



Early Action Plan Handbook

#BeeraSafe



Early Action Plan

Context

Heavy rains and flooding are among the most recurrent and destructive hazards affecting many urban informal settlements within Kampala.

The impacts include loss of lives and property, displacement, and the spread of waterborne diseases.

This handbook provides clear, step-by-step guidance to help communities prepare for, respond to and recover from floods through early actions that reduce risk.

Key Weather Hazard:
Heavy Rains & Floods



Secondary Hazards:



Lives & health
at risk



Damage &
disruption

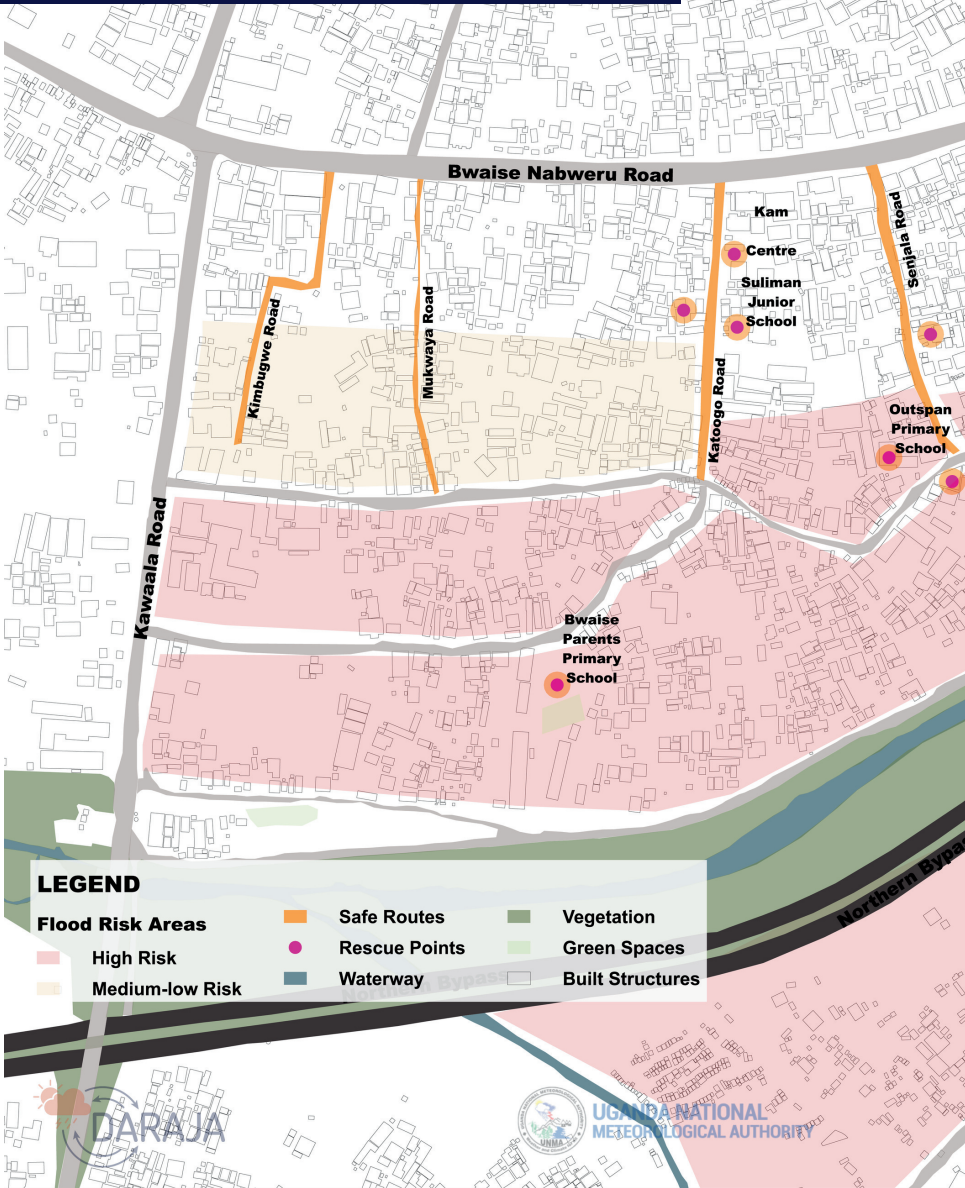


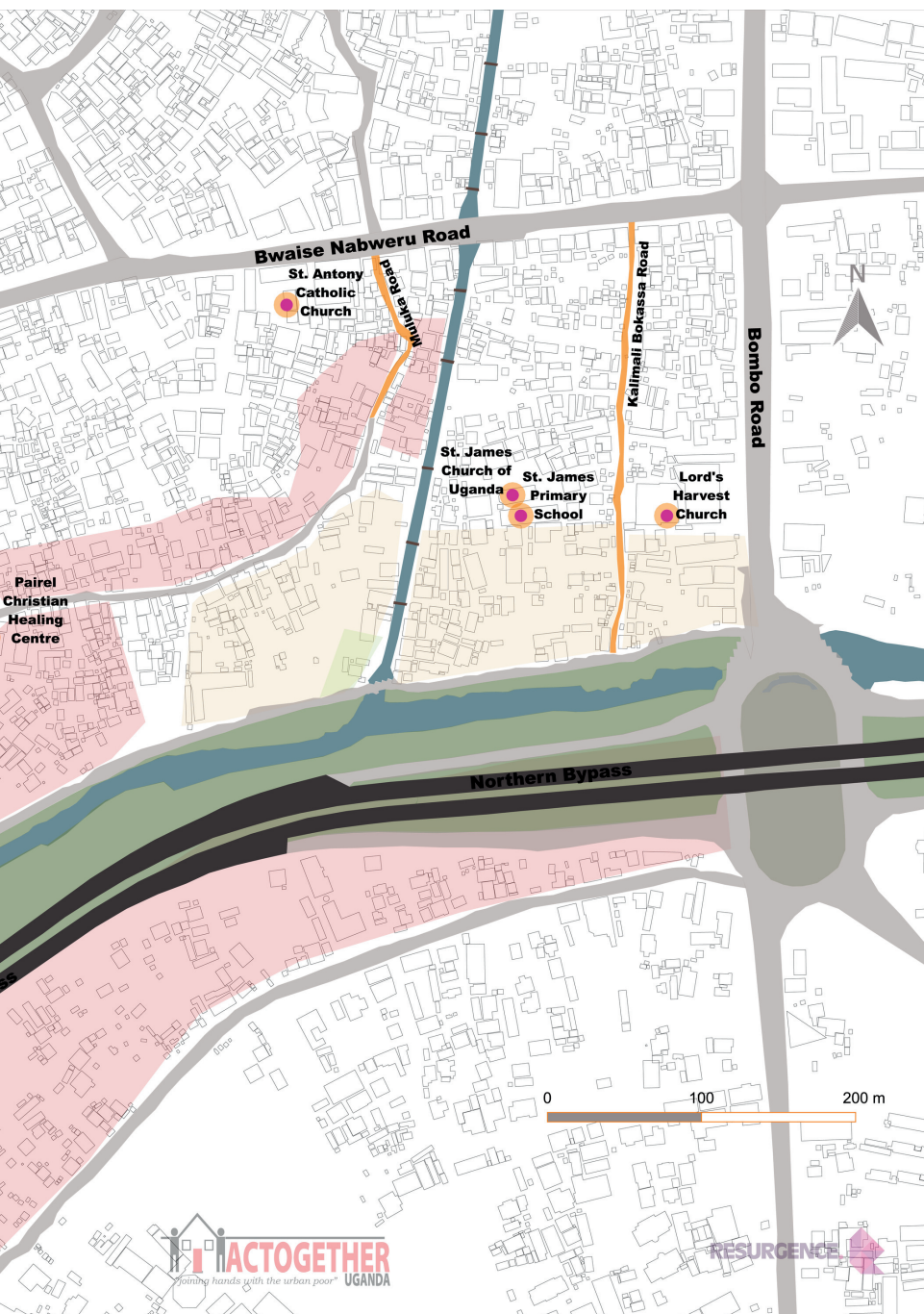
Water
contamination

Spatial Risk, Safe Routes and Rescue Points

This risk map shows areas that are most at risk of floods in Bwaise but the safe routes, green spaces and rescue points to support early warning systems and preparedness planning. The spatial mapping exercise was conducted with full community participation/involvement to ensure the information reflects local knowledge and lived experiences.

BWASE III PARTICIPATORY SPATIAL RISK, SAFE ROUTES AND RESCUE POINTS





Early Action Plan

Step by Step Approach for Early Actions

Floods can happen suddenly and cause serious damage to lives, homes, and livelihoods. This section covers exactly what to do before, during and after a flood, so that every community member knows how to act quickly and safely. It provides clear, practical guidance, from preparing emergency kits and clearing drainage systems, to safe evacuation and recovery after waters recede. They show how key stakeholders can work together to reduce risk, protect one another, and build a stronger, safer community in the face of heavy rains and flooding.





Action 1: Emergency Evacuation

Step 1:

Risk Assessment and Preparedness

(Disaster Management Team)

Key Action	What to do
Conduct a flood risk assessment (Disaster Management Team)	• Identify flood-prone areas, high-risk households, and critical infrastructure. • Engage with meteorological agency (UNMA) for early warning information.
Map out evacuation routes and safe zones (Disaster Management Team)	• Identify elevated areas, schools, churches, or community centres that can serve as evacuation shelters. • Develop multiple escape routes in case of blocked paths.
Establish an emergency coordination team.	• Involve local government, community leaders, Weather and climate champions, DRM officials, and emergency responders (Red Cross Uganda). • Set up communication channels (WhatsApp groups, community radio, SMS alerts).
Conduct community awareness and drills (Disaster Management Team)	• Train residents on evacuation procedures. • Conduct regular evacuation mock drills to ensure preparedness.
Secure essential items (Residents)	• Residents to have an emergency / evacuation bag with basic supplies such as drinking water, ready-to-eat non-perishable food, water purification tablets or portable water filter, essential documents, clothing, Hygiene & Sanitation, first aid kit, mosquito nets / repellent and malaria medication etc. • Local authorities should facilitate storage for valuables where possible.



Action 1: Emergency Evacuation

Step 2:

Early Warning Activation

Key Action	What to do
Monitor weather alerts and drainage channel levels (Disaster Management Team)	• Use forecasts from DMS to anticipate heavy rains. • Install community-based flood monitoring systems (rain gauges, water level sensors/gauges).
Issue early warnings (DMS to Weather and Climate Champions then to Community)	• Send alerts through SMS, local radios, megaphones, community meetings. • Use local leaders, Champions, community radio and boda boda riders to spread messages quickly.
Mobilize evacuation teams (Disaster Management Team Lead)	• Activate emergency response teams to assist vulnerable populations (elderly, children, disabled). • Alert key institutions (schools, religious places, hospitals, police, Red Cross).

Step 3:

Evacuation Execution (Disaster Management Team)

Key Action	What to do
Trigger evacuation orders based on thresholds (Disaster Management Team)	• If floodwaters reach a critical threshold, initiate movement from areas identified as vulnerable to flooding to safer grounds.
Ensure an orderly evacuation (Disaster Management Team)	• Deploy guides to direct people along designated safe routes. • Provide assistance for people with disabilities and the elderly. • Use available transport (boda bodas, trucks) for rapid movement.



Action 1: Emergency Evacuation

Step 4:

Temporary Sheltering and Emergency Relief

(Disaster Management Team and Well-wishers)

Key Action	What to do
Set up temporary shelters (Disaster Management Team and Well-wishers)	• Coordinate with well-wishers to prepare safe spaces such as churches, schools etc. as identified in the flood risk safe space map • Ensure safety, clean water, and sanitation in designated evacuation centers. • Coordinate with humanitarian agencies (e.g., Red Cross, NGOs/CSOs, local government) to provide relief items.
Provide medical and psychosocial support (VHTs)	• Deploy health workers to treat injuries and prevent waterborne diseases. • Offer counselling to those traumatized by displacement.

Step 5:

Post-Flood Recovery and Reintegration

(Disaster Management Team and Humanitarian Organisations)

Key Action	What to do
Assess damage and ensure safe return (Disaster Management Team)	• Inspect affected areas before allowing people to return home. • Conduct community clean-ups and disinfection to prevent disease outbreaks. • Involve key stakeholders to restore affected services.
Support affected households (Government and Humanitarian Organizations)	• Provide emergency relief grants and rebuilding support. • Advocate for flood disaster resilience measures.
Review and improve the evacuation plan (Disaster Management Team)	• Gather feedback from the community to improve future responses. • Work with local government and development partners to strengthen flood mitigation.



Action 2: Installation of Flood Barriers

Steps	Actions
Identify areas at risk (Residents)	Using historical/community knowledge, identify hotspot areas along drainage channels that are prone water overflows.
Installation of sandbags (Residents)	- Secure materials such as sand and sacks. - Fill the sacks with sand and place along identified hotspot areas.



Action 3: Desilting & Cleaning drainage systems

Steps	Actions
Preliminary Assessment and Planning (Residents and Disaster Management Team)	- At community level, using historical/community knowledge, identify hotspot drainage channels that frequently overflow (distinguish minor from major drainages). - Identify and engage key stakeholders such as local government, local leaders, disaster management committee to support the process. - Where necessary (community level), obtain approvals for the proposed initiative from the concerned authorities before desilting of the drainage channels. - Develop a plan for implementing the activity clearly stating the involved activities, estimated budgets, timelines - before rain season (January-early March and July-August) and responsible persons / entities.
Resource mobilization (Disaster Management Team with Local Leaders inclusive).	- Map out, engage and secure funding/support from potential support groups (government, NGOs and donors) for initiatives that are beyond the community's ability. - Source the required labor both technical and casual for the work to be done. Note: Community involvement / contribution is key.
Maintenance and sustainability (Residents and Disaster Management Team)	- Establish / setup a monitoring system (a community-based committee for regular inspection to identify silted points and enforcement of proper waste management to avoid clogging). - Conduct regular maintenance (desilting) to keep the drainage system free of silt.



Action 4: Sensitization & Awareness Creation on Taking Early Action (Weather and Climate Champions, ACTogether and KCCA)

Steps	Actions
Identify and engage target groups (Disaster Management Team)	• Focus should be put on vulnerable groups such as slum dwellers, children, elderly and people with disabilities. • Identify key stakeholders such as NGOs, Government Authorities and local leaders who can support the initiative.
Develop Early Action oriented awareness materials (ACTogether and Community)	• Contextualize/customize massaging based on the challenges and feasible actions in the project area. • Develop user friendly materials (Visuals and understandable language)
Establish/strengthen communication channels including IEC materials (ACTogether and Weather & Climate Champions)	• Build on existing channels such as WhatsApp groups, settlement forums, schools, places of worship, community radios, pinning of IEC materials in market places and other public spaces etc. • Make use of mass media platforms such as Radios and Television channels. • Use door-to-door outreaches to cover vulnerable groups which have no access to other existing platforms.
Awareness creation on EAP in the communities. (ACTogether and Weather & Climate Champions)	• Roll out community campaigns focusing specifically on the EAP components, such as; triggers and thresholds (what signs to act on), actions to take at household, community, and institutional levels and how to coordinate or access available support. • Work hand in hand with the identified stakeholders to deliver the information to the community members. • Conduct evaluations to ascertain the impact/knowledge transfer to community members and how they intend to use the information.



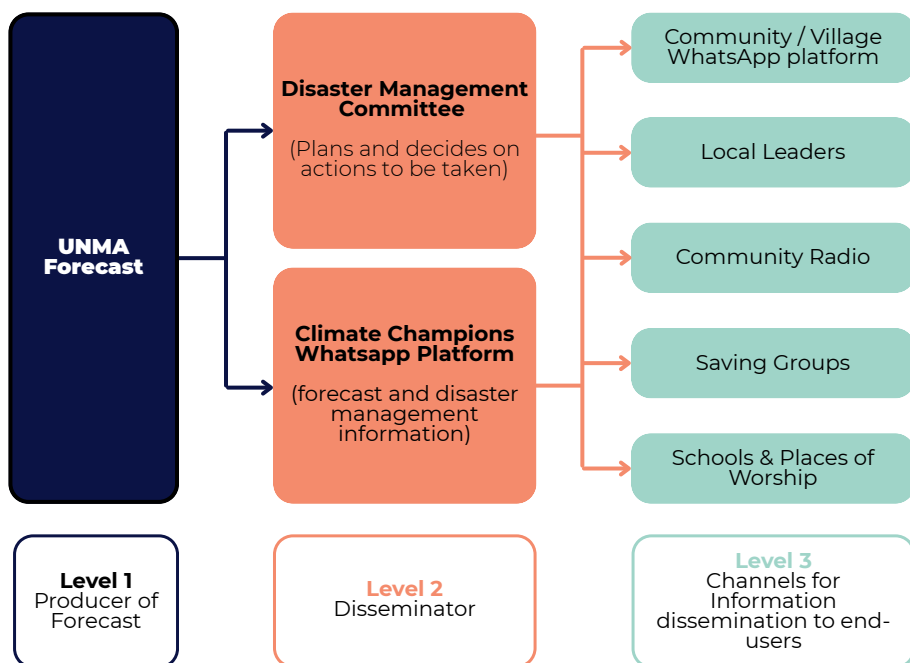
Action 5: Make repairs on houses & structures

Steps	Actions
Inspect the house to identify vulnerabilities (Household Head)	• Walk around and inside the house to identify cracks in walls, gaps around doors/windows and damaged roofing or signs of leaks. • Check electrical outlets and wiring to ascertain whether they are low and prone to flooding.
Prioritize What Needs Repair (Household Head)	• Note/list down all the issues found. • Prioritize/focus first on things that can let water in, such as cracks, broken windows, leaking roofs, or damaged doors • Pay attention to improving drainage around your home as well.
Secure materials and tools (Household Head)	• Based on the prioritized issues, secure/collect materials required to get the house fixed.
Reinforce / fix the identified leakages (Household Head)	• Use the secured materials to fix all the identified leakages. • Double check the reinforced gaps to ensure they are well fixed. • Ensure periodic inspection on your repairs, especially before the rainy or flood season.

Early Action Plan Activation **Communication Protocol**

The communication protocol builds on the project's established communication channels to ensure timely, clear and a coordinated flow of early warnings and activation of flood preparedness action information especially to at-risk community (Bwaise), relevant stakeholders and implementing agencies.

The communication is initiated once the thresholds for hazards are met or exceeded based on the meteorological information and the community-based observations by the disaster management committee.



Early Action Plan Activation Activation Protocol

Early Action Plan Activation Protocol operationalises the principles of anticipatory action and risk preparedness by establishing a timely, structured and evidence-based approach for activating early actions prior to the onset of predictable hazards including floods and extreme heat with the objective of reducing loss of life, protecting livelihoods and minimising disaster-related damages.

Activation Steps	What Happens	Responsible Actors
Risk Monitoring and Forecast Analysis	Continuous monitoring of hazards through national and regional forecasting tools to detect early signs of extreme weather and climatic anomalies Continuous monitoring and observation of community drainage system water levels and accumulation of silt	Department of Meteorological Services / UNMA Community-based Weather and Climate Champions / Disaster Management Team
Trigger-threshold Verification and Confirmation	System checks if pre-agreed thresholds are met or exceeded based on the forecast Ascertain whether drainage water level rise above danger mark	Department of Meteorological Services / UNMA Community-based Weather and Climate Champions / Disaster Management Team
Activation Decision and Communication	Convene an emergency meeting upon confirmation of reaching threshold levels to agree on appropriate actions, assigning roles and responsibilities General communication of the early warnings and actions to the public using established / available channels Authorization of activation of Early Action Plan Reach out / coordination with other vital entities in taking action	Community-based Weather and Climate Champions / Disaster Management Team

Activation Steps	What Happens	Responsible Actors
Launch / Implementation of Pre-planned and Agreed Upon Actions	Implementation / Immediate rollout of agreed upon actions that are feasible and community-driven.	Community-based Weather and Climate Champions / Disaster Management Team to spearhead supported by the community and other relevant entities
Post-event Review and Learning	Undertake a review to assess performance and identification of deviations for improvement.	Community-based Weather and Climate Champions / Disaster Management Team and other key entities.



Emergency Contacts

Byakika Zam

0782648638

ACTogether Uganda

0757006816

0774223496

