

A guide developed by practitioners for practitioners



WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THE GUIDE

This practical guide complements [The Future is a Choice. Oxfam's Framework and Guidance for Resilient Development](#). It is intended for Oxfam staff working on developing and implementing long- term development programmes and/or humanitarian response, as well as programmes to support resilient development. It follows the programme cycle and draws on the voices and experiences from our country work on resilience. It is not a comprehensive “how to” guide, as work on resilience is context specific and is a lively learning process. Rather, we hope the guide will provide inspiration and useful ideas, experiences and tools, as well as practical peer-to-peer tips.

The guide aims to help Oxfam put our Framework for Resilient Development into practice, by following the phases of the programme cycle.

It is divided into six sections:

- 1 Identification and assessment phase
- 2 Design and planning phase
- 3 Implementation phase
- 4 Evaluation and exit or transition phase
- 5 Integrating Gender Justice in resilience programming
- 6 MEAL, Iterative learning and adaptive management

Each section contains the following categories:



TIPS



TESTIMONIES



COUNTRY
EXPERIENCE



TOOLS

How was the guide developed?

The guide was developed by drawing from our country programmes in Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Uganda and Vanuatu. We used Oxfam's Resilient Development Framework as an analytical lens and to organise the learning from the different country programs. As the Framework had only been recently disseminated, none of the programmes had used it when they were designed. This guide was developed by Oxfam teams and partners from Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Uganda and Vanuatu, with the support of Oxfam's Resilience Knowledge Hub and Teresa Cavero (independent consultant). Material was gathered from 4 country and 1 cross-country learning workshops between August and December 2016. Funds were provided by Oxfam Knowledge Fund and UK Aid from the Department for International Development (DFID).

Who is this Guide For?

This guide is for practitioners. We collected the experiences of field practitioners, the tools they are finding useful, and the lessons they are learning as they implement their work in the hope that others will find it useful, get inspired and look to these colleagues as resources.

If you would like further information about the guide and/or other available resources, please contact us at: resiliencekh@oxfam.org

Implementing a resilience approach needs new ways of working and an enabling environment. Practitioners need the support of senior managers, and we have therefore developed a set of recommendations for line managers and senior managers.

Senior managers are responsible for creating and supporting the ways of working that a resilience approach requires. There is no blueprint for resilience work. Yet there is increasing agreement that taking a resilience approach requires profound changes in ways of working, both internally and with others.

Some of these changes include:

- **Commitment to long-term programming:** In general, implementing a resilience approach requires time. Usual programme and project cycles are short (3 years on average, with 6 to 12 months for humanitarian interventions, and 2 years for influencing strategies). Internal plans should look to achieve resilience results in the longer term (7 to 10 years).
- **Commitment to gender justice:** Gender justice needs to be central to all outcome areas in any resilience work, and all aspects of the programme / project should be seen specifically through a gender lens. Delivering on gender justice requires the skills and commitment of Oxfam staff at different levels. To make **gender central throughout the programme implementation**, all gender aspects need to be reflected in team composition, job descriptions, budgets, etc.
- **Capacity development:** Project staff – including project management and field teams – should be given support to develop and update their capacity for resilience and gender justice programming. All programme staff should be familiar with Oxfam's approach to gender justice and gender training should be incorporated into each new employee's induction and refreshed periodically.
- **Learning enabling environment:** Work on resilience requires a strong focus on learning and innovation. Teams, organisational structures, work spaces, tools and methodologies and relationships with others should be aimed at optimising learning to inform resilience programming.



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In a more general sense, the **resilience framework is a good tool for articulating Oxfam's One Programme Approach**. Resilience work around the three capacities is very much about coordinating and boosting synergies between Oxfam's different working areas (development, humanitarian and influencing) and sectors. Internal structures, planning cycles and ways of working should promote this coordination. This would help overcome the current feeling (as evidenced during the development of this guide) that programmes are not yet working to enhance **transformative capacity**.

Last but not least, the implementation of **Oxfam 2020** is an opportunity to transform Oxfam and we should take advantage of the process to also strengthen the local capacities of partners and networks.

1 IDENTIFICATION WITH A RESILIENCE LENS



"We spend a lot of time on context analysis to be able to run a programme that is inclusive. This allows us to see where we are going, and that we are aligned with what the communities want and require. We carry out a context analysis to understand the dynamics within communities. It helps us make sure we are doing the right thing – by carefully understanding the situation, and identifying relevant interventions. It is important for programme quality: if we don't do this well, we will waste efforts and resources."

Jackson Muhindo, Resilience Programme Officer, Oxfam in Uganda

Understanding the context is a central part of the identification phase. To achieve resilient outcomes, both Oxfam and our partners need to pay special attention to risks and vulnerabilities as well as existing capacities and opportunities when developing and implementing projects and programmes. We also need to recognise that we can't know everything: resilience is also about identifying and acting in contexts of uncertainty and unpredictability.

Oxfam and our partners work with a variety of actors, tools and processes to develop a rich understanding of the context of a particular project or intervention.

What are we looking for?

We are looking to understand existing and potential risks to our target communities, the vulnerabilities in such communities, existing capacities and opportunities for change.

As there are a range of processes and tools we can use, we need to be clear about what pieces of the big picture we need to analyse, in what depth and level of detail, and how we want to do it.

Some tools are more participatory in nature and can help build a shared and inclusive vision and plan of action for a group of stakeholders. Other tools are more focused on extracting quantitative information. Some aim to analyse one specific level (e.g. household economy analysis), while others look at multiple levels (e.g. vulnerability and risk assessment).

We also need to understand the different ways in which our target communities are vulnerable to risks. The differentiated vulnerabilities of specific groups – women, men, children, the elderly, people with disabilities – require specific attention, processes and tools.

And we also need to be aware of the wider policy context (such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, or the UNFCCC agreements), and the implications and opportunities it provides for the issues we work on. Considering existing opportunities for change is essential.

All this requires finding the right balance between an approach that is neither too narrow nor too broad.

Some key questions for the context analysis include:

1. RISKS

What **short and long term RISKS** (consider multiple dimensions: economic, environmental, social, geopolitical, etc.) can you identify in your context? What are the **causes** of these risks? What are the **impacts** of these risks at individual, household, community and systems levels?



“The experience of the ‘Recovery of Populations affected by Flooding’ project (REPI) has shown there is a need to consider all the risks: the occurrence of a drought during a project, and the lack of anticipation of this type of shock by the project, led Oxfam to reconsider its targeting to include households affected by drought and not only by flooding.”

Hadaogo Yougbare, Programme Officer BRACED, Oxfam in Burkina Faso



TIP: Type and frequency of shocks change: consider including contingency funds for shocks.

2. VULNERABILITIES and EXPOSURE

Who is vulnerable to what risks, and in what specific **ways**? How are risks **distributed** among different individuals and groups? How do those vulnerabilities **interact**?



“Classifying vulnerabilities (using IPC, HEA...) helps to target people and areas for resilience programming, and can serve as a baseline to monitor changes in their vulnerability or poverty situations, from one category of vulnerability to another in the course of our interventions.”

William Mafwalal, Livelihood Programme and Private Sector Manager, Oxfam in Nigeria



“In Burkina Faso, we are striving to build a consensus on harmonising data collection tools and approaches between actors so we get the same understanding and interpretation of where vulnerabilities lie in a given context.”

Konate Papa Sosthène, Resilience and Humanitarian Programme Manager, Oxfam in Burkina Faso

3. CAPACITIES

What are the **existing capacities** of women and men, communities and institutions (e.g. both public and private sectors and civil society)? What are the **processes** in place that enhance these capacities? What are the existing **coping strategies**?

This exercise is especially relevant, since the resilient development process should not only identify and acknowledge existing capacities at different levels, but also protect and enhance those capacities. The analysis will also facilitate identification of **opportunities** for further developing these capacities.



“Vulnerable people are not victims but survivors with capacities that must be taken into account”

Joselyn Bigirwa, ACCRA National Project Coordinator, Uganda



TIP: Acknowledge, preserve and enhance existing capacities and potential within the community and across relevant stakeholders interacting with the community.

4. POWER and GENDER

Gender justice is an essential element of all resilience assessments. Some key questions include: What do we know about **gender and power dynamics** in this particular context? What are the **policy frameworks** and to what extent do they protect and empower vulnerable groups and women? Who are the main **decision-makers and institutions** and is there **political space** for influencing? Do vulnerable groups and communities have access to policy-making processes?

Gender analysis should be an essential, [standard element of vulnerability assessments](#).



“Gender inequality and gender-based violence are clear sources of vulnerability for women. After tropical cyclone Pam hit, Oxfam conducted a post-cyclone rapid gender analysis to inform humanitarian response and recovery strategies.”

Amos Kalo, Resilience Programme Manager, Oxfam in Vanuatu



TIP: Consider different categories of exclusion in addition to gender differentiation in your context analysis.

5. STRUCTURAL DRIVERS

What is **driving** inequality, vulnerability and poverty? Do you understand how **inequality is increasing vulnerability** in your context? How are resources and risks **distributed**?

This is about understanding the structural drivers and the forces shaping inequality and poverty, and how they relate to risks and vulnerability (see key questions on risks and vulnerabilities and exposure above).



“The challenge is to meet short-term needs while having a long-term vision of local development to sustainably address structural problems and deficits. A combination of relief response, rehabilitation and long-term development with a strong advocacy component is needed.”

Thomas d'Aquin Yameogo, Humanitarian Response Officer, Burkina Faso

6. ACTORS

Who are the **relevant actors** with capacity to assess, affect or change the drivers, risks, vulnerabilities and capacities in this context? What are the **relationships** and **power dynamics** among them? What are the **gender** dimensions of these power dynamics?



“There is a protocol to follow. If you want to have full acceptance at all levels, you must not neglect this protocol. It is all about cultural nuance: for example, in Nigeria, at local level traditional leaders hold power. It doesn’t matter if you already have approval from the official chairman in the Local Government Authority: without the sultan’s buy-in, you will not succeed in your project. So understanding the power share of the traditional and formal authorities is essential.”

Eyong Sunday, Programme Officer WASH/Private Sector Engagement, Oxfam in Nigeria



“Identify State and non-State actors in a specific thematic area of your work, for example crisis prevention and management, and undertake a diagnosis of these actors: their leadership role and capacities in crisis response. This will allow you to liaise and relate with them more effectively and provide adequate targeted efforts to strengthen their role and build their capacities.”

Konate Papa Sosthène, Resilience and Humanitarian Programme Manager, Oxfam in Burkina Faso

7. OPPORTUNITIES

What are the **development trends** and how do they relate to the resilience challenges (humanitarian, justice and adaptive challenges)? What are the **opportunities for change**? What opportunities are **emerging** for building resilience? Consider here the **institutional context** and the wider policy context: what opportunities arise from the political (local, national, regional and global) and development (donor) agendas? What opportunities derive from **learning and innovation**?

A context analysis should incorporate an understanding of ‘system effects’ and link the local to the global, as well as looking at how the different factors influence each other.

Process of context analysis

Working towards resilient development requires taking the following into consideration:

- The **complexity of systems** and the different interactions between them. Given this complexity, no single actor has sufficient knowledge and expertise to work alone. Hence, it is key to bring together the knowledge, resources and expertise of diverse actors from different sectors.
- Because the context is constantly changing, there is a **component of uncertainty** that needs to be incorporated in the context analysis (and thus the need to apply flexibility in planning and implementation).

The context analysis process must be characterized by:

Participation and multi-stakeholders

Key to the process of context analysis with a resilience lens is getting others to participate: convene, connect and support multiple stakeholders to participate in processes of analysis. Where appropriate and possible, bring together different levels of governance with communities and other actors such as the private sector and research institutions. The context analysis should promote and enable the participation of vulnerable groups e.g. women, landless, minorities, etc.

Practitioners agree that the **involvement of key stakeholders in the analysis** is at least as important as the tools and methodologies used for the context analysis. Sometimes the consultation process raises expectations about funding among civil society organisations; to minimise this, it is very important to be transparent about what to expect from the collaboration, to identify strengths and priorities, and to assess how to use such strengths to achieve the priorities.



TIPS:

- **Ensure active participation of stakeholders (including different government levels, private sector, communities, donors and potential partners) at different levels (local, district, national, etc.) to build coherence, alignment, synergies, ownership and buy-in of the context analysis and of the overall programme and process.**
- **Ensure sufficient specific pieces of research. Conduct joint research with government bodies, academics, experts, etc. and make sure you capture indigenous knowledge alongside more scientific knowledge.**
- **Look for collaboration with public and private stakeholders. Engage in multi-stakeholder partnerships to reinforce capacities.**
- **Strengthen collaboration with national institutions, such as research and policy think tanks.**
- **Provide sufficient time for community consultations.**

> Gender and power analysis

Conducting gender and power analysis is a precondition for Oxfam work aimed at building resilient development. Understanding the way shocks and events affect men, women, boys and girls differently, how vulnerability differs, and how gender power dynamics shape the ability to cope, to adapt and to change, is vital in the resilience context analysis. It is not only about gathering gender differentiated data, but also about who conducts the context analysis, who provides the information, who interviews communities and other actors. Sometimes we will be unable to conduct the whole analysis in an ideal gender sensitive way (for example, noting that men and women may respond differently to the same questions and that this needs to be captured), but at least we will be aware of how results could be biased by gender aspects, and what consequences we will need to address as a result.



TIP: Always record the gender of the people answering questions during the context analysis, and make sure you interview women in particular in an environment that is appropriate in order to capture their true opinions.

If we lack gender analysis, we may perpetuate bad practice and hinder resilient development. In other words, our interventions may add risk. We therefore need to be aware that shocks exacerbate inequalities, since vulnerability of women, men, girls and boys differs.



TIP: Include a gender justice perspective in the Theory of Change and in any power analysis. Unpack the political, social, cultural and economic barriers preventing women from building their resilience. Results from project assessments, research and learning should be fed into the Theory of Change throughout the project cycle.

> Acknowledge uncertainty in a changing context

We live in a world that is changing fast: climate change, globalisation, communications, technology, etc. are rapidly and affecting the lives of millions of people. Resilient development takes these changes into consideration and introduces a variable of **uncertainty** in its context analysis and throughout the programme cycle. This is a new way of working in development that requires awareness-raising, training, testing, learning and adapting by all stakeholders involved. It means **we cannot be sure how we are going to achieve resilient development outcomes**, because the **changing context** may take us somewhere else. At the same time, we need to **ensure accountability** in our actions and results towards beneficiaries, donors, allies, supporters, etc. It is a difficult balancing act, and the first step is including this uncertainty in the context analysis, so that it is present in the rest of the phases of the resilient development cycle.

> Context analysis for funding proposals

A context analysis is usually required for the preparation of good funding proposals, i.e. before funding is allocated. This means it is necessary to build on the continuous analysis carried out through ongoing programmes. It is also essential to include a budget for follow-up and/or deeper analysis and research as part of an inception phase, MEAL and programme implementation. If time and resource constraints do not allow a thorough context analysis at the designing stage, consider completing or fine-tuning your analysis as part of a community and stakeholder engagement process once the project is funded and launched.



TIP: A Participatory Capacity and Vulnerability Assessment (PCVA) will give useful community level information to help design a good winning proposal. Remember to manage community expectations when funding has not yet been secured.

> Make sense of the different pieces

As part of the context analysis, we will gather a **combination of past experiences and learning from Oxfam, partners and other stakeholders**, together with **specific pieces of desk research** (e.g. literature review, trends analysis, or market opportunities) and **field research** (e.g. focus groups with communities). We will also **analyse opportunities** both in terms of added value considering what other organisations and institutions are doing, and in terms of political or funding opportunities (related to the national, regional or international political agenda and to the government and donors' funding priorities). Working for resilient development means taking all these into consideration, incorporating a variable of uncertainty, and planning using the social change processes (see sections 2 and 3 on this), while keeping some space to review and update the analysis of the (changing) context during programme implementation.

Sometimes, consolidating the different pieces of research can be very challenging, due to quality and breadth of research topics. It is important to agree beforehand on the key information needs and allocate enough time to frame, conduct, digest and utilise the research.



Burkina Faso: Context analysis for building resilience of communities affected by natural disasters and food crises (REPI/ PRSAN) and for building resilience and adaptation to climate extremes and disasters (BRACED)



“In Burkina Faso, we do participatory analysis with communities. This allows us to identify their needs before we start implementing projects.”

A participatory approach puts local people at the centre: it is an approach for community planning, where communities carry out an assessment of their situation and identify actions to be undertaken. This approach uses tools such as visual materials that foster participation, because illiteracy is high in the areas where we work. This helps communities understand and be actively involved in the process.

The participatory **BRAPA** (BRACED Participatory Assessments) methodology was developed by a consortium of partners from the BRACED (Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters) programme in 2015. It is a method for assessing vulnerabilities and capacities in the face of climate-related risks, emphasizing stresses as well as shocks. BRAPA focuses on four themes: gender; climate information provision; media opportunities; and resilience. Seventy-five BRAPAs were carried out across the project locations in Burkina Faso, using tools such as climate risk analysis, stakeholder analysis, community resource mapping, problem tree analysis, historical timelines and seasonal calendars.

The **REPI/PRSAN** context analysis covers:

- risks, shocks and their impacts on households;
- household capacities and response limits;
- gender inequalities;
- the vulnerabilities of socio-economic groups in terms of access to resources, income and expenditure;
- the opportunities for the different groups; and
- the State and community's preparedness and response capacities.

“First, we identified the area of intervention based on **vulnerability and needs assessments**. Once the area was identified, we set up a team, built their capacity and agreed on the terms relating to resilience: some words are not known to the community, so we translated concepts from English or French to national languages.

Then we contacted community and village leaders to agree and plan the consultation with them. With their permission, we started the consultations, spending a minimum of 4 days with each community.

We involved all groups in the community and worked separately with them to **assess how different groups face different risks**. For example, we identified drought and floods as shocks, but men identified drought as the shock with the greatest impact while women said floods were of higher priority. In these cases, we need to work with the groups to reflect on how to assign resources, and sometimes give more priority to one of the risks identified.

What is important is that everyone understands and is part of the decision.

After the analysis, we identified actions that met the objectives for tackling the problems identified, and then we reported back to the authority. This is the grassroots work that allows us to do advocacy.”



TIP: Understand problems, identify solutions, and prioritise actions based on the capacities of the community in participatory and transparent decision-making processes.

There are two levels for the monitoring of such projects: One follows the formal MEAL requirements, and the other is done by the participating actors themselves. Once the plan is developed and actors make their commitments, they themselves monitor implementation. This strengthens accountability.



Tools:

Community based tools: **PCVA** (Participatory Capacity and Vulnerability Assessment), with gender differentiation (Burkina Faso, Vanuatu); **HEA** (Household Economy Analysis), with gender differentiation (Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Uganda); **HVCA** (Household Vulnerability Capacity Assessment), with gender differentiation. (Nigeria, Uganda)

Household Care Analysis and **Rapid Care Analysis**: Rapid Care Analysis is a set of exercises for the rapid assessment of unpaid household work and the care of people in the communities where Oxfam is supporting programs. It is intended to be quick to use and easy to integrate into existing exercises for programme design or monitoring. It aims to assess how women's involvement in care work may impact on their participation in development projects. It can also be used to identify how wider programs can ensure adequate care for vulnerable people. (Uganda)

GALS (**Gender Action Learning System**): is a community-led empowerment methodology based on underlying principles of social and gender justice, inclusion and mutual respect, used to raise awareness about gender power imbalances, and to create a vision, plan objectives and actions and monitor progress to address those imbalances and move towards gender justice with communities and households. It can be adapted to different contexts and for different purposes, making each GALS process unique. (Uganda)

Strength based approach, with gender differentiation. (Vanuatu)

Other tools: PDRA (Participatory Disaster Risk Reduction and Adaptation tools), Hazard identification and prioritisation, hazard analysis tool, Vulnerability analysis tool, Risk analysis tool, Capacity assessment tool, Strategy selection tool, Community visioning tool, Action planning matrix. (Uganda)

2 DESIGN AND PLANNING WITH A RESILIENCE LENS



*“From the beginning, in the design, we put the power and the ownership of people at the centre so that communities can deal with what is thrown at them.”
Joselyn Bigirwa, ACCRA National Project Coordinator, Uganda*

Having done a good context analysis, Oxfam staff, partners and stakeholders can define or review (if previously drafted) a Theory of Change that will enhance people’s wellbeing and strengthen resilient development by achieving progress in the three resilience capacities (absorptive, adaptive and transformative). This will enable us to plan the necessary intervention(s), defining what we need to do and who we need to work with in order to achieve the desired outcomes.



TIP: Integrate resilient outcomes and a gender justice outcome in the Theory of Change.

What are we looking for?

Based on the context analysis, and taking into consideration the strengths, weaknesses and added value of the different stakeholders, Oxfam, partners and stakeholders will identify the resilience outcomes they want to achieve, define areas of work, establish what social change processes they will support, and develop a work plan. In Oxfam’s resilience terminology, **building blocks** are the different lines of work (or sectors) that we want to focus on and include: Disaster Risk Reduction, sustainable livelihoods, women empowerment, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), advocacy, campaigning, etc. **Social change processes** refer to aspects that are essential to building resilience, and include: securing and enhancing sustainable livelihoods, empowerment and gender justice, accountable governance, communication and access to information, learning and innovation, and forward-looking and flexible planning.

Planning and design process

In this phase, we organise the work on the different building blocks around specific processes, working collaboratively at different levels, properly sequenced in time, and allowing for the necessary flexibility to accommodate unexpected changes and learnings from the process itself, always aiming towards the achievement of resilient outcomes (which includes gender-justice outcomes).

We need to distinguish between what would be the ideal (where we would like to go) and what projects and programmes can realistically achieve considering the constraints (duration of projects, funding restrictions, etc.). In reality, the **Theory of Change is more like a compass**, marking where we are as we start our journey. It is not a map: we are not sure what is going to work in each context; our plan is our best attempt.

At times, developing a clear gender approach can be challenging in consortium-led projects that integrate different organisational cultures, value systems and priorities.

It is therefore important to spend enough time negotiating a shared understanding of the gender dimensions in resilience from the beginning.



TIPS:

- Design your MEAL system right from the design phase based on your Theory of Change (rather than the logframe).
- Define how the programme team is going to iteratively learn and reflect in order to adapt the Theory of Change and intervention along the way.
- Properly consider gender justice and dynamics in design and planning.

The stages in the design and planning phase are as follows:



Define building blocks

These will be the entry points of our work. They should be relevant enough to structure a major part of the work in an influential way in order to achieve desired changes. Depending on the relevance, the urgency or the resources available, the different building blocks will be sequenced in time and will have different relative weights. Sequencing also depends on existing capacities and how they evolve, on opportunities, and sometimes on seasonality (i.e. the Burkina Faso BRAPA, a methodology and tool for participatory vulnerability and capacity analysis at community level with a focus on climate change, uses seasonal calendars, and activities are aligned with such calendars).



TIP: Identify building blocks that constitute strong entry points (acting as a catalyst for influencing), unite actors around them, structure/sequence them in time and enhance social change processes along the way.



*“We can’t cover everything from the beginning: make an informed decision for the strategy around sequencing and weighting of entry points”
Ousseini Kouraogo, ATAD Coordinator (Oxfam Partner), Burkina Faso*



Example of building blocks in the PRO-ACT project in Nigeria

- 1. **Economic justice** and improving livelihoods
- 2. **DRR** and responding to humanitarian crisis
- 3. **Gender justice** and female leadership
- 4. Access to **markets** for women

These actions aim to address the following objectives **in order of importance, from saving lives to building the resilience and leadership capacity of vulnerable populations**, including women and youth:

1) rapid improvement in early recovery, food security and livelihoods; 2) risk preparedness and use of natural resources; 3) improved strategic links for food security and nutrition, supporting local market systems, productive capacities and governance of the agricultural sector, as well as the capacity of farmers and their associations to play a policy-influencing role; and 4) improved government response capacity in social protection, early warning systems, and strengthened local frameworks towards resilience building.



1 Assess & Identify



2 Design & Plan



3 Implement & Manage adaptively



4 Evaluate & Exit or Transition



5 Integrate Gender Justice



6 MEAL for adaptive management

➤ Identify how to support, enhance and promote social change processes

The six social change processes described in the Oxfam Framework for Resilient Development are broad enough to be applied in any given context. The proposal here is for Oxfam to work with other stakeholders to influence, strengthen and guide these processes towards resilient outcomes, at different levels.

This has been the experience in Vanuatu with VCAN and PICAN (Vanuatu and Pacific Islands Climate Action Networks respectively) on collective impact and sharing; with ACCRA in Uganda and other participating countries on the use of local experience on adaptive capacity to influence development of national climate change standard indicators and seasonal forecasting dissemination; and in Nigeria and Burkina Faso on the use of local evidence to influence food security and food crisis management systems.

Although everything we do towards achieving resilient development must also seek to enhance gender justice – an aspect that is or should be embedded and mainstreamed in all social change processes – there is one specific social change process relating to empowerment and gender justice, to ensure that this aspect is taken into account and is not lost in the midst of all the other actions in the social change processes.



TIPS:

- When pertinent and possible, consider working across all levels, from local to international, enhancing Oxfam's brokering, facilitating and convening roles.

- When defining your ToC, agree with stakeholders to what extent and how social change processes will be enhanced in any given programme, and develop context-specific indicators.

➤ Participation and multi-stakeholders approach

If the identification phase is carried out with the active participation of stakeholders, this should prepare a strong foundation for a collaborative process in the design, planning, and implementation phases of programs and/or projects.

To ensure ownership and sustainability, active community involvement and the voices of all stakeholders are important. All stakeholders and potential partners need to understand the importance of adopting a gender justice approach, and its implications, in their ways of working.



TIPS:

- Involve communities, civil society organisations, government and donors in the design and planning process.

- Work with partners on local development plans that help communities pitch their needs to government officials. Communities can influence allocation of budget, be part of discussions, and take charge of local planning processes. Make plans for capacity building of communities to help them be more influential.

- Support government to identify and design appropriate, flexible and forward-looking action plans.

- Be aware of gender dynamics and sensitivities among stakeholders and within processes.

➤ Plan for flexibility

As explained before, a changing context and a commitment to learn from the process require flexibility in planning and design. This is easier if we keep our focus on long-term resilient development outcomes, rather than on immediate outputs.



"True consideration of risks and assumptions calls for flexibility in the planning and design"
Joselyn Bigirwa, ACCRA National Project Coordinator, Uganda



TIPS:

- Try various strategies, learn from them and adjust them in accordance with learning, local needs and changing context: what works in one context may not work in another.

- Have functioning community feedback mechanisms in place from the beginning to inform project design, planning, implementation and learning.



Flexible and forward-looking planning in ACCRA (Uganda)



"In Uganda, we work on CCA (Climate Change Adaptation) as a building block, and on flexible forward planning as social change process, using the Local Adaptive Capacity framework. We have helped the Ministry of Water and Environment in their planning and decision making."

ACCRA aims to transform governance systems to support climate adaptive capacity development for people living in poverty. It is characterised by processes of flexible and forward planning, information and innovation. ACCRA looks at how development interventions can contribute to adaptive capacity at the community and household levels, and inform the design and implementation of local development plans by government and non-governmental development partners to support adaptive capacity for climate change and other stresses.

ACCRA focused on:

- A **context analysis** with communities and local structures, with national government and with global, continental and regional institutions.
- A political economy analysis of gaps and opportunities in each of the countries where ACCRA works.
- This led to the decision that the best entry points were **flexible and forward-looking planning, decision making and governance**, helping to bring a number of issues together.
- Support for local government and the Ministry of Water to conduct VCA (Village Community Assessments). This evidenced that the CCA plans being developed by the Ministry did not involve the local people and thus did not respond to the needs of the communities.

With this approach, ACCRA managed to:

- engage communities in the design of CCA district plans;
- reflect gender dynamics in the CCA plans;
- make district and local governments more accountable with regard to the commitments they would make with communities.

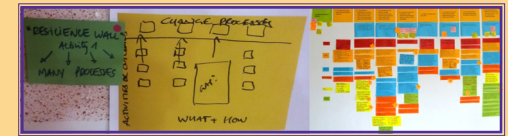
ACCRA used direct experiences from communities to inform the development of national plans.

This multi-level approach is helping ACCRA to attract funding.



Tools:

- **ACCRA game:** The game comes from the ACCRA Local Adaptive Capacity framework implemented in Uganda, Mozambique and Ethiopia. It touches on aspects of learning, gender, access to information and the interconnections between different sectors. The ACCRA game helps to factor uncertainty into plans. It can be played by different stakeholders (villagers, district and government officers, etc.), with Oxfam staff as facilitators (and translators – the game is in English).
- **GALS** (Gender Action Learning for Sustainability) and **GEM** (Gendered Enterprise and Markets) methodologies (Uganda and Nigeria)
- National PCVA (Participatory Capacity and Vulnerability Assessment by government, based on ACCRA experience) and government capacity building (Uganda)
- Climate Change Adaptation Plans at different levels (local, district and national), facilitated by ACCRA (Uganda)
- Resilience wall: Activities or outcomes (Y axis) related to several change processes (X axis), shows synergies and gaps, and helps define what to do and how (Vanuatu)



Planning for resilient outcomes in Vanuatu's response to Tropical Cyclone Pam

When tropical cyclone Pam hit Vanuatu in March 2015, there was a lot of confusion about how to organise the recovery in communities. Oxfam, with the support of its partner Wan Smol Bag (WSB), established CDCCCs (Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees) to raise awareness and improve the dissemination of and access to critical information for people in the communities to gain skills about how to proceed in case of disaster. There is now a "Red Alert" preparedness protocol in place and a response plan focused on the 3 resilience capacities, including:

- Proactive protection activities to cope with shocks and stresses (e.g. evacuation routes), and disaster response plans, which contribute to the absorptive capacity;
- Behaviour change (such as checking for messages from meteorology and listening to the radio for weather and other alerts), and CDCCC awareness raising sessions, which contribute to the adaptive capacity;
- Contribution to the transformative capacity (structural changes) comes very strongly from the CDCCCs themselves, as new structures, from the fact that villagers have the capacity to define, implement and review the emergency plan themselves, and from the strengthening of women's leadership, with women taking leading roles in the committees.



Nigeria's Livelihoods Program Implementation Plan (PIP) process

In the process of designing an integrated Livelihoods Programme and Theory of Change embodying the One Programme Approach, we went through a lot of reviews, research and consultations to come up with this programme. First, we undertook a partners' capacity assessment to understand their and our combined strengths and weaknesses. We did a funding scoping to understand the major donors' landscape and priorities in Nigeria (EU, DFID, WB, amongst others.). The next step was to look at our programme's alignment with government policy, reviewing their agenda (agricultural promotion policy, etc.). We had to learn from past experience in our programmes, in our pilots and from our GROW campaign with a variety of partners and allies. We met with BINGO (the British INGO platform) to seek their opinion on what we should do and how, and with a coalition of organisations making up Voices for Food Security.

We used all this to design, refine and finalise our programme, in the following stages:

- We developed a Livelihoods Programme framework which was discussed and validated with our partners in a workshop;
- We reviewed staff structure to ensure we had the right staff in place to allow the effective and efficient implementation of the Livelihoods framework and strategy;
- We aligned the Livelihoods framework with the Oxfam Gender Justice framework to ensure that it embodied the rights-based approach. We also conducted a gender audit to determine whether our programme complied with gender standards and improved its design;
- We reviewed and improved our programme quality standards (inclusiveness, quality MEAL system, etc.);
- We incorporated the WIN minimum standards and involved senior staff throughout the process;
- we undertook the OPAL training (Oxfam Programme Accountability and Learning system).

3

IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTATION WITH A RESILIENCE LENS



"We involve stakeholders at every stage, seek active participation of all, negotiate interests and try to achieve consensus – in the process we want to identify roles (who is doing what), share best practices, etc. When you engage stakeholders, you increase transparency and accountability. Stakeholder engagement should be purposeful and add value."

Oxfam staff in Uganda and Vanuatu

The implementation phase builds on the analysis, consultations and relationships developed during the identification, design and planning phases. All of this builds ownership of the programme among different actors. Ongoing engagement during implementation allows stakeholders to discuss and adapt interventions as needed.

What are we looking for?

In the implementation phase, we want to promote resilient development with a rights' based approach, which means our work must seek to empower different actors (individuals, communities, civil society organizations, government departments) to be the owners of their development.

Central to this phase is adjusting and adapting to ongoing changes and learning. There is more detailed guidance on this in Section 6: MEAL, Iterative Learning and Adaptive Management.

Process of implementation and management

In this phase, we will structure our collaborative work around our building blocks, whilst enhancing the relevant social change processes that together strengthen the three resilience capacities (absorptive, adaptive and transformative).



TIP: Play behind the scenes, adopt the role of facilitator, bring actors together, provide capacity support when needed. This can have a bigger impact than focussing on Oxfam branded activities.

¹ Social change processes are: securing and enhancing livelihoods, empowerment and gender justice, accountable governing, informing, forward and flexible planning, and learning and innovation

The following are aspects to be considered during implementation:

➤ Multi-stakeholder engagement



*“Multi-stakeholder consultation enriches processes. It is very important to do!”
Jackson Muhindo, Resilience Programme Officer, Uganda*

Working with stakeholders during the implementation of the project/ programme can involve negotiating interests and trade-offs to generate consensus, identifying the roles of stakeholders, sharing best practice, leveraging voices and experiences of communities to ensure sustainability, and collectively addressing the structural causes that drive risk and vulnerability.

Special attention must be paid to the analysis of relevant actors and power dynamics, making sure that we bring into the processes organisations and individuals representing marginalised groups and women’s interests, which are often underrepresented. It is crucial to ensure that we work with the actors who can better understand and communicate on gender justice and power dynamics.

It is not always possible to change the composition of a certain group (a team, or departments in ministries), but we need to be aware of how the composition of such groups can affect the implementation of our interventions and the outcomes: e.g. if there is no gender neutrality.

A collaborative approach helps create a common vision on resilience, boosting synergies between advocacy and influencing work, as well as with the different sectors of humanitarian and development work.



TIPS:

- **Boost constructive engagement with a range of stakeholders including government departments, CSOs, parliamentary bodies, etc. and organise regular and timely coordination meetings.**
- **Define clearly the roles of stakeholders: their engagement should be purposeful, adding value to the programme and its implementation, ensuring their active participation.**
- **Allocate budget and resources among partners according to the roles and responsibilities agreed. Identify common interests, manage partnerships and celebrate achievements together.**
- **Always ask who is missing among the stakeholders. Do they need to be included? How can we include them?**
- **Ensuring that women’s organisations and other groups related to women’s rights are recognised and can access the decision-making instances is critical to achieving a gender balance, and thus ensuring the effectiveness of the processes that will build resilience.**
- **Negotiate and be accommodating with government and the private sector, and avoid confrontation. This will make it easier to exert influence.**



Strengthening CSO networks in Vanuatu

Working through strong CSO networks has a lot of potential in terms of resilient development and sustainability. The process of engaging and strengthening these networks is in itself a path for resilience. In Vanuatu, the commitment to strengthen local partners and networks is clearly evidenced in the support to WSB, VCAN and VHT, which contributes to all three (absorptive, adaptive and transformative) capacities.



Articulating building blocks and multi-stakeholder social change processes (Burkina Faso)

In Burkina Faso, mobilising all actors in the search for synergy and harmonisation is essential to build resilience. “We need to work harmoniously, not necessarily in a standardised manner, but based on our respective added values. What we observe is that each actor holds one end of the blanket without coming together in the centre, which prevents a common mobilisation and a synergy of action, resources and knowledge to boost vulnerability reduction.”

By “bringing together all the small resilience capacities that we separately reinforce at our level, in our zone, in our area of expertise, through our projects”, and working together under a common building block that would consistently underpin all the other blocks of all the projects and actors in the area, the humanitarian and development community could jointly reinforce the processes around this common block, avoid the dispersion of interventions and better respond to the diversity of risks and factors that increase vulnerability, with a stronger connection between sectors of intervention, especially those in which Oxfam does not specialise in Burkina Faso (health...), but which are essential for strengthening resilient development.



Gender Justice and empowerment in tropical cyclone Pam recovery in Vanuatu

Gender is a cross-cutting issue in WASH, EFSVL and Gender & Protection, requiring special attention during coordination and preparedness activities (awareness-raising, fair selection and participation of women and men, etc.). Water committees and Community Disaster Committees (CDCs) are generally more male dominated, with women tending to have less influence. The programme is trying to balance this through gender workshops, general skills training in engineering techniques for both men and women (showing that women have the capacity to carry out engineering work), and enlisting the support of community chiefs to have women as chairs of CDCs.

Gender culture is observed; for example, agricultural activities are generally seen as female- dominated sector wide, but specifically livestock and fisheries are traditionally considered as male activities. The programme acknowledges this and tries to challenge it. Part of the humanitarian work focuses on empowering communities and stakeholders through conflict resolution (awareness building and providing safe spaces for dialogue: instead of going through the formal process of approaching the community chief, Oxfam’s partner WSB facilitates discussion and search for solutions amongst the people themselves); and capacity support (including training and monitoring of water committees; and training and input support to women’s groups on income generating activities, access to income, access to decision-making, etc.).

➤ Adjusting and adapting to ongoing changes and learning

We want to strengthen the resilience capacities of individuals, communities and institutions, but we work in complex changing contexts, and need to be ready to adjust and change our plans accordingly. Incorporating this flexibility while complying with long-term commitments is a challenge.

Section 6 on MEAL, Iterative Learning and Adaptive Management provides greater detail on how to do this, but it is essential that we, together with stakeholders, generate spaces for learning and reviewing the assumptions behind our Theory of Change, and allow for enough flexibility to adapt our interventions. In many cases, we are already doing this.

Resilient development requires us to do it intentionally, incorporating iterative learning and adapting as part of project implementation and management.



TIPS:

- Include in your MEAL plan systematic collection and analysis of context information to be able to better interpret progress on indicators according to the context and adapt activities and strategies to changing circumstances in a timely manner.

- Plan for short-term learning cycles to rapidly adjust and adapt your intervention to new learning. In resilience programming we need to learn faster.

- Keep in mind the final outcomes of your programme, but be flexible regarding the strategies, outputs and intermediate outcomes needed to achieve them.

- Give decision-making authority to those that work at the community level so they can take decisions and respond quickly to changes.

- Keep stakeholders regularly informed about programme progress, but also on learning and adaptation

- Be accountable to multiple stakeholders about outcomes and not just activities and outputs which might change as we learn and adapt our intervention strategies.

➤ Ways of working

The resilience approach requires new, different ways of working. It requires boosting synergies and coordination between the three “traditional” pillars of work (humanitarian, development programmes and advocacy and campaigns), sharing analysis, resources and plans, while keeping the corresponding expertise in each area. It also requires coordination between different sectors of work, such as agriculture, health, employment, etc. and between the different actors (government, academic community and civil society organisations) working in each sector. This requires more time and resources, but perhaps also new skills sets including communication, flexibility, and the capacity to delegate tasks.



“Uganda is currently hosting large numbers of refugees. We have been able to manage this because we work with a range of stakeholders. Very quickly we were able to facilitate a rapid response. Different stakeholders have different mandates and can do things that others cannot.”

Jackson Muhindo, Resilience Programme Officer, Uganda



Partnerships: The Common Framework (Burkina Faso)

Oxfam’s resilience programming in Burkina Faso is accompanied by long-lasting partnerships with local and national NGOs. Mindful of the humanitarian challenges, Oxfam and its partners undertake regular diagnosis of their capacities to jointly develop the most appropriate programming and capacity-building approaches to strengthen these national/local stakeholders and create synergies for the humanitarian response.

Oxfam, Christian Aid, Action Against Hunger (ACF) and their national partners ATAD (Alliance Technique d’Assistance au Développement) and ODE (Office de Développement des Églises) put in place the first successful example of a “Common Framework” intervention in their response to the 2012 floods that affected the Centre-North region (as part of the REPI project). This was made possible thanks to the leadership of UE donors (ECHO and DEVCO, the European Commission’s Directorate-General for International cooperation and Development) who, at the time were striving to work in a logic of linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) to jointly support the resilience-building of affected populations. The logical framework and monitoring indicators were defined jointly among all stakeholders, which resulted in an impressive collaborative work of iterative capitalisation, evaluation and learning. Effective coordination was ensured through a steering committee and an external body to support the sharing of information, knowledge and learning among all stakeholders.

Today, the REPI project is a reference in terms of consortium, of a common framework bringing together the diversity and value of each.

➤ Accountability to multiple stakeholders.

This usually refers to making the government (or private sector, or other institutions) accountable towards citizens for budget planning and spending, commitments, etc. But also important for accountable governance is the performance of Oxfam and other stakeholders in the development process². Engagement with stakeholders strengthens the transparency of the process, builds mutual trust, and enhances accountability towards beneficiaries, donors and campaign supporters.



TIPS:

- Build on stakeholder engagement to enhance transparency and accountability.

- Include key stakeholders in the project’s steering committee, such as government, donors, women’s organisations, other CSOs.

- Organise regular/ monthly coordination meetings with government, CSOs, parliamentary bodies, and other key stakeholders.

- Engage key stakeholders to participate in the programme’s learning exercises.

- Use stakeholder feedback information in your learning and reflection.

² Oxfam defines 5 dimensions of accountability: Transparency, Participation, Feedback and complaint mechanisms, Staff competency and upholding of international norms, Learning and continuous improvement



Learning with stakeholders in ACCRA (Uganda)

ACCRA created a platform for learning and sharing information with members of the consortium. Numerous assessments of capacities and gaps of members were carried out. This is critical. The interaction with governments is constructive, not confrontational, and this collaborative nature of the approach is appreciated. It improves accountability, and makes it more of a learning process which changes from year to year.



VCAN (Vanuatu Climate Action Network)

The VCAN started in 2012 but the work was disrupted after cyclone Pam, due to the humanitarian priorities of network members. It reconvened after 6 months, with 13 organisation members. The network focuses on two priority areas:

1) Capacity building for member organisations (training on climate change and disaster risk reduction, gender and climate change, gender leadership and media);

2) Influencing national, regional and international policies: VCAN is a member of the NAB (National Advisory Board for climate change and disaster risk reduction), and is proactive in feeding ideas into the government. For example, VCAN influenced the National Policy on climate change and disaster risk reduction and received an award from the Prime Minister for its efforts; monitoring the implementation of this (and other) government policy is still a pending task.

VCAN is also a member of the Oxfam supported Pacific Islands Climate Action Network (PICAN) and CAN International. VCAN representatives have joined the Vanuatu delegation at the global climate talks with a particular focus on gender and civil society. VCAN's engagement with the delegation and in preparations has contributed to an increase in the number of women representing Vanuatu at these meetings and the visibility of gender equality within national positions.

The work of **VCAN** fits in well with the establishment of CDCCCs, and shows a very comprehensive contribution to the three capacities.

- The community based experiences of the CDCCCs are captured by VCAN via its members, stories are shared during the VCAN meetings, and VCAN uses them to inform and influence national policy (for example, the National Advisory Board on climate change and disaster risk reduction).
- The community disaster climate change project aims to see the adaptive skills built into the long term, for example, ensuring that access to information from meteorology departments is easy and can be understood by the communities.
- CDCCCs can register with the National Disaster Office which provides information to community members; they may call directly and ask if the government is responding or not to their needs, and why. After the training received, the communities now know this is an option, and are aware of who the persons responsible for addressing their needs in the government are. This is making government more accountable. A clear example of communities exercising their rights.

4

EVALUATION AND EXIT / TRANSITION WITH RESILIENCE LENS

Ideally, programmes and projects wishing to understand their contribution to resilience should design and carry out evaluations that are able to assess to what extent the three resilience capacities have been enhanced and how (by what building blocks, social change processes and collaborations), as well as achievement around the resilient development outcomes.

The reality is that this is not yet happening. The Resilience Framework is very recent, and the Oxfam MEAL team is still working on how to evaluate resilience progress and achievements pursuant to the Framework. Nevertheless, Section 6 on Iterative Learning and MEAL provides some guidance on how to carry out evaluation. Experiences from some countries also provide insight on how to plan exit or transition in resilience programming.



TIPS:

- *Prepare the exit strategy at the beginning of the project: community responsibilities, strong involvement of technical services, and capacity-building activities are key to sustaining momentum.*
- *Organise workshops to build on project achievements and help local authorities include the resources necessary for continuity of processes and contingency and development plans in their budgets. This allows consolidation of project achievements in the long term.*
- *Document stories of change: record how the project or programme has changed the lives of individuals or communities.*



Be there at least until the first breakdown (Burkina Faso)



"We leave before acknowledging that what has been built holds the fort in the face of shocks and uncertainties. We must stay until the first breakdown happens!"
Konate Papa Sosthène, Resilience and Humanitarian Programme Manager, Oxfam in Burkina Faso

Staying 5 to 7 years in the same area is good practice to see changes, transformations and resilience emerge. This allows us to:

- build on the lessons learned from past projects;
- adopt an evolving approach and focus more on exchange of knowledge and know-how;
- strengthen programming and the Theory of Change as a whole;
- appreciate the effects / impacts of our work, and adapt it as necessary.

However, Oxfam must also explore ideas to support communities to "take off" in a shorter time frame, finding the right strategies to truly initiate the 3 resilience capacities. Throughout the life of the programme, we must ensure that beneficiaries receive complementary and diversified support which evolves over time and serves to strengthen their livelihoods and capacities.





Transitioning programmes in Vanuatu

Oxfam in Vanuatu (OiV) followed up the work developed in its 2012-2014 climate change adaptation resilience programme with the CA-MEL programme. But when cyclone Pam (category 5) struck in March 2015, the CA-MEL programme was put on hold and humanitarian action started. During that period, OiV developed a country strategy, including programme lines around resilience and humanitarian, governance, leadership and accountability, recognising that gender justice was missing in the humanitarian response. At the same time, the transition to Oxfam 2020 was taking place, which meant rethinking the role of OiV. Oxfam InterPacific (based in Fiji) was established, and supported government to look at COP 22, focusing on gender and youth. Late in 2015, the humanitarian response was wound down and development activities took over.

Programmes will end in 2017, and the following questions will need to be answered:

- How can the different programmes be brought together?
- How can the various frameworks work together (e.g. SEED and Resilience frameworks)?
- How can potential donors be identified?

One of the ideas for the future being put forward by the country team is a PACCRA (Pacific Climate Change Resilience Alliance). The idea is based on the ACCRA experience, and follows a similar approach (PACCRA would work with the Stockholm Environmental Institute, while ACCRA worked with ODI). A concept note focusing on the Pacific has been developed, and the aim is to implement it with Fiji and the Solomon Islands, in order to have Pacific regional programmes rather than just country programmes.

5

INTEGRATING GENDER JUSTICE



“Gender-based inequalities, beliefs, norms and practices that disempower women, men, boys and girls, have the potential to undermine resilience, as they become rigidities preventing the system from managing change. The absence or limited use of gender lenses remains one of the major structural inequalities women and men face, becoming a major risk and threat for the achievement of resilient development outcomes.”

Oxfam, Gender Justice and Resilience Companion draft

Resilient development is only achievable with gender justice; otherwise, it is not resilient development. In other words, all the work we do to build resilient development must be gender-just.

The vulnerability of women, men, girls and boys increases with shocks, exacerbating existing gender inequalities and power imbalances. As a result, women and girls suffer disproportionate risk of social discrimination, stigmatisation and social exclusion, which in turn reinforces other hidden layers of vulnerability (such as unpaid work, violence, etc.).

Gender refers to a system of power: it shapes power relations at all levels in society, intersecting other dimensions and systems of power. It is about power-over and power-to: who has access to and control of resources (information, inputs, services, credits)? Who is able to participate in spaces of decision making? Who is represented and who is not? Why? Building resilient and sustainable development therefore requires a deep understanding of the multiple dimensions at play in a given context, and how shocks or events impact differently on women, men, boys and girls, at the individual, household and community levels.

Representation is not just about the number of men and women: the quality of representation is also important. Participation is a starting point, but it is not enough.



“In Nigeria, sometimes if you put women and men together, women won’t talk. You need to separate groups”.

Sunday Eyong, Programme Officer WASH/Private Sector Engagement, Oxfam in Nigeria



TIPS:

- Define strategies of women empowerment and male engagement to drive processes towards gender justice.

- Work to improve the quality of the contributions of women to groups, meetings and processes in general.

Gender dimension in resilience programing

Gender justice in resilience programing is about:

- Assessing the context through gender justice and rights based approaches.
- Recognising that gender inequality disempowers women, men, girls and boys.
- Acknowledging that gender blindness causes harm.
- Avoiding instrumental measures alone, by making sure that strategic interests of women, girls, boys and men are considered.
- Questioning the unequal distribution of power between men and women.
- Finding innovative, flexible and diverse ways of engaging with non-traditional stakeholders, including traditional leaders, political and administrative authorities, faith based organisations, women, men, girls, boys and youth.

There is an instrumental approach to gender justice in resilience that addresses practical needs (consequences of gender-based inequalities), and a transformative approach that addresses strategic interests (root causes of gender-based inequalities).



Gender Justice is a resilient outcome: Six steps to mainstream gender in DRR*

1. Commit
2. Build capacities
3. Assess
4. Be fair
5. Support empowerment
6. Monitor and evaluate

*Key resource: ODI, Virginie Le Masson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-XhihCAtlM>

How we do it



Mainstreamed and standalone gender

Often it seems that we have to choose between gender-mainstreamed strategies (at the risk of losing the gender relevance in the midst of other interventions), or women's rights standalone strategies (at the risk of gender being absent in the rest of the activities). This is a false dichotomy: we need to do both. A mixed combination of approaches is the strategy to be followed by resilience-orientated programmes.



TIP: Consider having both standalone programmes with the main objective of achieving gender justice and mainstreaming gender throughout the process, identifying links and synergies.



*"If we have mainstreamed gender in programmes dedicated to women's economic empowerment and these are funded, then we should be able to achieve gender justice (in Uganda, we call it **integration**)."*

Harriet Mbabazi, Resilience Livelihoods Manager, Uganda



Budgeting for gender justice

A country programme or project budget can be a powerful lever for social transformation. If a budget does not account for the different needs of women and men, it is 'gender-blind', and it may perpetuate inequality through biased spending. Often, national budgets favour men and groups, institutions and systems that are led by men. Consequently, budgetary allocations that target women's practical and strategic gender needs remain low. This reality is found both at government and programme level.

In fact, it is crucially important to budget specifically for the gender aspects of all our interventions, as well as for any specific gender component or intervention. Examples are specific activities addressing gender dimensions, drafting and implementing gender differentiated methodologies, conducting training on new approaches or hiring specialised staff.

Sometimes a quality gender analysis is carried out but the results are not reflected in objectives, outputs, etc. It is important to design specific activities for gender justice, and this requires teams making it a priority, otherwise it will not happen.



TIP: Specific budget and human resources for gender are an important issue at the design stage, to identify specific activities, and to identify capacity needs of partners. Partners need to be supported so they can report on what they are doing.



Monitoring progress in gender justice

Develop indicators (and intermediate outcome indicators) to monitor progress and to better measure and evaluate gender justice and empowerment, inclusion, and resilience. Monitoring data should be disaggregated by sex and age throughout the course of programming, and mid-term and final evaluations should include specific analysis of behaviour changes towards women. Participation in community and household decision-making should be measured, and a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods should be used to evaluate whether influence has increased at the household and community levels. Additional gender-specific indicators should be monitored over the course of the programming, including monitoring of access to and control of resources, and adjustments to programming should be made as necessary.



"Oxfam wants to have a strong Gender Justice approach in resilience building, but are we sure we have the right indicators to ensure gender is appropriately taken into account, to have a sufficient perception of the real changes that are taking place?"

Joselyn Bigirwa, ACCRA National Project Coordinator, Uganda

➤ Ensure the programme team is skilled and up to date on gender justice

In order to fulfil Oxfam's commitment to gender justice and to resilient development, managers need to support their teams to be and stay skilled and informed and be accountable for delivering on gender justice.



"Oxfam recruited a gender specialist to operationalise gender. At the ground level, gender is considered. Consultations are happening and individual concerns of men, women, and children are contemplated. Gender is part of quality programming. For the team that will collect data, they need the right gender skill set. We ensure that the tools we use, for example, include gender. For the different processes, we consider the gender perspective."

Sebastian Shikel, MELSA Coordinator, Oxfam in Nigeria



Tools:

Gender related tools have been included in the different sections of the guide. Additional material can be found in [Oxfam's Women's Economic Empowerment Knowledge Hub](#). The following are suggested tools for "Gender Justice and Resilience":

- OXFAM: [Finding ways to build resilience. VRA methodology.](#)
- OXFAM: [Participatory capacity and vulnerability analysis: A practitioner's guide.](#)
- CARE International: [Gender Equity and Building Blocks](#)
- UNISDR [Making Disaster Risk Reduction Gender Sensitive](#) (Policy and Practical Guidelines)
- FAO Training guide: [Gender and Climate Change Research in Agriculture and Food Security for Rural Development](#)
- OXFAM: [Review of Climate Change Adaptation Practices in South Asia – Climate Concern](#)
- IUCN, UNDP, GGCA (2009). [Training Manual on Climate Change](#)
- UNDP: [Gender, Climate Change and Community-Based Adaptation Mercy Corps. VCA](#)
- ADB (2013). [Toolkit on Gender Equality Results and Indicators](#)
- CGIAR Gender and Inclusion Toolbox (2014): [Participatory Research in Climate Change and Agriculture](#)
- Community-based Risk Screening Tool – Adaptation and Livelihoods ([CRISTAL](#))



Gender Justice and Empowerment mainstreamed and stand alone, in Vanuatu

Oxfam in Vanuatu (OiV) puts a strong focus on strengthening women's power from programme inception, including:

- capacity building of women,
- support for leadership, and
- women's involvement in longer term change processes.

We are mindful of how the focus on gender is perceived in the community – e.g. gender seen "as women's business" –, to ensure that the overall burden on women is not increased.

OiV is currently designing a gender-just social and economic empowerment framework for applying to its resilience programming. This will enable a stronger gender transformative approach, incorporating community analysis and planning for restructuring and revaluing paid/unpaid labour, reducing violence and harmful masculinities, and supporting transformative leadership for women's rights.

In addition to mainstreaming gender in all activities, there are many activities directly linked to addressing women's rights in general and reducing gender-based violence at household and community levels, including:

- gender justice and resilience information dissemination via digests (newsletters);
- gender training and workshops for community members;
- promoting women's leadership and participation in resilience action at all levels (community, provincial, national, international – such as the UNFCCC);
- gender sensitivity retro-fitting (for example, not putting female toilets in front of male toilets, as this threatens women).

In the response to tropical cyclone Pam, all activities for 'Enhancing and securing livelihoods' incorporate a gender analysis and afford priority to vulnerable groups (in particular, women-headed households and single mothers), and include:

- direct inputs and training to beneficiaries;
- awareness-raising and training on identification of drought resistant crop varieties;
- entrepreneurship development and market access, through appropriate income-generating activities (IGA) for the specific contexts; and
- IGA group formation and training.

A very positive experience was the participation of two civil society representatives (from Oxfam and Care) in the official delegation attending the climate change negotiations in the past, which is perceived as a good example of participation, empowerment and accountable governance.



Lessons from Assessing gender in resilience programing: BRACED programme in Burkina Faso

Based on the Zaman Lebidi (BRACED) experience, five essential initiatives and tools have been identified to enhance gender dimensions within a project:

- 1. Incorporate gender-specific activities into the budget;
- 2. Hold a dedicated gender workshop for staff at the beginning of the project;
- 3. Write a gender check-list to guide project activities;
- 4. Involve men in community and household level discussions on behaviours and attitude to women;
- 5. Nominate gender champions across different areas of the project.

Full report available at:

<https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/10216.pdf>

6

ITERATIVE LEARNING AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT (MEAL)

"All failure is failure to adapt, all success is successful adaptation"

Max McKeown, author of 'Adaptability: The Art of Winning in an Age of Uncertainty'



"For everything you want to do, changes keep happening and you need to keep learning. We try to adapt and make changes immediately. In Burkina Faso, we worked with various stakeholders and created a steering committee that convenes every 6 months to share and learn. It is important to set up learning frameworks that are operationalised and are resourced properly."

Yougbare Hadaogo, Programme Officer BRACED, Oxfam in Burkina Faso

CAMSA (Common Approach to MEL and Social Accountability) defines a minimum set of MEAL requirements for all programme and suggests tools and methodologies that are also relevant for resilience. However, resilience programming puts greater emphasis on all aspects of MEAL .

What are we looking for?

We want to achieve resilient development outcomes. Because programmes and projects operate in changing and uncertain contexts, and we acknowledge that we do not have all the solutions in advance regarding the best way to enhance resilience in a given context, we need to plan for MEAL systems that help us learn and adapt as we go along. Our MEAL systems need to inform us about the progress we are, or aren't, making on the pathway to resilience and they need to foster the adaptive management of our programmes.

How we do it?

When designing and implementing MEAL systems for resilience programmes, you should consider the following aspects:



Base your MEAL system on the programme Theory of Change rather than the Logframe:

Theories of Change support the type of systemic and adaptive thinking required for programmes that aim to enhance resilient development. In complex, changing and uncertain environments, our Theory of Change can act as a compass³ helping us navigate the changing environment to stay on a resilience pathway.

³ Craig Valters (2015). Theories of Change: Time for radical approach to Learning in development. ODI



TIPS:

- Use the *Theory of Change* throughout the project cycle, not only in the design phase.
- Use the ToC to identify leaning needs and areas of uncertainty for experimentation and rapid learning cycles.
- Base your assumptions on how change happens and test them with learning and M&E evidence.
- Use and challenge your *Theory of Change* in reviews, reports, reflections, etc.
- Develop reporting templates so that they reflect the ToC and assess progress towards ToC / MEAL.



Using the “Resilience wall” to track progress against the theory of change to build resilience (Vanuatu)

Activities or outcomes (Y axis) related to several change processes (X axis), shows synergies and gaps, and helps define what to do and how. This visual representation of the ToC to build resilience is used in regular monitoring and reflection meetings to track how project activities and strategies are fostering social change processes.



➤ Place learning as a central element of the MEAL system



“One key aspect for us is learning. You need to keep learning about strategies that you are using.”

Joselyn Bigirwa, ACCRA National Project Coordinator, Uganda



“Do we want to learn by accident or learn on purpose?”

Sebastian Shikel, MELSA Coordinator, Oxfam in Nigeria

A MEAL system with a strong learning component should help the programme or project to:

- **1. Learn with others.** Learning for resilience needs to be participatory, involving people with a range of experience and knowledge. Involve people across projects as well as externally, in order to widen the net and support innovation, and open ourselves to new questions and ways of thinking.
- **2. Identify relevant questions.** All projects ask questions: take time to identify relevant ones and plan how you will explore them during the project cycle. The questions may relate to the project’s *Theory of Change*, or to a specific challenge a partner or the community is facing. There may be something that is working well, and we want to know why so we can capture and use the learning elsewhere.
- **3. Plan how the project will address these questions.** There are many options for exploring and answering questions. A small learning group could meet regularly to share insights on a specific issue. A conference may bring a range of actors together to explore a series of issues and share learning. Exchange visits can give people hands-on experience. Learning journeys can combine different methodologies and be integrated into a project or programme. Research could also be undertaken.

- **4. Plan to reflect.** Plan specific moments for critical thinking and reflection to review your *Theory of Change* and assumptions in the light of experience, changing circumstances and data that have been collected through monitoring and evaluation processes. Ask if the project is on a pathway to resilient development.



TIPS:

- Any new initiative needs to start with a reflection on what we have learnt from previous projects and programmes and what we are learning in our current work. Take into consideration previous evaluations, but also be aware that the context is probably different now than for previous projects and programmes, and experiences may not be replicable.
- Plan the learning strategy from the beginning. Focus on the aspects that you are more uncertain about, on the innovation you want to test, etc.
- Appropriately budget your MEAL system with a strong learning strategy. Experiences from Burkina and Vanuatu suggest that this can require up to 10% of project budget.
- Learning also requires time. Ensure that you systematically plan appropriate moments for learning and reflection with teams, partners, communities and other stakeholders.
- Develop programme team and primary stakeholders’ and partners’ reflective learning skills. Build capacities of involved stakeholders.
- Plan short learning cycles on strategies, activities or approaches you might need to ensure work in the specific context. Test different solutions, learn fast and adapt. An appropriate timeframe could be periods of 3 to 6 months.
- Carry out frequent reviews and reflections with partners on project process. Less formal and more regular meetings are often better.
- Use the learning process to explore emerging alternative ways to meet objectives and targets.
- Include research activities throughout the project to support your MEL and broaden your understanding on how change happens in a given context. To do so you might consider working with research institutions from the design phase.
- Research needs to be planned in advance already at the design phase: content, methodology, budget and time required.
- When implementing a project for a response to the same disaster, it is useful to have shared indicators with other actors implementing a recovery response in order to monitor results, conduct activities which build on work already done or being done, and organise learning workshops with all local stakeholders (partners, technical units, authorities, beneficiaries).
- Sometimes donor requirements might prevent us from investing in learning. We need to deliberately take the donors along with us on this journey, explain why learning is necessary for successful adaptive programming, and what is needed: funding, longer timeframes, flexibility, etc. This will contribute to the credibility of our evidence.



Sharing learning and accountability with multiple stakeholders (Uganda)

This is what ACCRA has been doing: the Local Adaptation to Climate Change framework involved learning collaboratively with other stakeholders, including governments, etc. Through this, ACCRA has influenced policy and governance systems. Learning is not just about Oxfam and our partners, it is also about the people we want to inform and influence.



The learning system in the BRACED programme (Burkina Faso)

BRACED has a central approach to learning and building on experiences, with a fourth specific outcome dedicated to building on research, learning, knowledge and good resilience practices in order to improve understanding of what works in achieving resilience. This implies alliances and synergies with different structures (technical services, local administration and regional authorities, research institutions, other BRACED consortia). On gender justice, MEAL activities integrate specific questions to identify whether the project has an impact on decision-making and the voice of women at household and community level.



Allow and plan for flexibility

Adopting an adaptive management approach means that we should be prepared to be flexible and change our activities, approaches, strategies, indicators, etc. as we gain knowledge on how change happens in the specific context and whether our programme strategies and activities are appropriate to bring about change.



TIPS:

- *Indicators and MEAL plans should evolve together with programme adaptation of strategies and activities, as well as in accordance with stakeholder interests on learning.*
- *Review and change your indicators as needed, when new learning and changes in contexts require this.*
- *Advocate to donors: Build in expectations on programme review and re-design during implementation. Emphasize learning and review exercises in proposals.*
- *Build trust: Delegate power and decision-making authority to programme implementation staff who are able to see when change occurs and respond accordingly.*
- *Promote piloting innovations, plan short learning cycles, adapt and scale-up as needed, and share learning with others.*



Flexible programming using community feedback to adapt project activities (Vanuatu)

Oxfam's partner WSB use frequent community feedback to continuously adapt their activities. Different tools are used to collect such feedback: spider web tool (see below), community feedback mechanism through meetings, complaint email address for partners, "question boxes" for communities and partners, or planning meetings with VCAN (Vanuatu Climate Action Network) members.



Iterative learning in Vanuatu's response to tropical cyclone Pam

The humanitarian response to cyclone Pam in Vanuatu implements activities alongside a MEAL system which allows the intervention to be adapted as new information and challenges arise. Some of these activities include: integrated WASH and EFSVL approach (e.g. as a WASH activity, water systems are restored, drills and wells installed, and this is used by the livelihoods programme for irrigating vegetable gardens, an innovative approach which is currently at a pilot stage); disability inclusion (in WASH, disabled-friendly facilities are developed in coordination with the gender and protection team); community managed water supply for home gardening; using the drinking water safety and security plan as participatory planning tools for water resource management, including identification of sources of water, challenges and difficulties, with Oxfam providing training and tools for fixing water systems; piloting resilient water options as a response to El Niño (testing the use of hand drilled wells [not very common] and rain water harvesting [more common]); community accountability mechanism to check the distribution of inputs and the performance of activities in general (story gatherings, feedback, notice board, complaint box, etc.); integrated DRR in the water project.



Be aware and capture resilience dynamics in your MEAL:

Monitoring and evaluation data needs to be dynamic in order to capture the reality of evolving events and changing circumstances. Building resilience is a long-term process, so 'success' cannot be understood without considering the evolution of context dynamics and development outcomes over time.



TIPS:

- *Monitor context and regularly update your context analysis.*
- *Collect data at specific points in time sensitive to resilience dynamics (e.g. before, during, after shock).*
- *Have context (agricultural calendar, shocks, etc.) in mind to organise learning and review exercises. Be flexible for organising learning and reflection meetings on the programme when changes in context occur, even if not planned in advance.*
- *Plan to have a "rolling baseline" by collecting the same data every year (or at shorter intervals), including qualitative data on resilience assets, resilience perceptions, etc. to see what progress is made.*



Track and measure both resilience outcomes and processes

The aim is to achieve resilient development. Thus, MEAL systems should define indicators for both **resilience outcomes** (i.e. resilience capacities) as well as **final development outcomes** (i.e. well-being and upholding of rights). Changes in indicators for both types of outcomes need to be analysed and interpreted in the light of information on **changing context**, shocks or stresses. This is needed to better interpret whether your intervention has been 'successful' in building resilience. However, focusing only on measuring outcomes might be insufficient for understanding and learning about the resilience pathways required to arrive there. MEAL systems should therefore also **track processes of change**, i.e. progress on the 6 multi-stakeholder social change processes that will lead to resilience capacities.



In summary, data and information from MEAL systems should help to measure progress and understanding of the four elements of change relevant for resilience:

- **1. Resilience pathways:** How are social change processes happening to reinforce resilience capacities? How are multi-stakeholder collaborations happening to enhance those processes?
- **2. Resilience capacities:** What do we assume will reinforce the capacity to better manage change in a given context and system? What is the effective resilience response of the system in the face of a shock or stress or uncertainty?
- **3. Wellbeing and upholding of rights:** Are women and men's wellbeing and rights improving over time despite shocks, stresses and uncertainties?
- **4. Changing context:** How does the changing context influence processes, capacities and wellbeing?



TIPS:

- Resilience is better measured with outcome level indicators. Try to move away from output and short-term outcome indicators (e.g. improved access to climate information) to intermediate or final outcome indicators (e.g. demonstrable use of climate information, increased production due to use of climate information, improvement of food security), while being realistic about what can be achieved within the duration of the project or programme.

- Provide timely feedback on progress towards outcomes and inform of changes in context to feed programme learning and reflection exercises.

- Focus on monitoring the process, on “how” you are delivering the project; focus on understanding better “how” the process itself influences the outcomes of your project.

- Build teams of community monitors (for example, ACCRA experience championing climate change monitors).

➤ Collect and make sense of different types of data and use participatory methods in MEAL

Relying exclusively on quantitative data to inform progress on resilience would be incomplete and might lead to the wrong conclusions. It is also difficult to take account of and give full meaning to subjective experiences of resilience through the reporting of qualitative information only. To measure and understand resilience building it is better to combine quantitative and qualitative sources of information, both objective and subjective.



TIPS:

- Dedicate time to periodically collect human stories to qualitatively illustrate the expected and unexpected effects of your programmes. To do this you can use methodological approaches such as the Most Significant Change, Outcome mapping or Outcome harvesting. Use these to inform, learn, raise awareness, advocate, etc.

- Build capacities within the communities so that they can monitor change, do their own planning and gain confidence in their ability to demand resources. Participatory MEAL with communities (i.e. Vanuatu spider web) feeds into programme MEAL and is also used by communities to monitor and plan for themselves and adapt.

- Gather frequent feedback by formal and informal means from local stakeholders. Ensure that means for collecting feedback are appropriate for both men and women. Use this feedback to feed monitoring progress on resilience and learning exercises.



Using different data (quantitative, qualitative, objective and subjective) generated by communities through the Spider Web tool (Vanuatu)

After a baseline of community needs is completed, communities do a ranking system to identify priorities (through voting). Then they add activities and determine who does what, so that you see what each organisation is doing. The community then carries out monitoring: different colours are placed on the board (a black bug, for example, means that the change has a negative impact on the community). Size is also important (big bug: big change). After 3 years, you can see how it looks (different activities at different levels). You can also see what has not been done. Communities can add their own activities: what do they organise themselves? This is similar to social processes. Communities use the spider web for their own monitoring, and place it on the community board.



Tools:

Tools shared by countries are:

- Spider web tool (Vanuatu)
- Inception meeting in communities (Burkina, Uganda, Vanuatu)
- MELSA and electronic wallet (ICT) (Nigeria)
- Resilience wall: ToC visualisation tool to track progress towards social change processes (Vanuatu)
- Annual Impact Reflection (AIR) meetings (Vanuatu)

Additional tools and methodologies used by Oxfam and others can be found in the MEAL Guide: “Understanding Resilient Development: Monitoring, Evaluating and Learning for Resilience”

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACCRA: Africa Climate Change Resilience Alliance (Uganda)
BRACED: Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters (Burkina Faso)
BRAPA: BRACED Participatory Assessments
CA-MEL: Central America and Melanesia resilience building project
CCA: Climate Change Adaptation
CDC: Community Disaster Committees
CDCCCs: Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees
CSO: Civil Society Organisation
DRR: Disaster Risk Reduction
EFSVL: Emergency Food Security and Vulnerable Livelihoods
GALS: Gender Action Learning System
GEMS: Gender Enterprise and Markets Solutions
HEA: Household Economy Analysis
HVCA: Household Vulnerability Capacity Assessment
IGA: Income Generating Activity
IPC: Integrated food security Phase Classification
LAC: Local Adaptive Capacity
LRRD: Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
MEAL: Monitoring Evaluation Accountability and Learning
ODI: Overseas Development Institute
PACCRA: Pacific Climate Change Resilience Alliance
PCVA: Participatory Capacity and Vulnerability Assessment
PDRA: Participatory Disaster Risk Reduction and Adaptation
PICAN: Pacific Islands Climate Action Network
PRO-ACT: Pro-Resilience Action – Building food security and resilience project (Nigeria)
PRSAN: Resilience, Food and Nutrition Security project (Burkina Faso)
REPI: Recovery of Populations affected by Flooding project (Burkina Faso)
ToC: Theory of Change
UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VCA: Village Community Assessments
VCAN: Vanuatu Climate Action Network
VHT: Vanuatu Humanitarian Team
VRA: Vulnerability and Risk Assessment
VSLA: Village Savings and Loans Associations
WASH: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WSB: Wan Smol Bag (Vanuatu)

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