



PREDICTABLE, PREVENTABLE

Best Practices in Addressing Interpersonal and
Self-Directed Violence During and After Disasters

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Disasters disrupt and damage landscapes and human lives.



Despite the loss and devastation, disasters can often bring people and communities together, and acts of remarkable humanity take place.



However, following a disaster, people's safety and security can be further undermined by violence, in the form of abuse, exploitation, harassment and discrimination, both from other survivors, and from those who are supposed to help.



Violence can thrive in the chaotic conditions that follow disasters. Lack of access to basic services, increased stress, substance abuse, family separation, insecure and crowded living conditions and misuse of power all contribute to increasing the risk.



Although anyone can be vulnerable to violence, women, children and other marginalized people are at particular risk.

Training on abuse, exploitation and power for IFRC field staff working in La Piste camp, Haiti.



While complex in its causes, violence after disasters is not inevitable; it is in fact, preventable.

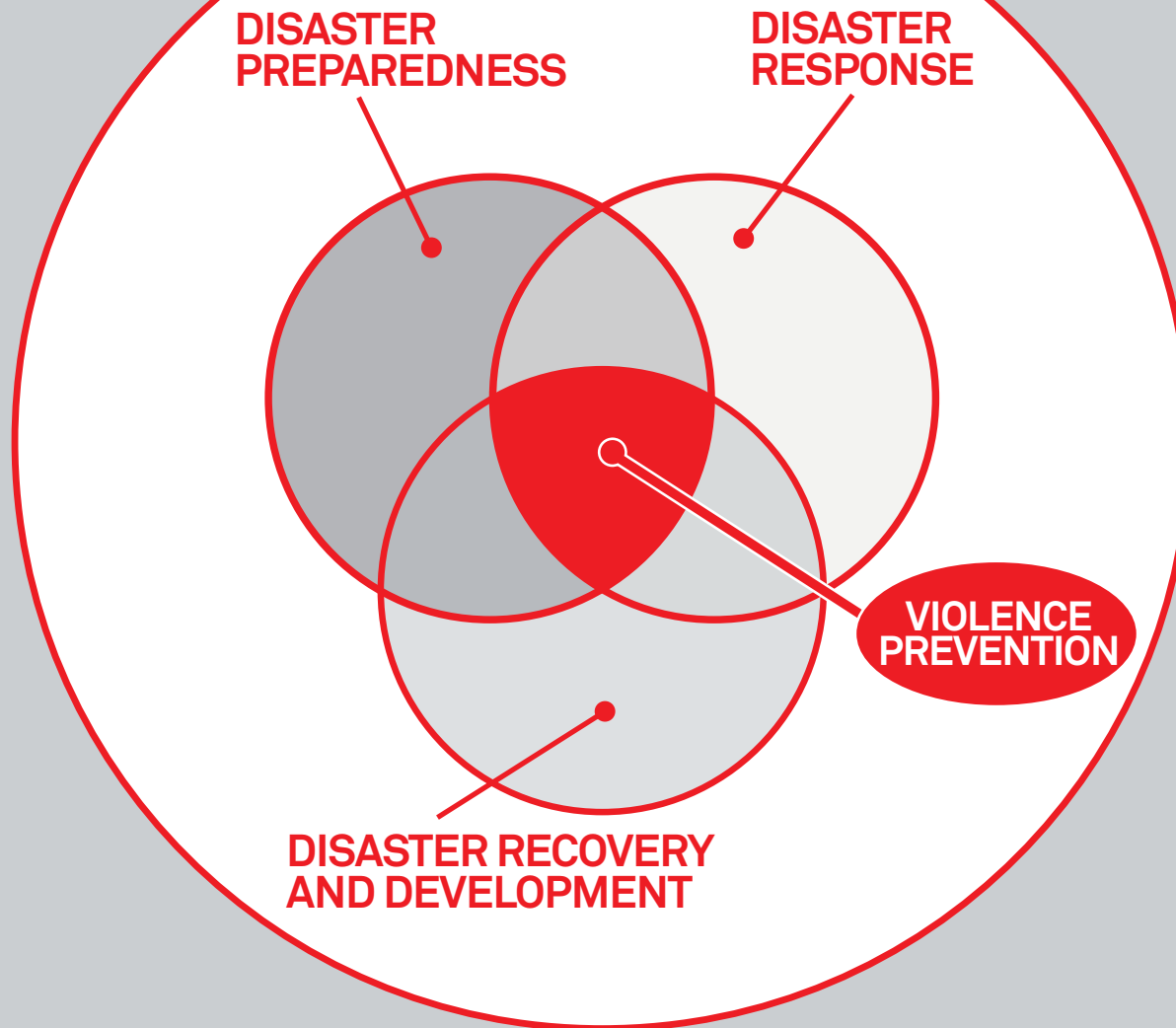
A child wearing a sticker calling for an end to violence against women.

La Piste camp, Port-au-Prince, Haiti



Like cholera, malaria, malnutrition, or other public health problems associated with disasters, the factors that put people at risk for violence can, and must, be addressed.

AMERICAS



By effectively addressing violence prevention across all aspects of the disaster programming cycle – preparedness, response, recovery and development – violence within disasters can be predicted and prevented.

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“Violence breaks up families, communities and countries; Watch those around you and protect your community.”

Red Cross SMS Violence Prevention Campaign, Haiti.



Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies can help tip the scales in favour of safety during disasters. This is already being done through best practices in some disaster situations.



Whether assisting with shelter, health care, the delivery of clean water and food, or helping to create livelihoods, violence prevention needs to be part of the responsibility, vision and action of all disaster responders.