

Handbook

Citizen & Authority Learning and Improving Preparedness Plans (CLIPP) Procedure

January 2026

Abstract: This document introduces the first prototype of the CLIPP procedure, designed to provide practical guidance for real-world implementation. Its application to the Empower-Citizens project test cases will strengthen the procedure through concrete examples and support further deployment. The final version of the CLIPP procedure is scheduled for delivery in January 2027.



List of Partners

Logo	Name	Short name
	DEEP BLUE	DBL
	NTNU SAMFUNNSFORSKNING AS	NSR
	ASS CITTADINANZATTIVA APS	CA
	MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS	DSU
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Table of Contents

Empower-Citizens Project Overview	5
Introduction	6
1. What is the CLIPP procedure and its five steps?	6
2. Who is this procedure for?	7
3. How to use the CLIPP procedure?	7
Step 1. Understanding the local context	9
1. Objectives	9
2. Methods	9
3. Implementation	9
4. Resources	10
5. Outputs	10
6. Example	10
Step 2. Fostering dialogue with citizens	11
1. Objectives	11
2. Methods	11
3. Implementation	11
4. Resources	12
5. Outputs	12
6. Example	12
Step 3. Organising information	13
1. Objectives	13
2. Methods	13
3. Implementation	13
4. Resources	14
5. Outputs	14
6. Example	14
Step 4. Revising preparedness plans	15
1. Objectives	15
2. Methods	15
3. Implementation	15
4. Resources	15
5. Outputs	16
6. Example	16
Step 5. Sharing lessons learnt with citizens	17
1. Objectives	17
2. Methods	17
3. Implementation	17
4. Resources	17
5. Outputs	18
6. Example	18

List of Tables

Table 1. List of methods for step 1	9
Table 2. List of methods for step 2	11
Table 3. List of methods for step 3	13
Table 4. List of methods for step 4	15
Table 5. List of methods for step 5	17

List of Figures

Figure 1. The CLIPP Procedure and its five steps (version 2, updated January 2026)	6
Figure 2. The Book of Methods - List of Methods	7

EMPOWER-CITIZENS PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Empower-Citizens project develops and tests a **structured approach to systematically capture, analyse and integrate feedback and lessons learnt by citizens from disasters, exercises and simulations, into preparedness plans**. Citizens' first-hand experiences, tacit knowledge and skills gained during these events are significant and offer a valuable source of insights and knowledge that complements the perspective of professional responders and institutional actors, representing an important asset for the management of future events. The project:

- integrates citizens' experiences into existing processes of drafting and revising preparedness plans;
- actively involves the public in preparedness activities.

It builds on past EU and national projects to review, adapt and integrate existing practices for **eliciting, selecting, filtering and aggregating experiences and feedback from citizens, communities and civil society organisations (CSOs)**. These outputs are being consolidated into a structured procedure for revising and improving preparedness plans called "**Citizen & Authority Learning and Improving Preparedness Plans**" (CLIPP).

The CLIPP procedure includes practical guidelines and support tools to help authorities in applying this approach in their local contexts. The procedure is being evaluated through the revision of **two real preparedness plans in Castelraimondo (Italy) and Innlandet County (Norway)**, with citizen-learnt lessons at their core, and will subsequently be **scaled up for a wider application at the European level**.

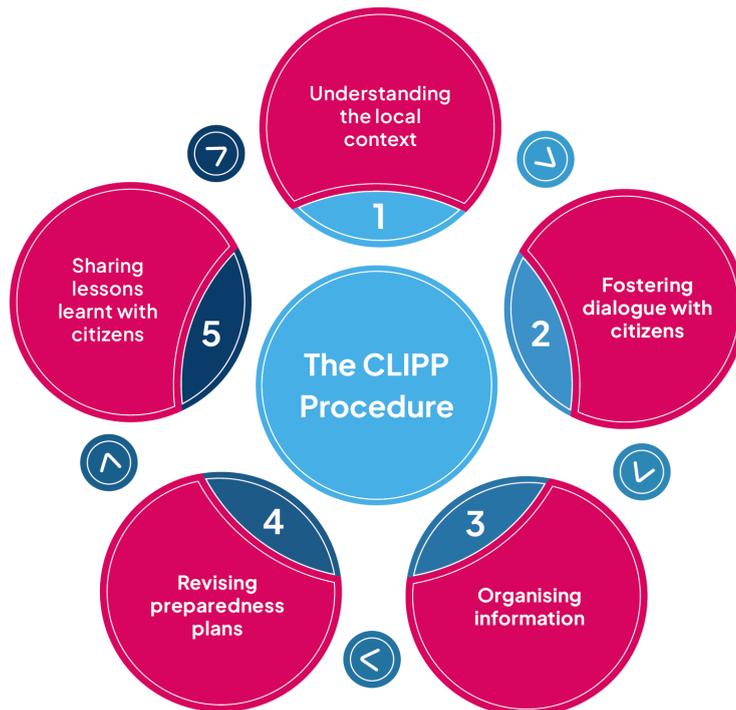
INTRODUCTION

1. WHAT IS THE CLIPP PROCEDURE AND ITS FIVE STEPS?

Citizens' first-hand experiences, tacit knowledge and skills gained from disasters, exercises and simulations are highly valuable as they often result from spontaneous or organised actions to support the community during critical times. Due to citizens' physical proximity to each other and the affected area, understanding of the local context, the knowledge of the environment and the community, and social ties, they work together effectively as volunteers to overcome the negative impact of disasters. Through this unique position and experience, they can offer feedback and knowledge that are complementary to that of professional and institutional actors, representing an important asset for the management of future events. The *"Citizen & Authority Learning and Improving Preparedness Plans"* (CLIPP) procedure provides guidelines on how to collect, evaluate and integrate such feedback and experiences. It is a step-by-step process demonstrating in practice how to integrate citizen knowledge in preparedness planning through five key steps:

1. **Understanding the local context** - Engaging key stakeholders to map the local context and actors to design context-appropriate and inclusive citizen participation processes.
2. **Fostering dialogue with citizens** - Having a dialogue with citizens to collect their experiences, local insights and practical lessons related to crisis management.
3. **Organising information** - Gaining an overview, categorising and validating information, and integrating professional and institutional expertise with residents' local experiences.
4. **Revising preparedness plans** - Updating preparedness plans based on the information and knowledge gathered in steps 1-3.
5. **Sharing lessons learnt with citizens** - Ensuring transparency and sustained participation in local emergency preparedness efforts.

Figure 1. The CLIPP Procedure and its five steps (version 2, updated January 2026)



2. WHO IS THIS PROCEDURE FOR?

The CLIPP procedure is a practical tool for institutions, authorities and first responders involved in the development and revision of preparedness plans at the local, regional and national levels. It can also be a valuable resource for a broader range of stakeholders, including civil society organisations (CSOs), third-sector actors and others interested in promoting innovative forms of active citizenship.

3. HOW TO USE THE CLIPP PROCEDURE?

Each step of the CLIPP procedure is described using the following structure: objectives, methods, implementation, resources, outputs and examples. The CLIPP procedure and its five steps are intended to be used as a high-level guide, requiring adaptation to the specific context, the type of participants involved and the dynamics of the process itself. Within each step, users may select, adapt or introduce methods that best suit their particular needs and circumstances. The listed methods are described in greater detail in *The Book of Methods*¹, where each of them is presented with a brief description, application context, implementation timeframe, required materials and approximate number of participants needed.

Figure 2. *The Book of Methods - List of Methods*

Empower-Citizens		List of Methods					SECTION 03
Methods	1. Understanding	2. Feedback	3. Filtering	4. Integration	5. Follow-up		
1. Stakeholder Mapping	✓						
2. Interviews	✓						
3. Surveys	✓	✓					
4. World Café		✓					
5. Storytelling		✓					
6. Focus Group		✓		✓	✓		
7. Photo elicitation	✓	✓					
8. Field visits		✓					
9. Nominal Group Technique		✓		✓			
10. Public Dialogue		✓			✓		
11. Participatory Workshop			✓	✓			
12. Multiple Confirmation			✓				
13. Prioritize Suggestions			✓				
14. Categorization of Feedback			✓				
15. Round Table					✓		

Following all five steps of the procedure ensures a complete cycle - from understanding the specific needs of a context, through data collection, integration, and evaluation, to implementing practical improvements and sharing feedback with all contributors. However, the CLIPP procedure can also be applied partially, using selected steps as needed. While this allows flexibility in

¹ Empower-Citizens Project (2025). *The Book of Methods*: Retrieved from: <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/media/book-methods>

choosing which steps and methods to apply, the procedure should always adhere to the following key principles of citizen engagement²:

- **Clear mandate and scope** - the ambition and scope of the participatory process should be clearly defined from the outset and in line with the context, time and resources available to conduct the process.
- **Inclusiveness and representativeness** - the recruitment must ensure that all citizens are equally likely to be selected, no matter their walks of life.
- **Aligned expectations** - citizens must know up front how their input will be used and the next steps beyond the specific 'event' in which they have participated, including an identified "feedback moment".
- **Respectful dialogue** - citizen engagement processes should entail professional facilitation which ensures that every participant has opportunity to speak, through appropriate group layouts that secure dialogue.
- **Transparency** - information on the process and results need to be made available online and regular communication with the participants need to take place.
- **Evaluation** - assessing the quality and the effectiveness of the chosen approach helps with accountability and institutional reflexivity.

² European Union (2024). Corporate Guidance on Citizen Engagement. Retrieved from: https://citizens.ec.europa.eu/document/download/ebc24405-4220-4273-9284-6ef84aa15344_sk?filename=Corporate%20Guidance%20on%20Citizen%20Engagement.pdf

STEP 1. UNDERSTANDING THE LOCAL CONTEXT

1. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this step is to map accessible knowledge of the local context (geographical, demographic, social and political) together with relevant formal and informal resources and actors. This includes identifying potential participant groups, suitable participation formats, and accessibility or support needs, in order to design inclusive and context-appropriate citizen participation processes. It is also important for all relevant public servants to be informed of the contents of the preparedness plans in advance.

2. METHODS

The relevant methods from *The Book of Methods* to carry out this step include:

Table 1. List of methods for step 1

Method	Implementation Time	External Participants
<u>Stakeholder mapping</u>	2 hours - 5 days	N/A
<u>Interviews</u>	30 min - 2 hours	1:1, 5 - 10 participants
<u>Surveys</u>	2 - 6 weeks	30 - 500 participants
<u>Photo elicitation</u>	2 - 3 hours	1 - 5 participants

3. IMPLEMENTATION

The first step of the CLIPP procedure requires detailed analysis of the social, geographic, political and risk landscape before any consultation or engagement is undertaken. Ensuring broad anchoring within a local authority maximises buy-in from the public servants involved in the preparedness work. A meeting or a workshop outlining the CLIPP procedure with the relevant officers, helps to set up the stage for an inclusive process.

Additionally, you must be aware of the hazards that are most relevant to their jurisdiction and the impact that historical events have had on the community. This may involve reviewing historical disasters' impact data, vulnerability assessments and previous emergency response records. Recommended sources include municipal emergency plans, national and regional civil protection databases, insurance claim records, health and social care statistics, and academic studies on the impact of local disasters. Participatory mapping exercises, surveys of risk perception and preparedness questionnaires can further reveal knowledge gaps and assess citizens' capacities and needs.

It is essential to identify the full range of stakeholders, including self-organised citizens who can bring insights about local opportunities and barriers to citizens' engagement. You may consult:

- community leaders and local associations (including religious, cultural and sports groups)
- CSOs engaged in social welfare or disaster relief
- professional first responders (firefighters, police, paramedics)
- spontaneous volunteer groups and informal neighbourhood networks
- schools and educational institutions for youth engagement
- representatives of diverse communities (e.g., elderly, people with disabilities, recent immigrants), especially if underserved and hard-to-reach
- local business owners and farmers
- academia and research organisations conducting relevant studies

This broad stakeholder mapping ensures that needs assessments capture not only infrastructural and institutional weaknesses, but also the strengths of informal social networks and tacit knowledge within the community. By reviewing these diverse perspectives and data sources at the start, you lay the groundwork for inclusive engagement throughout the CLIPP procedure.

THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR

It is recommended to collaborate and consult with the civil protection groups, CSOs, volunteer organisations, schools, neighbourhood groups, cultural mediators and journalists. Academic partners may provide valuable support in designing surveys or interview protocols.

This section will be finalised after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.

4. RESOURCES

The resources will be added after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.

5. OUTPUTS

After completion of this step, you will gain:

- an overview of local risks and vulnerabilities
- a list of stakeholders, including relevant civil society organizations (CSOs) and their key contact points
- a review of underutilised local capacities and informal networks
- insights into how and when these groups meet, any local events that could be leveraged, and channels of communication such as newsletters, community notice boards, or periodic communications
- a shared understanding of the opportunities and barriers to integrating citizens' knowledge and experience into preparedness plans

6. EXAMPLE

Examples will be added after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.

STEP 2. FOSTERING DIALOGUE WITH CITIZENS

1. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this step is to gather citizens' knowledge, experiences, local insights, and practical lessons learnt from disasters, exercises, and simulations related to crisis management.

2. METHODS

Relevant methods from *The Book of Methods* to carry out this step include:

Table 2. List of methods for step 2

Method	Implementation Time	External Participants
<u>Surveys</u>	2 - 6 weeks	30 - 500 participants
<u>World Café</u>	2 - 4 hours	4 - 6 participants for each subgroup
<u>Storytelling</u>	1 day	4 - 6 participants
<u>Focus group</u>	2 hours	6 - 12 participants
<u>Photo elicitation</u>	2 - 3 hours	1 - 5 participants
<u>Field visits</u>	2 - 3 hours	10 - 30 participants
<u>Nominal Group Technique</u>	2 hours - half day	4 - 10 participants
<u>Public dialogue</u>	3 - 4 hours	40 - 60 participants

3. IMPLEMENTATION

This step activates multiple mechanisms for capturing citizens' feedback and experiences from disasters or exercises. A variety of methods can be employed, including surveys, focus groups, field visits, and digital tools, to gather firsthand accounts from those directly affected or involved in emergency response. The choice of method(s) should consider the outputs from Step 1, such as the list of stakeholders, available resources, the size and characteristics of the area (e.g., urban vs. rural), the type of hazard (widespread vs. localized), and the costs associated with data collection.

Common barriers to effective knowledge capture include poorly advertised engagement opportunities, citizens' skepticism about the value of their input, and the absence of tailored

communication strategies for hard-to-reach populations. However, when mechanisms are designed to be inclusive and accessible, such as by involving trusted community leaders or cultural mediators, citizens are generally eager to share their knowledge and experiences.

THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR

Special attention must be given to the sensitivity of the topics addressed, citizens' privacy, and ethical concerns (e.g., data confidentiality, sharing, storing)..

This section will be finalised after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.

4. RESOURCES

The resources will be added after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.

5. OUTPUTS

After completion of this step, you should have an exhaustive list of citizen stories, comments, suggestions and complaints. It is crucial to ensure that different groups in the community are equally represented during the feedback collection process to guarantee rich and diverse feedback.

6. EXAMPLE

Examples will be added after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.

STEP 3. ORGANISING INFORMATION

1. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this step is to organise the information gathered in Step 2 to gain an overview, categorise, validate and integrate professional and institutional expertise with residents' local knowledge and experiences.

2. METHODS

Relevant methods from *The Book of Methods* to carry out this step include:

Table 3. List of methods for step 3

Method	Implementation Time	External Participants
<u>Participatory workshop</u>	2 - 3 hours	15 - 25 participants
<u>Multiple confirmation</u>	2 hours - 5 days	N/A
<u>Prioritise suggestions</u>	1 - 3 hours	10 - 30 participants
<u>Categorisation of feedback</u>	2 hours - 5 days	N/A

3. IMPLEMENTATION

In this step, collected citizen feedback is systematically assessed, aggregated, and validated to extract key themes and actionable recommendations. Filtering involves carefully reviewing all submissions to remove exact duplicates (identical reports submitted multiple times) and clearly irrelevant accounts (information unrelated to the hazards, emergency processes, or context under study), while retaining partial or unique insights that may provide valuable perspectives. Aggregation then combines the filtered data to identify patterns and priorities. This can be done through thematic analysis, which groups similar responses into key themes; digital dashboards, which visualise trends and recurring issues; or expert panels, which review and interpret the data to generate actionable recommendations. Finally, recurring or consensus issues are highlighted as lessons to act upon. For example, if multiple citizens report the same shelter location as problematic, this signals a priority area for intervention. Adopting transparent, inclusive filtering methods involving citizen representatives in the review, builds trust and ensures rich diversity of inputs.

THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR

Maintaining maximum transparency is crucial in this step to ensure legitimacy of the overall process.

This section will be finalised after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.

4. RESOURCES

The resources will be added after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.

5. OUTPUTS

After completion of this step, you will gain:

- thematic clusters of key issues and improvements
- suggestions for revising preparedness plans (including changes to existing processes and integration of new inputs)
- transparent and shared understanding of priorities

6. EXAMPLE

Examples will be added after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.

STEP 4. REVISING PREPAREDNESS PLANS

1. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this step is to update existing preparedness plans, building on the information and knowledge gathered in Steps 1–3.

2. METHODS

Relevant methods from *The Book of Methods* to carry out this step include:

Table 4. List of methods for step 4

Method	Implementation Time	External Participants
<u>Focus group</u>	2 hours	6 - 12 participants
<u>Nominal Group Technique</u>	2 hours - half day	4 - 10 participants
<u>Participatory workshop</u>	2 - 3 hours	15 - 25 participants

3. IMPLEMENTATION

The outputs of Step 3 inform practical interventions for preparedness plans and policies, and offer opportunities for creating feasible, citizen-centered solutions. This may include for example updating evacuation procedures, communication strategies or infrastructure investments. Furthermore, participatory workshops enable stakeholders to co-design interventions ensuring relevance and local acceptance.

Common intervention barriers include bureaucratic inertia or resource constraints, as well as potential resistance to changing established practices. However, evidence from past events shows that visible action based on citizens' feedback results in interventions that are more contextually grounded and more likely to be embraced by local communities.

THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR

This section will be finalised after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.

4. RESOURCES

The resources will be added after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.

5. OUTPUTS

After completion of this step, you will have an updated version of the preparedness plan, reflecting citizens' input and establishing a clear action list with defined responsibilities for implementation.

6. EXAMPLE

Examples will be added after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.

STEP 5. SHARING LESSONS LEARNT WITH CITIZENS

1. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this step is to share the outcomes and the lessons learnt from the application of the CLIPP procedure with citizens, in order to present the revised preparedness plan, ensure transparency, and encourage engagement in local emergency preparedness efforts.

2. METHODS

Relevant methods from *The Book of Methods* to carry out this step include:

Table 5. List of methods for step 5

Method	Implementation Time	External Participants
<u>Focus group</u>	2 hours	6 - 12 participants
<u>Public dialogue</u>	3 - 4 hours	40 - 60 participants
<u>Round table</u>	2 hours	10 - 15 participants

3. IMPLEMENTATION

By completing Step 5, you proactively communicate changes resulting from citizens' engagement. For instance, following implementation of revised preparedness plans, you may organise follow-up workshops or disseminate accessible reports, highlighting how local feedback shaped decision-making. Information campaigns, public meetings and ongoing advisory boards allow you to report back and thank contributors, fostering continued trust and collaboration. Citizens may feel their contributions are undervalued if they receive no follow-up or have no visibility of the results. Ongoing engagement keeps local knowledge current, enhancing overall resilience.

THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR

This section will be finalised after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.

4. RESOURCES

The resources will be added after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.

5. OUTPUTS

After completion of this step, you should have communicated the outcomes of the application of the CLIPP procedure and shared the updated preparedness plan with all relevant stakeholders. This final step is essential to ensuring sustainable, long-term collaboration among all involved actors.

6. EXAMPLE

Examples will be added after the application of the CLIPP procedure in the Test Cases of the Empower-Citizens project.