

# PHAST guidance notes

## Enabling factors for good PHAST programming

---

### 1 Does the National Society have a volunteer management policy?

One of the critical factors for success in PHAST implementation is management of volunteers. Bringing PHAST activities down to the communities require the mobilization of a large amount of Red Cross Red Crescent community volunteers. It is crucial for the correct deployment of PHAST to have a pre-developed volunteer policy within the National Society since this is what will guide the National Society on how to recruit, motivate and retain PHAST volunteers. The policy should outline the roles and expectations of volunteers, as well as the upgrading process. It is therefore recommended to make the best use of that policy (especially on issues related to recruitment, support and retention) when planning further engagement of volunteers in your PHAST programme.

**Tip:** What happens when the National Society lacks a volunteer's management policy? In that case, it is recommended to agree in advance with the National Society (at the stage of writing the project proposal if possible) on how to proceed with recruitment of volunteers, support given, etc. Institutional strengthening under the Organizational Development sector is recommended.

**Additional tip:** Volunteers should be recruited to work in the community where they live. They will be able to contribute to the PHAST programme on a regular basis and as much as they can. For the implementation of a standard PHAST programme it is expected that they contribute up to a maximum of two hours in a week, depending on the national volunteers policy, though this varies within different countries.

Volunteers will mobilize their communities to undertake the step-by-step PHAST activities and will maintain an active link between their communities and local Red Cross Red Crescent branches, reporting back to their coaches regularly on activities undertaken. Volunteers should be equipped with a PHAST tool kit, a loudspeaker, monitoring sheets and a T-shirt and cap. Recent reviews showed volunteers' retention as a key issue in implementation of PHAST.

### 2 Have you considered establishing a coaching system?

A coach can be defined as someone who ensures that networks of community volunteers are recruited, trained, motivated, supervised and monitored on a continual basis. Coaches might be recruited from the pool of experienced and skilled volunteers involved in community health programmes. The key qualities of a coach are likely to be: organization, administration, commitment and flexibility, and an empowering approach to hygiene promotion.

Why coaching groups? It is possible to manage only a maximum of 20 volunteers effectively, in an area where their work locations are close together and distance between work sites are short. Where distances are greater, fewer volunteers can be managed. The suggested ratio of coaches to volunteers is: 1 coach to 6-7 volunteers. In a large project, these coaching groups at branch or sub-branch level might require a branch coordinator to report to the headquarters.

**Tip:** Coaches should be part of the PHAST volunteer group, receiving the same training and carrying out the same activities at community level, but also assisting and supervising the less-experienced volunteers during the implementation activities at community level. They will be responsible for the weekly group meetings during the six-month programme period. The role of the coaches is to lead the PHAST group (five – seven members) through the PHAST seven-step process over six months and, in particular, to encourage people to attend the weekly group meetings.

### 3 Does the National Society a well functioning and effective branch in the project area?

It is critical to sustain PHAST Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers in the communities with well functioning Red Cross Red Crescent structures so proper follow up of their activities and effective support is provided. It is important as well to forge strong links between PHAST programmes being undertaken by the branches and National Society headquarters staff, especially where National Societies are running large programmes. Projects which are in remote regions require structured visits as part of the process of monitoring and evaluation.

*Tip:* What if the Red Cross Red Crescent branch located in the project area is not very strong? It is recommended that this factor is strongly considered at the stage of planning, so any additional funding or external support for branch capacity development is adjoined to the project proposal.

### 4 Has the Red Cross Red Crescent branch been operating in that area before?

The element of 'trust' has been often reported as the main factor for getting the community involved in PHAST activities. In those areas where the Red Cross Red Crescent branch has been involved in community activities prior to the PHAST programme, the foundation for a future close relation between Red Cross Red Crescent community volunteers and community villagers would be reasonably established.

*Tip:* What happens if this area is new to the Red Cross Red Crescent branch? PHAST Red Cross Red Crescent community volunteers would need to spend time describing the details of the PHAST process in a transparent way, clarifying doubts and concerns from the community members. Planning for some introductory visits before the PHAST programme gets into action is a key asset.

### 5 Is the National Society and target community familiar with participatory methodologies?

Some communities are not familiar with the participatory approach and expect to have lectures or teacher-centred sessions, so the involvement of the community members is minimal at the beginning.

*Tip:* In that situation, continue to use PHAST. As the PHAST programme goes along, the engagement often improves when, through the PHAST cycle, the community members realizes they are not 'empty heads' and all participants can contribute with traditional knowledge and life experience. See also next question.

### 6 What is the community seasonal calendar?

A key element on participation, reported commonly from all countries, is the need to adapt the PHAST activities to the community seasonal calendar, so activities are not incompatible with farming or day market, or set up in rainy season. This can best be done when the grass root activities are planned, not only with the local leaders, but also with selected PHAST group members who then guide the planning process including scheduling training activities.

*Tip:* If the community calendar is highly incompatible with weekly PHAST sessions, consider shortening PHAST so the process does not become overwhelming for the community. For example, discuss the possibility to shorten the process from 14 activities to 10, by merging some activities into one, or eliminating some of them.

*Additional tip:* In addition to seasonal duties, lifestyle has been seen as a key factor in regards to community participation. For example, communities with nomadic lifestyle have shown modest interest in attending regular scheduled meetings. In those contexts, 'flexibility' becomes as a vital aspect for the implementation of PHAST cycle.

## 7 What is the level of education (percentage of illiteracy) in your target communities?

In some communities, where the villagers had higher education level, the visual aids developed for PHAST were considered too simple, basic and even infantile, more appropriate for children than for adults. However, the general principle is that PHAST implementation does not discriminate between literacy and educational levels of the PHAST participants. A well-seasoned PHAST facilitator should be able to move at the pace of the PHAST group being handled at that time.

*Tip:* Consider introducing some ‘formal’ elements in the facilitation, like combining theoretical presentations with ‘role play’ activities, replacing some of the most basic sessions with focus group discussion, etc.

# PHAST in action

---

## PHAST training:

### 8 Have you got a clear map of your PHAST training cascade system? Have you clearly identified the different training workshops you need to plan for?

PHAST training follows a cascade system with at least two levels that may vary according National Society structure: 1) Training of trainers (ToT) at headquarters/province level; and 2) PHAST training for Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers at province/district level.

PHAST Training of trainers (ToT) is considered the first level of PHAST training so building up a professional pool of PHAST master trainers reinforces the capacity of the National Society. The trainers will train future PHAST volunteers and may act as a point of contact for PHAST at branch level (in that case it would be applicable to introduce some topic related to project management).

PHAST Training, at province level, for community volunteers (conducted by PHAST trainers) would be the natural second step in PHAST training. This pool of volunteers will facilitate PHAST sessions at community level.

### 9 Have you identified the different audiences and their training needs?

For PHAST ToT training the audience is composed of future trainers, often with experience in training/mentoring activities and implementation of health and/or Water and Sanitation activities at community level. They may have good Water and Sanitation technical skills and may be eager to learn about PHAST, but certainly they will need to obtain training skills as well. Therefore, it is often relevant to introduce as well ToT topics in the training agenda and not focus exclusively on PHAST methodology.

When delivering PHAST training for Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers, it is crucial to follow the adult learning principles of participation and experience sharing, promoting the use of practical exercises like role play or simulation exercises. It is necessary to identify training needs related to the implementation of PHAST methodology but also, as above, other areas such communication skills, facilitation techniques, coordination, reporting, coaching, etc.

### 10 Have you identified the minimum requirements for selecting the participants?

PHAST trainers may be recruited from the different provinces targeted by the project, based on specific requirements, such as strong communication skills, ability to facilitate in a participatory manner, experience in training/mentoring activities and implementation of health or/and Water and Sanitation activities at community level.

PHAST volunteers should be recruited to work in the community where they live. They should be willing to volunteer, able to read and write in the local language, and have the ability to train others. It is important to get a good gender and age balance.

### **11 Have you placed enough resources (venue, transport, facilitators, tool kits, field visits, etc) for conducting those trainings?**

A PHAST ToT training should be held for a maximum of 25 – 30 people. A master trainer needs to be identified for the facilitation of PHAST ToT and consequently trainers for the PHAST training for volunteers. The suggested ratio of facilitators to participants is 2 – 3 facilitators to 25 – 30 participants. The duration of the training may vary according to the additional topics selected but it should not be less than 10 days and it should include in all cases a one day field trip to practice PHAST activities and performance training skills in real time.

### **12 Have you considered the need for refresher trainings?**

To exchange experiences, review PHAST progress and strengthen the skills and knowledge of the volunteers, a refresher course should be factored in every two years when designing a PHAST programme.

## PHAST deployment

### **13 Have you developed a Plan of Action for PHAST deployment in the communities? Have you identified an exit strategy?**

Further to PHAST training, a Plan of Action and Exit Strategy should be developed by the participants for their respective branches. This should include a definition of the roles of those involved, including volunteers, coaches and branches. It should also define how the programme will be implemented, by whom, in which areas, who and what are the links with the community, and ways to mobilize them. An exit strategy and monitoring indicators should be developed from the outset.

*Tip:* Book one day of your training agenda to plan, in conjunction with project staff and volunteers involved in PHAST training, a Plan of Action for deploying PHAST activities in the community and Exit strategy for the programme.

### **14 Based on the context/reality of your project target area, will you be able to implement the traditional seven steps PHAST programme (as set out in the original standard guidelines for PHAST, produced by the World Bank/UNDP)?**

PHAST consists of 17 activities organized in seven main steps. One activity is usually carried out each week and the whole programme, typically, lasts from four months to six months. The 17 activities are sample activities, but the actual number of activities to be implemented should depend on the problem scope in the community. There could be cross-cutting issues but implementation of other activities should be needs based.

*Tip:* If you think that the traditional PHAST programme is not applicable to your context, consider shortening PHAST. There does not appear to be a clear way of shortening the PHAST process in a development context without interfering with the natural progression of activities and, thereby losing its impact. Where PHAST is a burden on the community, it may be necessary to change the programming of PHAST, in which case, the following issues should be taken into consideration:

1. Facilitating more sessions per week at community level. This presents several dilemmas:
  - Overwhelming communities with PHAST activities in the face of competing community needs in terms of

time. The involvement of urban populations/nomadic communities may be very difficult to sustain.

- Going through the PHAST process too quickly and not having real impact or community buy-in.
- Volunteer fatigue. A programme would require more volunteers so that volunteers are not required to work more than four hours a week. The alternative is to remunerate the volunteers and risk losing the spirit of volunteerism and its sustainability. In some cases, large numbers of volunteers are required to facilitate the PHAST groups (as the PHAST process aims to include five per cent of the target population as members of PHAST groups).

2. Leave the shortening of the PHAST process to the discretion of the programme manager based on the baseline survey findings, particularly where hardware already exists and there is no need for technology choice. During the developmental phase, where water and sanitation hardware facilities are necessary, the PHAST process should be undertaken in a traditional manner, as set out in the original standard guidelines for PHAST, produced by the World Bank/UNDP. There might be a need, however, to change the programming and facilitation of the PHAST process, rather than the content, as it is important to keep the tools themselves intact, and the order in which they are implemented.

## **15 Have you placed enough resources (PHAST tool kits, transport, incentives, volunteer’s equipment, etc.) for conducting PHAST activities in the community?**

There is often the belief that community-based activities are cheap since, in many places; the concept of ‘participation’ is widely taken to mean “cheap village labour”. The volunteer management policy will be an effective guide at the early state of the programme on what kind of incentives should be given out to the volunteers.

*Tip:* Special attention should be paid to how volunteers can be better supported and motivated, and placing enough resources in the budget.

## **16 Have you developed a pre-tested, context-related PHAST tool kit? Have you planned for enough samples?**

The PHAST tool kit consists of drawings made by a local artist reflecting the local culture and conditions. A set of drawings should be developed specifically for every activity in each step. A critical issue at this stage is availability of sufficient PHAST tool kits for the volunteers.

*Tip:* It is recommended to develop one tool kit containing all the required materials for a group or community of 20 – 25 households, as follows:

- Box or bag for the whole tool kit.
- One folder for each step, complete with brief instructions in local language.
- One folder for each activity, (each packaged separately within the steps’folders), the associated tool and any other required materials for the activity, complete with brief instructions in the local language.

Laminating the game cards for each activity in a different colour, is recommended.

- The “Seven steps of PHAST” outline and chart in the local language.
- Extra materials such as paper, markers, tokens, sticky tape. The monitoring tools, (templates, sheets, checklists, etc.), should be printed and bound and included in the toolbox or bag.

All game cards and instructions should be laminated on both sides to protect them against weather, dirt and frequent handling. Game cards will also have serial numbers printed on the reverse side, to make them easily identifiable.

## 17 Have you agreed on the desired coverage for a PHAST programme in the communities?

It is common that one PHAST volunteer meets the same group of community members (counted as number of households; HH) throughout the seven steps. The number of community members in that group varies from one project to another, having low ratios (1 volunteer/10 – 15 HH) to high ratios (1 volunteer/30 HH). This group is your direct target group, but the final goal of the PHAST process is transforming risky hygiene practices into positive behaviours at community and household level.

The PHAST volunteers follow up and support PHAST community group members who are actually working on their homes to turn them into 'model homes'. A model home is a home with all the basic sanitary facilities and practising at least basic hygienic behaviours (Washing hands at critical times, boiling water for drinking and consistent use of toilet). The PHAST community group members should be heads of households or at least influence decision making at household level. PHAST community group members should be evenly distributed throughout the entire village so that their actions and behaviours are felt and emulated in all sections of the village.

**Tip:** How do we achieve community behaviour change by just involving a sample of the community in PHAST activities? One may presume that once the group of community members complete the entire PHAST seven steps, they will be empowered to take action in different forms, turn their households into 'model homes' and eliminate diarrhoea in their families. This group will monitor the situation of relatives, friends and neighbours serving as vehicles for dissemination of key hygiene practices and influencing their behaviours. See next question.

**Additional tip:** PHAST sessions can be run targeting special vulnerable groups i.e., mothers with children under five that subsequently might form a group responsible for passing on information to other mothers at household level.

## 18 Have you planned for additional/complementary hygiene education programmes in the community?

It is recognized that in many situations, the driving force for behaviour change is not only the perception of health improvement but the influence that others have on our beneficiaries' attitudes (my neighbour has recommended) and the perceived norms (all my friends or neighbours do).

**Tip:** It is recommended that the PHAST community members identify a strategy to target their peers in the community after the completion of seven PHAST steps. A plan of activities might be developed including community meetings, religious gatherings, door-to-door hygiene campaigns and forming drama groups among themselves and sometimes inviting professional drama groups.

**Additional tip:** It is useful to involve children in PHAST activities especially in schools. In Somalia a project called 'CHAST' has been developed which is an adaptation of both PHAST and child-to-child methodologies.

## Link between PHAST and hardware component

Traditionally Water and Sanitation software activities have been implemented focusing on the health aspects of the community but lacking the link between these activities and the hardware planning process. The selection of appropriate technical options and management system needs to involve the community through a participatory process in which the community is an active partner and not simply a passive recipient. PHAST has been seen as a notable tool for bringing together the community and engineering aspects of the project. At the end of the seven steps cycle, specific outcomes need to be identified and properly documented: 1) Community plan for environmental improvements and 2) Community plan for O&M of water and sanitation facilities.

Critical steps for the elaboration of these plans are step four (selecting options) and step five (planning for new facilities and behaviour change). Activities in step four help the community to assess the community situation and decide on

which changes they are willing to take on board (in all aspects, hygiene practices, construction works and O&M issues). After the completion of step five, the group decides which implementation steps need to be taken to put in practice those changes they have agreed on. This step is clearly linked to O&M since it helps the group to assign responsibilities for each implementation step.

## 19 When have you planned to initiate your hardware construction?

Hardware activities should begin once step five is complete and especially after the community have agreed to their and roles and responsibilities in community management. Starting some basic construction activities after step five, based on the community's demands, helps to create trust and reliance on Red Cross Red Crescent, as the community realises that "talk is finally translated into action". At the end of the process it is recommended to draft a plan with all the elements discussed and agreed by the different PHAST groups. The plan needs to be effectively linked to the construction element of the project, so the facilities ultimately erected by the projects are those facilities selected and agreed to by the community.

**Tip:** What happens when the project proposal includes pre-fixed construction elements and those elements have been committed to the project donor? It is very common that Water and Sanitation projects bring pre-fixed, blueprint technical solutions for communities in terms of water and sanitation facilities so the level of engagement from the community in terms of technical choice is very deficient.

It is recommended that at the planning stage, the project proposal benefits from a certain range of flexibility in terms of selecting technical options so the community choice can be fully integrated afterwards during implementation phase and an effective link between PHAST process and hardware is put in place.

In case your proposal has been developed and there is not room for change, it is recommended to discuss with the community, the donor of the proposal, and the project team (engineer) how to reconcile the different opinions and choices.

## 20 Have you planned involving the engineer in the PHAST process?

PHAST is a helpful instrument to establish a dialogue between the community and the engineer, so they can jointly plan for the most appropriate facilities considering different factors (social, cultural, environmental, technical, financial, etc) and plan for the most appropriate maintenance system.

It is recommended that the engineer engages in the PHAST process from step four to step seven, specially in two critical phases: step four and five when the design for the facility is chosen and the management system agreed, and step seven, when the evaluation model is chosen to ensure that the construction of facilities meet the standards from the local authorities. It is important to allow the community to become engaged in the evaluation process of the facilities, so they get involved in the quality control process, encouraging the sense of ownership and long term responsibility.

**Tip:** Sometimes the physical involvement of the engineer in the PHAST process is not feasible (extensive geographical area of the project, lack of resources, lack of planning, etc). So other models can be applied, where PHAST coaches collect all the feedback from the communities on the development of facilities and its management system and report back to the technical office.

## 21 Have you establish the link between PHAST members in the community and the Water and Sanitation committees?

It is common that as result of the PHAST step four and five, a technology choice is selected, a plan of maintenance discussed and agreed and a Water and Sanitation community committee selected. At this stage, the PHAST group should link with the water and sanitation community committee and the engineers. It is recommended that all members (or at least a significant proportion) of the committee were previously trained in PHAST. It has been seen that those members who were part of the committee and got involved in PHAST sessions understood better their responsibilities in regards to maintenance of water and sanitation facilities.

**Tip:** There is a risk of overlapping and duplication between the roles of the PHAST groups and Water and Sanitation committees. Where present in communities, these groups should link up to avoid this. Integrating PHAST groups in the already existing community water and sanitation committees has been seen as a valuable resource developed by the project.

## PHAST impact: monitoring and evaluation

### Monitoring

#### 22 Have you planned for a baseline and impact survey?

The baseline study is the analysis and description of a situation prior to the programme against which assessments or comparisons can be made. The baseline study provides a benchmark for our programme objectives, focusing mainly on water, sanitation and recommended hygiene behaviour. The baseline provides the framework for monitoring and evaluation, with a follow-up study, (typically mid-way through the operation), to facilitate final analysis and overall impact of the programme.

**Tip:** Baseline data is always required and should be followed by an impact study, which should use the same methodology and study the same samples or sites to generate comparative data. A baseline survey should ideally be conducted before implementation of PHAST activities at community level.

**Additional tip:** The PHAST baseline survey questionnaire does not have to be used uniformly by all Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies. It can be used as a template and adapted accordingly. Here are some suggestions for using this questionnaire:

- The questionnaire is aimed at mothers and female caretakers.
- Each questionnaire should take approximately 30 – 40 minutes to complete.
- The questionnaire will be completed by a volunteer. It is often better for volunteers to work in pairs, especially if they are women.
- The questionnaire will be analysed at Red Cross Red Crescent branch and or headquarters level.
- It should take at least two days to train a volunteer to complete the questionnaire.
- Where possible, volunteers who undertake to complete the questionnaire will have undergone previous PHAST or CBHFA training.
- As it is rarely possible to include the entire target group in a survey, a limited number of respondents should be selected. This is known as the sample. The characteristics of the sample should be similar to the total population so it is as representative as possible. Different ways of obtaining a sample include: random sampling (picking names from a hat or at random from a list; interval sampling: (selecting persons from a list at regular intervals); or cluster sampling: (where groups of people, rather than individuals, are selected to comprise the sample).
- The baseline survey should take no longer than 1 – 2 weeks to complete. One way to calculate the total time needed to conduct a baseline survey is to take a sample size of 100 households, for example, hence 100 questionnaires. If one person or a team of two, can complete six questionnaires in a day, it will, therefore, take one person 17 days to complete all 100 questionnaires, or two people 8.5 days. (Note: time should be allowed for travelling to the community, walking between houses and introductions).
- The baseline survey should not be followed up more than once a year.

#### 23 Have you included in your logical framework a set of indicators related to the PHAST process and its impact in the community?

Together with the set of general indicators identified in the logical framework and used to measure progress of project objectives and results, the PHAST programme should also obtain its own set of indicators so one can easily quantify the level of success in implementing minimum standards for the PHAST component and its contribution to achieve the major goal in your project.

If your overall project objective is contributing to reduce diarrhoeal diseases in the community, there are three indicators that have shown to have a proven impact on decreasing diarrhoeal diseases: 1) percentage of caretakers with appropriate handwashing behaviour, 2) percentage of household with access to a hygienic and improved sanitation facility, 3) percentage of household with access to an improved and sustainable water supply.

How does PHAST contribute to the achievement of reducing diarrhoeal diseases in the community? PHAST contribute to this major goal through 1) demonstrating the relationship between sanitation and health status and transferring knowledge to household members on the health benefits of adhering to safe sanitation and hygiene practices and 2) empowering the community to plan environmental improvements and to own and operate water and sanitation facilities.

**Tip:** Indicators related to knowledge transfer and community based planning need to be reflected in the logical framework and linked to PHAST activities, examples are:

- Percentage of respondents in baseline HH interviews can identify at least three ways of transmission for diarrhoea.
- At the end of the PHAST cycle, the community has drafted a plan for environmental improvements and this has been integrated effectively in the project construction activities.
- At least 50 per cent of the members of the community Water and Sanitation committee has been involved in PHAST activities.
- At the end of the PHAST cycle, the community has drafted a plan for O&M and the Water and Sanitation committee has acknowledged this plan.

## 24 Have you allocated enough resources (field visits, monitoring forms, volunteers training, etc) for PHAST monitoring activities?

It is recommended to include in the project proposal specific activities in relation to the establishment of a PHAST monitoring system so resources are soundly allocated from the beginning of the project. A good practice would be to conduct a workshop aiming at producing a monitoring plan (who does what, when and how in terms of monitoring?). Specific outcomes from this workshop should be the revision, refining or adaptation of indicators and specific monitoring tools (questionnaires, quarterly forms, etc) to the project context.

**Tip:** Coaches should also be able to produce regular reports on the progress of the PHAST groups for the branch. When they have completed the PHAST training, they may have a role in overseeing the collection of baseline data and help with its analysis. Where group members need to write regular monitoring reports, coaches may well be able to help them with this.

## Evaluation

### 25 Relevance: Are the PHAST activities consistent with the overall goal of your project?

PHAST methodology has been originally designed as a tool for helping communities to prevent and reduce diarrhoeal diseases, therefore activities and tools have been conceived to help villagers to understand the oral-faecal route, link their episodes of diarrhoea to their lack of sanitation facilities and unsafe hygiene practices and consequently place effective barriers in order to avoid further transmission.

**Tip:** Does this mean that PHAST can only be used for those projects whose objectives are related to the prevention, containment or reduction of diarrhoeal diseases? The answer is no. PHAST has been proven to be a flexible method or recipient that may be filled with different topics or contents. For example: If the objective of your project is preventing or reducing the incidence of malaria in a certain community, you can also apply PHAST by adjusting activities and tools to malaria transmission routes and prevention measures.

## **26 Effectiveness: To what extent were the objectives achieved?**

See question above on PHAST indicators (Monitoring section).

## **27 Efficiency: Were PHAST activities achieved at least cost and in a timely manner?**

Several reviews conducted by non Red Cross Red Crescent partners indicate that PHAST can be delivered in an effective and efficient manner on a cost of 4 USD/direct beneficiary.

In Red Cross Red Crescent this cost can be higher where the Red Cross Red Crescent branch structures within the National Society are not well developed hence PHAST programmes include an extensive component of branch development and support. Also M&E activities specifically designed for PHAST are often not included in this cost although it is recommended to establish specific M&E mechanisms at community and branch level and they might be costly, depending yet again on the capacity of the National Society. Training within the structures of the National Society is surely the most expensive component of PHAST process, followed by the production of the PHAST tool kits and the sustainable maintenance of community PHAST groups. These groups, although they engage in the process on a voluntary basis, should be sustained and retained in different ways (incentives, equipment, etc).

On the other hand, timing is a critical factor in terms of PHAST implementation. The traditional PHAST cycle lasts from four to six months but it might be shortened or extended as long as the process accompanies the community calendar and the capacities of the National Society. Flexibility becomes a key word when implementing PHAST process and should not be forcibly implemented in a traditional manner (four – six months) but adjusted to the particular context (of both community and National Society).

## **28 Impact: What real difference has the PHAST process made to the beneficiaries?**

Implementing the PHAST process successfully in the community brings positive differences in terms of health status to the community but also in terms of community self-esteem and resilience. A community that has gone through the entire PHAST cycle has likely built a strong sense of responsibility for one's decisions. The PHAST approach helps the community members to feel more confident about themselves and their ability to take action and make improvements in their communities. It is recommended to include qualitative methods for data collection as part of the M&E system, such as Focus Group Discussion so information about the community members' feelings (of empowerment and personal growth) are captured in the project documentation.

## **29 Sustainability: To what extent did the PHAST group remain active in the community after donor funding reached an end?**

As previously outlined in this document (PHAST Deployment section), an exit strategy should be developed by the project team in conjunction with the community (it is recommended to include this activity as part of the PHAST training at Red Cross Red Crescent branch and community level). The exit strategy should identify those activities that will be continuing in the community after the completion of the project, and who will be in charge (at Red Cross Red Crescent branch and community level) for their implementation. It should also define the areas of support needed and the strategy to mobilise those resources.