

# Exercise: Coping with Multiple Shocks

**If doing the exercise in small groups:**

- Decide ahead of time which small group(s) will discuss *Situation 1: Cambodia* and which will discuss *Situation 2: Syria*. [note: *Situations* are on the following slides.]
- If possible, prepare by cutting each situation into 3 separate slips of paper for each subsequent “shock.”
- Distribute “Shock 1” only for group reading and discussion. Then, distribute, read and discuss “Shock 2” and “Shock 3” to the appropriate groups.
- Prepare to discuss in plenary the evolution of the family’s strategies and the differences in how CRS and its partners might respond to successive shocks of increasing magnitude. Discuss any differences between the two *Situations*.

**If doing the exercise alone**, choose one of the *Situations* on the following slides and reflect on each successive shock along with the questions provided.



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## *Situation 1: Cambodia*

**Shock 1:** Drought is a regular occurrence in the village of Svay Rieng. However, this past drought has been severe and crops have failed. There is little rice left to eat. Fish ponds are drying up, and other aquatic plants and animals are hard to find. You are a farmer and head of household in Svay Rieng with seven household members both old and young.

- How will the family cope with this situation?
- What could others in the community, including CRS and its partners do to help?

**Shock 2:** Now, bird flu has broken out and is spreading among chickens and ducks. The authorities are forced to kill all the poultry in Svay Rieng as part of a larger culling operation to prevent bird flu from spreading. You lost all your chickens and ducks.

- How will the family cope with this situation?
- What could others in the community, including CRS and its partners do to help?

**Shock 3:** In Svay Rieng, children have recently become ill. Health authorities took the sick children to a regional hospital and found it was bird flu. Several of these children have died and there is great fear that it will spread further. One of your neighbor's children is sick with avian flu. She is your daughter's best friend and they play together often.

- How will the family cope with this situation?
- What could others in the community, including CRS and its partners do to help?

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## *Situation 2: Syria*

**Shock 1:** Adnan and his family live in Syria near the Euphrates river in a semi-arid region. He is the father of three sons. He and his sons farm the family's land, which he inherited from his father and grandfather. For the past ten years, rainfall has been much lower than normal due to climate change, and their wheat production has steadily decreased. Irrigation is also less reliable than in the past because of fuel shortages and equipment breakdowns. To make matters worse, the government has encouraged herders to graze their cattle in the region because there is more pastureland near the river. However, the animals are destroying the crops in the fields.

- How will the family cope with this situation?
- What could others in the community, including CRS's local partners, do to help?

**Shock 2:** The war, which had seemed far away in Damascus, is now starting to affect the region around Adnan's village. Roads to nearby market towns where they sold their agricultural production and bought other goods have been destroyed. There are also checkpoints where both government soldiers and rebels threaten travelers and force them to pay bribes. Several bombings have occurred close to their house. Some relatives who lived in Damascus have come to take refuge with them. They have also just learned that their oldest son's wife (Hanan) is pregnant with their first grandchild. Due to the war, quality medical care has become hard to access since many doctors have left the area.

- How will the family cope with this situation?
- What could others in the community, including CRS's local partners, do to help?

**Shock 3:** Hanan has had a difficult pregnancy. The events of the last months have left her traumatized, and the family did not have access to adequate food or medical care. Suddenly she goes into premature labor. There are complications, and she needs immediate medical attention. The baby girl survives, but there are significant medical expenses to pay and further care is needed. The family has had no income for several months due to the worsening economic and political crisis. Many families have fled to Turkey and elsewhere due to increasing insecurity.

- How will the family cope with this situation?
- What could others in the community, including CRS's local partners, do to help?