



Members of duck raisers in Potuakhali, Bangladesh discuss with Oxfam and partners underlying causes of poverty in their village and lack of scale up of this industry which are: a) poor access to business services; b) inefficient supply chain; c) entrenched traditional beliefs that since women are caretakers of ducks, it is just an adjunct household chore and not a viable enterprise; and d) chronic natural disasters and climate variability. Photo: Janice Ian Manlutac/2015

# A COMPANION GUIDE TO RESILIENCE

Practical guidance for people designing and implementing programmes that aim to increase the resilience of people living in poverty

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# 1 ABOUT THIS COMPANION

## 1.1 Introduction

Asia is experiencing unprecedented change. Some of these changes are bringing undeniable benefits, such as the millions of Asians being lifted out of poverty by economic growth, and the soaring accessibility of information technology. Other changes are increasing the vulnerability of many portions of the population: climate change, the rapid increase in the number of disasters, political instability, and escalating inequality.

Resilience building is increasingly seen as a counter to these drivers of vulnerability. Fortunately, Oxfam and partners in Asia have a rich history of implementing approaches towards resilience that can be built upon to become more effective.

## 1.2 What is the purpose of this guide?

This companion aims to provide practical guidance to staff working on resilience throughout the region. It is intended to be used first and foremost by Oxfam and partner staff who are directly involved in project design and implementation. It should also be useful for those who support them: their managers, advisors and fundraisers. The guide includes a practical Resilience Checklist of things to consider at project and wider programme levels (Section 3). The guide complements Oxfam's Strategy for Resilience in Asia for 2015-2020, which was developed to foster a shared approach to resilience amongst all country programmes and affiliates in the region, and will normally be used alongside it.

Sharmila Karki, 48, Goma Limbu, 60, and Manju Thapa, 31 work in an onion field outside an informal settlement in the Manohara area of Kathmandu, Nepal, on August 29, 2015. The women usually work from 10 am to 6 pm and earn 260 Nepali NRs a day - around \$2.50. The legal minimum wage in Nepal is 450 NRs a day. Photo: Sam Cunningham Sam Tarling/2015

## 1.3 How is the guide structured?

The structure of the guide follows the basic sequence of project (or programme) cycle management: creating a vision, project design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Learning comes from all parts of this sequence. The guide is structured in this way so that people can use the guide to inform their work as it progresses, and find the parts that are most relevant to their work easily if they prefer to dip in and out of the guide. The sections of the guide are:

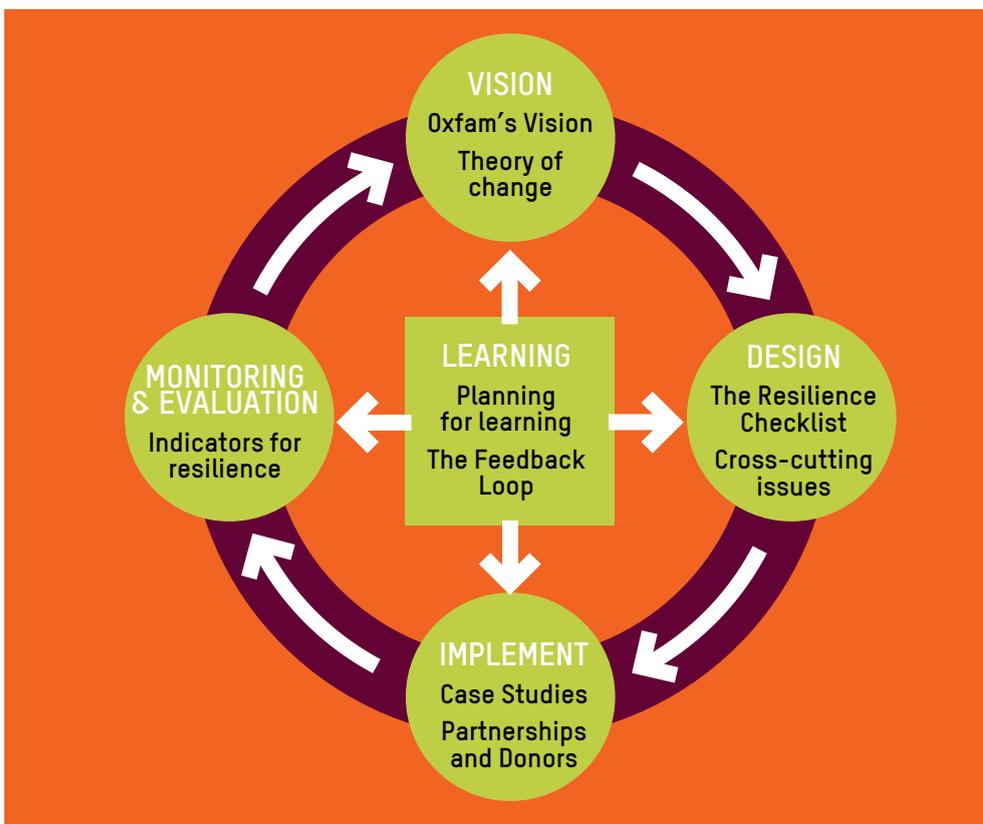
**Vision:** This part of the guide is intended to help you establish the vision and goals for your work on resilience. It contains a brief introduction to Oxfam in Asia's definition of and vision for resilience.

**Design:** The guide contains the Resilience Checklist, which is a handy tool that you can use when designing projects or programmes, including writing funding proposals. It also describes the Asia Theory of Change for resilience, a short discussion of how resilience relates to other programme areas, and includes tips and useful resources for designing projects and programmes.

**Implementation:** The guide contains a number of case studies from programmes around the region to help you think through some of the practical solutions that others have found when programming. It also includes a brief guide on partnerships and donors.

**Monitoring and Evaluation:** The guide contains a menu of indicators that can be used to develop monitoring and evaluation plans.

**Learning:** All parts of the project cycle – vision, design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation – provide experience, information and insight that we should be using to improve our work. This section provides information on how to plan and resource learning, and also introduces a 'feedback loop' to facilitate learning from work on resilience.





## 2 VISION

Establishing the vision –what you want to achieve – is a critical first step in any sort of programming. In practical terms, this means building on the strategic decisions that have been made by Oxfam in Asia so that your own work aligns with the broader work in the region whilst reflecting your own context. This section helps to explain what Oxfam in Asia means by resilience, how it is prioritised, and introduces a Theory of Change to help you develop the goals for your own work.

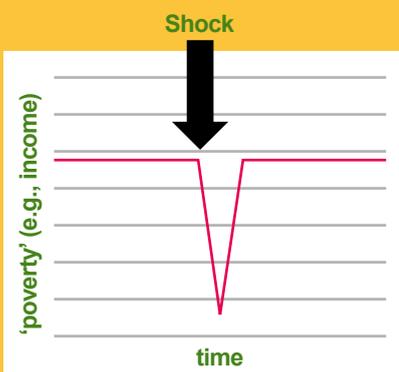
Climate change induced frequent and severe disasters have tested the life, sanity and livelihoods of residents of Magurakani Village of Atulia Union, close to the mangrove forest of Sundarban. Cyclone “Sidr” in 2007 and “Aila” in 2009 affected the South-West region adversely through saline intrusion forcing women to look at alternative livelihood such as crab fattening. The women saw crabs as a “friendly” way to produce food and get income for now through aquaculture until the environment recovers and become less saline. Photo: Janice Ian Manlutac/2015

## 2.1 What is resilience?

Oxfam defines resilience as *'the ability of women, men, and children to realise their rights and improve their well-being despite shocks, stresses, and uncertainty'*. Oxfam's definition of resilience is not only about coping or 'bouncing back', it is also about going beyond preparedness and risk reduction and ensuring that poor and marginalised people can realise their rights and improve their well-being despite shocks, stresses, and uncertainty. These essential elements – that people are both less affected by shocks, stresses and uncertainty and work their way out of poverty despite them – are illustrated in the picture below.

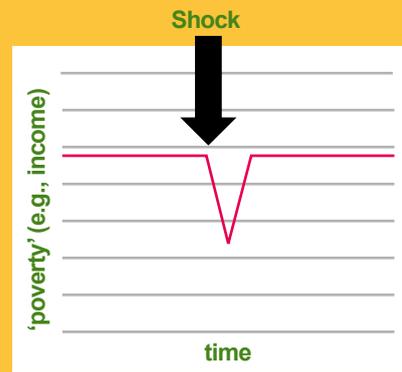
### LOW RESILIENCE:

the community is very affected by the shock (and may not even recover to their previous levels of poverty)



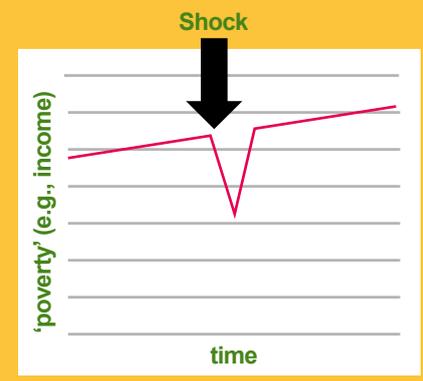
### INCREASED RESILIENCE:

the community is less affected by the shock (or bounces back more quickly) but is still left in poverty



### A RESILIENT COMMUNITY:

the community continues to move out of poverty even if a shock happens



### Definition Health Warning!

There is no definition of resilience that fits all contexts. Don't be too concerned about the precise definition: instead try to understand the core – poor people thriving despite shocks and uncertainty – and work with your colleagues to decide what to include, depending on the context you're working in.



### Is resilience just a new word for old work?

One common observation is that there doesn't seem to be anything new about resilience. Although there aren't any special new 'resilience interventions', resilience gives us the opportunity to approach existing problems more holistically, to think afresh how our work can prevent the repeated cycles of disasters affect millions of Asians, and to take a longer-term view in linking our humanitarian, development, and influencing projects together.

## 2.2 What are we trying to achieve?

Our vision for resilience in Asia is that *‘Women, men and children are less affected by shocks, stresses and uncertainty, thrive in the face of them and systemic changes mean that fewer people are exposed and vulnerable’*.

The key ideas here are that:

- This vision articulates three elements essential to resilience: our work needs to include elements which **reduce the impact of shocks and stresses** (increase the absorptive capacity of vulnerable people); it also should enable people to **adapt to change**; and it should include **transformative change** so that people are no longer exposed or vulnerable. Therefore in your resilience work, projects will need to take a long-term view.
- Disaster risk reduction remains an important approach within resilience, but we need to go beyond disaster risk reduction to assess and address people’s vulnerability to climate variation and climate change, and potentially to economic shocks, conflict and its aftermath, too. Therefore, we need to build programmes that respond to **‘stresses and uncertainty’ as well as ‘shocks’**.
- Resilience should be understood as a property of society. The social and economic linkages between citizens and their families, the linkages within and between communities, between people and businesses, and the responsibilities of governments to their citizens — all combine to give resilience. **Social empowerment is a route to resilience**, not something separate from it.
- **Resilience is gendered**: women and men are vulnerable in different ways and have different capacities to respond to shocks, stresses and uncertainty. Understanding these differences, and planning and implementing our work so that women and men can realise their human rights, is a necessary part of Oxfam’s approach to resilience.

## 2.3 Why is resilience important?

Asia is experiencing unprecedented change and is on a path of historical transformation. If the region’s economies continue to grow on their current trajectory, by 2050, Asia could account for more than half of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), trade and investment, and enjoy widespread affluence<sup>1</sup>. But although Asia’s economic growth has lifted millions of people out of poverty, deeply entrenched inequalities persist in the region and within countries. It is also home to many people who are very vulnerable to shocks, stresses and uncertainty:

- Asia is home to over two-thirds of the world’s poor, who remain vulnerable to disasters, climate change, economic shocks and conflict.
- Gender inequality and exclusion based on ethnicity or religion is deep-seated in many countries, putting people at risk.
- A number of countries in Asia are affected by or are recovering from political violence and civil war, including Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Afghanistan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, which is an added cause of risk.
- Asia contains many of the world’s most vulnerable countries to climate change. Changes

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<sup>1</sup> Asian Development Bank (2011). Asia 2050: Realizing the Asian Century.

include sea-level rise, saline intrusion into fresh water sources, changing seasonality and rainfall patterns, increasing temperatures, and increasing frequency and intensity of many types of extreme weather events. All of these changes undermine people's livelihoods and put their lives at increased risk.

- Asia consistently has the highest number of natural disasters and the highest number of disaster affected people of any region in the world. Moreover, the number of disasters has risen at an alarming rate over recent decades.
- Asia is urbanising at a faster rate than any other region. This rapid transformation also represents a concentration of risk even as it also presents opportunities.

All of these things mean that vulnerability in Asia is high and rising, and we need to work in ways that secure development gains in the face of the rising risks and uncertainties.



## TIPS AND TOOLS

### Some general resources on resilience:

- Oxfam's Asia Resilience Hub is coordinated by Janice Ian Manlutac ([JManlutac@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:JManlutac@oxfam.org.uk)) on behalf of all affiliates. The Hub coordinates strategy, learning, and programmes support.
- Globally knowledge management and learning for resilience is being coordinated by the Oxfam Resilience Knowledge Hub. There is also a global network of advisers that can contribute and support resilience programming.
- There are many definitions, frameworks and tools for resilience, including the ODI [Resilience Navigator](#), the OECD [Guidelines for Resilience Systems Analysis](#), and the ECHO [Resilience Markers](#).
- Resilience is increasingly mentioned and is included in international processes, including the Rio +20 agreement, '[The Future We Want](#)', and new global frameworks and agreements such as the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#), 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the recent Paris Climate Deal.

## 2.4 Our focus

### 2.4.1 Targeting

Under the *Asia's Resilience Strategy for 2015-2020*, interventions will particularly focus on the poorest 5-10%, who more often than not are also the most vulnerable and excluded socially due to gender, caste, or disability status. That being said, there are opportunities within all types of project to increase resilience, and the Strategy encourages people working with other portions of the population to think about how their resilience can be supported.

### 2.4.2 Thematic focus

In developing the Asia resilience strategy, the following areas of thematic focus were agreed. A country programme would not necessarily work on all of these areas, but would be expected to be proactive in at least one of the 'improving the quality of current programme' themes and one of the 'areas of innovation' themes.

Improving the quality of current programme thematic areas

- **Agriculture**—Increasing the *resilience of smallholder agriculture and enterprises to climate shocks and climate change*. Sustainable livelihoods and food security are essential to lifting people out of poverty, and increasing the ability of producers, small enterprises and the

markets they depend upon to withstand climate change and natural disasters is an important contribution to resilience. See Case Study 1.

- **Water** – Variable rainfall, drought and floods as well as access to water for human consumption and productive use are all drivers of vulnerability in Asia. We can build on our WASH expertise in emergencies, to encourage more sustainable management and equitable supply of water, including community-based management, social enterprise, and influencing governments and the private sector.

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## CASE STUDY 1:

### Climate change adaptation in smallholder agriculture—Thailand

Yasothon Province in north-east Thailand is part of the ‘Weeping Plain’, where dry conditions make it suitable for growing the world-famous fragrant jasmine rice. Smallholders, whose livelihoods depend on jasmine rice production, are threatened by the increasing frequency and severity of droughts.

The project provided education and training on climate change. Farmers developed their own water management systems supported by loans of up to \$880, to assist with construction of on-farm water management systems. They also saw diversification of crops as a key way of combatting increasing climate risk.

After harvest, all of the 57 participating households were more food-secure than they were at the outset of the programme. Rice production declined less than in farms that did not take part in the project. Farmers, especially women, planted fruits and vegetables and the produce not consumed by their households was sold at local markets, earning them around 500–1,500 baht (US\$ 15–40) a week. More than 90 different types of plant were grown across the project area.

[Jasmine Rice in the Weeping Plain: Adapting Rice Farming to Climate Change in Northeast Thailand. Oxfam Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Case Study](#)

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## Areas for innovation

- **Urban resilience:** This will mean working in innovative alliances and partnerships to find demand and supply-side solutions in policy and in practice. Examples might include using mobile phones for citizen-led hazard mapping, lobbying municipal government to provide the infrastructure and incentives so that local food supply chains make nutritious food accessible to the urban poor whilst benefiting farmers in the city’s hinterland, or supporting municipal governments to ensure that national building codes are implemented. See Case Study 2.

- **Resilience and natural resource management:** Healthy forests, soils, mangroves and other natural resources can reduce multiple risks, support coping, and are the basis for adapting to change for many poor people. Ensuring that vulnerable people have access to natural resources, and can restore and manage them sustainably, is therefore a critical aspect of resilience.

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## CASE STUDY 2: Urban resilience—Indonesia

This project is looking to create an innovative technological solution to enable easy access to trade and financial support in urban Jakarta and South Sulawesi. It aims to reach 1,500 households living in disaster prone areas and 30 merchants who will be able to offer mobile money transactions. It will enable poor urban communities to trade, access disaster relief, and receive cash transfers even if they do not have bank accounts.

Up to now, the uptake of mobile money transactions has been hampered by banks' request that traders should open bank accounts to operate the electronic data capture machines. The project will promote the adoption of electronic pre-paid solutions, particularly mobile and low cost money transactions between disaster-prone urban people and local merchants and government agencies.

Activities will target disaster relief cash distribution and social security payments. Training on electronic payments will improve the understanding of banks, telecommunication companies, government agencies and civil society organisations. Government agencies will then open CMS bank accounts, and arrange pre-paid e-money and e-cash transfers. The e-transfers are rapid, relatively robust to corruption and will strengthen communities' ability to respond and adapt to disasters and hardship with a potential for services beyond relief, e.g. provision of health subsidies, and savings services, etc.

**Gates Foundation Grand Challenge Concept Note, Oxfam, May 2015**

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## 2.5 Oxfam in Asia's Theory of Change for Resilience

We have developed an Oxfam Asia region Theory of Change for resilience to inform the development of programme vision, design and implementation (see diagram below). The Theory of Change can guide your thinking, help make sure there isn't anything you've missed, and help create a strong strategy. It can help you think about resilience in a holistic way whatever your starting point. The Theory of Change gives you a shared way of thinking, talking and learning about resilience; so a water engineer, a livelihoods project officer, a manager, and a grassroots activist can tackle resilience with a shared language.

However, there is no single approach to resilience building that will work everywhere. What you do must be based on the context as you understand it, and the information and analysis you have available. In practice it is unlikely that all elements would be included in a single project, so you should aim to use and adapt this diagram.

### What is a 'Theory of Change'?

A Theory of Change is a description of the types of changes you need to bring about to reach your goal – in this case increased resilience. Developing a Theory of Change is useful for thinking about how change happens, and is also increasingly demanded by donors.

# What Oxfam will do with partners

Build capacities of vulnerable people and of institutions

Generate evidence, learn and communicate

Convene and influence

Assess and address risk

Aim to achieve change at scale

Advance gender justice

Outcomes of our work in communities

Increased access to contingency resources and support

Assets, income and food security increased

Innovation fostered

Access to knowledge and information increased

Increased ability to exercise their rights

Natural resource base restored and maintained

## Our vision

Women, men and children are less affected by shocks, stresses and uncertainty, thrive in the face of them and systemic changes mean fewer people are exposed and vulnerable

Forward thinking and flexible planning

Reduce global GHG emissions

Responsiveness towards citizen's rights

Engage in a public discourse on resilience

# What Oxfam and allies encourage governments and businesses to do

The Theory of Change includes Oxfam's vision for resilience in Asia, that 'Women, men and children are less affected by shocks, stresses and uncertainty, thrive in the face of them, and systemic changes mean that fewer people are exposed and vulnerable'. The vision for a project or programme will usually be more specific, including the target communities, the main shocks, stresses and uncertainty they face, and the particular aspects of resilience that the project or programme will attempt to build. However, it should still contain the main ideas in the vision: reducing the impact of shocks and stresses; enabling people to adapt to change; including transformative change so that people are no longer exposed or vulnerable, based on social empowerment and with women's rights at its heart.

## TIPS AND TOOLS

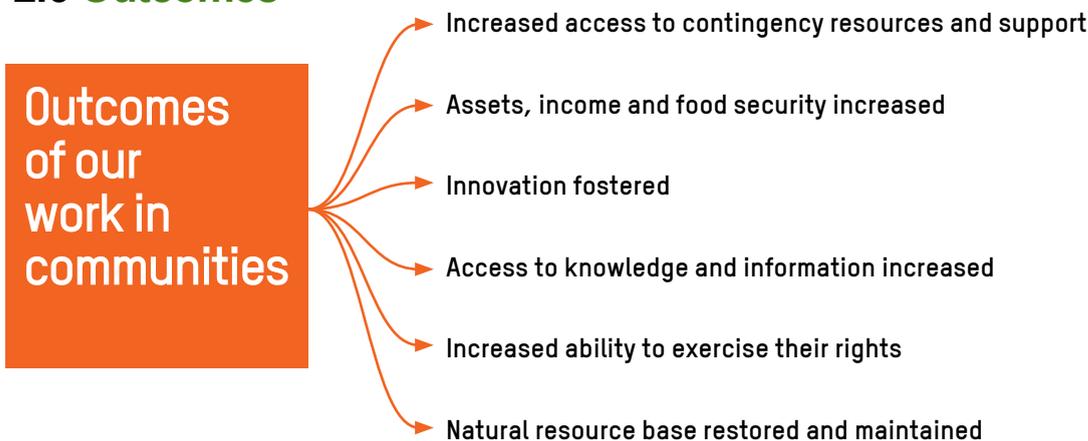


### Some of the things to think about when developing a vision for a project or programme:

- Include the key ideas of protecting vulnerable people from shocks and stresses, supporting people to adapt to change, and transformative change out of vulnerability.
- Make it specific to your context: try to include which people, where, how many, and what are the main barriers to greater resilience that they face.
- A good vision statement should be a consequence of the outcomes that the project activities create: if all of the outcomes are achieved, the vision will be fulfilled. If that isn't the case, your vision may be too ambitious or mismatched!
- It is important that communities themselves contribute to the vision and that it is based firmly on their reality. Use other sources of information that are available (experience of previous projects, reports, research, socio-economic data).
- Developing a vision, and designing a project or programme usually means a workshop. Try to include those who will be involved in delivery (including Oxfam and partner staff) and make sure that they can give genuine input into the process (e.g., by asking a range of people to run sessions).

Refer to global agreements such as '[The Future We Want](#)', and the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#).

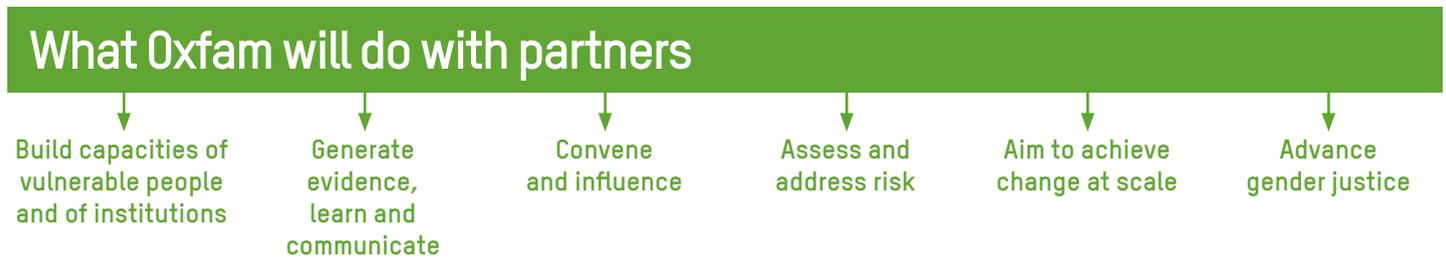
## 2.6 Outcomes



To achieve our vision, a number of changes have to happen in the lives of vulnerable women and men. These changes will happen as a result of the work we and our partners do in those communities, with government agencies, and with the private sector. These outcomes are written in the central block of the theory of change diagram. Several – and sometimes all – of these outcomes are likely to be a priority in any community where Oxfam and partners work. Each outcome is explained in turn:

- **Access to contingency resources and support** when shocks and stresses occur enables communities to 'bounce back'. This includes improving preparedness and ensuring timely and high quality humanitarian response.
- Economically empowered households are better able to deal with and adapt to most shocks and stresses, and so many projects will aim to increase the **assets, income and food security** of vulnerable people.
- Change is continuous, and doesn't reach a final point. For example, the climate will carry on changing for decades after greenhouse gas emissions have been brought under control. That means that people have to **develop and adopt innovations** if they are to increase their resilience. Similarly, the opportunities available are constantly growing (for example, mobile phone technologies), and we have a role in supporting communities to take up new opportunities.
- **Information** is another key resource for dealing with change and uncertainty. We have a role to play in linking vulnerable communities to sources of technical advice, by forging relationships with relevant institutions and by using communications media such as mobile phones or radio.
- The ability of vulnerable people to **exercise their rights** – to demand support in times of hardship, retain rights over the natural resources that they rely upon, and participate in decisions that affect them – underpins their resilience. The types of intervention here may include seeking changes in specific national policies relevant to resilience, and/or improved local implementation of existing policy, involving and empowering vulnerable people as agents of change.
- Many communities depend on natural resources for their livelihoods protection and food security. The more degraded these natural resources are, the less they will nourish and protect vulnerable people. **Restoring and managing the natural resource base**, and ensuring active community access and ownership, therefore provides the basis for resilience.

## 2.7 What Oxfam and partners will do



The second part of the Theory of Change concerns how Oxfam and partners will work to achieve the changes that we want to see in the lives of vulnerable people. These should be used as pointers to the general type of outputs you should consider, but you would have to turn them into specific deliverables in project proposal. These are:

- **building the capacity** of others,
- prioritising **gender justice**,
- designing and implementing our work to achieve **change at scale**,
- **convening and influencing**,
- generating **evidence, learning and communicating**, and
- basing projects on an **assessment of risk**.

## 2.8 Influencing government and business



The bottom bloc in the theory of change diagram is what Oxfam and allies will encourage others to do. This recognises that governments and business have a key role in supporting resilience, for example by implementing a social protection scheme, or a business reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Government and business can equally undermine resilience: damaging the natural environment or under-investment in high-risk areas. Oxfam and our allies therefore have three roles: (a) encouraging government and business to do the right things, (b) collaborating with them to develop and implement solutions, and (c) holding them to account for practices that undermine the resilience of poor people. Each of these roles are about leveraging a bigger impact for our work than can be achieved by working with communities alone.

The changes that we work for in government and business will ultimately increase the resilience of poor people. A project will usually have at least one of these elements, whereas a broader programme of work will cover several or all of them.

Key areas for Oxfam and allies to work with business and government include:

**Forward thinking and flexible planning:** Planning and managing processes and policy need to be increasingly flexible, forward-looking and able to adapt to the unexpected. Change will happen, therefore business and governments need to be prepared, and able to adapt.

**Action on global climate change:** Climate change threatens to undermine development and erode the resilience of millions across Asia. We must continue to ensure the success of international negotiations to reduce green house gas emissions, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Oxfam along with many others is attempting to influence this process to reach an effective, equitable agreement. Ensuring that work on resilience supports those efforts is therefore critical. That might involve working directly on global advocacy initiatives, supporting the national government on its role in the negotiations, or providing case studies to be used in campaigning activities.

**Responsiveness to citizens' rights:** As with all of Oxfam's work, we should take a rights based approach to resilience programming. In the context of resilience, this means supporting vulnerable communities to articulate and exercise their rights. It also means identifying opportunities to influence key policies that affect the resilience of vulnerable people (e.g., policy on social protection, disaster management or use rights to natural resources), and enabling their voices to be heard in debates (Case Study 3) and the development and implementation of solutions.

**Engaging in public discourse on resilience:** Risk is not distributed evenly in society, with poor people being more at risk from most types of shock and stress. A public discourse allows society to discuss the spread of risk, and challenge the increasing inequality that is widening the gap between the rich and the poor.

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### CASE STUDY 3:

#### Active Citizenship – influencing gender and land rights in Sri Lanka

The aim of the active citizenship programme in Sri Lanka was to increase understanding about land related issues affecting livelihoods, and to join communities and other partners together to advocate for land and gender rights.

Oxfam built capacity with partners through advocacy trainings and increasing understanding on land related issues. Partners were linked into the network, and discussions were held both individually and collectively. The result was increased understanding of land issues, with 93 applications made to the Land Reform commission, 43 of which were processed with minimum cost. 273 families, with support from one of the network partners in Addalachchenai, were able to get back their land, which had been encroached upon by the military.

The main elements of the project that made it successful were improved understanding of land issues including legal background, working with local networks and national organisations and systematic and regular follow up.

**Case Study for WIN Workshop: Active Citizenship, Sri Lanka (Oxfam Australia, 2015)**

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## 3 DESIGN

This section contains The Resilience Checklist, which is a practical tool to help you think through the design of resilience projects and programmes. It also identifies some cross-cutting issues that may need to be considered, with tips on how to work on resilience throughout.

Oxfam's Pink Phones project in Cambodia involves the distribution of mobile phones to women in rural communities. The phones enable them to gain access to vital farming information such as market prices for their crops and weather information that helps them plan when to harvest. The pink colour of the mobile phones, chosen by the women themselves, stands out clearly to communities as phones given to women leaders and therefore deters men from using them. Photo: Simon Rawles/2012

## 3.1 The Resilience Checklist

Resilience is complicated: there are so many causes of vulnerability and so many different approaches that can contribute to increasing resilience. The following checklists are a practical way of helping you manage some of this complexity. There is one main checklist – the Fundamentals Checklist – with an Additional Elements Checklist on the following page. The Fundamentals checklist is based on the Theory of Change, and therefore includes the changes that we want to see in the lives of vulnerable people (project or programme outcomes). The Fundamentals Checklist also includes a second type of requirement from the Theory of Change: how we have to work to achieve the outcomes.

The Additional Elements Checklist also includes two types of information. The first type is what we would encourage government and business to do to support the resilience of vulnerable people, or holding them to account for activities that threaten the resilience of vulnerable people. The final parts of the Additional Elements Checklist include internal changes to the way we work, such as such as humanitarian, development, and influencing staff working together.

## 3.2 What should I use the checklist for?

### 3.2.1 Project design

The Checklist should be used for project design. You can go through the checklist point by point to make sure that you're not forgetting anything as you are developing the project and writing a funding proposal. You may not end up including all of the changes in people's lives as outcomes, but you at least need to think why an element is not included; and you might end up realising that it should be included! This is likely to be most useful to project officers, partner staff and programme coordinators.

### 3.2.2 Programme design and implementation

The Additional Elements Checklist should be used with the Fundamentals Checklist rather than on its own. It is more likely to be useful when thinking about a whole programme—by which we mean either a number or inter-related projects or the whole country programme. This checklist includes elements that may or may not be part of any funded project, but that many people are likely to contribute towards. Used together, the two checklists should give a broad overview of the main ways that you should be seeking to contribute to building resilience across the whole programme. This could be useful to a programme coordinator, the country leadership team, or an advisor.

### 3.2.3 Keeping track of your approach

At the level of a country programme, or the Asia region as a whole, the checklist can be used as a monitoring tool to ask questions such as 'what aspects of resilience are we covering in our work?' or 'do we need to try some additional approaches?' Scoring the project, programme or overall regional work every year or so would also tell you if you were developing your understanding of, and approaches to, resilience. This could be useful to a programme coordinator in Oxfam or a partner, the country leadership team, or an advisor.



## What are inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts?

Different organisations have come up with their own ways of trying to write down roadmaps for how to bring about social change. These include log frames, logic models, and theories of change. They all contain similar elements though, which are:

*Inputs* are the resources that stakeholders contribute to the project (e.g., the project budget, and the time and expertise of others who are involved).

*Outputs* are the things you deliver (e.g., '50 urban disaster management groups formed' or 'a mobile phone app for crowd sourcing disaster risk created and downloaded onto 2,000 mobile phones').

*Outcomes* are the specific changes in peoples lives that we want to happen (e.g., increasing ability to exercise their rights, increasing food security).

*The vision* (also called impact statement, goals, or purpose) is the overall, long term change.

### 3.2.4 Using the checklist to create a logframe (or logic model)

At some stage, it is likely that you will have to create a logframe, logic model or theory of change as part of a funding proposal for the project you are designing. The exact details vary from donor to donor, but their purpose is similar in that they are supposed to make you think about how change happens and create a roadmap for making those changes. They mostly require a vision (sometimes called an impact statement or goal, see Section 2), outcomes, outputs and inputs.

The Fundamentals Checklist lists the outcomes from the Theory of Change. You may well be able to use the outcomes that are relevant to your context and vision directly to design a project or programme.

The Fundamentals Checklist also includes a second type of requirement: how we have to work to achieve the outcomes. These should be used as pointers to the general type of outputs you should consider, but you would have to turn them into specific deliverables in project proposal. For example, you could not simply copy the requirement 'evidence and learning' into a logframe as an output. Instead, you would have to decide how you are going to create evidence about the communities and the project (e.g., by including outputs like mid-term and final evaluations, a cross-learning visit, participation in a workshop, or making a video about the project).

In some projects there will be an additional step to get to some of the outcomes: what we would encourage government and business to do to support the resilience of vulnerable people, or holding them to account for activities that reduce resilience. These are 'indirect outcomes' in that changes in the practices of government and business will ultimately increase the resilience of poor people. These are in the Additional Elements Checklist, and you will need to make them specific for your particular project or programme. For example, the requirement 'Forward-thinking and Flexible Planning' might be changed into 'Supporting the development of Provincial Disaster Management Plans that take into account climate change'.

The checklists do not include any requirements for developing project inputs, for the simple reason that these are wholly dependent on the specific outputs you choose, and so are not specific to resilience.

## The Resilience Fundamentals Checklist

The changes we want to see in the lives of vulnerable people

-  **Element 1: Access to contingency resources and support.** Vulnerable people and those with the responsibility to support them need to be better prepared for when shocks occur. The project enhances the capacities of community members, partners and/or government agencies to understand, prepare for and respond to shocks, stresses and uncertainty.
-  **Element 2: Assets, income, and food security.** Economically empowered households are better able to deal with and adapt to most shocks and stresses. The project aims to increase income, assets, and food security, taking into account women's control over income and assets.
-  **Element 3: Fostering innovation.** Change is continuous, so the project should support people to develop and adopt innovations that help them adapt to climate change, uncertainty or political instability.
-  **Element 4: Access to knowledge and information.** Information is a key resource for dealing with change and uncertainty. The project links vulnerable communities to sources of technical advice (e.g., mobile phones, radio) and supports their capacity to use information.
-  **Element 5: Exercising rights.** Resilience is ultimately determined by how the most vulnerable are able to exercise their rights. The project aims to bring about changes in specific national policies relevant to resilience, and/or improved local implementation of existing policy, involving and empowering vulnerable people as agents of change.
-  **Element 6: The natural resource base.** Degraded ecosystems undermine the basis of resilience and prosperity for those people dependent on them. The project aims to maintain or enhance key natural resources whilst enhancing community access and control over them.

What Oxfam and partners will do

-  **Element 7: Assessing and addressing risk.** The project design is informed by analysis of shocks, stresses and uncertainty (including natural disasters as well as climate change, conflict, environmental degradation, etc) with the participation of vulnerable communities and with specific attention to women.
-  **Element 8: Evidence and learning.** There are dedicated resources within the project (people, money) to generate evidence, learn and communicate from the project.
-  **Element 9: Convening and influencing.** Oxfam and partners convene people, organisations and businesses that have the resources and influence to increase the resilience of vulnerable people (bring about systemic change).
-  **Element 10: Achieving change at scale.** The project has explicit and credible mechanisms that will allow the project—if successful—to go to scale.
-  **Element 11: Gender Justice.** All aspects of the work contain gender-specific plans and activities to support women's needs and rights and participation and leadership in decision making, based on a gendered analysis.
-  **Element 12: Work long term.** The work is long-term: a minimum of three years and ideally part of a longer programme, remaining responsive to communities' needs and rights as they evolve over time.

## Additional Elements



**Element 13: Action on global climate change.** Does the work contribute to Oxfam's influencing work on climate change, without which resilience will be inevitably undermined?



**Element 14: Forward thinking and flexible planning.** Climate change means that decision-makers have to be able to incorporate uncertainty and future shocks and stresses into their plans and budgets. Does the work build the capacity of decision makers to do this?



**Element 15: Public discourse on resilience.** Does the work help to engage in a public discourse on resilience?



**Element 16: Responsiveness to citizen's rights.** As with all of Oxfam's work, we should take a rights based approach to resilience programming. In the context of resilience, this means encouraging governments and business to support and not undermine the ability of vulnerable people to increase their resilience.



**Element 17: Humanitarian, influencing, and development staff collaborating.** Vulnerable people experience poverty in all its aspects, not the separate ones by which we organise our thinking. Creating synergies between staff with different skills and approaches in project and programme design and implementation is likely to lead to new and more joined up approaches to resilience.



**Element 18: Thematic focus.** The focus of our resilience work will be on improving the quality of existing programme areas of smallholder agriculture (including enterprise and value chains) and water; and two areas for innovation, namely urban resilience and resilience and natural resource management<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Whereas any project is likely to cover only one of these thematic areas, with a country programme we would normally expect a focus on one 'current' area (agriculture or water) and one area of innovation (urban or natural resource management).

## 3.3 'How to' suggestions on resilience

This section contains practical ideas, suggestions of how to work on each element of the Theory of Change (and Resilience Fundamentals Checklist), and links to useful information.



### TIPS AND TOOLS

## Tips and Tools on resilience outcomes

### 1. Access to contingency resources and support

- Design projects with humanitarian and long-term development staff working together.
- Designing projects in geographical areas where an emergency response is in the recovery phase or where an emergency is likely to happen in the near future, thinking how to make the work coherent across the board.
- Include Provincial and District Governments and support them to have fully funded contingency plans.
- Community-based preparedness is important in itself, and the process can be used to encourage better connections between communities and government departments.

### 2. Assets, income, and food security

- Think about the type of value chain vulnerable people's livelihoods depend on, think how the value chains might be vulnerable to conflict and climatic shocks, and talk with actors in the value chain about how they can be made more resilient. Some value chains (e.g., ones with highly perishable goods) may be inherently high risk and inappropriate for the communities which struggle to depend on them.
- Useful tools and resources on how to understand and intervene in agricultural markets for the benefit of vulnerable women can be found on the [Grow.Sell.Thrive](#) website.
- Consider mechanisms like savings schemes and micro-insurance which can help to spread the risk for women, smallholders, and small enterprises.

### 3. Innovation

- Consider speaking with your national meteorological service to understand the likely impacts of climate change on key livelihoods. Agricultural extension services will often understand what changes to crop varieties and cultivation techniques will help with unpredictable rains, floods and drought.
- There is a lot of potential for using mobile phones as a means of vulnerable people receiving information (e.g., farmers' forecasts) and also generating it (e.g., risk mapping). But don't forget that for many communities, older forms of communication, like radio, may still be more effective!
- GIS technology can be a useful way of supporting government, communities, and civil society to predict and plan for hazards (Oxfam has used this approach in Pakistan).

### 4. Information

- Discuss with communities about what sources of information they have access to that help secure their lives and livelihoods. Are these formal (e.g., risk warnings, weather forecasts, agricultural extension) or informal (e.g., news about conflict from neighbours)? How do they use the information? Do women have access to the information they need? Think about which types of information are missing that could help them deal with uncertainty and risk, and then discuss with the service provider how to bridge the gap.

## 5. Exercising rights

- Community organisation is key to resilience, whether it is community based disaster management groups or farmers' cooperatives. Make sure that women participate, and are involved in decision-making.
- Supporting existing grassroots organisations to increase their capacity and to coordinate better with each other can have a significant role in conflict-affected contexts (e.g., Within and Without the State).

## 6. Restoring the natural resource base

- Discuss with communities what natural resources they depend on and whether they are degraded now.
- Explore whether there are any markets for non-timber forest products (e.g., bamboo, rattan, or bulrush mats) that could support the communities' livelihoods whilst ensuring the sustainable management.
- Ownership and use rights often prevent communities accessing what they need to build resilient lives. Work with policy colleagues and allies to develop plans on agrarian reform or more local use rights.



## TIPS AND TOOLS

### Tips and Tools on what Oxfam and partners will do

#### 1. Assessment of risk

- Participatory Capacity and Vulnerability Assessment ([PCVA](#)) or similar tools are key ways of understanding the risks that communities face, their capacities in emergencies, and their needs. Make sure that assessment is gender disaggregated.

#### 2. Evidence, learning and communication

- Oxfam's [Policy on Program Evaluation](#) sets out the basic requirements for all evaluations
- Interesting case studies on evaluating resilience evaluation include '[Holding Back the Tide](#)' (see Case Study 12) and '[Information Flows Faster than Water](#): How livelihoods were saved in Pakistan's 2010 floods', Oxfam Research Report (2014).

#### 3. Convening and influencing

- The Oxfam International [National Influencing Guidelines](#) contains guidance on influencing.
- District and Provincial disaster plans are commonly underfunded, and are a good option for influencing work.

#### 4. Change at scale

- Think about who you design projects with: if you include the people who are able to implement things at scale in the design and implementation of a project (such as Provincial government departments or companies), it is much more likely to go to scale up if it succeeds.
- Cost is often the biggest obstacle to Oxfam's projects going to scale: can organising the project differently (e.g., through a social enterprise) or technology can reduce the cost per beneficiary?

#### 5. Gender Justice

- Oxfam in Asia has done more than anywhere else to put women's rights at the heart of its work, and resilience is no different. Use the resources you normally do, including advisors, the [Grow.Sell.Thrive](#)

website, and the [Minimum Standards for Gender in Emergencies](#).

## 6. Building the capacity of others

- There are likely to be a number of areas where capacity building can be an important approach: with Provincial and District departments to understand and respond to climate change, the capacity of civil society, and the capacity of vulnerable people to understand and respond to multiple hazards, to run enterprises, and claim their rights.



## TIPS AND TOOLS

### Tips and Tools on influencing government and business

#### 1. Forward thinking and flexible planning

- The capacity of Provincial and District departments to understand and respond to shocks and climate change is a major limitation in many countries. Discuss their capacity needs with them, and consider co-developing projects with them.
- A specific example is trans-boundary governance and management of freshwater, which is a challenge that is likely to require social innovations such as new forms of multi-state governance or layering the functions of sub regional nodes like ASEAN and SAARC.
- Some ideas about what can be achieved by working with authorities on forward thinking and flexible planning, and how to do it, can be found from the ACCRA programme. Although this programme is in Africa, some of the ideas and ways of working could be adapted for Asian contexts.

#### 2. Action on global climate change

- Oxfam in Asia has done important work on climate change in Bangladesh, the Philippines and elsewhere. Work with policy colleagues to think how your projects could be used for influencing on climate change (adaptation or mitigation).
- Consider how to support Oxfam's engagement with platforms such as ASEAN, SAARC and APAN on climate change. Work with allies (such as Climate Action Network) to amplify the voice of poor people.

#### 3. Responsiveness to citizens' rights

- Design projects based on the rights that communities need to exercise in order to become more resilient, and build their capacity to represent themselves. Use Oxfam's convening power to encourage good relationships between them and duty bearers.
- Work with advocacy colleagues to identify any underlying policies that could be fundamental to reducing resilience (e.g. ratifying a Standing Order on Disasters, or social protection) and how to work on it.

#### 4. Public discourse on resilience

- Work with policy and media colleagues to identify what aspects of resilience the publics in your country are responding to. Think how you could use projects to highlight these issues. Think how to incorporate communications activities into your plans.
- Remember to create a budget in the project for developing communications products and disseminating them. Consider using social media as a way of generating conversation. Use contacts in the media where possible.

## 3.4 Cross-cutting issues

Other important aspects of how Oxfam and partners work on resilience include ensuring that we have a long-term horizon. This is because resilience is about building people's capacities, and addressing the underlying causes of vulnerability as well as recovering from shocks. Similarly, collaborating across humanitarian, development, and influencing teams will make it more likely that resilience is addressed in a holistic way (see Case Study 4).

When you are designing your work on resilience, it is important to understand how resilience relates to other areas of work, beyond the thematic priorities already discussed.

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### CASE STUDY 4:

#### Linking up humanitarian and development thinking—Afghanistan

Afghanistan is recovering from decades of conflict and political turmoil. Livelihood instability affects the majority of Afghanistan's poor, rural households, exposing them to daily risks and limiting their prospects. Governmental provision of social protection is weak, and the majority of social protection efforts rest with NGOs.

To build resilience to this instability, the social protection programme used strategies from both humanitarian aid and development projects. Cash transfers are often used as a component of a humanitarian response, as a rapid solution to crisis. Cash transfers were made to 425 households, with direct supervision from Oxfam. Grain banks were set up with a longer-term view: following the logic that community control would be essential to ensuring a sustainable, village-based solution to critical food shortages.

In this project, Oxfam successfully targeted the most vulnerable populations in each district, as women were more likely to report being a beneficiary than men. Cash transfers were reported to be mainly used for buying food, for medical expenses or to pay off debt. These three uses all increase financial resilience—limiting the pressure of everyday or emergency costs. Grain banks were also used as a safety net; a female participant said, 'if we saw that our children are hungry and we didn't have anything, we would have to borrow to feed our children.' Enabling people to feed their families without going into debt or selling off assets increases their resilience in the future.

**Social Protection Study in Afghanistan. Final report. January 25, 2015. Sayara Research.**

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### 3.4.1 Resilience and other themes

[Oxfam's Strategic Plan](#) contains six external 'change goals' that describe the range of work done by Oxfam until 2019. Although resilience is not a stand-alone change goal, it was incorporated into other change goals, especially:

- Change Goal 3: Saving lives, now and in the future.
- Change Goal 4: Sustainable food.
- Change Goal 5: Fair sharing of natural resources.

These change goals emphasise the need to build the resilience of vulnerable people within our humanitarian and livelihoods work: addressing the root causes of vulnerability, improving risk reduction, increasing the resilience of smallholder producers, and engaging governments and businesses to promote policies that reduce risk.

### 3.4.2 Worldwide Influencing Network (WIN)

As described in the section on the Theory of Change, influencing is an important part of Oxfam’s approach to resilience. Following these guidelines will make projects and programmes aligned with WIN activities, because the Oxfam in Asia theory of change for resilience emphasises influencing, bringing about change at scale, and embedding influencing within programmes, which are shared goals of WIN. There may also be opportunities to link work on resilience to Oxfam’s global campaigns, GROW and Inequality:

- **GROW:** Climate change is a key and growing source of shocks through its impacts on food production and weather systems. Climate change also creates stresses and uncertainty. The resilience theory of change contains three elements that are directly related to the GROW campaign: ensuring that work on resilience supports global campaigning on climate change; responsiveness to citizens’ rights (which will include many issues relevant to GROW, such as the right to food, agrarian reform, etc); and engaging in public discourse on resilience.
- **Inequality** is a major driver of vulnerability. Wealth is not distributed equally, and neither is risk—risk being concentrated on the poorest. Many of the measures that reduce inequality can also directly increase resilience, such as social protection. As described in the theory of change, a public discourse allows society to discuss the spread of risk, and challenge the increasing inequality that is widening the gap between rich and poor.

### 3.4.3 Gender

As described above, gender justice is a central part of Oxfam’s approach to any area of programming. To give some examples of what this might mean in practice (and see Case Study 5):

- **Assess and address risk:** ensuring that the assessment of shocks, stresses and uncertainty (including natural disasters as well as climate change, conflict, environmental degradation, etc) is done with the participation of women, and that the specific needs of and opportunities for women that are identified in the assessment are for women are addressed in the project design.
- **Exercising rights:** from a gender perspective, this means involving and empowering vulnerable women as agents of change. In many contexts, an important part of this will be increasing the participation of women in decision-making positions and enhancing their leadership capacities.
- **Assets, income, and food security:** ensuring that livelihoods opportunities are appropriate for women, given their burden of work in the household, and enhancing women’s control on income and assets.
- **Access to contingency resources and support:** as women are more vulnerable to many types of disaster, and are often excluded from decision-making, the project may decide to have a specific focus on preparedness for women. Projects may also build the capacity of partners and governments to respond to emergencies according to the SPHERE Standards on gender, and ensure that women participate in the decision-making of any community-based DRR groups.

#### TIPS AND TOOLS

- Try forming a project design team that includes policy, long-term development, and humanitarian staff to identify opportunities to change policies that affect resilience, and thinking how programme work and influencing can support each other.
- Oxfam’s [National Influencing Guidelines](#) describes the basic approach of WIN, and includes some useful guidelines for influencing in different contexts.

#### TIPS AND TOOLS

- Include gender advisors in the project design team.
- Consider conducting a [Rapid Care Analysis](#) to help ensure that new livelihoods work doesn’t overwhelm women.
- Simple, practical changes can often make a big difference to women’s lives: making sure that flood shelters have segregated areas and facilities and are physically accessible to pregnant women, women’s savings groups, and organising women’s groups to demand their rights.

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## CASE STUDY 5:

### Putting women at the centre of community based disaster risk reduction—Bangladesh

The Ree-Call project sought to develop replicable models of resilient community through strengthening the livelihoods of communities and developing community leadership. It developed community-based organisations (CBOs), through which disaster risk reduction efforts were implemented.

Gender justice was addressed through promoting women's leadership, including adolescent girls, empowering elders to oppose child marriages in the community, and making sure that business hubs and enterprise initiatives are directed towards women. The project established seed and food banks, promoted insurance for flood damage, trainings on WASH and technology adoption, increased the strength of dwellings to resist hazards, and developed understanding of disaster risk. Women lead community activities to reduce disaster risk, therefore women's positions were strengthened not only in 'traditional' areas relating to women such as child marriage or gender based violence, but in all aspects of resilience that the communities addressed.

Ree-Call increased communities' ability to adapt to and withstand shocks. In Bangladesh flood risk is high and therefore the increased security of people's homes was an important outcome. Since the Ree-Call project there have been no child marriages in the communities. The project identified gender violence as a shock to which communities need to build resilience; and additionally gender equity in all activities increased the communities' resilience.

**Review of REE-CALL Project: In Quest of Promoting a Community Resilience Framework. Mid-term Evaluation Report, January 2015.**

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### 3.4.4 Violent Conflict

Many countries in the Asia region suffer from violent conflict or its aftermath, including Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Afghanistan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka. Violent conflict decreases people's resilience in many ways: creating stress, loss of livelihoods, breakdown of public service provision, displacement, and reduced opportunity for vulnerable people to exercise their rights.

There can be no 'one size fits all' rule for conflict-affected contexts. Two approaches that can be taken to incorporate an understanding of violent conflict into your programming are outlined below, to be interpreted and implemented based on your own judgement of the context:

- The initial assessment of multi-hazard risk can include assessment of a community's risk from violence. This might indicate that a deeper understanding of the risk from violent conflict is needed. It should indicate specific responses to minimise these risks, such as finding ways of supporting existing efforts to resolve disputes.
- In many contexts it will be important to assess whether any of the interventions you plan might inadvertently worsen conflict. This always requires an understanding of local power dynamics.

#### TIPS AND TOOLS

- Protecting civil society space and building civil society capacity can be effective approaches in fragile contexts: see '[Civil Society in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States](#)'.
- Tools for the 'do no harm' approach to working in conflict affected places can be found at [www.cdacollaborative.org/](http://www.cdacollaborative.org/)
- Useful resources on conflict transformation include Oxfam's Humanitarian Policy Note '[Conflict Transformation: Transforming cultures of violence to overcome injustice and poverty](#)' and Oxfam Novib's Policy Paper '[Achieving Conflict Transformation](#)'.



## 4 IMPLEMENTATION

Asia contains an enormous diversity of contexts, and what works in one place may not work in another. That means that simple instructions on implementing projects and programmes will not be very helpful. Instead, a number of case studies are provided which should provide helpful insights for whatever type of project you're working on. The section also considers what sort of partners and donors might be most appropriate for resilience.

### 4.1 Introduction

Implementing projects and programmes that seek to increase the resilience of vulnerable people should be implemented in line with [Oxfam's Programme Standards](#), in the same way as any other work.

### 4.2 Case studies on each of the resilience outcomes

The following short case studies illustrate some of the practical ways that people have delivered each of the outcomes in the theory of change. Using these case studies as inspiration, seeing how others have approached the same challenges you face, and noticing how they address the elements of the Theory of Change is a good first step for implementing your own projects. Key questions are included to guide your thoughts for each of the six outcomes.

Na Chantahun grilling fish from the Nam Ngua river at home in Sisa'ath village in the Laos province of Vientiane. Na, mother-of-six, has lived all her life in Sisa'ath Village. She is married to the village chief, Sonphet, and the couple have six children who are all studying in Vientiane. Over the past decade a paved road and electricity have improved life for the village's 50 families. But alongside this welcome progress climate change has brought unprecedented and unpredictable new weather patterns, disrupting harvests and lifestyles in the farming-dependent community. Photo: Sam Cunningham & Tessa Bunney/2015

**Table 1: Overview of case studies on resilience outcomes**

**Access to contingency resources and support**



**Case Study 6.** In Ben Tre, Vietnam, gender sensitive disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation plans were developed

**Case Study 7.** In Assam, India, community and government flood preparedness was increased

How can we best work with government departments to increase their response capacity? How do we work with community disaster groups and municipal government in urban settings?

**Assets, income, & food security**



**Case Study 8.** In Western Nepal, increasing farmers' access to drought resilient crop varieties and vegetable seeds increased their livelihood viability and food security

What options are there for women to increase their incomes and control over assets? Does climate change mean that a change in livelihoods is needed?

**Innovation**



**Case Study 9.** In Thailand, the project provided a loan mechanism to allow farmers to innovate to adapt to climate change

**Case Study 10.** In Indonesia, supporting SMEs to plan for disasters is an innovative approach to ensuring that local economies – and the people that rely upon them – are more resilient to disasters

How can you provide the security for people to innovate? What mechanisms can you use to help innovation spread?

**Access to information**



**Case Study 11.** In Nepal, access to information enabled people to engage in local government and village level disaster planning.

**Case Study 1 (in Section 2).** In Thailand, helping farmers to understand climate change allowed them to make different livelihoods decisions, and group leaders shared their knowledge with their peers

What sort of information is most needed by communities? What technologies and means of communication will be most suited to the context in which you are working?

**Exercising rights**



**Case Study 12.** In Bangladesh, work on gender supported older women to become local change makers and leaders

**Case Study 3 (in Section 2).** In Sri Lanka, an advocacy network created a better policy environment for eco friendly agriculture

How can communities be included in implementing the project? What are the main opportunities for influencing policies to increase the resilience of vulnerable people?

**Restoring & maintaining natural resources**



**Case Study 13.** In Pakistan, building an embankment transformed restored land and fishing lakes that had become unproductive.

What are the essential natural resources that support the communities' livelihood base? What natural resources offer protection?



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## **CASE STUDY 6:** **Increased Access to Contingency Resources and Support — Ben Tre, Vietnam**

Communities in the Red River Delta and the Mekong River Delta are extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The Mekong Delta in Vietnam is facing severe drought and salinity, the worst in several decades. This project set out to address four issues: 1) low adaptive capacity because of limited knowledge of climate change; 2) threats to livelihoods; 3) degrading natural resources and ecosystem services that are vulnerable to climate change; 4) existing climate change adaptation practice and policies do not reflect local challenges.

The strategy was to partner with a local NGO that had experience in community development, and to engage with communities, especially women and marginalised groups, in order that the project should be locally embedded and driven by the most vulnerable groups. Therefore, gender sensitive disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation plans were developed in a community-based process. Awareness raising materials were developed and disseminated. Local emergency response teams were provided with skills training, and an early warning communication system was developed. WASH learnings and messages on sanitation and hygiene were disseminated and participatory climate change action plans were developed and disseminated.

This project increased access to locally developed information—on climate adaptation, water issues and climate risks. Adaptation plans and a local early warning communication system increased the resilience of the community to climate-related shocks. These outcomes were even resilient in themselves, as they were developed locally, with input from women and the most vulnerable.

**Building resilience to disaster and climate risks of men and women in Ben Tre province, Vietnam (various project documents, 2013-14)**

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## **CASE STUDY 7:** **Increased Access to Contingency Resources and Support — Assam, India**

Assam is a highly disaster prone region, due to deforestation, erosion, highly variable monsoon regime and intense land use pressure. Assam has suffered major floods with increasing frequency, most recently in 2004, 2007, 2011 and 2012.

The disaster risk reduction programme in Assam, India, focused on improving community preparedness; increasing access to clean water and sanitation which is robust to flooding; improving food security and livelihoods including agricultural production and access to government schemes; and strong community networks to influence government policies. The project actively targets the most vulnerable sectors of society, including scheduled tribes, Muslims, women, flood affected communities, and socially excluded castes.

People in the target communities developed community action plans to influence government actors. Communities were trained in first aid and emergency response and raised infrastructure was built, including raised toilets, hand pumps and grain stores. Households were supported to grow vegetables in kitchen gardens, and also given and trained in growing flood tolerant, high yield seeds. Public health promotion increased the knowledge of important principles to reduce disease during flooding.

**Assam DRR Programme 2011-2014. Presentation to the National Humanitarian Hub, January 2014.**



### **CASE STUDY 8: Increased assets for resilience — Western Nepal**

Amongst the aims of this project was to enable adaptation to climate change in seven communities in Dadeldhura district, Western Nepal. The project focused mainly on increasing natural assets by providing high-yielding and drought tolerant varieties of cereal crops; introducing vegetable seeds to encourage crop diversification; and creating water conservation schemes.

The project improved access to contingency resources and support, and increased assets and food security that are under threat from climate change. Comparison between intervention communities and comparison groups that weren't part of the project showed that the project resulted in households having higher livelihood viability, improved dietary diversity, increased crop portfolio and significantly increased innovation. The project was effective in targeting female-headed households and people living in more remote areas.

**Climate Change Adaptation and Advocacy Project, Nepal 2012-13.**



### **CASE STUDY 9: Innovation for resilience — Thailand**

Yasothon Province in north-east Thailand is part of the 'Weeping Plain', where dry conditions make it suitable for growing the world-famous fragrant jasmine rice. Smallholders, whose livelihoods depend on jasmine rice production, are threatened by increasing frequency and severity of droughts.

In the same project described in earlier (Case Study 1), farmers innovated to adapt to climate change. They innovated by developing their own water management systems supported by loans of up to US\$880, and by diversifying their crops as a key way of combatting increasing climate risk.

For example, Manoon Phupa, a farmer who took part in the project, designed his own windmill pump from recycled billboard cut-outs to drain and irrigate water from a new well that Oxfam helped to build. The well, in addition to his existing pond, was used to irrigate his paddy fields during prolonged dry spells.

**Jasmine Rice in the Weeping Plain: Adapting Rice Farming to Climate Change in Northeast Thailand. Oxfam Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation Case Study (2009).**



## CASE STUDY 10: Building the resilience of Small and Medium Enterprises– Indonesia

There are an estimated 56.5 million small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Indonesia, which together are the biggest driver of national employment growth. The majority of these SMEs are “micro-enterprises”. Disasters seriously affect SMEs and the people that rely upon them, contributing to the impact of disasters and hampering recovery. For example, during the Yogyakarta earthquake in 2009, around 650,000 people lost their jobs, of which 90% were working for SMEs. After the earthquake, 20,000 SMEs became bankrupt, which disrupted access to goods and services.

Five SMEs in Agam District, Western Sumatra, have been trained on Business Continuity Plans (BCPs), through developing a disaster context analysis and identifying the impact on their business. Based on this, the SMEs were then able to develop a plan to reduce their vulnerability before, during and after a disaster.

The project strengthens the capacity of SMEs to prepare alternative business activities; creates temporary back-up strategies; builds collaboration and sharing between SMEs and local authorities; and identifies new investments and risk transfer strategies. The SMEs have developed strategies to secure supply and value chains before, during, and after disaster and are more confident in the sustainability of their business operations. One SME owner, Neti, who runs a fish cracker business, said ‘We have a plan if our businesses collapse once a disaster occurs. I started to save money in the bank and apply “kacio siaga” (disaster preparedness saving/insurance). If a disaster happens, we could claim the insurance and receive about AUD \$200. This is not enough. But, at least we will have capital for starting a new business’

**Case Study: Building small and medium enterprises’ resilience in Agam District, West Sumatra, Indonesia. Oxfam Australia, 2015.**



## CASE STUDY 11: Information for resilience — Western Nepal

This project focused on Western Nepal, aiming to reduce vulnerability and enhance disaster response capability in local communities. The project held trainings and prepared people for natural disasters, and achieved its goals partly by increasing innovation potential.

The resilience project showed impact on communities’ ability to respond to change, including creating an early-warning system; shifts in peoples’ attitudes to climate change and greater awareness of climate change; access to disaster preparedness information; participation in meetings and creation of disaster management plans. Community disaster management plans were developed from a participatory community vulnerability analysis. Lessons learned from this project were integrated into local development planning: a quarter of supported households became actively involved in local government or village level disaster management planning, compared to one percent of comparison households. A key practical innovation of the project was to use simple, low-cost technology innovations, such as bamboo boxes filled with stones as flood barriers, embankment construction, drain construction etc.

Evaluation showed that people involved in the project had greater awareness of climate change, positive attitudes toward new livelihood practices and increased innovation practices—for example, households started cultivating new crops, trying new tilling methods, or rearing livestock.

Resilience in Nepal: [‘Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and enhancing response capability.](#) Effectiveness Review Series 2013/14.



### **CASE STUDY 12:** **Increasing access to rights — Bangladesh**

The Ree-Call project aimed to develop community resilience and ability to withstand shocks including flooding, gender based violence, climate change and disasters (see also Case Study 5). One of the three main aims of the project was to develop community leadership, especially of women. Community based organisations (CBOs) led the implementation of the project, with participatory rural appraisal toward understanding disaster risk.

Access to rights was increased through empowering local community members as part of the CBO. Selected CBO members were inspired and supported to exercise power and assume responsibilities. Adolescent girls were trained as young leaders, and assumed positions of leadership that brought respect from the communities. Elder women were empowered to uphold young girls' rights by opposing child marriage in their communities, and persuading parents to wait before marrying their daughters.

CBOs showed leadership in addressing disaster risk, showing interest and activity in collecting information on weather, especially on extreme rainfall. After a Category-1 cyclone in 2009, communities advocated with local government to argue that they should repair all breaches in the local flood embankment. The communities taking part in Ree-Call were therefore able to exercise their rights, and had increased access to leadership and decision-making power.

**Review of REE-CALL Project: In Quest of Promoting a Community Resilience Framework. Mid-term Evaluation Report, January 2015.**



### **CASE STUDY 13:** **Restoring a coastal ecosystem — Badin, Pakistan**

Six years ago, villagers in the coastal area of Badin District, Sindh Province, Pakistan had almost no source of livelihood. Sea level rise, coastal erosion and storm surges had caused sea water to sweep across their land repeatedly. Almost all of the land was too saline to cultivate, and lakes and creeks that had once been a source of fish had become brackish and unproductive. Many families had left to find day labour elsewhere.

Oxfam's partner, a grassroots NGO called LHDP, convinced Oxfam that building an earthen embankment would protect the communities from coastal flooding. The embankment was constructed in 2012, is 2.2 km long and cost approximately US\$90,000.

Even LHDP didn't expect that a simple embankment would transform an ecosystem, but it has. The lakes and creeks contain freshwater again, and are full of fish and crabs. Rain and irrigation water have restored farmland. Fodder for cattle is easily available. Stands of Typha (bulrush) have grown up and are harvested for roofing material. Migratory birds are returning to the area for the first time in 20 years.

The incomes of fishing communities are rising rapidly. Farmers are now able to cultivate all of their land, are getting a good rice crop and seeing the value of their land increase nearly six fold. Families are returning from the towns to restart their traditional livelihoods. As one fisherman put it simply 'Before we were depressed. Now we are happy'.

**Holding back the Tide: Social Return on Investment of the Embankment in coastal Badin District, Pakistan, 2015.**

## 4.3 Partnerships and Funding for Resilience

At the moment, most work within the development and humanitarian sector on resilience is with the traditional types of partner and the same types of donor. The question is whether the way we are thinking about resilience creates opportunities to work with different partners and in different ways. For example, if SARC and ASEAN identify concrete areas of collaboration, based on their similar disaster profiles and climate change impacts, this might create more impact. If we and our traditional partners use the core competencies of technical agencies and the private sector, e.g. IBM and private consulting firms for data collection, collating, and analysis, and a combination of ICT and community based communication platforms as the delivery mechanism, we might have better risk analysis and in turn create better programmes.

More and more, we need to bring together a combination of actors who would not normally work together but whose core mandate and businesses intersect. Global and regional institutional and private sector partners, using their infrastructures and available technology, will work alongside a variety of local actors—people's organisations, farmer leaders - especially women - from high risk communities, small business owners and local government officials from urban and rural areas.

Another important angle to consider is funding. This is particularly important in Asia, where many countries are reaching 'middle income' status, which means that traditional donors are turning their attention away from the region. We should seek to influence these donors to shift their thinking and support resilience work.

Ultimately, the changing context will require us to be nimble and quick to respond with new business models. There are opportunities with new types of donors: for example, large service sector companies with a green agenda are likely to be attracted to financing (and/or partnering) work to restore ecosystems as an aid to resilience. One useful way of thinking about this is whether there are other organisations for whom resilience (or at least managing risk) are core to their business. Could these present new opportunities for delivering increased resilience?

Whether it is traditional or new donors, it is important to remember that resilience building is a long-term effort, and so multi-year funding is important. Oxfam should also actively seek out multi-country funding to support cross-programme learning.



### **Are we only talking about resilience because it's a donor buzzword?**

We are using the idea of resilience to try to improve the impact of our work as development and humanitarian practitioners, in response to the emerging challenges of the 21st Century. The fact that many donors are also interested in the idea means there may be more opportunities for us to put our ideas and new ways of working into practice.

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## CASE STUDY 14:

### Novel partnerships in disaster relief—Philippines

Cash transfers are an essential component of disaster relief aid. Providing funds directly to affected communities allows flexibility: households and individuals spend the money according to their most urgent needs. So it is essential to get funds to people quickly when a disaster occurs, and in order to transfer money fast, Oxfam developed a project in partnership with VISA, to provide 2,700 pre-paid visa cards to people who had been affected by Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

Between December 2014 and April 2015, Oxfam distributed the cards, through which \$188,023 USD was transferred to vulnerable communities. People used the cards at ATMs to withdraw cash, at remittance agencies and at shops that accept VISA. The project is an important step in advancing VISA's mission, "to provide financial access to everyone—everywhere", which will only become a reality when serving people at the bottom of the economic pyramid, as well as at the top. First time pre-paid card users reported 100% success with their transactions.

The scheme was innovative in bringing together a leading humanitarian and development NGO with a private sector financial services provider. In 45% of cases people kept \$15–20 balance as a 'disaster emergency fund', thus securing resilience in the future. For Oxfam, it reduced our cost per transaction compared with normal hard cash transfer by as much as 60%. That is money that can be used to target more beneficiaries!

**Electronic Cash Transfer Program: Innovative Solution for Disaster Recovery Disbursement. Presentation to UN Humanitarian Country Team, March 19, 2015.**

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## CASE STUDY 15:

### The need for business continuity presents an opportunity

A well-known high-street supermarket in the UK recently commissioned research to understand the risks associated with all of the hundreds of raw materials that go into its food. One of the main motivations for the supermarket was that if key products became unavailable, or too expensive, then they would be likely to see shoppers use other supermarkets instead. Managing risk in their supply chains is therefore fundamental to their success as a business.

The research identified some specific products that came only from a few islands in the world, and that were highly vulnerable to climate change and extreme weather events. The company is currently considering whether to change its purchasing strategy for these ingredients, moving away from buying on the international trading markets towards a model where they invest directly in supporting the smallholder producers to adapt to climate change. They think that this might be the best way of securing supply of these ingredients, and that it will have greater benefits to the smallholder producers as well. This sort of example potentially provides a convergence between the business needs of the supermarket and the skills and mission of Oxfam, and hence could lead to a partnership.

**(This is a real example, but the name of the company and some other details have been removed to maintain commercial confidentiality).**



## 5 MEASURING RESILIENCE

We need to know whether our work is having a positive impact on the communities we work with, for our own curiosity and learning, to improve our impact, and to be accountable to stakeholders. This section introduces the indicators that are appropriate to measuring resilience, which can be used in project planning, monitoring and evaluation.

At the Women Market in Southern Bangladesh, women entrepreneurs can give their feedback to each other and to local people's organisation helping them with product development using mobile phones and regular field visits through a monitoring mechanism agreed with multi-stakeholders under the Resilience through Economic Empowerment, Climate Adaptation and Leadership & Learning (REE-CALL) Programme. Photo: Janice Ian Manlutac/2014



## Is it possible to measure resilience?

Measuring resilience is difficult, partly because we are trying to measure something that hasn't happened yet, in the sense that we can't be sure that people are more resilient until a shock occurs. The approach we are using in Asia requires us to think about what characteristics are associated with resilience – food security, ability to exercise rights, a healthy natural resource base, and so on – which are the outcomes that we are seeking to achieve. That is why a strong focus of this section is on what indicators we can use to measure resilience outcomes.

### 5.1 Indicators for resilience

There is as yet no practical and standard way of measuring resilience either within Oxfam or externally. Oxfam in Asia is going to measure resilience by focusing on the range of outcomes that we think will result in resilience, as described in the Theory of Change.

Potential indicators are given for each outcome in Table 1. These indicators are what you would measure to show whether there had been change in the lives of the target communities. For each outcome that your project or programme is trying to achieve, you should choose the indicators that best match your specific work, and of course, feel free to add your own.

#### Some examples may help:

- If you are trying to achieve the resilience outcome of increased access to contingency resources and support, you may be doing this through forming community-based disaster management groups, holding capacity building exercises with the local government (outputs). The relevant indicators for this outcome might therefore be participation in community disaster management groups, and perceptions of community members about local government emergency support. You might measure changes in these indicators by counting the number of people in community disaster management groups before and after, and perhaps by government capacity assessments.
- If you are trying to achieve the resilience outcome of fostering innovation, you may be doing this through raising awareness on climate change, and helping farmers change their agricultural practices and the crops they grow as a result of their new understanding of climate change. The relevant indicators would therefore include awareness of climate change, and the presence of innovative farming practices.

Most donors require you to describe how you are going to monitor the project as part of the funding proposal, so these indicators can be a useful starting place for that. Some donors ask for 'targets' and 'means of verification'. A target is simply how much change in the indicator you are expecting. For example, you might change the indicator 'income' into the target 'at least half of the households in the communities show a 30% increase in income within 3 years'. Means of verification is description of how you would measure it, which in this case might be 'baseline survey by individual household interviews in year 1, interviews in year 3'.

**Table 2. Measuring resilience: resilience outcomes and a menu of potential indicators for projects and/or programmes**

| <b>Outcome</b>   | <b>Potential indicators<sup>3</sup></b>   |
|--|---|
| <b>Increased access to contingency resources and support</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in community groups</li> <li>Perceptions of local government emergency support</li> <li>Access to remittances or formal earnings</li> <li>Access to safe places for all members of the community</li> <li>Access to emergency stocks</li> </ul>            |
| <b>Assets, income, and food security increased</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women's control over assets and income</li> <li>Asset ownership</li> <li>Savings</li> <li>Income</li> <li>Food Security</li> <li>Number of weeks with less than normal number of meals</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Innovation fostered</b>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attitudes towards changing practices</li> <li>Awareness of climate change</li> <li>Climate predictions used</li> <li>Adoption of innovative livelihoods practices</li> <li>Number of social connections</li> <li>Access to credit</li> </ul>                             |
| <b>Access to knowledge and information increased</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of weather forecasts in livelihoods decisions</li> <li>Access to technical livelihoods support</li> <li>Access to disaster early warning information</li> <li>Awareness of community disaster risk reduction plans</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Increased ability to exercise their rights</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of women in decision-making roles</li> <li>Participation in community groups</li> <li>Perceived ability to influence local authorities</li> <li>Formal involvement of civil society in policy processes</li> <li>Change in [specified] national policy</li> </ul> |
| <b>Natural resource base restored and maintained</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soil quality</li> <li>Access to clean water</li> <li>Access to irrigation</li> <li>Area of habitat restored</li> <li>Perceived change in forest quality</li> <li>Access to communal natural resources</li> </ul>   |

<sup>3</sup> The indicators used are partly based on the Effectiveness Review methodology for Resilience, adapted to reflect the more holistic and dynamic approach to resilience proposed for Asia. Effectiveness Reviews were developed by OGB but are increasingly being used by other affiliates.

## 5.2 Case studies of measuring resilience

The following case studies are three examples of how resilience outcomes have been measured in Nepal and Pakistan.

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### CASE STUDY 16:

#### Measuring resilience outcomes—Nepal

In Western Nepal, vulnerability to flooding is high, and Oxfam conducted a thorough evaluation of the programme to reduce disaster risk, and to enhance response capability. Evaluation of resilience projects is essential to creating a flexible project, responsive to the needs of local people; to ensure institutional learning; and to improve future project design.

The project aimed to reduce vulnerability of communities by holding trainings, preparing people for natural disasters, creating a flood early warning system, and increasing access to resources and external support. Evaluation showed that there was a positive effect of the project on livelihood viability, innovation potential, access to contingency resources and support, and social and institutional capacity. However, there was no clear impact of the project on integrity of the natural and built environment.

**Resilience in Nepal: [‘Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and enhancing response capability’](#). Effectiveness Review Series 2013/14.**

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### CASE STUDY 17:

#### Measuring effectiveness—Pakistan

As part of Oxfam GB’s Global Performance Framework, Pakistan’s Community-based Disaster Risk Management and Livelihoods Programme was selected for rigorous effectiveness assessment. The project focused on reducing vulnerability and improving livelihood resilience in times of extreme flooding.

To assess the effectiveness of the programme on reducing risk and promoting resilience, surveys were developed and administered to representative samples of 341 households in 57 villages taking part in the project, and to 400 other households residing in 63 similar villages, in adjacent areas, not taking part in the project. Propensity score matching and multivariate regression were used in the statistical analysis to reduce bias in the comparisons made between the two groups.

Findings showed that supported households scored higher on resilience characteristics, and particularly it was significant that supported households owned fewer assets than comparison households, but were better off than comparison households at the time of assessment. However, there was no evidence that the programme positively affected livelihood diversification. The identification of both successful outcomes and failure to increase resilience is a powerful tool for learning, enabling Oxfam and partners to adapt, respond and learn.

**Effectiveness Review: [Community-based Disaster Risk Management and Livelihoods Programme, Pakistan](#). October 2012.**

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## CASE STUDY 18:

### Social Return on Investment of the Badin Embankment

As described in Case Study 12, Oxfam's partner LHDP constructed an embankment in coastal Badin District in 2012. The purpose of the embankment was to prevent high tides and storm surges flooding the land and villages of very poor communities.

LHDP commissioned an evaluation of the project in 2015. LHDP and Oxfam Novib wanted the evaluation report to be used to influence the way that government authorities use climate change adaptation funds, by demonstrating in financial terms how effective the intervention was. With this in mind, rather than commission a standard evaluation, they wanted to understand what benefits the embankment had created relative to the cost of building the embankment.

The methodology used, Social Return on Investment (SROI), is a holistic approach to evaluation that allows the measurement of social, environmental and economic value that a project (or organisation) has created. It is also very good way of capturing the intended and the unintended consequences of projects, because it focuses on identifying the changes that are important to stakeholders rather than those that were planned when the project was designed.

This is important, because all projects have unintended consequences, both good and bad. The evaluation showed that preventing sea water from flooding the land had consequences on many more villages than expected, and brought about increased food security, revived farming and fishing livelihoods, boosted land prices, increased women's income and self-confidence, and allowed the communities to look to the future with renewed hope.

[Holding back the Tide: SROI of the Embankment in coastal Badin District, Pakistan, 2015.](#)

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## 5.3 Some Oxfam measuring requirements

As is Oxfam's practice, data that is collected should be gender disaggregated, and in addition some indicators specific to women are included.

Measuring change – whether a project has been effective or not – is of limited value unless that information is used to inform decisions going forward. Each affiliate has its own systems for encouraging evidence-based decision making during project design and implementation, and these should be followed for projects where the outcomes include resilience.

Oxfam's Policy on Program Evaluation sets out the basic should be applied to all relevant projects.



## 6 LEARNING

Learning is critical to all development and humanitarian work. This section describes the need to resource and plan learning properly within resilience projects and wider programmes of work. It also introduces a 'feedback loop' for resilience practitioners.

It is a water world many in other parts of Asia. For those impacted by sea level rise, it is ironic that a certain village is surrounded by water which they cannot drink and they can barely use for any type of household consumption due to high water salinity. This has driven communities to have their own local research and development, continuing to test new ways of purifying water and using saline water for alternative livelihoods such as crab fattening and shrimp farming. It is a work in progress as there are environmental considerations which need constant monitoring and learning. Photo: Janice Ian Manlutac/2014

## 6.1 Plan and Resource Learning

There is no simple answer of 'how to do resilience'. That means that we have to place a strong emphasis on learning, so that we are constantly improving our work.

On a basic level, learning means using evidence to do something differently. This applies to a project you are delivering, where you can regularly challenge your programme logic and if necessary, change course. This is the basis for adapting your programme as it progresses, as you learn more about the project, and as the context changes. It equally applies to 'next time round' – the next programme, strategy, or project you are involved in.

Some of the evidence that we can use for learning comes from measuring resilience (Section 5), but we can and should use a much broader range of evidence than this: the experience of designing and delivering projects is also important evidence, and so is research, discussion, innovation, cross-project visits, and so on.

The kinds of process that can be used to convert this evidence into learning include creating occasions to reflect, discuss, express doubts, share insights and acknowledge failures and successes. Ideally, these are part of the culture of your team, and they can be formalised into periodic learning meetings or workshops, where experience and evidence is discussed and agreements made about how to do things differently.

All of these activities around learning require resources. That means planning the ways you are going to learn, making sure that time is kept for learning, and that there is a budget for learning. This should be done at a project level, and also at a broader programme, country and regional level. In line with Oxfam International agreements, a minimum of 5% of the value of each project should be budgeted for Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning. However, learning from the wider development sector is that high-quality MEL often requires 10-13% of project value.

## 6.2 Feedback loop

This document is a live document that can benefit from feedback, can be added to, have more case studies, more insights and experience from practitioners, and can include more resources that are useful. More than anything, discussing your work with fellow practitioners will foster learning and greater programme quality.

To encourage this feedback and discussion, the Asia Resilience Hub is hosting an email discussion loop. On the first year, there is also a roll-out accompanied mechanism plan. This means country teams using the guide can request dedicated support either via remote (skype or teleconference) or face-to-face for a total of four hours spread in two weeks time. So please send any ideas, comments or thoughts about resilience programming to [Asia\\_Resilience\\_Hub@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:Asia_Resilience_Hub@oxfam.org.uk). You may also find additional resources at the Asian Block Sumus Page. Over to you!



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