

Tsunami Preparedness in Local Communities

A Structured Approach for Capacity Development

The learning process during the GITEWS pilot project led to the development of a step-by-step approach towards tsunami preparedness across multiple levels.

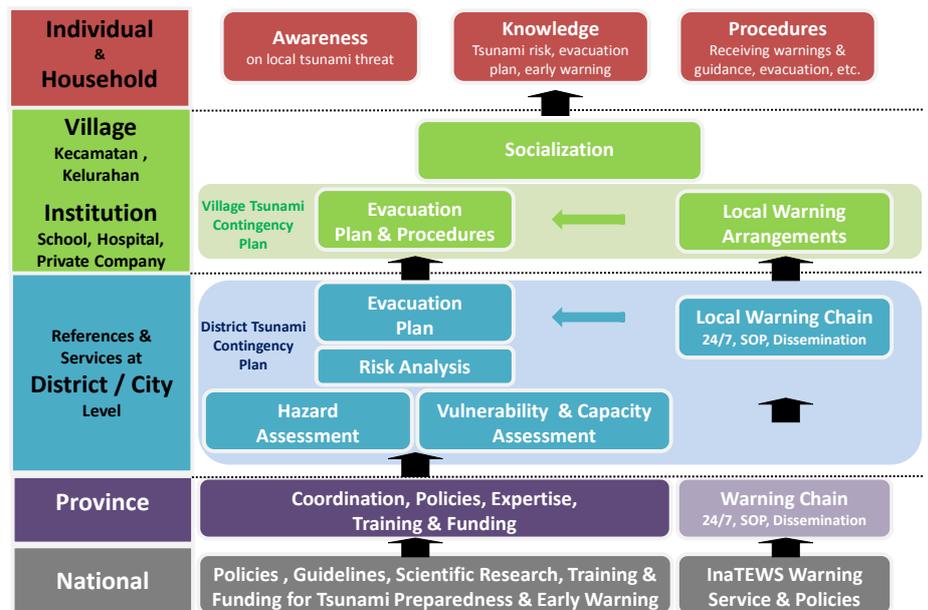
THE CONSECUTIVE STEP AND MULTI-LEVEL APPROACH

The rationale for this approach is based on the assumption that the chances to survive a near-field tsunami depend very much on the capacities of the affected people to quickly assess the situation and take the right decisions and actions based on basic but solid knowledge of local tsunami risks and preparedness plans, even in the case of the failure of warning services or in the absence of guidance from local authorities during an emergency.



Therefore people in risk areas need to be aware about tsunami hazard and risks and understand local warning and evacuation procedures. Furthermore, individuals and families should be encouraged to discuss and agree on own emergency procedures within their families or households (Red Level).

To provide people in communities at risk with more than thumb rules or general instructions on how to react to a tsunami threat, it is necessary to develop specific local evacuation maps and procedures as well as warning arrangements in a participatory way and communicate them to all community members (Green Level). Developing such plans at village or institutional level usually requires references regarding hazard and safe zones and recommended evacuation strategies, as well as the development of local warning services.



The responsibility to provide such references, including risk assessments, evacuation plans and the setting up of mechanisms for decision making and disseminating warnings lies with district and city governments (Blue Level).

To build local tsunami preparedness in a consistent and coherent way, national guidelines and policies are required to provide the necessary framework for local actors (Grey Level). The National Guideline on Tsunami Warning Services, as developed by BMKG, provides official information regarding the Indonesian Tsunami Early Warning System (InaTEWS), the warning chain from national to local levels, the sequence and content of warning messages - including recommendations on reaction to local authorities – as well as clarification on the roles, responsibilities and procedures of all relevant bodies. Other guidelines by the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) are addressing topics like risk assessments, local emergency centers and contingency plans.

