastom*, *hamutuk* and *wantok*, which already offer pathways for collective care and shared responsibility. These values can support inclusive practice when they make space for everyone to contribute, including those who are often overlooked.
- **A mainstream approach**, which means building inclusion into every part of CBDRM rather than treating diverse SOGIESC as a separate activity. This helps ensure that preparedness, warnings, evacuation and recovery processes work for people with different identities and lived realities.
- The understanding that **inclusion must be part of community systems**, not an add-on. When inclusion is not built into routine processes, people with diverse SOGIESC are easily missed or placed at risk.
- **Safeguarding and peacebuilding principles**, which focus on safety, dignity and respectful relationships. These principles help address the fears and mistrust that people with diverse SOGIESC may have from past harm or exclusion.

Inclusion is not a checklist. It is a continuing process of reflection, learning and adaptation that responds to people's lived realities, including the realities of diverse SOGIESC community members whose needs and strengths may be less visible in public spaces.

Inclusive CBDRM requires navigating complex cultural values, community expectations and diverse SOGIESC realities. Part 1 does not ask implementers to resolve these tensions on their own, but to recognise that they exist and to approach them with care. For many Pacific implementers, concepts such as *vanua*, *kastom*, *hamutuk* or *wantok* may feel familiar, but applying them to diverse SOGIESC inclusion may be new. The aim of Part 1 is to offer a shared starting point: understanding how power, safety and intersectionality shape exclusion, and why inclusion must be practiced with cultural grounding and Do No Harm principles. The tools that follow help translate these ideas into practical steps so that implementers do not need to rely on cultural assumptions or personal beliefs, but can follow clear processes that support safe, respectful and context-appropriate inclusion.

After reading Part 1, your team should be ready to move from understanding to action. You will have a shared foundation for inclusive CBDRM, grounded in local values. Carry this forward by applying what you have learned: recognise how power, safety, and intersectionality shape risk, and commit to practising inclusion through Do No Harm and No Disclosure Required principles in every stage of your work. These insights will guide how you approach the tools and activities in the next sections of the toolkit.





PART

2

Practical tools for inclusive CBDRM

This section supports NGOs, INGOs and CBDRM implementers to prepare, engage and strengthen inclusion at any stage of their work. The tools can be used before beginning a project, when joining an existing initiative, or when teams recognise that their current approaches need to be safer or more inclusive. Part 2 provides four practical tools to help teams understand their context, assess internal readiness, build trust and ensure safety across all activities.

Inclusive CBDRM cannot be imposed. It must be invited, earned and grounded in relationships of trust. When inclusion involves people with diverse SOGIESC, this groundwork becomes especially important because many have experienced stigma, silence or fear in formal processes. This section supports CBDRM implementers to prepare themselves and their teams so that inclusion is safe, practical and sustainable, even in contexts where SOGIESC cannot be named openly. The aim is to strengthen the conditions that allow people with diverse identities and lived realities to participate without risk.

Summary of tools

TOOL	PURPOSE	WHEN TO USE
2A Country Context Tool	Understand legal and cultural context and identify risks.	Program scoping or design.
2B Organisational Accountability Tool	Assess inclusion in policies and systems.	Before engagement or during review.
2C Community Readiness Assessment	Understand when and how to engage safely.	Before community activities.
2D Community Safety Audit	Ensure spaces and systems are inclusive and safe.	Before, during, and after engagement.

These tools are designed to strengthen the practice of NGOs, INGOs and CBDRM teams themselves. Where relationships with Diverse SOGIESC organisations exist, they may choose to share insights or advice if it is safe and appropriate, but they are not expected to lead CBDRM work.

These tools are designed to be used together, creating a clear pathway from preparation to safe engagement.

How to use this section of the toolkit:

- Use Tool 2A and Tool 2B at the start of a new project, when joining an existing project, or before continuing community activities where inclusion needs to be strengthened.
- Use Tool 2C to decide if, how and when to engage with a particular community, and revisit it when context or relationships change.
- Tool 2D can be used before and after public activities to check that spaces and processes remain safe.





Country context tool

Understanding the country context is essential for safe and effective CBDRM that includes people with diverse SOGIESC. Laws, social attitudes, and cultural norms vary widely across the Pacific, and these factors directly affect whether people can participate safely in disaster preparedness and response activities. This tool helps program teams assess risk, identify opportunities, and make informed decisions before engaging communities. It ensures that inclusion strategies are grounded in the real environment, not assumptions, so that no activity puts people at risk or unintentionally causes harm.

Users may need support from a national diverse SOGIESC CBO or from an external Diverse SOGIESC advisor or specialist to complete this tool accurately. If staff do not yet have basic knowledge of diverse SOGIESC inclusion, or if no local organisation is available to advise, the team should pause and complete preparatory learning before using this tool. This ensures the analysis reflects real risks and does not unintentionally reinforce stigma or exclusion.

This is a foundational tool. It supports implementers to act responsibly, adapt their approach to each context, and plan for safety, sensitivity, and accountability from the very beginning of a program.

Purpose: To understand the legal and social environment that affects inclusion and safety for people with diverse SOGIESC.

When to use: At the start of a program, during country scoping, or whenever laws or social conditions change.

Who facilitates: Country teams, program managers and staff who have basic working knowledge of diverse SOGIESC issues. External diverse SOGIESC advisors or, where appropriate and safe, local CSOs may offer insights, but they are not expected to lead or facilitate CBDRM activities.

Time: This tool cannot usually be completed in a single session. Initial discussions may take 2 to 4 hours, but gathering accurate information can take several days depending on the availability of data, the country context and the depth of research required. In some cases, a researcher or advisor may need to support this process. Update as country contexts evolve. Update as country contexts evolve.

Steps

- 1** Gather background information using local legal, cultural, and policy documents.
- 2** Discuss each question in the Country Context Table. Record findings clearly.
- 3** Rate risks as Low, Medium, or High (L/M/H).
- 4** Identify practical actions your organisation can take to reduce risk or build safety.



Country legal and social context table

DIMENSION	KEY QUESTIONS	COUNTRY SITUATION	RISK L/M/H	ACTION NEEDED
1. Legal Protection and Criminalisation	Are same-sex relationships criminalised under national law? If so, how is this law applied in practice?	Example: Same-sex relationships are criminalised, but enforcement is inconsistent and often depends on police discretion. Public morality laws are sometimes used to target feminine-presenting men.	High	Example: Avoid any activities that increase visibility. Use No Disclosure Required. Seek quiet guidance from trusted Diverse SOGIESC advisors. Do not assume safety when engaging officials.
	Are laws such as cross-dressing, public morality or indecency provisions used to target people because of how they present or express their gender?			
	Is there any legal process for gender transition, and can people safely access it?			
	Are there anti-discrimination protections that include sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics?			
	Are there privacy or data protection laws that help safeguard people's information?			
	How often are these laws enforced, and by whom? Are they actively used, rarely used or used selectively?			
	How do these laws and their enforcement affect the safety of CBDRM activities at the community level?			

DIMENSION	KEY QUESTIONS	COUNTRY SITUATION	RISK L/M/H	ACTION NEEDED
2. Law Enforcement and Government Practices	How do police and government officials treat people with diverse SOGIESC?			
	Are there known cases of violence, blackmail, or harassment by authorities?			
	Are complaints or legal protections accessible to people at risk?			
3. Freedom of Expression and Association	Can diverse SOGIESC organisations or informal groups supporting people with diverse SOGIESC register or operate legally?			
	Are public discussions about sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression permitted, tolerated, discouraged, or restricted?			
	Are there laws, policies or informal practices that restrict peaceful assembly, advocacy, or media coverage related to SOGIESC?			
	How are people with diverse SOGIESC spoken about in families, workplaces, and community life?			
	In general, how do families, workplaces, schools, community groups, and local leaders speak about or respond to gender and sexuality?			
	Are some groups (for example, trans women, feminine-presenting men, people with intersex variations, or women who partner with women) spoken about or treated differently?			

DIMENSION	KEY QUESTIONS	COUNTRY SITUATION	RISK L/M/H	ACTION NEEDED
5. Faith and Religious Influence	How do major faith-based groups and leaders influence public opinion and behaviour related to gender, sexuality, and family roles?			
	Have faith leaders or organisations made public statements or taken positions that support or oppose inclusion?			
	Are faith settings (church meetings, youth groups, women's groups, etc.) generally safe and respectful for people whose SOGIESC is known or perceived?			
	Are some people more likely to face negative attention in faith settings because of how they express their gender or who they are assumed to partner with?			
6. Traditional and Cultural Systems	How do traditional norms, customs, and leadership structures influence expectations about gender roles, family obligations, and belonging?			
	How do values such as vanua, kastom, wantok, or hamutuk shape community responsibility, protection, or decision-making?			
	Are there cultural beliefs or practices that may unintentionally exclude, shame, or place certain people at risk because of gender expression, sexuality, or family structure?			

DIMENSION	KEY QUESTIONS	COUNTRY SITUATION	RISK L/M/H	ACTION NEEDED
7. Visibility and Public Safety	Could participating in CBDRM activities (meetings, committees, drills, training) place people at risk if their SOGIESC becomes visible?			
	What forms of public exposure (meetings, photos, sign-in sheets, social media) are common in this context?			
	What measures exist or are needed to allow people to participate without being identified publicly?			
8. Media and Information Environment	How do national and local media portray people with diverse SOGIESC? (positive, neutral, negative, sensationalised)?			
	Are there known risks from online harassment, misinformation, or targeted exposure?			
	Are there journalists or outlets that promote accurate, respectful reporting?			
9. Community Support and Civil Society Landscape	Are there diverse SOGIESC CSOs, informal groups, or peer networks active locally or nationally?			
	Are these groups operating openly, discreetly, or under risk?			
	Are there existing relationships between humanitarian or development actors and these groups?			
	If engagement is possible, what are the risks to the organisation, the individuals, or to the CBDRM program?			
	If engagement is not possible, what alternative sources of insight or safeguarding support exist?			

How to use the L/M/H rating

The L/M/H risk rating reflects the level of danger a context may pose to people with diverse SOGIESC, not the likelihood of harm occurring and not the number of laws in place.

Implementers should avoid calculating risk or estimating probabilities, because this can create false confidence in contexts where information is incomplete or sensitive.

Use your best collective judgement based on:

- how laws are enforced in practice
- how police and authorities behave
- how public visibility is treated
- where stigma or surveillance may occur
- what local advisors say about safety

Legal and social restrictions do not always reflect everyday realities. In some countries, laws that criminalise or limit SOGIESC expression are rarely enforced, while in other places, harmful attitudes or actions may occur even without formal laws. Likewise, within socially restrictive environments, there are often pockets of acceptance, protection, and quiet support. It is essential to understand where safety exists and where risk may emerge through relationships, faith networks, families, or traditional systems.

This is also a key moment to involve diverse SOGIESC specialists and, where appropriate and safe, diverse SOGIESC CBOs. These organisations and advisors usually hold the most current understanding of local risks, social dynamics, and areas of quiet acceptance. Their contribution can improve the accuracy of the analysis and support implementers to design CBDRM activities that are safe, culturally grounded, and responsive to lived experience. Engagement should always be guided by what is safe for these groups and not assume they must lead or be publicly visible.

Discussion and action planning

After completing the table, discuss as a team:

- What are the highest risks for people with diverse SOGIESC?
- Where are these opportunities for safe engagement or advocacy?
- Which partners or networks can provide updated, reliable information?
- What actions are needed to ensure safety before any community activity?

PRIORITY AREA	ACTION	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE
(i.e. Gaps in staff knowledge on diverse SOGIESC safety and risk)	(i.e. organise a short internal orientation session on key SOGIESC concepts, local risks, confidentiality, and safe participation practices.)	(i.e. Program Manager with support from a diverse SOGIESC specialist)	(i.e. Within the next 4 weeks)



Tips

- Use facts, not assumptions. Verify information through credible local partners.
- Keep findings confidential and never record personal names.
- Revisit this tool regularly because laws and social norms can change quickly.

A context is considered high risk when the overall pattern across the table shows that people with diverse SOGIESC could face harm, exposure, or discrimination if CBDRM activities proceed without strong safeguards. This is not a numeric calculation. It is a practical judgement based on the combined findings from each dimension.

A context may be high risk if, for example:

- same-sex relationships or gender expression are criminalised and these laws are actively enforced
- police, faith leaders, or community authorities have a history of targeting or criticising people who do not conform to gender or sexuality expectations
- participation in public meetings, photos, or registration processes could expose someone or place them in danger
- there are few or no safe partners who can provide updated advice
- media or social media environments are hostile and could amplify risk

If several of these conditions appear together, the safest approach is to focus first on **internal readiness only** (see Tool 2) until the organisation has clearer guidance, stronger safeguards, and a better understanding of what is safe and possible.



SCENARIO

We changed how we planned

Location: Coastal district, Fiji

Content Warning: This story describes social discomfort, avoidance of public activities, and exclusion linked to household structure and visibility. It reflects real patterns in some Pacific communities where people who live alone or in non-traditional arrangements may feel unsafe joining public preparedness activities.

The Story of Litia and her neighbours

Litia lives alone in a small settlement along the coast of Fiji. She has lived there all her life, caring for relatives when needed and helping neighbours during cyclone seasons. People know her as quiet, capable, and kind. But when the community calls meetings at the village hall, Litia almost never attends.

In previous years, preparedness sessions began with a public rollcall. People were asked to confirm their household, their role in the family, and who they lived with. Litia always found this uncomfortable. Some villagers questioned her choices, asked why she was unmarried, or hinted that she should not sit alone in public spaces. She preferred to listen from outside or get information later from a trusted neighbour.

When a local NGO started planning seasonal CBDRM activities, the team used a new organisational reflection tool to review who usually participates and who stays away. They noticed that people like Litia, single older women, youth living in shared houses, and individuals not tied closely to household networks rarely joined the sessions.

Instead of assuming disinterest, the team changed how they planned. They stopped calling out names in public. They invited people through multiple pathways, including women's groups and quiet word-of-mouth networks. They also offered a small, low-visibility discussion space alongside the main meeting for anyone who preferred to join without being seen.

On the day of the preparedness session, Litia arrived early and quietly took a seat at the side of the room. No one asked her to explain herself. No one questioned why she was there. She listened, took notes, and later stood with other women reviewing evacuation routes near her home.

After the session, a committee member told the NGO team, "We didn't do anything big. We just removed the things that made people feel exposed." Over the next few weeks, more people who had avoided meetings in the past began turning up at activities, joining walk-throughs, or asking questions during the smaller sessions.

For Litia, the change was simple but meaningful. She felt she could participate without fear of being judged or singled out. "It felt peaceful," she said later. "I didn't have to explain anything. I could just be part of it."

Reflection Questions

1. What planning habits or assumptions made it difficult for people like Litia to participate safely in preparedness activities?
2. What small organisational changes could help create safer, lower-visibility options for participation in our own CBDRM work?



Organisational accountability tool

Inclusive CBDRM begins with the organisation itself. Before working with communities, it is essential that staff within Disaster READY partner organisations understand their own readiness, attitudes, and systems for safely including people with diverse SOGIESC. This tool helps organisations move beyond intent and assess whether their internal practices genuinely support inclusion and accountability. It supports honest reflection on leadership, culture, policy, and partnerships, helping teams identify both risks and opportunities. By using this tool, organisations can build trust, strengthen internal capacity, and ensure that CBDRM work does not unintentionally exclude or harm people it is meant to protect.

Purpose: Help organisations assess how well inclusion is embedded in policies, relationships, and everyday practice. Identify barriers and actions to strengthen accountability before engaging communities.

When to use: Before starting a new program, during annual reviews, or when preparing new partnerships.

Who facilitates: Program or MEL teams, safeguarding leads, and senior staff.

Time:

- Short-term (1 to 3 months)
- Medium-term (3 to 6 months)
- Long-term (6 to 12 months)

Before you begin: Using this self-assessment safely and honestly

It is normal for people and organisations to find self-assessments difficult. When we look at our own work, we often see what we hope is true, or what we want to be true. Sometimes we think we are doing well because we care about inclusion, even if our systems or everyday practices still need work. And sometimes we simply do not know what we do not know. This is human. It happens in every organisation.

Because of this, many teams will need support to complete this assessment accurately. Working with a diverse SOGIESC specialist or a trusted local organisation (where safe) can help you see things more clearly and honestly. Their guidance can reduce blind spots, show where extra care is needed, and help make sure the assessment reflects what is really happening, not just what we wish was happening. The goal is not to judge your organisation, but to understand your starting point so you can grow from there.

Steps

- 1** Discuss each question in the matrix.
- 2** Use the rating scale:
 - Red – Not in place
 - Amber – Some progress
 - Green – Strong and consistent
 - Unknown – More information needed
- 3** Record short comments and next actions.
- 4** Reflect as a team using the prompts below.

Inclusion self-assessment matrix

DOMAIN	KEY QUESTIONS	SELF-RATING				ACTION NEEDED
		R	A	G	U	
1. Leadership and Accountability	Does your organisational leadership clearly support inclusion of people with diverse SOGIESC?					
	Is this commitment communicated internally, and externally at the appropriate level (country, regional, or global) in ways that are safe, strategic, and suited to the local context?					
	Does your organisation employ or support staff with diverse SOGIESC in any role, and are there safe and appropriate ways their experience could help strengthen CBDRM inclusion work?					
2. Policy and Practice	Does your organisation have internal policies that explicitly reference SOGIESC inclusion (for example, in safeguarding, HR, or gender equality)?					
	If your organisation is part of an INGO, is there a global policy on inclusion of people with diverse SOGIESC or LGBTIQ+ communities?					
	If yes, are these policies known and applied in practice?					
3. Cultural Safety and Values	Are staff supported to understand local culture, beliefs, and values that shape inclusion?					
	Have staff received training on safe, inclusive, and trauma-aware ways of working with people with diverse SOGIESC?					
	Do your programmes and messages promote respect and care without reinforcing stigma, gender stereotypes or exclusion?					
4. Community Engagement	Does your organisation fund or create space for LGBTIQ+ CBOs to take active roles in appropriate and relevant activities or programmes?					
	Is the relationship with these LGBTIQ+ groups long-term and respectful, rather than limited to short-term consultancy for one activity or deliverable?					
5. Program Design and MEL	Do your programme and monitoring tools track how well your organisation is supporting inclusion of people with diverse SOGIESC, without asking anyone to disclose their identity?					
	Do your organisation record and reflect on how your programs support inclusion, trust, and safety for people with diverse SOGIESC?					
	Does your organisation use what is learned to strengthen accountability and adapt future CBDRM activities?					

6. Participation Pathways	Does your organisation provide safe and flexible ways for people to take part in CBDRM activities, such as anonymous feedback, confidential interviews, one-on-one conversations, or engagement through trusted partners?		
	Are staff trained and supported to use these approaches respectfully and to protect participants' privacy and safety?		
7. Safety and Safeguarding	Do your organisation have clear processes to respond to discrimination, exclusion, or harm in our organisation or community programs?		
	Do your programme and monitoring tools track how well your organisation is supporting inclusion of people with diverse SOGIESC, without asking anyone to disclose their identity?		
8. Partnership and Power Sharing	Does your organisation create space for LGBTIQ+ CBOs to play active roles in appropriate and relevant programmes or activities?		
	Are your partnership agreements fair, transparent, and long-term?		
9. Reflection and Learning	Does your organisation create time and space for staff to reflect on identity, power and discomfort in this work?		
	Is this learning captured and applied in planning and training?		
10. Language and Representation	Do your communications, visuals and tools reflect the diversity of people you work with, including people with diverse SOGIESC?		
	Is your organisation careful not to expose, stereotype or single anyone out?		

Scoring Guide

- Mostly Green: Inclusion is well embedded. Continue learning, partnering, and sharing good practice.
- Mix of Amber and Green: Foundations are strong. Focus on cultural safety and co-leadership.
- Mostly Amber or Red: Inclusion efforts may be inconsistent or surface-level. Revisit policies, systems, and leadership.
- Red and Unknown: Build staff awareness and safety before starting external work.

Reflection and Planning Questions

1. Where is our inclusion work strongest and why?
2. Where are we most at risk of causing harm or exclusion?
3. Who do we need to learn from, partner with, or be accountable to?
4. What would it take for our team to be trusted by people with diverse SOGIESC?
5. What will we do in the next 3 months to strengthen inclusion practice?

How to use the results

- Develop a 3-to-6-month internal inclusion action plan
- Identify training, partnership, or policy needs
- Share results internally or externally to model accountability
- Repeat the assessment annually or after major program changes
- Use results to inform CBDRM design, MEL frameworks, and donor reporting

SCENARIO

We didn't know what to write

Location: Rural settlement, Fiji

Content Warning: This scenario includes themes of gender identity, stigma, and discrimination affecting *vakasalewalewa* (feminine-presenting people and trans women in Fiji). It describes social exclusion, scrutiny from local leaders, and fear of exposure during a CBDRM registration process. It may be distressing for readers with lived experience of misgendering, forced disclosure, or community-level surveillance.

The House above the settlement

Just above a small settlement in rural Fiji, six *vakasalewalewa* live together in an old timber house that looks over the valley. People in the area know them, but they are rarely included. Some neighbours greet them warmly; others turn away. They have learned which paths to walk, which shops feel safest, and which houses they avoid.

Only two of the women work regularly at nearby farms where the supervisors treat them fairly. Two others earn income through sex work because past discrimination has kept them out of other jobs. Ana, who uses a wheelchair, stays home and plays an important role in the household's emotional life. Mere, her carer, manages the cooking, cleaning, and day-to-day rhythms of the home. Together, they make things work.

A Disaster READY partner begins organising village-based disaster preparedness-sessions. When Lani hears about a disability-focused session, she encourages Ana and Mere to attend. Cyclone Winston is still fresh in her memory, and she knows the risks rural communities face. When Ana and Mere arrive at the village hall, the space is already full. The *turaga-ni-koro* (village headman) is seated at the door, watching each person walk in. A church steward and a government district officer stand near the registration table. Conversations hush as the women enter.

A staff member gestures for them to register. The form is simple, but the atmosphere around the table is not. As Ana moves forward, the district officer steps closer to scan the names already written. The *turaga-ni-koro* looks from the form to Ana to Mere, silently assessing them. Someone behind them whispers a question they cannot quite hear, but they know what it will be about.

Ana hesitates over the name line. She doesn't know if the officer will later ask for her ID. She wants to write the name she lives by, but she also knows villagers talk—and talk travels quickly in rural places. She feels exposed under the quiet, watchful eyes of the leaders.

Mere senses the tension rising. She gently folds the sign-in sheet before Ana can complete it and tells the staff member they will return later. The staff smiles uncertainly, but the leaders' eyes follow them as they leave.

On the walk home, they agree they still need the disaster information. But attending the session together felt too visible, too risky. They decide to ask someone they trust to collect the information and bring it back to their house.

Reflection Questions

1. What made this environment unsafe for Ana and Mere? Think about leadership presence, scrutiny, social expectations, and the impact of visibility.
2. What could the NGO have done differently to create a safer pathway for them to access disaster preparedness-information? Consider registration processes, alternative formats, outreach through trusted networks, and the role of village leadership.



Community readiness assessment tool

Inclusive CBDRM cannot begin with assumptions; it must be grounded in a clear understanding of community dynamics, trust, and cultural readiness. This tool helps implementers assess whether conditions are in place to safely and respectfully introduce inclusion for people with diverse SOGIESC. It supports teams to identify opportunities, risks, and relationship pathways before beginning engagement, ensuring that inclusion is not introduced in ways that cause harm, create backlash, or undermine long-term trust. By using this tool, organisations can plan their approach carefully, working in alignment with cultural values, local leadership structures, and community rhythms, rather than imposing external expectations.

Purpose: This tool helps CBDRM implementers understand the general level of openness, trust, transparency and shared decision making in a village or settlement. It does not measure readiness for diverse SOGIESC inclusion directly. Instead, it shows the relational conditions that must be in place before safe, culturally grounded inclusion work can begin.

When to use: Before planning or outreach in any new community

Who facilitates: CBDRM implementers, program teams, or MEL staff

Time: 2 hours or split across sessions.

Steps

- 1** Reflect as a team or with trusted advisors
- 2** Review each readiness domain and rate Low, Moderate or High.
- 3** Discuss what groundwork or relationship building is needed before inclusion becomes more visible.

Why assessing readiness matters

Inclusive CBDRM depends on timing, trust and relationships. Communities may welcome inclusive practice when it is introduced slowly and through shared values, but react negatively if activities are too visible or too fast. This tool helps implementers understand whether conditions support safe engagement now, or whether relationship-building, cultural grounding or quieter approaches are needed first. Readiness is not about acceptance of diverse SOGIESC people, but about understanding what is safe, respectful and appropriate at this moment in time.

What this tool does and doesn't do

This tool identifies:

- existing strengths in participation and safety
- where cautious, values-based approaches are needed
- safe entry points for early engagement

This tool does not:

- test whether a community accepts diverse SOGIESC people
- predict reactions to visibility
- replace specialist support when required

Note

In this tool, the term village or settlement includes the diverse forms of community organisation across the Pacific and Timor-Leste, whether guided by *vanua*, *kastom*, *hamutuk*, or *wantok* systems. Readiness in these contexts is built through relationships, not only policies. Trust often depends on personal conduct, respect for protocol, and cultural connection.

Community readiness assessment matrix

READINESS DOMAIN	KEY QUESTION	INDICATORS OF READINESS
1. Leadership and Decision-Making Power	Who holds authority in the village or settlement, and how are decisions made?	Low: Power sits with a few formal or traditional leaders; decisions are made privately.
		Moderate: Some consultation occurs, but final decisions remain top-down.
		High: Leadership listens and responds; decision making is discussed openly and includes different voices. Leaders can acknowledge tension or difference without escalating conflict
2. Participation and Representation	Whose voices are heard in CBDRM planning or community meetings?	Low: Women, youth, or people with disabilities rarely participate.
		Moderate: Some diversity in participation, but not consistent.
		High: Participation includes people who are usually less visible in community settings, even if SOGIESC is not openly discussed
3. Exclusion and Barriers	Which people or groups are missing from CBDRM participation, and what prevents them from joining? This may include women, youth, older people, people with disabilities, people with diverse SOGIESC, single parents, ethnic or language minorities, or people living in remote or informal settlements.	Low: Some groups are consistently absent or silent. People feel unsafe or fear stigma, and exclusion is not recognised.
		Moderate: Barriers are acknowledged, but action is inconsistent or limited to certain groups.
		High: Leaders and community members show willingness to address exclusion, even in small or coded ways
4. Cultural Safety and Norms	Do local customs, faith, or values support respectful inclusion or create risk for some groups?	Low: Norms or beliefs strongly used to justify exclusion.
		Moderate: Some tension, but dialogue is possible when framed around shared values like safety, unity, or care.
		High: Cultural or spiritual values already guide respect and harmony between different groups.
5. Conflict or Harm History	Has people in the village or settlement experienced exclusion, stigma, or harm related to gender or identity?	Low: Ongoing or unresolved harm; fear or mistrust persists.
		Moderate: Past harm recognised but not yet addressed.
		High: Harm has been acknowledged through dialogue or reconciliation, and trust is being rebuilt.
6. Trust in NGOs and Community Partners	Do people trust NGOs or CBDRM partners to act fairly and respectfully?	Low: Widespread distrust from past harm or unkept promises.
		Moderate: Trust depends on individual relationships; mixed views.
		High: NGOs are viewed as honest, respectful, and reliable in their work with the community.

7. Trust in Government and Local Authorities	Do people trust government, provincial, or village-level disaster officials to act fairly and support the whole community?	Low: Deep distrust due to unequal treatment or lack of response.
		Moderate: Mixed experiences; trust varies across levels of government.
		High: Local and national disaster officials are seen as responsive, transparent, and respectful.
8. Community and Support Networks (Trusted Circles)	Are there informal networks or safe spaces where diverse SOGIESC people go for support or advice?	Low: No visible networks; people fear being seen or identified.
		Moderate: Quiet networks exist between trusted individuals.
		High: Trusted circles of care and support are active and respected, helping people navigate social challenges.
9. Values-Based Dialogue Openness	Can topics like gender, safety, and inclusion be discussed through shared values?	Low: Topics are avoided or considered taboo.
		Moderate: Dialogue possible through shared values such as care, safety, or unity.
		High: Cultural or faith-based values are already used to discuss diversity and strengthen community wellbeing.
10. Readiness	Are CBDRM participant groups such as women, youth, or people with disabilities ready to engage safely alongside people with diverse SOGIESC?	Low: Fear or bias prevents open participation.
		Moderate: Some openness, but safety concerns remain.
		High: Participant groups are supportive and safe mixed participation is possible.

How to interpret the indicators

- Mostly Low = slow relationship-building; avoid visible inclusion.
- Mixed = quiet, values-based inclusion with caution
- Mostly High = safe for quiet mainstreaming; still avoid explicit SOGIESC discussions.

SOGIESC readiness is never assumed. It must be explored relationally and slowly.

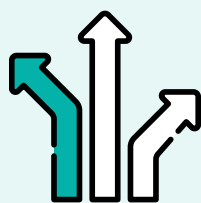
How to identify the safest inclusion pathway

There is no scoring system, and you do not add up the indicators.

Instead, look across all domains and ask:

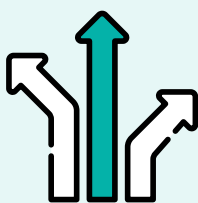
- Are most indicators showing unresolved harm, fear, or gatekeeping?
- Are there mixed conditions, with some safe entry points through shared values?
- Are there signs of openness and safety that allow quiet inclusion in CBDRM work?

Your overall sense of the pattern will help you choose one of the three pathways:



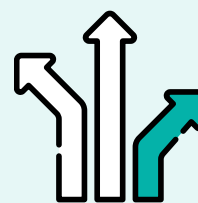
**Pathway 1:
Quiet foundations**

Community has low readiness for diverse SOGIESC inclusion. Internal NGO learning continues. Engagement focuses on building trust, modelling respectful behaviour, strengthening inclusive practices for women, youth, and people with disabilities, and forming relationships with informal leaders. No visible SOGIESC-specific activities are introduced yet, but opportunities for subtle norm-shifting (e.g., respectful language, safe registration processes) are used.



**Pathway 2:
Shared values entry point**

Community has moderate readiness. Inclusion is introduced carefully through shared cultural or faith values such as care, safety, unity, *vanua*, *kastom*, *hamutuk*, or *wantok*. Activities remain low-visibility but deliberate, focusing on safe participation systems, quiet allyship, and trusted relationships. NGO staff model safe behaviour; community groups begin discussions framed around broader safety and respect.



**Pathway 3:
Quiet mainstreaming**

Community shows higher readiness. Inclusion can be quietly integrated into all CBDRM processes without drawing attention to individuals. Tools, meetings, assessments, committees, and evacuation planning use gender-sensitive, respectful, and safe practices. No targeted outreach is done without community input, but inclusion is normalised across the project cycle.

Note

Communities are not “low,” “moderate,” or “high”, these terms only help you understand what is safe to do now, so you can choose an approach that protects people, respects culture, and builds trust over time.

Planning next steps

After completing the matrix

- **Identify strengths:** Where is the community most ready for inclusion?
- **Identify risks:** Where could harm or backlash occur?
- **Select your approach:** Mainstream inclusion or continued internal preparation.

Plan practical steps

- Build relationships with informal leaders and gatekeepers
- Engage through shared cultural or faith values
- Connect with trusted circles and community networks
- Adapt tools such as anonymous feedback or safer meeting spaces
- Continue reflection and organisational accountability work

Using this tool over time

Readiness changes as relationships and trust grow. Revisit this tool:

- At the start of each project phase
- After consultations or reflection sessions
- When new risks or opportunities emerge
- As part of ongoing monitoring and learning

Inclusive CBDRM cannot be imposed. It must be invited, earned, and grounded in relationships of trust. Acting with humility, integrity, and care ensures that inclusion is safe, practical, and sustainable.

After completing Tool 2C, use Tool 2D: Community Safety Audit to identify specific safety risks, and Tool 3A onwards to design inclusive approaches that do not rely on disclosure or identity-based participation.

SCENARIO

They skipped our house

Location: Volcanic island, Vanuatu

Content Warning: This story includes references to homophobia, social exclusion, and stigma related to sexuality and HIV. It reflects real community attitudes in parts of the Pacific where men perceived as gay may also be unfairly assumed to be living with HIV.

The story of Jonny and his family

Jonny lives with his mother and younger sister in a small village on one of Vanuatu's volcanic islands. His father passed away many years ago, and since then Jonny has become the main carer in the household. He cooks, cleans, tends the garden that feeds the family, and helps his sister with her schoolwork while caring for his mother, who can no longer walk.

In the village, Jonny is known as gentle and hardworking, but he is also talked about. Many people assume he is a man who loves other men. He has never confirmed or denied it. He simply lives quietly, without hiding who he is but without naming it either. His mother and sister accept him completely and often say how proud they are of him.

Outside their home, however, the story is different. Some villagers whisper that Jonny's difference brings shame or bad luck. Others say his family must be cursed. A few believe he is living with HIV, assuming that all gay men carry the virus. Neighbours avoid sharing food or water. Some warn their children not to visit the house. Because his mother and sister support him, they too are gossiped about and left out of gatherings.

When an NGO and the local government begin a household vulnerability mapping exercise as part of a preparedness plan for a possible volcanic eruption, every household is supposed to be visited. The team is mapping who might need help to evacuate and what routes are safest for each family.

But Jonny's house is never visited.

He sees the team pass by several times. One of the church leaders helping with the project meets his eyes but says nothing. Jonny waits all week, hoping someone will come. No one does.

When the village disaster map is finalised, his home is missing.

At a community meeting, the disaster plan is shared. Each household is assigned to a group in case of evacuation. Jonny quietly asks a committee member whether his family is on the list. The person looks away and says, "It's complicated."

Jonny walks home in silence, wondering what will happen when the volcano erupts and whether anyone will come for them.

Reflection Questions

1. What allowed Jonny's household to be left out of the mapping process, and how did community attitudes influence the decisions of leaders and the assessment team?
2. What should the NGO and disaster committee do differently to make sure every household is included safely and respectfully in future preparedness activities?



Community safety audit

Safety in CBDRM is not only physical but also social, cultural, emotional, and digital. For people with diverse SOGIESC, disaster planning spaces can carry hidden risks such as exposure, judgment, or exclusion. This tool helps organisations assess whether their spaces, processes, and relationships uphold safety and dignity for all participants, visible or not. It supports implementers to identify risks early, strengthen protective practices, and ensure that inclusion is not just an invitation to participate but a commitment to protect. Using this tool builds trust, accountability, and readiness, helping CBDRM activities create environments where everyone can engage without harm or fear.

Purpose: To assess whether spaces, systems, and relationships in CBDRM are safe, dignified, and respectful for everyone, including people whose identities or situations may not be openly discussed. Because SOGIESC may be sensitive in some contexts, this tool uses general safety indicators that help reveal where diverse SOGIESC people might face risk without requiring explicit conversation.

The tool focuses on:

- Physical safety: accessibility, privacy, and design of community spaces
- Social and emotional safety: tone, language, facilitation, and relationships
- Cultural and spiritual safety: alignment with local norms and respect for belonging
- Procedural and digital safety: privacy, data protection, and safeguarding systems

This tool is not about perfection but about reflection and responsibility. It helps teams ask:

- Are we unintentionally putting anyone at risk?
- Are our staff equipped to manage safety issues or respond to harm?
- Are we creating the kind of space where everyone, visible or not, can contribute and feel respected?

When to use: Before, during and after any community activity

Who facilitates: CBDRM implementers, safeguarding offices or program leads.

Time: 60 minutes.

Steps

- 1 Prepare as a team**
Bring together CBDRM implementers, safeguarding staff, or local partners who understand the community context and planned activities.
- 2 Walk through each area of the Safety Audit Checklist**
Consider physical, social, cultural, and procedural safety. Use Yes / Somewhat / No to rate each question honestly based on current conditions.
- 3 Discuss risks and protective factors**
Where "Somewhat" or "No" is selected, identify what may cause harm or exclusion. Consider who may be at risk, why, and what adjustments are needed.
- 4 Agree on immediate actions**
Identify what can be changed before activities begin, such as room layout, language to avoid, privacy measures, or staff preparation.
- 5 Decide if the activity can proceed**
If major risks remain, pause or adapt engagement and seek advice from inclusion advisors or LGBTIQ+ CBOs.
- 6 Record findings and responsibilities**
Document decisions, responsible people, and timelines for action. Treat all information as confidential.
- 7 Repeat during and after activities**
Use this tool regularly to monitor emerging risks, respond to incidents, and improve ongoing safety practices.

Diverse SOGIESC safety audit checklist

AREA	KEY QUESTIONS	SAFETY CHECK		
Physical Environment	Are there toilets and washrooms that ensure privacy and dignity for people of all genders?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
	Does the layout support safety for everyone, including women, people with disabilities, and people whose gender expression does not fit expected categories?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
	Are there discreet options for seating, entry, or exit for those needing privacy or safety?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
Social Environment	Are facilitators using respectful, inclusive, and non-gendered language?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
	Are there ways for participants to contribute without speaking publicly or revealing identity?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
	Have steps been taken to prevent gossip, judgment, or informal surveillance?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
Cultural and Spiritual Safety	Are local customs and values being used to promote care and unity, not exclusion or shame?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
	Are CBDRM committee members prepared to respond if harmful comments or behaviour occur?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
	Do cultural or faith-based actors contribute to a safe environment for all participants?	☐ Supportive	☐ Mixed	☐ Harmful
Facilitation and Process	Do registration forms, attendance lists, or groupings protect privacy and gender diversity? (e.g. private Kobo forms instead of paper lists)	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
	Can participants share needs privately through cards, notes, or quiet conversation?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
	Is feedback collected in ways that protect confidentiality and dignity?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
Digital and Data Safety	Is participant information stored securely and shared only when necessary?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
	Are digital photos, recordings, or GPS data handled with informed consent?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
	Are communication platforms (WhatsApp, Facebook, etc.) managed with privacy settings and moderation to prevent exposure or harassment?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
Accountability and Repair	Is there a clear process to respond to harm or discrimination during an activity?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
	Are participants aware of how to report harm or exclusion, and is it accessible?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
	Is there a trusted person or ally participants can speak to if they feel unsafe?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
Organisational and Staff Readiness	Are staff leading the process trained on SOGIESC, confidentiality, and do no harm principles?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
	Does the organisation have internal safeguarding procedures that include SOGIESC considerations?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No
	Are staff aware of risks from external actors such as government or religious institutions, and have mitigation plans in place?	☐ Yes	☐ Somewhat	☐ No

How to interpret safety indicators

Because open discussion of SOGIESC may not be possible in some communities, this tool uses general safety indicators. These indicators help identify patterns that also affect people with diverse SOGIESC.

- Lack of privacy → higher risk of exposure
- Gossip or informal surveillance → risk of stigma, judgement, or harm
- Gatekeeping by leaders → people may avoid attending
- Untrained facilitators → accidental harm is more likely
- Unsafe data practices → risk of being identified without consent

The audit does not measure acceptance of SOGIESC. It measures whether CBDRM spaces are safe enough for people who may not be able to speak for themselves.

Scoring and interpretation



Mostly Yes Strong safety conditions. Dignity and inclusion are visible in both practice and design. Continue to strengthen trust, monitor for new risks, and share good practice with others.



Mixed Some safety measures in place but gaps remain. Potential for harm if unaddressed. Review areas marked "Somewhat" or "No." Prioritise changes that can be made quickly (e.g. layout, language, privacy options). Seek technical advice for structural or policy gaps.



Mostly No High risk of exclusion or harm. Systems or spaces are unsafe for diverse participants. Reconsider activity design. Delay or adapt approach. Seek guidance from safeguarding focal points, CBOs or inclusion advisors before proceeding.



Tip

- "Somewhat" means uncertainty. Use it to prompt discussion
- Protect both community members and staff
- Treat all information as sensitive
- Inclusion means ensuring that once people arrive, they are safe.

Reflection questions

1. What assumptions do we make about "community safety," and who is excluded from that vision?
2. Have we unintentionally made anyone invisible or vulnerable through our process or tools?
3. What would it take for this to feel like a safe space for those with the most at stake?
4. Who should be part of reviewing and improving this safety audit, within the organisation, and within the community?
5. Are our staff and partners prepared to protect confidentiality and manage harm if it occurs?



Additional Guidance for Implementers

1. Navigating Tensions Between Gender and SOGIESC Safety

In some activities, advice for women's safety (for example, separate sleeping spaces or latrines) may seem to conflict with safety for people whose gender expression or identity does not fit expected categories. There is no single rule that fits all situations.

When tensions arise:

- Prioritise safety, dignity, and privacy for everyone
- Use flexible options such as private stalls, curtains, or unisex spaces where appropriate
- Avoid forcing anyone to choose a category publicly
- Seek advice from safeguarding staff or inclusion specialists when possible
- Use quiet, practical solutions rather than public explanations

Safety solutions should reduce risk rather than draw attention to difference.

2. Untrained staff or limited experience

Not all staff will have specialist SOGIESC knowledge. This tool does not require them to identify or name identities. Instead, it helps staff focus on behaviours and conditions that create vulnerability.

If specialist support is not available:

- pair less experienced staff with safeguarding or gender staff
- focus on universal safety principles such as privacy, respect, and confidentiality
- avoid direct questioning about identity
- use observation and local knowledge of social dynamics to anticipate risk
- take a "do no harm" approach: if unsure, act cautiously

This recognises limits without undermining confidence.

3. When Government or Religious systems are not supportive

If open discussion of SOGIESC is unsafe, apply a mainstream inclusion approach. Focus on universal safety principles such as privacy, respect, non-discrimination, and ensure no one is singled out. Quietly strengthen relationships with trusted allies over time.

4. Understanding organisational risk appetite

NGOs vary in how much risk they can take when operating in restrictive environments. Organisational safety should be considered alongside community safety.

Teams should ask:

- What are the real risks (not rumours) to staff, offices, or programs?
- What mitigation measures exist (for example, discreet partnerships, low-visibility practice)?
- What actions are possible without making staff or community members vulnerable?
- What is our organisational mandate for inclusion, and how do we honour it safely?
- When do we need to consult our leadership or legal teams?

This helps prevent unnecessary withdrawal while acknowledging legitimate risk.

5. Emergency and digital planning

Include this audit in broader emergency preparedness and digital data management plans. Treat personal information as sensitive data, especially when linked to names, photos, or locations.

Safety cannot be assumed. It must be co-created, reviewed, and restored over time. The Diverse SOGIESC Safety Audit supports implementers to act with cultural respect, confidentiality, and care, ensuring that inclusive CBDRM is not just about inviting people in, but about ensuring they are safe once they arrive.

Part 2 of the toolkit focused on preparing organisations and teams to act with cultural awareness, safety, and accountability. Once readiness is established, inclusion can move from preparation to practice.

Part 3 builds on this foundation by showing how to embed inclusion into the key stages of community disaster planning, from risk assessment and shelter design to early-warning systems and evacuation plans.



PART

3

Building inclusion into community disaster planning

This section shows how CBDRM implementers can embed inclusion across the full range of disaster and resilience activities. It offers practical ways to adapt existing tools and processes so everyone can participate safely and with dignity. Inclusion is not about adding new steps. It is about making every day CBDRM practice safer, more reflective of community realities, and grounded in shared cultural values.

These tools support inclusion across all community preparedness and resilience activities, not only formal CBDRM processes.

Summary of tools in this section

TOOL	FOCUS	PURPOSE	WHEN TO USE
Tool 3A: Inclusive Risk Assessment	Risk and vulnerability analysis	Identify social and structural risks alongside hazard risks	During community risk and vulnerability assessments.
Tool 3B: Inclusive Shelter Planning Checklist	Emergency shelters and WASH	Ensure shelters and facilities protect privacy, dignity, and safety	During preparedness planning, audits, or response reviews.
Tool 3C: Inclusive Preparedness Participation Checklist	Drills, meetings, trainings	Adapt existing preparedness activities so all people can participate safely	Before and after drills, simulations, or CBDRM training
Tool 3D: Inclusive Leadership Reflection	Leadership and decision-making	Strengthen fairness, inclusion, and accountability within CBDRM leadership structures.	During CBDRM committee formation or review, or when leadership changes.
Tool 3E: Inclusive Early-Warning and Evacuation	Early-warning systems and evacuation routes	Ensure messages reach everyone safely and evacuation is accessible	During planning, testing, or revising early-warning and evacuation procedures
Tool 3F: Inclusive WASH Planning and Management Checklist	Shelter operations and management	Ensure water, sanitation, and hygiene systems are designed and managed to protect dignity, privacy, and safety for all.	During preparedness planning, evacuation centre design, or early recovery.

How to use this section of the toolkit:

- Part 3 moves from preparation to practice. It builds directly on the readiness and safety work in Part 2 and helps implementers apply inclusion within the standard steps of the CBDRM cycle.
- Each tool in this section aligns with a key activity in community disaster planning.
- The guidance is designed to be flexible so implementers can apply it quietly or visibly, depending on context and readiness.
- Use the overview below to select the right tool for your activity.



CBDRM and resilience activities: Where to find inclusion guidance

ACTIVITY	CORE QUESTIONS TO ASK	USE THESE TOOLS IN PART 3
Risk assessments	Who is missing from our picture of risk? What social barriers increase risk?	Tool 3A: Inclusive Risk Assessment
Early- warning systems	Who does not get the message? Can people opt in privately?	Tool 3E: Inclusive Early-Warning and Evacuation
Evacuation plans and shelters	Can everyone evacuate and enter safely? Is privacy protected?	Tool 3B: Inclusive Shelter Planning Checklist, Tool 3E: Inclusive Early-Warning and Evacuation
Simulation exercises and drills	Who attends? Who needs a safer role or quiet option?	Tool 3C: Inclusive Preparedness Participation Checklist, Tool 3D: Inclusive Leadership Reflection
Community disaster plans	Do plans reflect quiet participation and non-standard households?	Tool 3A: Inclusive Risk Assessment, Tool 3C: Inclusive Preparedness Participation Checklist, Tool 3D: Inclusive Leadership Reflection, Tool 3E: Inclusive Early-Warning and Evacuation
WASH activities (water and latrines)	Are facilities and schedules safe and private for all users?	Tool 3F: Inclusive WASH Planning and Management Checklist
First aid trainings	Who is left out of sign-ups? Does role play risk outing?	Tool 3C: Inclusive Preparedness Participation Checklist, Tool 3D: Inclusive Leadership Reflection
Broader CBDRM trainings	Who speaks and who is silent? Are icebreakers and introductions safe?	Tool 3C: Inclusive Preparedness Participation Checklist, Tool 3D: Inclusive Leadership Reflection

These tools are designed to be applied across all CBDRM and resilience-related activities, including savings groups, climate-resilient agriculture, nature-based solutions, school or church-based preparedness, community information development, and procurement or pre-positioning, even though these activities are not listed individually.



Inclusive risk assessment

Risk assessments in CBDRM often focus only on physical hazards such as floods, cyclones, or landslides. However, people's safety is also shaped by social and structural factors — such as who receives information, who feels safe to access a shelter, or whose households are recognised. If these factors are not included, disaster plans may unintentionally leave some people at greater risk, even when the hazard is the same.

This tool helps CBDRM teams recognise and document these social risks alongside physical hazards. The goal is not to identify individuals, but to understand patterns of exclusion that affect community safety and preparedness.

Purpose: Identify social and structural risks that sit alongside hazard risks.

When to use: During risk and vulnerability analysis.

Who facilitates: CBDRM implementers

Time: 90 minutes

Steps

This tool builds on your existing hazard or vulnerability assessment process. It helps your team look beyond physical risks (like floods or cyclones) to include **social and structural factors** that affect who is safe, informed, and protected in the community.

1 Add a new column to your usual hazard or vulnerability assessment table called *"Inclusive Risk Analysis."*

This column helps record how social systems or norms may increase risk for some groups.

2 Discuss each hazard together and reflect on three questions:

- Who might be unintentionally left at risk?
- Why does this happen (what social or structural barrier causes it)?
- What small, safe actions could reduce that risk?

3 Use the examples below as guidance only.

They show the type of detail to include in your own table. Replace them with your own local hazards, experiences, and actions.

4 Focus on patterns, not people.

Do not name individuals or identity groups. Keep the focus on safety and belonging, not on disclosure



Understanding SOGIESC risks within general inclusion measures

Some risks faced by people with diverse SOGIESC cannot be stated openly in certain communities, but they still shape how people participate in CBDRM. Fear of exposure, stigma, surveillance, or gatekeeping often prevents people from joining public activities, accessing shelters, or using shared services. The examples below use broad categories ("people living alone," "those who fear judgment") to keep communities safe, but each example is also intended to help implementers recognise how diverse SOGIESC people may be affected. When reviewing the table, consider which risks may be especially relevant to people whose identities or relationships are not publicly acknowledged.



Example table

HAZARD OR SITUATION	WHO MIGHT BE MOST AT RISK	WHY THIS HAPPENS	INCLUSIVE ACTION (WHAT CAN BE DONE SAFELY)
Flooding at night	People living alone or not connected to household networks	Alerts are shared only through family heads	Provide quiet opt-in messaging through SMS or trusted contact points
Shelter shortage	Single parents, gender-diverse people	Gender-segregated shelter rules and gatekeeping	Remove gender-based entry requirements and offer private registration
Public drills	People who fear exposure or judgment	Social stigma, fear of being watched	Offer participation through small groups, alternative roles, or observation-only options
Water access disruption	People with limited mobility or who avoid queues	Public water points monitored by community members	Schedule flexible access times or provide discreet collection options

Facilitator notes

- The examples below reflect risks that frequently affect people with diverse SOGIESC, even when not named directly. Implementers should consider how stigma, gender norms, and privacy concerns shape who participates and who stays hidden.
- Treat this tool as a discussion guide, not a form to be completed quickly.
- Encourage local leaders and committee members to share practical examples from past events.
- Record agreed actions in the CBDRM plan or activity log.
- Revisit this tool after every disaster season to update what has changed.



Tip

Focus on safety, trust, and inclusion rather than identity labels. The goal is to build systems where everyone can prepare, act, and recover safely.

Once risks are understood, the next step is to make sure physical and social spaces are protective. Tool 3B supports inclusive shelter planning.

SCENARIO

We saw risks we had missed

Location: Small island community, Solomon Islands

Content warning: This story describes experiences of social avoidance, stigma, and safety concerns related to living arrangements and community visibility. It reflects real patterns in some Pacific communities where people outside traditional household structures may be overlooked during risk assessments.

The story of Kala and the mapping team

Kala had lived with her cousin's family for several years in a small island community in the Solomon Islands. She helped with fishing, cared for the children, and contributed to the household whenever she could. People respected her hard work, but some still whispered about her private life or questioned why she was not living with her parents. Because of this, Kala rarely spoke during village meetings and avoided any gathering where she might be asked personal questions.

When the community began its yearly disaster preparedness work, the CBDRM team used Tool 5 to reassess local risks. Instead of only looking at hazards and infrastructure, they reviewed who tended to be left out of planning and why. They realised that their old approach to household visits and mapping had missed several groups: people living in shared households, individuals renting rooms, young adults who moved between relatives, and those who stayed away from public meetings because of shyness or stigma.

To address this, the team changed how they collected information. Rather than announcing household names in public, they placed a small table at the market with a simple, anonymous form asking about evacuation support needs. They also did quiet one-on-one check-ins through women's church groups and youth leaders. No one was asked to state who they lived with or explain their household structure.

Kala filled out the form when the team visited the market. It was the first time she had ever participated in preparedness planning. She shared that she preferred early evacuation because she disliked crowds and felt unsafe moving at night. She also asked for information to be passed to her discreetly, through her cousin or a neighbour she trusted.

When the new risk map was finalised, Kala's needs were included alongside everyone else's. During the next heavy rain, she received an early warning through her neighbour and evacuated calmly with her cousin's family long before the river rose.

The team later reflected that this shift helped far more people than they expected. One member said, "Once we stopped forcing people into household boxes, we finally understood the real risks. People trusted us because we didn't ask them to explain themselves."

Reflection Questions

1. What standard assessment practices in our own work might unintentionally exclude people who do not fit traditional household structures?
2. How can we collect risk information in ways that protect privacy and allow people to share safely, without revealing personal details?





Inclusive shelter planning checklist

Shelters and evacuation centres are central to community disaster safety, but they are not always equally safe for everyone. People may avoid shelters due to fear of exposure, discrimination, or lack of privacy. This tool ensures shelters are designed and managed in ways that uphold dignity, fairness, and cultural values of collective care. It supports implementers to identify practical improvements before, during, and after disasters so that all community members can access protection without risk or shame.

For people with diverse SOGIESC, shelters can carry unique risks that are not always visible to others. Some may avoid shelters because they fear being questioned about their gender, separated from partners or chosen family, or monitored by community members. Others may worry about harassment in sleeping areas, being outed through registration systems, or using toilets and bathing spaces where privacy is limited. These fears often mean that people who most need protection choose unsafe alternatives such as staying alone, remaining in damaged homes, or hiding in unsafe locations during disasters. Understanding these hidden risks allows implementers to design shelters in ways that support dignity, privacy, and belonging for all.

Purpose: To plan or review shelters so they are protective, culturally safe, and inclusive for all community members.

When to use:

- During preparedness planning and shelter design
- During shelter audits or annual community disaster risk reviews
- After drills or activation of evacuation centres to assess safety and trust

Who facilitates: CBDRM implementers, local disaster committees, with support from those trained in protection, gender, or SOGIESC inclusion.

Time: 30 – 60 minutes. Can be repeated at different phases of planning or response.

Steps

- 1 Gather a small team that includes shelter managers, committee members, and trusted local advisors.
- 2 Walk through each domain in the checklist, discussing current practices honestly.
- 3 Mark each question as Yes, Somewhat, or No. Use “Somewhat” to indicate uncertainty or partial safety.
- 4 Identify specific actions for each “Somewhat” or “No” to reduce risk and improve privacy, access, or dignity.
- 5 Agree on who will take action and by when, and document follow-up.
- 6 Revisit the checklist regularly to monitor progress and adapt based on community feedback or changing conditions.

Understanding SOGIESC safety in shelters

Some risks for people with diverse SOGIESC cannot be named openly in all communities. This checklist uses general safety indicators that help reveal where people may face exposure, judgement, or harm. When completing the checklist, consider who might avoid using a space, who might fear being watched or questioned, whose relationships may not be recognised, and who might not feel safe entering a gendered or communal area. These insights help strengthen shelter planning for everyone.

Inclusive shelter planning checklist

DOMAIN	KEY QUESTIONS THAT REVEAL HIDDEN RISKS	WHY THIS MATTERS	STATUS	REALISTIC MITIGATION ACTIONS (LOW OR NO COST)	RESIDUE RISK AFTER ACTION
Access	Can people enter without being asked to prove their family relationship, gender, or identity?	Many people live outside traditional family structures and may avoid shelters to protect themselves.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No	Examples: Train shelter volunteers not to screen by family structure, and set up a general-admission line for anyone arriving alone.	☐ Reduced ☐ Partial ☐ High
Sleeping Arrangements	Are there flexible or private sleeping options for people who do not feel safe in gender-segregated spaces or whose household structure is not recognised locally?	Strict male/female divisions can exclude or endanger some people.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No	Examples: Use simple partitions such as curtains, sulus, tarpaulins, or movable screens to create mixed, flexible, or private areas.	☐ Reduced ☐ Partial ☐ High
Toilets & Bathing Areas	Are there private, single-use toilet and washing spaces with doors that lock from the inside, and are they located discreetly?	Shared facilities can lead to shame, harassment, or exposure.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No	Examples: Install temporary lockable doors or sliding bolts and use tarpaulins or bamboo screens to create one or two single-use private spaces.	☐ Reduced ☐ Partial ☐ High
Entry	Is entry based on head-of-household or family lists? Are there options for people arriving alone?	Household-based systems may exclude those not recognised within traditional structures.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No	A Examples: Ilow individual registration, including verbal registration for people.	☐ Reduced ☐ Partial ☐ High
Leadership & Monitoring	Are shelter managers trained to respond to discrimination or gossip? Is harmful behaviour addressed immediately?	Safety depends not only on space, but on behaviour and leadership.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No	Examples: Provide a quick briefing to all shelter workers on gossip, harassment, and confidentiality. Use a visible "Respect and Safety" statement at the entrance.	☐ Reduced ☐ Partial ☐ High

DOMAIN	KEY QUESTIONS THAT REVEAL HIDDEN RISKS	WHY THIS MATTERS	STATUS	REALISTIC MITIGATION ACTIONS (LOW OR NO COST)	RESIDUE RISK AFTER ACTION
Privacy & Dignity	Can people move, rest, and access assistance without being watched or questioned?	Privacy is protection. Without it, people will not use shelters.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No	Examples: Create quiet or low-visibility pathways, and place latrines or washing areas away from crowded spaces where possible.	☐ Reduced ☐ Partial ☐ High
Cultural Care	Are local values of care and unity actively used to create belonging for all?	Values such as vanua, kastom, wantok, and hamutuk can be powerful tools for inclusion.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No	Examples: Ask leaders to speak about shelter as a shared space of unity and care, emphasising local values of respect and protection for every person.	☐ Reduced ☐ Partial ☐ High
Feedback & Complaints	Is there a safe, private way for people to report harm or ask for support?	People need trusted ways to speak up without fear of exposure.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No	Examples: Use a private complaint box or assign one trusted same-gender or same-age support person to receive concerns confidentially.	☐ Reduced ☐ Partial ☐ High

Scoring

- ☒ **Mostly Yes** continue and monitor
- ☐ **Mixed** fix “No” items before proceeding
- ☒ **Mostly No** redesign or delay

Adaption: The same privacy checks can be applied to WASH facilities and temporary lavatories.

Once shelters are planned, inclusive participation ensures preparedness activities are safe for all. Tool 3C provides guidance.



SCENARIO

The shelter felt safe this time

Location: Western Province, Papua New Guinea

Content warning: This story describes exclusion, discomfort, and safety concerns related to shelter layouts, privacy, and community visibility. It reflects real experiences in some Pacific contexts where standard shelter designs do not meet the needs of people who require privacy or low-visibility options.

The Story of Sila and the evacuation centre

Whenever storms threatened the coast of Western Province, Sila avoided the evacuation centre. She lived with her auntie and cousins, helping with fishing, childcare, and a small garden at the back of the house. People knew her as reliable and hardworking, but some also talked about her behind her back.

At the evacuation centre, Sila felt exposed. Sleeping areas were divided strictly into “men” and “women”, with no flexible space for people who did not feel safe in either area or who lived outside traditional family structures. The bathing area had no locking door, and people often stood nearby to chat. Sila preferred to stay at home until the last moment, even when the weather turned dangerous.

Before the next cyclone season, the CBDRM committee used Tool 3C to reassess the evacuation centre. They noticed several issues: people avoiding the shelter, strict gendered sleeping spaces, a lack of privacy in bathing areas, and no discreet entry for those who wanted to avoid crowds. They spoke quietly with a few trusted community members and learned that Sila was not the only one staying away.

The committee made small changes that did not require new buildings or large budgets. They created two flexible sleeping areas using curtains and tarpaulins, allowing families, single adults or small friend groups to sleep together without pressure. They added a temporary lock to the bathing area and positioned screens to stop people gathering nearby. Volunteers were asked to keep entry pathways clear and avoid questioning people about who they lived with or where they should sleep.

When the next storm approached, Sila arrived early with her auntie. She walked quietly to the flexible sleeping area, arranged her bedding, and felt a sense of calm she had not experienced before. The centre was quieter, more respectful, and less crowded at the entrance. Other people who had avoided the shelter in the past also came, settling into the flexible spaces without feeling watched.

Afterward, the committee noted that the changes had not required major resources. One member said, “We did not rebuild the shelter. We just changed the parts that made people feel unsafe.”

For Sila, the difference was simple: she had space, privacy, and choices. For the first time, she planned to return next season without hesitation.

Reflection Questions

1. Which aspects of our shelter spaces could unintentionally make people feel exposed, judged or unsafe during a disaster?
2. What low cost or no cost adjustments could we introduce, such as flexible sleeping areas, lockable spaces or discreet entry routes, to support safer and more dignified access?



Inclusive preparedness participation checklist

Preparedness activities such as drills, simulations, awareness sessions, and community meetings are already part of CBDRM. This tool helps implementers make those activities safe, welcoming, and practical for everyone—without requiring new sessions or naming identities publicly. It supports staff to notice who participates, who stays away, and why, and to make small, safe adjustments so more people can take part.

Understanding SOGIESC participation risks

Some people avoid preparedness activities because of fear of exposure, stigma, being watched, or being questioned about gender, household status, or relationships. These risks often affect people with diverse SOGIESC, but also others who prefer not to be seen, such as people living alone, those with strained family relationships, or anyone who fears community judgement.

Use the checklist below to read participation patterns with these hidden risks in mind.

Purpose: Adapt existing preparedness activities so all people can participate safely and meaningfully.

When to use: Before and after any preparedness activity, such as:

- community drills
- early-warning demonstrations
- household mapping
- evacuation walk-throughs
- shelter orientations
- awareness or training sessions

Who facilitates: CBDRM implementers, committee members or trainers, ideally in pairs (one leads, one observes participation and safety)



Steps

- 1** Review your CBDRM planned activities and note who is usually invited.
- 2** Map participation using the table below to identify who joins, who is missing and why.
- 3** Plan small elements such as timing, group size, or venue to increase safety and access.
- 4** Observe during activities who speaks, who is silent and whether everyone can participate comfortably.
- 5** Reflect afterwards to decide what to change next time. Document only patterns, not personal details.

Inclusive participation review table

ACTIVITY	WHO PARTICIPATES NOW	WHO IS MISSING OR AT RISK	WHY MISSING	WHAT WILL HELP NEXT TIME
e.g. Community drill	Families, school children	People who avoid visibility; older people; people with disabilities; those living alone	Fear of exposure, timing, mobility barriers, not informed	Adjust timing; offer quiet participation; ensure multiple invitation pathways
e.g. Early-warning demo	Men attending the meeting house	People who prefer not to attend public gatherings; new arrivals; those not linked to household networks	Information passed only through chiefs or household heads	Provide opt-in SMS alerts; share messages through trusted intermediaries
e.g. Evacuation walks	Youth groups and church groups	People who feel watched or unsafe walking in groups	Fear of judgement; stigma; lack of privacy	Offer small-group or household-level walk-throughs
Early-warning system education session	Committee members, teachers	People who avoid public teaching spaces, those not comfortable asking questions	Fear of being singled out or questioned, low literacy, timing conflicts	Provide visual or audio materials, offer short, repeated sessions, allow quiet participation
Warning alert simulation	CBDRM volunteers, selected households	People who do not feel safe having their household listed, renters, mobile individuals	Fear of household data exposure, unclear role in simulation	Use opt-in groups, avoid naming households publicly, give neutral roles in simulations
Household mapping or hazard mapping	Traditional households, land-owning families	People not recognised as a household, those living informally, women living with friends, youth in shared housing	Mapping assumes formal households	Allow individuals or small groups to contribute privately, use anonymous sticky notes or symbols instead of names
Shelter orientation session	Community leaders, families with children	People who do not want to be seen entering shelters, people who are uncertain about rules	Fear of gossip or exposure	Provide small, repeated orientation sessions, video walk-throughs, or quiet viewing times

Preparedness awareness or training sessions	Regular attendees of village meetings	People who avoid large gatherings or do not feel safe speaking	Social visibility, fear of being asked personal questions	Allow back-row seating, quiet participation, written feedback, and trusted intermediaries
Committee formation or review meeting	Male leaders, active church members	People who avoid leadership spaces or fear being nominated	Pressure to speak, fear of misrepresentation	Use private nominations, 1:1 invitation, and anonymous input tools
Livelihood or climate-smart agriculture preparedness sessions	Farmers, landholders	Renters, seasonal workers, people mobile between households	Assumes land ownership, visibility concerns	Provide inclusive invitation wording, meet in neutral spaces, allow offsite learning

You can expand this table for as many activities as needed.

Inclusive Participation Micro-Checklist

Use this list before and during the activity:

- Invitation open and accessible to all
- Participation can be quiet or indirect
- No public roll call or introductions revealing identity
- Seating and movement allow privacy and flexible positioning
- Feedback can be verbal, written or through a trusted person
- Photos and videos only with consent
- Facilitators can pause if harm or discomfort occurs

Facilitator Notes

- Inclusion means adapting existing work, not adding more
- Encourage participation through trusted and discreet channels
- Model respectful language and listening
- End each activity with the question: *Who did we not hear from, and why?*

Safe participation also depends on leadership and decision making that protects dignity. Tool 3D provides a reflection process for inclusive leadership.

SCENARIO

We thought we weren't welcome

Location: Rural town, Papua New Guinea

Content warning: This story contains references to homophobia and social exclusion. It reflects real experiences in some parts of Papua New Guinea where gay men may face discrimination and exclusion from community life. Reader discretion is advised.

The story of Kila and his friends

Kila, Maki, and Wagi live together in a rural town in PNG. They are gay men. In their community, being gay is dangerous. Some people believe it is wrong or shameful. There are rumours that gay people are cursed, or that they bring sickness or disasters. Because of this, Kila and his friends are careful. They keep to themselves. They go about their lives quietly, going to the market when needed, or doing small jobs. But they try not to attract attention.

Kila works part-time at a small store. Maki runs a small garden behind their house. Wagi helps care for an elderly neighbour. They support each other emotionally and financially. They know how important it is to have people you can trust.

One day, they hear about a disaster preparedness program being run by an NGO. There have been more floods and landslides lately, and Kila thinks it might be a good idea to attend. But then they see the flyer. It lists the invited groups: church leaders, women's groups, youth groups, and ward councillors. Kila and his friends are not in any of those groups. They are not sure if the meeting is for people like them.

They ask a friend who works at the local clinic. She says the meeting is open to everyone. But she also says that the community leader and local church pastor will be leading the opening prayers. The last time they attended a public event, someone shouted at them and told them to leave. They felt humiliated.

They decide not to go.

The community makes an evacuation plan during the meeting. It includes community mapping to create evacuation plans, designated safe houses and a WhatsApp group for warnings. Kila and his friends are not on the list; they don't know the safe houses or the community evacuation plans. No one checks in with them.

Reflection Questions

1. What unspoken messages did Kila and his friends receive from the way the meeting was framed, and how might these messages have shaped their decision not to attend?
2. What could the NGO and community leaders have done differently so that people who are not part of formal groups felt safe, welcome, and informed about the evacuation plan?





Inclusive leadership reflection

Leadership in CBDRM often sits with chiefs, headmen, faith leaders, local officials and committee members. These structures provide continuity and trust, but they may also unintentionally exclude or marginalise some people, including people with diverse SOGIESC who may be living quietly, avoiding attention, or concerned about their safety.

This tool helps CBDRM implementers create safer leadership spaces by strengthening fairness, accountability and shared responsibility. In some communities, this may not change harmful beliefs in the short-term. The aim is to reduce harm, avoid making situations worse and encourage leadership behaviours that do not place people at further risk.

Purpose: Support leaders to reflect on their approach to safety, fairness and responsibility, especially when working with groups who may not feel welcome or safe in public community settings.

When to use:

- During committee formation
- After drills or planning sessions
- When preparing for leadership turnover or elections
- When concerns arise about exclusion or unsafe decision-making

Who facilitates: CBDRM implementers or trainers who can guide grounded, respectful, safety-conscious discussion. This tool does not require naming or identifying anyone with diverse SOGIESC.

Time: 60-75 minutes

Steps

1 Start with shared values

Start by naming community values such as *duavata* (unity), *solesolevaki* (collective action), *kastom* (respect) and *hamutuk* (togetherness).

Explain that:

- leadership grounded in fairness and safety helps the whole community prepare and respond
- some people may feel unsafe participating
- strengthening leadership behaviours helps avoid further harm

Explain that inclusion helps everyone prepare and respond more effectively.

2 Reflect on leadership practice

Invite discussion using prompts that focus on behaviour, not on identity groups:

- What strengths do our current leaders bring to community safety?
- How do our leaders show care and respect for community members who may feel unsafe or hesitant to speak?
- Whose knowledge do we rely on during emergencies, and who might we be overlooking?
- Who are the quiet or informal leaders that people trust during difficult times?
- What changes to leadership practice would make participation feel safer, especially for those who rarely speak or never attend?

Important: Do not ask anyone to disclose their gender identity, sexual orientation or personal experience.

3 Identify one or two practical safety actions

These actions should strengthen safety without requiring disclosure. Examples:

- Rotate who speaks first, so decision-making does not centre only senior men.
- Create “open listening hours” where people can safely raise concerns one-on-one.
- Add a standing agenda item on safety and respectful behaviour.
- Ensure leaders check whether meetings feel safe for everyone, without asking about anyone’s identity.
- Make clear that discouraging attendance, spreading rumours or using shaming language is unacceptable.

4 Leadership commitment to Do No Harm

Invite leaders to read or adapt a collective statement such as:

“We commit to leading with care and fairness. We will not create or reinforce unsafe spaces for anyone. We share responsibility for respectful decision-making and will address behaviours that cause harm or exclusion.”

Responding when harmful beliefs arise

Feedback noted that some leaders may openly state that diverse SOGIESC identities are incompatible with community values. Facilitators must be prepared for this.

This tool is not designed to challenge deeply held beliefs head-on. It is designed to keep CBDRM safe, reduce harm and prevent exclusionary practices that increase disaster risk.

Facilitators can respond by grounding the discussion in roles and responsibilities, not identity debates. For example:

If a leader says:

“These people do not belong here” or
“their lives are against our values.”

A possible facilitator response:

“Our role today is not to change anyone’s beliefs. Our responsibility in CBDRM is to make sure all community members can stay safe during emergencies. Some people may feel unsafe or unwelcome, and that puts them at higher risk during disasters. Our focus is on leadership behaviour that avoids harm and upholds fairness, even when we have different beliefs.”

If the conversation becomes unsafe or highly charged:

- pause the discussion
- re-centre on safety
- avoid arguments about identity
- remind participants that CBDRM’s purpose is community-wide safety

How this tool relates to the scenario:

“We thought we weren’t welcome” (PNG)

In the PNG scenario, (above Tool 3D) Kila, Maki and Wagi avoid community gatherings because they fear discrimination, public shaming or being treated as a threat. Their exclusion is not caused by lack of interest or ability. It is caused by unsafe leadership environments, gossip, and community attitudes that signal they are not welcome.

Tool 3D does not ask leaders to debate sexuality or change long-held beliefs. Instead, it focuses on the one area where CBDRM implementers can influence change: leadership behaviours that reduce harm and avoid making the situation worse.

In contexts like this, even small leadership shifts can make a meaningful difference, such as:

- leaders committing not to shame or single people out
- ensuring meetings are run in ways that minimise risk for those who attend quietly
- reinforcing that harassment or exclusion during CBDRM activities is unacceptable
- creating safer, lower-visibility pathways for participation

These changes may not resolve wider stigma, but they do create conditions where people like Kila, Maki and Wagi can participate in ways that feel less risky. The goal in such settings is harm prevention, not identity disclosure or public inclusion campaigns. Tool 3C supports leaders to strengthen fairness, safety and responsibility so that community members who fear discrimination are not pushed further into the margins during disaster preparedness and response.

Tips for facilitators

- Keep the focus on safety, behaviour and responsibilities, not on identities.
- Avoid asking people to share personal stories or backgrounds.
- Reinforce: inclusion strengthens preparedness; exclusion increases risk.
- Repeat the reflection annually or when leadership changes.
- If harmful statements arise, respond using the guidance above.

SCENARIO

They think we're all the same

Location: Highlands village, Papua New Guinea

Content warning: This story includes references to transphobia, stigma, and social exclusion. It reflects real experiences in parts of Papua New Guinea where trans women may face discrimination, moral judgment, and exclusion from community programs and disaster preparedness activities.

The story of Alua, Mela, and Sigi

Alua, Mela, and Sigi are transwomen who live together in a small house on the edge of a village in the PNG Highlands. They survive through their own hard work. They grow sweet potatoes, greens, and bananas in their garden, and they go bush hunting and fishing. They rarely ask for help and take pride in providing for themselves.

But the community sees them differently. Many people assume that all transwomen are sex workers. Because of this, Alua, Mela, and Sigi live with double stigma: for being trans, and for being seen as "immoral" even when they are not. Some people whisper about them. Others avoid them. A few openly insult them at the market.

Alua has a younger brother, Pita, who works for a local NGO. He is part of a new disaster preparedness project in the area. They are building community disaster response plans and organising a training on what to do in case of an earthquake or landslide.

Alua asks her brother if they can attend the preparedness training. She explains how they could help—they know the land well, they can hunt and track, and they have ideas for how people like them can stay safe during emergencies.

Pita lowers his voice and says, "Sister, you know this is not easy. People will talk. Being trans is taboo here. If you show up, they will say the NGO is encouraging it. Maybe it's better if you don't come."

Alua says nothing. That night, she tells Mela and Sigi what he said. They sit in silence.

A few weeks later, there is a community earthquake drill. People gather at the church ground. Information is shared about what to do and where to go. Maps are shown. Safe spots are marked.

Alua, Mela, and Sigi are not there. Their house is not listed on the evacuation map. No one checks on them.

When the next earthquake hits, they are unsure where to go. They make their way to the nearest open space on their own, after hearing others shouting. They are safe, but they realise again that their safety was never part of the plan.

Reflection Questions

1. In our leadership and planning work, what assumptions do we make about who belongs in community activities, and how might these assumptions quietly remove people from safety plans?
2. How can we ensure that community members who face stigma or judgement can still access disaster information and safety plans, even if they do not feel safe attending public meetings?





Inclusive early-warning and evacuation

Early-warning and evacuation systems work best when messages reach everyone and when all people feel safe to act on them.

In many communities, warnings are shared through chiefs, church leaders, or family heads. These systems may not reach people who live alone, rent rooms, avoid public spaces, or are not connected to local leadership.

This tool helps CBDRM implementers check that early-warning messages and evacuation plans are clear, fair, and safe for all members of the community.

Purpose: To make sure that early-warning messages and evacuation systems reach all people safely, including those who may not be part of traditional households or community networks.

When to use: During preparedness planning, when testing early-warning systems, or when reviewing evacuation routes and shelter access.

Who facilitates: CBDRM implementers, community disaster committees, and local leaders responsible for communication or drills.

Time: 2 hours

Steps

- 1 Start with a community map (30 minutes)**
Draw or use an existing map of the community. Show where early-warning messages come from and how they travel. Ask:
 - Who gets the message first?
 - Who might not receive it at all?
 - Who might not trust it or feel safe to act on it?
- 2 Review early-warning practices (30 minutes)**
Discuss each question in the checklist below. Mark *Yes*, *Somewhat*, or *No* and talk about what can be improved.
- 3 Review evacuation practices (30 minutes)**
Go through how people move during an evacuation, how shelters are accessed, and how safety is protected.
- 4 Plan small changes (30 minutes)**
Agree on two or three actions that can make early warnings and evacuations safer for everyone. Keep actions realistic and based on what is within your control.



Inclusive early-warning checklist

AREA	KEY QUESTION	STATUS
Message Delivery	Is the person or agency responsible for message delivery known, and can you work with them to adjust how warnings reach everyone?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are messages shared through more than one way (e.g. radio, phone, word of mouth, peer groups)?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are messages given in local language and simple words that everyone understands?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Do people who live alone or outside families also receive the warning?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Can people receive the message quietly or privately (e.g. by text, through a friend, or small group)?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Do messages clearly say what to do next and where to go?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are there people who avoid group meetings, churches, or public gatherings because they fear judgement or discrimination, and how can they receive warnings safely?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
Trust and Safety	Are trusted people from different groups involved in sharing messages (not only chiefs or pastors)?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are messages shared in a way that protects people's privacy and dignity?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Can people ask questions or check information safely?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are any groups or leaders spreading confusion or fear, and how can that be addressed?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are warnings shared in ways that do not rely only on leaders who may hold strong views about gender roles, morality or identity?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Can people who are gossiped about, judged, or avoided in the community still check information without exposing themselves to harm?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
Data and Communication Safety	Are contact lists or group chats managed carefully to avoid exposing people's names or numbers?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are photos or stories shared only with consent and without showing private details?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are private messages, group chats, or contact lists handled in ways that protect people who would face harm if their identity, contacts, or household information became known?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No

Scoring



Mostly Yes Systems are inclusive and trusted. Continue to review and share lessons.



Mixed Some people are still being left out. Focus on improving those areas before the next season.



Mostly No High risk of exclusion or harm. Pause and revise before continuing activities.

Why this checklist matters for people with Diverse SOGIESC

In many communities across the Pacific, people who experience stigma, judgement or exclusion may receive warnings later than others or may avoid public gatherings where warnings are shared. This includes some people with diverse SOGIESC, whose safety concerns or social standing may prevent them from accessing information in the same way as the rest of the community.

Because direct questions about SOGIESC may be unsafe in some contexts, this checklist uses broader safety and inclusion questions that can still reveal patterns such as:

- warnings not reaching people who live alone
- warnings withheld from people who are avoided or gossiped about
- messages shared only through leaders who may discriminate
- unsafe group chats that expose private information
- evacuation instructions that do not consider people who fear being harassed or judged

These patterns often mirror the kinds of exclusion faced by diverse SOGIESC people even when they cannot be openly named.

Staff should use this tool to notice whether anyone who is socially marginalised, isolated, or living quietly is unintentionally being left out. This helps identify early-warning gaps that particularly affect people with diverse SOGIESC—and to improve systems without creating additional risk.



Tip

An inclusive early-warning system does not require naming people's identities. It requires noticing who is missing, who is avoiding public spaces, who is not being reached, and who may face judgement or harm if their information is shared. When these people are considered, early warning becomes safer for everyone, including those who cannot speak openly about their lives.



Inclusive evacuation checklist

AREA	KEY QUESTION	STATUS
Routes and Access	Were evacuation routes tested with different community members to check for safety or access issues?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Can people evacuate quietly or through an alternative route if they need to avoid attention or judgement?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Do plans include people who are not linked to traditional households, families or clan structures?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are there places along the route where people may face questioning, harassment, or unwanted attention?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
Shelter Entry and Safety	Can people enter shelters without being asked personal questions about gender, family, relationships, or how they live?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are private or smaller areas available for people who feel unsafe or exposed in large open spaces?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are shelter committees briefed to address harmful behaviour, teasing, or discrimination quickly and safely?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are there options for people who may want to stay near the edge of the shelter space or in less crowded areas?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
Follow-Up and Feedback	After drills or events, are people able to share feedback privately or through trusted people?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are lessons from private or anonymous feedback used to update plans?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Is feedback collected in ways that do not require people to disclose their identity, household structure, or personal details?	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No

Scoring



Mostly Yes Systems are inclusive and trusted. Continue to review and share lessons.



Mixed Some people are still being left out. Focus on improving those areas before the next season.



Mostly No High risk of exclusion or harm. Pause and revise before continuing activities.

How this checklist exposes SOGIESC-related barriers

In many communities, people who face judgement, stigma, or questions about their identity can feel unsafe using main evacuation routes or entering shelters. This includes some people with diverse SOGIESC, who may wish to evacuate quietly or avoid spaces where they expect questioning, harassment, or scrutiny.

Because direct questions about SOGIESC may be unsafe in some settings, the checklist uses broader questions that help identify patterns of exclusion such as:

- people avoiding main routes
- people not linked to recognised households
- people expecting questioning at shelter entry
- people needing privacy or smaller spaces
- people reluctant to give feedback publicly

These patterns often mirror the barriers experienced by people with diverse SOGIESC people, even when they cannot be openly named.

This tool helps staff identify whether evacuation plans are safe for those who want to participate without exposing themselves to harm.

Reflection

- Who was hardest to reach?
- What made some people feel unsafe to evacuate?
- What small change could make the system safer for everyone next time?

Start with small changes that build trust. Over time, those changes save lives.



Tip

Inclusive evacuation does not require people to state who they are. It requires creating routes, shelter spaces, and feedback systems that feel safe for those who fear judgement, questioning, or discrimination. When these people are included, everyone is safer.



SCENARIO

We just listened from outside

Location: Coastal town, Timor-Leste

Content warning: This story includes references to homophobia, transphobia, and social exclusion. It reflects real experiences in parts of Timor-Leste where lesbian, bisexual, and trans people may face discrimination and be excluded from community activities and disaster preparedness planning. Reader discretion is advised.

The story of Marta, Nunu, and Teo

Marta and Nunu are a couple. They are lesbians and live with their friend Teo, a trans man, in a small rental house in a coastal town in Timor-Leste. Marta works at a small food stall, and Nunu is a cleaner at a guesthouse. Teo has not been able to find stable work. Most places reject his job applications because he does not “look like a man” or because his documents still show a different name and gender. The three support each other with care and shared income.

They live quietly. They are often mocked when walking in public. Some neighbours call them names. They do not feel safe at community meetings, especially when the *suco* (village) leader or church leaders are present. Once, they tried to attend a community health day, but a volunteer said they were in the wrong place.

They recently heard that the local government and an NGO are doing disaster preparedness training. The coast is at risk of flooding and storm surges, and everyone has seen how the climate is changing. Marta wants to go—she remembers a big flood that destroyed her village as a child.

The meeting is held at the *suco* hall. Marta, Nunu, and Teo stand nearby, but do not go in. They see a big group of men sitting in the front. The only women are from church groups and mothers' groups. They do not feel welcome. They are afraid someone will ask why they are there.

They listen from outside, trying to hear the information. One part of the meeting is about evacuation shelters. They hear there will be shelters for families, and separate shelters for single men. Marta and Nunu look at each other. Will they be allowed to stay together? Will Teo be sent to the men's shelter? They don't know where they fit. They feel anxious and invisible.

They write down what they can remember when they get home.

Two weeks later, there is a preparedness drill. Everyone receives messages on their phones. But Teo's number was never collected. Nunu's phone is broken. No one knocks at their house. They hear the siren and run up the hill, but they do not know the full evacuation route. They are scared and confused.

Later, a neighbour says they should have gone to the meeting. But Marta asks: “Would you have sat next to us?” The neighbour is quiet.

Reflection Questions

1. Who feels safe walking into community meetings, and who stays outside and what leadership or organisational behaviours make that difference?
2. How can evacuation plans, shelter arrangements, and early-warning systems include people who live quietly, avoid community spaces, or do not fit into traditional family categories?





Inclusive WASH in community disaster preparedness and response

In disasters, access to water, toilets, and washing facilities becomes a critical survival need. However, WASH facilities are often designed with assumptions about gender, household structure, and privacy that do not reflect the realities of all community members. People may avoid evacuation centres, skip washing, or ration water due to shame, safety concerns, or fear of being seen. This creates serious health and protection risks.

Why WASH facilities can exclude people with Diverse SOGIESC

People with diverse SOGIESC may avoid WASH areas when:

- gender-segregated facilities are unsafe or heavily policed
- queues involve staring, comments, or gossip
- bathing or toilet areas allow people to monitor or judge who goes where
- menstrual products are distributed through gendered assumptions
- management practices allow harassment to continue
- privacy is not protected in shelters or temporary camps

Because it is unsafe to ask about identities directly in many Pacific contexts, this checklist uses behavioural and environmental questions that surface these issues indirectly while keeping community conversations safe.

This tool helps CBDRM implementers apply these values in disaster WASH planning to ensure dignity, privacy, safety, and equitable access for all.

Purpose: To ensure that water, sanitation, hygiene, and bathing facilities used during disasters are designed, managed, and communicated in ways that protect dignity, privacy, health, and safety for all community members.

When to Use:

- During community disaster preparedness planning
- When designing evacuation centres or temporary shelters
- During disaster simulations, drills, or seasonal readiness reviews
- During early recovery when WASH facilities are used by displaced or affected households

Who facilitates: CBDRM implementers, disaster committees, shelter or evacuation managers, WASH focal points, faith-based partners, with support from inclusion and safeguarding advisors.

Time: 45–60 minutes. Can be integrated into broader shelter or evacuation planning sessions.

Steps

- 1** Introduce the purpose: Emphasise dignity, privacy, and safety as core components of WASH in disaster resilience.
- 2** Walk through the checklist as a group, focusing on real experiences rather than theory.
- 3** Identify who may face barriers or risk (without naming individuals).
- 4** Mark Yes / Somewhat / No based on current WASH facilities and practices.
- 5** Agree on changes that can be realistically implemented with existing resources.
- 6** Record responsibilities and timelines and follow up as part of disaster preparedness monitoring

Inclusive WASH checklist

DOMAIN	KEY QUESTIONS (UNCOVERING HIDDEN EXCLUSION)	WHY THIS MATTERS	STATUS
Water Access	Can all individuals safely collect water without standing in gendered or public queues?	Gendered queues can expose people to scrutiny, gossip or questioning.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are quiet or alternative collection times available for people who avoid crowded or highly visible areas?	Some people avoid public spaces for safety or dignity reasons.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
Toilets	Are there private or single-use toilet options that do not force people to choose between "male" or "female" facilities?	Gender-segregated toilets can be unsafe for trans and gender-diverse people.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are toilets designed and lit to ensure safety while also protecting privacy (e.g., bright enough to prevent harm but with doors/walls that prevent people seeing who uses which toilet)?	Good lighting supports safety; privacy design prevents surveillance or policing of who enters which space.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
Bathing Areas	Are bathing areas enclosed, private, and available for anyone who needs additional safety or privacy?	Trans and gender-diverse people often avoid bathing due to harassment, exposure or shame.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are bathing areas located in safer places that reduce visibility from public paths or gathering areas?	This reduces monitoring or judgement of who goes in and out.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
Menstrual Hygiene	Are menstrual products available without needing to ask publicly or justify who they are for?	People who menstruate may not be recognised or may avoid asking due to stigma or gendered assumptions.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Can people access products privately or through multiple quiet distribution points?	Reduces exposure and embarrassment.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
Accessibility	Can people with mobility challenges safely reach and use WASH facilities without assistance that compromises dignity?	Safety requires thoughtful pathways, stable surfaces, and inclusive design.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are doorways wide enough for wheelchairs, mobility devices or people needing physical support?	Essential for access and autonomy.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are toilet and bathing areas usable by people who cannot stand for long periods or need additional support bars?	Supports older adults, disabled people, and anyone navigating physical challenges.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No

Cultural Safety	Are cultural norms of privacy, respect, bodily dignity, and shame carefully considered in the layout and operation of WASH facilities?	Cultural safety helps reduce judgement and exclusion	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Have gendered expectations or assumptions been minimised in signage, layout and access rules?	Prevents misgendering and harassment.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
Management & Monitoring	Are CBDRM committees prepared to respond quickly to gossip, harassment or policing of who uses which WASH facilities?	Behaviour determines safety just as much as infrastructure.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are volunteers trained to support people who quietly avoid WASH areas or only attend at off-peak times?	This highlights patterns of exclusion that might otherwise be missed	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
Feedback & Adaptation	Is there a safe, private way for people to report WASH problems or harm?	People experiencing stigma rarely report issues openly.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No
	Are sensitive WASH concerns used to improve design and management without requiring people to reveal personal details?	Protects dignity while enabling learning.	☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No

Scoring

- ☒ **Mostly Yes** Systems protect dignity and access.
Continue monitoring and improvement
- ☐ **Mixed** Some risks present.
Fix “Somewhat” and “No” before next disaster season
- ☐ **Mostly No** Facilities may cause harm or exclusion.
Redesign or delay, seek technical support



Tip

- Well-lit WASH facilities increase general safety. Privacy should be protected through design (doors, partitions, placement), not darkness. A safe WASH space is well lit for visibility yet designed so people cannot monitor, judge or question who uses which facility.
- Once WASH facilities are designed to be inclusive, they should be integrated into preparedness drills, evacuation centre planning, and monitoring systems. Community participation (Tool 3C) and leadership (Tool 3D) play key roles in maintaining dignity and safety in WASH environments

SCENARIO

People finally felt comfortable using the facilities

Location: Cyclone prone coastal town, Vanuatu

Content warning: This story describes privacy concerns, fear of being watched, and social discomfort related to shared WASH facilities during disasters. It reflects real experiences in some Pacific contexts where poorly designed or poorly supervised WASH spaces create risks for people who need privacy and safety.

The Story of Tanu and the Shared WASH Area

Tanu lived in a coastal town that experienced frequent storms and flooding. Whenever the community moved to the evacuation centre, Tanu always felt uneasy using the shared toilets and bathing spaces. The toilet doors did not fully close, the bathing area had no lock, and people sometimes gathered nearby to wash clothes or talk. Tanu preferred to wait until late at night or avoid the facilities altogether, which affected both health and comfort during long stays.

Tanu was not alone. Several young people, single adults, and older women quietly avoided using the facilities because they felt exposed or unsafe. Some brought water containers into the sleeping area to wash in private, while others returned home briefly during storms to bathe, risking their safety.

Before the next cyclone season, the CBDRM committee used Tool 3F to review the evacuation centre's WASH setup. They realised that privacy and safety concerns were discouraging many people from using the facilities. They also learned that not everyone felt safe being seen entering the bathing area, especially when groups gathered nearby.

The committee introduced simple changes that did not require major construction or new funding. They added internal sliding bolts to the toilet and bathing doors so people could lock them from the inside. They created a small, screened pathway using tarpaulins to reduce visibility for those entering the bathing area. They asked volunteers to relocate clothes washing to the back of the centre, so people did not gather at the entrance. A young woman and an older woman were designated as quiet contact persons for anyone with concerns.

When the next cyclone approached, people noticed the difference immediately. The screened path allowed Tanu to enter the bathing area without being watched. The lock on the door meant the space could be used without fear of interruption. More women and youth used the washing facilities earlier in the evening, and no one needed to sneak out of the centre after dark.

After the storm, the committee reflected on how the smallest changes had created the biggest improvements. One volunteer noted, "People used the facilities because they felt safe. It was not the building that changed, but the way we arranged it."

For Tanu, the change meant safety, privacy, and dignity during a stressful time. For the first time, using the evacuation centre's WASH facilities felt normal and respectful.

Reflection Questions

1. Which aspects of our current WASH facilities might unintentionally expose people or make them feel unsafe during a disaster, and why might these concerns be hidden?
2. What simple adjustments, such as locks, screens or relocating social activity areas, could help create safer and more private WASH spaces in our evacuation centres?





Working with Diverse SOGIESC advisors and community-based organisations

This part of the toolkit supports Disaster READY partners to build and maintain safe, respectful partnerships with diverse SOGIESC advisors and CBOs. These partnerships help strengthen inclusive practice within existing CBDRM planning, processes, and decision-making.

Diverse SOGIESC advisors and CBOs should not be expected to deliver or lead CBDRM activities. Most CBOs do not work within formal disaster systems, and many will not have experience navigating the structured, regulated CBDRM processes that require provincial approval and alignment with NDMO guidance. Their primary contribution is not technical CBDRM implementation, but strengthening inclusion, safety, and community connection across the work that implementers already lead.

CBOs typically support by offering:

- Sensitisation or 101 training on diverse SOGIESC.
- Review and adaptation of project plans, tools, and language to reduce risk and bias.
- Facilitating short reflective sessions with NGO staff on topics such as safer language, stigma and discrimination, managing disclosure, understanding local identities, and recognising how everyday practices can unintentionally exclude people with diverse SOGIESC.
- Identification of participation barriers and advice on safer engagement approaches.
- Guidance on local norms, terminology, stigma, trust, and safety considerations.

These contributions help implementers check assumptions, navigate sensitive contexts carefully, and build the skills required to make their CBDRM work safer and more inclusive over time.

Diverse SOGIESC CBOs offer essential insight into local realities of stigma, safety, participation, and language. They act as advisors, reviewers, co-facilitators, and relational bridges. Their involvement must remain safe, be fairly compensated, and grounded in what they determine is appropriate for their organisation and communities.

Building these partnerships takes time and care. This part guides implementers on partnering safely with diverse SOGIESC CBOs, understanding their role and limits, paying fairly, and maintaining accountability for inclusion across the project cycle.

Use this part when:

- Beginning or strengthening relationships with diverse SOGIESC CBOs or informal peer networks.
- Designing activities that may involve or affect people with diverse SOGIESC.
- Supporting downstream partners or local authorities to work more safely and inclusively.

Context in the Pacific and Timor-Leste

People with diverse SOGIESC are part of every community. Many already practise informal preparedness through peer networks, trusted relationships, and mutual support. Some avoid formal CBDRM processes or public meetings because of stigma, safety concerns, or past experiences of harm.

In many areas, particularly in PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and rural Timor-Leste, there may be no formal diverse SOGIESC CBOs at all. Instead, there may be informal networks, small peer groups, HIV-focused MSM networks, gender-diverse networks, or trusted individuals who support one another quietly and cautiously. These groups may not be publicly visible, may not use 'diverse SOGIESC' terminology, and may operate with significant risk. In places where formal CBOs do exist, many are based in capital cities and may not be recognised or safe in rural or remote communities.

Whether formal or informal, these networks hold valuable insight into local language, stigma, safety, and participation barriers. They can guide implementers to choose culturally grounded, safer engagement approaches and understand when visibility is appropriate and when privacy is essential.

Partnerships work best when implementers and networks are honest about their different strengths. Formal CBOs and informal groups may be small or volunteer-led but hold deep knowledge and trust. NGOs may have resources, structure, and CBDRM expertise but less confidence or experience in this area. Working well together means listening deeply, taking guidance seriously, and sharing power in ways that protect safety, respect local realities, and uphold community leadership.



Preconditions for inclusive partnerships

Before partnerships with diverse SOGIESC CBOs can succeed, certain preconditions need to be in place. These are the enabling factors that allow inclusion to move from intent to practice. They create the foundation for safety, mutual respect, and shared accountability. Where these conditions are weak or missing, the first step is not partnership itself, but internal preparation, reflection, and readiness-building within the implementing organisation.

PRECONDITION	WHAT IT MEANS IN PRACTICE	WHY IT MATTERS
Organisational readiness	The implementing organisation has leadership support, basic SOGIESC awareness, and internal systems for confidentiality, payment, and inclusion. Staff have been briefed on safety, respect, and local sensitivities.	Inclusion cannot rely only on external advisors. Internal readiness ensures the organisation does not unintentionally cause harm or burden CBO partners.
Cultural and relational grounding	Staff understand that trust is relational and that Pacific values such as vanua, kastom, wantok, and hamutuk shape how people connect and care for one another. Meetings begin with relationship-building, not only agenda items.	In Pacific and Timor-Leste contexts, relationships come before tasks. Cultural grounding makes inclusion genuine and respectful.
Safe entry points	Allies and trusted intermediaries (identified through Tool 4A: Champion Mapping Tool) help introduce implementers to CBOs and advise on local dynamics.	Safe introductions prevent harm, reduce suspicion, and demonstrate respect for local relationships.
Accountability to local partners	Inclusion is guided by shared goals and transparent communication. Both sides agree how progress and safety will be reviewed.	CBOs can see that their advice leads to action, not token consultation. This builds credibility and sustained engagement.
Practical resourcing	Budgets cover advisory fees, translation, and reflection time. Payment processes are simple and timely.	CBOs are often under-resourced. Paying fairly and promptly demonstrates respect and strengthens long-term trust.
Institutional openness	Organisational systems, donors, and government counterparts show willingness to adapt rules and practices to make inclusion possible.	When institutions are flexible, inclusion becomes part of normal operations rather than a special project.
Protection pathways	There are clear internal channels to raise safety concerns, pause activities, or adapt engagement if risks change.	Safety can shift quickly. Partners need to know that implementers will respond if harm or exposure becomes likely.

Working with government systems safely

Government interface protocol

Inclusive practice in disaster preparedness often involves working with provincial or national authorities. In some settings, open reference to diverse SOGIESC partnerships can create risk for community partners. This protocol helps implementers maintain essential coordination with government systems while protecting partner safety, privacy, and trust.

- Map relationships early. Government departments, ministries, and local offices are not monolithic. Attitudes toward diverse SOGIESC can differ between national and provincial levels, between sectors, and even between individual staff within the same unit. Use quiet enquiries, existing relationships, or trusted intermediaries to understand who is likely to be supportive, neutral, or sensitive. Where possible, engage using broad equity or “leave no one behind” language rather than focusing solely on SOGIESC.
- Protect anonymity. When sharing examples or lessons learned, use general terms such as “community advisors” or “local inclusion partners” unless visibility has been explicitly agreed as safe. Avoid naming individuals or CBOs in official meetings, reports, or presentations.

- Work through multi-issue platforms. Participate in gender, protection, disability, or child protection clusters where diverse SOGIESC concerns can be addressed as part of broader inclusion discussions. Where policies, toolkits, or processes already involve other community-based organisations, look for opportunities to build solidarity and address exclusion collaboratively.
- Prepare respectful talking points. Frame inclusion in terms of fairness, dignity, and community safety. Connect your messages to national resilience strategies, social protection frameworks, or existing government commitments to equitable disaster risk management.
- Share credit collectively. When acknowledging progress with government or donors, focus on shared outcomes and community benefit rather than naming individual partners, advisors, or CBOs. This avoids spotlighting organisations or people who may face safety risks.
- Debrief with partners after engagement. Check how government interactions felt for them, whether any new risks emerged, and whether communication approaches or visibility levels need to be adjusted before future meetings.

This protocol supports implementers to navigate government systems safely. It recognises that inclusion in disaster preparedness often sits within politically and socially sensitive spaces, and that careful relationship management is essential to protect partners and maintain community trust.

Preconditions for safe partnership and government engagement

Before engaging with government counterparts or formalising new partnerships, take time as a team to discuss these questions. Record key insights or actions in your project notes or Partnership Note.

REFLECTION QUESTION	PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION
What needs to be in place before we bring partners into government spaces?	Clarifies readiness and prevents exposure of CBOs or individuals before systems are safe.
How can we describe our inclusion work in language that is respectful, accurate, and culturally safe?	Helps staff and partners find language that aligns with Pacific values and avoids terms that may cause misunderstanding or risk.
Who will monitor and follow up on safety if government engagement increases visibility?	Assigns accountability for ongoing risk assessment, ensuring that inclusion remains protective rather than performative.



Tip
Use these prompts during partnership planning meetings or after government briefings. They can help teams reflect on readiness, align messaging, and identify any new safety actions needed before proceeding.

Summary of tools in this section

TOOL	FOCUS	PURPOSE	WHEN TO USE
Tool 4A: Champion Mapping Tool	Trust and entry points	Identify trusted allies, informal networks, and safe connectors who can support inclusive engagement	Early in planning, before consultations or risk mapping; after incidents to review who helped and how
Tool 4B: Building and Maintaining Trust with diverse SOGIESC CBOs	Partnership practice	Strengthen long-term, accountable relationships with CBOs through fair payment, transparent communication, and shared learning.	During design or adaptation phases; when initiating or strengthening relationships; for regular follow ups and feedback loops

How this section works

Part 4 builds on earlier readiness work and helps implementers partner safely with diverse SOGIESC advisors and CBOs, so inclusion stays mainstreamed across the CBDRM cycle.

Work in sequence where possible: confirm Preconditions, apply the Government Interface Protocol if needed, then use Tool 4A or Tool 4B to plan and sustain partnerships.





Champion mapping tool

Often, people with diverse SOGIESC, people with disabilities, or others at risk of exclusion rely on quiet allies and informal networks rather than formal leadership structures. These “champions” help connect implementers to communities in ways that protect safety and dignity.

This tool helps CBDRM implementers identify who already supports inclusion in practice, including people, groups, or organisations who can safely act as entry points, connectors, or protective intermediaries in preparedness and response activities.

Purpose: To identify and engage trusted individuals, groups, or organisations who quietly or openly support inclusion and safety in their communities.

When to use:

- Early in CBDRM project planning, before community consultations or risk mapping
- When forming new partnerships with CBOs
- During reviews or debriefs to recognise and strengthen existing networks of care

Who facilitates: CBDRM implementers, inclusion focal points.

Time: 45–60 minutes (or as part of ongoing team or CBO dialogue)

Materials needed

- Flipchart or printed Champion Mapping Template
- Sticky notes or markers
- Coloured dots or stickers (optional for visual layering)
- Partner organisation or CBO list (if available)

Instructions

1. Frame the activity

Begin by explaining that “champions” are not always formal leaders. They may be quiet supporters, informal influencers, or trusted allies in peer networks. The purpose of this activity is to understand who communities trust and how support already shows up in daily life.

You can say:

“This tool helps us notice people or groups who quietly or openly support safety and inclusion. These are people we may want to work with to make sure our CBDRM process reaches everyone, not only those who already hold power. We will move slowly and protect people’s privacy at every stage.”

Remind your team that you are not naming anyone yet. You will only add names after completing the risk assessment in Step 5.

2. Introduce the champion mapping template

Once you have worked through Steps 1–5 and confirmed it is safe to name someone, you can use the template together as a group.

If it is not safe to name someone, keep the entry general (for example, “clinic nurse” or “youth group leader”).

Draw or print the table below and fill it in together as a group.

Encourage your team to move carefully. Only complete the first column when you are confident it is safe for that person to be named.

Examples

These examples show the type of information that can be recorded.

They should not be used to assume who real champions are in any community.

NAME / GROUP	WHO TRUSTS THEM?	HOW DO THEY SHOW SUPPORT?	WHAT RISKS DO THEY FACE (IF ANY)?	HOW CAN WE INVOLVE THEM SAFELY?
<i>e.g. Auntie Sala</i>	<i>Young women, queer youth</i>	<i>Listens, gives shelter, provides quiet support</i>	<i>Social stigma, gossip</i>	<i>Private planning meeting; community-led session</i>
<i>e.g. Local youth club</i>	<i>School-age youth</i>	<i>Safe space, informal care</i>	<i>Funding and visibility pressure</i>	<i>Include in awareness campaign</i>
<i>e.g. Disability org representative</i>	<i>Women with disabilities</i>	<i>Facilitates access to meetings</i>	<i>None (strong local reputation)</i>	<i>Partner in shelter and risk mapping</i>

3. Identify champions (individual or group reflection)

In this step, you are not writing down names. You are helping your team notice where trust already exists in the community. Champions may be diverse SOGIESC people, allies, or anyone who quietly protects and supports others. All may face risk if identified too early, so keep this broad until you complete the safety assessment in Step 5.

Use these questions to guide the conversation:

- “Who do people turn to when they feel unsafe or excluded?”
- “Who has stepped in when someone was treated unfairly?”
- “Who helps others navigate difficult situations without judgement?”
- “Are there individuals or groups already supporting inclusion in quiet ways?”

Think in general categories rather than names. Examples might include:

- a teacher, nurse, or clinic staff member who is known to be discreet and kind
- a women’s group, youth group, or a local leader who promotes fairness
- a disability organisation, CBO, or faith leader who supports people others overlook
- someone who has helped people evacuate safely or access aid during past emergencies

Keep descriptions broad. You will only consider names after assessing safety in Step 5.

4. Shortlist roles and patterns (without naming people yet)

Before you think about individuals, narrow the list into roles, behaviours, and patterns of trust. This helps you understand the types of champions who exist without putting anyone at risk.

Ask yourself and your team:

- “Which of these roles seem most trusted in this community?”
- “Who tends to act when someone is excluded or unsafe?”
- “Where do people feel most protected or listened to?”
- “Which categories feel too risky to involve at this stage?”

Create a short list of roles only, such as “a secondary school teacher”, “a youth leader”, “a clinic nurse”, “a women’s group representative”, or “a disability advocate”.

This step allows you to consider involvement safely without naming any individuals yet.

5. Assess risk and involvement

Only now do you begin to consider specific people, and only if it feels safe. Some trusted people may not be safe to approach. Others may be safe but prefer to stay in the background. This step helps you protect those who already protect others.

For each potential champion, ask:

- Would involvement increase their visibility in ways they have not chosen?
- Could this expose them, their family, or the people who trust them?
- Do they face stigma, scrutiny, or pressure that could increase risk?
- What would make involvement safe for them, if they choose it?
- Should you avoid naming them and keep descriptions general instead?

If you are not sure, stay cautious.

Visibility must always be their choice.

Once you understand the risks, decide whether and how to approach them.

Plan who will speak to them, what will be said, and how confidentiality will be protected.

6. Build relationships and reciprocity

If a champion agrees to be involved, take time to build a safe, respectful, and fair relationship.

You and your team should:

- Share what you learned from the tool and ask for their thoughts
- Ask how they want to be involved and what feels safe or unsafe
- Compensate their time, knowledge, transport, or emotional labour
- Set up simple ways for them to give feedback throughout the project
- Check in regularly to ensure risks or circumstances have not changed

Champions choose their own level of involvement, pace, and visibility. Your role is to protect their safety, uphold dignity, and avoid placing pressure on any single person or group.

Facilitator tips

Do not assume champions and gatekeepers are always separate roles. Some diverse SOGIESC community members may protect others in some situations and act as gatekeepers in others. Take time to understand the context before making assumptions.

- Use this tool early in CBDRM planning, ideally before community consultations begin. This helps you understand where trust already exists and where you need to build it.
- If a community has no visible champions, that is still useful information. It means trust-building and safer entry points must come before any new engagement.
- In high-risk settings, avoid recording names. Use broad descriptions or initials only. Be aware that even coded or partial information can sometimes be traced back to individuals, so move slowly and check with partners about what feels safe.
- When in doubt, prioritise safety over detail. It is better to keep the mapping broad than to expose someone to risk.

Expected outcomes

- Clearer understanding of who supports inclusion in practice
- Safer, relational entry points into marginalised communities
- Shared accountability between implementers and CBOs
- Increased community-led protection and trust
- Reduced reliance on dominant powerholders alone

After using the Champion Mapping Tool to identify trusted allies, intermediaries, and CBOs who support inclusion, this next tool helps you take the next step, building genuine, safe, and accountable relationships with them. It focuses specifically on working with diverse SOGIESC CBOs and advisors, whose participation strengthens safety, inclusion, and trust throughout the CBDRM process.



SCENARIO

We were included, but still felt exposed

Location: Provincial town in Vanuatu

Content warning: This scenario contains themes of identity-based pressure, misrepresentation, and data privacy concerns affecting people with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. It includes examples of assumptions based on appearance, discomfort caused by forced categorisation, and uncertainty about how personal information may be used or shared.

The story of the targeted meeting

After attending a sensitisation workshop delivered by a national LGBTIQA+ organisation, an NGO in a provincial town decided to hold a special CBDRM consultation specifically for people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions.

The meeting was held in a private space. The NGO said it would be a “safe, inclusive space” for community members who are diverse SOGIESC to participate in disaster planning. Word spread quietly, and about a dozen people attended, some gay men, a few lesbians, and two transwomen.

At the beginning of the workshop, participants were asked to fill out a form. It included their name, age, address, gender (Male / Female / Other), and phone number. Some people paused. A few looked around the room. One participant, a gay man named Tanu who has a more feminine gender expression, hesitated at the gender box. He ticked “Male.”

An NGO staff member walked past and said softly, “You know it’s okay to tick ‘Other’ here. We’re inclusive. We don’t discriminate.”

Tanu looked up. He replied, “I’m a man.” The staff member smiled awkwardly and walked away, but the moment stayed with Tanu. He felt like the NGO expected him to fit into their idea of inclusion, based on how he looked—not on what he said.

During the session, there were also discussions about where the data would go. Some participants asked if their names or information would be shared with the provincial government. The NGO worker replied, “No, this is just for our planning.” But when asked if the forms might ever be seen by the government in future projects, the answer was less certain.

After the meeting, a few attendees quietly said they didn’t feel comfortable coming to the next one. “It was supposed to be for us,” one lesbian woman said, “but they were still putting us in boxes.”

Reflection Questions

1. What assumptions might I or my organisation be holding about community readiness that could affect how safely we introduce inclusion?
2. Looking across the matrix, which domains present the greatest risks for people with diverse SOGIESC, and how should this shape our approach right now?





Building and maintaining trust with diverse SOGIESC CBOs

Many diverse SOGIESC CBOs are volunteer-led, small, and underfunded. They often carry significant emotional and social labour to support their communities. At the same time, they hold deep expertise in safety, inclusion, community relationships, and lived experience that larger organisations cannot replace.

INGOs and national NGOs often hold more power, funding, systems, and decision-making authority. Building trust requires conscious effort to rebalance these dynamics.

Principles for building institutional trust

1. Respect lived expertise

Recognise diverse SOGIESC local advisors and CBOs as technical experts in inclusion and safety. Their knowledge is equal in value to sectoral or technical expertise.

2. Acknowledge unequal power and resources

Be transparent about limits, budgets, timeframes, and what is realistic for under-resourced partners. Avoid expecting unpaid or voluntary labour.

3. Prioritise continuity over one-off consultation

Sustained relationships build trust. Engage across multiple programmes or projects when possible.

4. Pay fairly and on time

Budget for advisory roles, reviews, mentoring, and participation. Use procurement pathways that work for small organisations.

5. Be transparent about how advice is used

Provide clear, written follow up. Explain what changed and, if something did not change, why.

6. Protect partner safety and reputation

Discuss how the CBO wishes to participate publicly. Never share images, data, or stories without consent.

7. Share access and recognition safely

Support CBOs to participate in meetings, events, and forums when safe. Build their visibility without exposing them to harm.

8. Be consistent and predictable

Respond to messages. Return calls. Share updates. Keep commitments.

Consistency is more important than formality.



Practical ways to strengthen trust

Use this table during project design or partnership planning:

PRACTICE	HOW TO APPLY IT	WHY IT MATTERS
Early engagement and mapping	Identify CBOs early. Ask where they can safely contribute. Share draft designs or assessments for review.	Prevents tokenism. Ensures safety and inclusion are built in from the start.
Accessible communication	Use plain language and avoid technical jargon. Share documents early and allow time for response.	Recognises resource limitations. Reduces power imbalances.
Structured reflection and review	Include CBOs in learning sessions or reviews. Invite feedback on what worked and what needs change.	Reinforces accountability and learning.
Flexible and fair funding	Create mechanisms for small payments or microgrants. Keep reporting proportionate.	Reduces financial strain and supports sustainability.
Ethical and safe representation	Seek consent for any photos, quotes, stories, or descriptions. Allow CBOs to review drafts.	Protects privacy and dignity.
Mutual capacity exchange	Share learning both ways: CBOs share insight on safety and inclusion; NGOs share disaster systems knowledge.	Builds partnership through reciprocity.
Internal advocacy	Work within your organisation to support small partners, adjust procurement, and maintain relationships.	Embeds fairness into systems, not personalities.

Understanding trust in Pacific and Timor-Leste contexts

Trust is built over time through behaviour, follow-through, respect, and relationship.

Partners observe consistency, care, and humility, not just written agreements.

For diverse SOGIESC CBOs, trust grows when they feel valued rather than used.

This means:

- listening carefully
- being honest about constraints
- maintaining the relationship after projects close
- recognising the emotional and moral labour they carry
- showing commitment beyond donor timelines

What strong trust looks like

- CBOs are invited to review tools before approval
- Payments are processed quickly
- Input is reflected in final decisions
- Advisors are included in staff reflection sessions
- Communication continues between projects
- Both sides can raise concerns without damaging the relationship

Reflection prompts

- Do our partnership agreements recognise CBO knowledge as technical expertise?
- Are our timeframes realistic for small, under-resourced partners?
- What evidence shows our CBO partners trust us enough to give honest feedback?
- When did we last follow up outside a project requirement?
- How can we advocate internally for more equitable partnership systems?

SCENARIO

The voices kept going

Location: Timor Leste

Content Note: Strengths-based reflection on sustainability, informal media, and community resilience

The story of the Rainbow Waves Collective

In a rural province of Timor Leste, a group of diverse SOGIESC community members began quietly gathering during the pandemic. They were supported by a regional community-based organisation and had been part of a CBDRM project that focused on inclusive early-warning systems and risk communication.

During that project, the group shared feedback that disaster information never reached them. Many didn't attend village meetings. Some lived in extended households where it wasn't safe to be open. Others were mobile or moved between places informally. Traditional noticeboards and megaphones weren't reaching them, and the messages that did come through didn't reflect their realities or risks.

With support from the CBO and one local youth group, they trialled a simple idea: recording short voice notes about disaster preparedness and community concerns using their mobile phones. They uploaded the messages to a closed WhatsApp group and community Facebook page managed by trusted allies. Sometimes, they talked about safe evacuation routes, or where to find water when it ran low. Other times, they simply shared reflections on community life, how safety felt, what had changed, and what they needed.

Over time, the messages became part of the rhythm of life.

People from nearby areas started sending in questions or adding their own updates. Someone donated an old speaker so the group could play the recordings in a women's church hall. Local youth began remixing the audio with music. A trusted pastor agreed to read out some of the updates during morning market announcements, without naming anyone.

When a landslide happened in the highlands, the first reports came through the Rainbow Waves channel. It was faster than official communications.

Though the original project had ended, the collective kept meeting. They now gather every fortnight in a community hall and have created a simple, low-cost system of communication that bridges gaps between official systems and everyday life. Diverse SOGIESC community members contribute regularly, many who would never attend a formal meeting.

It's a community safety network grounded in trust, voice, and care.

Reflection Questions

1. What does this story teach us about how communities create their own safety and communication systems when formal CBDRM processes do not meet their needs?
Consider what strengths, relationships, and local knowledge allowed the Rainbow Waves Collective to build something that lasted beyond the project.
2. How can CBDRM implementers recognise, respect, and support informal networks like this without taking over, formalising them, or placing people at risk?
Think about how to honour community-led solutions while maintaining appropriate boundaries and safety.



Closing section: Reflection and boundaries for inclusive CBDRM

Final reflection: Walking forward with inclusion

Inclusive CBDRM is not achieved through one tool, one training session, or a single partnership. It grows through relationships, self-awareness, and repeated choices to act with care and accountability. Before ending this toolkit, we invite implementers to pause and reflect on the commitments they are taking forward.

Reflection prompts

1. How have my beliefs, fears, or assumptions shaped the way I approach inclusion?

What has shifted as I worked through these tools? What still needs attention?

2. What relationships do I need to strengthen?

Which partners, advisors, community-groups or colleagues do I need to reconnect with, listen to, or involve more respectfully?

3. Where do risks still exist in my practice?

Where could my actions, materials, or decisions unintentionally expose someone or make inclusion harder?

4. How will I practise safety in everyday decisions?

What will I change about how I communicate, plan, share information, or move through communities?

5. How will I use my influence to support fair and ethical partnerships?

What can I advocate for inside my organisation to make it easier for small and under-resourced partners to participate safely?

6. What does genuine community inclusion look like where I work?

Whose voices are heard? Who is still left out? What would it take to make preparedness safer for them?

7. What commitment am I making today to do no harm?

Name one practical action you will take in the next month.

Use these questions individually or as part of team reflection, supervision, or partnership review. They are not one-off questions; they are part of an ongoing practice.



Toolkit boundaries: What this toolkit can and cannot do

This toolkit is designed to support NGOs delivering CBDRM activities under Disaster READY. It provides practical tools, reflective questions, and safety guidance to strengthen inclusion for people with diverse SOGIESC. It does this by helping staff recognise risk, adapt their practice, and build respectful relationships with community-based organisations.

It is equally important to be transparent about what the toolkit does not do.

1. This toolkit does not promote targeted SOGIESC-based CBDRM activities.

It does not ask implementers to run separate groups, committees, or preparedness-sessions solely for people with diverse SOGIESC. Inclusion is achieved by strengthening whole-of-community approaches, not by creating separate pathways.

2. It does not position diverse SOGIESC CBOs as CBDRM implementers.

These organisations have their own mandates and safety considerations. Their expertise is in inclusion, community safety, and lived experience, not in disaster operations or preparedness-delivery. This toolkit recognises their value without placing them in roles they have not chosen or are not resourced for.

3. It cannot remove political, cultural, or legal risks.

In some contexts, visibility creates danger. The tools support implementers to engage safely, but safety is always dynamic and must be reassessed regularly with local partners.

4. It does not replace local knowledge or relationships.

Every community and every island have its own ways of relating, protecting, and organising. These tools support reflection and safer decision making but must be adapted with local partners and advisors.

5. It cannot guarantee that no harm will occur.

All inclusion work carries risk. The purpose of this toolkit is to help implementers identify, reduce, and avoid foreseeable harm, and to respond ethically when challenges arise.

6. It is not a guide to diverse SOGIESC sensitisation issues.

It does not attempt to explain identity, rights frameworks, or movement organising in depth. Instead, it provides practical guidance for CBDRM implementers working in diverse Pacific contexts.

7. It is not exhaustive.

This toolkit is a starting point, not a final answer. Inclusive practice requires learning, listening, and adapting over time.

A final word

Inclusion is not an additional task to bolt on to CBDRM. It is a way of working. It is grounded in relationships, humility, and a commitment to do no harm. As contexts change, relationships deepen, and lessons emerge, the tools in this toolkit should be revisited, adapted, and improved.

Most importantly, inclusive practice grows when implementers move slowly, listen carefully, build trust, and uphold the dignity and safety of all community members.

This is the work of preparedness. This is the work of care.

Annex 1. Recommended reading on Diverse SOGIESC in disasters and CBDRM

This reading list provides essential context for understanding why Diverse SOGIESC inclusion matters in CBDRM. These reports and articles document experiences of exclusion, resilience, safety concerns, and community-led strategies across the Pacific and Timor-Leste, and provide evidence for inclusive preparedness-approaches. This annex can be used to support donor justification, orient new staff, strengthen internal learning, and guide implementers who want to deepen their practice. These sources provide evidence for:

- why people with diverse SOGIESC face heightened disaster risks
- how exclusion operates in Pacific DRR systems
- what safe, culturally grounded engagement looks like
- community-led communication and resilience strategies

Pacific & Timor-Leste focused studies

[Building a Rainbow in Timor-Leste: Initial Insights and Ways Forward](#)

ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, 2017

Contextual analysis of diverse SOGIESC organising in Timor-Leste, documenting safety concerns, discrimination, political context and emerging community networks.

[Down by the River: Addressing the Needs and Strengths of Fijian Sexual and Gender Minorities in Disaster Risk Reduction and Humanitarian Response](#)

Emily Dwyer & Lana Woolf, 2018

Foundational research documenting Fiji-based experiences during TC Winston and other crises, including exclusion from shelters, discrimination, coping strategies and structural barriers across DRR systems.

[Effective SOGIE Inclusion in Times of Disaster: A Guide for Humanitarian Agencies in Vanuatu and the Pacific](#)

VPride, 2021

Pacific-focused operational guidance with case studies from Vanuatu (including Cyclone Harold), outlining barriers, protection risks and practical entry points for safer, rights-based DRR engagement.

[Rainbow Resilience: Leaving No Fijian Behind. Giving Soli for More Inclusive Climate and Disaster Resilience](#)

Lana Woolf, 2022

Participatory research with diverse SOGIESC communities, faith leaders and village representatives across Fiji. Explores harmful disaster narratives, exclusion in preparedness and response, and the role of solesolevaki and Indigenous knowledge in inclusive community-led climate and disaster resilience.

[SOGIE Diversity in Vanuatu: Research Report](#)

VPride, 2019

Evidence on the lived experiences of SOGIESC-diverse people in Vanuatu, including norms, discrimination, informal support networks and interactions with village governance structures. (Contained within the VPrize DRR Guide.)

[SOGIESC Handbook for Humanitarian Actors](#)

Rainbow Pride Foundation Fiji, 2025

Delving into the diverse socio-cultural and legal aspects of the SOGIESC spectrum this handbook is a comprehensive guide aimed at fostering understanding and inclusion of individuals based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) within the humanitarian sector.

Acknowledgements

This toolkit was developed by Lana Woolf, through a consultancy commissioned by the Australian Humanitarian Partnership Support Unit (AHPSU), an initiative of the Australian Government. Sincere thanks to Liam Sharp, Tim Muir and Louise Parker from the AHPSU for their guidance, collaboration, and stewardship throughout the development process.

This resource was created to support Disaster READY partners working across Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, PNG, and Timor-Leste, with the goal of strengthening the inclusion, safety, and participation of people with diverse SOGIESC in community-based disaster risk management.

Special thanks to the Reference Group, made up of Disaster READY partners and LGBTIQ+ CBOs from across the region. Their collective wisdom, lived experience, and practical insights have deeply shaped the tools, reflections, and principles within this toolkit.

This work is rooted in their leadership and grounded in the belief that safer communities are built when all people are included, protected, and heard.

This publication has been funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The views expressed in this publication are the authors' alone and are not necessarily the views of the Australian Government.

Published 2026.