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YEARS

Empowered lives. Resilient nations.

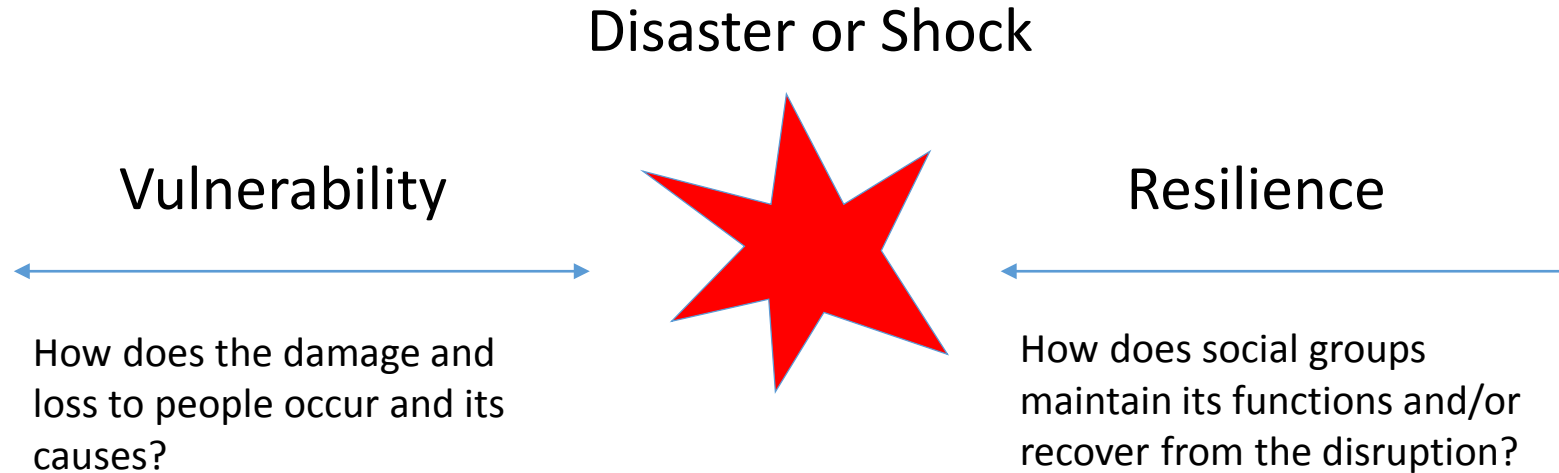
Putting People First: Practice, Challenges and Innovation in Characterizing and Mapping Social Groups

Introduction to Social Vulnerability

What is Social Vulnerability?

- Social vulnerability refers to **potential harm to people**. It involves a combination of factors that determine the degree to which someone's life and livelihood are put at risk by a discrete and identifiable event in nature or in society.
- Social vulnerability refers to the **characteristics of a person or group** in terms of their **capacity to anticipate, cope with, resist and recovery** from the impact of a natural hazard (Wisner et al., 2004)."
- Social vulnerability refers to the **resilience of communities** when confronted by external stresses on human health, stresses such as natural or human-caused disasters, or disease outbreaks. Reducing social vulnerability can decrease both human suffering and economic loss (<http://svi.cdc.gov/>).
- Social vulnerability refers to the **inability of people, organizations, and societies to withstand adverse impacts** from multiple stressors to which they are exposed. These impacts are due in part to characteristics inherent in social interactions, institutions, and systems of cultural values-(Wiki).
- Social vulnerability refers to the **susceptibility of social groups to potential losses** from hazard events of society's resistance and resilience to hazard (Blaikie et al., 1994; Hewitt, 1977)

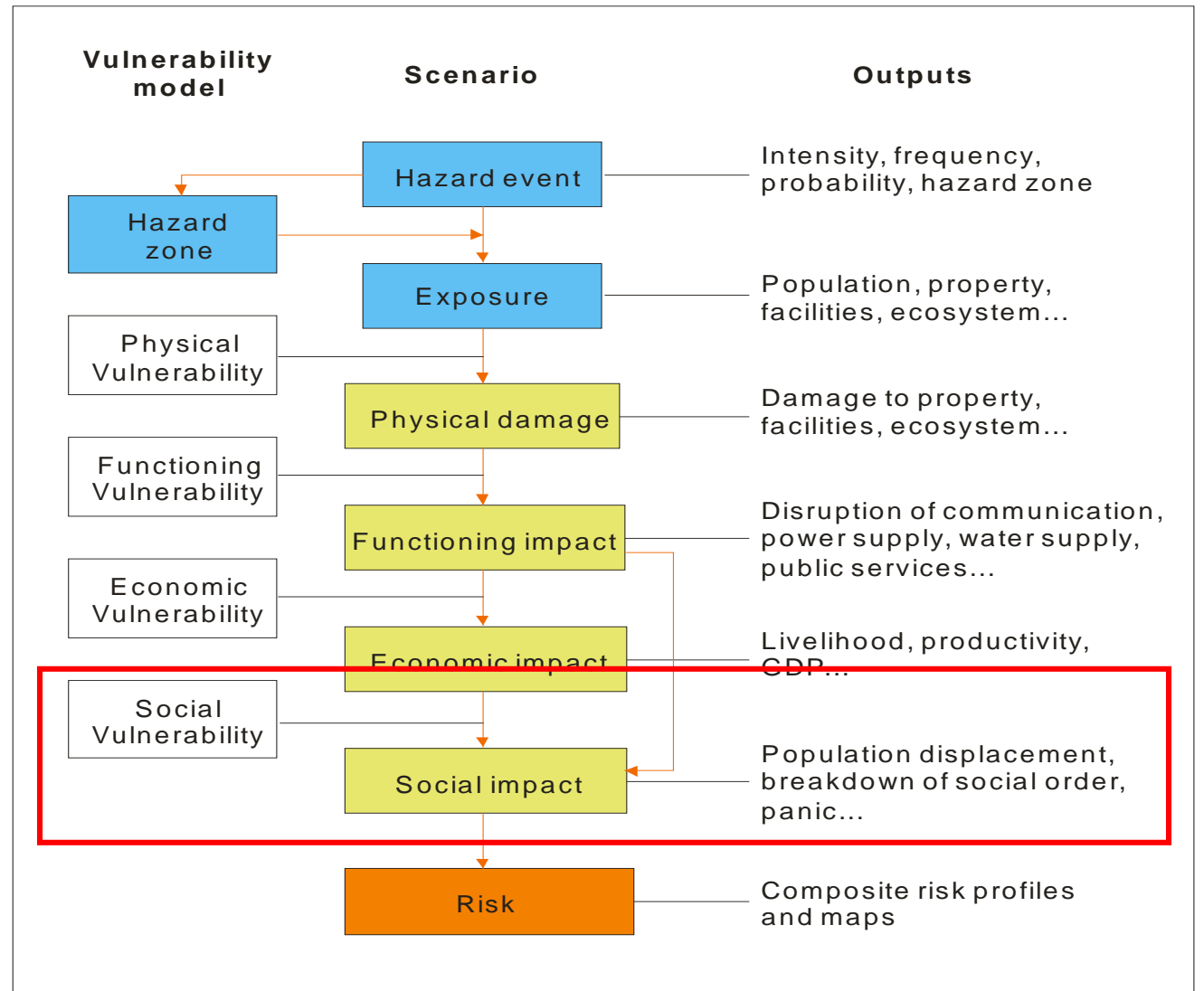
Vulnerability vs. Resilience



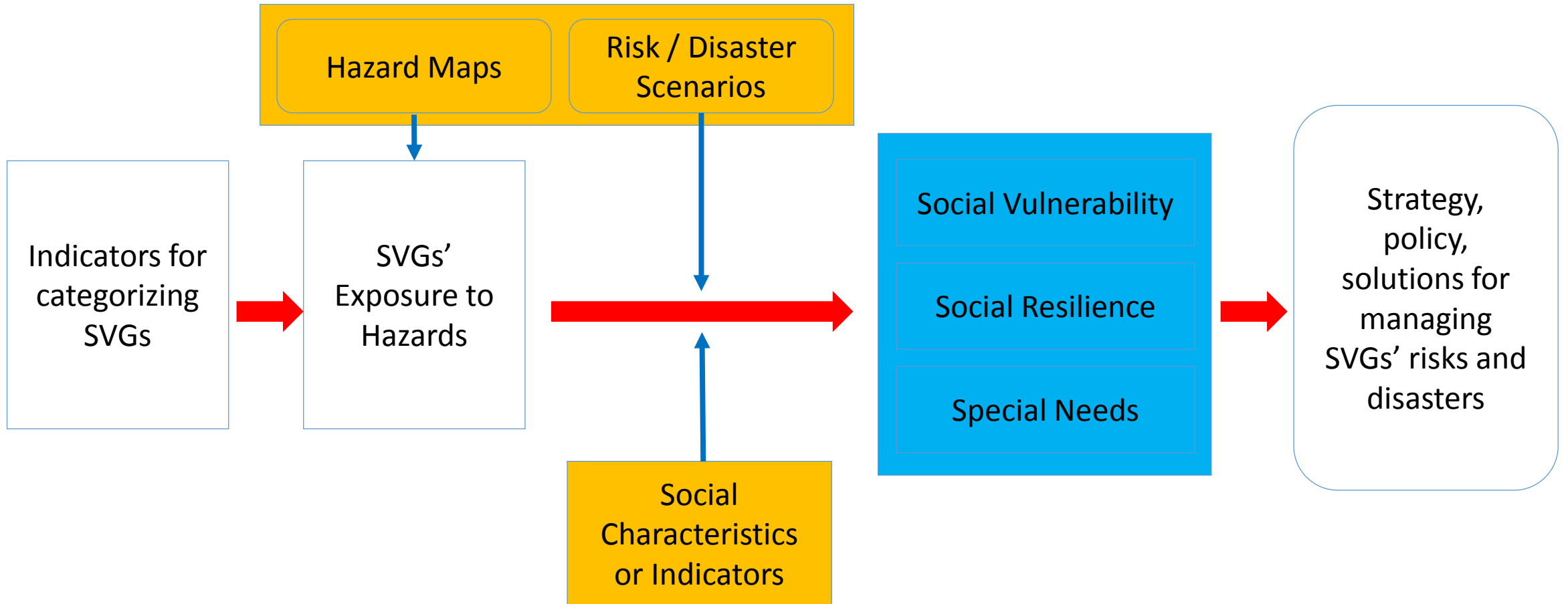
Social characteristics or Indicators:

Income, access to basic services, access to social protection, attitude and culture to risk / disasters, social capital, etc.

Social Vulnerability Assessment in the Risk Assessment Process



A Contextual Framework for Characterizing and Mapping Socially Vulnerable Groups (SVGs):



Dimensions of Categorizing Socially Vulnerable Groups

Socially
Vulnerable
Groups

- Poverty
- Class/caste
- Race/Ethnicity
- Religion
- Gender
- Age such as the elderly (> 65), the children (<5)
- Disability
- Health
- Language/literacy
- Households and families, such as single-parental household

Dimensions of Social Vulnerability

After Cutter et al. (2003)

Socially
Vulnerable
Group

- Level of poverty
- Lack of or limited access to resources such as information, knowledge and technology
- Lack of or limited access to political power and representation (marginalization, exclusive)
- Lack of or limited social capital including social networks and connections
- Inadequate beliefs, customs and attitude in response to risk or disasters
- Vulnerable residential settings (i.e. weak structure, poor protection, poor maintenance, etc.)
- Frail and physical limited individuals
- Lack of or Limited access to critical services such as communication, transportation, power supply, water supply, sanitation, etc.

Questions for Discussion

- How to correctly understand the concept of social vulnerability?
- How to categorize Socially Vulnerable Groups in terms of the context?
- How to select indexing or analytic approaches to social vulnerability assessment?
- How to collect and keep data current?
- How to use information on social vulnerability in development planning and disaster management?